

The Three Pillars of Revelation

Pillar 1: The Nature of God

Pillar 2: The Plan of God

Pillar 3: The Way of God

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God is spirit ... God is light ... In him was life, and the life was the light of men.

(John 4:24a, 1 John 1:5bα, John 1:4 ESV)

For from the rising of the sun to its setting **my name will be great among the nations** ...

(Malachi 1:11a ESV)

Then God said, “**Let us make man in our image**, after our likeness. ...” male and female he created them.

(Genesis 1:26a, 27b ESV)

... **we are children of God**, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and **fellow heirs with Christ** ...

(Romans 8:16b-17a ESV)

... **according to the Way** ... I worship the God of our fathers ... (Acts 24:14 ESV)

... your **Teacher** will not hide himself anymore, but your eyes shall see your **Teacher**. And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, “**This is the way, walk in it**” ... (Isaiah 30:20b-21a ESV)

God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. (1 John 4:16b ESV)

The Bible is the revelation by the Creator God of himself to his most important creation – human beings.

This revelation is centered around three main themes:

- The **Nature of God** – who and what is God? Where is God? What is God like?
- The **Plan of God** – what is God’s purpose for human beings? How is God accomplishing this purpose?
- The **Way of God** – what does God require of human beings? How can we fulfill our part to accomplish his purpose?

This paper, “**Second Pillar - The Plan of God**”, is the second part of a single document, “**The Three Pillars of Revelation**”. Due to size constraints, the document has been split in three papers for publishing. Please also see the other two parts, “**First Pillar - The Nature of God**” and “**Third Pillar - The Way of God**”. These three papers analyze the three **Pillars of Revelation** and explore the questions around them. **These papers do NOT comprise a “philosophical” investigation.** The focus is always on what the Bible actually says. What God himself reveals to us in his inspired word.

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2. The Plan of God

Before the universe existed, before there was time, two Divine Beings in eternity made a Plan. The scope of this Plan is beyond human comprehension, but **God has revealed in the Holy Scriptures as much of the Plan of God as we are capable of understanding:**

In the beginning was **the Word**, and the Word was **with God**, and the **Word was God**. He was in the beginning with God. **All things were made through him**, and without him was not any thing made that was made. (John 1:1-3 ESV)

I, **wisdom**, dwell with prudence, and I find knowledge and discretion.

[YHWH] possessed me at the beginning of his work, the first of his acts of old.

Ages ago I was set up, at the first, before the beginning of the earth.
(Proverbs 8:12, 22-23 ESV)

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. (Genesis 1:1 ESV; see also Hebrews 1:10)

Who has performed and done this, calling the generations from the beginning?

I, [YHWH], the first, and with the last; I am he.

I am he; **I am the first, and I am the last**.

My hand laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand spread out the heavens;
when I call to them, they stand forth together. (Isaiah 41:4, 48:12b-13 ESV)

Behold, **I am coming soon**, bringing my recompense with me, to repay each one for what he has done.

I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, **the beginning and the end**.
(Revelation 22:12-13 ESV)

The Plan of God is a mystery to the world. Only through God's revelation in the Bible can we know anything about it:

The secret things belong to [YHWH] our God, but **the things that are revealed belong to us** and to our children forever ... (Deuteronomy 29:29a ESV; see also Daniel 2:28, 47)

... him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to **the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but has now been disclosed** ...
(Romans 16:25-26a ESV)

But we impart **a secret and hidden wisdom of God**, which God decreed before the ages for our glory.

None of the rulers of this age understood this ... This is how **one should regard us**, as servants of Christ and **stewards of the mysteries of God**. (1 Corinthians 2:7-8a, 4:1 ESV)

[YHWH], you are my God; I will exalt you; I will praise your name,
for you have done wonderful things, **plans formed of old, faithful and sure**.

[YHWH] of hosts has sworn:

As I have planned, so shall it be, and **as I have purposed, so shall it stand** ...

This is **the purpose that is purposed** concerning the whole earth,
and this is the hand that is stretched out over all the nations.

For [YHWH] of hosts has purposed, and who will annul it?

His hand is stretched out, and who will turn it back?

... **so shall my word be** that goes out from my mouth;
it shall not return to me empty, but **it shall accomplish that which I purpose**,
and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it. (Isaiah 25:1, 14:24, 26-27, 55:11 ESV)

The working-out of the Plan of God began with the **Patriarch Abraham**. Abraham commenced a family line which eventually grew into the nation of ancient Israel. Through that nation God has bequeathed to us the Holy Scriptures, which reveal the Plan of God. But, God's purpose for Abraham went far beyond that – through faith, **Abraham became designated the “Father of the Faithful”**. Abraham is the “spiritual” father of all True Worshipers, all True Christians, and all humanity in the World Tomorrow:¹

... what does the Scripture say? **“Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.”** ... **The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe ... the promise to Abraham** and his offspring that he would be heir of the world ... **depends on faith**, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring ... one who shares the faith of **Abraham, who is the father of us all**, as it is written, **“I have made you the father of many nations”** ... (Romans 4:3, 11bα, 13a, 16a, 16bβ-17a ESV)

The Plan of God is centered around the Family of God. The two divine beings who devised the plan desired to share their existence in eternity with other divine beings of like nature and character. To do this, **physical beings had to be created with “free moral agency”** so that they could choose to become part of the God Family or not. Throughout the period of the working out of the Plan of God with the physical nation Israel, **the Divine Being known as the Word, revealed himself as YHWH to Israel**. He was the “spokesperson”, the “point man”, during that period. **The other Divine Being remained largely in the background**. When that phase of the working-out of the Plan of God ended, **the Divine Being known as YHWH became incarnate as Jesus Christ**, the First Advent. During the First Advent, **Jesus is explicit that he came to reveal the other Divine Being as “the Father”**,² Jesus himself assuming the designation **“the Son”**; thus, **emphasizing the Divine Family of God** into which True Worshipers are being called. **At the Second Advent**, the realization of the expansion of the Family of God will occur through the **First Resurrection**.³ **Then God will offer to all human beings the opportunity for salvation.**

2.1 The Family of God

God's purpose in creating human beings was to increase the God Family; the earth was to be a beautiful home for human beings:

Then God said, **“Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. ...”**

So God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
male and **female** he created them.

And **God blessed them**. And God said to them,

Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it,
and **have dominion** over the fish of the sea
and over the birds of the heavens
and over every living thing that moves on the earth. (Genesis 1:26a, 27-28)

Adam and Eve were required to exercise “free moral agency”. The two trees in the middle of the Garden of Eden represent the choices of entering the God Family or following the way of sin and death:

And **[YHWH] God planted a garden in Eden**, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed.
... **The tree of life was in the midst of the garden**, and **the tree of the knowledge of good and evil**. ... And the **[YHWH] God commanded the man**, saying, “You may surely **eat of every tree of the garden**, but of **the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat**, for in the day that you eat of it **you shall surely die**.”

But [YHWH] God called to the man and said to him “... **Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?**” ... Then [YHWH] God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, **lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever—**” therefore [YHWH] God sent him out from the garden of Eden ...
(Genesis 2:8, 9b, 16-17, 3:9a, 11b, 22-23a ESV)

¹ For further discussion of this, see section **3. The Covenant of Promise**, in the paper “**Covenants of Grace**”, and section **11.2 Abraham and the Promises of God**, in the paper “**The Writings of Moses**”; both papers are located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

² See the discussion of this in section **1.4.2 The Name of God**, in the paper “**First Pillar - The Nature of God**”, located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

³ See section **2.1.3 The Resurrection of the Dead**.

Having chosen to go the way of sin and death, Adam and Eve could NOT be allowed to “eat from the tree of life” – to have eternal life.⁴ The path to eternal life as a member of the Family of God became much more complicated from that time – this is the subject of “salvation”, which is discussed in sections **2.2 Salvation** and **2.3 Salvation History**.

As **YHWH**, the divine being who became Jesus Christ, **on several occasions expressed a “fatherly relationship” with the nation of Israel**. He does this as the active member of the God Family, the spokesman, and as the Creator of humanity:

And [YHWH] said to Moses, “When you go back to Egypt ... Then you shall say to Pharaoh, ‘**Thus says [YHWH], Israel is my firstborn son**, and I say to you, “**Let my son go** that he may serve me.” If you refuse to let him go, behold, I will kill your firstborn son.’” (Exodus 4:21a, 22-23 ESV)

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

... **I am a father to Israel**, and Ephraim is my firstborn. (Jeremiah 31:9b ESV)

Do you thus repay [YHWH], you foolish and senseless people?

Is not he your father, who created you, who made you and established you? (Deuteronomy 32:6 ESV)

I said, How I **would set you among my sons**,

and give you a pleasant land, a heritage most beautiful of all nations.

And **I thought you would call me, My Father**, and would not turn from following me. (Jeremiah 3:19 ESV)

For **you are our Father**, though Abraham does not know us, and Israel does not acknowledge us; you, **[YHWH]**, are **our Father**, our Redeemer from of old is your name.

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, **Everlasting Father**, Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 63:16, 9:6 ESV; see also 64:8)

God created human beings to live in “family relationships” to teach us about “love”. Living in a properly functioning family is the best way for children to grow up with respect for other human beings and with a proper understanding of true love among the members of the family. **The two Divine Beings inherently have this “love” for each other**. To be part of the God Family, God requires human beings to learn to have this divine love:

... hope does not put us to shame, because **God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit** [which] has been given to us. (Romans 5:5 ESV)

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and **the love of God** and the **fellowship of the Holy Spirit** be with you all. (2 Corinthians 13:14 ESV)

May the Lord direct your hearts to the love of God and to the steadfastness of Christ. (2 Thessalonians 3:5 ESV)

In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. (1 John 4:9 ESV; see also 2:5, 5:3)

... **keep yourselves in the love of God**, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ **that leads to eternal life**. (Jude 21 ESV)

The New Testament roles assumed by the two Divine Beings, as “the Father” and as “the Son”, are to emphasize the family relationship. The Old Testament relationship of Jesus Christ, as YHWH, **“Father to Israel”** served the same purpose. God’s objective is to increase his Family. To be part of that Family, human beings must learn the “love of God”, which is best expressed in a “family relationship”. **The “family relationship” was expressed to ancient Israel and it is expressed to the New Testament Church**.

2.1.1. The Family Name

The Hebrew words אֵל - ‘el, אֱלֹהִים - ‘eloah, and אֱלֹהִים - ‘elohim, all are translated by “god”, “gods”, or “God”. The etymology of all three words is much disputed and far from settled.⁵ The general semitic word for “diety” is ‘el. It occurs in almost all semitic languages - its range of meaning corresponds closely to the English word “god”. The words ‘eloah and ‘elohim are more or less unique to Hebrew. They are mostly used with reference to the True God, but they are occasionally used in other contexts. There are over 2200 occurrences of ‘elohim, but only fifty-seven occurrences of ‘eloah, mostly in the

⁴ This is discussed in more detail in section **2.2.1 The Foundation of the World**.

⁵ See **TWOT** article 93 pages 41-45, **TDOT** volume I pages 242-261, and 267-284

Book of Job. While *‘elohim* is plural in form, it is most often used with singular verb forms and singular pronouns and adjectives.

In the re-creation account, the name *‘elohim* is used for “God” in all instances in Genesis chapter one. In most cases the verbs and prepositions associated with *‘elohim* are singular in form. The notable exception is:

Then God (‘elohim) said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. ...” (Genesis 1:26a ESV)

The **verb “let us make” is plural** and the **prepositions in “our image” and “our likeness” are plural**. The first source tablet of Genesis ends at chapter two verse four.⁶ In this tablet, **the singular use of ‘elohim identifies the God Family in general, the two Divine Beings**. The contrast in verse twenty-six shows the two Divine Beings talking with each other about the most important part of the creation – human beings. In the second tablet (Genesis 2:5-5:2), the references to God are more specific: **“YHWH ‘elohim”** is most often used. **This identifies the Divine being who became Jesus Christ:**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. (John 1:1-3 ESV)

He is the image of the invisible God, **the firstborn of all creation**. For **by him all things were created**, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—**all things were created through him and for him**. (Colossians 1:15-16 ESV)

... yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, **Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist**. (1 Corinthians 8:6 ESV)

... in these last days he has spoken to us by **his Son**, whom he appointed the heir of all things, **through whom also he created the world**. ... By faith we understand that **the universe was created by the word of God**, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible. (Hebrews 1:2, 11:3 ESV)

The Apostle Paul is explicit that the Family of God is named after the Father:

For this reason I bow my knees before **the Father, from whom [the whole]⁷ family in heaven and on earth is named** ... (Ephesians 3:14-15 ESV see also Jeremiah 14:9, 15:16)

Whatever the original etymology of the name ‘elohim turns out to be and whatever meanings it may have in other contexts, as used in the Bible, **the most important meaning of the word is as the Family Name of the Family of God**. The Divine Family of God has always comprised two beings, revealed in the New Testament as **“the Father”** and **“the Son”**. The purpose of this Divine Family in creating human beings is to **extend the Family by granting the gift of eternal life** to human beings through the resurrection from the dead thus **transforming those human beings into Divine Spirit Beings** who can inhabit eternity as members of the God Family.

2.1.2 The Nature of Man

In the re-creation narrative, **when living creatures are discussed**, the words נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה - nephesh hayyah, are used to describe them. **The adjective hayyah means “alive”, “living”**; it is from the verbal root חָיָה - hayah, “live”, “have life”.⁸ The **noun nephesh** is much more complicated. BDB identifies ten different nuances of meaning.⁹ Cognates exist in many Semitic languages.¹⁰ In Hebrew, the verb form may be derivative from the noun, but based also on cognates, **the verb, נָפַשׁ - naphash, seems to have fundamental meaning of “to breathe”,** with the noun having the most basic meaning of **“breath of life”**.¹¹ The fundamental meaning is clear in the Genesis account:

And God said, “Let the waters swarm with swarms of **living creatures (nephesh hayyah)**, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens.” So God created the great sea creatures and every **living creature (nephesh hayyah)** that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. ... And God said, “Let the earth bring forth **living creatures (nephesh hayyah)** according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds.” And it was so. ... And to every beast of the earth and to

⁶ For a discussion of the source tablets Moses used to compile Genesis, see section 3. *The Early Parts of Genesis*, in the paper “The Writings of Moses” located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

⁷ The Greek phrase is: ἐξ οὗ πάσα πατριά, ex hou pasa patria, literally “of whom wholeness (all) family”; see NIV, NKJV.

⁸ See TWOT article 644 pages 279-282, pages BDB pages 310-313, TDOT volume IV pages 324-344

⁹ See BDB pages 659-661

¹⁰ See TDOT volume IX pages 497-519

¹¹ See TWOT article 1395 pages 587-591

every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the **breath of life (nephesh hayyah)** ... (Genesis 1:20-21, 24, 30a ESV)

With the creation of man, the process is described in more detail:

... then [YHWH] God formed the man of dust from the ground and **breathed (nappah) into his nostrils the breath of life (n^eshamah hayyim)**, and **the man became a living creature (nephesh hayyah)**. (Genesis 2:7 ESV)

The verb נָפַח - naphaḥ, is more or less synonymous with the verb *naphash*, “to breathe”, “to blow”.¹²

The noun נֶשָׁמָה - n^eshamah,¹³ is more or less synonymous with the noun *nephesh*. The noun חַיִּים - hayyim means “life”; it is from the same root as *hayyah*. **It is the “breath” (nephesh, n^eshamah) of life from God breathed into (naphash, naphah) a physical body which makes that body alive – there is no distinction between man or animal. What then makes human beings superior in intellect to animals?**¹⁴

The breath of life imparts the spirit of life.¹⁵ Human beings have a “spirit” component which comes from God and give us life and human intelligence:

But it is **the spirit (ruah) in man, the breath (n^eshamah) of the Almighty**, that **makes him understand**.

The Spirit (ruah) of God has made me, and **the breath (n^eshamah) of the Almighty gives me life (hayah)**.

If he should set his heart to it and **gather to himself his spirit (ruah) and his breath (n^eshamah)**, **all flesh would perish together**, and man would return to dust.

(Job 32:8, 33:4, 34:14-15 ESV)

As you do not know the way **the spirit (ruah) comes to the bones in the womb of a woman with child**,¹⁶ so you do not know the work of God who makes everything. (Ecclesiastes 11:5 ESV)

Thus says God, [YHWH],

who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from it, **who gives breath (n^eshamah) to the people** on it and **spirit (ruah) to those who walk** in it:

For I will not contend forever, nor will I always be angry;

for **the spirit (ruah) would grow faint** before me, and **the breath (n^eshamah) of life**¹⁷ **that I made**.

(Isaiah 42:5, 57:16 ESV)

Thus declares [YHWH], who stretched out the heavens and founded the earth and **formed the spirit (ruah) of man within him**: ... (Zechariah 12:1b)

Without the spirit, the breath of life, life is not possible for animals or man. When a person dies, the human spirit returns to God, animal spirits do not:

For **what happens to the children of man and what happens to the beasts** is the same; as one dies, so dies the other. They **all have the same breath (ruah)**, and man has no advantage over the beasts, for all is vanity. All go to one place. All are from the dust, and to dust all return. Who knows whether **the spirit (ruah) of man goes upward** and **the spirit (ruah) of the beast goes down into the earth?**

No man has power to retain the spirit (ruah), or power over the day of death.

Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come and the years draw near ... and **the dust returns to the earth** as it was, and **the spirit (ruah) returns to God who gave it**. (Ecclesiastes 3:19-21, 8:8a, 12:1a, 7 ESV)

For as the body apart from the spirit (pneuma) is dead ... (James 2:26a ESV)

Now when Jesus returned ... And there came a man named **Jairus**, who was a ruler of the synagogue. ... for he had an **only daughter**, about twelve years of age, and she **was dying**. ... And they laughed at him, **knowing that she was dead**. But taking her by the hand **he called, saying, “Child, arise.”** And **her spirit (pneuma) returned, and she got up at once**. (Luke 8:40a, 41a, 42, 53-55a ESV)

Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, **“Father, into your hands I commit my spirit (pneuma)!”**

And having said this **he breathed his last**.

(Luke 23:46 ESV // Matthew 27:50, John 19:30; see also Acts 7:59-60)

¹² See TWOT article 1390 page 586

¹³ See TWOT article 1433a page 605

¹⁴ For a discussion of the translation of *nephesh* by the English word “soul”, see *Excursus 2 – נֶפֶשׁ and ψυχή*, in the paper “The Transfiguration and the Tabernacle” located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

¹⁵ See the discussion of *ruah* and *pneuma* in section 1.1.1 *God is Spirit* of the paper “First Pillar - The Nature of God” located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

¹⁶ This statement alone is sufficient to condemn all who participate in abortions.

¹⁷ This word is supplied by the translator.

The human spirit is what makes us “human”. It raises human beings to a plane above animals and provides access to God. **Through the human spirit, God can ascertain the state of the inner being of a person:**

He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also, **he has put eternity (‘olam)¹⁸ into man’s heart** ... (Ecclesiastes 3:11a ESV)

The spirit (n^oshamah) of man is the lamp of [YHWH], searching all this innermost parts.

All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes, but **[YHWH] weighs the spirit (ruah).**

Commit your work to [YHWH], and your plans will be established. (Proverbs 20:27, 16:2-3 ESV)

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and **renew a right spirit (ruah) within me.**

Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit (ruah qodesh) from me.

Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and **uphold me with a willing spirit (ruah).** (Psalm 51:10-12 ESV)

Since we have these promises, beloved, **let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit (pneuma),** bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God. (2 Corinthians 7:1 ESV)

... to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to **be renewed in the spirit (pneuma) of your minds,** and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. (Ephesians 4:22-24 ESV)

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit (pneuma).

(Philippians 4:23 ESV; see also Galatians 6:18, 2 Timothy 4:22, Philemon 25)

From a physical perspective, **animals and man are identical:** both die and return to dust. Life is imparted by the breath of God. **The breath of God gives a spirit essence to both animals and man.** The spirit in man causes human being to have an innate need to have a relationship with God. Through the human spirit, God can ascertain the innermost being of each person. At death, an animal’s spirit dissipates. **At death, the spirit of a human being is retained by God.** It is this spirit essence that allows God to re-create the person in a “resurrection”.

2.1.3 The Resurrection of the Dead

The “hope” of the Christian calling is to be granted the gift of eternal life. To be granted the gift of eternal life is the definition of “**salvation**”. The gift of eternal life is only possible through **the resurrection of the dead,** which is to occur at the Second Advent:

And as he was setting out on his journey, a man ran up and knelt before him and asked him, “Good Teacher, **what must I do to inherit eternal life?**”

(Mark 10:17 ESV // Matthew 19:16, Luke 18:18; see also Luke 10:25)

Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the sake of the faith of **God’s elect** and their knowledge of the truth, which accords with godliness, **in hope of eternal life,** which God, who never lies, **promised before the ages began** and at the proper time manifested in his word ...

But when the goodness and loving kindness of **God our Savior** appeared, he [is saving] us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but **according to his own mercy,** by the washing of **regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,** [which] he poured out on us richly **through Jesus Christ our Savior,** so that being justified by his grace **we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.**

(Titus 1:1-3a, 3:4-7 ESV)

But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, **the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life.** For the wages of sin is death, but **the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.** (Romans 6:22-23 ESV)

Now when **Paul** perceived that one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, “Brothers, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees. **It is with respect to the hope and the resurrection of the dead that I am on trial.**” (Acts 23:6 ESV; see also 24:14-15)

... waiting for **our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ** ... (Titus 2:13 ESV)

Analysis of the “hope of eternal life” :

- A person must desire eternal life, **“what must I do to inherit eternal life”**
He will render to each one according to his works: to those **who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality,** he will give eternal life; (Romans 2:6-7 ESV)

¹⁸ See the discussion of ‘olam in section [1.3 Where is God?](#) in the paper “**First Pillar - The Nature of God**” located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

- According to the Plan of God, a person must be called, **“God’s elect”, “promised before the ages began”**
 ... **we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son**, much more, now that we are reconciled, **shall we be saved by his life**. ... much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and **the free gift of righteousness** reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ. ... For **the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable**. (Romans 5:10b, 17b, 11:29 ESV)
- The objective of the Christian calling is the hope of eternal life, **“become heirs according to the hope of eternal life”**
 ... **you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call** ... that you may know what is **the hope to which he has called you**, what are the riches of **his glorious inheritance in the saints** ... But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and **for a helmet the hope of salvation**. For God has not destined us for wrath, but **to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ** ... Fight the good fight of the faith. **Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called** ...
 (Ephesians 4:4b, 1:18b, 1 Thessalonians 5:8-9, 1 Timothy 6:12a ESV)
- Salvation is only available from God through Jesus Christ, **“God our Savior”, “through Jesus Christ our Savior”**
 For to this end we toil and strive, because **we have our hope set on the living God**, who is **the Savior of all people**, especially of those who believe. (1 Timothy 4:10 ESV)
 In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined¹⁹ according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that **we who were the first to hope in Christ** might be to the praise of his glory. In him you also, **when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation** ... (Ephesians 1:11-13a ESV)
 For this is **the will of my Father**, that **everyone who looks on the Son** and **believes** in him should **have eternal life**, and I will raise him up on the last day. (John 6:40 ESV)
- Salvation is strictly a matter of God’s grace and mercy, **“according to his own mercy”**
 ... the righteousness of God through faith [of] Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are **justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus** ... (Romans 3:22-24 ESV)
 But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, **waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life**. (Jude 20-21)
 Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, **set your hope fully on the grace** that will be brought to you at **the revelation of Jesus Christ**.
 (1 Peter 1:13 ESV; see also 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17)
- Nothing a person can do puts God in a position where he must grant eternal life, **“the free gift of God is eternal life”**
For by grace you [are being] saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; **it is the gift of God**, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9 ESV)
 But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, **he [is saving] us, not because of works done by us in righteousness**, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit ... (Titus 3:4-5 ESV)
 ... the righteousness of God through faith [of] Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: for **all have sinned** and fall short of the glory of God, and **are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus** ... (Romans 3:22-24 ESV)
- Salvation is effected through the power of the Holy Spirit, **“regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit”**
 And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive **the gift of the Holy Spirit**. For **the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself**.” (Acts 2:38-39 ESV)
 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that **by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope**. (Romans 15:13 ESV)
- Living by the Way of God is prerequisite to salvation, **“the fruit you get leads to sanctification”**
 For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak. And I know that **his commandment is eternal**

¹⁹ See the discussion of “predestination” in section [2.3.1.2 Election in the New Testament](#).
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life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me. ... As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.

When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome. (John 12:49-50, 15:9-10, 17:1-3, 1 John 5:2-3 ESV)

- Eternal life is granted through the resurrection, "the hope and the resurrection of the dead" Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. (John 11:25-26a ESV)
We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. (Romans 6:4-5 ESV)
- The resurrection will occur at the Second Advent, "the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ"
For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together ... (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17a ESV)
Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. (Matthew 24:30-31 ESV)
Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever." ... "We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, who is and who was, for you have taken your great power and begun to reign. ..." And another angel came out of the temple, calling with a loud voice to him who sat on the cloud, "Put in your sickle, and reap, for the hour to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is fully ripe." ... They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. ... This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years. (Revelation 11:15, 17, 14:15, 20:4b, 5b-6 ESV)

The seminal scripture on the resurrection is First Corinthians chapter fifteen:

Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. ... For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. ... But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?" ... So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.

I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. (1 Corinthians 15:12-14, 16-17, 20, 35, 42-44, 50-53 ESV)

Before the unravelling of human DNA, the process of the resurrection was a complete mystery. But, understanding what DNA is, it is clear that all God requires to re-create a person is the record of their DNA. The Bible talks a lot about "The Book of Life".²⁰ The existence of a "physical book" is almost certainly a metaphor, but a God who can name all the stars can certainly keep track of the DNA of human

²⁰ For a discussion of this, see section 9.5 The Book of Life in the paper "The Writings of Moses" located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.
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beings, perhaps in “The Book of Life”. The other aspect of a person’s existence is their “human spirit”. In section **2.1.2 The Nature of Man**, it was discussed how this spirit goes back to God at death. To re-create a person exactly as they were at death, God needs only the person’s DNA and their human spirit. The DNA provides all physical characteristics – innate abilities, talents, appearance. The human spirit provides the mind – memories, skills, experience, wisdom.

2.2 Salvation²¹

The most important words related to salvation were introduced in section **1.2.3 God is the Source of Salvation** in the paper, “**First Pillar - The Nature of God**” located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

In **Hebrew**:

- the root verb יָשָׁע - yasha` carries a range of meaning including “save”, “be saved”, “deliver”, “be delivered”
- derived noun יֵשָׁע - yesha`, masculine ;
- derived noun יְשׁוּעָה - yeshu`ah, feminine;
- derived noun תְּשׁוּעָה - teshu`ah, feminine;
- all carry a similar range of meaning including “salvation” and “deliverance”

In **Greek**:

- σωτήρ - sōtēr, a masculine noun occurring 24 times, meaning “deliverer” or “Saviour”, usually used as an epithet for Jesus Christ or God the Father
- σωτηρία - sōtēria, a feminine noun occurring 45 times, meaning “salvation”, “deliverance”, “preservation”
- σωτήριος - sōtērios, an adjective occurring 5 times, meaning “saving”, “delivering”, “preserving” “bringing salvation”

The objective of “salvation” is clearly depicted in the Book of Revelation:

After this I looked, and behold, **a great multitude** that no one could number, **from every nation**, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, “**Salvation (sōtēria) belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!**”

And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, “**Now the salvation (sōtēria) and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come**, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. And **they have conquered** him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death.

After this I heard what seemed to be **the loud voice of a great multitude in heaven**, crying out, “Hallelujah! **Salvation (sōtēria) and glory and power belong to our God** ... And from the throne came a voice saying, “Praise our God, **all you his servants**, you who fear him, small and great.”

Then I heard what seemed to be **the voice of a great multitude**, like the roar of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, crying out,

Hallelujah! For **the Lord our God the Almighty reigns**.

Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory,

for **the marriage of the Lamb has come**, and **his Bride has made herself ready**;

it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure—

for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.

(Revelation 7:9-10, 12:10-11, 19:1, 5-8 ESV)

Ever since that day in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve chose the way of sin and death for all humanity, **the Divine Creator has meticulously worked that Plan of Salvation devised in eternity** before the world began. The Plan is unfolding inexorably to the Day of YHWH. On that Day, the Parousia will occur – **Jesus Christ will return to earth as King of kings**, The Second Advent. The King will first assume a working relationship with those human beings to whom God the Father has seen fit to grant the gift of eternal life – **this relationship is metaphorically called “the marriage of the Lamb”**. **This is the occasion of the First Resurrection**. All human beings since Abel in whom there has been the indwelling of the

²¹ For a good general article on “salvation”, with a limited bibliography, see “**SALVATION, SAVIOR**” by Alan Richardson in IDB volume 4 pages 168-181.

Holy Spirit have been candidates for the gift of eternal life – only God knows who these people are, their names are in **“The Book of Life”**. These resurrected, now divine beings with imperishable spiritual bodies, are then admitted to **full membership in the “Family of God”**.

The Plan of God will then move on to bring knowledge of the Truth to all the survivors of the holocaust. This will be accomplished through a **New Nation of Israel** comprised of people called from the four corners of the earth. Through the miracle of the **Second Exodus** these people will make their way to the Land of Israel. One of the first tasks of the Family of God will be to teach these people – to form them into the Church and the Nation. **The New Israel and the Church of God are coterminous at the beginning of the Millennium.** The other critical task for the God Family at the beginning of the Millennium will be to reach out to all the world to the survivors of the holocaust. Many of these people will have no knowledge of the True God. **They will need teaching, healing, food, shelter, and hope.** Once the New Israel is functioning as a nation, it will fulfill **God’s intended purpose for Israel from its original inception** – to be an example nation to teach all other nations.

2.2.1 The Foundation of the World

For a more complete discussion of this topic see section **1. The Foundation of the World** and section **2. The Plan of God** of the paper **“The Human Condition”** located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

In this current paper, we will start the story with **the sin of Adam and Eve**:

Now **the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field** that [YHWH] God had made. He said to the woman, **“Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’”** And the woman said to the serpent, **“We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’”** But the serpent said to the woman, **“You will not surely die. ...”** (Genesis 3:1-4 ESV)

Satan appeared as a “serpent” to Eve, **discredited God**, and convinced her of **the big lie**: **“you will not surely die”**. The Apostle Paul affirms the actions of “the serpent”, and the Book of Revelation affirms the identity of “the serpent”:

But I am afraid that as **the serpent deceived Eve** by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ. (2 Corinthians 11:3 ESV)

And the great dragon was thrown down, **that ancient serpent**, who is called **the devil and Satan**, the **deceiver of the whole world** ... And he seized **the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan** ... (Revelation 12:9a, 20:2a ESV)

The sin of Adam and Eve set the stage for all human existence. Humanity was destined to live in a world under the control of Satan the Devil, to live and die struggling with sin, the knowledge of good and evil. This is the **“foundation of the world”** from a sociological perspective. God’s Plan of Salvation had anticipated the eventuality of man’s choice to live in sin. The Plan contained a way for man to be absolved of sin – the propitiating death of the Creator, YHWH, who became Jesus Christ:
... **the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.** (Revelation 13:8bβ NKJV)

The Apostle Paul discusses this sequence of events:

For while we were still weak, at the right time **Christ died for the ungodly.** ... God shows his love for us in that **while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.** Since, therefore, **we have now been justified by his blood**, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies **we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son**, much more, now that we are reconciled, **shall we be saved by his life.**

Therefore, just as **sin came into the world through one man**, and **death through sin**, and so **death spread to all men because all sinned** ... Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of **Adam**, who **was a type of the one who was to come.**

But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man’s trespass, much more have the grace of God and **the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many.** And the free gift is not like the result of that one man’s sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but **the free gift** following many trespasses **brought justification.** For if, **because of one man’s trespass, death reigned** through that one man, **much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.**
(Romans 5:6, 8-10, 12, 14-17 ESV)

For **as in Adam all die**, so also **in Christ shall all be made alive.** ... Thus it is written, **“The first man Adam became a living being”**; **the last Adam became a life-giving spirit.** But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual. The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is

from heaven. As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. Just **as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven.** (1 Corinthians 15:22, 45-49 ESV)

The key to the Plan of God, to salvation, is Jesus Christ. From the beginning, the need for his sacrifice was part of the divine Plan assembled in eternity before the creation of the world. Only through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ can human sin be absolved. **His propitiating death makes it possible for God to apply mercy and grace to any human being.** Upon repentance and acceptance of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, a human being can be truly forgiven and accounted “holy” by God; thus, becoming a candidate for eternal life.

2.2.2 The First Advent

The pivotal event of God's Plan of Salvation is the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Plan of the Two Divine Beings in eternity included a way for sinning human beings to be forgiven and become beings that could be allowed to share eternity. One of the Divine Beings, **a Creator**, would relinquish his divine status and **become a flesh and blood human being**. He would live a sinless life, thus NOT incurring the death penalty. As the Creator his life is of more value than all created beings. **This incarnate God would willingly give up his human life as a propitiating sacrifice to cover all sins of all human beings.** Three days after his death, the first transformation from corruptible to incorruptible occurred, and the Divine Being was restored to his former glory.

2.2.2.1 The Incarnation of Christ

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother **Mary** had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she **was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit**. And her husband **Joseph**, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he **considered these things**, behold, **an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream**, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for **that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit**. **She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.**” (Matthew 1:18-21 ESV)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and **the Word was God**. He was in the beginning with God. **All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.** ... And **the Word became flesh and dwelt among us**, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John 1:1-3, 14 ESV)

It is explicit and clear that the Divine Being who became Jesus Christ was a Creator – one of the two Divine Beings present in Genesis chapter one. **Jesus explicitly referred to his prior status on more than one occasion:**

For **I have come down from heaven**, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me.

I came from the Father and **have come into the world**, and now I am leaving the world and **going to the Father**.

And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with **the glory that I had with you before the world existed**. (John 6:38, 16:28, 17:5 ESV)

The Apostle Paul summarizes Jesus' divinity and humanity:

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For **by him all things were created**, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—**all things were created through him and for him**. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that **in everything he might be preeminent**. For **in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell**, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, **making peace by the blood of his cross**. (Colossians 1:15-20 ESV)

Paul is also explicit that the Being who became Jesus was known as YHWH to ancient Israel:

For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that **our fathers** were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they **drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them**, and **the Rock was Christ**. (1 Corinthians 10:1-4 ESV)

For **I will proclaim the name of [YHWH]**; ascribe greatness to **our God!**

The Rock, his work is perfect ... (Deuteronomy 32:3-4aα ESV)

I love you, [YHWH], my strength.

[YHWH] is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer,

my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge,
my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. (Psalm 18:1-2 ESV)
Trust in [YHWH] forever, for **[YH, YHWH,] is an everlasting rock**.
(Isaiah 26:4 ESV; see also 30:29, 44:8)

Jesus himself is explicit that he was known as “YHWH” to ancient Israel. When YHWH revealed himself to Moses at the burning bush, he referred to himself as “**‘eh^eyeh ‘asher ‘eh^eyeh**”, “I am who I am” (see the discussion of this in section **1.4.2.2 Seminal Scriptures** of the paper “**First Pillar - The Nature of God**”, located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca). The Septuagint translates the first **‘eh^eyeh** as “**ΕΓΩ ΕΙΜΙ**”, ego eimi, “**I am**”. The Gospel of John contains multiple occasions where Jesus applied this phrase to himself:

When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw **Jesus** walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they were frightened. But he **said to them, “[ego eimi]; do not be afraid.”**

I told you that you would die in your sins, for **unless you believe that [ego eimi] you will die in your sins.**

So Jesus said to them, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, **then you will know that [ego eimi]**, and that I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me. ...”

Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, **before Abraham was, [ego eimi].**”

Then **Jesus**, knowing all that would happen to him, came forward and said to them, “**Whom do you seek?**” They answered him, “Jesus of Nazareth.” **Jesus said to them, “[ego eimi].”**

(John 6:19-20, 8:24, 28, 58, 18:4-5a ESV; see also 6:35, 48, 51, 8:12, 9:5, 10:7, 9, 11:25, 14:6, 15:1)

Through the miracle of the “incarnation”, God became man. The Divine being known as YHWH willingly put aside his divine status and assumed the frailty of a human being. His Divine Spirit remained in him so that **he was fully human and fully divine**. This allowed him to accomplish **his purpose of living a perfect life** and presenting himself as a propitiating sacrifice for the sins of all humanity.

2.2.2.2 The Life of Christ

Even as a child, Jesus was aware of his divinity:

Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. And **when he was twelve years old**, they went up according to custom. And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, **the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem**. ... After three days **they found him in the temple**, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And **all who heard him were amazed at his understanding** and his answers. ... And he said to them, “**Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in about my Father’s business?**” (Luke 2:41-43a, 46-47, 49 ESV)

John the Baptist’s most important role was to witness that Jesus was the Messiah. Jesus and John were likely third cousins and likely had grown up knowing each other.²² After baptizing Jesus, John witnesses to Jesus’ Messiahship:

The next day [John the Baptist] saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “**Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said,** ‘After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.’ I myself did not know him, but **for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel.**”

And John bore witness: “I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him, but **he who sent me to baptize with water** said to me, ‘**He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.**’ And I have seen and have borne witness that **this is the Son of God.**” (John 1:29-34 ESV)

Jesus’ first priority after his baptism was to deal with Satan, the god of this world:

And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. In their case **the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers**, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ ... for even **Satan disguises himself as an angel of light**. (2 Corinthians 4:3-4a, 11:14b ESV)

In those days **Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan**. And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, “**You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.**” **The Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness**. And he was in the wilderness forty days, being **tempted by Satan**. ...

Jesus came into Galilee, **proclaiming the gospel of God**, and saying, “**The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand**; repent and believe in the gospel.” (Mark 1:9-13a, 14b-15 ESV)

²² John’s mother, Elizabeth, was a “relative” (Luke 1:36) of Mary, Jesus’ mother. If Mary and Elizabeth were first cousins, John and Jesus were third cousins. Mary spent time with Elizabeth during pregnancy (Luke 1:39-40,56).

When Jesus says, **“the kingdom of God is at hand”**, he is implying that the door is now open. The “god of this world” has been disqualified. Jesus Christ, the Messiah, YHWH, has qualified to assume his role as **King of kings** and **bring the Kingdom of God to this earth**. **The Apostle Matthew greatly elaborates on the battle:**

Then **Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil**. And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. And the tempter came and said to him, **“If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.”** But he answered, **“It is written,**

‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but **by every word** that comes from the mouth of God.’”
(Deuteronomy 8:3)

Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, **“If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written,**

‘He will command his angels concerning you,’
and ‘On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.’”
(Psalms 91:11-12)

Jesus said to him, “Again **it is written,**

“You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.”” (Deuteronomy 6:16)

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to him, **“All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.”** Then Jesus said to him, **“Be gone, Satan! For it is written,**

‘You shall worship the Lord your God and **him only shall you serve.**’” (Deuteronomy 6:13)

Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him.
(Matthew 4:1-11 ESV, see also Luke 4:1-13)

In the battle, the final volley of Satan, the god of this world, was to offer all the world to Jesus at the price of worship. **Jesus, the Word, used the words he had inspired to be recorded in the Writings of Moses to defeat Satan the Devil.** In this battle, Jesus qualified to be the King of kings -he is now on his throne in eternity readying to establish his Kingdom on earth. Meanwhile, Satan the Devil has been left still in charge of the earth; however, his removal is certain:

I will no longer talk much with you, for **the ruler of this world is coming**. He has no claim on me ... **the ruler of this world is judged**. ... **now will the ruler of this world be cast out** ...
(John 14:30, 16:11b, 12:31b ESV)

After defeating Satan Jesus commenced his public ministry of teaching and healing. These were signs of assurance that the Kingdom would come:

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

The meek shall obtain fresh joy in [YHWH],
and **the poor** among mankind shall exult in the Holy One of Israel.

Then **the eyes of the blind shall be opened**, and **the ears of the deaf unstopped**;
then shall **the lame man leap like a deer**, and **the tongue of the mute sing** for joy
For waters break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert;
(Isaiah 29:18-19, 35:5-6 ESV)

When **John the Baptist** was in prison, he **wanted to point his disciples to Jesus**. He sent two of them to inquire of Jesus. **Jesus explicitly refers to his ministry to verify the coming of the Kingdom:**

The disciples of John reported all these things to him. And John, calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to the Lord, saying, **“Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?”** And when the men had come to him, they said, “John the Baptist has sent us to you, saying, ‘Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?’”

In that hour he healed many people of diseases and plagues and evil spirits, and on many who were blind he bestowed sight. And he answered them, “Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the **blind receive their sight**, the **lame walk**, **lepers are cleansed**, and the **deaf hear**, the **dead are raised** up, **the poor have good news preached to them**. ...” (Luke 7:18-22 ESV)

It was necessary for a **Divine Being to become human** so that he could **be fully aware of the frailties** of human existence, but overcome them and live a sinless life:

Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God ... For because **he himself has suffered when tempted**, he is able to help those who are being tempted. ... For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but **one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin**.
(Hebrews 2:17a, 18, 4:15 ESV)

And **being found in human form**, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. (Philippians 2:8 ESV)

He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. (1 Peter 2:22 ESV)

You know that he appeared in order to take away sins, and **in him there is no sin**. (1 John 3:5 ESV)

Jesus' life had a specific purpose. He was always aware of that purpose. He worked tirelessly towards his purpose. His personal defeat of Satan the Devil was necessary to qualify as King of kings. His ministry was a demonstration of the fulfillment of the prophecies of the Kingdom of God. His experiences in the frailties of human existence were necessary to prepare him for his role as High Priest and intercessor. This prepared him to fulfil his purpose – **the propitiating sacrifice of the crucifixion**.

2.2.2.3 The Crucifixion of Christ

Just before the moment of his death on the cross, Jesus appealing to the twenty-second Psalm cried out:

And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, "**Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?**" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Mark 15:34 ESV)

And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "**Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?**" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46 ESV)

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? (Psalm 22:1a ESV)

Hebrew from BHS:	עֲזַבְתָּנִי	לָמָּה	אֱלֹהִי	אֱלֹהִי
	`azav ^e tani	lamah	`eli	`eli
	you have forsaken me	why	my God	my God

Both Mark and Matthew record "*lema sabachthani*" which is Aramaic for "*lamah `azav^etani*". Mark uses Greek based on the Aramaic, ἐλωὶ – elōi for Hebrew "'eli"; whereas Matthew reverts to Greek based on the Hebrew text, ἡλεὶ - ēlei.²³ Clearly Jesus spoke in Aramaic. The Gospel Authors make several other allusions to the twenty-second Psalm during the crucifixion event. Clearly the Psalm was on Jesus' mind.

None of the Gospels contains any explanation as to why Jesus felt forsaken by God the Father.

However, **the Apostles Paul and Peter provide insight:**

For our sake **he made him to be sin** who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. (2 Corinthians 5:21 ESV)

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, **who gave himself for our sins** to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father ...

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law²⁴ by **becoming a curse for us**—for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree"²⁵ ... (Galatians 1:3-4, 3:13 ESV)

When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued **entrusting himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree**, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

For **Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous**, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit ... (1 Peter 2:23-24, 3:18 ESV)

During the crucifixion, Jesus became the embodiment of all the sins of all humanity. Being "sin" Jesus felt forsaken by God the Father. However, the twenty-second Psalm also contains powerful words, which Jesus also knew well, which describe **the end result of his suffering:**

All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to [YHWH – Jesus Christ],

and all the families of the nations shall worship before you.

For kingship belongs to [YHWH], and he rules over the nations.

All the prosperous of the earth eat and worship;

before him shall bow all who go down to the dust,
even the one who could not keep himself alive.

Posterity shall serve him; it shall be told of the Lord to the coming generation;

they shall come and **proclaim his righteousness** to a people yet unborn, **that he has done it.**

(Psalm 22:27-31 ESV)

²³ See GEL ἐλωὶ page 253 and ἡλεὶ page 345

²⁴ The "curse of the law" is death, the required penalty for sin.

²⁵ Quoting Deuteronomy 21:23

The objective of all the **sacrifices in the Old Testament** was “atonement”; for example:

If anyone of the common people sins unintentionally in doing any one of the things that by [YHWH’s] commandments ought not to be done, and realizes his guilt, or the sin which he has committed is made known to him, he shall bring for his offering a goat, a female without blemish, for his sin which he has committed. ... And **the priest shall make atonement for him**, and **he shall be forgiven**.

If his offering is a burnt offering from the herd, he shall offer a male without blemish. He shall bring it to the entrance of the tent of meeting, that he may be accepted before [YHWH]. He shall lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and **it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him**. (Leviticus 4:27-28, 31b, 1:3-4 ESV)

Similar language is found in all the instructions related to the sacrifices. **The “forgiveness” attainable by animal sacrifices was only typical.**²⁶ For an Israelite to have a relationship with God, it was necessary for God to account that person as “holy”.²⁷ The animal sacrifices provided this, but as the author of Hebrews makes clear this was not “spiritual” forgiveness that permanently removed the sin:

But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. For **it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins**.

But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) he entered once for all into the holy places, **not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood**, thus **securing an eternal redemption**. For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, how much more will **the blood of Christ**, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, **purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God**. (Hebrews 10:3-4, 9:11-14 ESV)

The New Testament uses the term “propitiation” for the efficacious sacrifice of Jesus Christ. The word occurs four times. The translations are based on three words:²⁸

- εἰλάσκομαι - heilaskomai, a verb, “make propitiation”
Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, **to make propitiation (heilaskomai) for the sins of the people**. (Hebrews 2:17 ESV)
- ἱλαστήριον - hilastērion, a neuter noun, “propitiation”
... for **all have sinned** and all short of the glory of God, and are **justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus**, whom God put forward **as a propitiation (hilastērion) by his blood**, to be received by faith. (Romans 3:23-25a ESV)
- ἱλασμός - hilasmos, a masculine noun, “propitiation”
My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But **if anyone does sin**, we have an advocate with the Father, **Jesus Christ** the righteous. He **is the propitiation (hilasmos) for our sins**, and not for ours only but **also for the sins of the whole world**.
In this is love, not that we have loved God but that **he loved us** and **sent his Son** to be the **propitiation (hilasmos) for our sins**. (1 John 2:1-2, 4:10)

Before the sacrifice of Christ, all that was possible was “atonement for sin” – a temporary putting aside of the penalty. **Jesus died “once for all”**. The **“propitiation by the blood of Christ”** is sufficient to **permanently remove the penalty of death required by sin**.²⁹ The many times that the Gospel writers record Jesus forgiving sin during his ministry were **the foreshadow of the propitiation**:

And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, **“Son, your sins are forgiven.”** Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, “Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming! **Who can forgive sins but God alone?**” And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, “Why do you question these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, **‘Your sins are forgiven,’** or to say, ‘Rise, take up your bed and walk’? But **that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins**”—he said to the paralytic—“I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home.” (Mark 2:5-11 ESV)

²⁶ For further discussion, see section 10. *The Role of Sacrifices*, in the paper “True Worship of the True God” located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

²⁷ For further discussion, see section 6. *Holiness*, in the paper “To Be a Priest” located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

²⁸ See www.esv.org “Greek Word Detail”

²⁹ See Romans 3:23, 6:23

The fundamental principle of justice, established by God with Noah for all humanity,³⁰ requires that blood be shed to pay the penalty of sin:

And **for your lifeblood I will require a reckoning**: from every beast I will require it and from man.

From his fellow man **I will require a reckoning for the life of man**.

Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed,
for God made man in his own image. (Genesis 9:5-6 ESV)

The need to pay the penalty of sin by shed blood was later generalized to all sin in the Writings of Moses and alluded to by the author of Hebrews:

For **the life of the flesh is in the blood**, and I have given it for you on the altar **to make atonement** for your [lives], for **it is the blood that makes atonement by the life**. (Leviticus 17:11 ESV)

... **[Moses] took the blood of calves and goats**, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, saying, "This is **the blood of the covenant** that God commanded for you." ... and **without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins**.
(Hebrews 9:19b-20, 22b ESV)

Jesus is explicit that salvation is available only through his blood:

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst. ... For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. For **this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life**, and I will raise him up on the last day."

So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks **my blood has eternal life**, and I will raise him up on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and **my blood** is true drink. Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks **my blood abides in me, and I in him**. ..."

 (John 6:35, 38-40, 53-56 ESV)

At the inauguration of the New Testament Passover, Jesus explained the metaphor of "eating flesh and drinking blood":

And **he took bread**, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "**This is my body**, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." And **likewise the cup** after they had eaten, saying, "**This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood**. ..."

 (Luke 22:19-20 ESV)

The application of the metaphor is clear. To be a True Worshipper of God, a person must first be called by God and then respond with repentance. **Repentance requires acceptance of the blood of Christ for the forgiveness of sin**. Then living by the Way of God, **"eating his flesh, drinking his blood"**, requires daily acceptance of the direction of the Holy Spirit, **"abides in me, and I in him"**. The metaphor is commemorated by the yearly observance of the New Testament Passover. The author of Hebrews summarizes:

Therefore, brothers, since **we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us** through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. **Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering**, for he who promised is faithful. (Hebrews 10:19-23 ESV)

Jesus was well aware of the death he would suffer. He was also well aware of its significance. Animal sacrifices had provided "atonement"; but Christ's sacrifice would provide "propitiation", rendering animal sacrifices obsolete. As he died, **Jesus felt the weight of the sins of humanity**: he felt he was a curse, forsaken by God the Father. Jesus shed blood paid the penalty for sin opening the way to salvation for repentant human beings. Having paid the penalty, Jesus could not be left dead – he was to be the **"firstborn"**, through the "resurrection".

2.2.2.4 The Resurrection of Christ

Jesus died late in the afternoon on a Wednesday and the resurrection occurred three days later, late in the afternoon of the Sabbath.³¹ **Jesus was the "firstborn" from the dead**. No former human being had ever been **resurrected to eternal spirit existence**:

For those whom he foreknew he also predestined³² to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that **he might be the firstborn among many brothers**. (Romans 8:29 ESV)

³⁰ For further discussion of this, see section 2. *The Covenant of Justness*, in the paper "Covenants of Grace" located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

³¹ See the chronological chart, "Jesus' Last Ten Days" located at <https://mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca/chronological-charts>.

He is the image of the invisible God, **the firstborn of all creation**.

He is the beginning, **the firstborn from the dead**, that in everything he might be preeminent.
(Colossians 1:15, 18b ESV)

For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being **put to death in the flesh** but **made alive in the spirit** ... (1 Peter 3:18 ESV)

Grace to you and peace ... from **Jesus Christ** the faithful witness, **the firstborn of the dead**, and the ruler of kings on earth. (Revelation 1:4bα, 5a ESV)

After the resurrection occurred, **Jesus made a point of ensuring that many people who knew that he had died, were now aware that he was in fact alive again**. The key people were the Apostles – it would be their job to witness to the resurrection. Others would support the witness.³² The fact of the resurrection is the singular motivator behind the zeal of the Apostles which gave them the strength to **build the New Testament Church**. This was the purpose for which Jesus had trained the Apostles. The inauguration of the New Testament Church was the next critical step in the Plan of Salvation:

And he said to them, “Go into all the world and **proclaim the gospel** to the whole creation. **Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved**, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.
(Mark 16:15 ESV)

And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and **make disciples of all nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you**. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:18-20 ESV)

Simon Peter replied, “**You are the Christ, the Son of the living God**.” And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and **on this rock**³⁴ **I will build my church**, and the gates of [the grave] shall not prevail against it. (Matthew 16:16-18 ESV)

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of **the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone**, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. (Ephesians 2:19-21 ESV)

The **Synoptist Luke** records the emphasis placed on **the witness to the resurrection** in the formation of the New Testament Church:

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and **you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth**.

... the patriarch **David** ... foresaw and **spoke about the resurrection of the Christ** ... This Jesus God raised up, **and of that we all are witnesses**.

And when Peter saw it he addressed the people: “**Men of Israel** ... you denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, and **you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses**. ...”

But Peter and **the apostles answered**, “We must obey God rather than men. **The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed** by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And **we are witnesses to these things** ...”

And **we are witnesses of all that he did** both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, but **God raised him on the third day and made him to appear**, not to all the people but **to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses**, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead. **To him all the prophets bear witness** that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.
(Acts 1:8, 2:29aβ, 31a, 32, 3:12a, 14-15, 5:29-32a, 10:39-43 ESV)

Jesus’ resurrection is the **dramatic proof that God does have the power to transform** physical human beings into immortal Divine Beings. Jesus’ resurrection was very public – there were **many witnesses**. The most important witnesses being **the Apostles**. Jesus personally commissioned them **build the Church** for him. The Church would be the means to bring many human beings into the Family of God. **Jesus would assume the key role** to ensure the success of the Church – **intercessor and High Priest**.

³² See the discussion of “predestination” in section **2.3.1.2 Election in the New Testament**.

³³ See the chronological chart, “**Post Resurrection Appearances**” located at <https://mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca/chronological-charts>.

³⁴ The “Rock” is Jesus Christ.

2.2.2.5 The Ascension of Christ

The **Synoptists Mark and Luke** briefly record the Ascension event:

So then **the Lord Jesus**, after he had spoken to them, **was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God.** (Mark 16:19 ESV)

And he led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up his hands he blessed them. While he blessed them, **he parted from them and was carried up into heaven.** (Luke 24:50-51 ESV)

And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, **he was lifted up**, and **a cloud took him out of their sight**. And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? **This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven**, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.” (Acts 1:9-11 ESV)

As **Jesus had prayed to be restored to his former state of glory**,³⁵ so it occurred:

And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed. (John 17:5 ESV)

Great indeed, we confess, is **the mystery of godliness**:

He was manifested in the flesh,
vindicated by the Spirit,
seen by angels,
proclaimed among the nations,
believed on in the world,
taken up in glory. (1 Timothy 3:16 ESV)

He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature ... But we see **him who for a little while was made lower than the angels**, namely **Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death**, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone. (Hebrews 1:3a, 2:9 ESV)

But **[Stephen]**, full of the Holy Spirit, **gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God**, and **Jesus standing at the right hand of God**. And he said, “Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.” (Acts 7:55-56 ESV)

Jesus’ position at the right hand of God the Father in eternity is critical for Christians. **Jesus is our intercessor, our High Priest**,³⁶ **our advocate with God the Father**. As a human being, Jesus learned about the frailties of human existence. God the Father determines when to call each person to repentance. Once brought into the Family of God by baptism and receipt of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, **it is Jesus who represents each Christian to God the Father**. This intercessory role is necessary because God the Father does NOT know what it is like to be human. It is only because Jesus is fulfilling this role as intercessor that any person can succeed in the Christian calling – indeed **we are indeed saved by his life**:

- Jesus’ position at the **“right hand of the Father”**:
... according to the working of **his great might that he worked in Christ** when he raised him from the dead and **seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places**, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion ... (Ephesians 1:19b-21a ESV)
Baptism ...now saves you ... through the resurrection of **Jesus Christ**, who **has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God**, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him. (1 Peter 3:21-22 ESV)
But when **Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins**, **he sat down at the right hand of God** ... (Hebrews 10:12 ESV)
- Jesus’ role as **“High Priest, Intercessor”**:
Who shall bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? **Christ Jesus** is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who **is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us**. (Romans 8:33-34 ESV)
Therefore, holy brothers, you who share in a heavenly calling, **consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession**, who was faithful to him who appointed him ...
Consequently, **he is able to save** to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since **he always lives to make intercession** for them. For it was indeed fitting that **we should**

³⁵ **During his ministry, Jesus appeared in vision in a glorified state to three of the Apostles**. This was an important witness to his divinity. See the discussion of this event in the paper “**The Transfiguration and the Tabernacle**” located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

³⁶ For a detailed discussion of Jesus’ role as High Priest, see section **8. The Role of a Priest** in the paper “**To Be a Priest**”, located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens.

Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven ... (Hebrews 3:1-2a, 7:25-26, 8:1 ESV)

- **The Christian calling:**

I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. (John 17:23-24 ESV)

To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power, so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. To this he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. (2 Thessalonians 1:11-12, 2:13-14 ESV)

Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. (2 Peter 1:10 ESV)

For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. (Romans 11:29 ESV)

- Jesus' understanding of "human frailty"

Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. (Hebrews 2:17-18, 4:14-16 ESV)

- Jesus is our "Advocate":

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked. (1 John 2:1-6 ESV)

- Christians are "saved by his life":

If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. (Colossians 3:1-4 ESV)

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst. ... Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. ... Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me. ..."

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. ..."

(John 6:35, 47, 53-57, 11:25-26a ESV)

Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. (Romans 5:9-10 ESV)

With the Ascension **Jesus returned to his former glory in eternity**. Since then, Jesus' focus has been to bring "**many sons to glory**".³⁷ Without Jesus as **our "Advocate" in the throne room in heaven**, we could not accomplish our calling. Because Jesus understands our frailty and weakness, he can assist us to live the Christian life, **the Way of God**. Indeed, we are truly saved by his life to be prepared to join Jesus and the Father in **the Family of God at the Second Advent**.

2.2.3 The Second Advent

The pivotal event of the World Tomorrow is the return to this earth of Jesus Christ as King of kings.

This event, the Parousia, is the realization of the promises of God to provide salvation. The New Testament authors are explicit about the certainty of the Second Advent. However, the time lapse and the circumstances of Christians between the First Advent and the Second Advent was NOT apparent to them. **On two separate occasions, Jesus, using a passage from the Prophet Micah, warned that his first coming was not to bring peace to the earth:**

Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And **a person's enemies will be those of his own household.** (Matthew 10:34-36 ESV)

I came to cast fire on the earth, and would that it were already kindled! I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how great is my distress until it is accomplished!

Do you think that I have come to give peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division. For **from now on in one house there will be five divided**, three against two and two against three. They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law. (Luke 12:49-53 ESV)

Put no trust in a neighbor; have no confidence in a friend;
guard the doors of your mouth from her who lies in your arms;
for the son treats the father with contempt,
the daughter rises up against her mother,
the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law;
a man's enemies are the men of his own house. (Micah 7:5-6 ESV)

Using parables, Jesus warned that the period of time between the First Advent and the Second Advent would be **a time of trial and difficulty:**

As they heard these things, **he proceeded to tell a parable**, because he was near to Jerusalem, and **because they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately.** He said therefore,

A nobleman **went into a far country** to receive for himself a kingdom and then return. Calling ten of his servants, he gave them **ten minas**, and said to them, **'Engage in business until I come.'**

But **his citizens hated him** and sent a delegation after him, saying, **'We do not want this man to reign over us.'**

When he returned, having received the kingdom, he ordered these servants to whom he had given the money to be called to him, that he might know what they had gained by doing business. The first came before him, saying, 'Lord, your mina has made ten minas more.' And he said to him, **'Well done, good servant!** Because you have been faithful in a very little, you shall have authority over ten cities.'

'I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. But **as for these enemies of mine**, who did not want me to reign over them, **bring them here and slaughter them before me.'** (Luke 19:11-17, 26-27 ESV)

And **he began to tell the people this parable:**

A man planted a vineyard and let it out to tenants and went into another country for a long while. When the time came, **he sent a servant to the tenants**, so that they would give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the tenants beat him and sent him away empty-handed. And **he sent another servant**. But they also beat and treated him shamefully, and sent him away empty-handed. And he sent yet a third. This one also they wounded and cast out.

Then **the owner of the vineyard said**, 'What shall I do? **I will send my beloved son**; perhaps they will respect him.' But when **the tenants** saw him, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir. Let us kill him, so that the inheritance may be ours.' And they **threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.**

What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them? He will come and destroy those tenants and give the vineyard to others.

³⁷ See Hebrews 2:10
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When they heard this, they said, “Surely not!” But he looked directly at them and said,
What then is this that is written:

‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone’?

Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces, and when it falls on anyone, it will crush him.”
(Luke 20:9-18 ESV)

The “**Parable of the Minas**” implies that Jesus will be gone for a long time, “**went into a far country**”. He expects his servants to use the time well, “**engage in business**”. But there is also a warning aimed primarily at the “Jews” of his day, his former “**citizens**” as the physical nation of Israel – their **rejection of the Messiah will result in their destruction**. But note, the final warning extends beyond that to the time of the Parousia, **when the King returns, “having received the kingdom”**. Now his subjects are all humanity – **his enemies will be slaughtered**. The “**Parable of the Vinyard**” is similar. The original **tenants** were **physical Israel**. They were about to be destroyed, “**he will come and destroy those tenants**”. Then Jesus looks to the establishment of the Church, “**give the vineyard to others**”. Jesus is the “**cornerstone**” of the Church. He warns those called to the Church NOT to stumble, to “**fall on that stone**” and “**be broken to pieces**”.

The period of time between the First Advent and the Second Advent is **a time of preparation for True Worshipers:**

Stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning, and be like men who are waiting for their master to come home from the wedding feast, so that they may open the door to him at once when he comes and knocks. Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes. ... You also must be ready, for **the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect**.

Peter said, “Lord, are you telling this parable for us or for all?” And the Lord said, “Who then is the faithful and wise manager, whom his master will set over his household, to give them their portion of food at the proper time? **Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes.** ...”
(Luke 12:35-37a, 40, 41-43 ESV)

Then **the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom**. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, **they all became drowsy and slept**. But at midnight there was a cry, **‘Here is the bridegroom!’** Come out to meet him.’

Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. And **the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’** But the wise answered, saying, ‘Since there will not be enough for us and for you, **go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves.**’

And while they were going to buy, the bridegroom came, and **those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast**, and the door was shut. Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open to us.’ But he answered, **‘Truly, I say to you, I do not know you.’** Watch therefore, for **you know neither the day nor the hour.** (Matthew 25:1-13 ESV)

When the time for the Parousia comes, it will happen quickly:

But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. And **then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory**. And then **he will send out the angels and gather his elect** from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.
(Mark 13:24-27 ESV)

Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. **Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man**, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the **Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory**. And **he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect** from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. (Matthew 24:29-31 ESV)

And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth distress of nations in perplexity because of the roaring of the sea and the waves, people fainting with fear and with foreboding of what is coming on the world. For the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then **they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory**. (Luke 21:25-27 ESV)

Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but **we shall all be changed**, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, **at the last trumpet**. For the trumpet will sound, and **the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed**. (1 Corinthians 15:51-52 ESV)

For **the Lord himself will descend from heaven** with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and **with the sound of the trumpet of God**. And **the dead in Christ will rise first**. **Then we who are alive,**

who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 ESV)

Then **the seventh angel blew his trumpet**, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, **“The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever.”** And the twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying,

We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, who is and who was,
for **you have taken your great power and begun to reign**.
The nations raged, but your wrath came, and the time for the dead to be judged,
and for **rewarding your servants**, the prophets and saints,
and those who fear your name, both small and great,
and for **destroying the destroyers of the earth**. (Revelation 11:15-18 ESV)

As the King of kings is approaching earth, the first resurrection will occur. All the dead, from the time of Abel, to whom God has determined to give the gift of eternal life, will be raised as imperishable spirit beings. Those True Worshipers who are alive will similarly be instantaneously transformed from physical beings to imperishable spirit beings. **The Book of Revelation contains more details about the Parousia:**

- **The gathering of the dead:**

Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and seated on the cloud one like a son of man, with a golden crown on his head, and a sharp sickle in his hand. And another angel came out of the temple, calling with a loud voice to him who sat on the cloud, **“Put in your sickle, and reap, for the hour to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is fully ripe.”** So he who sat on the cloud swung his sickle across the earth, and the earth was reaped. (Revelation 14:14-16 ESV)

- **The gathering of the living:**

Then I looked, and behold, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with him 144,000 **who had his name and his Father’s name written on their foreheads**. And I heard a voice from heaven like the roar of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder. The voice I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps, and they were singing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and before the elders. No one could learn that song except the 144,000 **who had been redeemed from the earth**. It is these who have not defiled themselves with women, for **they are virgins**. It is these who follow the Lamb wherever he goes. **These have been redeemed from mankind as firstfruits for God and the Lamb**, and in their mouth no lie was found, for they are blameless. (Revelation 14:1-5 ESV)

- **All the resurrected rejoice:**

And I saw what appeared to be a sea of glass mingled with fire—and also **those who had conquered the beast** and its image and the number of its name, standing beside the sea of glass with harps of God in their hands. And **they sing the song of Moses**, the servant of God, and **the song of the Lamb**, saying,

Great and amazing are your deeds, O Lord God the Almighty!
Just and true are your ways, O King of the nations!
Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name?
For you alone are holy.
All nations will come and worship you,
for your righteous acts have been revealed. (Revelation 15:2-4 ESV)

- **The marriage supper occurs:**

Hallelujah! For **the Lord our God the Almighty reigns**.
Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory,
for **the marriage of the Lamb has come**, and his Bride has made herself ready;
it was granted her to **clothe herself with fine linen**, bright and pure—
for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.

And the angel said to me,

Write this: **Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.**

(Revelation 19:6b-9a ESV)

- **The triumphant earth entry:**

Then I saw **heaven opened**, and behold, a white horse! **The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True**, and **in righteousness he judges and makes war**. His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and **the name by which he is called is The Word of God**. And the **armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen**, white and pure, were following him on white horses.

From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords. (Revelation 19:11-16 ESV)

- **The winepress of wrath:**

Then another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he too had a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, the angel who has authority over the fire, and he called with a loud voice to the one who had the sharp sickle, "Put in your sickle and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, for its grapes are ripe." So the angel swung his sickle across the earth and gathered the grape harvest of the earth and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden outside the city, and blood flowed from the winepress, as high as a horse's bridle, for 1,600 stadia. (Revelation 14:17-20 ESV)

- **The Battle of Armageddon:**

Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and with a loud voice he called to all the birds that fly directly overhead, "Come, gather for the great supper of God, to eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all men, both free and slave, both small and great."

And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies gathered to make war against him who was sitting on the horse and against his army. And the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who in its presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur. And the rest were slain by the sword that came from the mouth of him who was sitting on the horse, and all the birds were gorged with their flesh. (Revelation 19:17-21 ESV)

From his position "at the right hand" of God the Father, Jesus has watched over the Church for these two thousand years. The Apostles had no inkling it would be this long or of the trials and tribulations of True Christians over these two thousand years. Jesus did warn them, and they dutifully recorded his words which have given solace and hope to many generations of True Christians. But the recorded words of Jesus also are unequivocal that the Parousia will occur. It will occur quickly and the impact on the nations of the world will be staggering. For all True Christians, both the living and the dead, the most important event is the resurrection by which the gift of eternal life will be extended.

2.2.4 Eternal Life

Spiritual salvation ultimately implies receipt of the gift of eternal life.³⁸

... for the sake of the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth, which accords with godliness, in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began ... (Titus 1:1b-2 ESV)

Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, then you too will abide in the Son and in the Father. And this is the promise that he made to us—eternal life. (1 John 2:24-25 ESV)

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish ... Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. (John 10:27-28a, 17:1b-3 ESV)

But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 6:22-23)

The promise of eternal life goes back to the beginning:

And [YHWH] God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground [YHWH] God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden ... Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever ... (Genesis 2:8-9, 3:22b ESV)

Jesus affirmed that he had given to Moses knowledge of eternal life:

And Moses said, "I will turn aside to see this great sight, why the bush is not burned." When [YHWH] saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." Then he said, "Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing

³⁸ See also John 5:24, Romans 5:21, 1 Timothy 1:16
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is holy ground.” And he said, **“I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.”** And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God. (Exodus 3:3-6 ESV)

And **as for the dead being raised**, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the passage about the bush, how God spoke to him, saying, ‘I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? **He is not God of the dead, but of the living.** (Mark 12:26-27 ESV // Matthew 22:31-33, Luke 20:37-38)

In the Plains of Moab, one of Moses last speeches to the Israelites was the **“Covenant of Life”**.³⁹ Moses’ focus was that the Israelites live by the Way of God and thus receive God’s blessings in the promised land. But **the final imprecation of the covenant** implies much more: it **alludes to the choice of eternal life or death**, as implicit in the Plan of God from the start:

I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that **I have set before you life and death**, blessing and curse. Therefore **choose life**, that you and your offspring may live, **loving [YHWH] your God**, obeying his voice and holding fast to him, for **he is your life** and length of days, that you may dwell in the land that **[YHWH] swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob**, to give them. (Deuteronomy 30:19-20 ESV)

The **Apostle Paul** is clear and specific that the promises to Abraham are fulfilled in the salvific life and work of Jesus Christ. **Abraham is regarded as the “father of the faithful”**. **“The faithful”** are all persons who will become members of the Family of God made possible by the propitiating sacrifice of Jesus Christ.⁴⁰

For **the promise to Abraham** ... depends on **faith**, in order that the promise may rest on **grace** and be guaranteed to all his offspring ... who shares the **faith of Abraham**, who is **the father of us all**, as it is written, **“I have made you the father of many nations”**—in the presence of the **God** in whom he believed, who **gives life** to the dead ... (Romans 4:13aα,16-17a ESV)

Know then that it is **those of faith who are the sons of Abraham**. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, **“In you shall all the nations be blessed.”** ... **Christ redeemed us** from the curse of the law (death) by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, **“Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree”**—so that **in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come** to the Gentiles, so that we might receive **the promised Spirit through faith**. ... Now **the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring**. It does not say, **“And to offsprings,”** referring to many, but referring to one, **“And to your offspring,” who is Christ**. ... And **if you are Christ’s**, then **you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to promise**. (Galatians 3:7-8, 13-14, 16, 29 ESV)

There are several words in Hebrew which are used to refer to eternal life:

- עוֹלָם - ‘olam, a masculine noun, its range of meaning includes indefinite time both in the future and in the past; therefore, “forever”, “evermore”, “everlasting”, “old”, “ancient”.⁴¹
- עַד - ‘ad, a masculine noun, which most often “denotes the unforeseeable future”; therefore, “forever”, “eternity”.⁴²
- נֶצַח - netzah, a masculine noun, derived from the verbal root נָצַח - natzah, which carries a range of meaning including “be preeminent”, “be enduring”. The noun, therefore, carries a range of meaning including “strength”, “victory”, “perpetual”, “forever”.⁴³

A full understanding of spiritual salvation and eternal life is only possible based on the New Testament documents. However, glimpses of this understanding are evident throughout the Old Testament, especially in the Psalms. **Many Psalmists explore the prospect of eternal life**. The various Psalmists may NOT have fully understood what they wrote, but with the understanding available through the New Testament documents, it is possible to fully understand the allusions to eternal life in the Psalms. The author of Hebrews is explicit that **the inspiration of God through the Holy Spirit was operative in the writing of the Psalms**:

Therefore, **as the Holy Spirit says**, “Today, if you hear his voice ...” (Hebrews 3:7 ESV)

The author of Hebrews then loosely quotes from Psalm 95 – the point being that God, through the Holy Spirit, breathed⁴⁴ into the Psalms **truth that can only be fully perceived within the wider context of the full revelation of God: the whole Bible**.

³⁹ See section **5. The Covenant of Life** in the paper **“Covenants of Grace”**; see also the paper **“The Words of Eternal Life”**; both papers are located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

⁴⁰ See also John 4:36, 5:39, Acts 13:48

⁴¹ See **TWOT** article 1631a pages 672-673

⁴² See **TWOT** article 1565a pages 645-646; note: ‘ad is also a homonym, a preposition or conjunction, denoting a continuum, see **TWOT** article 1565c page 646.

⁴³ See **TWOT** article 1402 page 593

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David, in establishing the genre, **set the main themes for all the Psalms**:

For there [YHWH] has commanded **the blessing, life (hayyim) forevermore ('ad `olam)**.
(Psalm 133:3b ESV)

He asked **life (hayyim)** of you; you gave it to him, length of days **forever ('olam) and ever ('ad)**.
His glory is great through **your salvation (y'shu'ah)**; splendor and majesty you bestow on him.
For you make him most blessed **forever ('ad)**; you make him glad **with the joy of your presence**.
(Psalm 21:4-6 ESV; see also 41:12)

You make known to me **the path of life (hayyim)**;
in **your presence** there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures **forevermore (netzah)**.
(Psalm 16:11 ESV; see also 139:24)

Turn away from evil **and do good**; so shall you **dwell forever ('olam)**.
For [YHWH] loves justice; he will not forsake **his saints**.
They **are preserved forever ('olam)**, but the children of the wicked shall be cut off.
The righteous shall **inherit the [earth]** and **dwell upon it forever ('ad `olam)**.
(Psalm 37:27-29 ESV; see also 23:6, 140:13)

I will **extol you**, my God and King, and **bless your name forever ('olam) and ever ('ad)**.
Every day I will **bless you** and **praise your name forever ('olam) and ever ('ad)**.
(Psalm 145:1-2 ESV; see also 5:11, 22:26, 30:12, 86:12)

But I am like a green olive tree in the house of God.
I **trust** in the [hesed]⁴⁵ of God **forever ('olam) and ever ('ad)**.
I will **thank you forever ('olam)**, because you have done it.⁴⁶
I will wait for your name, for it is good, in the **presence of the godly**.
(Psalm 52:8-9 ESV; see also 61:4-6)

My mouth will speak the praise of [YHWH],
and let **all flesh bless his holy name forever ('olam) and ever ('ad)**. (Psalm 145:21 ESV)

David's Themes:

- Eternal life is the ultimate blessing from God, the realization of "**salvation**", "**life forevermore**"
- With eternal life, one can actually be with God, "**with the joy of your presence**"
- The Way of God is "**the path of life**"
- "**His saints**" must repent, "**Turn ... and do good**"
- "**The righteous**" will "**inherit the earth**" and "**dwell upon it forever**"⁴⁷
- Those given eternal life will "**bless and praise and thank**" God "**forever and ever**"
- They will promulgate this blessing to "**all flesh**" – every human being who has ever lived will be granted the opportunity of salvation

Later Psalmists echo David's themes:

- **Salvation**, the gift of eternal life, can only come from God:
Truly no man can ransom another, or **give to God the price of his life**,
for the ransom of their life is costly and can never suffice,
that he should **live (hayah) on forever (netzah)** and never see the pit. (Psalm 49:7-9 ESV)
My flesh and my heart may fail,
but **God is** the strength of my heart and **my portion forever ('olam)**.
(Psalm 73:26 ESV; see also 121:8)
- Those to whom the gift is given will "thank", "bless", and "**serve**" God "**forever**"
In God we have boasted continually, and we will **give thanks** to your name **forever ('olam)**.
(Psalm 44:8 ESV; see also 79:13)
But we will **bless [YHWH]** from this time forth and **forevermore ('ad `olam)**.
Praise [YHWH]! (Psalm 115:18 ESV)
But I will **declare it forever ('olam)**; I will sing praises to the God of Jacob. (Psalm 75:9 ESV)
- The Psalmist of the 119th Psalm addresses **the concept of eternal life** in stanza "nun":
Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to **my path**.
I have sworn an oath and confirmed it, **to keep** your righteous [mish'patim].⁴⁸

⁴⁴ See 2 Timothy 3:16

⁴⁵ For a discussion of the meaning of *hesed*, see section **1.4.3 Attributes of God's Character** in the paper "First Pillar - The Nature of God" located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

⁴⁶ This seems to allude to the concept of the "resurrection"; demonstrated by the resurrection of Christ and, ultimately, the First Resurrection at which point the gift of eternal life will have been given "**you have done it**".

⁴⁷ See Matthew 5:5

I am severely afflicted; **give me life (hayah)**, [YHWH], according to your word!
 Accept my freewill offerings of **praise**, [YHWH], and **teach me** your [mish^epatim].
 I hold my life in my hand continually, but I do not forget **your [torah]**.⁴⁹
 The wicked have laid a snare for me, but I do not stray from **your precepts**.
Your testimonies are my heritage **forever ('olam)**, for they are the joy of my heart.
 I incline my heart to perform your statutes **forever ('olam)**, to the end.
 (Psalm 119:105-112 ESV; see also 119:44, 93, 98)

- Two Psalms of the **“Sons of Korah”** look to the teaching of **the Way of God** in the World

Tomorrow:

In place of your fathers shall be your sons; you will make them **princes in all the earth**.
 I will cause your name to be remembered in **all generations**;
 therefore **nations will praise you forever ('olam) and ever ('ad)**. (Psalm 45:16-17 ESV)
 Walk about Zion, go around her, number her towers,
 consider well her ramparts, go through her citadels,
 that you may **tell the next generation** that this is God, our God **forever ('olam) and ever ('ad)**.
 (Psalm 48:12-14a)

As discussed in section **2.1.3 The Resurrection of the Dead**, the mechanism of attaining eternal life is the **“resurrection”**. Section **2.2.2.4 The Resurrection of Christ** discussed the resurrection of Jesus Christ as the **“firstborn”** – demonstrating the fact of God’s ability to transform a physical human being into a divine immortal being. The **Apostle John** reports **Jesus’ discussion with Nicodemus regarding eternal life**. The key word in this discussion is **the verb γεννάω - gennaō**, “procreate”, “give birth”, “be born”, “bring forth”.⁵⁰ The word implies **the whole process from conception to birth**. Jesus used this word to help Nicodemus understand the process of attaining eternal life:⁵¹

Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, **unless one is born again (gennaō) he cannot see the kingdom of God**.” Nicodemus said to him, **“How can a man be born (gennaō) when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born (gennaō)?”**

Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, **unless one is born (gennaō) of water and the Spirit**, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. **That which is born (gennaō) of the flesh is flesh**, and **that which is born (gennaō) of the Spirit is spirit**. Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born (gennaō) again.’ ...”

If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And as **Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness**,⁵² **so must the Son of Man be lifted up**, that whoever believes in him may have **eternal life**.

For God so loved the world, that **he gave his only Son**, that **whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life**. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. **Whoever believes in him** is not condemned, but **whoever does not believe is condemned already**, because he has not believed in the name of **the only Son of God**.
 (John 3:3-7, 12-18 ESV)

Jesus initiates the discussion of eternal life. Jesus was clearly aware of Nicodemus’ potential.⁵³

Nicodemus clearly understands the implication of being “born again” – he refers immediately to the physical process of conception through birth. **Jesus is referring to the spiritual process**. The spiritual process begins with **baptism, “water”**, and the subsequent **indwelling of the Holy Spirit**. This is analogous to **“conception”**. Jesus then contrasts **physical birth, “of the flesh”**, with **spiritual birth, “of the Spirit”**. Both are a transformation: physical birth yields a human being; **spiritual birth yields a spirit being**.

Jesus then goes on to emphasize that “spiritual birth” implies eternal life. Jesus alludes to an event near the end of the wilderness period. Poisonous snakes were killing the people. God instructed Moses to erect a bronze snake on a pole to which people could look and live. Jesus uses the **“lifted up”** snake

⁴⁸ For a discussion of the meaning of *mish^epatim*, see section **1.4.3 Attributes of God’s Character** in the paper **“First Pillar - The Nature of God”** located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

⁴⁹ The Hebrew word תּוֹרָה - torah, means “teaching”, “instruction”, “direction”; it is more or less synonymous with “the word of God”; it has almost no overlap in meaning with the English word “law”; see the discussion in **Excursus 3 – torah** of the paper **“Covenants of Grace”** located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

⁵⁰ See GEL pages 154-155

⁵¹ See also Galatians 6:8

⁵² See Numbers 21:6-9

⁵³ See John 7:50-51, 19:38-40

to foreshadow his crucifixion to which all humanity can “look and live” – through the process of spiritual birth attain eternal life.

It is NOT clear whether the next statement is John quoting Jesus, or whether it is John’s comment on Jesus’ teaching. Jesus is the “only son” who will experience incarnation. Jesus is the “firstborn”. His life and work were to accomplish the Plan of God: “whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life”. The requirement, “whoever believes in him” is greatly elaborated by the Apostle John in his first letter. Failure to “believes in him” results in “condemnation” – a spiritual miscarriage, failure to complete the process of spiritual birth, failure to attain eternal life. In First John, the Apostle John uses the word “*gennaō*” in the sense of someone who is in the process: spiritual conception has occurred, the person has the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, but birth has NOT occurred, eternal life remains the “hope”. This is the state of True Christians working to live by the Way of God.⁵⁴

And now, little children, abide in him, so that when he appears we may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming. If you know that he is righteous, you may be sure that everyone who practices righteousness has been [begotten] (gennaō) of him. (1 John 2:28-29 ESV)

Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous. Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. No one [begotten] (gennaō) of God makes a practice of sinning, for God’s seed⁵⁵ abides in him; and he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been [begotten] (gennaō) of God. By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother. (1 John 3:7-10 ESV)

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been [begotten] (gennaō) of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. (1 John 4:7-8 ESV)

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been [begotten] (gennaō) of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been [begotten] (gennaō) of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome. For everyone who has been [begotten] (gennaō) of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? (1 John 5:1-5 ESV)

We know that everyone who has been [begotten] (gennaō) of God does not keep on sinning, but he who was born⁵⁶ (gennaō) of God protects him, and the evil one does not touch him. We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. (1 John 5:18-19 ESV)

From the beginning, God’s Plan of Salvation has included the granting of the gift of eternal life. The working out of the Plan of God is driven by the promises to Abraham which reflect God’s sovereign desire to accomplish his purpose as and when he sees fit. The promises to Abraham are being fulfilled in the salvific life and work of Jesus Christ. Abraham, “the father of the faithful”, is the typical progenitor of the God Family, which will extend to all humanity in the World Tomorrow. God has revealed understanding of eternal life to those he has called down through the ages. The full understanding of eternal life being only possible through the New Testament documents.

2.3 Salvation History

Salvation History is the record of God’s working out his plan of salvation for human beings. The Plan of God for human beings is clear and simple, but the working out of the Plan has required considerable effort on God’s part. As we approach the end of the age, we can look back and see clearly how God has worked inexorably to accomplish his purpose.

2.3.1 Election

Fundamental to all aspects of God’s working with human beings is the concept of “election” – God decides who he will call at any given time. This was fundamental in the selection of Israel to be an

⁵⁴ See also John 12:24-25, 17:2-3, 1 John 3:15, 5:11,13,20

⁵⁵ God’s “seed” is the Holy Spirit.

⁵⁶ The Greek here is difficult: there are two options, either treat the verb as reflexive “who was [begotten] (gennaō) of God protects himself” (see NKJV); or, take it as a reference to the One who has been “born” (gennaō), Jesus Christ (see NEB, NASB).

example nation. When Israel failed, God elected a small remnant to prepare for the First Advent. The New Testament Church comprises a special remnant – the “**firstfruits**”,⁵⁷ those individuals which through election God has decided to call out of the world to participate in the First Resurrection. Finally, the Kingdom of God will be established, and “election” will extend to all human beings.

2.3.1.1 Election in the Old Testament

In the ancient world, it was **a well-established tradition** that the “firstborn son” would receive the “**family birthright**” and an enhanced “**family blessing**”.⁵⁸ The Mosaic prescriptions endorsed this tradition:

If a man has two wives, the one loved and the other unloved, and both the loved and the unloved have borne him children, and if **the firstborn son belongs to the unloved**, then on the day **when he assigns his possessions as an inheritance** to his sons, **he may not treat the son of the loved as the firstborn in preference to the son of the unloved, who is the firstborn**, but **he shall acknowledge the firstborn**, the son of the unloved, by giving him a double portion of all that he has, for **he is the firstfruits of his strength. The right of the firstborn is his.** (Deuteronomy 21:15-17 ESV)

However, in dealing with the Patriarchs to establish the nation of Israel, **God had three times deliberately ignored the tradition of the “firstborn” in order to demonstrate his prerogative of election.** The first example is the case of **Ishmael and Issac.**⁵⁹ Abraham had many sons through concubines, but no son through his legal wife “Sarah”. Sarah resorted to the standard practice of providing a son through a slave who functioned as a surrogate. **Ishmael was legally Sarah’s son, Abraham’s firstborn.**⁶⁰ However, it was God’s choice NOT to work through Ishmael – **in spite of Abraham’s pleadings**, God promised and delivered Isaac:

And **Abraham said to God, “Oh that Ishmael might live before you!”**

God said, “No, but **Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac.** I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring after him.

[YHWH] visited Sarah as he had said, and **[YHWH] did to Sarah as he had promised.** And Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age at the time of which God had spoken to him. Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him, whom Sarah bore him, **Isaac.** (Genesis 17:18-19, 21:1-3 ESV)

The situation with **Esau and Jacob** was much more complicated. They were twins. **Esau was the “firstborn”**, but Rebekah had been given insight by God:

The children struggled together within her, and she said, “If it is thus, **why is this happening to me?**”

So she went to inquire of [YHWH]. And [YHWH] said to her,

Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you shall be divided;
the one shall be stronger than the other, **the older shall serve the younger.**

(Genesis 25:22-23 ESV)

If this insight was communicated to Isaac, **he ignored it and planned to pass the “birthright” and “blessing” to Esau:**

When the boys grew up, Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field, while Jacob was a quiet man, dwelling in tents. **Isaac loved Esau** because he ate of his game, but Rebekah loved Jacob.

When Isaac was old and his eyes were dim so that he could not see, **he called Esau his older son** and said to him, “My son”; and he answered, “Here I am.” He said, “Behold, I am old; I do not know the day of my death. Now then, take your weapons, your quiver and your bow, and go out to the field and hunt game for me, and prepare for me delicious food, such as I love, and bring it to me so that I may eat, **that my [being] may bless you before I die.**” Genesis 25:27-28, 27:1-4 ESV)

⁵⁷ Ultimately, the term “firstfruits” applies to all persons called by God since Abel, but it is particularly applicable to those called to the New Testament Church.

⁵⁸ For further discussion, see *Excursus 7 – The Firstborn Son* in the paper “True Worship of the True God” located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

⁵⁹ See also the discussion of the *Apostle Paul’s allegory of Sarah and Hagar* in section *5.6 Slaves as Surrogates* in the paper “The Human Condition” located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

⁶⁰ See the narrative in Genesis 16:1-16, 21:8-21, and the discussion in sections *3.1 Abraham* and *5.6 Slaves as Surrogates* in the paper “The Human Condition” located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

The story of how Jacob had unscrupulously purchased the “birthright” and how Rebekah and Jacob conspired to steal the blessing is well known.⁶¹ The point is that in spite of Jacob’s conniving nature, **God stuck to his plan of election and worked through Jacob**, not Esau:

“I have loved you,” says [YHWH]. But you say, “How have you loved us?” “**Is not Esau Jacob’s brother?**” declares [YHWH]. “**Yet I have loved Jacob but Esau I have hated.** ...” (Malachi 1:2-3a ESV)

The third example is **Manasseh and Ephraim** the sons of Joseph. The boys were born in Egypt of an Egyptian mother. Manasseh was the “firstborn”. When **Jacob** was approaching death, he effectively “**adopted**” **Joseph’s sons** making them equivalent to his other sons, and **he gave Ephraim the preeminence**:

After this, **Joseph was told**, “Behold, **your father is ill.**”

So he took with him his two sons, **Manasseh and Ephraim**. And it was told to Jacob, “Your son Joseph has come to you.” ... And Jacob said to Joseph “... And **now your two sons**, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, **are mine; Ephraim and Manasseh shall be mine, as Reuben and Simeon are.** ...”

And Israel stretched out **his right hand and laid it on the head of Ephraim**, who was the younger, and his left hand on the head of Manasseh, crossing his hands (for **Manasseh was the firstborn**). ... **Thus he put Ephraim before Manasseh.** (Genesis 48:1-2a, 3a, 5, 14, 20b ESV)

Just before his death, Jacob made it clear that **the preeminence in Israel was to go to Joseph’s sons**, NOT Jacob’s two oldest sons:

Reuben, you are **my firstborn**, my might, and **the firstfruits** of my strength, preeminent in dignity and preeminent in power. Unstable as water, **you shall not have preeminence** ...

Simeon and Levi are brothers; weapons of violence are their swords. **Cursed be their anger**, for it is fierce, and their wrath, for it is cruel! I will divide them in Jacob and **scatter them in Israel.**

Joseph is a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a spring; his branches run over the wall.

... the God of your father who will help you, by **the Almighty who will bless you** with blessings of heaven above, The **blessings of your father** ... **May they be on the head of Joseph**, and on the brow of him who was set apart from his brothers. (Genesis 49:3-4a, 5, 7, 22, 25a, 26a, 26b ESV)

Throughout the history of Israel, it was **Ephraim that assumed the leadership** of the northern tribes and the northern kingdom. Manasseh, the firstborn, was wealthy and abundant, but **the preeminence went to Ephraim**. This was clearly God’s intention:

When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son. Yet **it was I who taught Ephraim to walk**; I took them up by their arms, but they did not know that I healed them. I led them with cords of kindness, with the bands of love, and I became to them as one who eases the yoke on their jaws, and I bent down to them and fed them. (Hosea 11:1, 3-4 ESV)

Joshua and **Jeroboam** were from the tribe of Ephraim:

... **from the tribe of Ephraim**, Hoshea the son of Nun; And Moses called Hoshea the son of Nun **Joshua**. (Numbers 13:8, 16b)

Jeroboam the son of Nebat, **an Ephraimite** of Zeredah, a servant of Solomon ... And when all Israel heard that **Jeroboam had returned**, they sent and called him to the assembly and **made him king over all Israel**. (1 Kings 11:26a, 12:20a ESV)

Even **the selection of the descendants of Jacob to form the Nation of Israel** was purely and act of God’s grace, **an example of his exercising his prerogative of election**:

... take a nation for himself from the midst of another nation, by trials, by signs, by wonders, and by war, by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and by great deeds of terror, all of which **[YHWH] your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes?** To you it was shown, that you might know that [YHWH] is God; there is no other besides him. Out of heaven he let you hear his voice, that he might discipline you. And

⁶¹ See the narrative in Genesis 25:29-34, 27:5-29, and the discussion in sections **3.2 Jacob** in the paper “**The Human Condition**” located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

on earth he let you see his great fire, and you heard his words out of the midst of the fire. And **because he loved your fathers and chose their offspring** after them and brought you out of Egypt with his own presence, by his great power ...

... you shall say to your son, '**We were Pharaoh's slaves in Egypt**. And [YHWH] brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand.

For **you are a people holy to [YHWH] your God. [YHWH] your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession**, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. It was not because you were more in number than any other people that [YHWH] set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples, but **it is because [YHWH] loves you** and is **keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers**, that [YHWH] has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

Do not say in your heart, after [YHWH] your God has thrust them out before you, '**It is because of my righteousness** that [YHWH] has brought me in to possess this land,' whereas it is because of the wickedness of these nations that [YHWH] is driving them out before you. **Not because of your righteousness or the uprightness of your heart are you going in to possess their land**, but because of the wickedness of these nations [YHWH] your God is driving them out from before you, and **that he may confirm the word that [YHWH] swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob**.

Behold, **to [YHWH] your God belong heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth with all that is in it. Yet [YHWH] set his heart in love on your fathers and chose their offspring after them, you above all peoples, as you are this day**. (Deuteronomy 4:34aβ-37, 6:21, 7:6-8, 9:4-5, 10:14-15 ESV)

In dealing with ancient Israel, God deliberately made it clear that he was NOT bound by tradition. **Election is God's sovereign choice**. God is committed to his Plan. God established the working out of his Plan in the promises to the Patriarchs. This is the only reason why Israel was chosen as the nation through which God would work. However, God's sovereign choice extends beyond the nation to the individuals he calls to salvation.

2.3.1.2 Election in the New Testament

The concepts of "**election**" and "**predestination**" are very closely related. The Greek words which are used for these concepts in the New Testament are:

- ἐκλέγομαι - eklegomai, verb, "choose", "select" (see GEL pages 241-242, TDNT IV pages 144-176)
- ἐκλογή - eklogē, feminine noun, "election", "choice", (see GEL page 242, TDNT IV pages 176-181)
- ἐκλεκτός - eklektos, adjective, "elect", "chosen", (see GEL page 242, TDNT IV pages 181-192)
- προγινώσκω - proginōskō, verb, "know beforehand", "have foreknowledge" (see GEL page 710, TDNT I pages 715-716)
- προορίζω - proorizō, verb, "decide beforehand", "predetermine", (see GEL page 716, TDNT V page 456)

In the Septuagint, the Hebrew verb בָּחַר - baḥar, "choose", "select", is most often translated by *eklegomai*.⁶² **The concept of "election" is NOT as fully developed in the Old Testament as in the New Testament**; nevertheless, *baḥar* covers much of the same semantic ground as the New Testament terms, for example:

For you are a people holy to [YHWH] your God, and **[YHWH] has chosen (bahar) you to be a people for his treasured possession**, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. (Deuteronomy 14:2 ESV)

Blessed is the nation whose God is [YHWH], **the people whom he has chosen (bahar)** as his heritage!

Blessed is the one you choose (bahar) and bring near, to dwell in your courts!

For **[YHWH] has chosen (bahar) Jacob** for himself, Israel as his own possession. (Psalm 33:12, 65:4a, 135:4 ESV)

"You are my witnesses," declares [YHWH], "and **my servant whom I have chosen (bahar)**, that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. ..."

For my name's sake I defer my anger;

for the sake of my praise I restrain it for you, that I may not cut you off.

Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; **I have chosen (bahar) you in the furnace of affliction**.

For my own sake, for my own sake, I do it, for how should my name be profaned?

My glory I will not give to another.

⁶² See TDNT IV pages 145-168, TWOT article 231 pages 100-101

Thus says [YHWH], the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One,
to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nation, the servant of rulers:
“Kings shall see and arise; princes, and they shall prostrate themselves;
because of [YHWH], who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen (bahar) you.”
(Isaiah 43:10a, 48:9-11, 49:7 ESV)

The **Synoptist Luke** introduces the word *eklegomai* with respect to the selection of the twelve Apostles, and the **Apostle John** reiterates the usage:

In these days he went out to the mountain to pray, and all night he continued in prayer to God. And when day came, he called his disciples and chose (eklegomai) from them twelve, whom he named apostles:
(Luke 6:12-13 ESV see also John 6:70, Acts 1:2)

Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them. I am not speaking of all of you; I know whom I have chosen (eklegomai).

You did not choose (eklegomai) me, but I chose (eklegomai) you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide ...

If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose (eklegomai) you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. (John 13:16-18a, 15:16a, 18-19 ESV)

Luke goes on to use *eklegomai* as an appellative for Jesus:

As he was saying these things, a cloud came and overshadowed them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is my Son, my Chosen One (eklegomai); listen to him!” And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone.
(Luke 9:34-36a ESV see also Luke 23:35 where *eklektos* is used in the same way)

Luke records the Apostle Peter’s usage of *eklegomai* to select a replacement for Judas Iscariot:

“... So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these men must become with us a witness to his resurrection.”

And they put forward two, **Joseph** called Barsabbas, who was also called Justus, and **Matthias**. And they prayed and said, “You, Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which one of these two you have chosen (eklegomai) ...” (Acts 1:21-24 ESV)

The **Apostle Paul** asserts that God’s selection of a person as a calling to the New Testament Church is NOT based on any worldly standard, in fact it is entirely a matter of God’s “foreknowledge”:

For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose (eklegomai) what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose (eklegomai) what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose (eklegomai) what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.
(1 Corinthians 1:26-29 ESV see also James 2:5)

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose (eklegomai) us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined (proorizō) us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. (Ephesians 1:3-6 ESV)

Paul uses the words *proorizō* and *eklegomai* in the same context to specifically link the concepts of “election” and “predestination”. Paul elaborates what he means by “predestination” linking the words *proginōskō* and *proorizō* :

And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew (proginōskō) he also predestined (proorizō) to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined (proorizō) he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. (Romans 8:28-30 ESV)

In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined (proorizō) according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. (Ephesians 1:11-12 ESV)

For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen (eklogē) you, because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction.
(1 Thessalonians 1:4-5a ESV)

Analysis of Paul's understanding of "election" and "predestination":

- Both concepts are integral to the Christian calling, **"consider your calling", "those who are called"**
- God's motivation is his purpose, his plan, **"the purpose of his will", "according to his purpose", "according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will"**
- It is strictly a matter of God's prerogative, **"God chose", "he has chosen you"**
- It is based on God's "foreknowledge", his assessment of a person, **"those whom he foreknew he also predestined"**
- Once God has made a "choice", he "predestines" the person by extending the Christian calling, **"those whom he predestined he also called"**
- The objective of election/calling/predestination is to receive the promises of God, **"his glorious grace", "adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ"**

The **Apostle Peter** is clear that **"predestination" does NOT imply "once saved always saved"**. It is very possible for a person who is called and chosen, and thus predestined, to fall away, to reject the grace of God:

His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, **through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence**, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them **you may become partakers of the divine nature**, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. ... Therefore, brothers, **be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election (eklogē)**, for **if you practice these qualities you will never fall**. ... You therefore, beloved, **knowing this beforehand (proginōskō)**, take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and **lose your own stability**. (2 Peter 1:3-4, 10, 3:17 ESV)

The **author of Hebrews** is also clear and specific that even when a person has been foreknown by God, called and chosen, i.e., **predestined**, **that person can reject the grace of God and "fall away" to an irreconcilable state:**

For **if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins**, but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries. ... How much worse punishment, do you think, will be deserved by **the one who has trampled underfoot the Son of God**, and has **profaned the blood of the covenant** by which he was sanctified, and has **outraged the Spirit of grace**?

For **it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened**, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, and **then have fallen away, to restore them again to repentance**, since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt. (Hebrews 10:26-27, 29, 6:4-6 ESV)

In his assessment of the current state of "Israel" with respect to the "Gentiles" and their position in the New Testament Church, **the Apostle Paul also affirms that a person once called and thus predestined can lose that status and fall away from the grace and calling of God:**

For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh. **They are Israelites** ... it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but **the children of the promise are counted as offspring**. ... when Rebekah had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac, though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—**in order that God's purpose of election (eklogē) might continue**, not because of works but **because of him who calls**—she was told, "The older will serve the younger."

God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew (proginōskō). ... So too **at the present time there is a remnant, chosen (eklogē) by grace**. But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace. What then? **Israel failed** to obtain what it was seeking. **The elect (eklogē) obtained it**, but the rest were hardened, as it is written,

God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that would not see
and ears that would not hear, down to this very day. (Isaiah 29:10)

But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, although a wild olive shoot, were grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing root of the olive tree, **do not be arrogant** toward the branches. If you are, remember it is not you who support the root, but the root that supports you. Then you will say, "Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in." That is true. **They were broken off because of their unbelief**, but **you stand fast through faith**. So **do not become proud**, but fear. For **if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you**. Note then the kindness and the severity of

God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God's kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness. Otherwise you too will be cut off.

... a partial hardening has come upon Israel ... As regards the gospel, they are enemies for your sake. But as regards election (eklogē), they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers. (Romans 9:3-4a, 8, 10-12, 11:2a, 5-8, 17-22, 25bα, 28 ESV)

Jesus is first recorded referring to "the elect" in the parables of the "persistent widow" and the "wedding garment":

And he told them a parable to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart. "... there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, 'Give me justice against my adversary.' ... And will not God give justice to his elect (eklektos), who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? ..." (Luke 18:1, 3, 7 ESV)

But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment. And he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants, 'Bind him hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' For many are called, but few are chosen (eklektos). (Matthew 22:11-14 ESV)

In the **Olivet Prophecy**, Jesus emphasizes the importance of the elect at the end-time:

For in those days there will be such tribulation as has not been from the beginning of the creation that God created until now, and never will be. And if the Lord had not cut short the days, no human being would be saved. But for the sake of the elect (eklektos), whom he chose (eklegomai), he shortened the days.

And then 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 arise and perform signs and wonders, to lead astray, if possible, the elect (eklektos).

And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. And then he will send out the angels and gather his elect (eklektos) from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven. (Mark 13:19-20, 21-22, 26-27 ESV // Matthew 24:21-25, 30-31)

The **Apostles Paul, Peter, and John** frequently refers to True Worshipers, Christians, as "the elect":

Who shall bring any charge against God's elect (eklektos)?

Greet Rufus, chosen (eklektos) in the Lord ... (Romans 8:33a, 16:13a ESV)

Put on then, as God's chosen ones (eklektos), holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. (Colossians 3:12-13 ESV)

Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect (eklektos), that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. (2 Timothy 2:10 ESV)

Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the sake of the faith of God's elect (eklektos) and their knowledge of the truth ... (Titus 1:1a ESV)

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who are elect (eklektos) exiles ...

As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen (eklektos) and precious, you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in Scripture:

Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen (eklektos) and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame. (Isaiah 28:16)

But you are a chosen (eklektos) race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. (1 Peter 1:1a, 2:4-6, 9 ESV)

The elder to the elect (eklektos) lady and her children ... The children of your elect (eklektos) sister greet you. (2 John 1a, 13 ESV)

Ultimately, in the Day of YHWH at the Second Advent, the resurrected elect will stand with the returning King of kings and defeat the final attack of Satan the Devil at the Battle of Armageddon:

As for the beast ... and the ten ... kings ... These are of one mind, and they hand over their power and authority to the beast. They will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with him are called and chosen (eklektos) and faithful. (Revelation 17:11α, 12a, 13-14 ESV)

The concepts of "election" and "predestination" are closely related and are more or less synonymous with "Christian calling". The New Testament is clear and specific that "predestination" does NOT imply a prior decision on an individual's ultimate salvation. There is no such thing as "once saved always

saved” – anyone called by God can by their own volition return to the world and miss out on salvation. Only “the elect”, True Christians, who actively live by the Way of God will be considered as candidates for the gift of eternal life. **In his grace, God will extend salvation to those to whom he sees fit – “election”.**

2.3.1.3 The Potter and the Clay

The **Prophet Isaiah** records **a metaphor from YHWH** which explicates God’s **prerogative of election**:

You turn things upside down!

Shall the potter be regarded as the clay,

that the thing made should say of its maker, ‘He did not make me’;

or **the thing formed say of him who formed it,** ‘He has no understanding’?

Woe to him who strives with him who formed him, a pot among earthen pots!

Does the clay say to him who forms it, ‘What are you making?’ or ‘Your work has no handles’?

(Isaiah 29:16, 45:9 ESV)

Later in a heartfelt prayer, Isaiah picks up the metaphor, and is **echoed by the Apostle Paul**:

But now, [YHWH], you are our Father;

we are the clay, and **you are our potter;** we are all the work of your hand. (Isaiah 64:8 ESV)

But who are you, O man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, “Why have you made me like this?” **Has the potter no right over the clay,** to make out of the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for dishonorable use? (Romans 9:20-21 ESV)

YHWH also used the metaphor with Jeremiah:

The word that came to Jeremiah from [YHWH]: “Arise, and **go down to the potter’s house,** and there I will let you hear my words.” So I went down to the potter’s house, and there he was working at his wheel. And **the vessel he was making of clay was spoiled in the potter’s hand,** and **he reworked it into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to do.**

Then the word of [YHWH] came to me: **“O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter has done?”** declares [YHWH]. Behold, **like the clay in the potter’s hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel.** ...” (Jeremiah 18:1-6 ESV)

Again, **the Apostle Paul takes the metaphor to its conclusion:**

For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” has shone in our hearts to give **the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.** But **we have this treasure in jars of clay,**⁶³ to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. (2 Corinthians 4:6-7 ESV)

True Worshipers are called to be worked by God, as with clay, to become far more than we could ever be by ourselves. God’s election, foreknowledge, and calling, i.e., predestination, are the most precious gift he can give to a human being. This is **the purpose of our human life** – to be worked into something pleasing to God.

2.3.2 The Purpose of Israel

God began to carry out his Plan of Salvation with Abraham. Through Abraham, God created a family that would become the Nation of Israel.⁶⁴ The covenantal descendants of Abraham ended up as slaves in the land of Egypt.⁶⁵ God sent Moses to free the slaves and bring them into the desert where God would form them into the Nation of Israel.⁶⁶ In Horeb at Mount Sinai, **God created Israel as a vassal nation to himself as Suzerain through the Sinai Covenant:**

[YHWH] called to [Moses] out of the mountain, saying,

Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the people of Israel:

You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. Now therefore, if you will indeed **obey my voice** and **keep my covenant,** **you shall be my treasured possession** among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; and **you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.**

These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel.

So Moses came and called the elders of the people and set before them all these words that [YHWH] had commanded him. **All the people answered together and said, “All that [YHWH] has spoken we will do.”** (Exodus 19:3b-8a ESV)

⁶³ See also Job 4:19, 10:9

⁶⁴ This is discussed in detail in section **3. The Covenant of Promise** in the paper “**Covenants of Grace**” located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

⁶⁵ See the narrative in Exodus chapter one.

⁶⁶ See the narrative in Exodus chapters two through eighteen.

The Sinai Covenant was very simple:

- Preamble: **“You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself”**
- Stipulations:
 1. **obey my voice**
 2. **keep my covenant**
 3. **be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation**
- Benefit: **“you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine”**

The people of Israel wholeheartedly agreed to the covenant: **“All that the LORD has spoken we will do.”** **The third stipulation specifies God’s purpose for the Nation of Israel:** Israel was to be an example nation for all other nations on the earth. God’s intention was to teach his Way to all nations. **The Nation of Israel would serve as the conduit through which the teaching of God would be disseminated to all the world.** After the nation had been brought under Sinai Covenant through the blood of a sacrificial animal, God called Moses and Joshua up the mountain to receive the stone tablets with the Ten Commandments and to receive the instructions for the construction of the Tabernacle.⁶⁷ **While Moses and Joshua were on the mountain, the golden calf incident occurred.**⁶⁸ At first, God intended to destroy the nation, but Moses interceded, and God relented:

And [YHWH] said to Moses, “I have seen this people, and behold, it is a stiff-necked people. Now therefore let me alone, that **my wrath may burn hot against them** and **I may consume them**, in order that I may make a great nation of you.”

But **Moses implored [YHWH] his God** and said, “[YHWH], why does your wrath burn hot against your people, whom you have brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? Why should the Egyptians say, ‘With evil intent did he bring them out, to kill them in the mountains and to consume them from the face of the earth’? **Turn from your burning anger** and relent from this disaster against your people. **Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants**, to whom you swore by your own self, and said to them, **‘I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your offspring, and they shall inherit it forever.’**” And [YHWH] relented from the disaster that he had spoken of bringing on his people. (Exodus 32:9-14 ESV)

Moses appealed to the covenant promises made to Abraham. As a result, YHWH made a personal theophany to Moses revealing to him key attributes of his nature.⁶⁹ After this revelation to Moses, God made a personal promise through Moses to **“all the people”**, i.e., **all of humanity**. The promise is in the form of **a new covenant** gratuitously entered into by God whereby he makes the unequivocal promise to accomplish his purpose through the Nation of Israel. This covenant can be called the **“Covenant of Performance”**⁷⁰ because by it, **God promises unequivocally to perform his Plan:**

And he said, “Behold, I am [cutting]⁷¹ a covenant. Before all your people **I will do marvels, such as have not been created in all the earth or in any nation.** And **all the people** among whom you are shall see the work of [YHWH], for **it is an awesome thing that I will do with you.** (Exodus 34:10 ESV)

The question is how would God do this? The Nation of Israel had already broken the Covenant and fallen into idolatry in the golden calf incident. **God was prepared for the ancient nation of Israel to fail, and the history of the Nation is a chronicle of that failure:**

And [YHWH] said to Moses, “Behold, you are about to lie down with your fathers. Then **this people will rise and whore after the foreign gods** among them in the land that they are entering, and **they will forsake me and break my covenant** that I have made with them. Then my anger will be kindled against them in that day, and **I will forsake them** and hide my face from them, and **they will be devoured.** ...”

For they are a nation void of counsel, and **there is no understanding in them.** **If they were wise,** they would understand this; they would discern their latter end! (Deuteronomy 31:16-17a, 32:28-29 ESV)

⁶⁷ See the narrative in Exodus chapter twenty-four; see also the discussion of **the covenant ratification ceremony** in section **4.2 The Teaching of God – torah** in the paper **“Covenants of Grace”** located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca. For the **sequence of events**, see the chronological chart, **“Horeb Timeline”**, located at <https://mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca/chronological-charts>.

⁶⁸ See the narrative in Exodus chapter thirty-two.

⁶⁹ See the discussion in section **Grace בְּרִית - hanann** in the paper **“First Pillar - The Nature of God”**; see also section **4.3 The Theophany to Moses** in the paper **“Covenants of Grace”**; both papers are located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

⁷⁰ For further discussion see section **9.3 The Covenant of Performance** in the paper **“True Worship of the True God”** located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

⁷¹ The Hebrew word is קָרַת - karath, the technical term for “cutting”, initiating, a new covenant.
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The next few sections review the failure of the ancient nation of Israel and how God will fulfill his promise and accomplish his Plan.

2.3.2.1 The Conquest and the Judges

After the years of wandering in the wilderness, the Israelites arrived in the Plains of Moab and prepared to enter the Promised Land. Moses reiterated to the people that God's choice of Israel was purely a matter "**election**". To accomplish **the Plan of God, the covenant promises had been made to Abraham**. According to his Plan, God was now working with the nation of Israel to perform his promise **to give the Promised Land to the descendants of Abraham**:

And he brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven, and **number the stars**, if you are able to number them." Then he said to him, "**So shall your offspring be.**" (Genesis 15:5 ESV)

[YHWH] your God has multiplied you, and behold, **you are today as numerous as the stars of heaven**.

Your fathers went down to Egypt seventy persons, and now [YHWH] your God has made you as **numerous as the stars of heaven**. (Deuteronomy 1:10, 10:22 ESV)

On that day [YHWH] made a covenant with Abram, saying, "**To your offspring I give this land**, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates, the land of the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, the **Hittites**, the **Perizzites**, the Rephaim, the **Amorites**, the **Canaanites**, the **Girgashites** and the **Jebusites**." (Genesis 15:18-21 ESV)

When [YHWH] your God brings you into the land that you are entering to take possession of it, and clears away many nations before you, the **Hittites**, the **Girgashites**, the **Amorites**, the **Canaanites**, the **Perizzites**, the Hivites, and the **Jebusites**, seven nations more numerous and mightier than you, and when [YHWH] your God gives them over to you, and you defeat them, then **you must devote them to complete destruction**. You shall make no covenant with them and show no mercy to them. (Deuteronomy 7:1-2 ESV)

And **I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings**, all the land of Canaan, **for an everlasting possession**, and **I will be their God**. (Genesis 17:8 ESV)

And **when [YHWH] your God brings you into the land that he swore to your fathers**, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give you—with great and good cities that you did not build, and houses full of all good things that you did not fill, and cisterns that you did not dig, and vineyards and olive trees that you did not plant—and **when you eat and are full**, then **take care lest you forget [YHWH]** ... (Deuteronomy 6:10-12a ESV)

Joshua went on to lead the people in the conquest. The first generation in the Promised Land was idyllic – the people remained faithful to the teaching of God because the leadership remembered God's salvation:

Israel served [YHWH] all the days of Joshua, and **all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua and had known all the work that [YHWH] did for Israel**. (Joshua 24:31 ESV // Judges 2:7)

I remember the devotion of your youth, your love has a bride, how you followed me in the wilderness, in a land not sown.

Israel was holy to [YHWH], the firstfruits of his harvest. (Jeremiah 2:2b-3a ESV)

The seeds of Israel's failure were however sown in the conquest by the fact that the various indigenous nations were not completely destroyed. The Gibeonite deception was the first failing,⁷² but there also remained large areas which were not under Israelite control:

Now Joshua was old and advanced in years, and [YHWH] said to him, "You are old and advanced in years, and **there remains yet very much land to possess**. This is the land that yet remains: **all the regions of the Philistines**, and all those of the **Geshurites** (from the Shihor, which is east of Egypt, northward to the boundary of Ekron, it is counted as Canaanite; there are five rulers of the **Philistines**, those of Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron), and those of the **Avvim**, in the south, **all the land of the Canaanites**, and Mearah that belongs to the Sidonians, to Aphek, to the boundary of the Amorites, and the land of the **Gebalites**, and all Lebanon, toward the sunrise, from Baal-gad below Mount Hermon to Lebo-hamath, **all the inhabitants of the hill country** from Lebanon to Misrephoth-maim, even **all the Sidonians**. ..." (Joshua 13:1-6a ESV see also Judges 1:27-36)

The influence of these people proved overpowering to Israel as they began to drift into worship of local deities:

And **the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of [YHWH] and served the Baals**. And they abandoned [YHWH], the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt. **They went after other gods, from among the gods of the peoples who were around them**, and bowed down to

⁷² See the narrative in Joshua chapter nine.
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them. And they provoked [YHWH] to anger. They abandoned [YHWH] and served the Baals and the Ashtaroth. So **the anger of [YHWH] was kindled against Israel**, and he gave them over to plunderers, who plundered them. And **he sold them into the hand of their surrounding enemies**, so that they could no longer withstand their enemies. (Judges 2:11-14 ESV)

The period of the Judges was an unmitigated disaster. God's intention was that the people would faithfully serve him directly as their King. However, they repeatedly violated the Sinai Covenant and God allowed various enemies to subjugate Israel. **They cried for relief and God sent "judges" to deliver them.** There are few notable heroes among the judges – Deborah and Barak,⁷³ Gideon;⁷⁴ but some of the judges were little more than thugs – Jephthah,⁷⁵ Samson.⁷⁶ There are tales of treachery and sordid debauchery – Abimelech ben Gideon,⁷⁷ Delilah,⁷⁸ the Levite's concubine,⁷⁹ the war on the tribe of Benjamin.⁸⁰ In the end the compiler of the Book of Judges summarizes the period very succinctly: **In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.** (Judges 17:6 ESV see also 18:1, 19:1, 21:25)

This is the background of the people's demand for a king as recounted in the First Book of Samuel.

2.3.2.2 The Monarchy

The story of the first King of Israel, Saul, is a classic tragedy. **Saul was a classic "choice of the people":** There was a man of Benjamin whose name was **Kish**, the son of Abiel, son of Zeror, son of Becorath, son of Aphiah, a Benjaminite, **a man of wealth**. And he **had a son whose name was Saul, a handsome young man**. There was not a man among the people of Israel more handsome than he. **From his shoulders upward he was taller than any of the people.** Then Samuel took a flask of oil and poured it on his head and kissed him and said, "**Has not [YHWH] anointed you to be prince over his people Israel?** And you shall reign over the people of [YHWH] and you will save them from the hand of their surrounding enemies. ...". So **all the people** went to Gilgal, and there they **made Saul king** before [YHWH] in Gilgal. There they sacrificed peace offerings before [YHWH], and there **Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly.** (1 Samuel 9:1-2, 10:1a, 11:15 ESV)

However, Saul's heart was NOT right before God. He made poor decisions and did NOT repent. God gave him over to a tormenting spirit and he became uncontrollably jealous of his faithful son-in-law, David, whom God had chosen to succeed him. These events are discussed in detail in the paper "**David – A Man After My Own Heart**" located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca. **David was the epitome of a good king – a type of the King of kings, his descendant.**

However, David's son, **Solomon**, who succeeded David on the throne, **set a pattern of apostasy for the kings of Israel that was never broken:**

For **when Solomon was old his wives turned away his heart after other gods**, and his heart was not wholly true to [YHWH] his God, as was the heart of David his father. For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. So **Solomon did what was evil in the sight of [YHWH]** and did not wholly follow [YHWH], as David his father had done. Then **Solomon built a high place** for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, and for Molech the abomination of the Ammonites, on the mountain east of Jerusalem. And so he did for all his foreign wives, who made offerings and sacrificed to their gods. (1 Kings 11:4-8 ESV)

Solomon's son, **Rehoboam**, who succeeded Solomon on the throne, continued his father's apostasy and dealt foolishly with the Northern Tribes, who revolted against him and set up **Jeroboam** as king of the Northern tribes.⁸¹ From the outset, **Jeroboam followed a course of apostasy which became proverbial:** And **Jeroboam said in his heart**, "Now the kingdom will turn back to the house of David. If this people go up to offer sacrifices in the temple of [YHWH] at Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will turn again to their lord, to Rehoboam king of Judah, and they will kill me and return to Rehoboam king of Judah."

⁷³ See Judges chapters four and five.

⁷⁴ See Judges chapters six, seven, and eight.

⁷⁵ See Judges chapters eleven and twelve.

⁷⁶ See Judges chapters thirteen through sixteen.

⁷⁷ See Judges chapter nine.

⁷⁸ See Judges chapter sixteen.

⁷⁹ See Judges chapter nineteen.

⁸⁰ See Judges chapter twenty.

⁸¹ See the narrative in First Kings chapters twelve, thirteen, and fourteen.

So the king took counsel and made two calves of gold. And he said to the people, “You have gone up to Jerusalem long enough. **Behold your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.”**

After this thing **Jeroboam did not turn from his evil way,** but **made priests for the high places again from among all the people.** Any who would, he ordained to be priests of the high places. And **this thing became sin to the house of Jeroboam** ... (1 Kings 12:26-28, 13:33-34a ESV)

... **Baasha** the son of Ahijah began to reign over all Israel at Tirzah, and he reigned twenty-four years. He did what was evil in the sight of [YHWH] and **walked in the way of Jeroboam and in his sin which he made Israel to sin.** (1 Kings 15:33b-34 ESV see also 16:2, 19, 26, 31, 22:52, 2 Kings 3:3, 10:29, 31, 13:2, 6, 11, 14:24, 15:9, 18, 24, 28, 17:22)

None of the kings of the Northern Kingdom ever repented and truly returned to serving God. As a result, the Northern Kingdom was destroyed by the **Assyrians** in 722BC. This punishment was required by the covenant curses which God had stipulated for the Sinai Covenant:

In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of **Assyria captured Samaria,** and he **carried the Israelites away to Assyria** and placed them in Halah, and on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes. And **this occurred because the people of Israel had sinned against [YHWH] their God,** who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had **feared other gods and walked in the customs of the nations** whom [YHWH] drove out before the people of Israel, and in **the customs that the kings of Israel had practiced.** (2 Kings 17:6-8 ESV)

And **I myself will devastate the land,** so that your enemies who settle in it shall be appalled at it. And I will **scatter you among the nations,** and I will unsheathe the sword after you, and your land shall be a desolation, and your cities shall be a waste. (Leviticus 26:32-33 ESV)

And **[YHWH] will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other,** and there you shall serve other gods of wood and stone, which neither you nor your fathers have known. And **among these nations you shall find no respite,** and there shall be no resting place for the sole of your foot, but **[YHWH] will give you there a trembling heart** and failing eyes and a languishing [mind]. **Your life shall hang in doubt** before you. Night and day **you shall be in dread** and have no assurance of your life. (Deuteronomy 28:64-66 ESV)

The Southern Kingdom fared a little better. Several of the Kings are commended for making an effort to follow God – **Asa** (1 Kings 15:11); **Jehoshaphat** (1 Kings 22:43); **Joash/Jehoash** (2 Kings 12:2); **Amaziah** (2 Kings 14:13); and, **Jotham** (2 Kings 15:34). However, none of these measured up to the stature of David, and there were some very bad kings: the worst being **Ahaz**⁸² and **Manasseh**.⁸³ Two kings of the Southern Kingdom are noted for embarking on deep-seated efforts of reform – **Hezekiah**⁸⁴ and **Josiah**.⁸⁵ Both were moderately successful while they were alive, but the nation quickly reverted to apostasy at their deaths. Finally, in 586BC, the Southern Kingdom suffered the same fate, to the **Babylonians**, as the Northern Kingdom had suffered to the Assyrians:

[YHWH], the God of their fathers, sent persistently to them by his messengers, because he had compassion on his people and on his dwelling place. But they kept mocking the messengers of God, despising his words and **scoffing at his prophets,** until the wrath of [YHWH] rose against his people, **until there was no remedy.** (2 Chronicles 36:15-16 ESV)

Still [YHWH] did not turn from the burning of his great wrath, by which his anger was kindled against Judah, **because of all the provocations with which Manasseh had provoked him.** And [YHWH] said, “I will remove Judah also out of my sight, as I have removed Israel, and **I will cast off this city that I have chosen,** Jerusalem, and the house of which I said, My name shall be there.”

And in the ninth year of [Zedekiah’s] reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, **Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon** came with all his army against Jerusalem and laid siege to it. And they built siegeworks all around it. So the city was besieged till the eleventh year of **King Zedekiah.** On the ninth day of the fourth month the famine was so severe in the city that there was no food for the people of the land. Then a **breach was made in the city,** and all the men of war fled by night by the way of the gate between the two walls, by the king’s garden, and the Chaldeans were around the city. And they went in the direction of the Arabah. But the army of the Chaldeans pursued the king and overtook him in the plains of Jericho, and all his army was scattered from him. Then **they captured the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah, and they passed sentence on him.** (2 Kings 23:26-27, 25:1-6 ESV)

⁸² See the narrative in Second Kings chapter sixteen, Second Chronicles chapter twenty-eight, and Isaiah 7:1-17

⁸³ See the narrative in 2 Kings 21:1-18, 2 Chronicles 33:1-20, and Jeremiah 15:1-4

⁸⁴ See the narrative in Second Kings chapters eighteen, nineteen, and twenty; Second Chronicles chapters twenty-nine through thirty-two; and Isaiah chapters thirty-six through thirty-nine.

⁸⁵ See the narrative in Second Kings chapter twenty-two and 23:1-30; Second Chronicles chapters thirty-four and thirty-five; and Jeremiah chapters one through six (these chapters relate to Josiah’s reform).

Therefore he brought up against them **the king of the Chaldeans**, who **killed their young men with the sword** in the house of their sanctuary and **had no compassion** on young man or virgin, old man or aged. He gave them all into his hand. And all **the vessels of the house of God**, great and small, and the treasures of the house of [YHWH], and the **treasures of the king** and of his princes, **all these he brought to Babylon**. And they **burned the house of God and broke down the wall of Jerusalem** and burned all its palaces with fire and destroyed all its precious vessels. **He took into exile in Babylon those who had escaped from the sword** ... (2 Chronicles 36:17-20a ESV)

The history of the Northern and Southern Kingdoms of Israel is mixed. Mostly it is a tale of apostasy, but there were notable exceptions. The most significant development was **the role of God's prophets**. They repeatedly warned the people and the nation. The writings that have come down to us from the prophets comprise **a major revelation from God to humanity**.

2.3.2.3 Prophets, Destruction, and Hope

Before the destruction of the Northern Kingdom, **God sent prophets to warn the people of the impending disaster**. We have a record of some of the preaching of some of these early prophets in the **Books of Hosea, Joel, and Amos**. It is not possible to put an exact chronology on the work of these prophets,⁸⁶ but their message of warning is clear. God gave the nation and the individual people ample opportunity to repent and return to True Worship. We know the Nation did NOT repent. We have no information as to whether or not individuals did repent. **Some excerpts from the prophets' preaching follow:**

Hear the word of [YHWH], O children of Israel,
for **[YHWH] has a controversy with the inhabitants of the land**.
There is no faithfulness or [hesed],⁸⁷ and **no knowledge of God in the land**;
there is swearing, lying, murder, stealing, and committing adultery;
They break all bounds, and **bloodshed follows bloodshed**.
Therefore the land mourns, and all who dwell in it languish ...

My people inquire of a piece of wood, and their walking staff gives them oracles.
For **a spirit of whoredom has led them astray**, and they have left their God to play the whore.

Their deeds do not permit them to return to their God.

For the spirit of whoredom is within them, and they know not [YHWH].

Sow for yourselves righteousness; reap [hesed];

break up your fallow ground, for **it is the time to seek [YHWH]**,
that he may come and rain righteousness upon you.

So you, **by the help of your God, return,**
hold fast to [hesed] and [mish'pat],⁸⁸ and wait continually for your God.

Return, O Israel, to [YHWH] your God,

for you have stumbled because of your iniquity.

Take with you words and **return to [YHWH]**;

say to him, "**Take away all iniquity**; accept what is good,

and **we will pay with bulls the vows of our lips**. ..."

(Hosea 4:1-3a, 12, 5:4, 10:12, 12:6, 14:1-2 ESV)

Hear this, you elders; give ear, all inhabitants of the land!

Has such a thing happened in your days, or in the days of your fathers?

Tell your children of it, and let your children tell their children,
and their children to another generation.

Put on sackcloth and lament, O priests; wail, O ministers of the altar.

Go in, pass the night in sackcloth, O ministers of my God!

"Yet even now," declares [YHWH], "**return to me with all your heart,**

with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your hearts and not your garments."

Return to [YHWH] your God, for he is **gracious** and **merciful**,

slow to anger, and **abounding in [hesed]**; and **he relents over disaster**.

(Joel 1:2-3, 13a, 2:12-13 ESV)

⁸⁶ For discussions of chronology, see the introductions, Freeman, Harrison, and Young; see also the commentaries, **KD10**, "Minor Prophets"; Dearman, J.A., *The Book of Hosea*; Allen, L.C., *The Books of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah*; Carroll R. M.D., *The Book of Amos*.

⁸⁷ For a discussion of the meaning of *hesed*, see section **1.4.3 Attributes of God's Character** in the paper "First Pillar - The Nature of God" located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

⁸⁸ For a discussion of the meaning of *mish'pat*, see section **1.4.3 Attributes of God's Character** in the paper "First Pillar - The Nature of God" located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

Thus says [YHWH]:

For three transgressions of Israel, and for four, **I will not revoke the punishment,** because **they sell the righteous** for silver, **and the needy** for a pair of sandals—those who **trample the head of the poor** into the dust of the earth and **turn aside the way of the afflicted;** a man and his father go in to the same girl, so that my holy name is profaned; they lay themselves down beside every altar on **garments taken in pledge,** and in the house of their God they drink the wine of those who have been fined.

You only have I known of all the families of the earth;
therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.

Seek good, and not evil, **that you may live;**
and so [YHWH], the **God of hosts,** **will be with you,** as you have said.
Hate evil, and **love good,** and **establish [mish^apat] in the gate;**
it may be that [YHWH], the God of hosts, will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.
O Lord [YHWH], please forgive! How can Jacob stand? He is so small!
[YHWH] relented concerning this: “It shall not be,” said [YHWH].
(Amos 2:6-8, 3:2, 5:14-15, 7:2b-3 ESV)

The prophets presented a message of **condemnation for the sins** of the people and the nation. They called for individual and national **repentance**. They all promised that God would positively respond to such repentance. **But they all began to add a new element to the message – a promise of hope beyond the impending destruction:**

Yet **the number of the children of Israel shall be like the sand of the sea,** which cannot be measured or numbered. And in the place where it was said to them, “You are not my people,” **it shall be said to them, “Children of the living God.”** And **the children of Judah and the children of Israel shall be gathered together,** and they shall appoint for themselves one head. And they shall go up from the land, for great shall be the day of Jezreel.

And **in that day,** declares [YHWH], **you will call me ‘My Husband,’** and no longer will you call me ‘My Baal.’ For **I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth,** and they shall be remembered by name no more. And **I will make for them a covenant on that day** with the beasts of the field, the birds of the heavens, and the creeping things of the ground. And **I will abolish the bow, the sword, and war from the [earth],** and I will make you lie down in safety. And **I will betroth you to me forever.** I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in [mish^apat], in [hesed] and in mercy. I will betroth you to me in faithfulness. And **you shall know [YHWH].**

And in that day I will answer, declares [YHWH],
I will answer the heavens, and they shall answer the earth,
and the earth shall answer the grain, the wine, and the oil,
and they shall answer Jezreel, and I will sow her for myself in the land.

And I will have mercy on No Mercy,
and I will say to **Not My People, ‘You are my people’;** and he shall say, **‘You are my God.’**

I will heal their apostasy; I will love them freely, for my anger has turned from them.
I will be like the dew to Israel; he shall blossom like the lily;
he shall take root like the trees of Lebanon; **his shoots shall spread out;**
his beauty shall be alike the olive, and his fragrance like Lebanon.

They shall return and dwell beneath my shadow;
they shall flourish like the grain; they shall blossom like the vine;
their fame shall be like the wine of Lebanon.

(Hosea 1:10-11, 2:16-23, 14:4-7 ESV)

Be glad, **O children of Zion,** and **rejoice in [YHWH] your God,**
for he has given the early rain for your vindication;
he has poured down for you abundant rain, the early and the latter rain, as before.
The threshing floors shall be full of grain; the vats shall overflow with wine and oil.

I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten,
the hopper, the destroyer, and the cutter, my great army, which I sent among you.
You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, and praise the name of [YHWH] your God,
who has dealt wondrously with you.

And **my people shall never again be put to shame.**

You shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am [YHWH] your God and there is none else.
And **my people shall never again be put to shame.**

So **you shall know that I am [YHWH] your God,** who dwells in Zion, my holy mountain.

And Jerusalem shall be holy, and strangers shall never again pass through it.
And **in that day** the mountains shall drip sweet wine,

and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the streambeds of Judah shall flow with water; and **a fountain shall come forth from the house of [YHWH]** and water the Valley of Shittim. (Joel 2:23-27, 3:17-18 ESV)

"In that day I will raise up the booth of David that is fallen and repair its breaches, and raise up its ruins and rebuild it as in the days of old, that they may possess the remnant of Edom and **all the nations who are called by my name,**" **declares [YHWH] who does this.**

"Behold, **the days are coming,**" declares [YHWH], "when the plowman shall overtake the reaper and the treader of grapes him who sows the seed; the mountains shall drip sweet wine, and all the hills shall flow with it.

I will restore the fortunes of my people Israel,

and **they shall rebuild the ruined cities and inhabit them;**

they shall plant vineyards and drink their wine, and they shall make gardens and eat their fruit.

I will plant them on their land,

and they shall never again be uprooted out of the land that I have given them,"

says [YHWH] your God. (Amos 9:11-15 ESV)

God continued to send prophets with the same message – we have writings from **Micah** and **Isaiah** in the late eighth century; and from **Habakkuk**, **Zephaniah**, and **Jeremiah** in the late seventh century, as the end of the Southern Kingdom approached. **The message of hope became stronger and stronger**, but there was **no indication in the prophecies as to how God would carry out his plan**. Finally, God made it clear to Jeremiah that there would be a "typical" return from the exile to the Land of Israel, but **the prophecies of the true restoration, the realization of the message of hope, were for a much later time**. God made it clear to Jeremiah that he had a purpose for the exiles in Babylon. The nation would be destroyed, but God would bring back some of the exiles to the Land of Israel:

After Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had taken into exile from Jerusalem Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, together with the officials of Judah, the craftsmen, and the metal workers, and had brought them to Babylon, **[YHWH] showed me this vision:** behold, **two baskets of figs** placed before the temple of [YHWH]. One basket had **very good figs**, like first-ripe figs, but the other basket had **very bad figs**, so bad that they could not be eaten. And [YHWH] said to me, "What do you see, Jeremiah?" I said, "Figs, the good figs very good, and the bad figs very bad, so bad that they cannot be eaten."

Then the word of [YHWH] came to me: "Thus says [YHWH], the God of Israel: **Like these good figs, so I will regard as good the exiles from Judah**, whom I have sent away from this place to the land of the Chaldeans. I will set my eyes on them for good, and **I will bring them back to this land. I will build them up**, and not tear them down; **I will plant them**, and not pluck them up. I will give them a heart to know that I am [YHWH], and **they shall be my people** and **I will be their God**, for **they shall return to me with their whole heart**."

"But thus says [YHWH]: **Like the bad figs** that are so bad they cannot be eaten, **so will I treat Zedekiah the king of Judah, his officials, the remnant of Jerusalem who remain in this land, and those who dwell in the land of Egypt**. I will make them a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth, to be a reproach, a byword, a taunt, and a curse in all the places where I shall drive them. And I will send sword, famine, and pestilence upon them, until they shall be utterly destroyed from the land that I gave to them and their fathers." (Jeremiah 24:1-10 ESV)

Analysis of the vision of the "the good figs and the bad figs":

- The vision is after 597BC when Nebuchadnezzar took the second group of exiles to Babylon
- The people in Babylon, the exiles, were represented by **"good figs"**
- The people remaining in the Land of Israel and those who had fled to Egypt were represented by **"bad figs"**
- The full measure of the **covenant curses** would be applied to the people represented by the "bad figs" – they would suffer destruction
- From among the people represented by the "good figs", **God would restore some** to the Land of Israel, bless them, and work with them

That same year, a council was convened in Jerusalem, presumably to consider coordinated resistance to Nebuchadnezzar, and **God give another word to Jeremiah:**

In the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah the son of Josiah, king of Judah, this word came to Jeremiah from [YHWH]. Thus [YHWH] said to me: "Make yourself straps and yoke-bars, and put them on your neck. Send word to the **king of Edom**, the **king of Moab**, the **king of the sons of Ammon**, the **king of Tyre**, and the **king of Sidon** by the hand of **the envoys who have come to Jerusalem** to Zedekiah king of Judah. Give them this charge for their masters: '**Thus says [YHWH] of hosts**, the God of Israel: This is what you shall

say to your masters: “It is I who by my great power and my outstretched arm have made the earth, with the men and animals that are on the earth, and I give it to whomever it seems right to me. Now I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar ...”

To Zedekiah king of Judah I spoke in like manner: “Bring your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people and live. ...”

... thus says [YHWH] of hosts, the God of Israel, concerning the vessels that are left in the house of [YHWH], in the house of the king of Judah, and in Jerusalem: They shall be carried to Babylon and remain there until the day when I visit them, declares [YHWH]. Then I will bring them back and restore them to this place. (Jeremiah 27:1-6a, 12, 21-22 ESV)

God made it clear that it was his purpose to give to Babylon seventy years of hegemony, 609-539BC.⁸⁹ Resistance would be futile – the nations, including Israel, were to serve Nebuchadnezzar or be destroyed. Israel was destroyed, and as YHWH told Jeremiah, the temple vessels and treasures did go to Babylon. But, YHWH was explicit after the seventy years, “the day when I visit them”, there would be a return, “I will bring them back and restore them to this place”. However, God also made it clear to Jeremiah that there would be yet a much greater restoration – the fulfillment of the message of hope from all the prophets. There would be another exodus, the “Second Exodus”,⁹⁰ which would bring people from the four corners of the earth to a new nation of Israel, “New Israel”,⁹¹ a single unified nation with no schism between North and South. In addition, each person in the New Israel will be called to conversion – the nation and the Church will be coterminous, all persons will come under a “New Covenant”. The New Israel will fulfill God’s always intended role for Israel to be an example nation and all nations of the earth will learn to worship and serve the True God:

Therefore, behold, the days are coming, declares [YHWH], when it shall no longer be said, ‘As [YHWH] lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt,’ but ‘As [YHWH] lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the north country and out of all the countries where he had driven them.’ For I will bring them back to their own land that I gave to their fathers.

For behold, days are coming, declares [YHWH], when I will restore the fortunes of my people, Israel and Judah, says [YHWH], and I will bring them back to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall take possession of it.”

Behold, I will bring them from the north country and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth ...

Return, O faithless children, declares [YHWH]; for I am your master;

I will take you, one from a city and two from a family, and I will bring you to Zion.

And I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding. And when you have multiplied and been fruitful in the land, in those days, declares [YHWH], they shall no more say, “The ark of the covenant of [YHWH].” It shall not come to mind or be remembered or missed; it shall not be made again.

At that time Jerusalem shall be called the throne of [YHWH], and all nations shall gather to it, to the presence of [YHWH] in Jerusalem, and they shall no more stubbornly follow their own evil heart. In those days the house of Judah shall join the house of Israel, and together they shall come from the land of the north to the land that I gave your fathers for a heritage.

Behold, the days are coming, declares [YHWH], when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares [YHWH]. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares [YHWH]: I will put my [torah]⁹² within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know [YHWH],’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares [YHWH]. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. (Jeremiah 16:14-15, 30:3, 31:8a, 31:14-18, 31:31-34 ESV)

The prophets God sent to Israel carried a message of warning and required repentance. They warned of national destruction and personal exile. The people and the nations did NOT repent – the destruction and exile occurred. The prophets also brought a message of “hope”. This part of the message remained ambiguous to people and the nation. The understanding of the “hope” would only come when it began

⁸⁹ See Jeremiah 25:11-12, 29:10, Daniel 9:1-2

⁹⁰ See section [2.4.5.1 The Second Exodus](#).

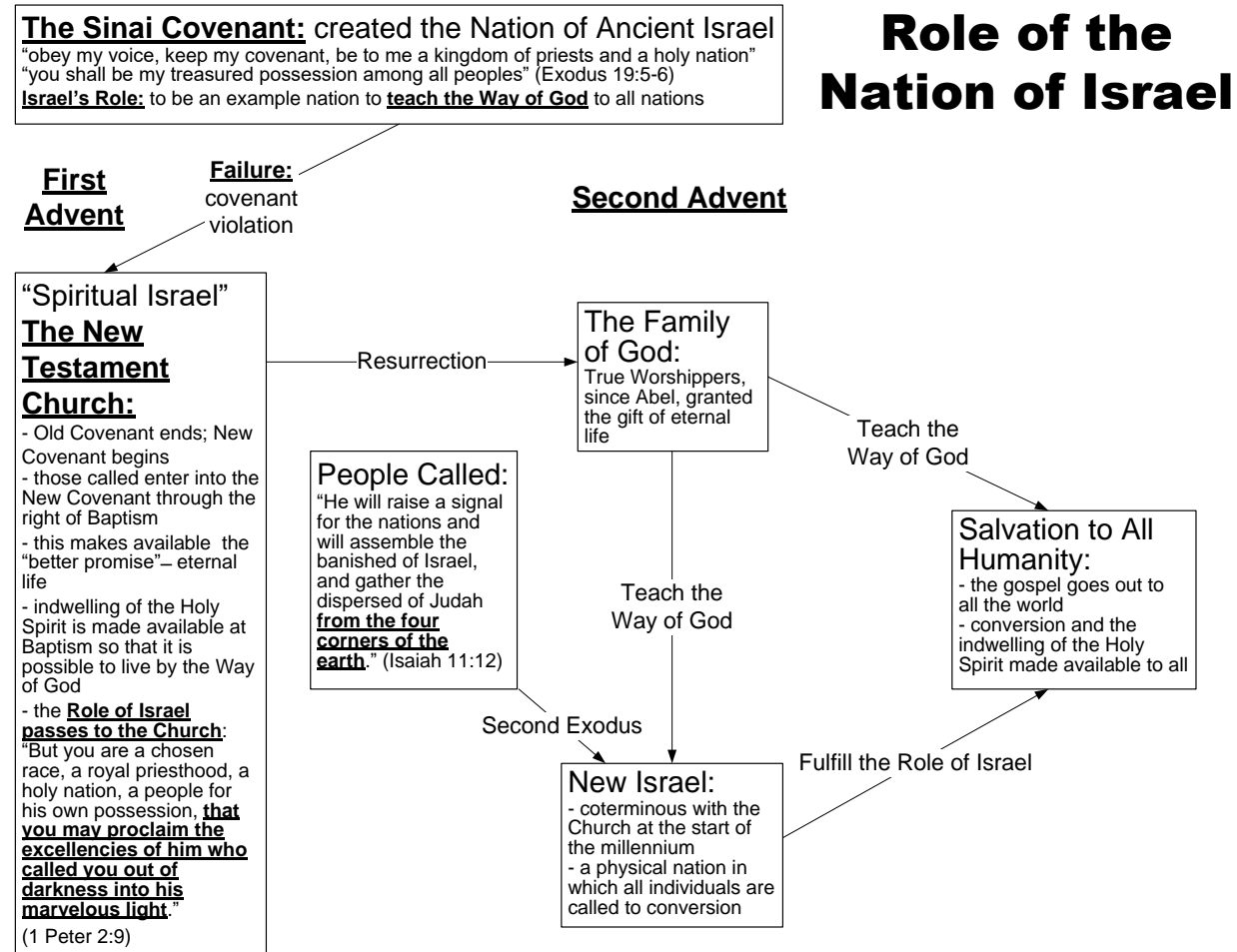
⁹¹ See section [2.4.5.2 The New Israel](#).

⁹² See footnote [49](#)

to be realized in the One upon whom the “hope” depended. It would be a long journey, but it began with **a restoration of a “community” by a remnant.**

2.3.2.4 Purpose of Israel Summary Diagram

The following diagram summarizes the role of the nation of Israel in God’s Plan of Salvation:



2.3.3 The Purpose of the Restoration

The return from the exile which began in 538BC had a very specific purpose. The returnees knew that their returning was NOT the prophesized realization of hope. **The restored community represented only a “remnant”⁹³ through whom God was working.** The restored community remained enslaved to the greater powers:

Behold, **we are slaves this day; in the land that you gave to our fathers** to enjoy its fruit and its good gifts, behold, we are slaves. And its rich yield goes to the kings whom you have set over us because of our sins. They rule over our bodies and over our livestock as they please, and **we are in great distress.** (Nehemiah 9:36-37 ESV)

For we are slaves. Yet our **God has not forsaken us** in our slavery, but has extended to us his [hesed] before the kings of Persia, **to grant us some reviving to set up the house of our God,** to repair its ruins, and to give us protection in Judea and Jerusalem. (Ezra 9:9 ESV)

The identification of the initial group to comprise “the remnant” was the work of the Prophet Ezekiel. Ezekiel had been taken captive with the second group of exiles in 597BC. The Prophet Jeremiah was active in Jerusalem from at least 627BC and continued until well after the fall of Jerusalem. Ezekiel was almost certainly familiar with Jeremiah’s message before he was taken to Babylon. Ezekiel is the only prophet, for whom we have records, who was told that he would meet with some success – **some people would respond to his message:**

⁹³ For scriptures on “the remnant”, see the Bible Study notes “**The Remnant and the Second Exodus**” located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

And he said to me, “Son of man, I send you to the people of Israel, to nations of rebels, who have rebelled against me. They and their fathers have transgressed against me to this very day. The descendants also are impudent and stubborn: I send you to them, and you shall say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord [YHWH].’ And whether they hear or refuse to hear (for they are a rebellious house) they will know that a prophet has been among them. ... And you shall speak my words to them, whether they hear or refuse to hear, for they are a rebellious house. ...”

And go to the exiles, to your people, and speak to them and say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord [YHWH],’ whether they hear or refuse to hear. ... But when I speak with you, I will open your mouth, and you shall say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord [YHWH].’ He who will hear, let him hear; and he who will refuse to hear, let him refuse, for they are a rebellious house. (Ezekiel 2:3-5, 7, 3:11, 27 ESV)

Ezekiel’s task was to identify “those who would hear” and bring them to repentance to form the remnant community to return to the Land of Israel:

Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, declares the Lord [YHWH]. Repent and turn from all your transgressions, lest iniquity be your ruin. Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed, and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Lord [YHWH]; so turn, and live.

And you, son of man, say to the house of Israel, Thus have you said: ‘Surely our transgressions and our sins are upon us, and we rot away because of them. How then can we live?’ Say to them, As I live, declares the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways, for why will you die, O house of Israel? (Ezekiel 18:30-32, 33:10-11 ESV)

The **Prophet Jeremiah** communicated with the exile community to encourage them that in fact God was working with them to accomplish his Plan:

These are the words of the letter that Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem to the surviving elders of the exiles, and to the priests, the prophets, and all the people ... “For thus says [YHWH]: When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place. For I know the plans I have for you, declares [YHWH], plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. ...” (Jeremiah 29:1a, 10-11 ESV)

Although the revelation was far from complete, the Biblical writings available to the restored community clearly indicated the “Messiah” would come.⁹⁴ The promises to Abraham of a descendant through whom all nations would be blessed, particularized to a descendant of David,⁹⁵ and elaborated in many Psalms, are particularly important. Both Jeremiah and Ezekiel were given prophecies that there would be a “new covenant” to replace the “old covenant”.⁹⁶ The preparation for the coming of the Messiah was God’s purpose for the restored community.

Ezekiel was successful in preparing a remnant because the return did occur. The elder statesman, **Daniel**, recognized that when hegemony passed from Babylon to Persia in 539BC, the seventy years recorded in the Book of Jeremiah were over. Most likely it was Daniel that influenced the Persian administration to allow the return of the exiles to Jerusalem. In any case, Daniel prayed for God’s blessing on the undertaking:

O Lord, according to all your righteous acts, let your anger and your wrath turn away from your city Jerusalem, your holy hill, because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and your people have become a byword among all who are around us. Now therefore, O our God, listen to the prayer of your servant and to his pleas for mercy, and for your own sake, O Lord, make your face to shine upon your sanctuary, which is desolate. O my God, incline your ear and hear. Open your eyes and see our desolations, and the city that is called by your name. For we do not present our pleas before you because of our righteousness, but because of your great mercy. O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive. O Lord, pay attention and act. Delay not, for your own sake, O my God, because your city and your people are called by your name. (Daniel 9:16-19 ESV)

The first group of returnees came under the leadership of **Sheshbazzar** in 538BC.⁹⁷ Soon a larger group returned under **Zerubbabel**, the governor, and **Joshua**, a high priest.⁹⁸ Both groups made efforts to start

⁹⁴ See the discussion in section **2.4.3 The Centrality of Jesus Christ**.

⁹⁵ See the discussion in sections **3. The Covenant of Promise** and **7. The Covenant of Descent** in the paper “**Covenants of Grace**” located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

⁹⁶ See the discussion in section **The Prophet Ezekiel**.

⁹⁷ See Ezra 1:5-11, 5:14-16

⁹⁸ See Ezra 2:2, 3:1-13

construction on a Temple, but they were delayed by local opposition.⁹⁹ God sent the **Prophets Haggai and Zechariah**, in 520BC,¹⁰⁰ to encourage the people to finish the Temple. They were successful and finally, the **Temple was completed in 515BC.**¹⁰¹ **The restored community remained aware of its status as a “remnant” community:**

Then **Zerubbabel** the son of Shealtiel, and **Joshua** the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, with **all the remnant of the people**, obeyed the voice of [YHWH] their God, and the words of Haggai the prophet, as [YHWH] their God had sent him. And the people feared [YHWH]. Then **Haggai, the messenger of [YHWH]**, spoke to the people with [YHWH’s] message, “**I am with you, declares [YHWH].**”

And **[YHWH] stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel** the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and **the spirit of Joshua** the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and **the spirit of all the remnant of the people.** (Haggai 1:12-14a ESV see also 2:2, Zechariah 8:6, 11, 12)

God made it clear through these prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, **that the purpose of the remnant community was to prepare for the First Advent.** During the First Advent, whenever Jesus was in Jerusalem, the focus of his activities was almost always the Temple area. **Haggai had prophesized this:** Be strong, all you people of the land, declares [YHWH]. **Work, for I am with you**, declares [YHWH] of hosts, according to the covenant that I made with you when you came out of Egypt. My Spirit remains in your midst. **Fear not.** For thus says [YHWH] of hosts: Yet once more, in a little while, I will shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land. And I will shake all nations, so that the treasures of all nations shall come in, and **I will fill this house with glory**, says [YHWH] of hosts. (Haggai 2:4b-7 ESV)

The Book of Malachi also prophesizes the coming of the Messiah to the Temple:
And **the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple;** (Malachi 3:1ba)

When the first temple was dedicated, **the “glory of YHWH” filled the Temple,**¹⁰² as had happened with the Tabernacle.¹⁰³ **The glory of YHWH did NOT fill the Second Temple at its dedication:**
Who is left among you who saw this house in its former glory? How do you see it now? Is it not as nothing in your eyes? (Haggai 2:3 ESV)

The “glory” of divinity in the second Temple was fulfilled by the physical presence of Jesus Christ. On two separate occasions, Jesus cleared merchants and money changers out the Temple, and both times he claimed an ownership position:

The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and **Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple he found those who were selling** oxen and sheep and pigeons, **and the money-changers** sitting there. And making a whip of cords, **he drove them all out of the temple**, with the sheep and oxen. And he poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. And he told those who sold the pigeons, “Take these things away; **do not make my Father’s house a house of trade.**” (John 2:13-16 ESV)

And **they came to Jerusalem.** And **he entered the temple** and began to **drive out those who sold and those who bought** in the temple, and he **overturned the tables of the money-changers** and the seats of those who sold pigeons. And he would not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple.

And **he was teaching them and saying to them**, “Is it not written, ‘**My house shall be called a house of prayer** for all the nations’? But you have made it a den of robbers.” (Mark 11:15-17 ESV // Matthew 21:12-13, Luke 19:45-46)

One of the best-known Messianic symbols in the Old Testament is the “Branch”.¹⁰⁴ The Book of Zechariah contains two passages related to the “Branch”:

Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, you and your friends who sit before you, for they are men who are a sign: behold, **I will bring my servant the Branch.** For behold, on the stone that I have set before Joshua, on a single stone with seven eyes, I will engrave its inscription, declares [YHWH] of hosts, and **I will remove the iniquity of this [earth]**¹⁰⁵ **in a single day.**

And say to him, ‘Thus says [YHWH] of hosts, “Behold, **the man whose name is the Branch:** for he shall branch out from his place, and **he shall build the temple of [YHWH].** It is he who shall build the temple of [YHWH] and **shall bear royal honor**, and **shall sit and rule on his throne.** And **there shall be a priest on his throne**, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.” (Zechariah 3:8-9, 6:12-13 ESV)

⁹⁹ See Ezra 4:1-23

¹⁰⁰ See Ezra 5:1-2, Haggai 1:1, Zechariah 1:1

¹⁰¹ See Ezra 6:13-15

¹⁰² See 1 Kings 8:10-11

¹⁰³ See Exodus 40:34-35

¹⁰⁴ See Isaiah 4:2, 6:11-13, 11:1-5, 10, Jeremiah 23:5-8, 33:4-18, Ezekiel 17:22-24, John 15:1-11; these passages are discussed in *Excursus 3 – The Branch* in the paper “*The Transfiguration and the Tabernacle*” located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

¹⁰⁵ The Hebrew עֶרֶץ - ‘eret, can be translated “land” or “earth” – here “earth” is better due to the universal nature of the sacrifice of Christ.
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The Hebrew name “Joshua” is the equivalent of the Greek name “Jesus” – **“Joshua” was a type of “Jesus”, the “Branch”. The death of Christ paid the penalty for all sin “in a single day”**.¹⁰⁶ Joshua built the “second temple” – a type of **the Temple Jesus would build** after the First Advent, through the Apostles, **the New Testament Church**. Since the Ascension, **Jesus has sat on his throne**, as King of kings, at the right hand of God the Father functioning as **“High Priest”** and intercessor for Christians.

The New Testament authors are very specific to link the life and work of Jesus Christ with other prophecies of Zechariah. On **Jesus’ triumphant entry into Jerusalem**, the report of the Apostle Matthew makes reference to a prophecy of Zechariah:

This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet, saying,
Say to the daughter of Zion, **‘Behold, your king is coming to you,
humble, and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.’**
(Matthew 21:4-5 ESV)

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!
Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem!
Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he,
humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. (Zechariah 9:9 ESV)

After Jesus’ death, **with regards to Judas’ blood money**, Matthew records events, again making reference to a prophecy of Zechariah:

Then when **Judas**, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he changed his mind and **brought back the thirty pieces of silver** to the chief priests and the elders ... But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver, said, **“It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since it is blood money.” So they took counsel and bought with them the potter’s field** as a burial place for strangers. Therefore that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day.

Then was fulfilled what had been spoken by the prophet [Zechariah],¹⁰⁷ saying, “And they took the **thirty pieces of silver**, the price of him on whom a price had been set by some of the sons of Israel, and they gave them for **the potter’s** field, as the Lord directed me.” (Matthew 27:3, 6-10 ESV)

Then I said to them, “If it seems good to you, give me my wages; but if not, keep them.” And they weighed out as my wages **thirty pieces of silver**. Then [YHWH] said to me, **“Throw it to the potter” —the lordly price at which I was priced by them**. So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them into the house of [YHWH], **to the potter**. (Zechariah 11:12-13 ESV)

The prophets of the restoration very much looked to the First Advent. This was **the purpose of the restored remnant community** – to **prepare for the First Advent**. There had to be a functioning community centered on a physical Temple so that the Messiah could come to his Temple. But more importantly **there had to be a community of True Worshipers into which the incarnate Messiah could be born and grow up as a child**. The New Testament clearly documents the existence of this community:

In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was **a priest named Zechariah**, of the division of Abijah. And he **had a wife** from the daughters of Aaron, and **her name was Elizabeth**. And they were **both righteous before God, walking blamelessly** in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord.

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to **a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David**. And **the virgin’s name was Mary**. And he came to her and said, “Greetings, **O favored one, the Lord is with you!**”

Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. And **her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown great mercy to her**, and they rejoiced with her. ... And fear came on all their neighbors. And all these things were talked about through all the hill country of Judea, and all who heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, **“What then will this child be?”** For **the hand of the Lord was with him**.

Now there was **a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon**, and this man was **righteous and devout**, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and **the Holy Spirit was upon him**. And **it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ**. And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when **the parents brought in the child Jesus**, to do for him according to the custom of the [nomos],¹⁰⁸ **he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said**,

¹⁰⁶ See Mark 15:1-39 // Matthew 27:1-54 // Luke 22:66-71, 23:1-47 // John 18:28-40, 19:1-37

¹⁰⁷ See the commentaries for a discussion of Matthew’s actual text, “Jeremiah”; NBC page 849, JFB page 947.

¹⁰⁸ The Greek word “nomos” does carry a similar range of meaning as the English word “law”, but its use in the New Testament is very complicated. For a discussion of how the Hebrew word “torah” came to be translated by “nomos”, see *Excursus 8 – torah and nomos* in the Sunday, May 19, 2024

Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word;
for **my eyes have seen your salvation** that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,
a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel.

And there was **a prophetess, Anna**, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. ... She did not depart from the temple, **worshiping with fasting and prayer** night and day. And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and **to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem**. (Luke 1:5-6, 26-28, 57-58, 65-66, 2:25-32, 36a, 37b-38 ESV)

The general population of the Jews at the time of Christ was looking for the physical fulfillment of the message of hope spoken by the prophets.¹⁰⁹ **When the Messiah came to the remnant of True Worshipers, they accepted the fact of his Messiahship**. However, even the Apostles were confused about the prophecies right up until the Ascension. **Only through the understanding yielded by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit did the Apostles come to understand the Plan of God, and his purpose for them**:

So when they had come together, they asked him, **“Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?”** He said to them, **“It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority**. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you ...” (Acts 1:6-8a ESV)

The Prophet Ezekiel prepared the first group of exiles in Babylon to return to the Promised Land as a **“remnant community”**. God’s purpose for this community was **to prepare for the First Advent**. Over the long period between the restoration and the First Advent, God worked with the individuals who comprised this community to ensure it was ready. When the Messiah, **Jesus Christ**, came he **grew up among this community**. The individuals whom he selected as **Disciples and Apostles** were largely from this community. It was they through whom Jesus **built the New Testament Church**.

2.3.4 The Purpose of the New Testament Church

During his preparation of the Twelve for the Transfiguration,¹¹⁰ Jesus questions them about their understanding of his Messiahship:

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, **“Who do people say that the Son of Man is?”** And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” He said to them, “But **who do you say that I am?**” Simon Peter replied, **“You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”** And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.

“And I tell you, **you are Peter**, and **on this rock I will build my church (ekklēsia)**, and the gates of [the grave] shall not prevail against it. I will give you **the keys of the kingdom of heaven**, and **whatever you bind on earth** shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ. (Matthew 16:13-20 ESV)

Peter, speaking for all the Apostles, affirms Jesus’ Messiahship. Jesus uses this as segue into his purpose for the Apostles: to build the New Testament Church. **Jesus makes the famous play on words**: “Peter” in Greek, πέτρος - petros, means “stone”.¹¹¹ **Jesus is the Rock** (πέτρα - petra).¹¹² The New Testament Church is:

.. built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, **Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone** ... (Ephesians 2:20 ESV)

Jesus is the foundation of the Church. The Apostles were called and trained by Jesus to build the Church. The word “church” is translated from ἐκκλησία - ekklēsia. The only other instance of the word in the Gospels is in Matthew chapter eighteen where Jesus is teaching the Twelve about conflict in interpersonal relationships:

If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. **If he refuses to listen to them, tell**

paper “**True Worship of the True God**”; for a discussion of the complexities of usage, see section **11.6 Paul and nomos** in the paper “**The Writings of Moses**”; both papers are located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

¹⁰⁹ See Bruce (NT) chapter 10. The Messianic Hope, pages 122-134 and Schurer Division II Volume II chapter 29. The Messianic Hope, pages 126-187

¹¹⁰ See the discussion of this in section **1. The Setting of the Transfiguration** in the paper “**The Transfiguration and the Tabernacle**” located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

¹¹¹ See GEL pages 660-661; see also notes at www.esv.org “ESV Study Bible”

¹¹² See 1 Corinthians 10:4, Deuteronomy 32:4,15,18,30,31, Psalm 18:2,31,46, 19:14, 31:3, Isaiah 26:4, 30:29, 44:8, Habakkuk 1:12, Acts 4:11-12, Ephesians 2:19-21, 1 Peter 2:4-8

it to the church (ekklēsia). And if he refuses to listen even to the church (ekklēsia), let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. Truly, I say to you, **whatever you bind on earth** shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. (Matthew 18:15-18 ESV)

The “**keys to the Kingdom heaven**” are the knowledge of salvation which Jesus was giving to the Apostles upon which the Church was to be built. In both passages, Jesus uses the phrase “**whatever you bind on earth**” – this implies the Church would be given discretion in matters of administration and organization, but clearly does not allow the Church to make changes to the plain teaching of God as revealed in the Scriptures.

Apparently in Jerusalem, during the first week after the resurrection,¹¹³ Jesus appeared to the eleven Apostles and gave them direction:

Afterward he appeared to the eleven themselves as they were reclining at table, and he rebuked them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who saw him after he had risen. And he said to them, “**Go into all the world** and **proclaim the gospel** to the whole creation. **Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved**, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. ...” (Mark 16:14-16 ESV)

Later, on a mountain in Galilee, Jesus elaborated:

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, “**All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me**. Go therefore and **make disciples of all nations, baptizing them** in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you**. And behold, **I am with you always**, to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:16-20 ESV)

This is the definition of the New Testament Church:

- The Apostles were to “**proclaim the gospel**”, “**teach all that Jesus commanded**”
- The message was to “**go into all the world**”, “**making disciples of all nations**”
- Those called to the Church, “**whoever believes**”, are to be “**baptized**” leading to salvation
- Jesus has received “**all authority in heaven and earth**” and thus will “**always be with the Church**”

In the **Olivet Prophecy**, Jesus had foretold the accomplishment of the mission of the Church:

But **be on your guard**. For they will deliver you over to councils, and you will be beaten in synagogues, and **you will stand before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them**. And **the gospel must first be proclaimed to all nations**. And when they bring you to trial and deliver you over, **do not be anxious beforehand what you are to say**, but say whatever is given you in that hour, for **it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit**. (Mark 13:9-11 ESV)

... **you will be brought before kings and governors for my name’s sake**. This will be **your opportunity to bear witness**. Settle it therefore in your minds not to meditate beforehand how to answer, for **I will give you a mouth and wisdom**, which none of your adversaries will be able to withstand or contradict. (Luke 21:12b-15 ESV)

But **the one who endures to the end will be saved**. And **this gospel of the kingdom shall be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations**, and then the end will come. (Matthew 24:13-14 ESV)

The **Book of Acts** uses the word *ekklēsia* twenty-three times and **Paul’s writings** use it sixty-one times. The Book of Acts is the record of the creation of the Church and Paul’s writings are a detailed exposition of the teachings of Jesus which comprise the “gospel”:

But **you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you**, and you will be my witnesses in **Jerusalem** and in all **Judea and Samaria**, and **to the end of the earth**.

.. for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God. **Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock**, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to **care for the church (ekklēsia) of God**, which he obtained with his own blood.

And **when we came into Rome, Paul** was allowed to stay by himself, with the soldier who guarded him. ... **From morning till evening he expounded to them**, testifying to the kingdom of God and trying to **convince them about Jesus** both from the [nomos]¹¹⁴ of Moses and from the Prophets. And **some were convinced** by what he said, but **others disbelieved**. ... He lived there **two whole years** at his own expense,

¹¹³ See the chronological chart “Post Resurrection Appearances” located at <https://mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca/chronological-charts>.

¹¹⁴ See footnote 108

and welcomed all who came to him, proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance. (Acts 1:8, 20:27-28, 28:16, 23b-24, 30-31 ESV)

The physical nation of Israel failed to accomplish the role God intended for it. It was destroyed. God worked with a small remnant to prepare for the First Advent. The remnant was successful – those it comprised were among the first to be integrated into the New Testament Church. The New Testament Church was created and has assumed the role of “Israel” in the Plan of God. The New Testament Church has become a “spiritual Israel”:

But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. ... And as for all who walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham. ... So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith. ... There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise. (Galatians 6:14, 16, 3:7, 9, 28-29 ESV)

But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant ... (Hebrews 12:22-24a ESV)

But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother. (Galatians 4:26 ESV)

As the “mother” of Christians, the New Testament Church is to be a safe spiritual home for those peopled called to the Family of God until the Second Advent when the transformation will occur. The Apostle Paul explicitly calls the Church “the household of God”.¹¹⁵

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. (Ephesians 2:19-22 ESV see also Galatians 6:10)

I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these things to you so that, if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth. (1 Timothy 3:14-15 ESV)

The Apostle John records the words of Jesus as he elaborates on the family relationship within the Church with God the Father and himself:

I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.

Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, “Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?” Jesus answered him, “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father’s who sent me. ...” (John 14:18-24 ESV)

During the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus had warned about the nature of “false teachers”, and then during the Olivet Prophecy, he warned that their appearance was inevitable.¹¹⁶

Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will recognize them by their fruits. ... For no good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit, for each tree is known by its own fruit. For figs are not gathered from thornbushes, nor are grapes picked from a bramble bush. The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks. (Matthew 7:15-16a, Luke 6:43-45 ESV)

And Jesus began to say to them, “See that no one leads you astray. Many will come in my name, saying, [that] I am he, and they will lead many astray. ... And then 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 arise and perform signs and wonders, to lead astray, if possible, the elect. But be on guard; I have told you all things beforehand. ...” (Mark 13:5-6, 21-23 ESV // Mathew 24:4-5, 11, 24, Luke 21:8)

¹¹⁵ See also 1 Peter 4:17

¹¹⁶ For a summary of heresies identified in the New Testament, see the Bible Study Notes “The Mystery of Iniquity” located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

The **Apostle Paul**, in his “**pastoral epistles**”, written to Timothy and Titus, issues several reminders to them to **teach the true gospel**, the word of God, and **avoid speculations and controversies**. This is the way they are to **care for the Church**, the household of God:

But as for you, **continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed**, knowing from whom you learned it and how **from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings**, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. **All Scripture is breathed out by God** and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:14-17 ESV)

For to this end we toil and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe. **Command and teach these things**. ... Until I come, devote yourself to the **public reading of Scripture**, to **exhortation**, to **teaching**. Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you. **Practice these things, immerse yourself in them**, so that all may see your progress. **Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching**. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.

(1 Timothy 4:10-11, 13-16 ESV)

Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. By the Holy Spirit [which] dwells within us, **guard the good deposit entrusted to you**. ... and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses **entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also**. ... **preach the word**; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. ... Do your best to **present yourself to God as one approved**, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, **rightly handling the word of truth**. ... But as for you, **teach what accords with sound doctrine**. (2 Timothy 1:13-14, 2:2, 4:2, 2:15, Titus 2:1, ESV)

As I urged you when I was going to Macedonia, remain at Ephesus so that you may charge certain persons **not to teach any different doctrine**, nor to devote themselves to **myths and endless genealogies**, which promote **speculations** rather than the stewardship from God that is by faith. ... **Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths**. ... **not to quarrel about words**, which does no good, but only ruins the hearers. ... But **avoid irreverent babble**, for it will lead people into more and more ungodliness, and their talk will spread like gangrene. ... For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but **having itching ears** they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will **turn away from listening to the truth** and **wander off into myths**. ... But **avoid foolish controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels** about the law,¹¹⁷ for they are unprofitable and worthless.

(1 Timothy 1:3-4, 4:7a, 2 Timothy 2:14b, 16-17a, 4:3-4, Titus 3:9 ESV)

On several occasions, in teaching his disciples, **Jesus adjured them to be ready for his coming**.¹¹⁸

Stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning, and be like men who are waiting for their master to come home from the wedding feast, so that they may open the door to him at once when he comes and knocks. **Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes**. ... **You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect**.

Peter said, “Lord, are you telling this parable for us or for all?” And the Lord said, “Who then is the faithful and wise manager, whom his master will set over his household, to give them their portion of food at the proper time? **Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes**. ...” (Luke 12:35-37a, 40, 41-43)

But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. **Be on guard, keep awake**. For **you do not know when the time will come**. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his servants in charge, **each with his work**, and commands the doorkeeper to stay awake. Therefore **stay awake**—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning—**lest he come suddenly and find you asleep**. And what I say to you I say to all: **Stay awake**.

(Mark 13:32-36 ESV)

The New Testament Church is the “home” of Christians – **only within the Church can Christians safely prepare for the Second Advent**:

Now **may our God and Father** himself, and our Lord Jesus, **direct our way to you**, and may the Lord make you **increase and abound in love** for one another and for all, as we do for you, so that he may **establish your hearts blameless in holiness** before our God and Father, **at the coming of our Lord Jesus** with all his saints.

Now may the God of peace himself **sanctify you** completely, and may your whole spirit and [mind] and body be kept **blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ**. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it. (1 Thessalonians 3:11-13, 5:23-24 ESV)

¹¹⁷ The Greek word is νομικός - nomikos, an adjective meaning “of the law”, “lawyer”; see GEL page 543.

¹¹⁸ See also Matthew 24:36-51, 25:1-13, Luke 21:34-36, Revelation 16:15, “The Parable of the Talents” Matthew 25:14-30, “The Parable of the Minas” Luke 19:11-27

Be patient, therefore, **brothers, until the coming of the Lord**. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. You also, be patient. **Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand**. (James 5:7-8 ESV)

And now, **little children, abide in him**, so that when he appears we may **have confidence** and not shrink from him in shame **at his coming**. (1 John 2:28 ESV)

During his time with the Disciples and Apostles, Jesus taught them so that they were prepared **to build the New Testament Church**. The Book of Acts records the work of the Apostles and Disciples to build the Church. The New Testament documents make it clear that **“the Church” is to be a “family” headed by the elder brother, Jesus Christ, and God the Father**. The Church is to be a safe home in which Christians can grow up and **prepare for the Kingdom of God**.

2.3.5 The Kingdom of God

In the **ESV**, the phrase **“kingdom of God”** occurs sixty-six times in the New Testament. The Gospel of Matthew equivalently uses the phrase **“kingdom of heaven”**¹¹⁹ thirty-one times. **None of these usages is definitional** – they assume the reader knows what phrase **“The Kingdom of God”** means. For modern readers of the Bible, we require a definition of the phrase, apart from its popular usage.

2.3.5.1 What is “The Kingdom of God”?

On trial before the Roman Governor, Pilate, **Jesus affirmed that in fact he was a king**:

So **Pilate** entered his headquarters again and **called Jesus and said to him, “Are you the King of the Jews?”**¹²⁰ Jesus answered, “Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about me?” Pilate answered, “Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you over to me. What have you done?”

Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But **my kingdom is not from the world**.” Then **Pilate said to him, “So you are a king?”** **Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth**. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.” (John 18:33-37 ESV)

At **the birth of Jesus**, there was no doubt about who he was – he was to be **The King**, the **prophesized descendant of David** who would carry forth the throne of David forever:

And **the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus**. He will be great and will be called **the Son of the Most High**. And **the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David**, and he will **reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end**.” (Luke 1:30-33 ESV)

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, **wise men from the east** came to Jerusalem, saying, **“Where is he who has been born king of the Jews?”** For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.” (Matthew 2:1-2 ESV)

At the **Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem**, all the gospel authors record general recognition of Jesus’ Kingship:

And **they brought the colt to Jesus** and threw their cloaks on it, and he sat on it. And many spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut from the fields. And **those who went before and those who followed were shouting, “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest!”** (Mark 11:7-10 ESV)

Now when they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then **Jesus sent two disciples**, saying to them, “Go into the village in front of you, and immediately **you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her**. Untie them and **bring them to me**. If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, ‘The Lord needs them,’ and he will send them at once.” This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet, saying,

Say to the daughter of Zion, **‘Behold, your king is coming to you,**
humble, and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden. (Zechariah 9:9)

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them. They brought the donkey and the colt and put on them their cloaks, and he sat on them. Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. And the crowds that went before him and that

¹¹⁹ Matthew wrote to “Jewish Christians”. To a first century “Jew”, the term “kingdom of God” meant the physical nation of Israel under a “Davidic” king. Matthew used the alternate term to make it very clear that he did NOT mean the physical nation.

¹²⁰ See also Mark 15:2 // Matthew 27:11 // Luke 23:3

followed him were shouting, “**Hosanna to the Son of David!** Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!” (Matthew 21:1-9 ESV)

And **as they were untying the colt, its owners said to them**, “Why are you untying the colt?” And they said, “**The Lord has need of it.**” And they brought it to Jesus, and throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. And as he rode along, they spread their cloaks on the road. As he was drawing near—already on the way down the Mount of Olives—**the whole multitude of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice** for all the mighty works that they had seen, saying, “**Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!** Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!” (Luke 19:33-38 ESV)

The next day **the large crowd** that had come to the feast **heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem**. So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, “Hosanna! **Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord**, even **the King of Israel!**” And Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, just as it is written,

Fear not, daughter of Zion; **behold, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey’s colt!**
(Zechariah 9:9)

His disciples did not understand these things at first, but **when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things** had been written about him and had been done to him.
(John 12:12-16 ESV)

As a King, **Jesus must have a “kingdom”**, but what exactly is his “kingdom”? Jesus explicitly told Pilate “**my kingdom is not of this world**”, so where is Jesus’ kingdom? When David was given the promise of Messianic Descent,¹²¹ his kingdom was very real. David was the sovereign ruler of a well-defined territory with an established administration and a definite subject population.¹²² The shepherd of Israel, David, became a type of The Shepherd of all humanity, Jesus Christ.¹²³ The kingdom of David is a type of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ.¹²⁴ The promise of Messianic Descent extended the physical dynasty of David into perpetuity, as the Dynasty of his descendant, Jesus Christ:

He shall build a house for my name,¹²⁵ and **I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.** ... And your house and **your kingdom shall be made sure forever** before me. **Your throne shall be established forever.**

And now, O Lord [YHWH], you are God, and **your words are true**, and you have promised this good thing to your servant. Now therefore may it please you to **bless the house of your servant**, so that it **may continue forever before you**. For you, O Lord [YHWH], have spoken, and with your blessing shall **the house of your servant be blessed forever.** (2 Samuel 7:13, 16, 28-29 ESV)

The **Prophet Isaiah** describes **the nature and the extent of Jesus’ government of the Kingdom of God:**

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given;
and **the government shall be upon his shoulder**,
and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, **Prince of Peace**.
Of the **increase of his government** and **of peace there will be no end**,
on the throne of David and **over his kingdom**, to establish it and to uphold it
with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and **forevermore**.
The zeal of [YHWH – Jesus Christ] of hosts will do this. (Isaiah 9:6-7 ESV)

Interpreting the dream of King Nebuchadnezzar, **Daniel identifies the final outcome of kingdoms of the world**, which is **further elaborated in the Book of Revelation:**

And **in the days of those kings** the **God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed**, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and **it shall stand forever** ... (Daniel 2:44 ESV)

The **kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ**, and **he shall reign forever and ever.**

We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, who is and who was,
for **you have taken your great power and begun to reign**.

Great and amazing are your deeds, O Lord God the Almighty!
Just and true are your ways, **O King of the nations!**
Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name?
For you alone are holy.

¹²¹ For a discussion of this, see section 7. *The Covenant of Descent* in the paper “Covenants of Grace” located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

¹²² For a discussion of David’s kingdom, see the paper “David – A Man After My Own Heart” located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

¹²³ See Mark 12:35-37 // Matthew 22:41-46 // Luke 20:41-44, Acts 2:24-32, 13:22-23, 32-38

¹²⁴ See 2 Samuel 7:12-16 // 1 Chronicles 17:11-14, Acts 15:13-17, Amos 9:11-12, Mark 11:10, Luke 1:32-33, 22:28-30

¹²⁵ This is a dual prophecy: Solomon built the Temple in Jerusalem; Jesus built the true Temple, the New Testament Church.

All nations will come and worship you,
for your righteous acts have been revealed.

Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the roar of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, crying out,

Hallelujah! For **the Lord our God the Almighty reigns.**

From his mouth comes a sharp sword¹²⁶ with which to strike down the nations, and **he will rule them with a rod of iron.**¹²⁷ ... On his robe and on his thigh **he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.**
(Revelation 11:15b, 17, 15:3b-4, 19:6, 15a, 16 ESV)

Jesus Christ is the King of kings. His territory will encompass the whole world. His subjects will comprise every living human being. All other kings and rulers on the earth will be subject to Jesus Christ. **All will serve him and carry out his agenda for world peace.** The Apostle Paul summarizes the attitude required of a Christian looking to the Sovereign King:

But as for you, **O man of God,** flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. **Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called** and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of **Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession,** to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which he will display at the proper time—**he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords,** who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. **To him be honor and eternal dominion.** Amen. (1 Timothy 6:11-16 ESV)

Those who comprise the Kingdom of God will be the resurrected saints – the members of the God Family, “**O man of God**”, those who “**take hold of the eternal life to which you were called**”, and to whom God sees fit to grant the gift of eternal life. **Jesus Christ is NOW the King of kings.** He will soon establish his kingdom, the Kingdom of God, over all the world. **All nations, all persons, will be subject to him.** This message is greatly elaborated upon by the New Testament documents.

2.3.5.2 New Testament Usages

John the Baptist began his public preaching with the adjuration:

In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, “**Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.**” (Matthew 3:1-2 ESV)

Similarly, **Jesus began the Great Galilean Ministry:**

After the two days **he departed for Galilee.** (For Jesus himself had testified that a prophet has no honor in his own hometown.) So when he came to Galilee, **the Galileans welcomed him,** having seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the feast. For they too had gone to the feast. (John 4:4-45 ESV)

Now after John was arrested, **Jesus came into Galilee,** proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and **the kingdom of God is at hand; repent** and believe in the gospel.” (Mark 1:14-15 ESV)

Now when he heard that John had been arrested, **he withdrew into Galilee.** ... From that time **Jesus began to preach,** saying, “**Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.**”
(Matthew 4:12, 17 ESV see also Luke 4:42-44, 8:1-3)

Later, Jesus sent **the Twelve on tour** with the same message:

These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them, “Go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And **proclaim as you go,** ‘**The kingdom of heaven is at hand.**’ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. ...”
(Matthew 10:5-8a ESV see also Luke 9:1-2, 11)

John the Baptist’s early message during the years he spent in the wilderness was preparatory for the coming of the Messiah.¹²⁸ **The coming of the Messiah would be the first event leading up to the actual arrival of the Kingdom of God.** When Jesus began to preach in Galilee, the start of the Great Galilean Ministry, he had already been baptized,¹²⁹ defeated Satan,¹³⁰ identified his first four disciples,¹³¹ and conducted an eventful early ministry in Galilee,¹³² Jerusalem,¹³³ Judea,¹³⁴ and Samaria.¹³⁵ **This**

¹²⁶ See Ephesians 6:17, Hebrews 4:12, Revelation 2:12,16, Isaiah 49:2

¹²⁷ A shepherd’s crook: see Psalm 23:1-4, Micah 7:14

¹²⁸ See Mark 1:2-6 // Matthew 3:1-6 // Luke 3:3-6

¹²⁹ See Mark 1:9-11 // Matthew 3:13-17 // Luke 3:21-23, John 1:29-34

¹³⁰ See Mark 1:12-13 // Matthew 4:1-11 // Luke 4:1-13

¹³¹ See John 1:35-51

¹³² See John 2:1-12

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established the pattern of Jesus' ministry, which was the next step in the events leading to coming of the Kingdom of God. When the Twelve were sent to preach, this was typical of what they would later do to **establish the New Testament Church – a required event leading to the arrival of the kingdom of God.** All these events were preparatory and essential for the arrival of the Kingdom of God – **indeed the Kingdom of God was now at hand,** events were motion that would lead to its arrival.

Jesus' famous "**Sermon on the Mount**" was given later in the Great Galilean Ministry near Capernaum. It is reported by Matthew and Luke. There are several references to the Kingdom of God. The objective of Jesus' references to the Kingdom of God is to identify **attitudes and character traits that allow a person to be a candidate** for participation in the Kingdom of God:

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who are **persecuted for righteousness' sake,** for **theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

Therefore **whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments** and teaches others to do the same will be called **least in the kingdom of heaven,** but whoever **does them** and teaches them will be called **great in the kingdom of heaven.**

For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of **the scribes and Pharisees,** you **will never enter the kingdom of heaven.**

But **seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness,** and all these things will be added to you.

Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will **enter the kingdom of heaven,** but **the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.** (Matthew 5:3, 10, 19, 20, 6:33, 7:21 ESV)

And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said: "**Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.**" (Luke 6:20 ESV)

On two different occasions, it is recorded that Jesus used **the example of little children to demonstrate the required attitude of Christians** towards the Kingdom of God:

At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "**Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?**" And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them and said, "Truly, I say to you, **unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.**" (Matthew 18:1-4 ESV)

And they were bringing children to him that he might touch them, and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for **to such belongs the kingdom of God.** Truly, I say to you, **whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.**" (Mark 10:13-15 ESV // Matthew 19:13-15, Luke 18:15-17)

During his special training of the Twelve, Jesus participated in the vision of the **Transfiguration** with three of the disciples.¹³⁶ The objective of the vision was to demonstrate **the divinity of Jesus and his glorified state to be restored by his resurrection.** The three disciples witnessed in vision the glory of Jesus in the Kingdom. Jesus identifies this as **a sign of the Kingdom of God:**

And he said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death **until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power.**" (Mark 9:1 ESV)

Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see **the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.** (Matthew 16:28 ESV)

But I tell you truly, there are some standing here who will not taste death **until they see the kingdom of God.** (Luke 9:27 ESV)

On several occasions people were told they were "near" to the Kingdom of God:

- The "wise scribe" clearly has understanding and a correct attitude:
And the **scribe said** to him, "You are right, Teacher. You have truly said that he is one, and there is no other besides him. And to **love him with all the heart** and with all the understanding and with all the strength, and to **love one's neighbor as oneself,** is much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." And when **Jesus saw that he answered wisely,** he said to him, "**You are not far from the kingdom of God.**" (Mark 12:32-34a)

¹³³ See John 2:13-25, 3:1-21

¹³⁴ See John 3:22-36, 4:1-4

¹³⁵ See John 4:5-42

¹³⁶ For a detailed discussion of this event, see the paper "The Transfiguration and the Tabernacle" located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.
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- Jesus' action in exorcising demons by the power of the Holy Spirit, is a demonstration of the power of the coming of the Kingdom of God:
But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.
(Matthew 12:28 ESV // Luke 11:20)
- The Seventy were sent on a preaching tour as the Twelve had done. This was typical of the creation of the New Testament Church, an event leading to the coming of the Kingdom of God – their presence in any city was a witness of the coming of the Kingdom of God:
Whenever you enter a town and they receive you, eat what is set before you. Heal the sick in it and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.' But whenever you enter a town and they do not receive you, go into its streets and say, 'Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near.' (Luke 10:8-11 ESV)
- In the following passage, Jesus is being deliberately vague with the Pharisees due to their hardness of heart – he knew that they would NOT accept his teaching; therefore, his presence, "in the midst" of them, was as close as they would get to the Kingdom of God:
Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, he answered them, "The kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed, nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There!' for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you." (Luke 17:20-21 ESV)
But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut the kingdom of heaven in people's faces. For you neither enter yourselves nor allow those who would enter to go in. (Matthew 23:13 ESV)

Jesus' focus in the **Olivet Prophecy** is the Second Advent, the inauguration of the Kingdom of God:

As he sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?" (Matthew 24:3 ESV)

So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near.
(Luke 21:31 ESV)

On the evening when Jesus ate his last traditional Passover and inaugurated the first Christian Passover, his mind was on the Kingdom of God:

And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and they all drank of it. And he said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Truly, I say to you, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."
(Mark 14:23-25 ESV // Matthew 26:27-29)

And he said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you I will not eat it again until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said, "Take this, and divide it among yourselves. For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."

You are those who have stayed with me in my trials, and I assign to you, as my Father assigned to me, a kingdom, that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. (Luke 22:15-18, 28-30 ESV)

After Jesus' death, the man who took his body for burial is identified as a True Worshipper by his understanding of the Kingdom of God:

Now there was a man named Joseph, from the Jewish town of Arimathea. He was a member of the council, a good and righteous man, who had not consented to their decision and action; and he was looking for the kingdom of God. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.
(Luke 23:50-52 ESV // Mark 15:43)

From the **Book of Acts**, it is clear that the Kingdom of God was at the core of the gospel message proclaimed by the early Church:

In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.

He lived there two whole years at his own expense, and welcomed all who came to him, proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance.
(Acts 1:1-3, 28:30-31 ESV see also 8:12, 14:22, 19:8, 28:23)

The **Apostle Paul** discusses characteristics of the Kingdom of God:¹³⁷

For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. (Romans 14:17 ESV)

¹³⁷ See also Colossians 4:11, 2 Thessalonians 1:5
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For the **kingdom of God** does not consist in talk but in **power**.

I tell you this, brothers: **flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God**, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. (1 Corinthians 4:20, 15:50 ESV)

The **Apostle Paul** also identifies some **behaviours which disqualify a person** from participation in the Kingdom of God:

Or do you not know that **the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God**? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers **will inherit the kingdom of God**. (1 Corinthians 6:9-10 ESV see also Galatians 5:19-21)

The teaching of the Kingdom of God is the heart of the New Testament gospel. John the Baptist spoke of it. Jesus repeatedly spoke of the Kingdom of God from the beginning to the end of his ministry. In the Book of Acts and the writings of Paul the Kingdom of God is discussed. **Jesus also used one of his favourite techniques to teach about the Kingdom of God – parables.**

2.3.5.3 Parables of the Kingdom

Many of the New Testament parables are directly given to illustrate the nature of the Kingdom of God. In particular, **the whole concept of the parables is to reveal the nature of the Kingdom of God only to those people to whom God gives understanding.** Jesus used the famous parable of the **“Sower and the Seed”** to make this point:

And **he was teaching them many things in parables**, and in his teaching he said to them: “Listen! Behold, **a sower went out to sow**. And as he sowed, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured it. Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and immediately it sprang up, since it had no depth of soil. And when the sun rose, it was scorched, and since it had no root, it withered away. Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain. And other seeds fell into good soil and produced grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.” And he said, **“He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”**

And when he was alone, those around him with **the twelve asked him about the parables**. And he said to them, **“To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in parables ...”** (Mark 4:2-11 ESV // Matthew 13:3-12, Luke 8:5-10)

In this same context, the Synoptist Mark the reports the parable of **“Growing Seed”**¹³⁸ and the parable of the **“Mustard Seed”**,¹³⁹ both of which teach the **inevitability of the coming of the Kingdom of God**. The Apostle Matthew also reports the parable of the **“Mustard Seed”**¹⁴⁰ and includes the parable of the **“Leaven”**,¹⁴¹ with the same meaning. Matthew also reports the parable of the **“Weeds of the Field”**,¹⁴² the **“Hidden Treasure”**,¹⁴³ the **“Pearl of Great Value”**,¹⁴⁴ the **“Net”**,¹⁴⁵ and **“New and Old Treasure”**.¹⁴⁶ The **“Weeds of the Field”** and the **“Net”** both make the same point: only God knows who has **the indwelling of the Holy Spirit** and thus is **a candidate for eternal life** and will be **revealed at the resurrection**. The **“Hidden Treasure”** and the **“Pearl of Great Value”** both make the same point: **the knowledge of the Kingdom of God** is the most valuable thing a person can have – it comes only by God’s revelation; all other things are to be given up in its favour.¹⁴⁷ **The parable of “New and Old Treasure” is very profound:**

“Have you understood all these things?” They said to him, “Yes.” And he said to them, “Therefore **every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven** is like a master of a house, who **brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.**” (Matthew 13:51-52 ESV)

Jesus asks his disciples if they **“understood all these things”**, i.e., the parables which he has just given. They have already been told that the parables are open to their understanding, but NOT to the understanding of the general crowd. The disciples affirm that they do understand. Jesus goes on to

¹³⁸ See Mark 4:26-29

¹³⁹ See Mark 4:30-32

¹⁴⁰ See Matthew 13:31-32, Luke 13:18-19

¹⁴¹ See Matthew 13:33, Luke 13:20-21

¹⁴² See Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

¹⁴³ See Matthew 13:44

¹⁴⁴ See Matthew 13:45-46

¹⁴⁵ See Matthew 13:47-50

¹⁴⁶ See Matthew 13:51-52

¹⁴⁷ See also Mark 9:47 // Matthew 18:9, Mark 10:28-30 // Matthew 19:27-29 // Luke 18:28-30, Matthew 19:12

explain: the “scribes” were the educated elite of that day – they maintained the text of documents, especially the scriptures, they therefore were the experts on the contents of the scriptures. Jesus tells the disciples that they are to be like the scribes in their understanding of the scriptures, the “Old Treasure”, but also, they had to be experts on the teaching of Jesus, the “New Treasure”, the knowledge of the Kingdom of God.

Jesus used several parables to prepare the disciples for life after his death and resurrection. The disciples would have to live in the world and carry out their commission. Jesus knew this would NOT be easy. Apparently in Jericho, just prior to Jesus’ final entry into Jerusalem, he is at a large gathering at the home of Zacchaeus, a chief Tax Collector; thus, hated by the Jews. The audience would have been mixed – including disciples, friends of Zacchaeus, and various Jews. Jesus puts forth a parable:

As they heard these things, he proceeded to tell a parable, because he was near to Jerusalem, and because they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately. He said therefore, “A nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and then return. ...” (Luke 19:11-12 ESV)

The disciples would immediately pick up the allusion to Jesus’ assuming his role of King of kings. The others would take it as a simple introduction to an interesting story. Jesus continued, his primary purpose being to show his disciples that the Kingdom would NOT appear immediately:

Calling ten of his servants, he gave them ten minas, and said to them, ‘Engage in business until I come.’

But his citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, ‘We do not want this man to reign over us.’

When he returned, having received the kingdom, he ordered these servants to whom he had given the money to be called to him, that he might know what they had gained by doing business. The first came before him, saying, ‘Lord, your mina has made ten minas more.’ And he said to him, ‘Well done, good servant! Because you have been faithful in a very little, you shall have authority over ten cities.’ And the second came, saying, ‘Lord, your mina has made five minas.’ And he said to him, ‘And you are to be over five cities.’

Then another came, saying, ‘Lord, here is your mina, which I kept laid away in a handkerchief; for I was afraid of you, because you are a severe man. ... He said to him, ‘I will condemn you with your own words, you wicked servant!

But as for these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slaughter them before me.’” (Luke 19:13-21a, 22a, 27 ESV)

The “good servants” went about the business of serving their master, and they were accordingly rewarded for their efforts. The “wicked servant” was afraid of his master – he did NOT do the business the master left him to do, and he was condemned for it. An aside of the parable is the “citizens” – those hearers who were NOT disciples. Most would NOT have understood Jesus’ allusion to them, but his warning was that they were heading for destruction. Jesus picks up this theme in many parables. The immediate implication of it was the destruction to come in the wars of 70AD and 130AD, but the long-term implication is the Day of YHWH when God will take vengeance on all the “wicked of humanity”, his enemies.¹⁴⁸ Soon after this, in Jerusalem, Jesus is teaching in the Temple precincts when he is accosted by a group of Jewish “leaders”. Jesus responds with a pointed parable:

And when he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came up to him as he was teaching, and said, “By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?”

“What do you think? A man had two sons. And he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ And he answered, ‘I will not,’ but afterward he changed his mind and went. And he went to the other son and said the same. And he answered, ‘I go, sir,’ but did not go.

“Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.”

Jesus said to them, “Truly, I say to you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes go into the kingdom of God before you. ...” (Matthew 21:23, 28-31 ESV)

The Jewish leaders were those who claimed to do the will of God, but did not, the “second son”. The sinners who overtly refused to serve God, the first son, repented and did God’s will. The repentant sinners will have opportunity to enter the Kingdom; the arrogant “righteous” will not.

¹⁴⁸ See section 2.4.4.3 The Day of YHWH.

Jesus followed this parable with one even more pointed:

Hear another parable. There was a master of a house who planted a vineyard and put a fence around it and dug a winepress in it and built a tower and leased it to tenants, and went into another country.

When the season for fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants to get his fruit. And the tenants took his servants and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other servants, more than the first. And they did the same to them.

Finally he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, have his inheritance.' And they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

When therefore the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?

They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death and let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the fruits in their seasons."

Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people producing its fruits.

When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they perceived that he was speaking about them. (Matthew 21:33-41, 43, 45 ESV // Mark 12:1-12, Luke 20:9-18, see also Isaiah 5:1-7)

The "servants" clearly represent "my servants the prophets" who warned Israel. Now the leaders of Israel conspired to kill Jesus for their own political advantage, "let us kill him and have his inheritance".

The "people producing fruits", are the servants who "engage in business", the New Testament Church, spiritual Israel, who were about to replace the last vestiges of the physical nation of Israel in the Plan of God. The Jewish leaders were cut off from access to the Kingdom of God. In this same context,

Matthew reports the parables of the "Wedding Feast" and the "Wedding Garment":

And again Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son, and sent his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding feast, but they would not come. Again he sent other servants, saying, 'Tell those who are invited, "See, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding feast."'"

But they paid no attention and went off, one to his farm, another to his business, while the rest seized his servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them. The king was angry, and he sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their city.

Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding feast is ready, but those invited were not worthy. Go therefore to the main roads and invite to the wedding feast as many as you find.' And those servants went out into the roads and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good. So the wedding hall was filled with guests. (Matthew 22:1-10 ESV)

But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment. And he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants, 'Bind him hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' For many are called, but few are chosen. (Matthew 22:11-14 ESV)

Those called initially to the wedding feast, were the Jews – Jesus spent most of his ministry among the Jews, but few people of the general population and almost none of the leaders responded. The servants who were to "go therefore to the main roads" are the New Testament Church. In the "main roads" many "Gentiles" responded. But when the actual wedding occurs, at the resurrection, Jesus warns that only those persons who are given a wedding garment will participate. Nominal "Christians" and those who "hang around" but are never committed, will NOT participate.

All three Synoptists report the Olivet Prophecy¹⁴⁹ and the parable of the "Fig Tree", but only Matthew reports another group of parables associated with the Olivet Prophecy. Two of these are of particular significance for the Kingdom of God, the parable of the "Ten Virgins" and the parable of the "Talents":

Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps.

As the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a cry, 'Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise

¹⁴⁹ See the discussion in section [2.4.4.2 The Book of Revelation](#); also see the paper ["The Olivet Prophecy"](#) located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

answered, saying, ‘Since there will not be enough for us and for you, go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves.’

And while they were going to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut. Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open to us.’ But he answered, ‘Truly, I say to you, I do not know you.’ Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour. (Matthew 25:1-13 ESV see also Luke 13:22-30)

The “virgins” are “Christians”. Jesus is the Bridegroom. When the call goes out, “here is the bridegroom”, there will be no more time to prepare. Preparation to be ready to be considered as a candidate for the resurrection requires living by the Way of God. God is very patient with those he calls, but response is required. The foolish virgins did NOT respond when they had the chance. When the time came, Jesus simply asserts, “truly, I say to you, I do not know you”. The Christian life is one of coming to know God and of being known by God. The parable of the “Talents” strikes home this point:

For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property. To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away.

He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master’s money.

Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me five talents; here, I have made five talents more.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’ And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me two talents; here, I have made two talents more.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’

He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here, you have what is yours.’ But his master answered him, ‘You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest.

So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ (Matthew 25:14-30 ESV)

This parable is very similar to the “Parable of the Minas”,¹⁵⁰ except that the audience is only the disciples. The “servants” are Christians. The “talents” are the work God has given us to do. Doing the work of God requires living by the Way of God, getting to know God, and becoming known by him. The “good and faithful servants” did this. The “wicked and slothful servant” did NOT. The “good and faithful servants” will “enter into the joy of their master”; the “wicked and slothful servant” will NOT.

During his ministry, Jesus had given the disciples several parables related to preparing for the Kingdom of God and being ready for the coming of the Kingdom of God. A very important one, reported by all three Synoptists, is the “Eye of the Needle”:

And Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How difficult it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!” And the disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said to them again, “Children, how difficult it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle¹⁵¹ than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.”

And they were exceedingly astonished, and said to him, “Then who can be saved?” Jesus looked at them and said, “With man it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God.” (Mark 10:23-27 ESV // Matthew 19:23-26, Luke 18:24-27)

¹⁵⁰ See the discussion of the “Parable of the Minas” in section [2.2.3 The Second Advent](#).

¹⁵¹ “the eye of a needle. The smallest opening found in the home. Jesus paints a picture of something impossible in order to illustrate that even the seemingly impossible is possible with God. There is no evidence for the popular interpretation that there was a gate in Jerusalem called “the eye of the needle,” which camels had to stoop to their knees to enter. Such an interpretation would miss the point: it is not merely difficult for the wealthy to be saved; without God’s grace it is impossible.” ESV Study Bible comment on Matthew 19:24

The obvious point is that those who are wealthy in this world are generally very committed to this world. Such people will have trouble giving up their commitment. **The difficulty Jesus addresses is the fact that God requires complete commitment to his Way,**¹⁵² without which you may as well try to have a camel go through a needle's eye. Only by God's grace is salvation possible – there is no other way. The **Synoptist Luke** reports two related parables "**Leave the Dead**" and the "**Narrow Door**":

As they were going along the road, **someone** said to him, "**I will follow you wherever you go.**" And Jesus said to him, "**Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.**"

To another he said, "Follow me." But he said, "Lord, **let me first go and bury my father.**" And Jesus said to him, "**Leave the dead to bury their own dead.** But as for you, **go and proclaim the kingdom of God.**"

Yet another said, "**I will follow you,** Lord, but **let me first say farewell to those at my home.**" Jesus said to him, "**No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.**" (Luke 9:57-62 // Matthew 8:19-22)

He went on his way through towns and villages, teaching and journeying toward Jerusalem. And **someone** said to him, "Lord, **will those who are saved be few?**" And he said to them, "**Strive to enter through the narrow door.**"¹⁵³ For many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able.

"When once the master of the house has risen and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and to knock at the door, saying, 'Lord, open to us,' then he will answer you, '**I do not know where you come from.**' Then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in your presence, and you taught in our streets.' But he will say, 'I tell you, **I do not know where you come from.** Depart from me, all you workers of evil!'"

"In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, **when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God** but you yourselves cast out. And people will come from east and west, and from north and south, and **recline at table in the kingdom of God.** And behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last." (Luke 13:22-30 ESV)

The setting of both parables is ambiguous – Luke implies random persons asking questions, "**someone**". In the parable of "**Leave the Dead**", Jesus is clearly making a point to those being called. In the first case, "**I will follow you wherever you go**" the person asserts a desire to follow Jesus, but Jesus perceives that the person does NOT have the stamina to follow through. In the second case, Jesus calls the person, "**follow me**", "**go and proclaim the kingdom of God**", but the individual balks. In the third case, the individual asserts a desire to follow Jesus, "**I will follow you**", but places something else first, "**let me first say farewell to those at my home.**" To all three cases, Jesus summarizes, "**no one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.**" The commitment is total and irrevocable.

The parable of the "**Narrow Door**" is not so sharply focused. A random person asks about salvation. Jesus answers that it is difficult, "**strive to enter through the narrow door**". The difficulty is the commitment required. Then **similar to the parable of the "Ten Virgins"**, Jesus emphasizes the need-to-know God and to be known by God. Jesus then seems to imply that **the persons to whom he is speaking are not ready for calling** – the kingdom will have come before they are called, "**you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God**". Because they are hearing Jesus live during the First Advent, they are among "**some are first who will be last**".

The **Apostle Matthew** reports a unique parable, the "**Labourers in the Vinyard**". This parable is clearly aimed at Christians – those who have been called to do the work. The objective is to yield understanding of **election and calling**:

For **the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house** who went out early in the morning to **hire laborers for his vineyard**. After **agreeing with the laborers for a denarius a day**, he sent them into his vineyard. And going out about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and to them he said, 'You go into the vineyard too, and whatever is right I will give you.' So they went. Going out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour, he did the same. And **about the eleventh hour** he went out and found others standing. And he said to them, '**Why do you stand here idle all day?**' They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You go into the vineyard too.'

And when evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the laborers and **pay them their wages, beginning with the last, up to the first.**'

¹⁵² Although it is NOT generally recognized as a parable, all three synoptists record Jesus' teaching on "**leaving one's family**" for the sake of **eternal life**, see Mark 10:29-30 // Matthew 19:29 // Luke 18:29-30.

¹⁵³ See also Matthew 7:13-14

And when **those hired about the eleventh hour** came, each of them **received a denarius**. Now when **those hired first** came, they thought they would receive more, but each of them also received a denarius. And on receiving it they **grumbled** at the master of the house, saying, ‘These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’ But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, **I am doing you no wrong**. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? Take what belongs to you and go. **I choose to give to this last worker as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me?** Or **do you begrudge my generosity?**’ So the last will be first, and the first last.” (Matthew 20:1-16 ESV)

In discussing the role of John the Baptist¹⁵⁴ with “a crowd”, Jesus uses two parables which are extremely important with respect to the Kingdom of God, the **“Least in the Kingdom of Heaven”** and the **“Violent Take it by Force”**:

As they went away, **Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John**: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings’ houses. What then did you go out to see? **A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.** This is he of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you. (Malachi 3:1)

Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen **no one greater than John the Baptist**. Yet **the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he**. From the days of John the Baptist until now **the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence**, and **the violent take it by force**. For all the Prophets and the [nomos]¹⁵⁵ prophesied until John, and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah¹⁵⁶ who is to come. He who has ears to hear, let him hear. (Matthew 11:7-15 ESV see also Luke 16:16)

If there was **“no one greater than John the Baptist”**, how is **“the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he”**? The simple answer is that until the first resurrection, only God the Father and Jesus Christ are “in the Kingdom of heaven”. However, Jesus probably meant to imply more than that – **to be the greatest on this earth is of less value than to be the least in the Kingdom of Heaven**. Nothing about our physical existence can in any way be compared to eternal life in the Kingdom of God.

The **violence associated with the Kingdom is difficult**. Consider other translations:

From the days of John the Baptist until now, **the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing**, and forceful men lay hold of it. (Matthew 11:12 NIV)

Ever since the coming of John the Baptist the kingdom of Heaven has been subject to violence and **violent men are seizing it**. (Matthew 11:12 NEB)

There are two aspects to the “violence”: first, it relates to the “coming”, the “spread”, the “advance “ of the Kingdom of God; secondly, those attaining the Kingdom of God must in some way exhibit “violence”. **John the Baptist worked tirelessly in the wilderness** for perhaps a dozen years preaching in preparation for the commencement of Jesus’ ministry.¹⁵⁷ The Apostle Matthew summarizes John’s preaching:

In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, **“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”** For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said,

The voice of one crying in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.’

(Matthew 3:1-3 ESV see also Mark 1:2-3)

The work of John the Baptist signalled the end of the old economy, the nation of Israel, and the beginning of the new – the coming of the Kingdom of God. **The actual arrival of the Kingdom will be associated with violence – the Day of YHWH**. Then, after the establishment of the Kingdom of God, it will advance to the whole world. There are many **metaphoric passages** in the Old Testament which **attest to the “violent” advance of the kingdom**.¹⁵⁸ The metaphor is the conquest of the world with the truth of God. So actual violence is associated with the coming of the Kingdom of God and metaphorically with its spread in the World Tomorrow.

The **second aspect of the “violence”** is more important on a personal basis to Christians. We are in a **daily battle with our adversary for our very lives** – our eternal lives. **Christians must fight this war to**

¹⁵⁴ For a discussion on the role of John the Baptist, see the paper “John the Baptist – More Than a Prophet” located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

¹⁵⁵ See footnote 108

¹⁵⁶ For a discussion of Elijah, see the paper “The Work of Elijah” located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

¹⁵⁷ See the chronological chart “Life and Times of John the Baptist” located at <https://mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca/chronological-charts>.

¹⁵⁸ See for example, Isaiah 11:12-16, 26:1-15, Micah 5:1-15, Psalm 149:4-9

win – “no holds barred”, “grant no quarter”. The adversary will use all means at his disposal to destroy Christians:

Be sober-minded; be watchful. **Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.** (1 Peter 5:8 ESV)

Finally, **be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might.** Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For **we do not wrestle against flesh and blood**, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against **the spiritual forces of evil** in the heavenly places. Therefore **take up the whole armor of God**, that you may be able **to withstand in the evil day**, and having done all, **to stand firm.** (Ephesians 6:10-13 ESV)

For though we walk in the flesh, **we are not waging war according to the flesh.** For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have **divine power to destroy strongholds.** (2 Corinthians 10:3-4 ESV)

Many other parables relate to these and similar themes. **The parables that have been discussed in this section specifically mention the Kingdom of God.** Another area of the Bible in which there is much teaching about the Kingdom of God, is “prophecy”. God has repeatedly **foretold his Plans** and explained the meaning of the **Plan of God** in “prophecy”.

2.4 The Role of Prophecy

When God commissioned Moses to return to Egypt and free the Israelites, Moses quibbled on account of his inability to speak eloquently:

But **Moses said to [YHWH]**, “Oh, my Lord, **I am not eloquent**, either in the past or since you have spoken to your servant, but I am slow of speech and of tongue.” Then **[YHWH] said to him**, “**Who has made man’s mouth?**” Who makes him mute, or deaf, or seeing, or blind? Is it not I, [YHWH]? Now therefore go, and **I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall speak.**” But he said, “Oh, my Lord, please send someone else.”

Then the anger of [YHWH] was kindled against Moses and he said, “Is there not **Aaron**, your brother, the Levite? **I know that he can speak well.** Behold, he is coming out to meet you, and when he sees you, he will be glad in his heart. **You shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth**, and **I will be with your mouth and with his mouth and will teach you both** what to do. He shall speak for you to the people, and he shall be your mouth, and you shall be as God to him. ...” (Exodus 4:10-16 ESV)

Once they were in Egypt preparing to confront Pharaoh, Moses brought up the subject again:

On the day when **[YHWH] spoke to Moses in the land of Egypt**, [YHWH] said to Moses, “I am [YHWH]; **tell Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I say to you.**” But Moses said to [YHWH], “Behold, I am of uncircumcised lips. **How will Pharaoh listen to me?**” And [YHWH] said to Moses, “See, **I have made you like God to Pharaoh**, and **your brother Aaron shall be your prophet.** **You shall speak all that I command you**, and your brother Aaron shall tell Pharaoh to let the people of Israel go out of his land. ...” (Exodus 6:28-29, 7:1-2 ESV)

These conversations provide **the definition and specification of the role of a “prophet”**:

- Human proclivities are irrelevant, **“who has made man’s mouth?”**
- The words of the prophet come from God, **“I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall speak”**
- The prophet was to pass on the words of God to the target recipient, **“tell Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I say to you”**
- The prophet stands between God and the target recipient, **“I have made you like God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet”**
- The prophet is a messenger with words from God, **“you shall speak all that I command you”**

Moses was the archetypical prophet.¹⁵⁹ He stood between God and the people of Israel at Sinai and delivered God’s words to the people.¹⁶⁰ God held Moses in a special category – above others who would be considered “prophets”:

Now **the man Moses was very [humble]**, more than all people who were on the face of the earth. And suddenly [YHWH] said to Moses and to Aaron and Miriam, “Come out, you three, to the tent of meeting.” And the three of them came out. And [YHWH] came down in a pillar of cloud and stood at the entrance of the tent and called Aaron and Miriam, and they both came forward.

¹⁵⁹ Note that Abraham had been called a “prophet” because he interceded on “Abimelech’s” behalf before God, see Genesis 20:7.

¹⁶⁰ See Exodus 20:18-21

And he said, “Hear my words: **If there is a prophet among you, I [YHWH] make myself known to him in a vision; I speak with him in a dream.** Not so **with my servant Moses.** He is faithful in all my house. With him **I speak mouth to mouth,** clearly, and not in riddles, and **he beholds the form of [YHWH].** (Numbers 12:3-8a ESV)

During **one of his speeches in the Plains of Moab,** Moses made a dual prophecy concerning the prophetic institution in Israel:

[YHWH] your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen—just as you desired of [YHWH] your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of [YHWH] my God or see this great fire any more, lest I die.’ And **[YHWH] said to me,** ‘They are right in what they have spoken. **I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers.** And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him. ...’ (Deuteronomy 18:15-19 ESV)

This clearly anticipated the establishment of the office of “Prophet” within Israel; but also, more importantly looked forward to **“The Prophet”**, the antitypical fulfillment of the role, in Jesus Christ. While there were others who filled office of prophet before him,¹⁶¹ it was **Samuel** who established the **“Prophet Institution”** in Israel.¹⁶² By the time of the First Advent, **it was popularly recognized that Moses’ words anticipated the appearance of “The Prophet”:**

And this is **the testimony of John**, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, “I am not the Christ.” And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” **“Are you the Prophet?”** And he answered, “No.” ... They asked him, “Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, **nor the Prophet?**” So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves left by those who had eaten. When **the people saw the sign** that he had done, they said, **“This is indeed the Prophet who is to come into the world!”** Perceiving then that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by himself. When **they heard these words, some of the people** said, **“This really is the Prophet.”** Others said, “This is the Christ.” But some said, “Is the Christ to come from Galilee?” (John 1:19-21, 25, 6:13-15, 7:40-41 ESV)

The following sections consider God’s use of **prophecy to reveal the Plan of God**. There are two aspects to this revelation: **“foretelling”** the Plan of God and **“forthtelling”** the Plan of God, teaching what it means. First, the discussion turns to what “prophecy” really is – the **nature of prophecy**; then, some prophecies that have been fulfilled; then, **the most important aspect of prophecy – the Messiah**; and, finally prophecies that look forward into the **Kingdom of God**.

2.4.1 The Nature of Prophecy

There are three Hebrew roots from which the terminology derives:

- נָבֵא - nava’, “prophecy” (TWOT article 1277 pages 544-545)
- הָזַח - hazah, “look”, “see”, “behold”, “prophecy” (TWOT article 633 pages 274-275)
- רָאָה - ra’ah, “see”, “look at”, “inspect” (TWOT article 2095 pages 823-825)

The verb *nava’* is probably denominative¹⁶³ from the noun נָבִיא - navi’, “spokesman”, “speaker”, “prophet” – the most common term for a “prophet”. There are two other derived nouns:

נְבוּאָה - nēvu’ah, “prophecy”; and, נְבִיאָה - nēvi’ah, “prophethess”. The verb *hazah* is rarely used for ordinary “seeing” – most often it is used metaphorically for some form of perception. There are two important derivative nouns: הָזֶן - hazon, “vision”; and, הֹזֵה - hozeh, “seer”. The verb *ra’ah* is the normal word for “seeing”, but it is also used for many metaphoric forms of perception. The derivative רְאֵה - ro’eh can mean “seer” or “prophetic vision”. The words *navi’*, *hozeh*, and *ro’eh* are more or less synonymous when used for a “prophet”.

There are two fundamental aspects of “prophecy”: forthtelling and foretelling. “Foretelling” is to make predictions, to state what is going to happen in the future. “Forthtelling” is teaching the Way of God. God’s habitation in eternity has been discussed in section **1.3 Where is God?** in the paper “**First Pillar -**

¹⁶¹ See Judges 6:8, 1 Samuel 9:9

¹⁶² See the discussion in section **2.4.1.1 The Former Prophets**

¹⁶³ See Freeman page 37-39

The Nature of God” located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca. From eternity God can perceive the future. God is also able to participate in the affairs of human beings to cause the future to turn out as he predicts. This makes “foretelling” possible for God. However, “forthtelling” is far more important. **“Forthtelling” is the primary purpose of the prophets – their job was to teach people the Way of God.** “Foretelling” is most often used to support “forthtelling”.

There are commonly two main foci of “foretelling” – short-term and long-term. Examples of short-term foretelling are:

Behold, I **am bringing against you a nation from afar, O house of Israel**, declares [YHWH].

It is an enduring nation; it is an ancient nation,

a nation whose language you do not know, nor can you understand what they say.

Their quiver is like an open tomb; **they are all mighty warriors.**

They shall eat up your harvest and your food;

they shall eat up your sons and your daughters;

they shall eat up your flocks and your herds;

they shall eat up your vines and your fig trees;

your fortified cities in which you trust they shall beat down with the sword. (Jeremiah 5:15-17 ESV)

Now **Pashhur the priest**, the son of Immer, who was **chief officer in the house of [YHWH]**, heard Jeremiah prophesying these things. Then **Pashhur beat Jeremiah the prophet**, and put him in the stocks that were in the upper Benjamin Gate of the house of [YHWH].

The next day, when Pashhur released Jeremiah from the stocks, **Jeremiah said to him, “[YHWH] does not call your name Pashhur, but Terror on Every Side.** For thus says [YHWH]: Behold, I will make you a terror to yourself and to all your friends. They shall fall by the sword of their enemies while you look on. And **I will give all Judah into the hand of the king of Babylon.** He shall carry them captive to Babylon, and shall strike them down with the sword. Moreover, I will give all the wealth of the city, all its gains, all its prized belongings, and all the treasures of the kings of Judah into the hand of their enemies, who shall plunder them and seize them and carry them to Babylon.

“And you, Pashhur, and all who dwell in your house, shall go into captivity. To Babylon you shall go, and there you shall die, and there you shall be buried, you and all your friends, to whom you have prophesied falsely.” (Jeremiah 20:1-6 ESV)

The key characteristic of short-term foretelling is that it nearly always applies to the immediate working out of the Plan of God. The example from **Jeremiah chapter five** is a prophecy from YHWH which likely represents conditions towards the end of the reign of Josiah when it was clear that the reform had NOT changed the nation. **YHWH declares in no uncertain terms that the nation will be destroyed by a foreign power.** At this time, the Assyrian Empire still stood, so the foreign power is NOT named, although most living at that time would have assumed “Assyria”.

The example from **chapter twenty** is a few years later. This prophecy likely occurred **after 609BC** when **Babylon had assumed hegemony** over Assyria at the Battle of Haran and **before 605BC** when Nebuchadnezzar defeated Egypt at the Battle of Charchemish. After the Battle of Charchemish, Nebuchadnezzar came south and forced Jehoiakim into a vassal relationship.¹⁶⁴ **This the first explicit mention of Babylon in the Book of Jeremiah**, so the Babylonians were clearly on the scene. The establishment had become very tired of Jeremiah’s preaching. So, Pashhur took the opportunity to attempt to silence him. Jeremiah’s response, inspired by YHWH, was that indeed it would be Babylon to enslave the Southern Kingdom. Much of the population, including Pashhur, would go into captivity. **These events are history to us.** They have no long-term consequences. **They are examples of God’s working to carry out his Plan.**

A key aspect of **short-term “foretelling”** is that it **is generally conditional.** The ability of God to “relent”, to reverse a position which he has stated, was discussed in section **Unchangeable נִסְּחָ - naham** in the paper **“First Pillar - The Nature of God”** located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca. Consider the following example:

In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, this word came from [YHWH]: “Thus says [YHWH]: Stand in the court of [YHWH’s] house, and **speak to all the cities of Judah** that come to worship in the house of [YHWH] all the words that I command you to speak to them; do not hold back a

¹⁶⁴ For a summary of the chronology of this period, see the chart “**Jeremiah – Life and Times**” located at <https://mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca/chronological-charts>.

word. It may be they will listen, and every one turn from his evil way, that I may relent (naham) of the disaster that I intend to do to them because of their evil deeds. ...”

Then Jeremiah spoke to all the officials and all the people, saying, “[YHWH] sent me to prophesy against this house and this city all the words you have heard. Now therefore mend your ways and your deeds, and obey the voice of [YHWH] your God, and [YHWH] will relent (naham) of the disaster that he has pronounced against you. ...” (Jeremiah 26:1-3, 12-13 ESV)

This is where “forthtelling” intersects with “foretelling”. God’s purpose is for people to learn to live by the Way of God. The primary function of “prophets” is to proclaim the Way of God – to teach people what it means to obey God and live according to his word. “Foretelling” of punishment can always be reversed if the recipients of the teaching do repent. Consider Jeremiah’s famous Temple Sermon likely given towards the end of the reign of Josiah – the focus of the sermon is to bring the people to repent of blatant sins:

The word that came to Jeremiah from [YHWH]: “Stand in the gate of [YHWH’s] house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of [YHWH], all you men of Judah who enter these gates to worship [YHWH]. Thus says [YHWH] of hosts, the God of Israel: Amend your ways and your deeds, and I will let you dwell in this place.

“For if you truly amend your ways and your deeds, if you truly execute justice one with another, if you do not oppress the sojourner, the fatherless, or the widow, or shed innocent blood in this place, and if you do not go after other gods to your own harm, then I will let you dwell in this place, in the land that I gave of old to your fathers forever.

“Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, make offerings to Baal, and go after other gods that you have not known, and then come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, ‘We are delivered!’ —only to go on doing all these abominations? ...” (Jeremiah 7:1-3, 5-7, 9-10 ESV)

The Apostles Peter and Paul summarize the relationship between “forthtelling” and “foretelling”:

And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone’s own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. ... that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles, knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing ... Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully ... (2 Peter 1:19-21, 3:2-3a, 1 Peter 1:10 ESV)

Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. (1 Corinthians 13:8-9 ESV)

Long-term foretelling nearly always has a focus on the Messiah – the First Advent and the Second Advent and the related events and circumstances. These predictions are generally NOT subject to cancellation because they define the long-term Plan of God, which includes much “forthtelling”. These topics are discussed in sections [2.4.3 The Centrality of Jesus Christ](#) and [2.4.5 The World Tomorrow and Beyond](#).

The earlier prophets have left us no direct record of their teaching. However, the Biblical books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings are known as the “Former Prophets”. The source materials from which these books were compiled were most likely assembled by the “earlier prophets”.

[2.4.1.1 The Former Prophets](#)

God’s purpose for Israel was to be a Holy Nation as an example for all other nations to learn the Way of God, as discussed in section [2.3.2 The Purpose of Israel](#). The Judges period had been an unmitigated disaster – God would have been within his covenantal right to terminate the nation. But, God is Love. God’s love is manifested through grace and mercy. God extended grace and mercy to the nation. During the period of the Judges, Israel was a “theocracy”, under the direct rule of YHWH as King. At the end of the Judges period,¹⁶⁵ the Plan of God called for a “human king” who would fulfill the role as a type of the

¹⁶⁵ See the discussion in section [2.3.2.1 The Conquest and the Judges](#).

King of kings. God brought the **Prophet Samuel** onto the scene to broker this change.¹⁶⁶ In order to re-establish true worship of YHWH, Samuel instituted **“Schools of the Prophets”**.¹⁶⁷ These schools comprised individuals personally trained by Samuel to teach the Way of God. **This was the origin of the prophetic institution within ancient Israel as prophesized by Moses.**¹⁶⁸

The **Prophets Gad and Nathan**, who worked closely with David, were almost certainly from Samuel’s schools. **The Bible contains nothing further about these schools until the time of Elijah and Elisha.**

However, there are mentioned **many “prophets” over this period** some of whom were almost certainly associated with the schools originated by Samuel:

- Ahijah the Shilonite, ~940-920BC, 1 Kings 11:29-39, 14:2-18, 2 Chronicles 9:29, 10:15
- Shemaiah the man of God, ~930-925BC, 1 Kings 12:22-24, 2 Chronicles 11:2-4, 12:5-8, 15
- An un-named man of God, ~925BC, 1 Kings 13:1-32
- Jehu the son of Hanani, ~915BC, 1 Kings 16:1-4, 7-12
- Iddo the seer, ~910BC, 2 Chronicles 9:29, 12:15, 13:22
- Azariah the son of Oded, ~895BC, 2 Chronicles 15:1-8
- Hanani the seer, ~890, 2 Chronicles 16:7-10
- Several un-named prophets,¹⁶⁹ ~855BC, 1 Kings 20:13-14, 22, 35-42
- Micaiah the son of Imlah, ~853BC, 1 Kings 22:8-28, 2 Chronicles 18:4-27
- Jehu¹⁷⁰ the son of Hanani the Seer, ~852BC, 2 Chronicles 19:2-3, 20:34
- Eliezer the son of Dodavahu, ~850BC, 2 Chronicles 20:35-37
- un-named prophets, ~805BC, 2 Chronicles 24:19
- Zechariah the son of Jehoiada, ~805BC, 2 Chronicles 24:20-22
- An un-named prophet, ~785BC, 2 Chronicles 25:15-16
- Jonah the son of Amittai,¹⁷¹ ~780BC, 2 Kings 14:25
- Oded a prophet, ~735BC, 2 Chronicles 28:9-11

The Books of First and Second Kings contain a lot of material on **Elijah** and **Elisha**.¹⁷² Elijah was active from about 875BC until at least 845BC. Elisha was active from about 860BC until his death in about 790BC.¹⁷³ During this period, there are several passages which make it clear that the **“Schools of Prophets”** had continued to function. The incident with **Obadiah**¹⁷⁴ makes it clear that Elijah was well known and that there had been **organized prophetic groups, which Jezebel attempted to eradicate:**

So Elijah went to show himself to Ahab. Now the famine was severe in Samaria. And Ahab called **Obadiah, who was over the household.** (Now Obadiah feared [YHWH] greatly, and when **Jezebel cut off the prophets of [YHWH], Obadiah took a hundred prophets and hid them** by fifties in a cave and fed them with bread and water.)

And **as Obadiah was on the way,** behold, **Elijah met him.** And **Obadiah recognized him** and fell on his face and said, “Is it you, my lord Elijah?” And he answered him, “It is I. Go, tell your lord, ‘Behold, Elijah is here.’”

Has it not been told my lord what I did when **Jezebel killed the prophets of [YHWH],** how **I hid a hundred men of [YHWH’s] prophets** by fifties in a cave and fed them with bread and water?
(1 Kings 18:2-4, 7-8, 13 ESV)

¹⁶⁶ For a summary of the events of this period, see the chart “**Samuel and Saul Timeline**” located at <https://mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca/chronological-charts>. There is discussion of the failure of King Saul and the selection of David in the paper “**David – A Man After My Own Heart**” located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

¹⁶⁷ See section “**Samuel and the Prophetic Schools**” pages 28-34 in Freeman

¹⁶⁸ See the discussion in section **2.4 The Role of Prophecy**.

¹⁶⁹ Note: one of these is called a man of **“the sons of the prophets”** (1 Kings 20:35); this is the technical term for a member of a “School of the Prophets”, see Freeman page 31.

¹⁷⁰ This “Jehu” is almost certainly NOT the same “Jehu” of 1 Kings chapter 16.

¹⁷¹ The name suggests that this is the “Jonah” of the Book of Jonah, see Jonah 1:1.

¹⁷² See 1 Kings chapters 17, 18, 19, 21:17-29, 2 Kings chapters 1, 2, 3:9-20, 4, 5, 6, 7:1-2, 8:1-14, 9:1-13, 13:14-21

¹⁷³ For a summary of the chronology of this period, see the chart “**Life and Times of Elijah**” located at <https://mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca/chronological-charts>.

¹⁷⁴ This may or may NOT be the “Obadiah” who wrote the Book of Obadiah – there is no conclusive evidence either way, but it is chronologically possible.

After the death of Ahab, Jezebel's power was apparently reduced because Elisha was able to re-establish "**Schools of the Prophets**" at **Bethel**, **Jericho**, and **Gilgal**.¹⁷⁵ Elisha was closely associated with the "**Schools of the Prophets**".¹⁷⁶ Elisha and the "**Schools of the Prophets**" were instrumental in **the purge of Jehu**, a defining event in the history of North Israel:

Then **Elisha the prophet** called **one of the sons of the prophets** and said to him, "Tie up your garments, and take this flask of oil in your hand, and go to Ramoth-gilead. And when you arrive, **look there for Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat**, son of Nimshi. And go in and have him rise from among his fellows, and lead him to an inner chamber. Then take the flask of oil and pour it on his head and say, '**Thus says [YHWH], I anoint you king over Israel.**' Then open the door and flee; do not linger."

So **the young man, the servant of the prophet**, went to Ramoth-gilead. And when he came, behold, the commanders of the army were in council. And he said, "I have a word for you, O commander." And Jehu said, "To which of us all?" And he said, "**To you, O commander.**" So he arose and went into the house. And the young man poured the oil on his head, saying to him,

Thus says [YHWH], the God of Israel, I anoint you king over the people of [YHWH], over Israel.

And **you shall strike down the house of Ahab your master**, so that I may avenge on Jezebel the blood of my servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of [YHWH]. For **the whole house of Ahab shall perish**, and I will cut off from Ahab every male, bond or free, in Israel. And I will make the house of Ahab like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah. And **the dogs shall eat Jezebel in the territory of Jezreel**, and none shall bury her.

Then he opened the door and fled. (2 Kings 9:1-10 ESV)

The purge of Jehu occurred in about 840BC, at which time Jezebel was killed. Elisha died about 790.¹⁷⁷ No doubt for the rest of his life and a period afterward, **the "Schools of the Prophets" flourished**, but there is no specific information. God continued to send prophets to both the Northern Kingdom and the Southern Kingdom.¹⁷⁸ However somewhere between the death of Elisha and the arrival of the Prophet Amos, about a generation later, **the "Schools of the Prophets" became corrupted**, and God had to deal with individuals specifically called to be Prophets:

And **Amaziah said to Amos**, "**O seer, go, flee away to the land of Judah**, and eat bread there, and prophesy there, but never again prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is a temple of the kingdom." Then **Amos answered and said to Amaziah**, "**I was no prophet, nor a prophet's son**, but I was a herdsman and a dresser of sycamore figs. But [YHWH] took me from following the flock, and **[YHWH] said to me, 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel.'**" (Amos 7:12-15 ESV)

After this time the institutional prophets were more or less considered to be "false prophets".¹⁷⁹ False Prophets are discussed in section **2.4.1.3 False Prophets**. There may at times have been periods of some reconciliation, as suggested in the time of Josiah. Jeremiah, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah were probably all active at this time. They and the institutional prophets together would have listened to King Josiah:

And **the king went up to the house of [YHWH]**, and with him all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem and **the priests** and **the prophets**, all the people, both small and great. And **he read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant**¹⁸⁰ that had been found in the house of [YHWH]. (2 Kings 23:2 ESV)

All these prophets have been designated the "**Former Prophets**" (with the exception of Amos, and possibly Jonah and Obadiah). **We have no written record of their teaching**; however, it is clear that many of them wrote. The author of the Books of First and Second Kings repeatedly mentions his sources: the "**Book of the Acts of Solomon**",¹⁸¹ the "**Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel**",¹⁸² the "**Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah**".¹⁸³ As does the Chronicler: "**the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel**",¹⁸⁴ the "**Book of the kings of Israel**",¹⁸⁵ the "**Book of the Kings**".¹⁸⁶ The Chronicler also

¹⁷⁵ See 2 Kings 2:3, 5, 15, 4:38

¹⁷⁶ See 2 Kings 4:1-6, 38-44, 6:1-7

¹⁷⁷ See 2 Kings 13:14-21

¹⁷⁸ See 2 Kings 17:13,23, 2 Chronicles 36:15-16

¹⁷⁹ See Isaiah 9:15, 28:7, 29:10, Jeremiah 2:8,26, 5:13,31, 6:13, 8:10, 14:13-18, 23:9-40, 26:7-11, 27:9-18, 29:21-23, Lamentations 4:13, Ezekiel 13:2-16, 22:25-28, Hosea 9:7-9, Micah 3:5-7,11, Zephaniah 3:4

¹⁸⁰ For a discussion of the nature of this document see section **10.2 The Reforms of Hezekiah and Josiah** in the paper "**The Writings of Moses**" located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

¹⁸¹ See 1 Kings 11:41

¹⁸² See 1 Kings 14:19, 15:31, 16:14,20,27, 22:39, 2 Kings 1:18, 10:34, 13:8,12, 14:15, 15:11,15,21,26,31

¹⁸³ See 1 Kings 14:29, 15:7,23, 22:45, 2 Kings 8:23, 12:19, 14:18, 15:6,36, 20:20, 21:7,25, 23:28, 24:5

¹⁸⁴ See 2 Chronicles 16:11, 25:26, 27:7, 28:26, 32:32, 35:27, 36:8

¹⁸⁵ See 2 Chronicles 20:34

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mentions several **authors of his source material**: the “history of Nathan the prophet”, the “prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite”, the “visions of Iddo the seer”,¹⁸⁷ the “chronicles of Shemaiah the prophet and of Iddo the seer”,¹⁸⁸ the “story of the prophet Iddo”,¹⁸⁹ the “chronicles of Jehu the son of Hanani”,¹⁹⁰ “now the rest of the acts of Uzziah, from first to last, Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz wrote”.¹⁹¹ **Clearly the “prophets” were the ones who maintained the records which were used as the source material for the books that have been passed down to us.** The following two passages make this abundantly clear:

Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah and his good deeds, behold, they are **written in the vision of Isaiah the prophet**, the son of Amoz, **in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel**. (2 Chronicles 32:32 ESV)

Jeremiah also uttered a lament for Josiah; and all the singing men and singing women have spoken of Josiah in their laments to this day. They made these a rule in Israel; behold, **they are written in the Laments**.¹⁹² Now **the rest of the acts of Josiah**, and his good deeds according to what is written in the [torah]¹⁹³ of [YHWH], and his acts, first and last, behold, **they are written in the Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah**. (2 Chronicles 35:25-27 ESV)

As prophesized through Moses, the prophetic institution in Israel was established by Samuel. The early prophets played a key role in **teaching the nation of Israel the Way of God**. Unfortunately, the nation persisted in apostacy, which led God to provide a new breed of prophets – the “**writing prophets**”.

2.4.1.2 The Writing Prophets

The documents that have comedown to us from the “**writing prophets**” contain **the second great revelation from God to man** (this is discussed further in section **3.3 The Three Great Periods of Revelation** in the paper “**Third Pillar - The Way of God**” located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca). God sent these men to convict Israel of her sins and where possible bring some to repentance. **The messages of the “writings prophets” were first and foremost for their original audience.** However, their teaching is also eternal. **The materials that God inspired to be recorded and preserved contain truth from God that is required for all True Worshippers** to know God, to know his Plan, and to live by the Way of God. **The following sections briefly survey the contributions of each of the “writings prophets” to the revelation of the Plan of God.** The Plan of God has unfolded along two axes: the history of salvation and the future of salvation. The “writing prophets” have contributed understanding along both of these axes.

Prophets Obadiah, Joel, and Jonah

The two earliest prophetic books, **Obadiah** and **Joel**, **were written during the turbulent times during the middle of the ninth century**.¹⁹⁴ The last reference to Elijah occurs during this period,¹⁹⁵ and Elisha was in the middle of his career. King Jehoram (849-842BC) of the Southern Kingdom was married to Athaliah, daughter of King Ahab (875-853BC) of the Northern Kingdom.¹⁹⁶ Jehoram, abetted by Athaliah, led the nation into grievous sin and apostacy.¹⁹⁷ **Two significant events occurred during Jehoram’s reign**: Edom revolted from Israelite control,¹⁹⁸ and a coalition of nearby nations sacked Jerusalem.¹⁹⁹

With the books of Obadiah and Joel, God began a new era of revelation. God began to reveal to human beings his prophetic word to be recorded and passed down through the generations. The messages recorded are very profound. They had immediate meaning to the original audience but also **God began to piece together a picture of the future**. How God would bring about the planned salvation for all human beings. The original audiences, even the original authors, saw only pieces of the Plan – they could NOT attain to full understanding. Only with the complete revelation of the Plan, which we

¹⁸⁶ See 2 Chronicles 24:27

¹⁸⁷ See 2 Chronicles 9:29

¹⁸⁸ See 2 Chronicles 12:15

¹⁸⁹ See 2 Chronicles 13:22

¹⁹⁰ See 2 Chronicles 20:34

¹⁹¹ See 2 Chronicles 26:22

¹⁹² The Book of Lamentations may contain some of this material.

¹⁹³ See footnote 49

¹⁹⁴ See Freeman pages 140-141, 147-149

¹⁹⁵ See 2 Chronicles 21:11-15

¹⁹⁶ See 2 Kings 8:18, 2 Chronicles 18:1, 21:6

¹⁹⁷ See 2 Chronicles 21:4,6,11

¹⁹⁸ See 2 Kings 8:20-22, 2 Chronicles 21:8-10

¹⁹⁹ See 2 Chronicles 21:16-17, 22:1

have now, can we properly understand all the revelations given to the writing prophets. It is beyond the scope of this paper to do even a survey of the writing prophets – all that can be done is excerpt **examples demonstrating the progressive revelation of the Plan of God.**

The **Book of Obadiah** reflects the sack of Jerusalem during the days of Jehoram. The book contains many allusions to the historic enmity between Israel and Edom. But, more importantly, it begins to show **“Edom” as a type of the nations of the world in enmity with God** who gather to fight against the returning King of kings and suffer utter destruction in the **Battle of Armageddon**:

The vision of Obadiah.

Thus says the Lord [YHWH] concerning Edom:

We have heard **a report from [YHWH]**, and a messenger has been sent **among the nations**:

“Rise up! **Let us rise against her for battle!**” (Obadiah 1 ESV)

Thus says the Lord [YHWH] to the mountains and the hills, the ravines and the valleys, the desolate wastes and the deserted cities, which have become a prey and derision **to the rest of the nations** all around, therefore **thus says the Lord [YHWH]**: Surely **I have spoken in my hot jealousy against the rest of the nations** [even]²⁰⁰ **against all Edom** ... (Ezekiel 36:4b-5a ESV)

Who is this who comes from Edom, in crimsoned garments from Bozrah, he who is splendid in his apparel, marching in the greatness of his strength?

It is I, speaking in righteousness, mighty to save.

Why is your apparel red, and **your garments like his who treads in the winepress?**

I have trodden the winepress alone, and from the peoples no one was with me;

I trod them in my anger and trampled them in my wrath;

their lifeblood spattered on my garments, and stained all my apparel.

For **the day of vengeance was in my heart**, and my year of redemption had come.

I looked, but there was no one to help; I was appalled, but there was no one to uphold;

so **my own arm brought me salvation**, and my wrath upheld me.

I trampled down the peoples in my anger; I made them drunk in my wrath,

and I poured out their lifeblood on the earth. (Isaiah 63:1-6 ESV)

For they are **demonic spirits**, performing signs, who **go abroad to the kings of the whole world**, to **assemble them for battle on the great day of God the Almighty**. ... And they assembled them at the place that in Hebrew is called **Armageddon**.

Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, **a white horse!** The **one sitting on it is called Faithful and True**, and **in righteousness he judges and makes war**. His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. **He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood**, and the name by which he is called is **The Word of God**. ... **He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty**. On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, **King of kings** and Lord of lords.

Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and with a loud voice he called to **all the birds** that fly directly overhead, “Come, gather for the great supper of God, to **eat the flesh of kings**, the **flesh of captains**, the **flesh of mighty men**, the flesh of horses and their riders, and the **flesh of all men**, both free and slave, both small and great.”

And I saw the beast and **the kings of the earth with their armies gathered to make war against him who was sitting on the horse** and against his army. ... And **the rest were slain by the sword that came from the mouth of him who was sitting on the horse**, and all the birds were gorged with their flesh.

(Revelation 16:14, 16, 19:11-13, 15b-19, 21 ESV)

The Book of Obadiah introduces the concept that **the Day of YHWH**²⁰¹ as a day of **God’s wrath on the nations of the world**, and the subsequent **rule of the resurrected Saints with Jesus Christ in the Kingdom of God**:

For the day of [YHWH] is near upon all the nations.

As you have done, it shall be done to you; your deeds shall return on your own head.

But in Mount Zion there shall be **those who escape**, and it **shall be holy** ...

Saviors shall go up to Mount Zion to rule Mount Esau,

and **the kingdom shall be [YHWH’s]**. (Obadiah 15, 17a, 21 ESV)

... for you were slain, and **by your blood you ransomed people for God**

from every tribe and language and people and nation,

and **you have made them a kingdom** and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.

²⁰⁰ This “waw” is best taken as appositional, not conjunctive.

²⁰¹ For a discussion of this, see section **2.4.4.3 The Day of YHWH**; see also the paper “**The Day of YHWH**” located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. ... Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years. (Revelation 5:9b-10, 20:4bβ, 6 ESV)

The locust plague and the severe drought reported in the Book of Joel may reflect the punishment on the nation for the sins of Jehoram and his wife Athaliah, as was prophesized by Elijah:

And a letter came to [Jehoram] from Elijah the prophet, saying, "Thus says [YHWH], the God of David your father, 'Because you have not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat your father, or in the ways of Asa king of Judah, but have walked in the way of the kings of Israel and have enticed Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem into whoredom, as the house of Ahab led Israel into whoredom, and also you have killed your brothers, of your father's house, who were better than you, behold, [YHWH] will bring a great plague on your people, your children, your wives, and all your possessions ...'"

(2 Chronicles 21:12-14 ESV)

Hear this, you elders; give ear, all inhabitants of the land!

What the cutting locust left, the swarming locust has eaten.

What the swarming locust left, the hopping locust has eaten,

and what the hopping locust left, the destroying locust has eaten.

The fields are destroyed, the ground mourns, because the grain is destroyed, the wine dries up, the oil languishes.

Be ashamed, O tillers of the soil; wail, O vinedressers,

for the wheat and the barley, because the harvest of the field has perished.

The vine dries up; the fig tree languishes.

Pomegranate, palm, and apple, all the trees of the field are dried up,

and gladness dries up from the children of man. (Joel 1:2a, 4, 10-12 ESV)

The Book of Joel is famous for its numerous allusions to the Day of YHWH,²⁰² and for the prophecy of the pouring out of the Holy Spirit,²⁰³ but it also introduces the concepts of personal and corporate repentance²⁰⁴ and the potential for restoration.²⁰⁵ These concepts are foundational to the message of all the writing prophets, as discussed in the sections [2.3.2.3 Prophets, Destruction, and Hope](#) and [2.3.3 The Purpose of the Restoration](#).

If in fact, the "Jonah" of the Book of Jonah is "Jonah the prophet" of Second Kings chapter fifteen, then the King in Assyria when Jonah went there was probably Shalmaneser IV (783-774BC).²⁰⁶ There are two main themes in the Book of Jonah, both of which become exceedingly important in the New Testament:

- **Reluctance to serve God**

Now the word of [YHWH] came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it, for their evil has come up before me." But Jonah rose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of [YHWH]. ... And [YHWH] appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

When my life was fainting away, I remembered [YHWH], and my prayer came to you, into your holy temple.

But I with the voice of thanksgiving will sacrifice to you; what I have vowed I will pay. Salvation belongs to [YHWH]!

And [YHWH] spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah out upon the dry land.

(Jonah 1:1-3a, 17, 2:7, 9-10 ESV)

- **Repentance of Gentiles**

And the people of Nineveh believed God. They called for a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them.

The word reached the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And he issued a proclamation and published through Nineveh, "By the decree of the king and his nobles: Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything. Let them not feed or drink water, but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and let them call out mightily to God. Let everyone turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. Who knows? God may turn and relent and turn from his fierce anger, so that we may not perish."

²⁰² See Joel 1:15, 2:1-2,10-11,30-31, 3:9-16

²⁰³ See Joel 2:28-29, Acts 2:14-21

²⁰⁴ See Joel 1:8,13-14, 2:12-17

²⁰⁵ See Joel 2:18-27,32, 3:1,17,20

²⁰⁶ See Bright page 256

When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, **God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it.** (Jonah 3:5-10 ESV)

The first lesson, is of course incumbent on **any person who receives a calling from God: respond!**²⁰⁷ An aside of the first lesson is **the one sign Jesus gave** the “scribes and Pharisees” **of his Messiahship:** Then some of **the scribes and Pharisees** answered him, saying, “**Teacher, we wish to see a sign from you.**” But he answered them, “An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but **no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah.** For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, **so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.**²⁰⁸ ...” (Mathew 12:38-40 ESV see also Luke 11:29-30)

Jesus went on to impress upon the “scribes and Pharisees” **the second lesson from Jonah** – a lesson which **the Apostle Paul saw repeated on several occasions:**

The **men of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it,** for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here. The **queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it,** for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here. (Matthew 12:41-42 ESV see also Luke 11:31-32)

The next Sabbath almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord. But when **the Jews** saw the crowds, they **were filled with jealousy** and began to contradict what was spoken by Paul, reviling him. And **Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly,** saying, “It was necessary that the word of God be spoken first to you. Since you thrust it aside and **judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life,** behold, **we are turning to the Gentiles.**

When Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia, **Paul was** occupied with the word, **testifying to the Jews that the Christ was Jesus.** And when **they opposed and reviled him,** he shook out his garments and said to them, “**Your blood be on your own heads!** I am innocent. **From now on I will go to the Gentiles.**” (Acts 13:44-46, 18:5-6 ESV)²⁰⁹

These three earliest Writing Prophets set the stage for what was to come. Most of the main themes of prophecy, as expounded by subsequent writing prophets, have been introduced:

- The wrath of God towards his enemies
- The Day of YHWH
- The rule of the resurrected Saints with Jesus Christ in the Kingdom of God
- God’s efforts to work with the Nation of Israel
- Individual and corporate repentance
- The ability of God to relent of promised punishment
- The pouring out of the Holy Spirit
- The promise of restoration
- Personal calling of individuals
- The need for response to calling
- The extension of God’s grace to “Gentiles” – all people in all nations

Prophets Amos and Hosea

The next two Writing Prophets are **Amos** and **Hosea**. Amos was active for a relatively short period around 760BC.²¹⁰ Hosea started about the same time and was active much longer,²¹¹ and he may well have ended his career in the Southern Kingdom. **The main focus of both of these prophets was the Northern Kingdom,** which had been in apostacy from its inception.²¹² God made a concerted effort to draw the Northern Kingdom out of apostacy through **the purge of Jehu** in 842BC. Elisha’s involvement in this was discussed in section **2.4.1.1 The Former Prophets.** Jehu met with some success, and he was

²⁰⁷ See section **2.3.1 Election.**

²⁰⁸ This of course was literally fulfilled when Jesus died late in the afternoon on a Wednesday and was resurrected late in the afternoon on the Sabbath. See the chronological chart, “**Jesus’ Last Ten Days**” located at <https://mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca/chronological-charts>. Note also that Jonah 2:1-6 strongly implies that Jonah was in fact dead for the three days in the fish. The “sign” comprises not only of the time element, but also the fact of the resurrection.

²⁰⁹ See also Acts 9:15, 10:45, 11:1-18, 13:47-48, 14:2-7, 27, 15:1-21, 22:21, 26:17, 20, 23, 28:28

²¹⁰ See Freeman page 187

²¹¹ See Freeman pages 175-176

²¹² See the discussion in section **2.3.2.2 The Monarchy.**

promised that his dynasty would last four generations. However, he was castigated for NOT carrying the reform far enough and **his failure became proverbial**:

Thus **Jehu wiped out Baal from Israel**. But **Jehu did not turn aside from the sins of Jeroboam** the son of Nebat, which he made Israel to sin—that is, the golden calves that were in Bethel and in Dan.

And **[YHWH] said to Jehu**, “Because **you have done well in carrying out what is right in my eyes**, and have done to the house of Ahab according to all that was in my heart, **your sons of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel.**”

But **Jehu was not careful to walk in the [torah]²¹³ of [YHWH]**, the God of Israel, with all his heart. **He did not turn from the sins of Jeroboam**, which he made Israel to sin. (2 Kings 10:28-31 ESV)

And [YHWH] said to [Hosea], “Call his name Jezreel, for in just a little while **I will punish the house of Jehu for the blood of Jezreel**,²¹⁴ and I will put an end to the kingdom of the house of Israel. ...” (Hosea 1:4 ESV)

This is the background of both of these prophets. Jeroboam II, Jehu’s grandson, was king in Northern Israel. During his reign all of Israel had enjoyed unprecedented prosperity, the so called “Golden Age”.²¹⁵ This resulted in political, social, economic, and religious degeneracy. **Both Amos and Hosea spoke out against the sins**. Their message was the last warning to the Northern Kingdom; the end was inevitable:

For three transgressions of Israel, and for four, **I will not revoke the punishment** ... Behold, **I will press you down** in your place, as a cart full of sheaves presses down.

You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.

The end has come upon my people Israel; I will never again pass by them. (Amos 2:6aβ, 13, 3:2, 8:2b ESV)

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because you have rejected knowledge, I reject you from being a priest to me.

Their deeds do not permit them to return to their God. For the **spirit of whoredom** is within them, and they know not [YHWH]. For **they sow the wind**, and **they shall reap the whirlwind**.

Israel is swallowed up; already they are among the nations as a useless vessel. The days of **punishment** have come; the days of **recompense** have come; **Israel shall know it**. (Hosea 4:6a, 5:4, 8:7a, 8, 9:7a ESV)

Both prophets call for personal and corporate repentance.²¹⁶ Both prophets express the hope of restoration.²¹⁷ The **Book of Hosea** contains a new element: **a sincere effort to use the apostacy of the Northern Kingdom to influence the Southern Kingdom to reform**:

But **I will have mercy on the house of Judah**, and I will save them by [YHWH] their God.

Though you play the whore, O Israel, **let not Judah become guilty**.

For you also, O Judah, a harvest is appointed.

Ephraim has surrounded me with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit, but **Judah still walks with God and is faithful to the Holy One**. (Hosea 1:7a, 4:15a, 6:11a, 11:12 ESV)

Prophets Isaiah and Micah

Before the destruction of the Northern Kingdom, God brought two more great prophets onto the scene: **Isaiah** and **Micah**. Both were primarily active in the Southern Kingdom, but **neither ignored the Northern Kingdom**.²¹⁸ The Southern Kingdom had participated in the “Golden Age” with the Northern Kingdom, and as a result, also participated in the political, social, economic, and religious degeneracy. **Both prophets denounced these sins**.²¹⁹ As contemporaries, both prophets appear to be familiar with each other, consider the following:

Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for **[YHWH] has spoken** ... (Isaiah 1:2a ESV)

Hear, you peoples, all of you; **pay attention, O earth**, and all that is in it, and let **the Lord [YHWH] be a witness** against you, the Lord from his holy temple. (Micah 1:2 ESV)

²¹³ See footnote 49

²¹⁴ The “blood” of the House of Ahab spilled at Jezreel was wasted because the reform was NOT carried far enough.

²¹⁵ For further information see Bright pages 255-266.

²¹⁶ See Amos 4:6-11, 5:4-6, 14-15, Hosea 5:11, 6:1-3, 7:14, 16, 10:12, 12:6, 14:1-3

²¹⁷ See Amos 9:11-15, Hosea 1:10-11, 2:14-23, 3:5, 11:10-11, 12:9, 14:5-7

²¹⁸ See, for example, Isaiah 5:7, 7:8-9a, 8:5-7, 9:8-12, 10:10, 11:13, Micah 1:1, 5-7, 2:7, 3:1, 8-9, 6:2-5, 16

²¹⁹ See, for example, Isaiah 1:4-6, 12-15, 2:8, 3:5, 5:8, 11-12, 18-23, Micah 2:1-2, 3:1-3, 6:11-12, 7:2-6

What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices? says [YHWH];
 I have had enough of **burnt offerings** of rams and the fat of well-fed beasts;
 I do not delight in the blood of bulls, or of lambs, or of goats. (Isaiah 1:11 ESV)

With what shall I come before [YHWH], and bow myself before God on high?
 Shall I come before him with **burnt offerings**, with calves a year old?
Will [YHWH] be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? (Micah 6:6-7a ESV)

Your princes are rebels and companions of thieves.
Everyone loves a bribe and runs after gifts. (Isaiah 1:23a ESV)

Its heads give judgment for a bribe;
 its priests teach for a price;
 its prophets practice divination for money; (Micah 3:11a ESV)

Most importantly, the seminal prophecy of the World Tomorrow:

It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of [YHWH]
 shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and it shall be lifted up above the hills;
 and peoples shall flow to it, and many nations shall come, and say:
 Come, let us go up to the mountain of [YHWH], to the house of the God of Jacob,
 that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.

For out of Zion shall go forth the [torah],²²⁰ **and the word of [YHWH] from Jerusalem.**
 He shall judge between many peoples, and shall decide disputes for strong nations far away;
 and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks;
 nation shall not lift up sword against nation, **neither shall they learn war anymore;**
 (Micah 4:1-3 ESV // Isaiah 2:2-4)
 but they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree, and no one shall make them afraid,
 for the mouth of [YHWH] of hosts has spoken. (Micah 4:4)

Both of these prophets were given important Messianic prophecies – these are identified in section **2.4.3 The Centrality of Jesus Christ**. Isaiah contains more about the Messiah than any other prophetic book. The amount of Messianic material in Isaiah is exceeded only by the Messianic material in the Psalms.

Earlier prophets had included material about **the nations around Israel**,²²¹ but Isaiah contains a very large section devoted to other nations. The later prophets, **Jeremiah** and **Ezekiel**, would both similarly include significant material on the nations around Israel. The general purpose of these prophecies is to demonstrate **the universal nature of the dominion of God**. This uses two approaches:

- **Specific events related to the nations:** these prophecies demonstrate that God is in daily control of history – no nation functions in autonomy with respect to the Plan of God:

The oracle concerning Babylon which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw.
 On a bare hill raise a signal; cry aloud to them;
 wave the hand for them to **enter the gates** of the nobles.
 I myself have commanded my consecrated ones,
 and have summoned my mighty men to execute my anger, my proudly exulting ones.
 Behold, **I am stirring up the Medes against them,**
 who have no regard for silver and do not delight in gold.
 Their bows will slaughter the young men;
 they will have no mercy on the fruit of the womb;
 their eyes will not pity children. (Isaiah 13:1-3, 17-18 ESV)

[YHWH] of hosts has sworn:
As I have planned, so shall it be,
 and **as I have purposed,** so shall it stand,
 that **I will break the Assyrian in my land,**
 and on my mountains trample him underfoot;
 and his yoke shall depart from them, and his burden from their shoulder.
 (Isaiah 14:24-25 ESV)

In the year that the commander in chief, who was sent by **Sargon the king of Assyria**, came to Ashdod and fought against it and captured it—at that time **[YHWH] spoke by Isaiah the son of Amoz,** saying, “Go, and loose the sackcloth from your waist and take off your sandals from your feet,” and he did so, walking naked and barefoot.

²²⁰ See footnote 49

²²¹ See Obadiah 19-20, Joel 3:4-12, Amos 1:3-15, 2:1-3

Then [YHWH] said, “As my servant Isaiah has walked naked and barefoot for three years as a sign and a portent against Egypt and Cush, so shall the king of Assyria lead away the Egyptian captives and the Cushite exiles, both the young and the old, naked and barefoot, with buttocks uncovered, the nakedness of Egypt. (Isaiah 20:1-4 ESV)

- **God’s universal perspective:** these prophecies demonstrate that God’s Plan is all encompassing – all nations will eventually succumb to the Kingdom of God:

Wail, for the day of [YHWH] is near; as destruction from the Almighty it will come!

Therefore all hands will be feeble, and every human heart will melt.

This is the purpose that is purposed concerning the whole earth,

and this is the hand that is stretched out over all the nations.

For [YHWH] of hosts has purposed, and who will annul it?

His hand is stretched out, and who will turn it back?

Ah, the thunder of many peoples; they thunder like the thundering of the sea!

Ah, the roar of nations; they roar like the roaring of mighty waters!

The nations roar like the roaring of many waters,

but he will rebuke them, and they will flee far away ...

All you inhabitants of the world, you who dwell on the earth,

when a signal is raised on the mountains, look!

When a trumpet is blown, hear!

(Isaiah 13:6-7, 14:26-27, 17:12-13a, 18:3 ESV)

Chapters forty through sixty-six of the Book of Isaiah are unique with respect to their content, perspective, and scope. The earlier chapters of Isaiah contain material similar to other prophetic books. Chapters forty through sixty-six look almost exclusively to the Kingdom of God.²²²

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.

Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended,

that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from [YHWH’s] hand double for all her sins.

And the glory of [YHWH] shall be revealed,

and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of [YHWH] has spoken.”

Behold, the Lord [YHWH] comes with might, and his arm rules for him;

behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.

He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms;

he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.

Have you not known? Have you not heard?

[YHWH] is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth.

He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable.

He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength.

Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted;

but they who wait for [YHWH] shall renew their strength;

they shall mount up with wings like eagles;

they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.

(Isaiah 40:1-2, 5, 10-11, 28-31 ESV)

Isaiah lived and worked at the threshold of a major change in world history. At the Tower of Babel,

God had stepped into world history to prevent the human race from destroying itself:

And [YHWH] said, “Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the

beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them.

Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another’s speech.” (Genesis 11:6-7 ESV)

Once the human race was divided by languages, **God basically left humanity “hands-off” to let the various nations make their own way.** Civilization first developed in two closely related areas: Sumer in the southern fertile plain between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers and a little further north in the area where the Upper Zab and the Lower Zab rivers join the Tigris. The Tower of Babel was in the south:

Now the whole earth had one language and the same words. And as people migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar (Sumer) and settled there. And they said to one another, “Come, let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly.” And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. Then they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower ...” (Genesis 11:1-4a ESV)

²²² For a summary of these chapters, see the Bible Study Notes, “Isaiah Chapters 40-66 Outline”, located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.
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A descendent of Noah's son Ham, Nimrod, became a "leader" in Sumer:

The sons of Ham: Cush ... **Cush fathered Nimrod**; he was the first on earth to be a mighty man. ...
The **beginning of his kingdom** was Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, **in the land of Shinar**.
(Genesis 10:6a, 8, 10 ESV)

In the north, a grandson of Noah, Asshur, became the "leader":

The sons of Shem: ... Asshur ... From that land **[Asshur] went [out] and built Nineveh**, Rehoboth-Ir, Calah, and Resen between Nineveh and Calah; that is **the great city**. (Genesis 10:22a, 11-12)

"Asshur" is the eponymous ancestor of "Assyria". The **Assyrian King List**²²³ contains kings which can be dated into the first third of the second millennium BC. It also contains many earlier undatable kings. The point being that **early civilization was more or less uniform in both the north and the south**. Sumer as an identifiable political entity was overwhelmed and had more or less disappeared by the end of the second millennium BC, while **Assyria emerged as the dominant power** by the end of the second millennium BC. By the time of Isaiah, the **Neo-Assyrian Empire** was at its zenith. But, God was about to step into human history again – this time for good. The dominance of Assyria would be destroyed. A series of succeeding world ruling empires would dominate and themselves finally be destroyed.²²⁴ **This inexorable march of history will end with the establishment of the Kingdom of God**.²²⁵ God revealed to Isaiah in no uncertain terms that God was in control of the nations. God sees the "end from the beginning". **God is in control of history**. God had allowed the progression of history during the "Assyrian Period", the "former things"; but soon, **something new would begin**:

Behold, **the nations are like a drop from a bucket**, and are accounted as the dust on the scales; behold, he takes up the coastlands like fine dust.
Lebanon would not suffice for fuel, nor are its beasts enough for a burnt offering.
All the nations are as nothing before him, they are accounted by him as less than nothing and emptiness.

Do you not know? Do you not hear?

Has it not been told you from the beginning?

Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?

Who has performed and done this, **calling the generations from the beginning?**

Remember this and stand firm, recall it to mind, you transgressors,
remember the **former things** of old;

for **I am God**, and **there is no other; I am God**, and **there is none like me**,

declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done,

saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and **I will accomplish all my purpose**.'

Behold, **the former things have come to pass**,

and **new things I now declare**; before they spring forth I tell you of them.

The **former things** I declared of old; they went out from my mouth, and I announced them;
then suddenly I did them, and **they came to pass**.

Because I know that you are obstinate, and your neck is an iron sinew and your forehead brass,

I declared them to you from of old, before they came to pass I announced them to you,

lest you should say, 'My idol did them, my carved image and my metal image commanded them.'

You have heard; now see all this; and will you not declare it?

From this time forth I announce to you new things, hidden things that you have not known.

They are created now, not long ago;

before today **you have never heard of them**, lest you should say, 'Behold, I knew them.'

You have never heard, you have never known, from of old your ear has not been opened.

(Isaiah 40:15-17, 21, 41:4a, 46:8-10, 42:9, 48:3-8a ESV see also 41:21-23, 43:18-19, 44:6, 8, 45:11, 21)

In Isaiah's time, Assyria seemed impregnable.²²⁶ Isaiah witnessed the destruction of the Northern Kingdom by Assyria.²²⁷ Isaiah witnessed Heseiah's being **"shut up like a caged bird"** by Sennacherib.²²⁸ Yet **God told Isaiah that Assyria would be destroyed**, and to prove his power, God did destroy the army of Sennacherib before Jerusalem:

Woe to Assyria, the rod of my anger; the staff in their hands is my fury!

²²³ See ANE Volume II pages 113-118

²²⁴ See the discussion of this under [The Prophet Daniel](#).

²²⁵ This perspective on world history is summarized in the chart "Summary of History" located at <https://mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca/chronological-charts>

²²⁶ See Isaiah 7:17,18,20, 8:4,7, 20:1,4,6, 36:1-20, 37:8-13

²²⁷ See 2 Kings 17:1-8, 24-28

²²⁸ See DOTT page 67

When the Lord has finished all his work on Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, **he will punish the speech of the arrogant heart of the king of Assyria and the boastful look in his eyes.** For he says:

By **the strength of my hand** I have done it, and by **my wisdom**, for **I have understanding**;
I remove the boundaries of peoples, and plunder their treasures;
like a bull I bring down those who sit on thrones.

Shall the axe boast over him who hews with it, or the saw magnify itself against him who wields it?

As if a rod should wield him who lifts it, or as if a staff should lift him who is not wood!

Therefore **the Lord [YHWH] of hosts will send wasting sickness among his stout warriors,**
and under his glory a burning will be kindled, like the burning of fire.

Therefore **thus says [YHWH] concerning the king of Assyria:** He shall not come into this city or shoot an arrow there, or come before it with a shield or cast up a siege mound against it. By the way that he came, by the same he shall return, and he shall not come into this city, declares [YHWH]. For **I will defend this city to save it,** for my own sake and for the sake of my servant David.

And that night **the angel of [YHWH] went out and struck down 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians.**

And when people arose early in the morning, behold, these were all dead bodies.

(Isaiah 10:5, 12-13, 14-16, 2 Kings 19:32-35 ESV)

As contemporaries, Micah and Isaiah seem to have been familiar with each other. God gave Micah a strong message to present, and the record of it that has come down to us is powerful. But, **the revelations given to Isaiah, that are recorded in his book, are the pinnacle of Old Testament prophecy.**

The Prophet Nahum

The next prophet on the scene is **Nahum**. He is like Jonah in that **his prophecy is directed specifically at Nineveh and by extension, Assyria.** Assyria seems to be at the height of her power,²²⁹ so the date is probably around 650BC. When Jonah went to Nineveh, the people repented, and God relented of the planned destruction. There is no hint anything similar in the **Book of Nahum** – the theme of the book is **retributive justice:**

[YHWH] is a jealous and avenging God; [YHWH] is avenging and wrathful;

[YHWH] takes vengeance on his adversaries **and keeps wrath for his enemies.**

[YHWH] is slow to anger and great in power, and **[YHWH] will by no means clear the guilty.**

(Nahum 1:2-3a ESV)

By the time of Nahum, Assyria had been the dominant world power for hundreds of years. **Nineveh was “world city”.** Nineveh represented everything evil about “Satan’s world”. The nation of Israel had been under the “jackboot” of Assyria for about a hundred years. The atrocities of Assyria were infamous.²³⁰

The Egyptian city of Thebes had recently been sacked by Assyria.²³¹ **God promises to free Israel and bring Nineveh to destruction:**

And now **I will break his yoke from off you (Israel)** and will burst your bonds apart.

[YHWH] has given commandment about you (Nineveh):

No more shall your name be perpetuated;

from the house of your gods I will cut off the carved image and the metal image.

I will make your grave, for you are vile.

Are you better than Thebes that sat by the Nile,
with water around her, her rampart a sea, and water her wall?

And all who look at you will shrink from you and say,

“Wasted is Nineveh; who will grieve for her?” (Nahum 1:13-14, 3:8, 7a ESV)

The destruction of “world city”, Nineveh, is echoed by the other prophecies of “world city” destruction in Babylon²³² and Tyre.²³³ The destruction of the ancient cities is **a type of the destruction of the ultimate “world city”,** the modern end-time world which will soon coalesce under the **“beast”** and the **“false prophet”** into a hateful configuration dominated by **religious control requiring idol worship**²³⁴ and **economic control requiring “the mark of the beast”**.²³⁵ This “world city” will attempt to oppose the returning Jesus Christ and will be destroyed by him:

²²⁹ See Nahum 1:11-13, 2:9-13, 3:1-4

²³⁰ See Olmstead pages 87, 208, 227-228, 438-439

²³¹ See Saggs pages 136-137

²³² See Isaiah chapters 13, 21:1-10, Jeremiah chapters 50 and 51, Revelation chapter 18

²³³ See Isaiah chapter 23, Ezekiel chapters 26 and 27

²³⁴ See Revelation 13:4,8,12-15, 14:9-11, 16:2, 19:20, 20:4

²³⁵ See Revelation 13:16-17, 14:9-11, 16:2, 19:20, 20:4

We give thanks to you, **Lord God Almighty**, who is and who was,
for **you have taken your great power and begun to reign**.
The nations raged, but **your wrath came**, and the time for the dead to be judged,
and for rewarding your servants, the prophets and saints,
and those who fear your name, both small and great,
and for **destroying the destroyers of the earth**. (Revelation 11:17-18 ESV)

Prophets Zephaniah, Habakkuk, and Jeremiah

In the last third of the Seventh Century, well before the final destruction of the Southern Kingdom, God sent three more prophets with a message of **warning and repentance**. **Zephaniah** may have come on the scene first – his superscription simply mentions the “days of Josiah”, 640-609BC. **Jeremiah** states that he began to preach in the “thirteenth year of Josiah’s reign”, 627BC. **Habakkuk** does not specify a date, but chapter one verse six states “I am raising up the Chaldeans”, which would likely place it between 626BC²³⁶ and 605BC.²³⁷ In the extant writings, there is no overt recognition by any of these prophets of the other two.

Given the size of the **Book of Zephaniah**, it is remarkable for the scope of its contents. It censures the sins of the people²³⁸ and calls them to repentance.²³⁹ A main theme of the book is **the Day of YHWH**. The focus moves almost imperceptibly between the ultimate Day of YHWH,²⁴⁰ at **the Second Advent**, and the impending Day of YHWH,²⁴¹ **the upcoming destruction of Jerusalem**. The book ends with several glimpses into the future,²⁴² which are discussed in section **2.4.5 The World Tomorrow and Beyond**.

The **Book of Habakkuk** is very focused on the impending **destruction of the Southern Kingdom by the Chaldeans**.²⁴³ Habakkuk decries the sins of the people,²⁴⁴ but cannot understand how God can use the much worse **Chaldeans as the instrument of punishment**.²⁴⁵ Chapter two contains **a series of five “woes”**.²⁴⁶ These obviously are intended to apply directly to Nebuchadnezzar, in particular, and Babylon, in general; but, they are also **typical of the condemnation of the end-time reincarnation of “Babylon”**, “world city”, to be destroyed by the King of kings at the Second Advent.²⁴⁷ From the prophet Habakkuk, True Worshipers of God are given an example to **patiently watch God work out his Plan**:

Look among the nations, and see; wonder and be astounded.

For **I am doing a work in your days** that you would not believe if told.

And [YHWH] answered me:

Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it.

For still **the vision awaits its appointed time**; it hastens to the end—it will not lie.

If it seems slow, **wait for it; it will surely come**; it will not delay.

[YHWH], I have heard the report of you, and **your work, [YHWH], do I fear**.

In the midst of the years revive it;

in the midst of the years make it known; **in wrath remember mercy**.

Yet **I will quietly wait** for the day of trouble to come upon people who invade us.

... yet **I will rejoice** in [YHWH]; **I will take joy in the God of my salvation**.

(Habakkuk 1:5, 2:2-3, 3:2, 16b, 18 ESV)

²³⁶ The date of Nabopolassar’s first success against Assyria, see Bright page 315.

²³⁷ The date upon which Nebuchadnezzar defeated the Egyptian/Assyrian alliance at Carchemish and first subjugated the Southern Kingdom, see Bright page 326.

²³⁸ See Zephaniah 1:4-5,9,12, 3:1-4,7b

²³⁹ See Zephaniah 1:6, 2:1-3, 3:7a

²⁴⁰ See Zephaniah 1:2-3,7,14-18, 3:8; see also section **2.4.4.3 The Day of YHWH**.

²⁴¹ See Zephaniah 1:4a,7-13

²⁴² See Zephaniah 3:9-20

²⁴³ See Habakkuk 1:5-11

²⁴⁴ See Habakkuk 1:3-4

²⁴⁵ See Habakkuk 1:12-17

²⁴⁶ See Habakkuk 2:6-20

²⁴⁷ See Revelation chapter 18

The **Prophet Jeremiah** presided over **the transition of world history** from the “Assyrian Period” to the period of “World Empires” as had been predicted by Isaiah:

Now **the word of [YHWH] came to me**, saying,

Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you;
I appointed you a prophet to the nations.²⁴⁸

Then I said, “Ah, Lord [YHWH]! Behold, I do not know how to speak, for I am only a youth.”

But **[YHWH] said to me**,

Do not say, ‘I am only a youth’;²⁴⁹

for to all to whom I send you, you shall go, and **whatever I command you, you shall speak**.

Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you, declares [YHWH].

Then **[YHWH] put out his hand and touched my mouth**. And [YHWH] said to me,

Behold, **I have put my words in your mouth**.

See, **I have set you this day over nations and over kingdoms**,

to pluck up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant.

(Jeremiah 1:4-10 ESV)

Soon after this commissioning, **Jeremiah was given another vision**:

And the word of [YHWH] came to me, saying, “Jeremiah, what do you see?” And I said, “**I see an almond branch**.” Then [YHWH] said to me, “You have seen well, for **I am watching over my word to perform it**.”

(Jeremiah 1:11-12 ESV)

This vision is most profound – it reveals **God’s intense fervor to accomplish his Plan**. The vision exhibits **a brilliant play on words** in order to impress upon Jeremiah the significance of God’s message. The word for “**almond**” is שָׁקֵד - **shaqed**; the word for “**watching**” is שָׁקֵד - **shoqed**, a qal participle of שָׁקֵד - shaqad, “be vigilant”, “watchful”.²⁵⁰ An almond tree in flower is an impressive sight – **the image would remain forever burned into the memory of Jeremiah**. As his career progressed and he encountered threats, danger, disappointment, discouragement, and lack of response by the people, the image of the almond tree would remind him that **God watches over his word**. God’s word, as we have it is a complete package – **the Bible**. Jeremiah had only portions of the written word, but **he had the ongoing words that God gave him perform his ministry**. We have some of those words in the Book of Jeremiah. **Jesus Christ is the living Word of God**. All God’s actions in history look to the First and Second Advents – the intersection of the Word of God with affairs of human beings. This is how Jeremiah was to be “**over nations and over kingdoms**” – under his watch **the transition occurred from God’s leaving humanity to run its course, to God’s stepping into human history and directing events towards the Kingdom of God**.

Jeremiah grew up in the shadow of the Temple with the stirrings of reform in the air. **Josiah**, at twenty years old in his twelfth year as king, **commenced his reform in 629BC**.²⁵¹ Jeremiah commenced his ministry about a year later.²⁵² Jeremiah’s preaching supported the reform. Jeremiah witnessed the death of Josiah in his battle with Pharaoh Neco in 609BC.²⁵³ Josiah’s death resulted in the utter collapse of the reform. The Bible gives no indication why Josiah chose to oppose Pharaoh Neco on his way to **the Battle of Haran**, but as a result Neco made the Southern Kingdom a vassal and took **Jehoahaz** to Egypt where he died, **leaving Jehoiaquim as king**.²⁵⁴ The Battle of Haran was a watershed in human history – **the mighty Assyrian Empire was defeated and hegemony assumed by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon**. Four years later, Neco attempted to oppose Nebuchadnezzar at **Carchemish**.²⁵⁵ He was utterly defeated. After the battle, Nebuchadnezzar imposed his suzerainty on the Southern Kingdom, which never recovered. Jehoiaquim became a vassal of Nebuchadnezzar, but he led the Kingdom into ruin.²⁵⁶

In order **to demonstrate the finality of his dealings with Israel**, God required Jeremiah to perform a **difficult symbolic action**. Jeremiah was instructed to purchase a linen garment, wear it publicly, then go

²⁴⁸ See Jeremiah 4:16, 25:15,32, 27:1-11, chapters 46 through 51

²⁴⁹ This is an important concept for True Worshipers: God is NOT concerned with a person’s limitations; he will provide the ability to fulfill one’s calling. See also the discussion of Moses and Aaron in section **2.4 The Role of Prophecy**.

²⁵⁰ See Holladay page 382

²⁵¹ See 2 Chronicles 34:3-7

²⁵² See Jeremiah 1:2

²⁵³ See 2 Kings 23:29-30, 2 Chronicles 35:20-25

²⁵⁴ See 2 Kings 23:31-34, 2 Chronicles 36:1-4

²⁵⁵ See Jeremiah 46:2-12

²⁵⁶ See 2 Kings 23:36, 24:1-4, 2 Chronicles 36:5-8

and hide it among rocks. Later he was to obtain the garment and observe its uselessness in its rotten state:

Thus says [YHWH] to me, “Go and buy a linen [waistband]²⁵⁷ and put it around your waist, and do not dip it in water.” So I bought a [waistband] according to the word of [YHWH], and put it around my waist.

And the word of [YHWH] came to me a second time, “Take the [waistband] that you have bought, which is around your waist, and arise, go to the Euphrates and hide it there in a cleft of the rock.” So I went and hid it by the Euphrates, as [YHWH] commanded me.

And after many days [YHWH] said to me, “Arise, go to the Euphrates, and take from there the [waistband] that I commanded you to hide there.” Then I went to the Euphrates, and dug, and I took the [waistband] from the place where I had hidden it. And behold, the [waistband] was spoiled; it was good for nothing.

Then the word of [YHWH] came to me: “Thus says [YHWH]: Even so will I spoil the pride of Judah and the great pride of Jerusalem. This evil people, who refuse to hear my words, who stubbornly follow their own heart and have gone after other gods to serve them and worship them, shall be like this [waistband], which is good for nothing. For as the [waistband] clings to the waist of a man, so I made the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Judah cling to me, declares [YHWH], that they might be for me a people, a name, a praise, and a glory, but they would not listen. (Jeremiah 13:1-11 ESV)

The garment is linen – as were priestly garments.²⁵⁸ Israel was to be “kingdom of priests a holy nation”.²⁵⁹ Such waistbands were normally part of military attire and would have been conspicuous over normal attire. If Jeremiah travelled all the way to the Euphrates River, his absence would have been lengthy;²⁶⁰ again, conspicuous. The Northern Kingdom was gone. The Southern Kingdom was about to go into exile. God was through; it was over; God had done all he could, “I made the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Judah cling to me”, but to no avail. The last vestige of the nation was rotten and useless.

Later Jeremiah reports God’s judgement on the Davidic Dynasty:

And to the house of the king of Judah say, ‘Hear the word of [YHWH], O house of David!

Thus says [YHWH]: ... I will punish you according to the fruit of your deeds, declares [YHWH];

But if you will not obey these words, I swear by myself, declares [YHWH], that this house shall become a desolation. For thus says [YHWH] concerning the house of the king of Judah:

You are like Gilead to me, like the summit of Lebanon,
yet surely I will make you a desert, an uninhabited city.
I will prepare destroyers against you, each with his weapons,
and they shall cut down your choicest cedars and cast them into the fire.

As I live, declares [YHWH], though Coniah (Jehoiachin), the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, were the signet ring on my right hand, yet I would tear you off and give you into the hand of those who seek your life, into the hand of those of whom you are afraid, even into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and into the hand of the Chaldeans. ... Thus says [YHWH]:

Write this man down as childless, a man who shall not succeed in his days,
for none of his offspring shall succeed in sitting on the throne of David
and ruling again in Judah.

(Jeremiah 21:11-12a,14a, 22:5-7, 24-25, 30 ESV)

The physical Dynasty of David would be terminated. However, the line of descent would continue unbroken in non-royal persons until the First Advent,²⁶¹ when the Messiah would assume his position as King descended from David. As King, Jesus has restored the David Dynasty in perpetuity according to the promises to David.²⁶² He will establish his throne on earth as King of kings at the Second Advent.

Similarly, Jeremiah reports God’s judgement on all nations of the earth:

Thus [YHWH], the God of Israel, said to me: “Take from my hand this cup of the wine of wrath, and make all the nations to whom I send you drink it. ... “

So I took the cup from [YHWH’s] hand, and made all the nations to whom [YHWH] sent me drink it:

Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, its kings and officials, to make them a desolation and a waste, a hissing and a curse, as at this day; Pharaoh king of Egypt, his servants, his officials, all his people, ... all the kings

²⁵⁷ אֶזֶר - ‘ezor, “waistband”, TWOT article 59a page 29; BDB page 25, “waistcloth”

²⁵⁸ See Exodus chapters 28 and 39

²⁵⁹ See Exodus 19:6

²⁶⁰ See Thompson pages 364-365

²⁶¹ See Matthew 1:1-16, Luke 3:23-38; see also *Excursus 3 – The Genealogies of Christ* in the paper “David – A Man After My own Heart”

located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

²⁶² See 2 Samuel 7:13,16

of the north, far and near, one after another, and all the kingdoms of the world that are on the face of the earth. And after them the king of Babylon shall drink.

Then you shall say to them, 'Thus says [YHWH] of hosts, the God of Israel: Drink, be drunk and vomit, fall and rise no more, because of the sword that I am sending among you.'

And if they refuse to accept the cup from your hand to drink, then you shall say to them, 'Thus says [YHWH] of hosts: You must drink! For behold, I begin to work disaster at the city that is called by my name, and shall you go unpunished? You shall not go unpunished, for I am summoning a sword against all the inhabitants of the earth, declares [YHWH] of hosts.'

You, therefore, shall prophecy against them all these words, and say to them:

[YHWH] will roar from on high, and from his holy habitation utter his voice;
he will roar mightily against his fold, and shout, like those who tread grapes,
against all the inhabitants of the earth.

The clamor will resound to the ends of the earth,
for [YHWH] has an indictment against the nations;
he is entering into judgment with all flesh,
and the wicked he will put to the sword, declares [YHWH].'

Thus says [YHWH] of hosts:

Behold, disaster is going forth from nation to nation,
and a great tempest is stirring from the farthest parts of the earth!

(Jeremiah 25:15, 17-19, 26, 27-32 ESV)

The hegemony of Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon was just beginning. It would last seventy years. The typical fulfilment of this prophecy was the destruction of the Babylonian "world" control by the Persians. The Babylonian rulers did indeed drink the cup of wrath.²⁶³ The ultimate fulfillment of the prophecy is the end-time holocaust when all nations of the world will gather together to fight the returning King of kings. They will suffer horrible defeat. The final "world city", Babylon the Great, will drink the final wrath of God:

For they are demonic spirits, performing signs, who go abroad to the kings of the whole world, to assemble them for battle on the great day of God the Almighty. ... And they assembled them at the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon.

And there were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, and a great earthquake such as there had never been since man was on the earth, so great was that earthquake. The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell, and God remembered Babylon the great, to make her drain the cup of the wine of the fury of his wrath.

Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and said to me, "Come, I will show you the judgment of the great prostitute who is seated on many waters ..." And on her forehead was written a name of mystery: "Babylon the great, mother of prostitutes and of earth's abominations." And I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints, the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.

After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was made bright with his glory. And he called out with a mighty voice,

Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place for demons,
a haunt for every unclean spirit, a haunt for every unclean bird,
a haunt for every unclean and detestable beast.

For all nations have drunk the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality,
and the kings of the earth have committed immorality with her,
and the merchants of the earth have grown rich from the power of her luxurious living.

Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying,

So will Babylon the great city be thrown down with violence, and will be found no more;

Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords. (Revelation 16:14, 16, 18-19, 17:1, 5-6, 18:1-3, 21, 19:11-16 ESV)

The last prophets to the Southern Kingdom brought a message of warning, but the call to repentance was NOT heeded. Jeremiah painfully watched the destruction play out. But God gave Jeremiah a much

broader perspective – God impressed upon Jeremiah the importance of the Plan of God and that God was “watching” carefully over his word to accomplish it. Jeremiah painfully documented the end of the Davidic Dynasty, but **God gave Jeremiah the words to speak over the nations of the world**, “world city”, that they would drink the cup of God’s wrath.

The Prophet Daniel

Daniel, of course, did NOT hold the office of “prophet”. He was a statesman,²⁶⁴ a counsellor,²⁶⁵ and an administrator.²⁶⁶ Nevertheless, **Daniel was given revelations and visions which laid out the course of world history, as directed by God, to move inexorably to the establishment of the Kingdom of God.** Daniel’s first revelation related to a dream of Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel was summoned to interpret the dream, and God revealed to him its meaning:

Then **the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision** of the night. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven. Daniel answered and said:

Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, to whom belong wisdom and might.

He changes times and seasons; **he removes kings and sets up kings;**

he gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding;

he reveals deep and hidden things;

he knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwells with him.

To you, O God of my fathers, I give thanks and praise,

for you have given me wisdom and might,

and have now made known to me what we asked of you,

for you have made known to us the king’s matter.

You saw, O king, and behold, a great image. This image, mighty and of exceeding brightness, stood before you, and its appearance was frightening. ... This was the dream. **Now we will tell the king its interpretation.**

And in the days of those kings **the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed,** nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. **It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever** ... (Daniel 2:19-23, 31, 36, 44 ESV)

This initial understanding given to Daniel was the framework of human history from his time until the arrival of the Kingdom of God. **Nebuchadnezzar’s image depicted four “kingdoms”, starting with the Neo-Babylonian Empire originated by Nebuchadnezzar:**

... **you are the head of gold. Another kingdom inferior to you shall arise after you, and yet a third kingdom** of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth. And **there shall be a fourth kingdom,** strong as iron, because iron breaks to pieces and shatters all things. And like iron that crushes, it shall break and crush all these. (Daniel 2:38b-40 ESV)

Some years later, in a vision given directly to Daniel, **God made explicit that the second “kingdom” would be the Persian Empire created by Cyrus the Great; and, the third “kingdom” would be the Greek Empire started by Alexander the Great,** which would split into the **four Hellenistic Empires,** but there is no indication as to the identity of the **“fourth kingdom”**:

I raised my eyes and saw, and behold, **a ram standing on the bank of the canal. It had two horns,** and both horns were high, but **one was higher than the other,** and **the higher one came up last.** I saw the ram charging westward and northward and southward. No beast could stand before him, and there was no one who could rescue from his power. He did as he pleased and became great.

As I was considering, behold, **a male goat came from the west across the face of the whole earth,** without touching the ground. And the goat had **a conspicuous horn between his eyes.** He came to the ram with the two horns, which I had seen standing on the bank of the canal, and he ran at him in his powerful wrath. I saw him come close to the ram, and he was enraged against him and struck the ram and broke his two horns. And **the ram had no power to stand before him,** but he cast him down to the ground and trampled on him. And there was no one who could rescue the ram from his power.

Then **the goat became exceedingly great,** but **when he was strong, the great horn was broken,** and instead of it **there came up four conspicuous horns** toward the four winds of heaven.

And I heard a man’s voice between the banks of the Ulai, and it called, **“Gabriel, make this man understand the vision.”**

As for **the ram that you saw with the two horns, these are the kings of Media and Persia.** And **the goat is the king of Greece.** And the great horn between his eyes is the first king. As for the horn that was

²⁶⁴ See Daniel 2:24-25, 6:1-3

²⁶⁵ See Daniel 1:17-20, 5:11-12

²⁶⁶ See Daniel 2:48, 5:29

broken, in place of which four others arose, four kingdoms shall arise from his nation, but not with his power. (Daniel 8:3-8, 16, 20-22 ESV)

A few years earlier, Daniel had been given a vision of four ferocious beasts. In addition to the four beasts, the vision also provided a glimpse into eternity. The four beasts represent the same kingdoms as in Nebuchadnezzar's dream. The Identity of the first three kingdoms was well known but the identity of the fourth remained a mystery; however, it was made clear that the fourth beast would oppose the King of kings at the Second Advent and be destroyed by him:

I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea. And four great beasts came up out of the sea, different from one another. ... a fourth beast, terrifying and dreadful and exceedingly strong. It had great iron teeth; it devoured and broke in pieces and stamped what was left with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns.

I considered the horns, and behold, there came up among them another horn, a little one, before which three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots. And behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things.

I looked then because of the sound of the great words that the horn was speaking. And as I looked, the beast was killed, and its body destroyed and given over to be burned with fire.

As I looked, thrones were placed, and the Ancient of Days took his seat;

his clothing was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool;

his throne was fiery flames; its wheels were burning fire.

A stream of fire issued and came out from before him;

a thousand thousands served him, hand ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him;

the court sat in judgment, and the books were opened.

I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven

there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him.

And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom,

that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him;

his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away,

and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.

As for me, Daniel, my spirit within me was anxious, and the visions of my head alarmed me. I approached one of those who stood there and asked him the truth concerning all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of the things. 'These four great beasts are four kings who shall arise out of the earth. But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, forever and ever.'

Then I desired to know the truth about the fourth beast ... and the other horn that came up and before which three of them fell ... As I looked, this horn made war with the saints and prevailed over them, until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given for the saints of the Most High, and the time came when the saints possessed the kingdom.

(Daniel 7:2-3, 7b-8, 11, 9-10, 13-14, 15-18, 19a, 20aβ, 21-22 ESV)

The explicit identity of the fourth kingdom was not made known until God gave the Apostle John the revelations and visions reported in the Book of Revelation, see section [2.4.4.2 The Book of Revelation](#).

John describes a ferocious beast which opposes the returning King of kings and is destroyed by him at which time Jesus Christ and the resurrected saints assume the Kingdom of God. In somewhat cryptic language, John makes it clear that this beast is the Roman Empire:²⁶⁷

And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, with ten horns ... And the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words ... Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them.

Come, I will show you the judgment of the great prostitute who is seated on many waters ... I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was full of blasphemous names, and it had seven heads and ten horns. ... And I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints, the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. When I saw her, I marveled greatly. But the angel said to me, "Why do you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman, and of the beast with seven heads and ten horns that carries her.

This calls for a mind with wisdom: the seven heads are seven [hills]²⁶⁸ on which the woman is seated; ... The waters that you saw, where the prostitute is seated, are peoples and multitudes and nations and languages. ... And the woman that you saw is the great city that has dominion over the kings of the earth. (Revelation 13:1a, 5a, 7a, 17:1b, 3b, 6-7, 9, 15b, 18 ESV)

²⁶⁷ For a detailed comparison of the "beasts" in Daniel and the "beasts" in Revelation see the reference chart "[Beasts of Revelation and Daniel](#)" located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

²⁶⁸ The "seven hills" of the city of Rome: ὄρος - oros, neuter noun, "mountain", "hill", "hillside", see www.esv.org "Greek Word Detail"; "hills": NIV, NEB, Moffat; "mountains" NRSV, RSV, NKJV, KJV, NASB

The mystic of the “Roman Empire” has never disappeared. Even today, in Europe, people long for a return to the “glories of the Roman Empire”. History has seen many attempts restore the Roman Empire.²⁶⁹ The **Book of Revelation** makes it clear that there will be one more final, and successful reincarnation of the Roman Empire. The ways of the world have been passed down in an unbroken cultural sequence from ancient Babylon through the various empires to Rome. The cultural heritage of Western Civilization from Rome is undisputed. This is Satan’s world. The way of sin and death is ingrained into our culture. **The final incarnation of “Babylon the Great”, the reincarnated “Roman Empire” will be the epitome of Satan’s efforts to thwart the Plan of God.** Satan will fail:

Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great!

As **she glorified herself** and lived in luxury, so give her a like measure of torment and mourning, since **in her heart she says**, ‘I sit as a queen, I am no widow, and mourning I shall never see.’ For this reason **her plagues will come in a single day**, death and mourning and famine, and she will be burned up with fire; for **mighty is the Lord God who has judged her**.

Alas! Alas! You great city, you mighty city, Babylon!
For in a single hour your judgment has come.

Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you **saints** and **apostles** and **prophets**,
for God has given judgment for you against her!

So will **Babylon the great city** be thrown down with violence, and **will be found no more**;

Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying,
The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ,
and **he shall reign forever and ever**.

(Revelation 18:2a, 7-8, 10b, 20, 21b, 11:15 ESV)

The visions given to Daniel were the **outline of world history** within which the Plan of God would play out. **Daniel’s visions can only be fully understood now**, at the end-time, when they are matched with the **corresponding elements of the Book of Revelation**.

The Prophet Ezekiel

The role of Ezekiel in identifying and preparing the initial remnant to participate in the restoration was discussed in section **2.3.3 The Purpose of the Restoration**. **This was clearly Ezekiel’s most important contribution to the fulfillment of the Plan of God.** As with both Isaiah and Jeremiah, Ezekiel was given a significant set of prophecies regarding the nations. The purpose of these prophecies is the same: to demonstrate **the universal nature of the dominion of God**.²⁷⁰

Ezekiel and Jeremiah were jointly given **the seminal scriptures on the New Covenant**.²⁷¹

I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries and bring you into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water on you, and **you shall be clean from all your uncleanness**, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. And **I will give you a new heart**, and **a new spirit I will put within you**. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And **I will put my Spirit within you**, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to [live by my mish^epatim].²⁷²

You shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers, and **you shall be my people**, and **I will be your God**. And I will deliver you from all your uncleanness. And I will summon the grain and make it abundant and lay no famine upon you. I will make the fruit of the tree and the increase of the field abundant, that you may never again suffer the disgrace of famine among the nations.

Then **you will remember your evil ways**, and your deeds that were not good, and **you will loathe yourselves for your iniquities and your abominations**. It is not for your sake that I will act, declares the Lord [YHWH]; let that be known to you. Be ashamed and confounded for your ways, O house of Israel. (Ezekiel 36:24-32 ESV see also 11:16-20, 16:59-63, Jeremiah 31:31-34, 32:36-41, Luke 22:20, 1 Corinthians 11:24-25)

Ezekiel chapter thirty-seven contains the prophecy of the **“Valley of the Dry Bones”**. Many commentators attempt to demonstrate that this prophecy is purely symbolic of the restoration of the nation. However, in the light of the **“Great White Throne Judgement”** discussed in the Book of

²⁶⁹ See, for example the following articles on the “Holy Roman Empire”: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holy_Roman_Empire and <https://www.britannica.com/place/Holy-Roman-Empire>.

²⁷⁰ See Ezekiel chapters 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, and 35

²⁷¹ See the discussion of the New Covenant in sections **2.3.2.3 Prophets, Destruction, and Hope** and **2.4.5.2 The New Israel**.

²⁷² For a discussion of the meaning of *mish^epatim*, see section **1.4.3 Attributes of God’s Character** in the paper **“First Pillar - The Nature of God”** located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

revelation, it is clear that what Ezekiel saw in the “**Valley of the Dry Bones**” is the **details of the resurrection to physical life of the dead of humanity at large**, the “**second resurrection**”:

Then I saw **a great white throne** and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. And **I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened**. Then **another book was opened**, which is **the book of life**. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. (Revelation 20:11-13 ESV)

The hand of [YHWH] was upon me, and **he brought me out** in the Spirit of [YHWH] and **set me down in the middle of the valley; it was full of bones**. And he led me around among them, and behold, there were very many on the surface of the valley, and behold, **they were very dry**. And he said to me, “Son of man, **can these bones live?**” And I answered, “O Lord [YHWH], you know.”

Then he said to me, “**Prophecy over these bones**, and say to them, O dry bones, **hear the word of [YHWH]**. Thus says the Lord [YHWH] to these bones: Behold, **I will cause breath (ruah) to enter you**, and **you shall live**. And I will lay sinews upon you, and will **cause flesh to come upon you**, and cover you with skin, and put breath (ruah) in you, and **you shall live**, and you shall know that I am [YHWH].”

So **I prophesied as I was commanded**. And as I prophesied, there was a sound, and behold, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. And I looked, and behold, there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them.

But there was no breath (ruah) in them. Then he said to me, “Prophecy to the breath (ruah); prophecy, son of man, and say to the breath (ruah), Thus says the Lord [YHWH]: Come from the four winds (ruah), O breath (ruah), and breathe (naphash) on these slain, that they may live.”

So I prophesied as he commanded me, and **the breath (ruah) came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet**, an exceedingly great army. (Ezekiel 37:1-10 ESV)

God then reveals to Ezekiel the purpose of the “second resurrection” – that the dead can be given their opportunity for salvation. In Revelation chapter twenty, it says “**books were opened**” – these are the **books of the Bible** which the resurrected dead will now be given the opportunity to understand. These people will be called to conversion and given the opportunity to have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit which can lead to eternal life:

Then he said to me, “Son of man, **these bones are the whole house of Israel**.²⁷³ Behold, they say, ‘Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are indeed cut off.’

“Therefore prophecy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord [YHWH]: Behold, **I will open your graves and raise you from your graves**, O my people. And I will bring you into the land of Israel. And **you shall know that I am [YHWH]**, when I open your graves, and raise you from your graves, O my people.

“And **I will put my Spirit (ruah) within you**, and **you shall live**,²⁷⁴ and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I am [YHWH]; **I have spoken**, and **I will do it, declares [YHWH]**.” (Ezekiel 37:11-14 ESV)

Prophets Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi

The role that **the Prophets Haggai and Zechariah** played in the establishment of the remnant community after the exile was discussed in section **2.3.3 The Purpose of the Restoration**. This is the most important contribution of these prophets to the fulfillment of the Plan of God. In addition, **the Book of Zechariah provided the remnant community with inspiration to help them look to the First Advent**. This is similar to the function of the **Book of Revelation** for the New Testament Church looking to the Second Advent.

The prophecies from earlier prophets had indicated that **the Messiah would come as child** requiring a community in which to grow up. In the **Book of Zechariah**, **YHWH revealed that he would come to the remnant community**:

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder ...

Therefore **the Lord himself will give you a sign**.

Behold, **the virgin shall conceive and bear a son**, and shall call his name Immanuel.

(Isaiah 9:6a, 7:14 ESV)

Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion, for behold, **I come and I will dwell in your midst**, declares [YHWH]. (Zechariah 2:10 ESV)

²⁷³ The bones specifically represent all the dead of Israel; but, in general, the bones of all humanity are implied.

²⁷⁴ This implies the potential for “eternal life”, i.e., to participate in the Family of God.

YHWH had identified himself as “the cornerstone” – a refrain that was picked up by a Psalmist. The completion of the Temple by Zerubbabel required a **“top stone”** bringing **“grace”**. The **“top stone”** may be the one having been alluded to have **“seven eyes upon it”**.²⁷⁵ In any case, Zechariah identified that **“the cornerstone”** would come **through the tribe of Judah in the remnant community**. The New Testament authors unequivocally identify the **“cornerstone”** as **Jesus Christ**:

... therefore **thus says the Lord [YHWH]**,

Behold, I am the one who has laid as a foundation in Zion,

a stone, a tested stone, **a precious cornerstone**, of a sure foundation ... (Isaiah 28:16a ESV)

I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation.

The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. (Psalm 118:21-22 ESV)

Who are you, O great mountain? Before **Zerubbabel** you shall become a plain.

And he **shall bring forward the top stone**²⁷⁶ amid shouts of **“Grace, grace to it!”**

For behold, on the stone that I have set before Joshua, **on a single stone with seven eyes**, I will engrave its inscription, declares [YHWH] of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of [the earth] in a single day.²⁷⁷

... for [YHWH] of hosts cares for his flock, **the house of Judah**,

and will make them like his majestic steed in battle.

From him shall come the cornerstone ... (Zechariah 4:7, 3:9, 10:3b-4a ESV)

What will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the tenants and give the vineyard to others. **Have you not read this Scripture:**

The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone;

this was the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes? (Psalm 118:22-23)

And **they were seeking to arrest him** but feared the people, for they perceived that he had told the parable against them. So they left him and went away.

(Mark 12:9-12 ESV // Matthew 21:41-46, Luke 20:16-18)

This **Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders**, which **has become the cornerstone**.

And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved. (Acts 4:11-12 ESV see also Ephesians 2:19-22)

As you come to him, **a living stone** rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, **you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house**, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in Scripture:

Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, **a cornerstone** chosen and precious, (Isaiah 28:16)

and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame. (Psalm 25:3, Joel 2:26-27, Isaiah 49:23)

So the **honor is for you who believe**, but **for those who do not believe**,

The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone (Psalm 118:22)

and

A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense. (Isaiah 8:14)

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do. (1 Peter 2:4-8 ESV)

The Book of Zechariah contains **multiple assurances by God that he was with the remnant community**.²⁷⁸ The general thrust of the visions and revelations which were given to Zechariah includes both the **First Advent**²⁷⁹ and the **Second Advent**.²⁸⁰ Some of the detailed prophecies of Zechariah would have rung home to the remnant community over the intervening years leading to the First Advent. In particular, **some of the prophecies seem to specifically look to events during the time of the Maccabees**:

- The **“waterless pit”** sounds like Hellenistic philosophy:
As for you also, because of the blood of my covenant with you,
I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit.
Return to your stronghold, O prisoners of hope;
today I declare that I will restore to you double. (Zechariah 9:11-12 ESV)

²⁷⁵ See Zechariah 4:10b, Revelation 5:6

²⁷⁶ This could be translated **“beginning stone”**; see Boda pages 285-286, 296-297.

²⁷⁷ See Mark 15:1-39 // Matthew 27:1-54 // Luke 22:66-71, 23:1-47 // John 18:28-40, 19:1-37

²⁷⁸ See Zechariah 1:2-6, 12-16, 2:4-8, 3:7, 4:6-10, 8:1-5, 9-19, 10:1

²⁷⁹ See Zechariah 2:10, 3:8-9, 4:7, 6:12-13, 15, 9:9, 11:12-13, 12:7, 10b, 13:7b

²⁸⁰ See Zechariah 1:17, 2:11-13, 3:10, 8:6-8, 20-23, 14:1-11

- The metaphor of “**Judah the bow**” against “**Greece**”²⁸¹ sounds like the armies led by the sons of Mattathias:
For **I have bent Judah as my bow**; I have made Ephraim its arrow.
I will stir up your sons, O Zion, **against your sons, O Greece**,
and wield you like a warrior’s sword. (Zechariah 9:13 ESV)
- The promise to “**march forth**” and “**protect them**” must have been assuring during the battles fought by the Maccabees:
Then [YHWH] will appear over them, and his arrow will go forth like lightning;
the **Lord [YHWH]** will sound the trumpet and **will march forth** in the whirlwinds of the south.
[YHWH] of hosts will protect them, and they shall devour, and tread down the sling stones,
and they shall drink and roar as if drunk with wine, and be full like a bowl,
drenched like the corners of the altar. (Zechariah 9:14-15 ESV)
- Those who resorted to “**household gods**”, teraphim, were anathema to the Maccabees, as were the Jewish “**leaders**” who willingly embraced Hellenism:
For the **household gods utter nonsense**, and the diviners see lies;
they tell false dreams and give empty consolation.
Therefore the people wander like sheep; they are afflicted for lack of a shepherd.
My anger is hot against the shepherds, and **I will punish the leaders**;
for [YHWH] of hosts cares for his flock, the house of Judah,
and will make them like his majestic steed in battle. (Zechariah 10:2-3 ESV)
- The “**pitiless shepherds**” sound like the priests who willingly embraced Hellenism:
“... and their own shepherds have no pity on them. ...” (Zechariah 11:5b ESV)
- The “**clans of Judah**”, under the Maccabees, were indeed like a “**flaming torch**”:
On that day I will make **the clans of Judah** like a blazing pot in the midst of wood, **like a flaming torch** among sheaves. And they shall devour to the right and to the left all the surrounding peoples, while Jerusalem shall again be inhabited in its place, in Jerusalem. (Zechariah 12:6 ESV)

The Book of Malachi is the last prophetic book in the Old Testament. “Malachi” may in fact NOT be a name just a title, “My Messenger”. The Targum Jonathan includes “Ezra” as the messenger. The content of the book fits the time when Ezra joined Nehemiah in Judea around 428BC. The remnant community was three to four generations old, and many people had lost their zeal to serve YHWH. It is clear that by this time, **God was NOT working with the entire community**, but only with a “remnant” within the community:

Then **those who feared [YHWH] spoke with one another**. [YHWH] paid attention and heard them, and a book of remembrance was written before him of **those who feared [YHWH] and esteemed his name**.
They shall be mine, says [YHWH] of hosts, in the day when I make up **my treasured possession**,
and I will spare them as a man spares his son who serves him. Then once more **you shall see the distinction** between the righteous and the wicked, **between one who serves God and one who does not serve him**. (Malachi 3:16-18 ESV)

The **Book of Malachi** closes the Old Testament prophetic corpus with **the famous prophecy**.²⁸²

Remember the [torah]²⁸³ **of my servant Moses**, the statutes and [mish*patim]²⁸⁴ that I commanded him at Horeb for all Israel.

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet **before the great and awesome day of [YHWH] comes**. And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the [earth] with a decree of utter destruction. (Malachi 4:4-6 ESV)

Moses was the first and greatest “prophet”. **God began to reveal his Plan in the Writings of Moses**. This final prophecy is a reminder to go back to those writings and be sure to understand them. Then the prophecy looks to the end of the age, **the Day of YHWH**. Elijah was a great prophet. John the Baptist worked in the spirit and power of Elijah to prepare for the **First Advent**. At the end-time, God is doing another great work in the spirit and power of Elijah to prepare for the **Second Advent**.

²⁸¹ The remnant community knew “Greece” would come because of the prophecies of Daniel.

²⁸² For detailed discussion of this prophecy see the papers “The Work of Elijah” and “John the Baptist – More Than a Prophet” located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

²⁸³ See footnote 49

²⁸⁴ For a discussion of the meaning of *mish*patim*, see section 1.4.3 *Attributes of God’s Character* in the paper “First Pillar - The Nature of God” located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

2.4.1.3 False Prophets

The **Synoptists Matthew and Luke** report the words of Jesus regarding “false prophets”:

Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. **You will recognize them by their fruits.**

And **many false prophets will arise** and **lead many astray**. And because lawlessness will be increased, the **love of many will grow cold**. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.

Then **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 arise** and **perform great signs and wonders**, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect. See, I have told you beforehand.

“Woe to you, when all people speak well of you, for so their fathers did to the false prophets.
(Matthew 7:15-16a, 24:11-13, 23-26, Luke 6:26 ESV)

Who are “false prophets”? Jesus warns True Worshipers NOT to be deceived by their lies, even great miracles. Yet, **they are distinguishable by what they do**, by what they produce, “their fruits”. When the world, “all people”, provide accolades, it is because **they are hearing what they want to hear**. What does the Bible teach us about “false prophets” so that we can avoid **“if possible to be led astray”**?

The **Prophet Moses** provides the basic teaching of God with regard to “false prophets”:

If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and **gives you a sign or a wonder**, and the sign or wonder that he tells you **comes to pass**, and if he says, ‘**Let us go after other gods**,’ which you have not known, ‘and let us serve them,’ **you shall not listen to the words of that prophet** or that dreamer of dreams. For [YHWH] your God is testing you, to know whether you love [YHWH] your God with all your heart and with all your [mind]. You shall walk after [YHWH] your God and fear him and **keep his commandments and obey his voice**, and you shall serve him and hold fast to him. But **that prophet** or that dreamer of dreams **shall be put to death** ...

But **the prophet who presumes to speak a word in my name** that I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die. And if you say in your heart, ‘**How may we know the word that [YHWH] has not spoken?**’—when a prophet speaks in the name of [YHWH], if **the word does not come to pass or come true**, that is a word that [YHWH] has not spoken; **the prophet has spoken it presumptuously**. You need not be afraid of him. (Deuteronomy 13:1-5a, 18:20-22 ESV)

There is an **apparent contradiction** in this teaching: chapter thirteen says “false prophets” can give signs which come to pass; chapter eighteen seems to say the opposite. The phrase **“the word does not come to pass or come true that is a word that [YHWH] has not spoken”** comes from:

וְלֹא־	יְהִיָּה	הַדָּבָר	וְלֹא־	יָבוֹא	הוּא	הַדָּבָר	אֲשֶׁר	לֹא־	דִּבְּרוּ	יְהוָה
YHWH		hadavar	w ^{lo}	yavo	hu	hadavar	’asher	w ^{lo}	dib ^{ero}	YHWH
YHWH		the thing	that	it comes	or not	the thing	that	not	he has spoken	YHWH

Literally: “and not it is the thing, or not it comes, that, the thing that not he has spoken YHWH”

Better: “if it is NOT a word that comes from, or that has been spoken by, YHWH”

The phrase relates to **“keep his commandments and obey his voice”**, NOT to a prediction’s coming to pass, i.e., the fulfillment of a prediction, which clearly “false prophets” can do; but only a True Prophet teaches the Way of God correctly – **“has a word from YHWH”**. As Jesus said **“by their fruits you shall know them”** – **false prophets DO NOT speak the truth from God**.

The **Prophet Ezekiel** reports the words of YHWH **condemning the “false prophets”** and itemizing some particulars of their sin:

The word of [YHWH] came to me: “Son of man, **prophecy against the prophets of Israel**, who are prophesying, and say to those who **prophecy from their own hearts**: ‘Hear the word of [YHWH]!’ Thus says the Lord [YHWH], Woe to the foolish **prophets who follow their own spirit**, and **have seen nothing!** “Your **prophets have been like jackals among ruins**, O Israel. You have **not gone up into the breaches**, or built up a wall for the house of Israel, that it might stand in battle in the day of [YHWH]. **They have seen false visions and lying divinations**. **They say, ‘Declares [YHWH],’** when **[YHWH] has not sent them**, and yet they expect him to fulfill their word. ...”

Therefore **thus says the Lord [YHWH]**: “Because you have uttered falsehood and seen lying visions, therefore behold, **I am against you**, declares the Lord [YHWH]. **My hand will be against the prophets** who see false visions and who give lying divinations. ... Precisely because **they have misled my people, saying, ‘Peace,’ when there is no peace**, and because, **when the people build a wall, these prophets smear it with whitewash** ... And **I will break down the wall** that you have smeared with whitewash, and bring it

down to the ground, so that its foundation will be laid bare. When it falls, you shall perish in the midst of it, and **you shall know that I am [YHWH]**.

“And you, son of man, set your face against the daughters of your people, who prophesy out of their own hearts. Prophesy against them and say, Thus says the Lord [YHWH]: **Woe to the women who sew magic bands** upon all wrists, and make veils for the heads of persons of every stature, in the hunt for [lives]! **Will you hunt down [lives] belonging to my people and keep your own [selves] alive?**”

“Because **you have disheartened the righteous falsely**, although I have not grieved him, and **you have encouraged the wicked**, that he should not turn from his evil way to save his life, therefore you shall no more see false visions nor practice divination. **I will deliver my people out of your hand**. And **you shall know that I am [YHWH]**.” (Ezekiel 13:1-6, 8-9a, 10, 14, 17-18, 22-23 ESV)

Some characteristics of “false prophets”:

- Not sent by God, **“I am against you”**, **“I will deliver my people out of your hand”**
And Jeremiah the prophet said to the prophet Hananiah, **“Listen, Hananiah, [YHWH] has not sent you**, and you have made this people trust in a lie. Therefore thus says [YHWH]: ‘Behold, I will **remove you from the face of the earth**. This year you shall die, because you have uttered rebellion against [YHWH].’” In that same year, in the seventh month, the prophet Hananiah died. (Jeremiah 28:15-17 ESV see also 14:13-15)
- Speak from their own mind, **“prophesy from their own hearts”**, **“follow their own spirit”**
Thus says [YHWH] of hosts: “Do not listen to the words of **the prophets who prophesy to you, filling you with vain hopes**. They speak **visions of their own minds**, not from the mouth of [YHWH]. They say continually to those who despise the word of [YHWH], ‘It shall be well with you’; and to everyone who stubbornly follows his own heart, they say, ‘No disaster shall come upon you.’” (Jeremiah 23:16-17 ESV)
- Speak lies, falsehoods, **“false visions and lying divinations”**, **“saying, ‘Peace,’ when there is no peace”**
So **[YHWH] cut off from Israel head and tail**, palm branch and reed in one day—the elder and honored man is the head, and **the prophet who teaches lies is the tail**; for **those who guide this people have been leading them astray**, and those who are guided by them are swallowed up. (Isaiah 9:14-16 ESV)
An appalling and horrible thing has happened in the land:
the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests rule at their direction;
my people love to have it so, but what will you do when the end comes? (Jeremiah 5:30-31 ESV)
- Claim to speak for God, **“they say, ‘Declares [YHWH]’**
Behold, **I am against the prophets**, declares [YHWH], **who use their tongues and declare, ‘declares [YHWH]’**. (Jeremiah 23:31 ESV)
- Prophesy to enrich themselves, **“like jackals among ruins”**
Therefore I will give their wives to others and their fields to conquerors, because from the least to the greatest **everyone is greedy for unjust gain; from prophet to priest**, everyone deals falsely. (Jeremiah 8:10 ESV see also 6:13-14)
Its heads give judgment for a bribe; its priests teach for a price;
its prophets practice divination for money; (Micah 3:11a)
- Discourage right, **“misled my people”**, **“disheartened the righteous falsely”**
I did not send the prophets, yet they ran;
I did not speak to them, yet they prophesied.
But if they had stood in my council, then **they would have proclaimed my words to my people**, and **they would have turned them from their evil way**, and from the evil of their deeds. (Jeremiah 23:21-22 ESV see also 4:9-10)
- Encourage wrong, **“when the people build a wall, these prophets smear it with whitewash”**, **“encouraged the wicked”**
For they are a rebellious people, lying children, children **unwilling to hear the instruction of [YHWH]**; **who say to the seers, “Do not see,”** and **to the prophets, “Do not prophesy to us what is right;** speak to us smooth things, prophesy illusions ... (Isaiah 30:9-10 ESV)
But in **the prophets of Jerusalem** I have seen a horrible thing: they commit adultery and walk in lies; **they strengthen the hands of evildoers**, so that no one turns from his evil; **... from the prophets of Jerusalem ungodliness has gone out into all the land**. (Jeremiah 23:14a, 15b ESV)

Her princes in her midst are like wolves tearing the prey, shedding blood, destroying lives to get dishonest gain. And her prophets have smeared whitewash for them, seeing false visions and divining lies for them, saying, 'Thus says the Lord [YHWH],' when [YHWH] has not spoken. (Ezekiel 22:27-28 ESV)

- Participate in Satanic ways, the occult, "not gone up into the breaches", "sew magic bands"
So do not listen to your prophets, your diviners, your dreamers, your fortune-tellers, or your sorcerers, who are saying to you, 'You shall not serve the king of Babylon.' (Jeremiah 27:9 ESV)
The priests and the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of [YHWH]. And when Jeremiah had finished speaking all that [YHWH] had commanded him to speak to all the people, then the priests and the prophets and all the people laid hold of him, saying, "You shall die! ..." (Jeremiah 26:7-8 ESV)
- Use people for their own advantage, "hunt down [lives] belonging to my people and keep your own [selves] alive"
Thus says the LORD concerning the prophets who lead my people astray, who cry "Peace" when they have something to eat, but declare war against him who puts nothing into their mouths. (Micah 3:5 ESV)

In the mid-fifties of the First Century, during his final address to the Ephesian Elders, the Apostle Paul warned that "false prophets" would arise in the New Testament Church. Likely within ten years, the Apostle Peter reissued the warning. About a generation later, the Apostle John makes reference to the fact that it has happened. John introduces the term "antichrist" to identify the attitude of the "false prophets":

Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. (Acts 20:28-30 ESV)

But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction. And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of truth will be blasphemed. And in their greed they will exploit you with false words. Their condemnation from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep. (2 Peter 2:1-3 ESV)

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already.

Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us. ... Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son.

For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist. (1 John 4:1-3, 2:18-19, 22, 2 John 7 ESV)

Perhaps slightly before his address to the Ephesian Elders, the Apostle Paul had warned the Church in Corinth about "false apostles", identifying them to be agents of Satan. In an earlier letter, he had warned the Church in Thessalonica about a "man of lawlessness" who epitomized the attitude of "antichrist":

And what I am doing I will continue to do, in order to undermine the claim of those who would like to claim that in their boasted mission they work on the same terms as we do. For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds. (2 Corinthians 11:12-15 ESV)

Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we ask you, brothers, not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of [perdition], who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God.

Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? And you know what is restraining him now so that he may be revealed in his time. For the mystery of lawlessness²⁸⁵ is already at work. Only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming.

The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false, in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness. (2 Thessalonians 2:1-12 ESV)

The "man of lawlessness", the "antichrist", is unequivocally identified as the "The False Prophet" in the Book of Revelation. "The False Prophet" is the religious leader commissioned by Satan to work with "The Beast", the "political leader", of the final end-time reincarnation of the Roman Empire, "Babylon the Great". This entity opposes Jesus Christ at the Second Advent and is destroyed by him:

And I saw, coming out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs.

And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies gathered to make war against him who was sitting on the horse and against his army. And the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who in its presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur. (Revelation 16:13, 19:19-20 ESV)

The most important characteristics of "false prophets" is that they DO NOT speak the truth of God. They speak lies, deceptions, things they have made up in their own minds. They speak for Satan the Devil:

Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice. ... Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. ... Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. ... and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

They answered him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would be doing the works Abraham did ... You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies." (John 18:37b, 17:17, 14:6a, 8:32, 39, 44 ESV)

This screams loudly to modern day "scholars", "pastors", "teachers" – anyone who handles the written word of God, the Bible. The Bible is the "God breathed"²⁸⁶ word from the Creator to his most important creation through which he reveals himself, his purpose, and his requirements. To handle the word of God as if it were just a collection of ancient documents and on that basis come up with ideas out of one's own mind about the provenance and nature of the Bible is the very essence of "false prophecy":

But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in my name that I have not commanded him to speak ... the prophet has spoken it presumptuously ... that same prophet shall die. (Deuteronomy 18:20a, 22b, 20b ESV)

2.4.2 Fulfilled Prophecy

Much has been written on prophetic predictions and their fulfilment. In his monumental work, "Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy", **J. Barton Payne identifies 1817 distinct predictions.**²⁸⁷ There is, of course, always room for debate as to the identification of some predictions and the identification of their fulfillment. **However, the overwhelming evidence is clear:** the Bible contains many predictions and many of them have been fulfilled. The nature of "short term" predictions was briefly discussed in section **2.4.1 The Nature of Prophecy**. A very interesting comparison is the **prophecies about the ancient cities of Tyre and Babylon**; first consider the words from the **Prophet Isaiah** concerning Tyre:

The oracle concerning Tyre.

Wail, O ships of Tarshish, for **Tyre is laid waste, without house or harbor!**

From the land of Cyprus (Kittim) it is revealed to them.

Be still, O inhabitants of the coast; the merchants of Sidon, who cross the sea, have filled you.

And on many waters your revenue was the grain of Shihor, the harvest of the Nile;

²⁸⁵ For scriptures related to this, see the Bible Study Notes, "The Mystery of Iniquity" located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

²⁸⁶ See 2 Timothy 3:14-17

²⁸⁷ See Payne pages 674-675

you were the merchant of the nations.

Be ashamed, O Sidon, for the sea has spoken, the stronghold of the sea, saying:

"I have neither labored nor given birth, I have neither reared young men nor brought up young women."

When the report comes to Egypt, **they will be in anguish over the report about Tyre.**

Cross over to Tarshish; wail, O inhabitants of the coast!

Is this your exultant city whose origin is from days of old, whose feet carried her to settle far away?

Who has purposed this against Tyre, the bestower of crowns,

whose **merchants** were **princes**, whose **traders** were the **honored of the earth?**

[YHWH] of hosts has purposed it, to defile the pompous pride of all glory,
to dishonor all the honored of the earth.

Cross over your land like the Nile, O daughter of Tarshish; there is no restraint anymore.

He has stretched out his hand over the sea; he has shaken the kingdoms;

[YHWH] has given command concerning Canaan to destroy its strongholds.

And he said: "**You will no more exult,** O oppressed virgin daughter of Sidon;

arise, cross over to Cyprus (Kittim), even there you will have no rest." (Isaiah 23:1-12 ESV)

It is NOT possible to specifically date this oracle, but it was probably in the last quarter of the eight century BC.²⁸⁸ **At this time Tyre was at the height of her commercial power.** Isaiah's oracle against Tyre clearly looked to a future fulfillment. **Over a century later,** when Ezekiel prophesied, **Tyre's commercial power had NOT waned:**

Tarshish did business with you because of your great wealth of every kind; silver, iron, tin, and lead they exchanged for your wares. Javan, Tubal, and Meshech traded with you; **they exchanged human beings and vessels of bronze for your merchandise.** From Beth-togarmah they exchanged **horses, war horses,** and mules for your wares. The men of Dedan traded with you. Many **coastlands were your own special markets;** they brought you in payment ivory tusks and ebony. Syria did business with you because of your abundant goods; they exchanged for your wares emeralds, purple, embroidered work, fine linen, coral, and ruby.

Judah and the land of Israel traded with you; they exchanged for your merchandise wheat of Minnith, meal, honey, oil, and balm. Damascus did business with you for your abundant goods, **because of your great wealth of every kind;** wine of Helbon and wool of Sahar and **casks of wine** from Uzal they exchanged for your wares; **wrought iron,** cassia, and calamus were bartered for your merchandise. Dedan traded with you in saddlecloths for riding.

Arabia and all the princes of Kedar were your favored dealers in lambs, rams, and goats; in these they did business with you. The traders of Sheba and Raamah traded with you; they exchanged for your wares **the best of all kinds of spices** and all precious stones and gold. Haran, Canneh, Eden, traders of Sheba, **Asshur,** and Chilmad **traded with you.** In your market these traded with you in choice garments, in clothes of blue and embroidered work, and in carpets of colored material, bound with cords and made secure. **The ships of Tarshish traveled for you with your merchandise.** So you were filled and heavily laden in the heart of the seas. (Ezekiel 27:12-25 ESV)

In spite of Tyre's wealth, commercial power, and influence, **Ezekiel reports God's judgement:**

In the eleventh year, on the first day of the month,²⁸⁹ **the word of [YHWH] came to me:** "Son of man, because Tyre said concerning Jerusalem, 'Aha, the gate of the peoples is broken; it has swung open to me. I shall be replenished, now that she is laid waste,' therefore **thus says the Lord [YHWH]:** Behold, **I am against you, O Tyre,** and will bring up many nations against you, as the sea brings up its waves. **They shall destroy the walls of Tyre and break down her towers,** and **I will scrape her soil from her and make her a bare rock.** She shall be in the midst of the sea a place for the spreading of nets, for I have spoken, declares the Lord [YHWH]. And she shall become plunder for the nations, and her daughters on the mainland shall be killed by the sword. Then they will know that I am [YHWH].

"For thus says the Lord [YHWH]: Behold, **I will bring against Tyre from the north Nebuchadnezzar** king of Babylon, king of kings, with horses and chariots, and with horsemen and a host of many soldiers. He will kill with the sword your daughters on the mainland. He will set up a siege wall against you and throw up a mound against you, and raise a roof of shields against you. He will direct the shock of his battering rams against your walls, and with his axes he will break down your towers. His horses will be so many that their dust will cover you.

"Your walls will shake at the noise of the horsemen and wagons and chariots, when he enters your gates as men enter a city that has been breached. With the hoofs of his horses he will trample all your streets. He will kill your people with the sword, and your mighty pillars will fall to the ground. They will plunder

²⁸⁸ Isaiah 14:28-32 is dated to 715BC; Isaiah 20:1-3 is dated to 711BC

²⁸⁹ The date formula lacks the month, and so cannot be fixed with precision. It falls within the span of 587/586 B.C. According to Josephus, Nebuchadnezzar's siege against Tyre was launched around 586/585 B.C. and lasted 13 years (Jewish Antiquities 10.228). (www.esv.org **ESV Study Bible** footnote on Ezekiel 26:1)

your riches and loot your merchandise. They will break down your walls and destroy your pleasant houses.

"Your stones and timber and soil they will cast into the midst of the waters. And I will stop the music of your songs, and the sound of your lyres shall be heard no more. I will make you a bare rock. You shall be a place for the spreading of nets. **You shall never be rebuilt,** for I am [YHWH]; I have spoken, declares the Lord [YHWH]. ..." (Ezekiel 26:1-14 ESV)

The history of the destruction is well documented.²⁹⁰ Briefly, Nebuchadnezzar besieged Tyre for thirteen years, 585-573BC. He was unable to take the city on the island, but it eventually capitulated under terms. It was not destroyed, and Nebuchadnezzar got little plunder:

In the twenty-seventh year, in the first month, on the first day of the month, the word of [YHWH] came to me: "Son of man, **Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon made his army labor hard against Tyre.** Every head was made bald, and every shoulder was rubbed bare, yet **neither he nor his army got anything from Tyre to pay for the labor** that he had performed against her. ..." (Ezekiel 29:17-18 ESV)

A century and a half later, **Alexander the Great** besieged and destroyed Tyre. He scraped the mainland site bare to build a causeway to the island. A city was soon rebuilt in the general area, but Tyre never regained her former glory. Today there is sizable population living in the area, but the ruins of old Tyre remain visible, and they are protected as a World Heritage Site:

You shall never be rebuilt: Tyre was rebuilt and reconquered several times after Alexander the Great, so the complete fulfillment of this prophecy did not come immediately. The modern city of Tyre is of modest size and is near the ancient site, though not identical to it. Archaeological photographs of the ancient site show ruins from ancient Tyre scattered over many acres of land. No city has been rebuilt over these ruins, however, in fulfillment of this prophecy. (www.esv.org **ESV Study Bible** comment on Ezekiel 26:14)

The prophecies against Babylon appear very similar:

The oracle concerning Babylon which **Isaiah the son of Amoz saw.**

On a bare hill raise a signal; cry aloud to them;
wave the hand for them to enter the gates of the nobles.

I myself have commanded my consecrated ones,
and have summoned my mighty men to execute my anger, my proudly exulting ones.
The sound of a tumult is on the mountains as of a great multitude!
The sound of an uproar of kingdoms, of nations gathering together!
[YHWH] of hosts is mustering a host for battle.

They come from a distant land, from the end of the heavens,
[YHWH] and the weapons of his indignation, to destroy the whole land.

Behold, **I am stirring up the Medes against them,** who have no regard for silver and do not delight in gold.

Their bows will slaughter the young men;
they will have no mercy on the fruit of the womb; their eyes will not pity children.

And **Babylon,** the glory of kingdoms, the splendor and pomp of the Chaldeans,
will be like Sodom and Gomorrah when God overthrew them.

It will never be inhabited or lived in for all generations;

no Arab will pitch his tent there; no shepherds will make their flocks lie down there.
But wild animals will lie down there, and their houses will be full of howling creatures;
there ostriches will dwell, and there wild goats will dance.

Hyenas will cry in its towers, and jackals in the pleasant palaces;

its time is close at hand and its days will not be prolonged.

(Isaiah 13:1-5, 17-22 ESV see also Isaiah chapter 47)

The word that [YHWH] spoke concerning Babylon, concerning the land of the Chaldeans,
by Jeremiah the prophet:

Declare among the nations and proclaim, set up a banner and proclaim, conceal it not, and say:

'Babylon is taken, Bel is put to shame, Merodach is dismayed.

Her images are put to shame, her idols are dismayed.'

For **out of the north a nation has come up against her,** which shall **make her land a desolation,** and **none shall dwell in it;** both man and beast shall flee away. ... For behold, I am stirring up and bringing against Babylon **a gathering of great nations,** from the north country. And they shall array themselves against her. From there she shall be taken. Their arrows are like a skilled warrior who does not return empty-handed. Chaldea shall be plundered; all who plunder her shall be sated, declares [YHWH].

Though you rejoice, though you exult, O plunderers of my heritage,
though you frolic like a heifer in the pasture, and neigh like stallions,
your mother shall be utterly shamed, and she who bore you shall be disgraced.

²⁹⁰ See the articles: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tyre,_Lebanon and <https://www.britannica.com/place/Tyre>.
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Behold, **she shall be the last of the nations, a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert.**
Because of the wrath of [YHWH] **she shall not be inhabited but shall be an utter desolation;**
everyone who passes by Babylon shall be appalled, and hiss because of all her wounds.

Set yourselves in array against Babylon all around, all you who bend the bow;
shoot at her, spare no arrows, for she has sinned against [YHWH].
Raise a shout against her all around; she has surrendered;
her bulwarks have fallen; her walls are thrown down.
For this is the vengeance of [YHWH]: take vengeance on her; do to her as she has done.
Cut off from Babylon the sower, and the one who handles the sickle in time of harvest;
because of the sword of the oppressor, every one shall turn to his own people,
and every one shall flee to his own land.

How the hammer of the whole earth is cut down and broken!

How Babylon has become a horror among the nations!
I set a snare for you and you were taken, O Babylon, and you did not know it;
you were found and caught, because you opposed [YHWH].

[YHWH] has opened his armory and brought out the weapons of his wrath,
for the Lord [YHWH] of hosts has a work to do in the land of the Chaldeans.
Come against her from every quarter; open her granaries;
pile her up like heaps of grain, and devote her to destruction; let nothing be left of her.
Kill all her bulls; let them go down to the slaughter.
Woe to them, for their day has come, the time of their punishment.

Summon archers against Babylon, all those who bend the bow. Encamp around her; let no one escape.
Repay her according to her deeds; do to her according to all that she has done. For she has proudly defied
[YHWH], the Holy One of Israel. Therefore her young men shall fall in her squares, and all her soldiers
shall be destroyed on that day, declares [YHWH].

Behold, I am against you, O proud one, declares the Lord [YHWH] of hosts,
for your day has come, the time when I will punish you.
The proud one shall stumble and fall, with none to raise him up,
and I will kindle a fire in his cities, and it will devour all that is around him.

A sword against the Chaldeans, declares [YHWH]

and against the inhabitants of Babylon, and against her officials and her wise men!
A sword against the diviners, that they may become fools!
A sword against her warriors, that they may be destroyed!
A sword against her horses and against her chariots,
and against all the foreign troops in her midst, that they may become women!
A sword against all her treasures, that they may be plundered!
A drought against her waters, that they may be dried up!
For it is a land of images, and they are mad over idols.

Therefore wild beasts shall dwell with hyenas in Babylon, and ostriches shall dwell in her. **She shall never
again have people, nor be inhabited for all generations.** As when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah
and their neighboring cities, declares [YHWH], so no man shall dwell there, and no son of man shall
sojourn in her.

Behold, a people comes from the north:

a mighty nation and many kings are stirring from the farthest parts of the earth.
They lay hold of bow and spear; they are cruel and have no mercy.
The sound of them is like the roaring of the sea;
they ride on horses, arrayed as a man for battle against you, O daughter of Babylon!
The king of Babylon heard the report of them, and his hands fell helpless;
anguish seized him, pain as of a woman in labor.
(Jeremiah 50:1-3, 9-16, 23-27, 29-32, 35-43 ESV see also chapter 51)

Again, **the general history of Babylon is well documented.**²⁹¹ Isaiah had already identified the “Medes”
as the power to destroy Babylon. Jeremiah confirmed this.²⁹² Cyrus the Great had united the Median
and Persian Empires. Battles had been fought, but the forces of Cyrus entered Babylon with little
resistance, and there was little bloodshed or plundering the city itself. Belshazzar, the acting king, was
executed.²⁹³ **Cyrus himself entered the city as a “liberator”.** Later, at the ascent of Darius, Babylon got

²⁹¹ See the articles <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Babylon> and <https://www.britannica.com/place/Babylon-ancient-city-Mesopotamia-Asia/The-ancient-city>.

²⁹² See Jeremiah 51:11,28

²⁹³ See Daniel 5:30

involved in some rebellions and the city walls were destroyed and violence was done to some citizens; but the city was NOT destroyed.

Although the prophesized fates of Tyre and Babylon were very similar, their actual history was very different. Tyre met a violent end from which she never fully recovered. Babylon continued as a major political and commercial center for centuries – she did NOT meet a violent end. When **Alexander the Great** assumed control of Babylon, he found it extremely desirable – he made it one of his capitals. Alexander died in Babylon. **Seleucus I Nicator**, first king of the Seleucid Dynasty, in 312BC built a new capital, Seleucia,²⁹⁴ a little further north on the Tigris River near the conflux of the Diyala. After this, **Babylon slowly wasted away.**²⁹⁵ The general area of Babylon, if not the city itself, continued as an area of Jewish scholarship for centuries. The Babylonian Talmud was completed in 620AD.²⁹⁶ Subsequent to the Islamic conquest through the Middle Ages, the site was fully abandoned and became lost. **Modern archeological excavations commenced in the early nineteenth century.**²⁹⁷ Today the archeological site is a World Heritage Site.²⁹⁸

The point of this is that God can fulfill prophecies in multiple ways. Both Tyre and Babylon were prophesized to become wasted and uninhabited. Tyre met a violent end; Babylon did not; but both sites are wasted and uninhabited. **This is a lesson to be learned in looking to the future.** Bible prophecy is very specific about certain events leading up to the Second Advent. **Jesus warned True Worshipers to “watch” because almost certainly things will unfold in ways that cannot be anticipated:**

Watch therefore, for **you know neither the day nor the hour.** (Matthew 25:13 ESV)

But watch yourselves lest your hearts be weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and cares of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly like a trap. For it will come upon all who dwell on the face of the whole earth. But **stay awake at all times**, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are going to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man. (Luke 21:34-36 ESV)

Many other Bible Prophecies have been dramatically fulfilled. But, the main theme of the Bible remains the Messiah, Jesus Christ. **There are more prophecies about the Messiah than any other topic** – the prophecies of the First Advent have been fulfilled; the prophecies of the Second Advent will soon be fulfilled.

2.4.3 The Centrality of Jesus Christ

In his monumental work, **“Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy”**, J. Barton Payne identifies about **two hundred specific Messianic prophecies.**²⁹⁹ Other lists find even more.³⁰⁰ Again, there is always room for debate as to the identification of some predictions and the identification of their fulfillments. The famous beginning of Messianic prophecies is the so-called **“protoevangelium”**.³⁰¹

[YHWH] God said to the serpent,

Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life.

I will put enmity between you and **the woman**,

and between your offspring and **her offspring**;

he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel. (Genesis 3:14-15 ESV)

This prophecy opens up the central theme of the Bible: The Plan of God to bring human beings, **“the woman ... and her offspring”**, into the **Family of God**. The sin of Adam and Eve consigned human beings to live in a world of sin and death under the control of Satan the Devil. Only through the intercession of the Messiah, **“The Offspring”**, **“he shall bruise your head”**, can human beings escape from the way of sin and death. Fortunately, **God has also told us the end of the story:**

Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! **The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True**, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. ... **the name by which he is called is The Word of God.** ...

On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, **King of kings** and **Lord of lords**.

²⁹⁴ See EBM volume 11, article “Mesopotamia and Iraq, History of”, pages 989-990

²⁹⁵ See IDB volume 1, article “Babylon (OT)”, page 335

²⁹⁶ See Fonrobert pages xv- xvi

²⁹⁷ See IDB volume 1, article “Babylon (OT)”, page 334

²⁹⁸ See <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/278/>

²⁹⁹ See Payne pages 665-670

³⁰⁰ See <https://www.newtestamentchristians.com/351-old-testament-prophecies-fulfilled-in-jesus-christ-2/>

³⁰¹ See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seed_of_the_woman

Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were **those to whom the authority to judge was committed**. ... **They came to life** and **reigned with Christ for a thousand years**. ... Blessed and holy is the one who shares in **the first resurrection**! Over such the second death has no power, but **they will be priests of God and of Christ**, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. And **he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan**, and bound him for a thousand years, and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, **so that he might not deceive the nations any longer** ... **the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire** ... (Revelation 19:11, 13b, 16, 20:4a, 4c, 6, 1-3a, 10a ESV)

The first prophecy of the Messiah indicates that **the ongoing battle of humanity with Satan is to be resolved by a victory of the Messiah over Satan the Devil**. The final outcome of the battle is the resurrection into the Family of God of those human beings to whom God the Father sees fit to grant the gift of eternal life. Concomitant with this, Satan the Devil, the author of sin and death, will be permanently removed.

Jesus is explicit that the entire Old Testament predicted his life and work:

Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, **that everything written about me in the [nomos]³⁰² of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled**.” Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures ... (Luke 24:44-45 ESV)

The following table summarizes many of the **explicit prophecies of the Messiah**; also, “**types**” and **symbolic references** which foreshadow the Messiah. Some of these references may be only verbal – a New Testament author uses a phrase from the Old Testament, either consciously or unconsciously, but **always under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit**. Note that **a table like this is NEVER complete** – as it is used, there will always be additions, deletions, and corrections.

	<u>Scripture</u>	<u>Comment</u>	<u>Fulfillment</u>
1.	Genesis 1:3,6,9,11,14,20,24,26, Psalms 24:1-2, 33:4, 89:11-12, 104:5,30, 115:15, 121:2, 124:8, 134:3, 136:4-9, 146:6, 147:15, 148:5, Isaiah 24:3, 40:26,28, 42:5, 48:13, 51:13,16, 55:11, Jeremiah 1:12, 10:12, Jonah 1:9	YHWH – Jesus Christ spoke the words at the re-creation	John 1:1-3, Mark 13:19, Acts 14:15, Romans 1:20, 1 Corinthians 8:6, Ephesians 3:9, Colossians 1:16-17, Hebrews 1:2, 11:3, Revelation 4:11, 10:6, 14:7
2.	Genesis 2:1-3, Exodus 20:8-11, Deuteronomy 5:12-15	YHWH – Jesus Christ, as Creator, is Lord of the Sabbath	Mark 2:23-28 // Matthew 12:1-8 // Luke 6:1-5
3.	Genesis 6:5, 18:12-15, Psalms 94:11, 139:2,23, Proverbs 15:26, Isaiah 55:8-9, 66:18, Jeremiah 17:9-10, Ezekiel 20:32, Amos 4:13	Jesus discerns thoughts	Matthew 9:4 // Mark 2:8 // Luke 5:22, Matthew 12:25, Luke 6:8, 11:17, 1 Corinthians 3:20, Hebrews 4:12
4.	Genesis 8:21, Exodus 29:18,25,41, Leviticus 1:9,13,17, 2:2,9,12, 3:5,16, 4:31, 6:15,21, 8:21,28, 17:6, 23:13,18, Numbers 15:3,7,10,13,14,24, 18:17, 28:2,6,8,13,24,27, 29:2,6,8,13,36	Jesus’ sacrifice is a “pleasing aroma”	2 Corinthians 2:15, Ephesians 5:2
5.	Genesis 9:4, Leviticus 17:11,14, Deuteronomy 12:23	Life is in the blood; blood makes atonement: Christ’s blood makes “true” atonement: propitiation	Mark 14:24 // Matthew 26:28 // Luke 22:20, Romans 3:23-25, 5:9, Ephesians 1:7, Colossians 1:19-20, Hebrews 9:22, 13:12, 1 John 1:7
6.	Genesis 12:3, 17:4-5, 22:18, 26:4, 28:14, 35:11, 48:4,19, Psalm 72:17, Jeremiah 4:2	All nations are to be blessed through a descendant of Abraham	John 12:13, Acts 3:25, Romans 4:16-17, 9:4-5, Galatians 3:7-9, 14-16, Revelation 5:13
7.	Genesis 14:18-23, Psalm 110:4	Melchizedek, king and priest, is a type of Jesus, The King and Priest	Hebrews 5:6,10, 6:20, 7:1,11,15,17

³⁰² See footnote 108
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	<u>Scripture</u>	<u>Comment</u>	<u>Fulfillment</u>
8.	Genesis 18:25, Judges 11:27, 1 Samuel 24:12-15, 1 Kings 8:31-32, 1 Chronicles 16:33, 2 Chronicles 6:22-23, Job 21:22, 23:7, Psalms 7:8,11, 50:4-6, 51:4, 58:11, 72:2, 75:2, 94:2, 96:13, 98:9, 119:84, Ecclesiastes 3:17, Isaiah 11:3-4, 16:5, 33:22, 51:5, Jeremiah 11:20, Lamentations 3:59, Ezekiel 7:8,27, 11:10, 16:38, 18:30, 21:30, 24:14, 33:20, 34:17,20,22, 35:11, 36:19, Micah 5:1, Malachi 3:5	YHWH – Jesus Christ is The Judge of all persons in all the world	John 5:22,27,30, 8:15-16,26, 9:39, 12:47-48, Acts 10:42, 17:30-31, Romans 2:1-5,16, 3:4,6, 14:10, 1 Corinthians 4:4, 11:32, 2 Timothy 4:1,8, Hebrews 10:30b, 12:23, 13:4, James 4:12, 5:9, 1 Peter 1:17, 2:23, 4:5-6, Revelation 6:10, 11:18, 18:8, 19:2, 20:12-13
9.	Genesis 22:6-7	Issac carried the wood as Jesus carried the cross	John 19:16b-17
10.	Genesis 22:8-14	A lamb will be provided	John 1:29,35-36, Acts 8:32-35, 1 Peter 1:18-19, Revelation 5:9-14
11.	Genesis 35:14, Exodus 29:40-41, Leviticus 23:13,18,37, Numbers 6:15-17, 15:5,7,10,24, 28:(8 occurrences), 29:(19 occurrences)	Drink offering: “if anyone thirsts ...”	John 4:14, 6:35,54-56, 7:37-38, Matthew 5:6, Revelation 7:16
12.	Genesis 48:15, 49:24, Psalm 23:1, 28:9, 80:1, Ecclesiastes 12:11, Isaiah 40:11, 56:8, Jeremiah 3:15, 23:3-4, 31:10, Ezekiel 34:11-16, Micah 5:4, 7:14, Zechariah 13:7	Jesus is The Good Shepherd	Matthew 2:6, 25:32, John 10:1-16, Hebrews 13:20, 1 Peter 2:25, 5:4, Revelation 7:17, Mark 14:27 // Matthew 26:31
13.	Genesis 48:16, Exodus 6:6, 15:13, Deuteronomy 7:8, 9:26, 13:5, 15:15, 21:8, 24:18, 2 Samuel 4:9, 1 Kings 1:28-29, 2 Samuel 7:23 // 1 Chronicles 17:21, Nehemiah 1:10, Job 5:20, 6:23, 19:25-26, 33:28, Psalms 19:14, 25:22, 26:11, 31:5, 34:22, 44:26, 55:18, 69:18, 71:23, 72:14, 77:15, 78:35,42, 103:4, 106:10, 107:2, 111:9, 119:134,154, 130:8, Proverbs 23:11, Isaiah 1:27, 29:22, 35:9, 41:14, 43:1,14, 44:6,22-24, 47:4, 48:17,20, 49:7,26, 50:2, 51:10, 52:3,9, 54:5,8, 59:20, 60:16, 62:12, 63:9,16, Jeremiah 15:21, 31:11, 50:34, Lamentations 3:58, Hosea 7:13, 13:14, Micah 4:10, 6:4, Zechariah 10:8	YHWH – Jesus Christ is the living Redeemer	Matthew 1:21, Luke 1:68, 24:21, Acts 7:35, Galatians 3:13, 4:5, Titus 2:14, Hebrews 9:15, Revelation 14:3-4
14.	Genesis 49:10, Psalms 60:7, 108:8, Zechariah 10:3-4	The Ruler will come from Judah	Hebrews 7:14, Revelation 5:5

	<u>Scripture</u>	<u>Comment</u>	<u>Fulfillment</u>
15.	Genesis 49:18, Exodus 14:13, 15:2, 1 Samuel 2:1, 2 Samuel 22:3,36,47,51 // Psalms 18:2,35,46,50, 1 Chronicles 16:23,35 // Psalms 96:2, 106:47, 2 Chronicles 6:41, Psalms 3:8, 9:14, 13:5, 14:7, 17:7, 20:5, 21:1,5, 24:5, 25:5, 27:1,9, 35:9, 37:39, 38:2, 40:10,16, 42:5,11, 43:5, 50:23, 51:12,14, 53:6, 60:5, 62:1-2,6-7, 65:5, 68:19-20, 69:29, 70:4, 71:15, 74:12, 79:9, 85:4,7,9, 88:1, 89:26, 91:16, 95:1, 98:1-3, 106:21, 108:6, 116:13, 118:14,21, 119:41,81,123,166,174, 132:16, 140:7, 149:4, Isaiah 12:2-3, 25:9, 26:1-2, 33:5-6, 43:3,11, 45:8,15,17,21, 46:13, 49:6,8,26, 51:5,8, 52:10, 56:1, 59:16-17, 60:16, 62:11, 63:5,8, Jeremiah 3:23, 14:8, Lamentations 3:26, Hosea 13:4, Jonah 2:9, Micah 7:7, Habakkuk 3:13,18, Zechariah 9:9, 12:7	Salvation is available only through Jesus Christ, the Saviour	Matthew 1:21, 10:22, 24:13, Mark 8:35, 13:13, Luke 1:47,69-71,77, 2:11,30, 3:6, 9:24, 19:9-10, John 3:17, 4:42, 5:31,34, 6:40, 10:9, 12:47, Acts 2:21,47, 4:10-12, 5:31, 13:23,26,47, 15:11, 16:17,30-31, 28:28, Romans 1:16, 5:9-10, 8:23-24a, 10:8-13, 11:26-27, 1 Corinthians 1:18-21, 15:1-2, 2 Corinthians 2:15, 6:1-2, 7:10, Ephesians 1:3-14, 2:5-9, 5:23, 6:17, Philippians 1:27-30, 3:20, 2:9-13, 1 Thessalonians 2:15-16, 5:8-11, 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14, 1 Timothy 1:1,15, 2:3-5, 4:10,16, 2 Timothy 1:8-11, 2:2-13, 3:14-15, Titus 1:3-4, 2:10-14, 3:4-7, Hebrews 2:3,10, 5:9, 6:1,9, 7:25, 9:28, James 1:21, 5:15, 1 Peter 1:3-12, 2:1-3, 3:21-22, 2 Peter 1:11, 2:20, 3:2,15,18, 1 John 4:14, Jude 3,5,24-25, Revelation 7:10, 12:10, 19:1
16.	Exodus 3:6	YHWH – Jesus Christ is the God of the living NOT the dead	Mark 12:26-27 // Matthew 22:32 // Luke 20:37-38, Acts 10:42, Romans 14:9, 2 Timothy 4:1, 1 Peter 4:5
17.	Exodus 3:13-15, Isaiah 41:4,10,13,14, 42:6,8, 43:3,5,11,12,13,15,25, 44:6,24, 45:5,6,7,22, 46:4,9, 48:12,17, 49:23,26, 51:12,15, 52:6, 60:16	I am who I am	(ἐγώ εἰμι) John 4:26, 6:20, 8:24,28,58, 18:5,6,8, (ἐγώ εἰμι – x) John 6:35,48,51 bread of life, 8:12 light of the world, 10:7,9 the door, 11,14 good shepherd, 11:25 resurrection and life, 14:6 way truth and life, 15:1 true vine
18.	Exodus 6:6, 13:15, 15:13, Deuteronomy 7:8, 9:26, 13:5, 15:15, 21:8, 24:18, 2 Samuel 7:23, 1 Chronicles 17:21, Psalms 74:2, 77:15, Isaiah 51:10, 63:9, Micah 6:4	Redemption of Israel from Egypt prefigures Jesus' redemption of sinners: propitiation	Romans 3:22-25, 8:23, 1 Corinthians 1:30, Ephesians 1:7, 4:30, Colossians 1:13-14, Hebrews 2:17, 9:12, 1 John 2:2, 4:10, Jude 5
19.	Exodus 12:3-13,43-49, Numbers 9:12, Psalms 34:20	Jesus is "The Passover Lamb"	Mark 14:22-24 // Matthew 26:26-28 // Luke 22:19-20, 1 Corinthians 5:7-8, 11:23-25, John 1:29,36, 19:31-37, Romans 5:8-9, Hebrews 9:13-14
20.	Exodus 15:26, Numbers 12:13, Deuteronomy 32:39, 2 Kings 20:5,8, 2 Chronicles 30:20, Job 5:18, Psalms 6:2, 30:2, 41:4, 103:3, 107:20, 147:3, Isaiah 19:22, 30:26, 53:5, 57:18-19, Jeremiah 17:14, 30:17, 33:6, Hosea 6:1, 7:1, 11:3	YHWH – Jesus Christ provides healing	Matthew 4:23-24, 8:7,16-17, 9:27-30,35, 12:15,22, 14:14, 15:28,30, 17:18, 19:2, 20:33-34, 21:14, Mark 1:34, 3:10, 5:29,34, 6:5, 7:29-30,34-35, 8:22-25, 10:51-52, Luke 4:40, 5:15,17, 6:18-19, 7:3,21, 8:2,36,43-44,47, 9:11,42, 13:10-14, 14:4, 17:14-15, 18:41-43, John 4:46-53, 5:1-15, 9:1-7, Acts 10:38, 1 Peter 2:24
21.	Exodus 16:4,31,33,35, Numbers 11:6,7,9, Deuteronomy 8:3,16, Joshua 5:12, Psalms 78:23-25, 105:40, Isaiah 55:2	Manna is a type of the True Bread from heaven – Jesus Christ	John 6:27,29-58, 21:9-13, 1 Corinthians 10:3,16,17, 11:23-29, Hebrews 9:4, Revelation 2:17, Matthew 4:4 // Luke 4:4, Mark 14:22 // Matthew 26:26 // Luke 22:19,
22.	Exodus 26:31-35, 34:29-35, Leviticus 16:2, Isaiah 25:7	The "veil" symbolizes lack of access to God – Jesus' death makes access possible	Mark 15:38 // Matthew 27:51 // Luke 23:45, 2 Corinthians 3:12-16, Hebrews 4:14-16, 9:7-8,11-14
23.	Exodus 28:41, 29:7,29, 30:30, 40:13, Leviticus 8:12,30	Aaron, the anointed High Priest, is a type of Jesus, "The High Priest", "The Anointed"	Hebrews 1:8-9, 2:17, 3:1, 4:14-15, 5:5, 7:26, 8:1, 9:11, 10:21, Luke 4:18, Acts 4:26-27, 10:38

	<u>Scripture</u>	<u>Comment</u>	<u>Fulfillment</u>
24.	Leviticus 4:11-12,21, 16:27	Disposition of the sin offering outside the camp: crucifixion was outside the city	Hebrews 13:11-12, Matthew 27:33 // Mark 15:22 // Luke 23:33 // John 19:16b-17
25.	Leviticus 14:2,11,18-20	Cleansing lepers is a sign of Jesus' Messiahship	Matthew 8:2-4 // Mark 1:40-44 // Luke 5:12-14, Luke 17:12-14, Matthew 11:5 // Luke 7:22
26.	Leviticus 16:5,7-8,15-19	The goat for the sin offering of the people foreshadows Jesus' offering of himself	Hebrews 9:11-14
27.	Leviticus 19:18, Numbers 31:3, Deuteronomy 32:35,41,43, Joshua 22:23, 1 Samuel 20:16, Psalms 18:47, 58:10, 94:1, 149:7, Isaiah 34:8, 35:4, 47:3, 59:17, 61:2, 63:4, Jeremiah 11:20, 15:15, 20:12, 46:10, 50:15,28, 51:6,11,36, Ezekiel 24:8, 25:17, Micah 5:15, Nahum 1:2	YHWH – Jesus Christ reserves the right of vengeance	Luke 21:22, Romans 12:19, 2 Thessalonians 1:5-8, Hebrews 10:30a
28.	Leviticus 23:11, Daniel 7:13	The Wave Sheaf prefigures the presentation after the resurrection	John 20:17
29.	Numbers 21:8-9,	Serpent on a pole: a type of the crucifixion	John 3:14-15
30.	Numbers 24:17a	Messiah: "not now", "not near"; but in the "fullness of time"	Galatians 4:4, Ephesians 1:9-10, John 1:14
31.	Numbers 24:17b, Psalms 45:6, 110:2	The "star" and "scepter" look to Jesus	Matthew 2:2,7,9-10, Revelation 2:28, 22:16, Hebrews 1:8, 2 Peter 1:19
32.	Deuteronomy 6:4, Psalm 91:1-2, 136:1-3, Isaiah 40:28, 41:13, 42:5, 45:3,5, 48:17, Jeremiah 3:21-23, 5:14, 7:21, 10:10, Ezekiel 28:26, Hosea 12:5,9, 13:4, 14:1, Joel 2:13-14,27, Amos 4:13, 9:15, Jonah 2:6, 4:2, Micah 6:6, 7:7, Nahum 1:2, Habakkuk 1:12, 3:18, Zephaniah 3:17, Haggai 1:13-15, Zechariah 8:7-8, 9:16, 10:6, 11:4, 13:9, 14:5b	YHWH – Jesus Christ is God	Mark 12:29, John 1:1-2,14-18,29-34,49, 5:18, 8:23,54, 10:29-36, 11:27, 17:5, 20:31, Matthew 11:27, 16:16, Luke 1:32-33, 10:22, Mark 9:7 // Matthew 17:5 // Luke 9:35, Mark 12:35-37 // Matthew 22:41-46 // Luke 20:41-44, Mark 14:61b-62 // Matthew 63b-64 // Luke 22:70, Mark 15:39b // Matthew 27:54b, Acts 2:36, 7:56, 9:20, 13:33, Romans 1:1b-4, 15:5-6, 1 Corinthians 8:4b,6, 15:20-26, 2 Corinthians 1:3, Ephesians 1:3, 4:12-13, Philippians 2:5-8, Colossians 1:3,19, 1 Timothy 1:16-17, 2:3-6, 3:16, 2 Timothy 1:8-10, Titus 2:10-13, Hebrews 1:1-3,8,10-11, 3:6, 4:14, 6:6, 10:29, 1 Peter 1:3, 2 Peter 1:1,3, 1 John 1:1-3, 4:10,14, 5:10-13,20, 2 John 3,9, Jude 25, Revelation 1:5-6
33.	Deuteronomy 18:15	"This is indeed the Prophet ..."	John 1:45, 6:14, 7:40, Luke 7:16, 24:19, Acts 7:37
34.	Deuteronomy 18:15-18	"... if you believed Moses, you would believe me ..."	John 5:43-47
35.	Deuteronomy 18:18	"... I ... speak just as the Father has taught me ..."	John 8:28-29
36.	Deuteronomy 18:19	"... every person who does not listen to The Prophet, shall be destroyed ..."	Acts 3:22-23

	<u>Scripture</u>	<u>Comment</u>	<u>Fulfillment</u>
37.	Deuteronomy 21:6-8	"handwashing" foreshadows Pilot's action in condemning Christ	Matthew 27:24
38.	Deuteronomy 21:23	"Cursed is anyone who is hanged on a tree ..."	Galatians 3:13
39.	Deuteronomy 29:4, Psalms 40:6, 78:1, Isaiah 50:4, Jeremiah 5:21, 6:10, 25:4, Ezekiel 12:2	"ears to hear" – Jesus' metaphor for conversion	Matthew 11:15, 13:9,43, Mark 4:9,23, Luke 8:8, 14:35, Revelation 2:7a,11a,17a,29, 3:6,13,22, 13:9
40.	Deuteronomy 31:6,8, Joshua 1:5, 1 Samuel 12:22, 1 Kings 6:13, Psalms 37:28, 56:4,11, 94:14, 118:6, Isaiah 41:17, 42:16	YHWH – Jesus Christ "will not leave you or forsake you"	Hebrews 13:5-6, Romans 8:31, 11:1-2, 12:19, Philippians 1:6, 1 John 4:4
41.	Deuteronomy 32:4,13,15,18,20,31, 1 Samuel 2:2, 2 Samuel 22:2-3,32,47, 23:3, Psalms 18:2,31,46, 19:14, 28:1, 31:2,3, 42:9, 61:2, 62:2,6,7, 71:3, 78:35, 81:16, 89:26, 92:15, 94:22, 95:1, 144:1, Isaiah 8:14, 17:10, 26:4, 30:29, 44:8, 51:1, Habakkuk 1:12	Jesus is "The Rock"	Matthew 16:18, 1 Corinthians 10:4, Matthew 7:24-25 // Luke 6:47-48, Romans 9:33, 1 Peter 2:8
42.	Deuteronomy 32:43 LXX, 2 Samuel 22:50 // Psalm 18:49, Psalm 117:1, Isaiah 11:1,10	"Christ became a servant ... that the Gentiles might glorify God ..."	Romans 15:8-13
43.	1 Samuel 2:10, 16:11-13, 2 Samuel 2:4,7, 3:39, 5:3,17, 12:7, 19:21, 22:51, 23:1, 1 Chronicles 11:3, 14:8, Psalms 2:1-2, 18:50, 20:6, 23:5, 28:8, 45:7, 89:20, 110:1-3, 132:10,17, Isaiah 61:1, Daniel 9:25	David, the anointed king, is a type of Jesus, "The Anointed King", the Messiah	Matthew 2:2, 21:3-5,9, 27:11, Mark 11:9-10, 15:2, Luke 1:32-33, 4:16-21, 19:37-38, 23:3, John 1:41,49, 4:25-26, 12:13,15, 18:33,37, Acts 2:32-36, 4:25-27, 10:38, 15:13-18, 1 Timothy 1:17, 6:14-15, Hebrews 1:8-9, Revelation 15:3, 17:14, 19:16
44.	1 Samuel 2:10, Psalms 2:8, 7:6-8, 8:6, 9:5-8,19-20, 10:16, 22:27-29, 24:1, 29:10, 33:8, 46:10, 47:2,7-9, 48:10, 58:11, 59:8,13, 64:9, 65:2,5,8, 66:1-4,7, 67:4, 72:8,11,17, 76:7-9,12, 82:8, 83:18, 86:9, 94:2, 96:9-10,13, 98:4-6,9, 99:1-3,5,9, 100:1-2, 102:15,22, 103:19, 110:1-2,6, 113:4, 138:4-5, 148:11-13, Isaiah 2:4, 24:13-16, 33:22, 45:22-23, 51:4-5, 66:23, Jeremiah 10:6-7,10, 33:9, Ezekiel 36:36, 37:28, 38:23, 39:7,21-23,27, Daniel 7:13-14, Joel 3:12, Micah 4:3, 5:4, 7:16-17, Zephaniah 3:9, Zechariah 9:10b, 13:2, 14:9,16-17, Malachi 1:11,14b, 3:12	YHWH – Jesus Christ will judge/rule the ends of the earth All the earth will worship him	Matthew 2:2,8, 24:30, 26:64, 28:18, Mark 13:26, 14:62, Luke 1:32-33, 2:30-32, 3:16, 19:38, 21:27, 22:69-70, John 3:31,35, 13:3, Romans 14:10-11, 1 Corinthians 15:24-27, Ephesians 1:20-23, Philippians 2:9-11, Colossians 2:9-10, Hebrews 2:5-8, 10:13, 1 Peter 3:22, Jude 15, Revelation 6:10, 11:15-18, 15:3-4, 16:5-7, 19:1-3,6
45.	1 Samuel 2:35	A Faithful Priest	Hebrews 2:17, 3:1-2,6, 4:14-15, 7:24-25, 9:11-12
46.	1 Samuel 24:5-6,10, 26:9-11,23-24	David deferred to God's appointed king – a type of Christ's deferring to the Father	John 5:19,36, 8:16,28, 10:30,38, 12:49-50, 14:9-11,24,31, 16:28, 18:11, Acts 1:7

	<u>Scripture</u>	<u>Comment</u>	<u>Fulfillment</u>
47.	2 Samuel 7:10-16 // 1 Chronicles 17:9-14, Psalms 18:50, 89:3-4,24-37, 110:1-7, 132:11-12,17, Isaiah 9:7, 16:5, Jeremiah 23:5-6, 33:14-22,25-26, Ezekiel 17:22-24, 21:26-27, Amos 9:11-12, Haggai 2:23, Zechariah 6:9-15	The promise of Messianic Descent Jesus is “The Son of David” The lines from David converge in Zerubbabel	Luke 1:26-33,68-69, 2:4,11, 3:23-31, 18:38-39, 20:41-44, Matthew 1:1,6-16,20, 9:27, 12:23, 15:22, 20:30-31, 21:9,15, 22:42-45, Mark 10:47-48, 11:10, 12:35-37, John 7:42, Acts 2:34-35, 13:22-23,32-38, 15:13-18, Romans 1:2-4, 2 Timothy 2:8, Hebrews 1:5,13, Revelation 5:5, 22:16
48.	2 Samuel 22:3 // Psalms 18:2, Psalms 89:24, 132:17	“the horn of my salvation”	Luke 1:69
49.	2 Samuel 22:11-12 // Psalms 18:10-11, Psalms 104:3, Isaiah 19:1, Ezekiel 1:4, Daniel 7:13	“... he is coming with the clouds ...”	Mark 13:26 // Mathew 24:30 // Luke 21:27, Mark 14:62 // Matthew 26:64, Acts 1:9-11, 1 Thessalonians 4:17, Revelation 1:7, 14:14
50.	2 Samuel 22:47 // Psalms 18:46, 1 Chronicles 29:11, Psalms 21:13, 47:9, 57:5,11, 97:9, 99:2,5a,9a, 108:5, 148:13, Isaiah 2:11,17, 30:18, 33:5,10, 52:13	YHWH – Jesus Christ to be exalted	Acts 2:33, 5:31, Philippians 2:9, Hebrews 7:26
51.	1 Kings 17:17-24, 2 Kings 4:32-37, 5:10-14	Raising the dead, healing lepers, prefigure the ministry of Christ	Luke 4:23-27, 7:22, Matthew 11:5, John 5:21, 11:42-44, 12:1,9,17
52.	Job 5:17, Psalms 94:12, 118:18, Proverbs 3:11-12	Jesus disciplines are those he loves	Hebrews 12:5-6, Revelation 3:19, 1 Corinthians 11:32, 2 Corinthians 6:8b-10
53.	Job 13:15, Psalms 33:18,22, 39:7, 42:5,11, 43:5, 62:5, 65:5, 69:6, 71:5,14, 78:7, 146:5, 147:11, Isaiah 8:17, Jeremiah 14:22, 17:13, Lamentations 3:24	Jesus Christ is our hope	Romans 5:2, 8:24-25, 2 Corinthians 1:10, Galatians 5:5, Ephesians 1:12,18, 4:4, Colossians 1:5,23,27, 1 Thessalonians 1:3, 5:8, 2 Thessalonians 2:16, 1 Timothy 1:1, 4:10, 5:5, Titus 1:2, 2:13, 3:7, Hebrews 3:6, 6:11,18,19, 10:23, 11:1, 1 Peter 1:3,13,21, 3:5,15, 1 John 3:3
54.	Job 9:13-15,32-33, 13:3, 16:19, 23:4, Isaiah 53:21, 59:16	The “arbiter” prefigures Christ’s role as “Mediator”, “Intercessor”	Mathew 10:32, 1 Timothy 2:5, Hebrews 3:1, 4:14-15, 7:25-26, 8:1,6, 9:11-12,15, 12:24
55.	Job 14:13-15, 19:25-27, Psalms 11:7, 13:3, 16:10, 17:15, 27:13, 41:10, 49:15, 50:5, 56:13, 61:4, 68:20, 73:24-26, 140:13, Isaiah 26:19-20, 61:3-4, Ezekiel 37:1-10, Daniel 12:2, Hosea , 13:14	Jesus will perform the resurrection of the dead	John 5:25-29
56.	Job 22:12, 28:24, Psalms 9:7, 11:4, 14:2, 20:6, 29:10, 33:13-14, 45:6, 47:8, 53:2, 55:19, 57:5,11, 73:25, 76:8, 80:14, 92:8, 93:2,4, 99:1, 102:12,19, 103:19, 108:5, 110:1, 113:4-6, 115:3, 123:1, 138:6, 148:13, Isaiah 6:1, 33:5, 57:15, 66:1, Jeremiah 25:30, Lamentations 5:19, Micah 6:6	YHWH – Jesus Christ is on his throne in eternity	Mark 12:36 // Matthew 22:44 // Luke 20:42,43, Mark 14:62 // Matthew 26:64, Mark 16:19, Luke 22:69, Acts 2:32-34, 5:30-31, 7:55-56, Romans 8:34, Ephesians 1:20, Colossians 3:1, Hebrews 1:3,8,13, 4:14-16, 8:1-2, 10:12, 12:1-2, 1 Peter 3:21b-22, Revelation 3:21, 12:5
57.	Psalms 2:1-3	The enmity of kings of the earth	Acts 4:25-28
58.	Psalms 2:7 (Note: YHWH is here speaking as the spokesman of the God Family about his own future Role as Messiah; see also Psalms 110:1-2,4)	Jesus is the Son of God	Mark 1:11 // Matthew 3:17 // Luke 3:22, Mark 14:61-62 // Matthew 26:63-64, John 1:14-15,29-34, Acts 13:32-33, Romans 1:3-4, Hebrews 1:5, 5:5
59.	Psalms 2:9, 23:4b	Jesus will rule with a “rod of iron”, a shepherd’s crook	Revelation 2:27, 12:5, 19:15

	<u>Scripture</u>	<u>Comment</u>	<u>Fulfillment</u>
60.	Psalms 2:10-12	Jesus is due honour	John 5:22-23, 15:23, 1 John 2:23, Mark 6:4 // Matthew 13:57, John 4:44, Mark 7:6 // Matthew 15:7-8, Philippians 1:20, 1 Timothy 1:17, 6:16, Hebrews 2:7-9, 1 Peter 3:15, 2 Peter 1:17, Revelation 5:12-13, 7:12
61.	Psalms 2:6, 5:2, 9:4,7-8, 10:16, 11:4, 24:7-10, 29:10, 44:4, 45:6, 47:2-8, 68:24, 74:12, 84:3, 89:4,14,18,27,29,36, 93:1-2, 95:3, 96:10, 97:1-2, 98:6, 99:1-4, 103:19, 145:1, 146:10, 149:2, Isaiah 6:1,5, 9:7, 16:5, 24:23b, 32:1, 33:17,22, 41:21, 43:15, 44:6, 52:7, 66:1, Jeremiah 3:17, 8:19, 10:6-7,10, 23:5, 46:18, 51:57, Lamentations 5:19, Ezekiel 20:33, 43:7a, Daniel 2:44, 4:37, 7:13-14, Micah 2:13b, 4:6-7, Zephaniah 3:15, Zechariah 9:9, 14:9,16, Malachi 1:14b	YHWH – Jesus Christ is the King of Kings	1 Timothy 1:17, 6:15, Revelation 1:5, 3:21, 11:15, 15:3, 17:14, 19:6,16, 20:4,6, 21:24, 22:5, Mark 15:2 // Matthew 27:11 // Luke 23:3 // John 18:33, Matthew 2:2, 5:34-35, 19:28, 25:31-34, Luke 1:32-33, 19:38, John 1:49, 12:12-15, 18:36-37, Acts 2:29-32, 7:48-49, 1 Corinthians 15:25, Hebrews 1:8, 4:16, 8:1, 12:2
62.	Psalms 8:2	“Out of mouths of infants ...”	Matthew 21:15-16
63.	Psalms 8:4-6	Incarnation, death, and resurrection	Hebrews 2:5-9, 1 Corinthians 15:27, Ephesians 1:22, Matthew 11:27
64.	Psalms 8:4, 80:17, 144:3, Daniel 7:13	Jesus is “The Son of Man”	Acts 7:56, Hebrews 2:6, Revelation 1:13, 14:14, Matthew (28 occurrences), Mark (13 occurrences), Luke (25 occurrences), John (12 occurrences)
65.	Psalms 9:8, 96:13b, 98:9b	“Jesus will judge the world in righteousness”	Acts 17:30-31, 10:42, 2 Timothy 4:8
66.	Psalms 11:7, 17:15, 27:13	In the resurrection, we will be like Jesus Christ; we will see him as he is	1 John 3:2-3, Romans 8:29, 1 Corinthians 15:42-44, 2 Corinthians 3:18, Philippians 3:20-21, 2 Peter 1:3-4
67.	Psalms 16:10	NOT to be abandoned in the grave	Acts 2:31, 13:35-37
68.	Psalms 20:6, 28:8	YHWH – Jesus Christ saves those he anoints	2 Corinthians 1:21-22, 1 John 2:20,27
69.	Psalms 22:1a	Jesus was forsaken due to sins of humanity	Mark 15:34 // Matthew 27:46, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Galatians 1:3-4, 3:13, 1 Peter 2:23-24, 3:18, Hebrews 10:3-4, 9:11-14, John 6:35, 38-40, 53-56
70.	Psalms 22:1b	Jesus’ suffering	Hebrews 5:7
71.	Psalms 22:2	Jesus prays for “rest”	Mark 14:36 // Matthew 26:39 // Luke 22:42
72.	Psalms 22:6-7, 109:25	Observers scorn Jesus	Mark 15:27-32 // Matthew 27:38-44 // Luke 23:35-37
73.	Psalms 22:6b,13	The people scorn Jesus and call for Jesus’ death	Mark 15:12-14 // Matthew 27:22-23 // Luke 23:20-23 // John 19:6
74.	Psalms 22:8, 31:14	“let God deliver him”	Matthew 27:43
75.	Psalms 22:9-10, Isaiah 49:1,5	The incarnation	Matthew 1:18-23, Luke 1:26-35, Philippians 2:7
76.	Psalms 22:12,16a	Roman soldiers, “bulls”, “dogs”, surround Jesus	Matthew 27:27-31, Mark 15:16-20

	<u>Scripture</u>	<u>Comment</u>	<u>Fulfillment</u>
77.	Psalm 22:14a	"I am poured out like water"	John 19:34
78.	Psalm 22:14b-15a,17, Isaiah 50:6	Jesus' abuse and scourging	Mark 14:65 // Matthew 26:67-68 // Luke 22:63-65, Mark 15:15-20 // Matthew 27:26-31, Luke 23:11,25b, John 18:22, 19:1-3
79.	Psalm 22:15ba	"my tongue sticks to my jaws"	John 19:28
80.	Psalm 22:15bβ	Jesus' death	Mark 15:37 // Matthew 27:50 // Luke 23:46 // John 19:30
81.	Psalm 22:16b	"they had crucified him"	Mark 15:24a // Matthew 27:35a // Luke 23:33a // John 19:18a
82.	Psalm 22:18	"they divide my garments"	Mark 15:24b // Matthew 27:35b // Luke 23:34b // John 19:23-24
83.	Psalm 22:19-21	Jesus' resurrection	Mark 16:6 // Matthew 28:6 // Luke 24:6
84.	Psalm 22:22-26	The work of the Church	Matthew 28:16-20, Mark 16:14-18, Luke 24:44-49, John 21:15-19, Acts 1:8
85.	Psalm 22:27-31	The World Tomorrow	Second Advent
86.	Psalms 23:2, 36:8-9, 42:1-2, 46:4, 65:9, Isaiah 12:3, 55:1, Jeremiah 2:13, 17:13, Ezekiel 47:1, Joel 3:18, Zechariah 14:8	Jesus Christ is the True River of Living Waters	John 4:7-15, 7:37-39, Revelation 7:17, 21:6, 22:1,17
87.	Psalms 24:7-10, 29:1-2, 96:7-9	Jesus is the King/Lord of Glory	1 Corinthians 2:8, James 2:1, Acts 7:2, Hebrews 3:3,
88.	Psalms 25:11, 51:1-2,9, 65:3, 79:9, 86:5-6, 99:8, 103:3, 130:4, Proverbs 16:6, Isaiah 1:18, 27:9, 43:25, 44:22, 55:7, Jeremiah 31:34, 33:8, 50:20, Ezekiel 16:63, Daniel 9:9,24, Micah 7:18	Forgiveness is only available through Jesus Christ At the First Advent, Jesus came to atone for sin, propitiate sin	Mark 2:9-10 // Matthew 9:5-6 // Luke 5:23-24, Mark 2:7 // Luke 5:21, Matthew 26:28, Luke 1:77, 7:48-49, Acts 3:18-19, 5:31, 10:43, 13:38, 22:16, 26:18, Romans 3:25, Ephesians 1:7, Colossians 1:14, 2:13-14, 3:13, Hebrews 2:17, 9:14, 10:12-18, 1 John 1:7,9, 2:2, 4:10
89.	Psalms 27:12, 35:11	False witnesses against Jesus	Mark 14:55-59 // Matthew 26:59-61
90.	Psalm 31:5a	Jesus' last words	Luke 23:46
91.	Psalm 31:11, 88:8,18	Jesus companions fled from him	Mark 14:49b-50 // Matthew 26:56, John 16:32
92.	Psalms 31:13, 94:21	The plot to kill Jesus	John 11:47-53, Mark 15:1a // Matthew 27:1 // Luke 22:66
93.	Psalms 33:4-6, 105:19, 138:2	Jesus Christ is the living Word of God	John 1:1-3, 1 John 1:1-2, Revelation 19:13
94.	Psalms 34:15-17, 145:18-20, Isaiah 56:6-8	YHWH – Jesus Christ hears prayers of True Worshipers	Mark 11:17 // Matthew 21:13 // Luke 19:46, Mark 11:24 // Matthew 21:22, Acts 1:24, Philippians 1:9-11,19, 1 Peter 3:12
95.	Psalms 35:7,19, 69:4	"they hated me without a cause"	John 15:25
96.	Psalm 38:11	"friends and companions stand aloof"	Mark 15:40-41 // Matthew 27:55-56 // Luke 23:49
97.	Psalm 38:12	"to trap him in his talk"	Mark 12:13 // Matthew 22:15 // Luke 20:20
98.	Psalm 38:13	"Jesus made no further answer"	Mark 15:3-5 // Matthew 27:12-14

	<u>Scripture</u>	<u>Comment</u>	<u>Fulfillment</u>
99.	Psalm 38:20	"he went about doing good"	Acts 10:38
100.	Psalm 39:3, Jeremiah 20:9, Job 32:19-21	"did not our hearts burn within us"	Luke 24:25-32
101.	Psalm 40:6-8	Jesus' sacrifice replaces animal sacrifices	Hebrews 10:5-10
102.	Psalms 41:9, 55:12-14,	"... has lifted his heel against me ..."	John 13:18
103.	Psalms 42:5-6a, 43:5, 69:20	Jesus is sorrowful in Gethsemane	Mark 14:33b-34a // Matthew 26:37b-38a
104.	Psalm 45:2	"grace is poured upon your lips"	Luke 4:22a, John 1:14,16-17
105.	Psalm 45:3, 149:6, Isaiah 49:2, 66:16, Micah 5:6	The sword of Jesus Christ	Hebrews 4:12, Revelation 1:16, 2:12,16, 19:15,21
106.	Psalms 45:4, 65:5,8	Jesus rides to awesome victory in righteousness	Revelation 19:11
107.	Psalm 45:7, Isaiah 11:2, 61:1-2	Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power	Mark 1:9-11 // Matthew 3:13-17 // Luke 3:21-22, John 1:31-34, Acts 10:44-48
108.	Psalm 45:8	Preparation of Jesus' body	John 19:39-40
109.	Psalm 45:9b, 13-15	The marriage of the "Lamb" and the Church	Revelation 19:6-9
110.	Psalm 45:6,12,16-17	The World Tomorrow	Second Advent
111.	Psalms 49:4, 78:2	Jesus spoke to the crowds in parables	Matthew 13:34-35
112.	Psalms 65:7, 89:9, 104:6-7, 107:29	Jesus "rebuked the winds and the sea"	Mark 4:39 // Matthew 8:26b // Luke 8:24b
113.	Psalm 68:18	Jesus' death, ascension, and gift of grace	Ephesians 4:7-10, Luke 24:51, Acts 1:9
114.	Psalm 69:8	"his own people did not receive him"	John 1:11, 7:5
115.	Psalm 69:9a, 119:139	"zeal for your house ..."	John 2:17
116.	Psalm 69:9b	"Christ did not please himself ..."	Romans 15:3
117.	Psalm 69:19, Isaiah 53:3	"my shame and my dishonour"	Hebrews 12:2, Luke 24:26, Philippians 2:8
118.	Psalm 69:21b	"they offered him wine to drink"	Mark 15:23 // Matthew 27:34, Luke 23:36, Mark 15:36 // Matthew 27:48 // John 19:28-29
119.	Psalms 80:17, 110:1b	"... the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power ..."	Mark 14:62 // Matthew 26:64, Luke 22:69, Ephesians 1:20, Colossians 3:1, Hebrews 1:3, 8:1, 10:12, 12:2
120.	Psalm 88:1	"... elect, who cry to him day and night ..."	Luke 18:7
121.	Psalm 89:27	Jesus Christ is the "firstborn" – the first human being to be resurrected to eternal life	Romans 8:29, Colossians 1:15,18, Hebrews 1:6, Revelation 1:5, 3:14
122.	Psalm 91:11-12	Jesus is protected by angels	Matthew 4:5-6 // Luke 4:9-11, Matthew 26:53,

	<u>Scripture</u>	<u>Comment</u>	<u>Fulfillment</u>
123.	Psalm 92:5, 111:2, 139:14	"How great are your works ..."	Revelation 15:3,
124.	Psalm 95:7b-11	"... if you hear his voice ..."	Hebrews 3:7-19
125.	Psalm 101:2	"when will you come to me"	John 14:23
126.	Psalm 102:25-27, Isaiah 34:4, 41:4, 48:12-13, 51:6	"your years have no end"	Hebrews 1:10-12, 2 Peter 3:7-12, Revelation 21:1, Mark 13:31 // Matthew 24:35 // Luke 21:33
127.	Psalms 116:13, 16:5	New Testament Passover symbol predicted	Mark 14:23-24 // Matthew 26:27-28 // Luke 22:20, 1 Corinthians 10:16,21, 11:25-29
128.	Psalms 118:22-23, Isaiah 8:14-15, 28:16, Daniel 2:34-35,44-45, Zechariah 4:7, 10:4	Jesus is the "cornerstone", the "foundation"	Mark 12:10-12 // Matthew 21:42-46 // Luke 20:17-19, Acts 4:11, Romans 9:33, 1 Corinthians 1:22-24, 3:11, Ephesians 2:20, 1 Peter 2:4-8
129.	Psalm 118:25-26, Zechariah 9:9a	"hosanna": הוֹשִׁיעָה נָא - hoshi'ah nna', "save we pray"	Mark 11:7-10 // Matthew 21:7-9, Matthew 21:4-5,15, John 12:12-15,
130.	Psalm 129:2	Christian affliction is resolved in the life of Christ	2 Corinthians 4:7-12
131.	Psalm 129:3, Isaiah 50:6, 53:5,5	Jesus suffered scourging and disgrace	Mark 10:33-34 // Matthew 20:18-19 // Luke 18:31-34, Mark 14:65 // Matthew 26:67-68 // Luke 22:63-65, Mark 15:15b // Matthew 27:26b, John 19:1-5
132.	Psalm 146:7-9, Isaiah 29:18, 35:5-6a, 42:7,16,18, 61:1	Jesus performed the "signs of the Kingdom"	Mathhew 11:4-5 // Luke 7:21-22, Mark 7:31-37, Mathhew 15:30-31, Luke 4:18, John 9:17,32,39, 10:21, 11:37
133.	Isaiah 1:4, 5:19,24, 10:20, 12:6, 17:7, 29:19,23, 30:11,12,15, 31:1, 37:23 (// 2 Kings 19:22), 41:14,16,20, 43:3,14, 45:11, 47:4, 48:17, 54:5, 55:5, 60:9,14, Jeremiah 50:29, 51:5, Psalms 71:22, 78:41, 89:18	Jesus Christ is the Holy One of Israel	Mark 1:24 // Luke 4:34, John 6:67-69, Acts 2:22-27, 13:35, 1 John 2:20-22a, Revelation 3:7, 15:4, 16:5b
134.	Isaiah 4:2, 6:11-13, 11:1-5,10, Jeremiah 23:5-6, 33:14-18, Ezekiel 17:22-24, Zechariah 3:8-10, 6:12-13	Jesus Christ is "The Branch", "The Shoot from the Stump", and "The Root"	John 15:1-11, Acts 13:22-23 Romans 11:17-21, 15:12, Revelation 5:5, 22:16
135.	Isaiah 5:1-7, Psalm 80:8, Hosea 9:10	The Parable of the Vineyard	Mark 12:1-9 // Matthew 21:33-41 // Luke 20:9-16
136.	Isaiah 5:20, 9:2, 29:15,18, 42:6,16, 45:7,19, 49:6,9, 58:10, 59:9, 60:2, Jeremiah 13:16, 23:12, Lamentations 3:1-6, Daniel 2:20-22, Amos 5:18-20, Micah 7:8-9	"...darkness for light and light for darkness ..." Jesus is the Light	John 1:1-5, 3:19, 8:12, 12:35-36a,46, Matthew 4:16, 6:22-23. 10:27, Luke 1:79, 11:33-36, Acts 26:16-18, Romans 13:12, 1 Corinthians 4:5, 2 Corinthians 4:6, 6:14, Ephesians 5:8-11, 6:12, Colossians 1:13, 1 Thessalonians 5:4-5, 1 Peter 2:9, 1 John 1:5-6, 2:8-11
137.	Isaiah 6:1,5,10, 53:1	"Isaiah ... saw his glory and spoke of him."	John 12:37-41

	<u>Scripture</u>	<u>Comment</u>	<u>Fulfillment</u>
138.	Isaiah 6:8	Isaiah's being "sent" is a type of Jesus "sent" by the Father	Mark 9:37 // Luke 9:48, Matthew 10:40, Luke 4:43, 10:16, John 3:34-36, 5:24,30,36-38,43, 6:38-39,44,57, 7:16,18,28-29,33, 8:16,18,26,29,42, 9:4,7, 10:36, 11:42, 12:44-45,49, 13:20, 14:24, 15:21, 16:5, 17:3,8,18,20-26, 20:21, Acts 3:26, Galatians 4:4-7, 1 John 4:9-10,14
139.	Isaiah 6:9-10, 53:1	Jesus' use of parables was to prevent understanding	John 12:36b-40, Mark 4:10-12 // Matthew 13:10-15 // Luke 8:9-11, Acts 28:24-28, Romans 10:16
140.	Isaiah 7:10-14, 8:8-10, 9:6-7	"the sign of Immanuel"	Matthew 1:18-25, Luke 1:30-35, 2:11, John 1:14, Romans 1:1-4, 1 Timothy 3:16
141.	Isaiah 8:17-18, Psalm 22:22	Isaiah's children are a type of Jesus' "brothers"	Mark 3:31-35 // Matthew 12:46-50 // Luke 8:19-21, Hebrews 2:10-13
142.	Isaiah 9:1-2	Jesus to live in Galilee, the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali	Mathew 4:13-16, Luke 1:79,
143.	Isaiah 11:1	נָצַר - netzer, "branch", play on words with "Nazarene"	Matthew 2:23
144.	Isaiah 11:2, 40:13, 42:1, 61:1	"I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him."	John 1:29-34, Mark 1:9-11 // Matthew 3:13-17 // Luke 3:21-22, Acts 10:38
145.	Isaiah 11:3	"Do not judge by appearances"	John 7:24, 8:15-16, Acts 17:30-31
146.	Isaiah 11:4, 49:2, 66:16, Ezekiel 21:3-5	"... with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked."	2 Thessalonians 2:8, Ephesians 6:17, Hebrews 4:12, Matthew 10:34, Revelation 1:16, 2:12,16, 19:15,21
147.	Isaiah 11:5	"Righteous" and "Faithful"	Revelation 19:11
148.	Isaiah 11:10	"... of him the nations shall inquire ..."	John 12:20-23
149.	Isaiah 22:22	"... the key of David ..."	Revelation 3:7, 1:18, Matthew 16:19, Luke 11:52
150.	Isaiah 28:4, Jeremiah 8:13, Hosea 9:10, Micah 7:1	Jesus' parable – Israel became a barren fig tree	Mark 11:12-14,19-22 // Mathew 21:18-21a, Luke 13:6-9
151.	Isaiah 29:13	"... the commandments of men ..."	Mark 7:5-9 // Matthew 15:3,7-9
152.	Isaiah 29:16, 45:9, 64:8, Jeremiah 18:4-6	Jesus is The Potter	Romans 9:20-21, 2 Corinthians 4:6-7
153.	Isaiah 40:3-5, Malachi 3:1	Preparation for the Messiah	Mark 1:2-3 // Matthew 3:3 // Luke 3:4-6, John 1:23, Matthew 11:10 // Luke 7:27
154.	Isaiah 40:9, 59:20	Jesus came first to the remnant of Israel	Matthew 2:6, 15:24, Luke 1:16, 2:34, John 1:11,31,49, 4:22, 12:13, Acts 2:36, 5:31, 10:36, Romans 11:26,
155.	Isaiah 41:4, 44:6, 48:12	Jesus Christ is the "first and the last"	Revelation 1:8,17, 2:8, 16:5, 22:13, Matthew 19:30, 20:16, Mark 10:31, Luke 13:30, 1 Corinthians 15:45
156.	Isaiah 42:1-4, 49:1-7, 50:4-9, 52:13-53:12, 61:1-3	The Servant Songs – Jesus is the quintessential Servant	Mark 10:45 // Matthew 20:28, Matthew 10:24-25a, 12:18, 23:11, Luke 12:37, 22:27, John 13:1-17, Acts 3:13,26, 4:27,30, Romans 15:8, Philippians 2:5-7

	<u>Scripture</u>	<u>Comment</u>	<u>Fulfillment</u>
157.	Isaiah 42:1-3a (MT), 4b (LXX)	Matthew's summary of Jesus' work	Matthew 12:18-20a (First Advent), 12:20b-21 (Second Advent)
158.	Isaiah 42:6, 49:8, 54:10, 55:3, 56:4,6, 59:21, 61:8, Jeremiah 31:31-34, 32:38-41, 50:5, Ezekiel 11:19-20, 16:60-63, 20:37, 34:25, 36:25-28, 37:26, Hosea 2:18, Malachi 3:1	Jesus is the mediator of the New Covenant	Hebrews 8:6-13, 9:15, 10:15-18, 12:24, Luke 22:20 // Mark 14:24 // Matthew 26:28, Romans 11:27, 1 Corinthians 11:25, 2 Corinthians 3:6
159.	Isaiah 44:3, Joel 2:28-29	Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit	John 14:15-26, 16:7-15, Acts 2:1-4,15-18,38
160.	Isaiah 50:4-5, 29:14b	Jesus did NOT receive his teaching from men	Matthew 7:28-29, 11:25-30, Luke 10:21-24, 1 Corinthians 1:18-25
161.	Isaiah 52:7, 53:1, 65:1-2, Deuteronomy 32:21, Psalms 19:4, Nahum 1:15, Habakkuk 2:2	"... faith comes from hearing ... the word of Christ."	Romans 10:14-21, Hebrews 4:2, John 12:37-38
162.	Isaiah 52:13 52:13-53:3 The Life of the Messiah	Introduction to the 4th Servant Song	Luke 2:52, John 12:32-33, Acts 1:9, Ephesians 1:19-21, Philippians 2:8-11
163.	Isaiah 52:14	"... many were astonished ..." "... his appearance was so marred ..."	Mark 8:31-33 // Matthew 16:21-23, Mark 9:30-32 // Matthew 17:22-23 // Luke 9:43-45, Mark 10 32-34 // Matthew 20:17-19 // Luke 18:31-34, Mark 15:15b // Matthew 27:26b
164.	Isaiah 52:15, Exodus 24:6-8, Leviticus 8:30, 16:14-19, Ezekiel 36:25	"... sprinkle many nations ..." "... that which has not been told ..."	Hebrews 9:11-14,18-22, 10:19-22, 11:28, 12:22-24, 1 Peter 1:2, Romans 15:20-21, 2 Corinthians 10:13-18
165.	Isaiah 53:1, 51:9, 52:10	"Who has believed ..." "... the arm of YHWH ..."	John 12:37-38, Romans 10:16, Luke 1:51, 3:6, Acts 13:47
166.	Isaiah 53:2	"... he had no form or majesty that we should look at him ..."	Luke 4:28-31, Mark 14:43-45 // Matthew 26:47-49 // Luke 22:47-48
167.	Isaiah 53:3, Psalms 42:6,11	"... despised and rejected ... sorrows ... and grief" "... men hide their faces ..." "we esteemed him not."	Mark 9:12b // Matthew 17:12b, Mark 14:33-34 // Matthew 26:37-38, Mark 14:49b-50 // Matthew 26:56, Mark 15:12-14 // Matthew 27:22-23 // Luke 23:20-22 // John 18:6-7, Luke 4:28-29, 19:41, John 1:10-11, Hebrews 4:15, 1 Peter 2:23
168.	Isaiah 53:4, Psalms 69:26 53:4-6 The Substitutive Nature of the Sacrifice	"... borne our griefs and carried our sorrows ..." "... stricken, smitten ..., and afflicted."	Mark 1:32-34 // Matthew 8:16-17 // Luke 4:40-41, Mark 14:63-65 // Matthew 26:65-68 // Luke 22:63-65 Mark 15:29-32 // Matthew 27:39-44 // Luke 22:35-37
169.	Isaiah 53:5	"... pierced for our transgressions ..." "... crushed for our iniquities;" "... chastisement that brought us peace ..." "... wounds we are healed."	Mark 10:45 // Matthew 20:28, Mark 15:16-19 // Matthew 27:27-30, Romans 4:25, 5:6,8, 8:32, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Galatians 1:4, Ephesians 2:13-14, Philippians 2:8, Colossians 1:20, Hebrews 2:9, James 5:14-15, 1 Peter 2:24
170.	Isaiah 53:6, Psalms 119:176	"All we like sheep have gone astray;" "... the iniquity of us all."	Luke 15:4, John 10:11, Galatians 1:4, 1 Peter 2:25, 1 John 2:2, 4:10

	<u>Scripture</u>	<u>Comment</u>	<u>Fulfillment</u>
171.	Isaiah 53:7, Jeremiah 11:19 <u>53:7-9 Suffering and Death</u>	"... oppressed ... afflicted ..." "... opened not his mouth ..." "... a lamb that is led to the slaughter ..."	Mark 14:60-61 // Matthew 26:62-63, Mark 15:3-5 // Mathew 27:12-14 Mark 15:20 // Matthew 27:31, John 1:29,36, 19:9-10, Acts 8:32,35, Hebrews 9:26, 1 Peter 1:18-19, 2:23,
172.	Isaiah 53:8	"... he was taken away ... who considered ..." "... cut off out of the land of the living ... for transgression of my people ..."	Mark 14:43-46,48-49,53-65, // Matthew 26:47-51,55-57,59-68, // Luke 22:47-48,52-53,63-71 // John 18:24, Mark 15:1b,12-14,15b,20 // Matthew 27:2,22-23,26b,31 // Luke 23:1,20-22,25b // John 18:28a, 19:6-7,16-17, John 18:3-9,12-14, 19:1-5, Mark 15:37 // Matthew 27:50 // Luke 23:46 // John 19:30, John 11:51-52, 12:32, Acts 8:33,35, Romans 3:23-25, 2 Corinthians 5:18-19, Colossians 1:19-20, 1 John 2:2, 4:10
173.	Isaiah 53:9, Deuteronomy 21:22-23	"... grave with the wicked ... with a rich man ..." "... done no violence ... no deceit in his mouth."	Luke 23:32,39-41, Mark 15:42-46 // Matthew 27:57-60 // Luke 23:50-54 // John 19:38-42, Hebrews 4:15, 1 Peter 2:22, 1 John 3:5
174.	Isaiah 53:10, Psalm 22:22 <u>53:10-12 Success of the Servant</u>	"... will ... to crush him ... put him to grief ... an offering for guilt ..." "... see his offspring ... prolong his days ... prosper ..."	Mark 14:35-36 // Matthew 26:39 // Luke 22:41-42, Matthew 20:28, 26:42, John 10:15, 12:27, 17:1-5, 18:11, Acts 13:29-31, Romans 6:9-10, 1 Timothy 2:3-6, Titus 2:11-14, Hebrews 2:10-12, 9:28, Revelation 5:9-10
175.	Isaiah 53:11	"Out of the anguish ... he shall see and be satisfied;" "... his knowledge ... make many to be accounted righteous ..." "... bear their iniquities ..."	John 19:25-27, 14:1-11,19b,23,25-26, 15:5,15b,27, 16:12-15,30, 17:2-3,7-8,10,14a,17,19-26, Hebrews 9:28, 10:10, 1 Peter 2:24, 3:18
176.	Isaiah 53:12	<u>Summary of the 4th Servant Song</u> "... a portion with the many ... divide the spoil with the strong ..." "... numbered with the transgressors ..." "... makes intercession ..."	Revelation 2:2-3,7b,9,11b,13,17b,19, 26-28, 3:1b,5,8,12,15,21 Mark 15:27 // Matthew 27:38, Luke 23:33-34a, Romans 8:34, 1 Timothy 2:5, Hebrews 3:1, 4:14-15, 7:25-26, 9:11-12
177.	Isaiah 54:5-6, Jeremiah 3:8, 31:32, Hosea 2:7b,16a,19-20	"... your Maker is your husband ..."	Matthew 22:2, 25:10, 2 Corinthians 11:2, Ephesians 5:22-33, Revelation 19:6-9
178.	Isaiah 56:7, Jeremiah 7:11	"... my house shall be called a house of prayer ..."	Mark 11:17 // Matthew 21:13 // Luke 19:46
179.	Isaiah 60:6b	"... they offered ... gold and frankincense ..."	Mathew 2:11
180.	Isaiah 60:19-20	"... its lamp is the Lamb ..."	Revelation 21:22-24
181.	Isaiah 61:1-2a	Luke's account of the purpose of the First Advent	Luke 4:16-21
182.	Isaiah 63:2-3, Lamentations 1:15, Joel 3:13	The winepress of wrath	Revelation 14:17-20, 19:13-15
183.	Jeremiah 9:23-24	"... boast in the Lord ..."	1 Corinthians 1:31, 2 Corinthians 10:17

	<u>Scripture</u>	<u>Comment</u>	<u>Fulfillment</u>
184.	Hosea 6:2, Jonah 1:17, 2:1-10, 3:1-5	"... the third day ..." death and resurrection "... Jonah became a sign ..."	Mark 8:31 // Matthew 16:21 // Luke 9:22, Mark 9:31-32 // Matthew 17:22-23, Mark 10:33-34 // Matthew 20:18-19 // Luke 18:32-34, Mark 14:57-58 // Matthew 26:61, Mark 15:29-30 // Matthew 27:39-40, Matthew 12:39-40, 16:4, 27:62-64, Luke 11:29-32, 24:21,46, John 2:18-22, Acts 10:39-41, 1 Corinthians 15:3-4
185.	Hosea 6:6	"... go and learn what this means ..."	Matthew 9:13, 12:7
186.	Hosea 11:1	"... out of Egypt I called my son ..."	Matthew 2:14-15
187.	Joel 2:32	"... everyone who calls on the name of YHWH shall be saved."	Romans 10:13, Acts 2:21, 16:31, Mark 16:16,
188.	Micah 5:2a	Birthplace of the Messiah	Matthew 2:4-6, John 7:40-42
189.	Micah 5:2c	"... from of old, from ancient days ..."	John 1:1-2, 8:58
190.	Micah 5:2b-5a, Zechariah 2:10-12, Malachi 3:1-2	First and Second Advents	Mark 8:38b // Matthew 16:27 // Luke 9:26b Mark 13:26 // Matthew 24:30 // Luke 21:27 Matthew 24:3b, 25:14-15,19,31, Luke 1:32-33, 17:22-25, 19:11-13, John 14:2-3, Acts 1:11-12
191.	Haggai 2:7b, Malachi 3:1bα	"... I will fill this house with glory ..."	Mark 11:15-17 // Matthew 21:12-13 // Luke 19:45-46, John 2:13-16
192.	Zechariah 3:9b	"... I will remove the iniquity of the earth in a single day."	Mark 15:1-39 // Matthew 27:1-54 // Luke 22:66-71, 23:1-47 // John 18:28-40, 19:1-37
193.	Zechariah 9:9b	"... your king is coming ..."	Mark 11:7-10 // Matthew 21:8-11 // Luke 19:36-38 // John 12:12-13
194.	Zechariah 9:9c	"... humble and mounted on a donkey ..."	Matthew 21:4-5, John 12:14-16
195.	Zechariah 11:12-13	"... thirty pieces of silver ..."	Mark 14:11a // Matthew 26:15 // Luke 23:5, Matthew 27:3-10, Acts 1:18-19
196.	Zechariah 12:10	"... look on ... whom they have pierced ..."	John 19:33-37, Revelation 1:7
197.	Zechariah 14:4	"On that day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives ..."	Acts 1:9-12, Luke 24:50-51, Mark 8:38b // Matthew 16:27 // Luke 9:26b, Philippians 3:20, 1 Thessalonians 1:10,16, 2 Thessalonians 1:7,10
198.	Malachi 1:6	"... if I am a master ..."	Matthew 7:21-23, Luke 6:46, John 13:13

2.4.4 Eschatology

Eschatology relates to "last things":

Eschatology, the doctrine of the last things.³⁰³

Eschatology: from Ancient Greek ἔσχατος (éskhatos) 'last', and -logy; concerns expectations of the end of the present age, human history, or the world itself.³⁰⁴

³⁰³ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/eschatology>
Sunday, May 19, 2024

Beyond that, there is very little agreement on the meaning of the term. **From a Biblical perspective, the primary meaning of the term is the study of the events leading up to the Second Advent and the Second Advent itself.** The Second Advent terminates the period of time God has allocated for human beings to try to devise philosophies of life and government apart from God's revelation. All have failed. After the Second Advent, God will reveal his Way to all human beings, and will usher-in a thousand years of peace, order, good government, and freedom. Much of the Bible looks to the events leading up to the Second Advent and the Second Advent itself – eschatology.

2.4.4.1 The End-Time

The Book of Daniel uses the phrase **“time of the end”** on six occasions. The revelations given to Daniel have been briefly discussed in section *The Prophet Daniel*. Daniel's **second vision** related to the **Persian Empire** and the **Greek Empire**. The assumption of the Persian Empire by **Alexander the Great** is well documented to have occurred within about two centuries of Daniel's vision. **Gabriel is told to explain the vision to Daniel:**

“Gabriel, **make this man understand the vision.**” So he came near where I stood. And when he came, I was frightened and fell on my face. But he said to me, **“Understand, O son of man, that the vision is for the time of the end.”** ... He said, **“Behold, I will make known to you what shall be at the latter end of the indignation,** for it refers to **the appointed time of the end.** (Daniel 8:16b-17, 19 ESV)

The vision began with contemporary events but projected into the indefinite future. The progression of events from the contemporary would lead into events at **“the latter end of the indignation”**:

And **at the latter end** of their kingdom, **when the transgressors have reached their limit,** a **king of bold face**, one who understands riddles, shall arise. **His power shall be great**—but not by his own power; and he shall cause fearful destruction and shall succeed in what he does, and destroy mighty men and the people who are the saints. By his cunning **he shall make deceit prosper** under his hand, and **in his own mind she shall become great.** Without warning he shall destroy many. **And he shall even rise up against the Prince of princes,** and **he shall be broken**—but **by no human hand.** (Daniel 8:23-25 ESV)

The phrase **“by no human hand”** alludes back chapter two:

... **a stone was cut out by no human hand,** and it struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold, all together were broken in pieces, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, so that not a trace of them could be found. But **the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.** (Daniel 2:34-35 ESV)

The **“stone”** represents the Kingdom of God. The **“king of bold face”** is the “Antichrist”,³⁰⁵ the “Beast”,³⁰⁶ the agent of Satan who leads the world into destruction at **“the time of the end”**. In Daniel chapter eleven, at **“the time of the end”**, we find **“the wise”** in conflict with **“the world”**, and **“kings”** engaged in battle:

And **the wise** among the people shall make many understand, though for some days they shall stumble by **sword** and flame, by **captivity** and **plunder**. When they stumble, **they shall receive a little help.** And many shall join themselves to them with flattery, and some of **the wise** shall stumble, so that they may be **refined, purified,** and **made white,** **until the time of the end,** for it still awaits **the appointed time.**

At the time of the end, the **king of the south** shall **attack** him, but the **king of the north** shall rush upon him like a whirlwind, with **chariots** and **horsemen,** and with **many ships.** (Daniel 11:33-35, 40a ESV)

Finally in chapter twelve, **Daniel requests overall understanding of his visions,** but he is told that they are **“sealed up”** until **“the time of the end”**:

“... But you, Daniel, **shut up the words** and **seal the book,** **until the time of the end.** Many shall run to and fro, and **knowledge shall increase.**” ... I heard, but **I did not understand.** Then I said, “O my lord, what shall be the outcome of these things?” He said, “Go your way, Daniel, for **the words are shut up and sealed until the time of the end.** ...” (Daniel 12:4, 8-9 ESV)

“The time of the end”, the end-time, is the period preceding the Second Advent. The apocalyptic sweep of Biblical prophecy is intended to provide information regarding events to occur in the end time. **The prophecies will be understandable only to “the wise” and only as the events unfold.** God will provide the **“increase of knowledge”** as he sees fit.

³⁰⁴ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eschatology>

³⁰⁵ See 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 1 John 2:18

³⁰⁶ See Revelation chapters 13 and 17, and 19:20

Are we therefore in the end-time? The New Testament authors are clear and specific that they believed they were in the end-time:

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but **in these last days** he has **spoken to us by his Son**, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. ... But as it is, **he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages** to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. (Hebrews 1:1-2, 9:26b ESV)

But **Peter**, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them: “Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, **let this be known to you**, and give ear to my words. But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel:

And **in the last days** it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; (Acts 2:14-17 ESV)

Now these things happened to them as an example, but **they were written down for our instruction**, on whom **the end of the ages has come**. (1 Corinthians 10:11 ESV)

He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was **made manifest in the last times** for the sake of you who through him are **believers in God** ... (1 Peter 1:20-21a ESV)

Children, **it is the last hour**, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. **Therefore we know that it is the last hour**. (1 John 2:18 ESV)

The end-time began with the inception of the New Testament Church.³⁰⁷ Therefore, we can look to fulfillment of end-time prophecies throughout the history of the New Testament Church. To qualify this understanding, it is necessary to quantify what exactly is the “New Testament Church”. **The Apostle Paul provides a definition of a Christian:**

You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact **the Spirit of God dwells in you**. **Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him**. But **if Christ is in you**, although the body is dead because of sin, **the Spirit is life** because of righteousness. (Romans 8:9-10 ESV)

To be a Christian, a person must have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The Body of Christ, the Church, is comprised of those living persons who have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. History is clear and specific that the True Church became corrupted very quickly. Almost every New Testament book makes reference to advancing heresies.³⁰⁸ During the second century, **the visible church** was becoming more and more corrupted, until we see the utter debauchery of the Middle Ages. The **protestant reformation** only dealt with administrative problems – all the major lies of the corrupted church were retained: Sunday worship,³⁰⁹ pagan holidays, the trinity, infant baptism, etc. **Today most of visible Christianity remains locked into these same lies**. The True Church comprises scattered groups and individuals throughout the world who **“keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus”**.³¹⁰ The True Church is recognizable by its members living by the Way of God.

2.4.4.2 The Book of Revelation

The Book of Revelation is consistent with this view of the end-time:

The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the **things that must soon take place**. ... Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for **the time is near**.

And behold, **I am coming soon**. Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book. ... And he said to me, “Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for **the time is near**. ...”

Behold, **I am coming soon**, bringing my recompense with me, to repay each one for what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, **the beginning and the end**.

I, **Jesus**, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. ... **He who testifies** to these things says, **“Surely I am coming soon.”** (Revelation 1:1a, 3, 22:7, 10, 12-13, 16a, 20a ESV)

From God’s perspective, in eternity, **the length of the period of the end-time is irrelevant – there is no “time” in eternity**. From a human perspective, as we can humanly measure time, the length of time of the period of the end-time, may seem excessive. We can only pray that from our perspective, the time is nearly over.

³⁰⁷ See the discussion of the inception and purpose of the Church in section **2.3.4 The Purpose of the New Testament Church**.

³⁰⁸ For a selection of scriptures, see the Bible Stud Notes, “**The Mystery of Iniquity**”, located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

³⁰⁹ For a discussion of how the Sabbath was rejected and the “visible church” embraced “Sunday worship”, see Bacchiocchi.

³¹⁰ See Revelation 12:17b

The Book of Revelation was most likely written by the Apostle John in the last decade of the First Century. John is explicitly told the nature of the material he has recorded and that his primary audience is seven Churches in what is today Turkey:

Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.

Write therefore the **things that you have seen, those that are** and **those that are to take place after this**. (Revelation 1:11, 19 ESV)

The primary mode of revelation is “vision” – John saw living depictions of events and persons; however, there was also much verbal revelation. In particular, the messages from Jesus to the seven Churches are all verbal. The **primary purpose of the Book** is to instill faith in True Worshipers and encourage them in living by the Way of God in the face of uncertainty:

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To **the one who conquers** I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.³¹¹

Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates.

I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. ... The Spirit and the Bride say, “Come.” And let the one who hears say, “Come.” And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires **take the water of life without price**. (Revelation 2:7, 22:14, 16a, 17 ESV)

The Book of Revelation puts into focus all prophecies throughout the Bible which relate to the end-time. The Book of Revelation specifies the sequence of events³¹² that will occur leading up to the Parousia. The **Olivet Prophecy**³¹³ explains much of the symbolism of the Book of Revelation, in particular the first four seals – **The Four Horsemen**, for example, **Seal One**:

Now I watched when the Lamb opened **one of the seven seals**, and I heard one of the four living creatures say with a voice like thunder, “Come!” And I looked, and behold, **a white horse!** And its rider had a **bow**, and a **crown** was given to him, and **he came out conquering, and to conquer**. (Revelation 6:1-2 ESV)

And Jesus began to say to them, “See that no one leads you astray. **Many will come in my name**, saying, ‘[that] I am he!’ and they will **lead many astray**. (Mark 13:5-6 ESV)

And Jesus answered them, “See that no one leads you astray. For **many will come in my name**, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and they will **lead many astray**. (Matthew 24:4-5 ESV)

And he said, “See that you are not led astray. For **many will come in my name**, saying, ‘I am he!’ and, ‘The time is at hand!’ **Do not go after them**. (Luke 21:8 ESV)

All three Synoptists emphasize that **“many would come” using the name of Christ**. Mark and Matthew cite the result: **“lead many astray”**; Luke cites it as a sign of the times, **“the time is at hand”**, and warns True Worshipers, **“do not go after them”**. This is exactly what happened beginning in the Second Century: as the visible church fell into error, more and more people were deceived until True Christians were forced underground. The **Second Seal** is similar:

When he opened **the second seal**, I heard the second living creature say, “Come!” And out came **another horse, bright red**. Its rider was permitted to **take peace from the earth**, so that people should slay one another, and he was given a great sword. (Revelation 6:3-4 ESV)

And when you hear of **wars and rumors of wars**, do not be alarmed. This **must take place**, but the end is not yet. (Mark 13:7 ESV)

And you will hear of **wars and rumors of wars**. See that you are not alarmed, for this **must take place**, but the end is not yet. (Matthew 24:6 ESV)

And when you hear of **wars and tumults**, do not be terrified, for these things **must first take place**, but the end will not be at once.” (Luke 21:9 ESV)

All three Synoptists recognize ongoing wars and conflicts as the steady state of the world. This is Satan’s world – his agenda is death: wars and conflicts are inevitable and will continue until the end of this age.

Seal Three, Revelation 6:5-6, warns of shortages and economic disruptions.³¹⁴ **Seal Four**, Revelation 6:7-8, predicts famine, pestilence, and more war.³¹⁵ These first four seals define the ongoing

³¹¹ See also Revelation 2:11,17,26-29, 3:5-6,12-13,21-22

³¹² See the Bible Study Notes “**Structure of the Book of Revelation**” located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

³¹³ See the paper “**The Olivet Prophecy**” located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

³¹⁴ See Mark 13:8a // Matthew 24:7a // Luke 21:10

³¹⁵ See Mark 13:8b // Matthew 24:7b-8 // Luke 21:11a

state of the world under the stewardship of Satan the Devil. All of these things, of course, are intensifying as we actually approach the end.

The **Fifth Seal**³¹⁶ changes direction somewhat. Religious persecution of True Christians was the focus of the First Seal. As the false church became more and more powerful after the Council of Nicaea and especially during the Middle Ages, many thousands of True Christians were martyred. When the Fifth Seal is opened, John sees a vision of all these dead crying out to God, see **Revelation 6:9-10**. Up to this point, John has recorded, from our perspective, “**things that you have seen, those that are**”. John is now given a glimpse into things “**that are to take place after this**”:

Then **they were each given a white robe** and told to rest a little longer, **until the number of their fellow servants and their brothers should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been.**

Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready;

it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure ... (Revelation 6:11, 19:7-8a ESV)

The “**white robes**” for the dead symbolize their promised position in the soon coming resurrection. But, the key is the second part of the verse: **more martyrs are to join them. This is the beginning of the Great tribulation.**³¹⁷ The Beast Power will be in control and True Christians will again be anathema.³¹⁸

With the **Sixth Seal**,³¹⁹ **God begins to act**. The “**heavenly signs**” are a harbinger of the Day of YHWH. The Ancient Prophets had frequently seen the “heavenly signs”, but they did NOT have the context of the Book of Revelation.³²⁰

The sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining.

And **I will show wonders in the heavens** and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke. The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, **before the great and awesome day of [YHWH] comes.** (Joel 2:10b, 30-31 ESV)

Behold, **the day of [YHWH] comes**, cruel, with wrath and fierce anger, to make **the [earth] a desolation** and to destroy its sinners from it.

For the **stars** of the heavens and their constellations will not give their light; the **sun** will be dark at its rising, and the **moon** will not shed its light. (Isaiah 13:9-10 ESV)

When he opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a **great earthquake**, and the **sun** became black as sackcloth, the full **moon** became like blood, and the **stars** of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale. The **sky vanished** like a scroll that is being rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place.

Then **the kings of the earth** and the great ones and the generals and the rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, calling to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and **hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne**, and **from the wrath of the Lamb**, for **the great day of their wrath has come**, and who can stand?” (Revelation 6:12-17 ESV)

2.4.4.3 The Day of YHWH

The **Seventh Seal**³²¹ is the Day of YHWH,³²² “**the great day of ... the wrath of the Lamb**”:

When **the Lamb opened the seventh seal**, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. Then I saw the **seven angels** who stand before God, and **seven trumpets** were given to them. And another angel came and stood at the altar with a golden censer, and he was given much incense to offer with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar before the throne, and the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, rose before God from the hand of the angel. Then the angel took the censer and filled it with **fire from the altar and threw it on the earth**, and there were peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake. (Revelation 8:1-5 ESV)

The wrath of God on sinning humanity is poured out in two waves heralded by the seven angels who blow the seven trumpets. The **first four trumpet blasts** signal cosmic disturbances, initiated by God, which do severe damage to the earth and kill many people, see Revelation 8:7-12. The **fifth trumpet**

³¹⁶ See Mark 13:9-13 // Matthew 24:9-14 // Luke 21:12-19

³¹⁷ See Jeremiah 30:7, Daniel 12:1, Mark 13:19-20 // Matthew 24:21-22

³¹⁸ See Revelation 13:7-8,15, 14:13, 16:6, 17:6, 18:24, Mark 13:21-23 // Matthew 24:23-26

³¹⁹ Mark 13:24-25 // Matthew 24:29 // Luke 21:25-26

³²⁰ See also Isaiah 34:4, 51:6, Ezekiel 32:7-8, Amos 8:9, Psalm 102:25-27

³²¹ See Mark 13:26-27 // Matthew 24:30-31 // Luke 21:27-28

³²² For a discussion of the historical development of the term, “Day of YAWH”, and for usage examples from the writing prophets, see the paper “**The Day of YHWH**” located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

heralds Satan's final attempt to attack humanity and thus thwart the Plan of God, see Revelation 9:1-11. It is NOT clear what is the "power to hurt ...but not to kill them". With the sixth trumpet, the entire world is plunged into war, presumably nuclear war, killing one third of humanity, Revelation 9:13-19. Even in the face of this death and destruction, the majority of humanity remain arrogant and defiant:

The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands nor give up worshipping demons and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood, which cannot see or hear or walk, nor did they repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts. (Revelation 9:20-21 ESV)

The seventh trumpet heralds the First Resurrection and the final outpouring of the wrath of God – the seven last plagues:

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

Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. (1 Corinthians 15:51-52 ESV)

For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17)

Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and seated on the cloud one like a son of man, with a golden crown on his head, and a sharp sickle in his hand. And another angel came out of the temple, calling with a loud voice to him who sat on the cloud, "Put in your sickle, and reap, for the hour to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is fully ripe." So he who sat on the cloud swung his sickle across the earth, and the earth was reaped. (Revelation 14:14-16 ESV)

Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever." And the twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying,

We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, who is and who was,
for you have taken your great power and begun to reign.

The nations raged, but your wrath came,
and the time for the dead to be judged,
and for rewarding your servants, the prophets and saints,
and those who fear your name, both small and great,
and for destroying the destroyers of the earth. (Revelation 11:15-18 ESV)

The "destroyers of the earth" include the leftist elites, their political puppets, perverse educator, liberal judges, corrupt lawyers, left-wing journalists, entertainment moguls, and all persons in positions of leadership and authority who have embraced the philosophies and ways of Satan the Devil. These are the people who have made this world the way it is. They are "arrogant", flaunting their "pride", "idolators", worshipping their own ideas, defiant before God and refusing to repent. God will have none of these people as subjects under his Kingdom. The seven last plagues will ensure that none of the "wicked", the "enemies of God", the "destroyers of the earth", will survive into the World Tomorrow, see Revelation 16:1-21.

Prior to the actual earth entry of the returning King of kings, an event occurs in eternity: all the newly resurrected member of the Family of God are assembled for a "marriage supper". This is a covenant meal securing the relationship between the "groom", Jesus Christ, and the "bride", the resurrected Christians. God the Father presumably presides. All the resurrected members of the God Family from Abel to the inception of the New Testament Church are the honoured guests:

Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the roar of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, crying out,

Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns.

Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory,

for the marriage of the Lamb has come,

and his Bride has made herself ready;

it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure"—

for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.

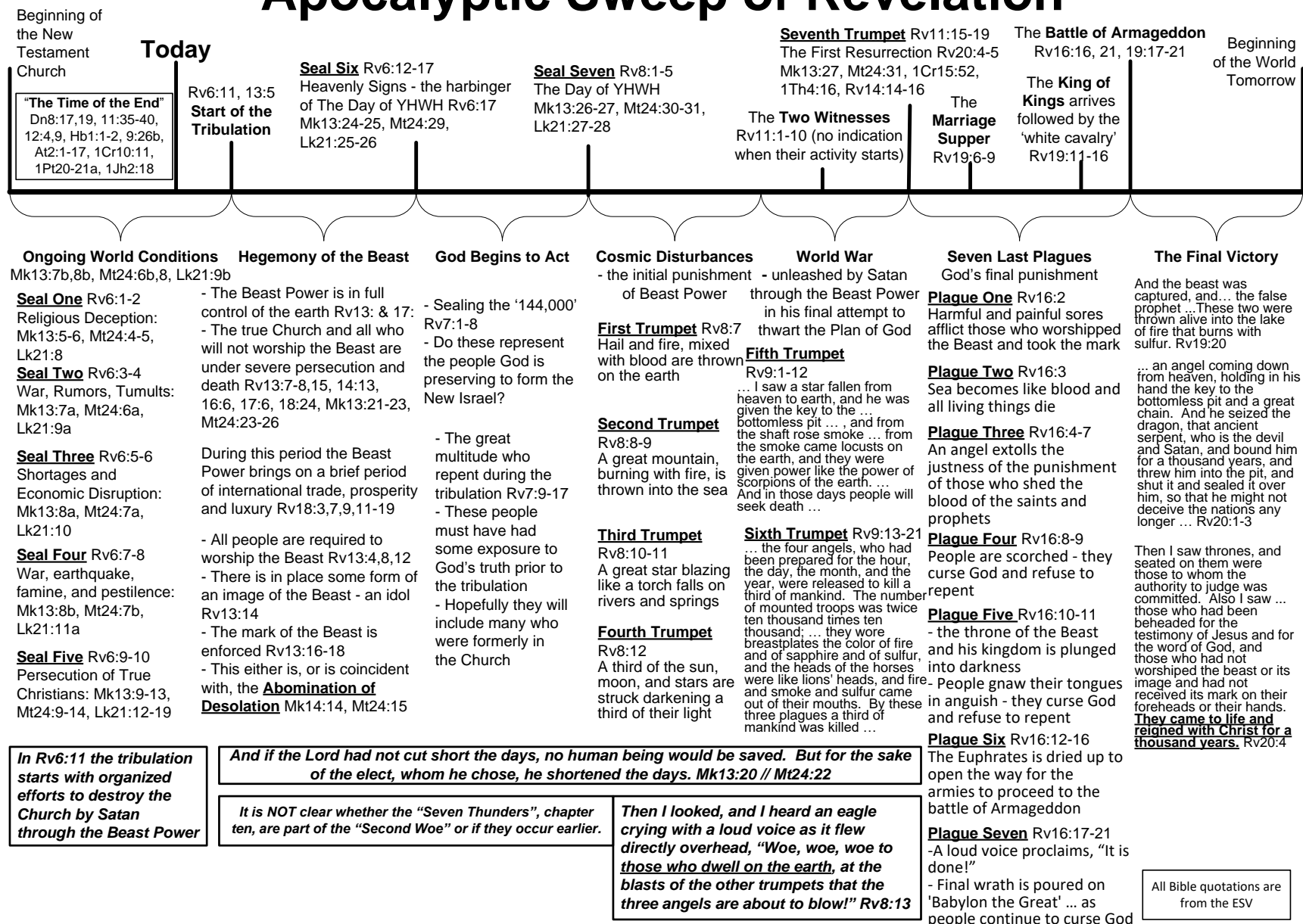
And the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." And he said to me, "These are the true words of God." (Revelation 19:6-9 ESV)

After the “marriage supper”, **Jesus**, at the head of the “**white cavalry**”, **enters the earth to face the armies of the world:**

Then I **saw heaven opened**, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and **in righteousness he judges and makes war**. His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. **He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood**, and the name by which he is called is **The Word of God**. And **the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen**, white and pure, **were following him on white horses**. From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, **King of kings and Lord of lords**. (Revelation 19:11-16 ESV)

The **Battle of Armageddon** ensues – the armies of the world are destroyed; and, the final leaders of Satan’s world, “**the Beast**” and “**the False Prophet**”, meet their fate, Revelation 16:12-16, 19:17-21. Satan himself is “bound” in the “abyss” so that he can have no influence on the world. Then can commence the “thousand years”, the Millennium, the utopia we call **The Wonderful World Tomorrow**, Revelation 20:1-6.

Apocalyptic Sweep of Revelation



2.4.5 The World Tomorrow and Beyond

The “World Tomorrow” is specifically the new world order created by the government of the Kingdom of God on this earth. The synonymous terms “Messianic Age” and “Millennium” are also in popular usage. Both the Old Testament and the New Testament use terminology such as **“in the latter days”**, **“in that day”**, and **“on that day”**. These phrases do NOT always point to the “World Tomorrow” – the context in which they are used must be considered. The **ESV** New Testament uses the phrase **“the age to come”** on four occasions all clearly **looking to the World Tomorrow**:

Jesus said, “Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, **for my sake and for the gospel**, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in **the age to come** eternal life. (Mark 10:29-30 ESV)

And he said to them, “Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children, **for the sake of the kingdom of God**, who will not receive many times more in this time, and in **the age to come** eternal life.” (Luke 18:29-30 ESV)

And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in **the age to come**. (Matthew 12:32 ESV)

For it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of **the age to come**, and then have fallen away, to restore them again to repentance, since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt. (Hebrews 6:4-6 ESV)

Jesus provided a parable, **“the sheep and the goats”**, which provides insight into **Jesus’ purpose in the World Tomorrow**:

When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. **Before him will be gathered all the nations**, and **he will separate people** one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left.

Then **the King will say to those on his right**, “Come, **you who are blessed by my Father**, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For **I was hungry and you gave me food**, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.”

Then **the righteous will answer him, saying**, “Lord, **when did we** see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?”

And the King will answer them, “Truly, I say to you, **as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.**”

Then **he will say to those on his left**, “**Depart from me**, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.”

Then **they also will answer, saying**, “Lord, **when did we** see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?”

Then **he will answer them**, saying, “Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.” And **these will go away into eternal punishment**, but **the righteous into eternal life**. (Matthew 25:31-46 ESV see also Isaiah 40:11, Ezekiel 34:11-16, Jeremiah 23:1-4, John 10:1-18, 21:15-17)

Analysis of the parable of “the sheep and the goats”:

- The time setting is the beginning of the Millennium, **“when the Son of Man comes in his glory”**
- The subjects are the people of the world, **“before him will be gathered all the nations”**
- The object is teaching the Way of God, **“he will separate people”**
- Some will learn, **“the righteous will answer”**, **“you who are blessed by my Father”**
- Those who learn are identified, **“the King will say to those on his right”**
- Those who do NOT learn are also identified, **“he will say to those on his left, ‘depart from me’”**
- The Way of God is summarized by Christian love, **“as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me”**
- Those who learn Christian love are admitted to the Family of God, **“the righteous into eternal life”**

- Those who do NOT learn Christian love, cannot be admitted to the Family of God, **“these will go away into eternal punishment”**

In his summary of the relationship between Jews and Gentiles, the **Apostle Paul** looks to the World

Tomorrow when **all Jews and all Gentiles will have equal opportunity for salvation:**

Lest you be wise in your own sight, **I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery**, brothers: **a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.** And in this way all Israel will be saved, as it is written,

The Deliverer will come from Zion, he will banish ungodliness from Jacob;
and **this will be my covenant** with them when I take away their sins. (Isaiah 59:20-21a LXX)

As regards the gospel, they are enemies for your sake. But as regards election, they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers. For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

For just as you were at one time disobedient to God but now have received mercy because of their disobedience, so they too have now been disobedient in order that by the mercy shown to you they also may now receive mercy. For **God has consigned all to disobedience, that he may have mercy on all.**

Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor? (Isaiah 40:13)

Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid? (Job 41:11a)

For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

(Romans 11:25-36 ESV)

The **seminal scripture on the World Tomorrow** is recorded by the Prophets Isaiah and Micah:

It shall come to pass **in the latter days** that the mountain of **the house of [YHWH]** shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be lifted up above the hills; and all **the nations shall flow to it**, and **many peoples** shall come, and say:

Come, let us go up to the mountain of [YHWH], to **the house of the God of Jacob**, that he may **teach us his ways** and that we may **walk in his paths**.

For out of Zion shall go forth the **[torah]**,³²³ [even] **the word of [YHWH]** from Jerusalem.

He shall judge between the **nations**, and shall decide disputes for **many peoples**; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; **nation shall not lift up sword against nation**, neither shall they learn war anymore.

O house of Jacob, come, **let us walk in the light of [YHWH]**. (Isaiah 2:2-5 ESV see also Micah 4:1-5)

The “house of God” is the Family of God – the world ruling Kingdom of God which will make the World Tomorrow possible. All nations will come to the Family of God to learn **the Way of God** as defined by the **torah**, the **word of God**. **There will be universal abundance and world peace.**

There are many other prophecies of this time, for example, consider the **Prophet Zephaniah**:

For **at that time** I will change the speech of **the peoples** to a pure speech, that **all of them may call upon the name of [YHWH] and serve him with one accord**.

But I will leave in your midst **a people humble and lowly**.

They shall seek refuge in the name of [YHWH], those who are left in Israel; they shall **do no injustice** and **speak no lies**, nor shall there be found in their mouth a deceitful tongue.

For they shall graze and lie down, and **none shall make them afraid**.

Sing aloud, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel!

Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem!

[YHWH] has taken away the [ways of the world from you]; he has cleared away your enemies.

The King of Israel, [YHWH], is in your midst; you shall never again fear evil.

On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:

Fear not, O Zion; let not your hands grow weak.

[YHWH] **your God is in your midst**, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing.

And **I will save the lame and gather the outcast**,

and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth.

At that time I will bring you in, at the time when I gather you together;

³²³ See footnote 49
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for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth,
when I restore your fortunes before your eyes,
says [YHWH]. (Zephaniah 3:9, 12-13, 14-17, 19b-20 ESV see also Hosea 14:4-9, Joel 2:23-27,
Amos 9:13-15, Zechariah 8:20-23, 13:1-6, 14:16-21)

In the Book of Isaiah, chapters forty through sixty-six,³²⁴ the themes around the World Tomorrow and beyond are prevalent:

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.

Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended,
that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from [YHWH's] hand double for all her sins.

Behold, the Lord [YHWH] comes with might, and his arm rules for him;
behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.

He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms;
he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.

For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground;

I will pour my Spirit upon your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants.

They shall spring up among the grass like willows by flowing streams.

This one will say, 'I am [YHWH's],' another will call on the name of Jacob,
and another will write on his hand, '[YHWH's],' and name himself by the name of Israel.

Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth!

For I am God, and there is no other.

By myself I have sworn; from my mouth has gone out in righteousness
a word that shall not return:

To me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear allegiance.

(Isaiah 40:1-2, 10-11, 44:3-5, 45:22-23 ESV)

The "warfare" of Jerusalem ends with the Second Advent. Jerusalem's "iniquity", symbolic of the "iniquity" of all humanity, can then be "pardoned". "YHWH comes with might" at the Parousia, he will then rule with a rod of iron (a shepherd's crook)³²⁵ by which "he will tend his flock like a shepherd". The Holy Spirit will be made available to all flesh³²⁶ – it is compared to water, "I will pour water on the thirsty land", "I will pour my Spirit upon your offspring". All people will come to acknowledge the sovereignty of God, "one will say, 'I am [YHWH's]'", and all humanity will "be saved, all the ends of the earth". This will be accomplished by teaching the Way of God, "from my mouth has gone out in righteousness a word that shall not return", and all humanity will worship the King of kings, "to me every knee shall bow".

One of the last revelations given to the Prophet Isaiah concerned the New Jerusalem; the Apostle John also saw the New Jerusalem in a vision:

For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth,

and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind.

But be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create;

for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy, and her people to be a gladness.

I will rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in my people;

no more shall be heard in it the sound of weeping and the cry of distress. (Isaiah 65:17-19 ESV)

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."

And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

And he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and she will be my son. ..." (Revelation 21:1-7 ESV)

³²⁴ See the Bible Study Notes, "Isaiah Chapters 40 through 66", located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

³²⁵ See Psalm 2:9, 23:1-4, Revelation 2:27, 12:5, 19:15

³²⁶ See Joel 2:28-29

When **“it is done”**, God the Father will join his Family on this earth and will say, **“I am making all things new”**. It will be a brand-new beginning. At that time, we will learn about the wonderful plans of God the Father for his Family and for his creation – the unfathomable physical universe. **We will then learn more about eternity which we will inhabit³²⁷ with God the Father and our elder brother, Jesus Christ.** But, before that happens, God will create a “utopia” on this earth – a thousand years of peace, order, good government, abundance, and freedom for all humanity. **It all begins with the creation of the New Nation of Israel.**

2.4.5.1 The Second Exodus

At the beginning of the Millennium, the first major activity will be **the assembly of the people who are being called to the New Israel** – the Second Exodus. **The seminal scriptures on the Second Exodus include:**

Therefore, behold, **the days are coming, declares [YHWH], when it shall no longer be said, ‘As [YHWH] lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt,’ but ‘As [YHWH] lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the north country and out of all the countries where he had driven them.’** For I will bring them back to their own land that I gave to their fathers.

Behold, I am sending for many **fishers**, declares [YHWH], and they **shall catch them**. And afterward I will send for many **hunters**, and they **shall hunt them from every mountain and every hill**, and out of the clefts of the rocks. (Jeremiah 16:14-16 ESV see also 23:7-8, 31:7-14)

In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples—**of him shall the nations inquire**, and his resting place shall be glorious.

In that day the Lord will extend his hand yet **a second time to recover the remnant that remains of his people**, from Assyria, from Egypt, from Pathros, from Cush, from Elam, from Shinar, from Hamath, and from the coastlands of the sea.

He will raise a signal for the nations and will assemble the banished of Israel, and gather the dispersed of Judah **from the four corners of the earth**. (Isaiah 11:10-12 ESV)

And **a highway shall be there**, and it shall be called the Way of Holiness; **the unclean shall not pass over it**.

It shall belong to **those who walk on the way**; even if they are fools, they shall not go astray.

No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but **the redeemed shall walk there**.

And **the ransomed of [YHWH] shall return** and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;

they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. (Isaiah 35:8-10 ESV)

As I live, declares the Lord [YHWH], surely with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm and with wrath poured out **I will be king over you**. I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered, with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out. And **I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples**, and there I will enter into judgment with you face to face. **As I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness** of the land of Egypt, so I will enter into judgment with you, declares the Lord [YHWH]. I will make you pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant. **I will purge out the rebels from among you**, and those who transgress against me. I will bring them out of the land where they sojourn, but they shall not enter the land of Israel. **Then you will know that I am [YHWH]**. (Ezekiel 20:33-38 ESV see also 39:25-29)

Analysis:

- The time setting is clear: after the Parousia, **“root of Jesse ... of him shall the nations inquire”**, **“I will be king over you”** (see also Isaiah 27:12-13)
- The Second Exodus is deliberately contrasted with First Exodus, **“it shall no longer be said ... the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt”**, **“a second time to recover the remnant that remains of his people”** (see also Isaiah 51:10-11)
- Those called come from all over the world, **“out of all the countries where he had driven them”**, **“from the four corners of the earth”** (see also Ezekiel 11:16-17, Jeremiah 32:37)
- Those called will be carefully selected, **“fishers ... shall catch them”**, **“hunters ... shall hunt them from every mountain and every hill”** (see also Ezekiel 34:11-13)
- Those called will be guided and protected, **“a highway shall be there”**, **“no lion shall be there”** (see also Isaiah 11:16, 43:1-7, 49:8-12)

- Those called are being offered salvation, **“the redeemed shall walk there”, “the ransomed of YHWH shall return”, “those who walk on the way”** (see also Jeremiah 3:14-15)
- Those called will be tested and tried, **“I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples”, “As I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness”** (see also Hosea 2:14-15, Jeremiah 31:1-6, Isaiah 43:18-21)
- Those called must respond with repentance and commitment, **“the unclean shall not pass over it”, “I will purge out the rebels from among you”** (see also Ezekiel 36:24-25, Zephaniah 3:10-13)
- Those called will enter into a functional relationship with God, **conversion, “then you will know that I am YHWH”** (see also Isaiah 12:1-6, Jeremiah 50:4-5, Ezekiel 20:41-42)

The people called to the Second Exodus will return to the Promised Land, the Land of Israel, and form a physical nation, New Israel, in which all persons of age are called to conversion. **The Nation and the Church will be coterminous at the beginning of the Millennium.**

2.4.5.2 The New Israel

After the Parousia, **the King of kings will establish his presence in the city of Jerusalem**, in the midst of the New Israel:

“Now I will arise,” says [YHWH], “now I will lift myself up; now I will be exalted. ...”

[YHWH] is exalted, for he dwells on high; he will fill Zion with [justness] and righteousness, and **he will be the stability of your times**, abundance of **salvation, wisdom, and knowledge**; the fear of [YHWH] is Zion’s treasure.

Your eyes will behold the king in his beauty; they will see a land that stretches afar.

Behold Zion, the city of our appointed [times]!

Your eyes will see Jerusalem, an untroubled habitation, an immovable tent, whose stakes will never be plucked up, nor will any of its cords be broken.

But there [YHWH] in majesty will be for us a place of broad rivers and streams, where no galley with oars can go, nor majestic ship can pass.

For [YHWH] is our **judge**; [YHWH] is our **lawgiver**; [YHWH] is our **king**; **he will save us**. (Isaiah 33:10, 5-6, 17, 20-22 ESV)

In that day the branch of [YHWH] shall be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land shall be the pride and honor of **the survivors of Israel**. And he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem **will be called holy**, everyone who has been **recorded for life in Jerusalem**, when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion and cleansed the bloodstains of Jerusalem from its midst by a spirit of [justice] and by a spirit of burning.

Then [YHWH] will create over the whole site of Mount Zion and over her assemblies **a cloud by day**, and smoke and the shining of a **flaming fire by night**; for over all the glory there will be a canopy. There will be **a booth** for shade by day from the heat, and for a refuge and **a shelter** from the storm and rain. (Isaiah 4:2-6 ESV see also Micah 4:6-7, Zechariah 2:4-5)

Therefore **[YHWH] waits to be gracious to you**, and therefore he exalts himself **to show mercy to you**.

For **[YHWH] is a God of [justness]**; blessed are all those who wait for him.

For **a people shall dwell in Zion, in Jerusalem**; you shall weep no more. He will surely be gracious to you at the sound of your cry. As soon as he hears it, he answers you. And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet **your Teacher will not hide himself anymore**, but your eyes shall see your Teacher. And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, **“This is the way, walk in it,”** when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left. (Isaiah 30:18-21 ESV)

In that day [YHWH] of hosts will be a crown of glory, and a diadem of beauty, to the remnant of his people, and **a spirit of [justness] to him who sits [over the justice]**, and strength to those who turn back the battle at the gate. (Isaiah 28:5-6 ESV)

For **on my holy mountain**, the mountain height of Israel, declares the Lord [YHWH], there **all the house of Israel**, all of them, **shall serve me** in the land. There **I will accept them**, and there I will require your contributions and the choicest of your gifts, with all your sacred offerings. As a pleasing aroma I will accept you, when I bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you have been scattered.

And **I will manifest my holiness among you in the sight of the nations**. And you shall know that I am [YHWH], when I bring you into the land of Israel, the country that I swore to give to your fathers. And there you shall remember your ways and all your deeds with which you have defiled yourselves, and **you shall loathe yourselves for all the evils that you have committed**. And you shall know that I am [YHWH], when **I deal with you for my name’s sake**, not according to your evil ways, nor according to your corrupt deeds, O house of Israel, declares the Lord [YHWH]. (Ezekiel 20:40-44 ESV)

And **the word of [YHWH]** of hosts came, saying,

Thus says [YHWH] of hosts: **I am jealous for Zion with great jealousy**, and I am jealous for her with great wrath.

Thus says [YHWH]: I have returned to Zion and will **dwell in the midst of Jerusalem**, and Jerusalem shall be called the faithful city, and the mountain of [YHWH] of hosts, the holy mountain.

Thus says [YHWH] of hosts: **Old men and old women shall again sit in the streets of Jerusalem**, each with staff in hand because of great age. And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its streets.

Thus says [YHWH] of hosts: If **it is marvelous** in the sight of the remnant of this people in those days, should it also be marvelous in my sight, declares [YHWH] of hosts?

Thus says [YHWH] of hosts: Behold, **I will save my people** from the east country and from the west country, and I will bring them to dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. And **they shall be my people**, and **I will be their God**, in faithfulness and in righteousness. (Zechariah 8:1-8 ESV)

The basis of the New Israel will be the New Covenant:

Behold, **the days are coming**, declares [YHWH], when I **will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah**, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares [YHWH].

For this is **the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel** after those days, declares [YHWH]: **I will put my [torah]³²⁸ within them, and I will write it on their hearts**. And **I will be their God, and they shall be my people**. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know [YHWH]'; **for they shall all know me**, from the least of them to the greatest, declares [YHWH]. For **I will forgive their iniquity**, and I will remember their sin no more. (Jeremiah 31:31-34 ESV see also 32:38-41)

... **I will establish for you an everlasting covenant**. Then **you will remember your ways and be ashamed** ... I will establish my covenant with you, and **you shall know that I am [YHWH]**, that you may remember and be confounded, and never open your mouth again because of your shame, **when I atone for you for all that you have done**, declares the Lord [YHWH].

I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and **from all your idols I will cleanse you**. And I will give you a **new heart**, and a **new spirit** I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And **I will put my Spirit within you**, and cause you to **walk in my statutes** and be careful to **[live by my mish*patim]**.³²⁹ You shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers, and **you shall be my people**, and **I will be your God**. And I will deliver you from all your uncleannesses. (Ezekiel 16:60b-61a, 62-63, 36:25-29a ESV see also 11:18-20, 37:15-28)

The New Nation of Israel will be a converted nation. All persons called to form the nation will have their minds opened to respond to the calling of God. Those that repent and are baptised will receive the gift of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and they will become **Christians on the path to salvation**. As the nation grows, its citizens will continue to be called to conversion:

In those days and in that time, declares [YHWH], **iniquity** shall be sought in Israel, and **there shall be none**, and **sin** in Judah, and **none shall be found**, for **I will pardon** those whom I leave as a remnant. (Jeremiah 50:20 ESV see also Isaiah 60:21)

In that day this song will be sung in the land of Judah:

We have a strong city; **he sets up salvation** as walls and bulwarks.

Open the gates, that **the righteous nation that keeps faith** may enter in.

You keep him in **perfect peace** whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you.

Trust in [YHWH] forever, for [YH, YHWH,] is an everlasting rock.

The **path of the righteous** is level; you make level **the way of the righteous**.

In the path of your [mish*patim], [YHWH], we wait for you;

your name and remembrance are the desire of our [being].

My [mind] yearns for you in the night; **my spirit within me earnestly seeks you**.

For when your [mish*patim] are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness.

[YHWH], you will ordain peace for us, for **you have indeed done for us all our works**.

(Isaiah 26:1-4, 7-9, 12 ESV)

In that day, a pleasant vineyard, sing of it!

I, [YHWH], am its keeper; every moment I water it.

Lest anyone punish it, **I keep it night and day**; I have no wrath.

³²⁸ See footnote 49

³²⁹ For a discussion of the meaning of *mish*patim*, see section **1.4.3 Attributes of God's Character** in the paper "First Pillar - The Nature of God" located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

Would that I had thorns and briers to battle!
 I would march against them, I would burn them up together.
 Or let them lay hold of my protection,
 let them make peace with me, let them make peace with me. (Isaiah 27:2-5 ESV)
Jacob shall no more be ashamed, no more shall his face grow pale.
 For when he sees his children, the work of my hands, in his midst, they will sanctify my name;
 they will sanctify the Holy One of Jacob and will stand in awe of the God of Israel.
 And those who go astray in spirit will come to understanding,
 and those who murmur will accept instruction. (Isaiah 29:22b-24 ESV see also 32:3-6)
 When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue is parched with thirst,
 I, [YHWH], will answer them; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them.
 I will open rivers on the bare heights, and fountains in the midst of the valleys.
 I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water.
 I will put in the wilderness the cedar, the acacia, the myrtle, and the olive.
 I will set in the desert the cypress, the plane and the pine together,
that they may see and know, may consider and understand together,
 that the hand of [YHWH] has done this, the Holy One of Israel has created it. (Isaiah 41:17-20 ESV)

God will pour out his blessings on the New Israel. There will be national and personal abundance. **All people will live in freedom** – there will be no oppressive self-serving governments, no manipulative and arrogant corporations, and no organized crime:³³⁰

And he will give rain for the seed with which you sow the ground, and bread, the produce of the ground, which will be rich and plenteous. In that day your livestock will graze in large pastures, and the oxen and the donkeys that work the ground will eat seasoned fodder, which has been winnowed with shovel and fork. And on every lofty mountain and every high hill there will be brooks running with water ... You shall have a song as in the night when a holy feast is kept, and gladness of heart, as when one sets out to the sound of the flute to go to the mountain of [YHWH], to the Rock of Israel. (Isaiah 30:23-25a, 29 ESV)

But you have increased the nation, [YHWH], you have increased the nation;
 you are glorified; you have enlarged all the borders of the land. (Isaiah 26:15 ESV see also 61:4-9)

... until the Spirit is poured upon us from on high,
 and the wilderness becomes a fruitful field, and the fruitful field is deemed a forest.
 Then [justness] will dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness abide in the fruitful field.

And the effect of righteousness will be peace,
 and the result of righteousness, quietness and trust forever.

My people will abide in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.
 (Isaiah 32:15-18 ESV see also 35:1-7)

Then fear not, O Jacob my servant, declares [YHWH], nor be dismayed, O Israel;
 for behold, I will save you from far away, and your offspring from the land of their captivity.

Jacob shall return and have quiet and ease, and none shall make him afraid.

For I will restore health to you, and your wounds I will heal, declares [YHWH],
 because they have called you an outcast: 'It is Zion, for whom no one cares!'

Thus says [YHWH]:

Behold, I will restore the fortunes of the tents of Jacob and have compassion on his dwellings;
 the city shall be rebuilt on its mound, and the palace shall stand where it used to be.

Out of them shall come songs of thanksgiving, and the voices of those who celebrate.

I will multiply them, and they shall not be few;

I will make them honored, and they shall not be small.

Their children shall be as they were of old, and their congregation shall be established before me,
 and I will punish all who oppress them. (Jeremiah 30:10, 17-20 ESV see also 31:3-7, 33:6-11)

I will make with them a covenant of peace and banish wild beasts from the land, so that they may dwell securely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods. And I will make them and the places all around my hill a blessing, and I will send down the showers in their season; they shall be showers of blessing. And the trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and the earth shall yield its increase, and they shall be secure in their land.

And they shall know that I am [YHWH], when I break the bars of their yoke, and deliver them from the hand of those who enslaved them. They shall no more be a prey to the nations, nor shall the beasts of the land devour them. They shall dwell securely, and none shall make them afraid. And I will provide for them renowned plantations so that they shall no more be consumed with hunger in the land, and no longer suffer the reproach of the nations.

³³⁰ All the institutions that have, under the influence of Satan, made this world the way it is will be gone: perverse educators, liberal judges, lying lawyers, demented entertainment moguls, biased and corrupted media, etc.

And **they shall know that I am [YHWH] their God** with them, and that they, **the house of Israel, are my people**, declares the Lord [YHWH]. And **you are my sheep**, human sheep of my pasture, and **I am your God**, declares the Lord [YHWH]. (Ezekiel 34:25-31 ESV see also 36:8-15, 28-38)

I will heal their apostasy; **I will love them freely**, for my anger has turned from them.

I will be like the dew to Israel; he shall blossom like the lily;

he shall take root like the trees of Lebanon; his shoots shall spread out;

his beauty shall be alike the olive, and his fragrance like Lebanon.

They shall return and **dwel beneath my shadow**;

they shall flourish like the grain; they shall blossom like the vine;

their fame shall be **like the wine of Lebanon**.

(Hosea 14:4-7 ESV see also Joel 2:23-27, 3:1, 18, 20, Amos 9:13-15)

God's intention for the original nation of Israel was that it be **a model nation to bring the teaching of God to the rest of the nations of the world**. The New Israel will accomplish this. Once the nation is established, God will begin to use it to **bring the gospel to all people in all other nations** of the world:

In days to come Jacob shall take root,

Israel shall blossom and put forth shoots and fill the whole world with fruit. (Isaiah 27:6 ESV)

And this city shall be to me a name of joy, **a praise and a glory before all the nations of the earth** who shall hear of all the good that I do for them. They shall fear and tremble **because of all the good and all the prosperity I provide for it**. (Jeremiah 33:9 ESV)

Shepherd your people with your staff, the flock of your inheritance, who dwell alone in a forest in the midst of a garden land; let them graze in Bashan and Gilead as in the days of old.

As in the days when you came out of the land of Egypt, **I will show them marvelous things**.

The nations shall see and be ashamed of all their might;

they shall lay their hands on their mouths; their ears shall be deaf;

they shall lick the dust like a serpent, like the crawling things of the earth;

they shall come trembling out of their strongholds; **they shall turn in dread to [YHWH] our God**,

and **they shall be in fear of you**. (Micah 7:14-17 ESV)

It is not for your sake that I will act, declares the Lord [YHWH]; **let that be known to you**. ... And they will say, 'This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden, and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are now fortified and inhabited.' **Then the nations that are left all around you shall know that I am [YHWH]**; I have rebuilt the ruined places and replanted that which was desolate. I am [YHWH]; **I have spoken**, and **I will do it**. (Ezekiel 36:32a, 35-36 ESV)

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of **him who brings good news**,

who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness,

who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."

The voice of your watchmen—they lift up their voice; together they sing for joy;

for eye to eye they see **the return of [YHWH] to Zion**.

Break forth together into singing, you waste places of Jerusalem,

for [YHWH] has comforted his people; **he has redeemed Jerusalem**.

[YHWH] has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations,

and **all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God**. (Isaiah 52:7-10 ESV)

On this mountain [YHWH] of hosts will make for all peoples

a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine, of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined.

And **he will swallow up on this mountain the covering that is cast over all peoples**,

the veil that is spread over all nations.

He will swallow up death forever; and the Lord [YHWH] will wipe away tears from all faces,

and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth, for [YHWH] has spoken.

It will be said on that day,

Behold, **this is our God**; we have waited for him, that he might save us.

This is [YHWH]; we have waited for him; **let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation**."

(Isaiah 25:6-9 ESV)

The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them.

The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together;

and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra,

and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den.

They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain;

for **the earth shall be full of the knowledge of [YHWH] as the waters cover the sea**. (Isaiah 11:6-9 ESV)

The worldwide utopia will begin with a New Nation of Israel. A nation in which all persons of age are converted. A nation in which there is no sin. A nation in which each and every person is learning to live

by the Way of God. **This nation will be an example to all the world.** Through this example God will teach all humanity, all nations throughout the world, to live by the Way of God. At the center of the New Nation will be the City of Jerusalem – the dwelling of the King of kings. **Beside the City will be a New Temple that will become a living object lesson, the “beating heart of the world”.**

2.4.5.3 The New Temple

At critical junctures during the execution of God’s Plan of Salvation, God has had his people construct a sanctuary, a center of worship:

- **The Tabernacle:** was the center of religious life in Israel for about 400 years. Its construction in the wilderness was the galvanizing project which created the Nation of Israel. **The pattern of the Tabernacle became the pattern for all subsequent Temples.** God gave Moses the plans for the Tabernacle when Moses and Joshua were upon Mount Sinai:

... And let them **make me a sanctuary**, that I may dwell in their midst. Exactly as I show you concerning **the pattern of the tabernacle**, and of all its furniture, so you shall make it. ... And see that you make them after the pattern for them, which is being **shown you on the mountain**. (Exodus 25:8-9, 40 ESV see also 26:30, 27:8, Numbers 8:4)

Presumably, the pattern reflects the actual **Throne Room of God in eternity:**

... I saw **the Lord sitting upon a throne**, high and lifted up; and **the train of his robe filled the temple**. ... [YHWH] is in his **holy temple; [YHWH’s] throne is in heaven**; ... Your throne is established from of old; you are from everlasting. ... (Isaiah 6:1b, Psalms 11:4a, 93:2 ESV)

After this I looked, and behold, **a door standing open in heaven!** And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, **“Come up here**, and I will show you what must take place after this.” At once I was in the Spirit, and behold, **a throne stood in heaven**, with one seated on the throne. ... And another angel came and stood at **the altar** with a golden censer, and he was given much incense to offer with the prayers of all the saints on **the golden altar before the throne** ... (Revelation 4:1-2, 8:3 ESV)

- **Solomon’ Temple:** David’s greatest desire was to construct a dwelling place for his God. He was NOT allowed to build it. Solomon, his son, did build it – Solomon’s temple became the center of Jerusalem and the center of the nation, again, for about 400 years. **Solomon’s Temple is one of the most famous structures of the ancient world.**³³¹
- **The Second Temple:** This Temple was a mere shadow of the former Temple, yet it stood for nearly 500 years, before it was rebuilt as a magnificent structure by Herod the Great. As discussed in section **2.3.3 The Purpose of the Restoration**, **its purpose was to prepare for the First Advent.** Nevertheless, its construction was the focal point of establishing the restored remnant community under the direction of Zerubbabel and Joshua:

Thus says [YHWH]... who says of **Cyrus**, ‘He is my shepherd, and **he shall fulfill all my purpose**’; saying of **Jerusalem**, ‘She **shall be built**,’ and of **the temple**, ‘Your **foundation shall be laid**.’” (Isaiah 44:24a, 28 ESV)

Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: **[YHWH], the God of heaven**, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and **he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem**, which is in Judah. (Ezra 1:2 ESV)

Now the prophets, **Haggai** and **Zechariah** the son of Iddo, prophesied to the Jews who were in Judah and Jerusalem, in the name of the God of Israel who was over them. Then **Zerubbabel** the son of Shealtiel and **Jeshua** the son of Jozadak arose and **began to rebuild the house of God** that is in Jerusalem, and the prophets of God were with them, supporting them. ... And **the elders of the Jews built and prospered** through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. **They finished their building** by decree of the God of Israel and by decree of Cyrus and Darius and Artaxerxes king of Persia; and **this house was finished on the third day of the month of Adar, in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king.**³³² (Ezra 5:1-2, 6:14-15 ESV)

- **Ezekiel’s Temple:** The construction of the Temple seen in vision by Ezekiel will be the first task of the nation of New Israel in the World Tomorrow. As with previous projects, the construction of this Temple will be **the galvanization agent for the new nation.**

³³¹ See 1 Kings chapters 5 and 6, and 2 Chronicles chapters 2, 3, and 4

³³² February 516BC

Ezekiel's Second Temple Vision is one of the most misunderstood parts of the Bible. The vision is of much more than the Temple:

- An **architectural sketch** of the New Temple is provided in Ezekiel 40:5-49 and all of chapter 41 and chapter 42
- The **consecration ceremony** for the altar of burnt offerings is discussed in Ezekiel 43:13-27
- The role of **"the prince"** is discussed in Ezekiel 44:1-3, 45:7-8, 13-17, and 46:1-10
- The role of the restored **Levitical Priesthood** is discussed in Ezekiel 44:15-31
- The layout of the **City of Jerusalem** and its environs is discussed in Ezekiel 45:1-8, and 48:30-35
- The **allotment of the Land** to the twelve tribes of the New Israel is discussed in Ezekiel 47:13-23, and 48:1-29
- The **"River of Life"** is discussed in Ezekiel 47:1-12

The Temple is however the most important feature of the vision because it is the Temple which will be at heart of the nation of New Israel, and the Temple will become the **"beating heart"** of the entire world in the World Tomorrow. The presence of God will be in the New Temple – it will be his permanent dwelling place. **The New Temple will be used as an object lesson to teach "holiness" to all the people of the whole world.** The revelation to Ezekiel describes the temple service including animal sacrifices, the role of the restored Levitical Priesthood, the role of "the prince", offerings for annual Holy Days, and the River of Life.

Ezekiel received the Temple vision in **March/April 573BC**, about 20 years after his first vision. As with the first Temple Vision, **an angelic guide explains the vision**.³³³ The message was for the exiles to give them a glimpse into the long-term purpose of God; but, more importantly, **it is for the people of New Isarel who will construct the Temple:**

In the twenty-fifth year of our exile, at the beginning of the year, on the tenth day of the month, in the fourteenth year after the city was struck down, on that very day, **the hand of [YHWH] was upon me, and he brought me to the city.** In visions of God he brought me to the land of Israel, and set me down on a very high mountain, on which was **a structure like a city to the south.**

When he brought me there, behold, **there was a man whose appearance was like bronze**, with a linen cord and a measuring reed in his hand. And he was standing in the gateway. And the man said to me, "Son of man, look with your eyes, and hear with your ears, and **set your heart upon all that I shall show you**, for you were brought here in order that I might show it to you. **Declare all that you see to the house of Israel!**" (Ezekiel 40:1-4 ESV)

The presence of God is in this Temple – just like the Tabernacle³³⁴ and Solomon's Temple.³³⁵ The presence of God was NOT in Zerubbabel's Temple or Herod's Temple:

Then he led me to the gate, the gate facing east. And behold, **the glory of the God of Israel was coming from the east.** And the sound of his coming was like the sound of many waters, and the earth shone with his glory. And the vision I saw was just like the vision that I had seen when he came to destroy the city, and just like the vision that I had seen by the Chebar canal. And I fell on my face. **As the glory of [YHWH] entered the temple** by the gate facing east, the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, **the glory of [YHWH] filled the temple.** (Ezekiel 43:1-5 ESV)

As with previous Temples, **the service of the Temple is centered around the sacrifice of animals.**³³⁶ The **sacrificial altar** is the main feature of the courtyard in front of the Temple building. A **consecration ceremony** is specified for the altar, but for no other parts of the Temple.³³⁷

These are the measurements of the altar ... from the altar hearth projecting upward, four horns. ... And he said to me, "Son of man, thus says the Lord [YHWH]: **These are the ordinances for the altar:** On the day when it is erected for offering burnt offerings upon it and for throwing blood against it ... a bull from the herd for **a sin offering.** And you shall take some of its blood and put it on the four horns of the altar and on the four corners of the ledge and upon the rim all around. **Thus you shall purify the altar and make atonement for it.**

³³³ See Ezekiel 8:2

³³⁴ See Exodus 40:34-35

³³⁵ See 1 Kings 8:10-11

³³⁶ See the discussion in section **10. The Role of Sacrifices**, in the paper "True Worship of the True God" located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

³³⁷ No reason is given for this. Possibly it is because only the sacrificial altar participates in the ceremonies of holiness. Compare the consecration ceremony for the Tabernacle and the Aaronic Priesthood in Exodus 29:1-37, 40:9-15, Leviticus 8:1-36.

Seven days shall they make atonement for the altar and cleanse it, and **so consecrate it**. And when they have completed these days, then from the eighth day onward the priests shall offer on the altar your **burnt offerings** and your **peace offerings**, and I will accept you, declares the Lord [YHWH]. (Ezekiel 43:13a, 15b, 18, 19b-20, 26-27 ESV)

A restored Zadokite Priesthood will perform the ongoing sacrifices:

But the **Levitical priests**, the **sons of Zadok**, ... shall come near to me to minister to me. And they **shall stand before me to offer me the fat and the blood**, declares the Lord [YHWH]. ... They shall eat the **grain offering**, the **sin offering**, and the **guilt offering**,³³⁸ and every devoted thing in Israel shall be theirs. (Ezekiel 44:15, 29 ESV)

Every year there will be a ceremony to purify the Temple and any of the Priesthood who sin in error:

Thus says the Lord [YHWH]: **In the first month, on the first day of the month**, you shall take a bull from the herd without blemish, and **purify the sanctuary**. The priest shall take some of the blood of **the sin offering** and put it on the doorposts of the temple, the four corners of the ledge of the altar, and the posts of the gate of the inner court. You shall do the same **on the seventh day of the month** for **anyone who has sinned through error or ignorance**; so you shall **make atonement for the temple**. (Ezekiel 45:18-20 ESV)

The “daily sacrifice” will occur only in the morning, not the evening:³³⁹

You shall provide **a lamb a year old without blemish** for a burnt offering to [YHWH] daily; **morning by morning you shall provide it**. And you shall provide a grain offering with it morning by morning, one sixth of an ephah, and one third of a hin of oil to moisten the flour, as a grain offering to [YHWH]. This is a perpetual statute. (Ezekiel 46:13-14 ESV)

Specific sacrifices are prescribed for the spring and fall Holy Days:³⁴⁰

Passover ... and for seven days **unleavened bread** shall be eaten. On that day the prince shall provide for himself and all the people of the land a young bull for a **sin offering**. And on the seven days of the festival (hag) he shall provide as a **burnt offering** to [YHWH] seven young bulls and seven rams without blemish, on each of the seven days; and a male goat daily for a **sin offering**. And he shall provide as a **grain offering** an ephah³⁴¹ for each bull, an ephah for each ram, and a hin³⁴² of oil to each ephah.

In the **seventh month**, on the **fifteenth day of the month** and for the **seven days of the feast** (hag), he shall make the same provision for **sin offerings**, **burnt offerings**, and **grain offerings**, and for the oil. (Ezekiel 45:21b-25 ESV)

Is this a return to the Old Testament sacrificial system? If it is, is that NOT a contradiction of the plain teaching of the New Testament that **the Old Testament sacrificial system is obsolete and done away?**

But when **Christ appeared as a high priest** of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect [tabernacle] (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) **he entered once for all into the holy places**, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but **by means of his own blood**, thus securing an eternal redemption. For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, how much more will **the blood of Christ**, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, **purify our conscience from dead works** to serve the living God.

Therefore **he is the mediator of a new covenant**, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a **death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions** committed under the first covenant. ... Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own, for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, **he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself**. (Hebrews 9:11-15, 25-26 ESV)

For since the [nomos]³⁴³ has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, **it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near**. Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins? **But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.**

³³⁸ Note that each of the five main types of offering will exist: sin offering, burnt offering, peace offering, guilt offering, and grain offering; compare Leviticus chapters 1 through 7.

³³⁹ Note that the evening sacrifice occurred at about the same time as Christ died.

³⁴⁰ Other Holy Days are NOT specifically mentioned – they are included in general provisions for “feasts”, “Sabbaths”, and “appointed times”; see Ezekiel 45:17 and 46:11. Note that for the Day of Atonement, the ritual is completely obsolete, so it may be completely abandoned.

³⁴¹ About 3/5 of a bushel or 22 liters

³⁴² About 4 small quarts or 3.5 liters

³⁴³ See footnote 108; in this passage, “nomos” is specifically the Levitical sacrificial instructions.

When he said above, “You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings” (these are offered according to the [nomos]),³⁴⁴ then he added, “Behold, I have come to do your will.” **He does away with the first in order to establish the second.** And by that will **we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.** And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same **sacrifices**, which **can never take away sins**. But when **Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins**, he sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. **For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.** (Hebrews 10:1-4, 8-14 ESV)

Analysis of animal sacrifices compared to Christ’s sacrifice:

- If Jesus’ sacrifice is **“once for all”** and **“he is the mediator of a new covenant”**; also, **“he does away with the first in order to establish the second”**; **how can animal sacrifices be reintroduced?**
- The answer is given: **“... in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year ... it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins”**
- There is nothing inherent in any animal, or in the killing of any animal, that can actually affect sin, guilt, or forgiveness
- **Forgiveness is an act of God’s grace**
- God requires us “to be holy”, but as human beings this impossible
- Under the Old Testament dispensation, God gave the sacrificial system as a method whereby “sin” could be “covered” (atoned for), and the offeror could be accounted “holy”
- Since Christ **“has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself”** and **“we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all”**, our sins can be truly forgiven (propitiated)
- **God can thus extend grace to us and account us “holy”** so that we can have a living relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ
- Yet while we are human, **this is not a permanent state**, we must daily overcome and pursue the Way of God:
 - But **seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness**, and all these things will be added to you. (Matthew 6:33 ESV)
 - Wretched man that I am! **Who will deliver me from this body of death?** Thanks be to God through **Jesus Christ our Lord!** (Romans 7:24-25a ESV)
- **We will be truly “holy” after the resurrection**, and we are able to share eternity with God the Father and Jesus Christ

The sacrifices under the Old Testament Levitical system looked forward to the sacrifice of Christ.

Animal sacrifices cannot pay the penalty for sin. The Old Testament sacrificial system provided a means of **“atonement”**, the covering of sin, so that God in his grace could “forgive” the sin. This did NOT permanently remove the sin. Only the sacrifice of Jesus Christ can permanently remove sin, i.e., take away the penalty, **“propitiation”**. **The sacrificial system in the New Temple will be a memorial – looking back to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.** Its purpose will be to teach “holiness” to the people of the world.

God’s intention for human beings has always been to attain holiness and be granted the gift of eternal life, but sin has gotten in the way:

And [YHWH] God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. ... **The tree of life was in the midst of the garden** ... And [YHWH] God commanded the man, saying, **“You may surely eat of every tree of the garden ...”**

Now, **lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever** ... (Genesis 2:8, 9bα, 16, 3:22b ESV)

Israel was to be a “holy nation” to set the example for all the world – the purpose of the Old Testament sacrificial dispensation was to teach Israel “holiness”:

You are to **distinguish between the holy and the common**, and **between the unclean and the clean**, and you are to **teach the people of Israel** all the statutes that [YHWH] has spoken to them by Moses. For I am [YHWH] your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and **be holy, for I am holy.** ...

For I am [YHWH] who brought you up out of the land of Egypt to be your God. You shall **therefore be holy, for I am holy**. (Leviticus 10:10-11, 11:44a, 45 ESV see also Deuteronomy 7:6, 14:2, 26:19, 28:9, 33:3)

In the World Tomorrow, God will “dwell” in the New Temple, and the New Temple will exemplify “holiness”:

While the man was standing beside me, I heard one speaking to me out of the temple, and he said to me, “Son of man, **this is the place of my throne and the place of the soles of my feet**, where **I will dwell in the midst of the people of Israel forever**. ...”

This is the [torah]³⁴⁵ of the temple: **the whole territory on the top of the mountain all around shall be most holy**. Behold, this is the [torah] of the temple.

But the Levitical priests, the sons of Zadok ... They shall **teach my people the difference between the holy and the common**, and show them how to **distinguish between the unclean and the clean**.

When you allot the land as an inheritance, you shall set apart for [YHWH] a portion of the land as **a holy district** ... It shall be **the holy portion of the land**. It shall be for the priests, who minister in the sanctuary and approach [YHWH] to minister to him, and it shall be a place for their houses and **a holy place** for the sanctuary. (Ezekiel 43:6-7a, 12, 44:15a, 23, 45:1, 4 ESV)

The construction of this Temple will be the defining event for New Israel. The Temple itself will be an object lesson in “holiness” – it is there to teach:

As for you, son of man, **describe to the house of Israel the temple**, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities; and **they shall measure the plan**. And if they are ashamed of all that they have done, make known to them the design of the temple, its arrangement, its exits and its entrances, that is, its whole design; and make known to them as well all its statutes and **its whole design** and all its [torah], and write it down in their sight, so that they may observe all its [torah] and all its statutes and carry them out.

Now when he had finished measuring the interior of the temple area, he led me out by the gate that faced east, and measured the temple area all around. ... He measured it on the four sides. **It had a wall around it ... to make a separation between the holy and the common**. (Ezekiel 43:10-11, 42:15, 20 ESV)

There are many prophecies identifying **Jerusalem** as **the center of the world** in the World Tomorrow, for example:

It shall come to pass **in the latter days** that the mountain of the house of [YHWH] shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and it shall be lifted up above the hills; and peoples shall flow to it, and **many nations shall come, and say:**

“Come, let us go up to the mountain of [YHWH], to the house of the God of Jacob, that **he may teach us his ways** and that we may walk in his paths.”

For out of Zion shall go forth the [torah], [even] **the word of [YHWH] from Jerusalem**. (Micah 4:1-2 ESV)

Behold Zion, the city of our appointed [times]!

Your eyes will see Jerusalem, an untroubled habitation, **an immovable tent**, whose stakes will never be plucked up, nor will any of its cords be broken. (Isaiah 33:20 ESV)

At that time Jerusalem shall be called the throne of [YHWH], and all nations shall gather to it, to the **presence of [YHWH] in Jerusalem**, and they shall no more stubbornly follow their own evil heart. (Jeremiah 3:17 ESV)

Then everyone who survives of all the **nations** that have come against **Jerusalem** shall go up year after year **to worship the King**, [YHWH] of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Booths. (Zechariah 14:16 ESV)

New Israel will be **a nation comprised of converted people** – people learning to exemplify “holiness”. At the center of the New Israel will be the city of Jerusalem, and north of the city of Jerusalem will be the Temple, **“the beating heart of the world”**: **the daily Temple service there will depict “holiness” through sacrifices**. The Way of God will be taught from the Temple – teaching the whole world “holiness”. The whole new nation of Israel will be a living example of how the nations of the world are to function. The nations will come up and learn the Way of God, and the peace of God will spread to the whole world:

Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end ... (Isaiah 9:7a ESV)

There is nothing inherently distasteful to God in animal sacrifices – it is one of the purposes for which he created animals. The phrase **“pleasing aroma”** is used with the specification of every sacrifice in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers to indicate that God is pleased with the sacrifice. From the beginning God has affirmed that **the smoke of a sacrifice is a “pleasing aroma”**:

³⁴⁵ See footnote 49
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Then **Noah** built an altar to [YHWH] and took some of every clean animal and some of every clean bird and **offered burnt offerings** on the altar. And when **[YHWH] smelled the pleasing aroma**, [YHWH] said in his heart ... (Genesis 8:20-21a ESV)

The **golden Altar of Incense** in the Tabernacle also provided **a permanent sweet smell to God**:

You shall make an altar on which to burn incense ... And Aaron shall **burn fragrant incense on it**. Every morning when he dresses the lamps he shall burn it, and when Aaron sets up the lamps at twilight, he shall burn it, **a regular incense offering** before [YHWH] throughout your generations. (Exodus 30:1a, 7-8 ESV)

King David affirms a relationship between sacrifice, incense, and prayer:

[YHWH], I call upon you; hasten to me!
Give ear to my voice when I call to you!
Let my **prayer** be counted **as incense** before you,
and the **lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice**! (Psalm 141:1-2 ESV)

Prayer is the basis of the relationship between a True Worshipper and God. As with “incense”, the “pleasing aroma” of the sacrifice, represents to God the relationship with the offeror of the sacrifice. The true sacrifice of Jesus Christ is depicted by the sacrifice of animals. The death of an animal cannot take away sin, but the death of Jesus Christ has made it possible “once for all” that sin can be taken away. **As the Old Testament sacrificial system looked forward to sacrifice of Christ, the sacrificial system of the Millennium will be a memorial looking back to the sacrifice of Christ**. The people of the world will look to this memorial and learn to have the relationship with God that he desires – “holiness”.

The **restored Levitical Priesthood** will function has human teachers to demonstrate “holiness” and teach the world “holiness”:

And of **Levi** he said ...
They shall teach Jacob your [mish^epatim]³⁴⁶ and Israel your [torah];
they shall put incense before you and whole burnt offerings on your altar.

So shall you know that I have sent this command to you, that **my covenant with Levi may stand**, says [YHWH] of hosts. My covenant with him was one of **life and peace**, and I gave them to him. It was a **covenant of [reverence]**, and he feared me. He stood in awe of my name. **True instruction** was in his mouth ...

For **the lips of a priest should guard knowledge**, and **people should seek instruction** from his mouth, for he is the messenger of [YHWH] of hosts.

For **from the rising of the sun to its setting my name will be great among the nations**, and in every place **incense will be offered** to my name, and a pure offering. For my name will be great among the nations, says [YHWH] of hosts. (Deuteronomy 33:8a, 10, Malachi 2:4-6a, 7, 1:11 ESV)

The people God calls to the New Israel will represent a “true aroma”:

For **on my holy mountain, the mountain height of Israel**, declares the Lord [YHWH], there **all the house of Israel**, all of them, **shall serve me** in the land. There **I will accept them**, and there I will require your contributions and the choicest of your gifts, **with all your sacred offerings**. **As a pleasing aroma I will accept you**, when I bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you have been scattered. And **I will manifest my holiness among you in the sight of the nations**. (Ezekiel 20:40-41 ESV)

All the symbolism looks to Jesus Christ, “The True Aroma”:

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as **Christ** loved us and **gave himself** up for us, **a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God**. (Ephesians 5:1-2 ESV)

But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the **fragrance of the knowledge of him** everywhere. For **we are the aroma of Christ to God** among those who are being saved ... (2 Corinthians 2:14-15a ESV)

The “prince” has been alluded to above, but **who is the “prince”**? First, it seems clear that **the “prince” is a human being**,³⁴⁷ he is assumed to have “sons”:

Thus says the Lord [YHWH]: If the prince makes a gift to **any of his sons** as his inheritance, it shall belong to his sons. It is their property by inheritance. (Ezekiel 46:16 ESV)

³⁴⁶ For a discussion of the meaning of *mish^epatim*, see section **1.4.3 Attributes of God’s Character** in the paper “**First Pillar - The Nature of God**” located at www.mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca.

³⁴⁷ However, on the basis of Ezekiel 34:24 and 37:25, it is possible to argue that the resurrected “David” is the prince.

The “prince” plays **an important role in some of the Temple Services**:

It shall be **the prince's duty** to furnish the burnt offerings, grain offerings, and drink offerings, **at the feasts (hag)**, the **new moons**, and the **Sabbaths**, all the **appointed [times] (mo`ed)** of the house of Israel: he shall provide the sin offerings, grain offerings, burnt offerings, and peace offerings, **to make atonement on behalf of the house of Israel**.

On that day **the prince shall provide for himself** and **all the people of the land** a young bull for a sin offering. **And on the seven days of the festival (hag) he shall provide as a burnt offering ...**

Thus says the Lord [YHWH]: The **gate of the inner court** that faces east shall be shut on the six working days, but **on the Sabbath day it shall be opened**, and on the day of the new moon it shall be opened. **The prince shall enter** by the vestibule of the gate from outside, and shall take his **stand by the post of the gate**. The priests shall offer his burnt offering and his peace offerings, and **he shall worship at the threshold of the gate**. Then he shall go out, but the gate shall not be shut until evening. The people of the land shall bow down at the entrance of that gate before [YHWH] on the Sabbaths and on the new moons.

The **burnt offering** that the prince offers to [YHWH] on the Sabbath day shall be six lambs without blemish and a ram without blemish. And the **grain offering** with the ram shall be an ephah,³⁴⁸ and the grain offering with the lambs shall be as much as he is able, together with a hin³⁴⁹ of oil to each ephah.

On **the day of the new moon he shall offer** a bull from the herd without blemish, and six lambs and a ram, which shall be without blemish. As a **grain offering** he shall provide an ephah with the bull and an ephah with the ram, and with the lambs as much as he is able, together with a hin of oil to each ephah.

When the prince enters, **he shall enter by the vestibule of the gate**, and **he shall go out by the same way**. (Ezekiel 45:17, 22-23a, 46:1-8 ESV)

The “prince” is allocated a significant amount of land near the City and the Temple. He is also granted **significant donations from the people**. These allocations are necessary to provide the means for the “prince” to supply his required sacrifices:

And to **the prince shall belong the land on both sides of the holy district** and the property of the city, alongside the holy district and the property of the city, on the west and on the east, corresponding in length to one of the tribal portions, and extending from the western to the eastern boundary of the land. **It is to be his property in Israel**.

What remains on both sides of the holy portion and of the property of the city **shall belong to the prince**. Extending from the 25,000 cubits of the holy portion to the east border, and westward from the 25,000 cubits to the west border, parallel to the tribal portions, **it shall belong to the prince**. The holy portion with the sanctuary of the temple shall be in its midst. It shall be separate from the property of the Levites and the property of the city, which are in the midst of that which belongs to the prince. The portion of the prince shall lie between the territory of Judah and the territory of Benjamin.

This is the offering that you shall make:³⁵⁰ one sixth of an ephah from each homer³⁵¹ of wheat, and one sixth of an ephah from each homer of barley, and as the fixed portion of oil, measured in baths,³⁵² one tenth of a bath from each cor³⁵³ (the cor, like the homer, contains ten baths). And one sheep from every flock of two hundred, from the watering places of Israel for grain offering, burnt offering, and peace offerings, to make atonement for them, declares the Lord [YHWH]. **All the people of the land shall be obliged to give this offering to the prince in Israel**. (Ezekiel 45:7-8a, 48:21-22, 45:13-16 ESV)

There is no indication how the “prince” is appointed. The position could be hereditary. The appointment could be for life or for a fixed term, there is no way for us to know now. **The purpose of the role is however clear**. The prince is to be an example human leader; first, for other leaders in the New Israel; then, for human leaders in other nations:

And **my princes shall no more oppress my people**, but they shall let the house of Israel have the land according to their tribes.

Thus says the Lord [YHWH]: Enough, **O princes of Israel! Put away violence and oppression, and execute justice and righteousness**. Cease your evictions of my people, declares the Lord [YHWH].

You shall have just balances, a just ephah, and a just bath. The ephah and the bath shall be of the same measure, the bath containing one tenth of a homer, and the ephah one tenth of a homer; the homer shall

³⁴⁸ “ephah” about 3/5 of a bushel or 22 liters

³⁴⁹ “hin” about 4 small quarts or 3.5 liters

³⁵⁰ The tax to be borne by the community is fairly small, at the rate of about 1/60 for cereals, 1/100 for oil, and 1/200 for sheep. (ESV footnote)

³⁵¹ “homer” about 6 bushels or 220 liters

³⁵² “bath” about 6 small gallons or 22 liters

³⁵³ “cor” about 6 bushels or 220 liters

be the standard measure. The shekel³⁵⁴ shall be twenty gerahs,³⁵⁵ twenty shekels plus twenty-five shekels plus fifteen shekels shall be your mina.³⁵⁶

The prince shall not take any of the inheritance of the people, thrusting them out of their property. He shall give his sons their inheritance out of his own property, so that none of my people shall be scattered from his property. (Ezekiel 45:8b-12, 46:18 ESV)

From beneath the Temple a stream trickles. This stream grows into a great river which flows into the world's oceans bringing healing:

Then he brought me back to the door of the temple, and behold, water was issuing from below the threshold of the temple toward the east (for the temple faced east). The water was flowing down from below the south end of the threshold of the temple, south of the altar. Then he brought me out by way of the north gate and led me around on the outside to the outer gate that faces toward the east; and behold, the water was trickling out on the south side.

Going on eastward with a measuring line in his hand, the man measured a thousand cubits, and then led me through the water, and it was ankle-deep. Again he measured a thousand, and led me through the water, and it was knee-deep. Again he measured a thousand, and led me through the water, and it was waist-deep. Again he measured a thousand, and it was a river that I could not pass through, for the water had risen. It was deep enough to swim in, a river that could not be passed through. And he said to me, "Son of man, have you seen this?"

Then he led me back to the bank of the river. As I went back, I saw on the bank of the river very many trees on the one side and on the other. And he said to me, "This water flows toward the eastern region and goes down into the Arabah, and enters the sea; when the water flows into the sea, the water will become fresh. And wherever the two rivers go,³⁵⁷ every living creature that swarms will live, and there will be very many fish. For this water goes there, that the waters of the sea may become fresh; so everything will live where the river goes.

And on the banks, on both sides of the river, there will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither, nor their fruit fail, but they will bear fresh fruit every month, because the water for them flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for healing. (Ezekiel 47:1-9, 12 ESV)

The Prophet Zechariah and the Apostle John were also shown the River of Life:

On that day living waters shall flow out from Jerusalem, half of them to the eastern sea and half of them to the western sea. It shall continue in summer as in winter. (Zechariah 14:8 ESV)

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. (Revelation 22:1-2 ESV)

Jesus uses the River of Life as a metaphor for the Holy Spirit which is only available through himself:

A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." ... The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water."

The woman said to him, "Sir, you have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water?" ... Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'" Now this he said about the Spirit, [which] those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

(John 4:7, 9-11, 13-14, 7:37-39 ESV see also Psalms 23:2, 36:8-9, 42:1-2, 46:4, 65:9, Isaiah 12:3, 55:1, Jeremiah 2:13, 17:13, Joel 3:18, Revelation 7:17, 21:6, 22:17)

God created human beings to become part of his Family. To accomplish this, human beings require a relationship with their Creator. God has always expressed this relationship as "dwelling" together. That has been the purpose of every "temple" structure: figuratively, God did "dwell" in the Tabernacle and Solomon's Temple. YHWH, Jesus Christ, the King of kings, will literally come to Jerusalem in the

³⁵⁴ "shekel" about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams

³⁵⁵ "gerah" about 1/50 ounce or 0.6 gram

³⁵⁶ "mina" about 1.25 pounds or 0.6 kilogram

³⁵⁷ See ESV footnote: one river flows into the Dead Sea, another river flows out to the Gulf of Aqaba taking the healing waters to all the world's oceans.

World Tomorrow. The people of New Israel will build the New Temple north of Jerusalem. **The New Temple will be filled with the Glory of God.** All people in every nation of the world will look to this manifestation of the Great Creator God and be taught “holiness”. Through this **all people in every nation of the world will be offered salvation**, the opportunity to be given the gift of eternal life and join the God Family in eternity.

Epilogue

This completes “**The Plan of God**”, the second part of the three-part series on “**The Three Pillars of Revelation**”. Part One “**The Nature of God**”, carefully goes through the various parts of the Bible and presents a systematic analysis of the Nature of God. Specifically, it analyzes the basic existence of God – “What is God”. Then it discusses God’s self-revelation – “Who is God”. The spiritual dwelling place of God is “eternity” – God interacts with humanity from that location. More than a dozen specific character attributes of God are discussed in detail, and the paper ends with a discussion of the Holy Spirit.

Part three, “**The Way of God**”, considers God’s requirements for human beings and what we must do to participate in the Plan of God. Specifically, it discusses “Living by the Way of God”, God’s revelation to humanity via “General Revelation” and “Special Revelation”. The Bible contains revelation from God to man over thousands of years – specifically, there were “Three Great Periods of Revelation”, and an ongoing collection of “Wisdom Literature”. Part three ends with the last word “**God is Love**”.

Please take the time to also read parts one and three!

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