

The Day of the Lord

Introduction

“But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells” (2 Peter 3:10-13).

So, what kind of people ought we to be as we see that Day approaching?

It is becoming very obvious that we are facing momentous days. The affairs of this world seem to be coming to violent climax in a number of places. In recent months the events in the Middle East have erupted and have, once again, come to occupy center stage in world news.

There are many new “prophetic words” and new teachings being spoken along with the older traditional teachings concerning the Day of the Lord. After the Y2K fiasco and other confidently proclaimed end-time prophecies, we need to be very careful not to mislead God’s people and once again become a laughing stock to the World.

The purpose of this School of the Word is to give a general overview of all the Bible has to say about the Day of the Lord. It will suggest reliable balanced source material for further more detailed study in many of these areas.

Along with other Scriptures we will look at the Book of Revelation but it will not be a detailed verse by verse exposition of this book or any other part of the prophetic Scriptures such as Daniel or Zechariah. We will review the main events and their likely chronology and attempt to draw reasonable conclusions. We will look at various sincerely held positions and attempt to show their strengths and weaknesses.

Day 1

Establishing the Correct Parameters of Truth

God Deliberately Hides and reveals Truth to those He chooses.

The Mystery of Parables. Jesus deliberately spoke only in Parables

Fulfilling the Conditions to be in “The You” Group

Truth comes through The Word

The Principles of Good Exegesis and Sound Hermeneutics.

The Principle of First Mention and other principles.

Day 2

Truth comes through The Prophets

Prophets often spoke by the Spirit beyond their Understanding. There was Progressive Fulfillment of Prophecy. Interpreting Literal, Allegorical and Poetic Scripture. A Right View of God’s Sovereignty and God’s Foreknowledge.

What Jesus said about the Day of His Return? The events that would precede and occur at His return. The specific signs and timing of these events

The Writings of John the Apostle. The Gospels, the Letters and the Book of Revelation.

The Writings of Paul, Peter, David, Daniel, Zechariah and other Prophets

The Five Main Schools of Eschatological Teaching. Their Strengths and Weaknesses and Various Subdivisions

Day 3

The Main Events.

Their Essential Elements and Chronology.
The Great Tribulation, The Rapture, The Millennium, The Anti-Christ,
The Last Week of Daniel, The Actual Appearing of Jesus,
Jerusalem and the “Promised Land” of Israel.

The Main Players.

Their Role. The Jews, The Church, The Kingdom and The Nations.
The Final Showdown with Satan and his Kingdom,
The Sheep Nations and the Goat Nations.

Day 4

What Kind of People Ought We to Be.

What Do We Do as We See the Day Approaching.

Don't be Cynical. Don't be Passive.

Become Actively Holy. A Passionate Worshiper of God

Skillful and Active in the use of our Spiritual Weapons

Active and Effective in Preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom with Power
accompanied by Healings, Casting out of Demons and Signs and Wonders.

Effective in Strategic and Successful Evangelism

An Appropriate Lifestyle. Busy with Right Fruitful Activity.

How can We Hasten that Day?

The Cry and Practice of Those Who Love His Appearing

Day 1

Establishing the Correct Parameters of the Truth

It is not enough to use our intellect and naturally acquired Bible knowledge.

How we come to the Truth

Jesus always spoke in Parables. So did many of the Prophets

God deliberately reveals the Mysteries of the Kingdom to whoever He chooses and also hides them from whoever He chooses. For this reason Jesus only spoke in parables. (Matt. 13:1-17; Mark 4:2, 9-25 Luke 8:9-18).

Certain people were chosen to be in the “You” group. To them the mysteries of the Kingdom were revealed. Spiritually they were given the ability to “See” and “Hear” things which even the prophets longed to look into.

A matter of Attitude	<u>The “You” Group</u>	<u>The “Them” Group</u>
	Hungry for the Word	Not Hungry
	Humility	Pride of Scriptural Knowledge
	Reverence	Arrogance
	High Value Placed	Light Regard
	Obedience	Disobedience

When the 70 returned with great joy, Jesus rejoiced and said “Thank you Father that you have hidden these things from the clever and the intelligent and have revealed them to babes” (Luke 10:21).

No one is ever “Born again” with defective spiritual Hearing or Sight. However, mature hearing and sight has to be developed.

Obedience sharpens the Hearing

Jesus the Man with Perfect Hearing (Isaiah 50:4-8; John 5:30; Matt.4:4; John 4:34).

Obedience Produces Change for Good

Maturity (Perfection) - Heb. 5:9 Same for Jesus and for us.

Sons instead of Orphans - John 14:18, 21-23

Inheritance - Acts 26:18; Acts 20:12

Satan Proof Living - John 14:30, 31

Enhanced ability to hear - John 10:27-29; John 15:10-16

Mighty Works of Faith - Rom 10:17

Disobedience Produces Change for the Worse

Permanent Chronic Babyhood - Live on Milk cannot receive Meat 1 Cor. 3:1-4

Backsliding - Need to be taught again the same elementary things Heb.5:12

Overwhelmed by the devil Gal.4:3

Unbelief

No Practical Sonship Gal.4:1-3

No Inheritance

Increasing Dullness of Hearing

Finally, Deafness or Blindness

Only Hearing produces Faith - Rom 10:17

The One thing which made Jesus Angry - Unbelief

How is it you cannot SEE? How is it you cannot HEAR? Mark 8:18-25

Lord I want to SEE again. Mark 10:46-52

The Principles of Good Exegesis

This is the method of determining the exact meaning of the text itself. What did that particular word mean and what did the writer mean then at the time he wrote?

We have to remember that a language is a living vehicle of communication and is constantly changing.

Over time, words change in their meaning and their use. We have to know what they meant then.

Even with older English translations what was an accurate word at the time of the translation has so changed in its meaning it no longer is a correct translation.

Where and how was the same word generally used elsewhere in Scripture and was does it consistently mean?

We need to note the particular parts of speech. The gender and case of nouns and adjectives. The tense, voice and mood of verbs and adverbs.

We sometimes find in our English translations that the doctrinal position and theology of the translators can affect the choice of words used to translate and can seriously affect the accuracy of translation and give a different meaning.

As Hebrew and Greek were largely spoken languages which were rarely written down, there was no developed means of punctuation for a written manuscript at the time the Bible was written. So punctuation in the English text is largely a matter of guesswork.

E.g. Mark 11:22 - NKJV “Have Faith in God”. The verb “Have” is in the Present Tense, the Imperative Mood and the Active Voice. The noun “God” is in the Genitive Case which owns or possesses the noun “Faith” which is in the Accusative Case. A good modern literal translation would read “Grab hold of God’s Faith now”.

The Principles of Sound Hermeneutics

Hermeneutics is both the Science and the Art of the Interpretation and Application of the Inspired Truths of Scripture.

Undoubtedly the Book of Revelation is one of the more difficult books in the Bible to interpret. It is a source of great controversy even among sincere Bible believing Christians.

Most Pastors avoid teaching it because of the controversy and most Christians avoid reading it because they find it so hard to understand. However the book does promise a special blessing “to those who read, hear and keep the Words of this book” (Rev. 1:3).

Why is there so much controversy? Two reasons I believe. One is the special attack of Satan on this book because it spells out his destruction. The other is the use of improper principles of Biblical Interpretation or bad Hermeneutics.

Principles of Biblical Interpretation

The Principle of Jesus First.

Jesus, The Word, has Authority over all Scripture to explain and interpret it (Matt. 5:27-45; Matt. 22:42-45).

Hermeneutically we should always start with what Jesus said, then we should go to the rest of the New Testament writers. They were inspired by the indwelling Holy Spirit which gave them a superior spirit of revelation (Heb.1:1-4; Heb. 2:1-4; John 14:25, 26; John 16:13, 14). Finally we should go to the Old Testament using the right methods of Exegesis and Hermeneutics. We can then understand better what the writers of the Law, the Psalms and the Prophets were having revealed to them.

In the Words of Jesus we find the Seed of every major Truth of Scripture.

These Truths are expanded in the Books and Epistles of the New Testament.

They are then traced back historically and filled out illustratively and prophetically by the books of the Old Testament.

E.g. The Subjects of Marriage, Covenant, The Feasts, The Kingdom, The Temple, The Jews and many others can only be properly understood in this way.

The Principle of First Mention

This principle teaches that once we have received the Words of Jesus and the teaching of the New Testament we should then go to the beginning of the subject at its first mention in the Bible. We can then trace out the growing development and enriching enlargement of the subject right through Scripture. It's amazing how many of these Truths begin in the first few chapters of Genesis and go right through the rest of Scripture. Many of them begin with Abraham.

e.g. The Fig Tree - Gen. 3; Blood Sacrifice - Gen. 3; Gen. 4; Faith Gen. 15; Covenant - Gen. 15; Marriage Gen. 2:22-25; Gen. 1:26,27; Tithing- Gen. 14; The Melchizedek Priesthood - Gen. 14; Possessing the Gates of our enemies - Gen. 22 etc.

The Principle of Revelation

Revelation is Truth imparted which could not be discovered by natural reasoning. It is God's Spirit communicating directly with our spirit and is often beyond words. It is sometimes hard or impossible to exactly convey the thoughts of God in human words (1 Cor. 2:9-16).

The Bible is the written revelation of God. All that man needs to know of God as to His nature, character and being in this present earthly state is found in the holy and infallible Scriptures.

The Principle of Inspiration

Inspiration describes the process by which revelation is recorded. The Scriptures are an infallible revelation recorded under inspiration of the Holy Spirit. God brought forth infallible revelation through the New Testament writers, who were fallible men using their unique gifting and personality. To expound the Bible accurately we must accept it as revelation written under divine inspiration.

Practically all Bible believing Christians are united in accepting these two principles of revelation and inspiration. But the problems arise over the next two principles.

The Principle of Interpretation

Interpretation pertains to Hermeneutics. Webster's Dictionary defines Hermeneutics as "the science of interpretation, of finding the meaning of an author's words and phrases and of explaining them to others".

Hermeneutics has also be defined as "the Science and Art of Biblical Interpretation". As a Science it is concerned with proper principles of interpretation

and as an Art it is concerned with the proper application of those principles.

The Principle of Application

The ultimate purpose of God's Word is that it should cause us to live out His Word in practical Life and so bring glory to His Name. The whole purpose is to finally show us what we are to be and what we are to do in the light of these events.

The purpose of studying end-time events is not to satisfy our curiosity but to bring us to a right practical response to all that God has shown us.

Therefore, what manner of people ought we to be as we see the Day approaching?
(2 Pet. 3:11)

Day 2

Truth Comes Through The Prophets

Prophets often spoke by the Spirit beyond their understanding and longed to look more deeply into what they were being inspired to say (Matt.13:17).

There were or will be several progressive fulfillments of the major prophecies.

Even though fulfilled in history and again at the beginning of the Church age there will be a greater fulfillment at the End of the age.

Two prophetic ministries Elijah and Moses have a special role at the end of the age when all things will be restored.

Jesus cannot come until this is completed (Acts 3:19-24; Matt.17:11, 12).

These two Prophets are clearly identified as being fulfilled in Jesus.

Elijah and Moses - the Agencies for the Restoration of All Things.

Matthew 17:11-12

Jesus answered and said to them, "Indeed, Elijah is coming first and *Will Restore All Things*. {12} "But I say to you that Elijah has come already, and they did not know him but did to him whatever they wished. Likewise the Son of Man is also about to suffer at their hands."

Acts 3:18-23

"But those things which God foretold by the mouth of all His prophets, that the Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled. {19} "Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, {20} "and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, {21} "whom *Heaven must Receive until the Times of Restoration Of All Things*, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began. {22} "For Moses truly said to the fathers, 'The LORD your God will

Raise up for You a Prophet like Me from your brethren. Him you shall hear in all things, whatever He says to you. {23} 'And it shall be that every soul who will not hear that Prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.'

These Prophetic Ministries Work Together to bring Restoration of All Things.

The Multiple Fulfillment of Certain Key Prophetic Scriptures.

- a) An Immediate Historic fulfillment close to the time the prophet first spoke.
- b) An Early Church fulfillment. Either at the time of Jesus' earthly ministry or close to the time the Church began its ministry.

This fulfillment had the character but lacked the dimension in which the prophet originally spoke.

What the prophet spoke of originally was to be:

- a) World-wide in its effect.
- b) Touching all nations.
- c) Massive in its size and impact.

When there was a fulfillment in the beginning of the Church Age, it had the character but lacked the dimensions of the original prophecy. It was:-

- a) LOCAL in its Effect. Usually only Jerusalem or Judea was affected. Certainly not World Wide.
- b) JEWISH in its Sphere of Influence. No other Nation or people were affected.
- c) LIMITED in its Size. It wasn't as large or as far reaching as the Prophet had said.
- d) Not all the specifics of the Prophecy were fulfilled in the first fulfillment.

When Jesus referred to the Prophecy by Malachi concerning Elijah He made it clear that this Prophecy had already been fulfilled and yet at the same time it was still to

be fulfilled in the future (Matt.17:11-13).

This prophesied Restoration must precede the coming again of our Lord Jesus.

THE ELIJAH MINISTRY.

- 1) A warring ministry against the demonic invasion of the land.
 - i) The battle with the prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18:20-40) e.g. Very similar to present day Occult, New Age activity. E.g. witches covens in USA society; witch doctors in Africa; and evil miracle workers in Islam and Hinduism.
- 2) Confronting the King, his secular Government and rebuking the evil of his day.
 - i) The collision with Ahab and Jezebel.
- 3) A powerful prayer life, exercising rule in the heavenlies.
 - i) It controlled the economy of the land. "It will not rain except by my word". Then Elijah prayed again and it rained. (1Ki.18:1; Ja.5:17, 18.)

The Same Elements in John the Baptist + Additional Elements.

- 1) A warring ministry against evil and demonic darkness. Confronting all that's wrong in the religious, civil and political life of the nation.
- 2) Confronting the King, the secular Government and the evil of his day.
 - i) The collision with Herod and Herodias (just like Ahab and Jezebel).

Additional Elements Prophesied by Malachi, Gabriel, Zacharias & Jesus.

Particularly associated with the last days and the great end-time harvest.
(Mal.4:1-5).

Not fulfilled in the days of John the Baptist. These were listed in: Luke 1: 69-79,

- 1) A **Restoration of Fatherhood**. Natural and spiritual but especially with a rediscovery of the Fatherhood of God.
- 2) A **Restoration of Family** and parent/child relationships.
- 3) Turning the **Disobedience of God's People** to the wisdom of the righteous (obedience) and making ready a people for their God.
- 4) **Raising up a Horn of Salvation**. An anointing to exercise dominion and rule (Zech. 1:19).
- 5) **Delivered from the Hand of All Our Enemies** and all that hate us.
- 6) Serve Him **Without Fear All Our Days**.
- 7) **Holy and Righteous Before Him** all the days of our lives.
- 8) **Go Before the Face of the Lord to Prepare His Ways**.
- 9) **A Mighty Evangelistic Success** (v77-79).

Jezebel Defeats Elijah and Herodias Removes the Head of John the Baptist and Their Effective Ministries are Terminated.

There was only partial success. The spiritual power of the enemy was temporarily setback but not destroyed. The enemy came back with a vicious counter attack which defeated the Elijah spirit at the Elijah level of anointing

Elisha Learns So Much from Elijah but Sees That He Needs a Greater Anointing.

It's not a different anointing, but the same anointing in greater measure. I.e. a double portion of Elijah's spirit.

The Elisha Level of the Elijah Anointing imparted to Jehu destroys Jezebel and is not overcome by her.

Extra Dimensions of Elisha Ministry.

1) Great sensitivity to the spiritual realm. "If you see when I am taken, it shall be so" (2Kings 2:10)

2) Able to see into the heavenlies, See the angelic forces of God and the activity of Satan's forces (2Kings 6:15-17).

3) A highly developed Word of Knowledge ministry e.g. Naaman and Gahazi (2Kings 5:20-27).

4) Very spectacular miracles. Renders powerless whole armies of the enemy (2Kings 6:18-23).

5) Totally unafraid and totally without intimidation. Far greater power and authority, so that even Kings tremble e.g. Ahab, Hazeal, Joash etc.

6) Unflagging Zeal and Passion. Passion for God's Kingdom and for God's enemies to be destroyed. His anger with Joash King of Israel for only striking the ground three times (2Kings13:19, 20).

7) Able to complete the Elijah task (1Kings 19:15, 16).

a) Anoint Hazeal as King of Syria.

I.e. Decree by the Spirit, the political appointment of secular leaders so that an atmosphere of peace, freedom and righteousness is established in which the Church prospers and the gospel can be preached without let or hindrance. (1 Tim.2:1-4).

b) Anoint Jehu as King of Israel and completely destroy Jezebel.

I.e. Decree by the Spirit the appointment of religious leaders in apostate Christian religious systems and impart to them an anointing that causes them to be zealous for God. They bring about the downfall of the Spirit of Jezebel, that powerful occult syncretistic, immoral spirit of black magic and bring the nominal followers of God back to Him.

This is the spirit of manipulation and witchcraft that works so strongly through all religious systems especially within the nominal professing Christian Church. This spirit so strongly resists the Lordship of Christ and attacks the true headship and the true government that He has established in home, church and society.

In the New Testament, John the Baptist (Elijah) is superseded by **Jesus -the great Elisha (Rev.19:10)**. The Kingdom of God moves in the Elijah ministry but at the Elisha level of power - its weakest members are greater than John the Baptist (Matt.11:11-13).

The Spirit of Elijah was released in Elisha measure in the upper room on the day of Pentecost.

Now once again, in this new move of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Elijah is going forth in Elisha measure to bring about the downfall of strong demonic spirits that have experienced setbacks from the church moving in the Elijah ministry but have strongly counter-attacked and never been really destroyed and cast down by the Church before.

E.g. Stephen in the early church - Acts 7:1 - Acts 9:31.

Good Present day Examples

Reshem Raj Poudel - in Nepal. He was a Hindu priest training priests. He read the Bhurwa Gita 4:7-8 "I, Krishna, come to seek and to destroy the sinner".

He compared this with Luke 19:10 "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost".

Moved by God's compassion, he gave his life to Jesus. Thrown out of home. He began preaching Jesus. Thrown into prison. Every two hours, beaten and kicked by the police. Leg broken. Left without food four days. Arrested 22 times and thrown into jail. Kept in jail for long periods 3 times. Would not stop preaching Jesus.

1972 - 400 believers in 16 groups. The spirit fell on 70 "leaders" in Kathmandu and the church began to move in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Church began to Grow - There were many Battles - Many imprisoned over The Years. Many prayed - No immediate dramatic answers.

1990 - A New King in Nepal coupled with prayer and pressure from the World

Community- A measure of Freedom granted to be a Christian. A measure of Freedom to propagate The Gospel given to Nepalis.

72 of 75 Districts now fully evangelized. Now a united Church of around 500,000 believers exists with many fearlessly preaching The Gospel. Nearly all 22 Million Nepalis have heard in Five Years!

Reshem Raj Poudel recently said "We have paid the price, Nepal belongs to us".

Pastor Yom the "Heavenly Man" and the "Back to Jerusalem Movement" in China over the past 20 years or so. The burgeoning "Underground Church" is estimated to be around 100 million Believers (Read the Book!).

THE MOSES PROPHET MINISTRY

Apart from Moses' famous prophetic statement in Deuteronomy 18:15, 16: "God will raise up a prophet like me from among your brethren", there is no record of any specific prophecy coming from Moses mouth. Yet Jesus and several of the New Testament writers speak of "the Law" as being prophetic as well as "the Prophets".

The Law is usually understood to be the first five books of the Bible and is also known as the Pentateuch or the Torah. These books were written by Moses and much of them are a record of what he did as well as what he said. It is clear that the writers of the New Testament recognized that these books contained much which was relevant to the Church and to The Kingdom. It gave much instruction as to how the Kingdom was to be established either by allegory or by direct teaching.

It is clear from Acts 3 that Jesus is the fulfillment of that prophetic word and is now the fullness of the "Moses" prophetic ministry as well as the fullness of the Elijah prophetic ministry. The testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy (Rev.19:10) and these two ministries are now released by His spirit into His New Body, the Church in order to cause the restoration of all things.

These two ministries work together and complement each other, but it is necessary to recognize their distinctive prophetic styles and not be confused between them. They have different functions and have different objectives in ministry.

Characteristics of the Moses Ministry

Moses has become the Old Testament Type and Shadow of the New Testament. He typifies the Prophet/Apostle partnership frequently referred to in the New Testament. In Acts 3: 21-23, Moses is compared to Jesus who is “That Prophet” and in Hebrews 3: 1-6; He is compared to Jesus who is the Apostle and builder.

Moses was a Shepherd to the whole Nation and cared for all the peoples needs. He was a great Leader who established a system of Leadership which was copied by every great leader of God’s people.

He was a great Administrator who supervised the construction and management of the Tabernacle. He was a great General who raised up a powerful disciplined army from a rabble of slaves and led them in many great victorious battles.

He was a strong governmental leader in every way. Yet he was also called the meekest man on the face of the Earth. This is the character and style of the true New Testament Apostle/Prophet partnership. Not infrequently this style of Prophet becomes an Apostle as well (e.g. Barnabas).

Elijah and Elisha had none of these qualities. Both of them lived strange, lonely separate lives and did not relate to other people at all (e.g. Agabus).

A Comparison of the Two Prophetic Ministries

Elijah / Elisha

A Loner

Sees in the Spirit Realm the forces of God and the activity of Satan and the Powers of Darkness

Has a highly developed Word of Knowledge ministry

He is not necessarily Governmental

He is the Intelligence Wing, the CIA, of the Lord’s Army

He does not necessarily have an effective public ministry

He serves the Apostle / Moses type

Prophetic Partnership with information that enables them to fight more strategically

He is Governmental

He is a General in the Lord's Army

He may receive correct revelation but may come to wrong practical conclusions of how to act. E.g. Agabus and the prison experience awaiting Paul. (Acts 20:23; Acts 21:10).

He has an inspiring public ministry and causes God's people to see and be motivated with faith and zeal.

He works closely with an Apostle in the classic New Testament partnership.

A classic New Testament example is Agabus.
E.g. (Acts 11:28; Acts 21:10).

He often becomes Apostolic in His own right

A classic New Testament example is Barnabas or Silas.
E.g. (Acts 13:1; 14:14; Acts 15:22-34).

Moses

A Team Player

Sees the Plan of God the Grand Design and Wants to See it Built.

He Is a Builder and along with the Apostle. He Can Organize and Lead Men to Get Things Built.

Interpreting Literal, Allegorical and Poetic Scripture.

The obvious literal meaning is always the first way we should read and understand Scripture. We should only use it otherwise when we have sound hermeneutical reasons for doing so

Such as clear Biblical precedence.

e.g. "Don't muzzle the Ox which treads out the grain".
"the Rock that followed them was Christ".
"My sheep hear my voice"

Yet at the same time we should not ignore the obvious and practical application
e.g. 1 Cor.10:1-11 begins as a clear allegorical passage but still applies the literal
practical lessons as well.

Don't lust after evil things

Don't become idolaters

Do not commit sexual sin

All these things were written for our admonition at the end of the age.

Allegorical Interpretation of Scripture.

The Principles of Hermeneutics are valuable tools but not laws from God. They are valuable tools but are not infallible tools and we need to learn the best rules from the best sources and still not be absolutely bound by them.

Parables, Types and Shadows are a valid method of Scriptural Interpretation

Jesus and all the Apostles used this Method.

The Parable of the Sower is a key parable to understanding all other parables. (Matt.13:9-17; Mark 4:11-13, 23-25; Luke 8:9, 10, 17, 18.

It is set like a model math problem to teach us how to solve other problems. Jesus expected His disciples to be able to determine for themselves what the hidden meaning was in what He said by revelation. He taught that this was essential and expressed his strongest words of rebuke, (apart from their unbelief), when they were unable to do this. Why don't you see and understand? (Mark 8:13-21)
Mark 8:14-2- Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees i.e. their teaching (Matt.16:12).

Paul in Gal.4:22-31- The two women are an allegory of two covenants and two Cities, Earthly and Heavenly Jerusalem.

Paul in 1 Cor.9:8-10 - The teaching about oxen is not really about oxen at all, but Christian workers (1 Tim.5:17-18). What about sheep? and the Laws of Restitution in Exodus 22:1-5 and Proverbs 6:31.

Again in 1 Cor.10:1-11 - The crossing of the Red Sea was allegorical of baptism

and the Rock we are told was Christ. These things were particularly written for our example and warning on whom the end of ages have come.

1 Cor.3:11-14 - Building with the right building materials.

Eph.6:13-16 - The armor is allegorical not literal.

1 Pet.5:13 - Peter refers to present day Jerusalem as "Babylon".

Dreams and Visions

God spoke allegorically to the prophets and others through dreams and visions. Truths, events and time intervals were represented by types and shadows that needed revelation to understand. E.g. the interpreting of Nebuchadnezzar's dream by Daniel and Pharaoh's dream by Joseph.

God also spoke to Peter in a vision by allegory in Acts 10:8-16 to overcome his Jewish prejudice over preaching to the Gentiles.

Whole Chunks of Scripture Have No Obvious Literal Meaning

Large portions of the prophets like Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel etc. The Books of Poetry, especially the Song of Solomon, a lot of the parables of Jesus and almost the whole book of Revelation come into this category.

Also in many other chapters the literal, obvious teaching is now obsolete and irrelevant to the Christian. E.g. much of the ceremonial law in the books of Exodus, Leviticus through to Deuteronomy. Unless there is a hidden deeper meaning these Scriptures have no point or application anymore.

Definition of Allegorical Method.

The actual words, objects and verbal images used represent something else such as a spiritual principle and the story is told not so much for its surface meaning but for the hidden truth that it represents. They are types, shadows or parables.

It is a deliberate method of God, so that He can reveal His mysteries to some and

hide them from others. It needs revelation from God to understand these mysteries.

It requires a childlike (but not childish or unintelligent) humble mind. For God hides these things from the clever and intelligent and reveals them to babes, (Luke 10:21).

Jesus Himself gives clear guidance to the allegorical meaning of His own parables.

There are widely recognized types and shadows in the Old and New Testament.

Jesus Himself expounded in all the Law and the Prophets all the things concerning Himself (Luke 24:27). It must have been quite a Bible Study and based almost entirely on type and shadow because He is not mentioned directly by Name at all.

Scripture itself usually explains what these types and shadows represent.

Some More Obvious Types and Shadows.

In Leviticus 25 the Kinsman /Redeemer as type of Christ.

Isaac and Rebecca are a type of Christ and His Church

Boaz and Ruth are a type of Christ and His Church

Noah's Ark as a type of the church with Jesus as the door.

Moses and Moses' Tabernacle as a type of Christ

Aaron and his family as a type of the priestly ministry of Jesus.

David, his tabernacle, his throne, his Kingdom are all powerful allegories or types of Christ, His Heavenly Tabernacle, His throne and His Eternal Kingdom.

Melchizedek, another type of Christ, is The Glorious Priest of the New Covenant replacing the Levitical priesthood of the Law of Moses.

Lepers and their cleansing are a type of cleansing the sinner.

Israel - God's people - are also at times a type of the Church.

Many nations in the Old Testament typically represented particular aspects of the spiritual forces at war with God's people and God's purpose.

Esau/Amelek and Mount Seir - are a type of the flesh.

Egypt - a type of the world and the world system.

Pharaoh - a type of the prince of this world.

Phillistines - a type of Satan and his direct forces.

Syria and Assyria - The Power and force of Syncretism

Babylon/Chaldeans - The Powerful World System which acts independently of God

Mountains such as Mount Horeb, Mount Edom, Mount Sinai

Materials - such as Gold, Bronze, Silver, Precious Stones Wood, Hay Stubble etc. have significance.

Trees and Plants - such as the Olive, Vine, Fig Tree etc. have great significance.

Grains - such as wheat, barley etc. have significance.

Boats - From Noah's Ark onwards - a type of the Church

Substances - such as oil, wine, bread, leaven, all have significance and many more.

Place Names and People's Names - are often prophetic and have allegorical significance. Especially when God changes them.

Numbers - are often significant.

Everything Jesus said - Meant something and was often a Parable

Everything Jesus did - Had purpose and often had Allegorical significance.

e.g. His statement “Destroy this Temple and in three days I will rebuild it”

Cursing the Fig tree.

Washing the disciples' feet.

Feeding the five thousand and the four thousand.

Many of His healings and the way that he healed. E.g. Healing three blind men and using spittle and sending one to the Pool of Siloam. etc.

The disciples couldn't understand except by revelation. The Spirit had to show them. He used allegory, type and parable as a means of communicating and hiding truth.

He divided all men into a “You” category and a “Them” category. Matt 13; Mark 4; Luke 8: and warned them to be careful how they heard.

These types and shadows act as vivid illustration to make the point and once understood would never be forgotten.

The Dangers of this Method.

- 1) Teaching as doctrine personal fantasies which never came from God
- 2) People claiming to have heard from God when they haven't.
- 3) Fertile imagination rather than revelation from the Spirit.
- 4) Deceiving spirits giving dangerous false revelation
- 5) Prejudiced perspective not objective. Their own strong views, hurts and offences colors Scripture so they cannot read it objectively. They are therefore unable to receive any revelation from God.

6) Dishonesty, using the Scripture and bending it to try to make it support a point which has already been decided.

However the same problems exist with the gift of prophecy and with the interpreting of dreams and visions.

Also in the matter of guidance, people often claim to have heard from God when they actually haven't.

The main safeguard is a deep intimate relationship with God and a humble, contrite and teachable spirit.

But we cannot reject this whole area and ban these things from the Church just because of abuse and misuse by some.

Necessary Safeguards in Teaching this Kind of Interpretation.

1) The whole weight of Scripture must be considered. Don't avoid or ignore even one awkward Scripture that messes up your theory.

All Scripture must fit and if it doesn't there's something wrong with your doctrine.

All awkward verses must be honestly faced and when understood they will then often lead you to a greater truth.

2) Don't build too much on one solitary Scripture.

3) Most types and shadows only expand and illustrate truth and doctrine already taught plainly and directly in Scripture elsewhere.

4) The Kernel is always in the sayings of Jesus. It is expanded in the Epistles and is illustrated in the Old Testament.

5) Great certainty can be given to those types and shadows already explained by Scripture itself. Also those which run consistently right through the Bible and are widely accepted can be given greater weight.

6) Private personal revelation (while it may be valid), cannot be taught with the same authority and should be expressed as "I felt the Lord show this to me in this way".

7) Don't just parrot another's "revelation" without testing it but, like the Bereans, search the Scriptures, wait for your own witness of the Spirit and then see if these things are so (Acts 17:10-12). Don't say it or teach it until you have really seen it for yourself and know it's from God.

Poetic Scriptures

These apply particularly to a number of Psalms, the whole Book of the Song of Solomon and certain passages in the Prophets.

The only way to come to understanding of these Scriptures is to receive allegorical revelation from the Spirit of God.

Today there are a number of great expositors who have had wonderful revelation from God and can reveal the meaning of these great poems of the Spirit.

A Right View of God's Sovereignty

A wrong understanding of God's sovereignty can lead to a number of errors in understanding God's Word and in correctly responding to what it says.

1) A Wrong Passivity

A wrong kind of fatalism, similar to Hindu or Moslem concepts of God's Will. The believer leaves everything to God's inexorable purpose and does absolutely nothing to evangelize or make God's Will or His prophetic Word come to pass.

We are clearly called to take responsibility and be active workers together with God to make things happen and see His Will come to pass.

We absolve ourselves from all human responsibility and put the blame for

everything on God and thus malign His Character and Compassionate Love.

2) We Malign God's Character

We do this by attributing to Him harsh, vindictive, capricious choices such as creating some people beforehand for damnation e.g. Pharaoh (Rom. 9:11-17).

God is not bound by time and knows the end from the beginning. So He can make righteous choices according to His foreknowledge and choose who He will before the foundation of the world.

God is not willing that any should perish and will save all He can.

What Jesus Taught about His Return (Matt. 24: 1-51).

We need to read these things in the context of the events that just preceded this discourse.

We need to begin in Matthew Chapter 21 and read right through to Matthew 25 end.

There are similar passages in Luke Chapters 17-20 and in Mark Chapters 10:32- Mark 13:37.

Matthew 21

Triumphal Entry

Jesus cleanses the Temple and declares its true purpose

He curses the Fig Tree

Speaks a number of Scathing Parables aimed at the Hypocrisy of the Pharisees and the Sadducees

Uses the Term Kingdom of God instead Kingdom of Heaven (v31, 43).

Announces the Kingdom of God is taken from them and given to another nation

Matthew 22

Further Scathing Parables against the Scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees.

Clever empty arguments from them. A wrong way to use Scripture.

Jesus states “You are mistaken nor knowing the Scriptures or the Power of God”

Jesus quotes Scripture about being David’s Lord, not David’s Son (Ps.110:1).

Jesus is the Root of David (Rev5:5) and the Root of Jesse (Isa.11:1)

Matthew 23 The Seven Woes of the Scribes and Pharisees

A series of blistering attacks on the Scribes and Pharisees.

Strong denunciation of seeking honor, prominence or position.

Strong denunciation of use of Titles to get honor and respect (v6-12).

Called Hypocrites, A Brood of Vipers, Blind guides.

A Denunciation of False Swearing particularly with wrong financial attachment.

God dwelt in the Temple - not any more! - Past tense v 23

Final strong Denunciation with prophecy of Judgment of the City.

The House also will be left desolate.

Jesus weeps over Jerusalem. It could have been so different.

Matthew 24

Jesus leaves the Temple never to return. The Disciples are still enamored with the

buildings.

The Destruction of Temple is Prophesied.

He sat on the Mount of Olives. The Disciples begin to question Him.

- 1) When will these things be?
- 2) What will be the Sign of your coming?
- 3) What will be the Sign of the end of the Age?

Jesus' first response is "Don't let anyone deceive you!"

He gives 15 Indicators of His Coming which can be divided into 4 Categories

1) False Christs, False Prophets.

They come with great deceptions and lying signs and wonders. They will be very successful in deceiving many.

Beware of Teachings or Doctrines which suit our desires or "tickle our ears".

Doctrines of Excuse for our ineffectiveness. It's God's will for the devil to take over the World.

Doctrines of Escapism. We won't suffer, we'll all fly home to Jesus.

Doctrines of Laziness and Sloth. Excusing our failure to be zealously about our Father's business.

Doctrines of Universal Salvation. Don't worry, everybody will end up in Heaven.

Doctrines of Comfort and False Peace. No trouble or conflict to come it's only going to get better.

Doctrines of excuse for covenant breakers.

2) Wars and rumors of Wars in many places.

At least 30 major spheres of conflict right now in the World. Almost all are caused by Islamic fundamentalism

3) Natural Disasters, Famines, Pestilences (diseases, epidemics), Earthquakes.

4) Supernatural Signs in the Heavens affecting the Sun, the Moon and the Stars.

This will culminate with the “Sign of the Son of Man” appearing in the Heaven.

This will cause the whole Earth to mourn.

Then Jesus will come visibly with great Power and Glory.

After that the Elect will be gathered from the four corners of the Earth.

It will be a sudden event taking everybody by surprise.

Those who are watching will be expectant but will not know the hour or day.

Suddenly people will be taken selectively (Verses 40-42). This is the basis for the “left behind” teaching. But in the Parables of the Kingdom it’s the wicked who are taken to leave the righteous shining like the Sun (Matthew 13; 40-51).

Sometimes, what Jesus is saying seems very immanent and very local and describes a devastating time for Jerusalem and could well be applied to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. But not everything by any means was fulfilled at that time.

In other places His Vision seems to expand to the whole Earth and clearly be dealing with the final events at the end of the Age.

This is best explained by my Multiple Theory of the Fulfillment of Prophecy

This often happens with Prophets. They are seeing a series of events which stretch from the near future to the end of the Age. They see them as one mountain range of

God's purpose with a series of peaks.

At a distant it looks like one Mountain. But when you climb the first peak you discover behind it a wide valley with a series of peaks and valleys leading to the ultimate peak.

Many major Prophets and prophecies are like that. There has already been at least one earlier fulfillment which certain elements missing but the final total fulfillment is yet to come.

Matthew 25

More parables on the need to be prepared, ready and working diligently in anticipation of His coming.

There will be great reward for those who are found so doing and great loss for those who are lazy and unprepared at His coming.

Once again the emphasis is on being watchful and ready for His sudden unexpected return.

In this Chapter the Nations are brought for Judgment as Sheep and Goat nations and judged how they responded as Nations to the needs of the poor, sick, hungry and the imprisoned (verse 31-46).

At the end of the Age, God will deal differently with the Sheep and the Goat Nations.

Matthew 26 & 27

When Jesus had finished all these sayings, He moved immediately into the Passover, the first great Love Feast and the Cross.

The Major Divisions of Eschatological Teaching with various Sub Divisions. Their Strengths and their Weaknesses

The different ways of seeing and teaching End-time events are usually grouped into five major divisions with a number of subdivisions.

Dispensational - Futurist School

This has been the classic view of much of the Evangelical Church of North America and Europe and is still ardently believed and taught by many of its prominent leaders.

Recently this school has become strongly Pro-Israel and believes it must support Israel under all circumstances and help it to achieve its secular political goals including possessing all the land God promised Abraham. To do this, they believe, will cause God to bless us as a nation. Not to do this will cause the wrath of God to come upon our nation. It also believes God has a separate end-time purpose for the Jews apart from the Church which will continue in Eternity.

This School of thought is of relatively recent origin being not more than 150 years since its origin. It was expounded by J. N. Darby and popularized by the C. I. Scofield Bible with its extensive notes.

It sees almost all the Book of Revelation as future and yet to be fulfilled. The seven Churches of chapters 2&3 are seen as allegorical of historic periods through which the Church has or will pass until it all becomes Laodicean and apostate at which point the faithful in the Church will be taken out of the way by a sudden rapture leaving the rest behind to experience the Great Tribulation.

At this point the Jews will suddenly recognize their Messiah, be converted and evangelize the World for a period of 3 1/2 years during a time of Great Tribulation. Then all believers will be gathered into Heaven and God will pour out His direct wrath upon unrepentant humanity for another 3 1/2 year period thus completing the Last Week of Daniel.

Then Christ will return with those who have qualified to be part of the first resurrection and He will reign with them with a rod of iron on the Earth for a literal 1,000 years period bringing a time of the manifest Kingdom and of Peace. During this time Satan will be bound and will not be able to deceive the nations any more. After this thousand year period Satan will be released for a short season and will immediately deceive some who will choose to follow him,

Then will come the final judgment. Satan and his angels will be cast into the Lake of Fire along with all those whose names are not written in the Lamb's Book of Life. Heaven and Earth will be cleansed by fire. The Eternal Age will then begin with a New Heaven and a New Earth in which righteousness dwells with Heavenly Jerusalem at its center.

The general policy is to take the Book of Revelation from Chapter 4 onwards as mainly literal and chronological.

Dispensational - Historic Based on the Seven Feast of Israel

This was a new system of dispensationalism which came to the fore during the Latter Rain Movement which began in Canada in the late 1940's. It spread powerfully down the West Coast of America, jumped over the Pacific and deeply affected New Zealand and Australia in the 1970's through to this present day.

It was optimistic not pessimistic and saw a victorious Church not the Jews as the center of God's end-time purpose.

It had many of the elements of Restoration with the restoration of Apostles and Prophets and saw the raising up of David's Tabernacle and the restoration of Extravagant Worship.

It is probably more Historic than Futurist in its view of the Book of Revelation and saw the History of the Church being spelt out in the fulfillment of what the Seven Feasts of Israel allegorically represented.

They would see the Church presently somewhere in the Feast of Trumpets and the Day of Atonement and about to enter within the veil heralding in a new time of holiness and intimacy with God.

In their view the Church will soon enter into the Feast of Tabernacles be celebrating with Jesus a glorious end-time Harvest with the whole Earth having been reaped.

(Kevin J. Conner with his many excellent books is a much respected teacher out of

this School).

Non-Dispensational Futurist School

This School also sees most of the Book of Revelation from Chapter 4 onwards as future and largely literal and chronological. But they do not see any special end-time purpose for the Jews except that they will be largely saved and become part of the one Kingdom where there is neither Jew nor Gentile.

They do not see the seven churches as historic dispensational periods but as simultaneous conditions which can be found in any church at any time.

They do not believe that the Church will avoid the time of trouble but will be there in the first 3 1/2 year period to reap the great harvest that will be gathered in those days.

However, they do believe they will be taken out of the way in what is called the Mid-Tribulation Rapture for the second 3 1/2 year period when God pours out His direct wrath upon a rebellious unrepentant World.

They also generally believe in a literal Millennium during which Satan will be bound and then loosed for a brief period. After this will come the final Eternal State.

There are many variations of some of the detail of these things but this is the general picture.

The Preterist School

The term Preterist come from a Latin grammatical term for a tense roughly equivalent to the English past perfect tense. It roughly means “past, finished and done away with”.

This view has been around for some time but has suddenly becoming much more popular with several hard hitting books having been recently written. It is an understandable overreaction the errors of the dispensational position. But it creates a number of new serious problems of its own.

The Preterist School generally believes that the whole of the Book of Revelation up to Chapter 20 was fulfilled with the destruction of Jerusalem and the persecution under Nero in the year AD70 and is already past.

They believe the Millennium Rule of Christ and His Kingdom began then and is still continuing up to this present time. They see the Millennium not as a literal 1,000 years but simply as meaning a long time.

They also teach that Satan was bound then and is not deceiving the Nations any more.

They see the Great Tribulation as already completed in the persecution under Nero and do not expect a time of trouble in the future, just an increasing expansion of the Kingdom.

They generally also teach that God finished forever with the Jews with the destruction of the Temple, the City and the Nation and there is no purpose or future for them except to come as individuals into the Kingdom. They see no prophetic significance in the emerging nation of Israel and the events of the Middle East.

To make this stick, some have tried to move the date of the writing of the Book Revelation to before the destruction of the Temple, to somewhere around AD 54-68. Some have even tried to make an early church Elder called John the author instead of the apostle John.

There is good written evidence from a number of witnesses among the Early Church fathers as well as from the Book itself that it was written by the apostle John while a prisoner on the Isle of Patmos under Emperor Domitian around AD 95.

Another problem with this earlier date is that the errors and heresies addressed by Jesus in His letters to the various churches did not materialize until towards the end of the first century AD. He could not be addressing them as early as AD 60 because they did not yet exist.

The Historicist School

This sees the Book of Revelation and all the prophecies of the End-time as a gradual

unfolding plan for the Church through to the return of Christ.

Much of these Scriptures are interpreted in a highly allegorical and disjointed way to make them say what seems appropriate at the time.

They see Revelation gradually unfolding in History and becoming fulfilled through the sole agency of the Church. The Jews will joyfully be gathered in at some point towards the end, but only as part of the one Church. It seems according to their teaching Revelation Chapter 11 is definitely past and we are somewhere in between Revelation Chapters 12-18.

The Presentist School

This School teaches the Book of Revelation as having historical, present and future significance.

It basically divides the Book into seven complete pictures of the whole Gospel period based on the sevens in this book in what is called “Progressive Parallelism”.

Each series of Seven is seen as a complete review from beginning to end of the whole time period from John’s writing to the end of the age.

We then start again at the beginning with each series of Seven and get new insights of the past, present and the future.

There are some good blessed thoughts along the way but some is highly speculative. Again this is not a good method and one can make the Scriptures seem to say almost anything the interpreter chooses.

The Writings of John the Apostle

The Book of Revelation tells us that John was on the Isle of Patmos, “a companion in the tribulation”, “for the Word of God” (Rev 1:9) and was “in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day” (Rev.1:10).

He, according to Early Church tradition, was a prisoner working in the mines and

probably wrote all his books towards the end of his imprisonment which ended in A.D.96 with the assassination of the Roman Emperor Domitian a persecutor of Christians.

In his last two letters he is expecting imminent release (2John1:12; 3John 1:13).

These writings were circulating for a few years before his release and had a powerful effect in preparing the Church to come out of hiding and go on the offensive. As a result, every major demonic opposition was pulled down over Europe which was won for Christ within another 50 years.

John's Gospel and his First Letter were written to the Church with four main purposes.

- 1) They would be constantly filled with the Holy Spirit.
- 2) They would come into intimate relationship with the Father and serve Him as Sons.
- 3) They would actually live on Earth a manifestation of the Eternal Life of God.
- 4) They would continue to do the works of Jesus and bring the whole world to worship Him and acknowledge Him as Lord.

The Book of Revelation It came by direct revelation of Jesus Christ and John wrote as Jesus literally dictated His Word or showed him amazing visions, or John was being spoken to directly by angels. No other book of Scripture was written in this way.

Revelation Chapter 1. It begins with an encounter with the Risen Lord in all His glory and John can hardly bear the sight.

Revelation Chapter 2&3. Jesus then gives John a personal letter to each of the seven churches of Asia. They are actual churches and describe their present condition under His all seeing eyes.

These seven conditions existed simultaneously then and still do today in churches around the world. They probably always have existed simultaneously throughout Church History. I believe these Scriptures can be applied pragmatically to each individual Church situation as it seems relevant.

Some see them as dispensational allegories of different periods of church history.

Some respected scholars of the last century surprisingly have held this view mainly influenced by the Scofield Bible and its footnotes. E.g. Kenneth Wuest, Professor of New Testament Greek at Moody Bible Institute writes:-

“In the church at Ephesus we see the Apostolic Period	(AD 33-100)
In the church at Smyrna the period of the persecutions	(AD100-316)
In the church at Pergamos the period of the State church	(AD 316-500)
In the church at Thyatira the period of the Papacy	(AD 500-1500)
In the church at Sardis the period of the Reformation	(1500- ??)
In the church at Philadelphia the period of Modern Missions	(1793-??)
In the church at Laodicea the period of Apostasy	(1900-today)

Thus the history of the church from the first century to the present day was pre-written in these two chapters”.

On the other hand Dr. Adam Clarke, A famous Bible Commentator takes entirely the opposite view and writes: “I do not perceive any metaphorical or allegorical meaning in the epistles to these churches”.

Revelation Chapter 4 John is shown an open door into Heaven and is called “Come up here and I will show you things which must take place after this”. At this point the Present is divided from the Future. Everything from this point on is now future. The time of writing is about AD 96.

The rest of the chapter is devoted to worship the One sat on the Throne who is worthy to receive glory honor and power because He created all things and sustains all things.

Revelation Chapter 5 To understand this chapter we have to be familiar with the theme of the Kinsman-Redeemer which runs right through Scripture from Leviticus 25.

When a person became a debtor and could not pay the debt, he could be sold into slavery and his property sold also. At the time a Redemption Document had to be written with the terms of redemption written on it. If a blood relative could pay the redemption price and could prove his kinsman relationship to the slave, then at anytime he could pay the price and his relative and his property would be set free.

This is what is happening here. The moment has come to take the Scroll which is the Redemption Document of the whole Earth and forcefully take it back from the devil.

His pedigree is flawless and John is told to stop weeping. All heaven breaks out into glorious praise. Note in the pedigree He is called “The Root” not the Son of David.

Revelation Chapters 6-10

Breaking the seven seals are the steps which are taken to bring about the end of the rule Satan’s kingdom on Earth.

Revelation Chapter 11

When this is complete, it is declared that “the Kingdoms of this world have become the Kingdom of our God and of His Christ” and once again all Heaven worships. (Rev.11: 13-18).

Revelation Chapter 12

The Woman (The Church) in labor gives birth to a Child who was to rule the nations with a Rod of Iron. Michael and the Dragon engage in mortal combat, resulting in Satan and his angels being cast down to Earth with great fury.

The period of time 1260 days, 42months, 3 1/2 years keeps recurring. Is this anything to do with the Last Week of Daniel? Is it the same event but different Allegory?

Revelation Chapter 13

The Beast, empowered by the dragon arises and gains power over the whole earth for a period of 3 1/2 years and is followed by a second beast. Those who worship the Beast receive his mark. The number of the Beast is the number of man and is 666.

Revelation Chapter 14

The Lamb with the 144,000 arise and they go and preach the everlasting Gospel and then reap the two harvests. The first is reaped by the Son of Man and gathered. Then the second harvest is reaped and cast into the winepress of God’s wrath.

Revelation Chapters 15 & 16

The seven Last Plagues and the seven Bowls of Wrath to complete the Wrath of God.

Revelation Chapter 17 & 18

The Fall of Babylon

Revelation Chapter 19

The Marriage of the Lamb. The Righteous King goes to War.

Revelation Chapter 20

The Millennium reign of 1,000 Years. Satan bound and cast into the Bottomless Pit for 1,000 Years and cannot deceive the nations any more. Literal? Allegorical? Past, Present or Future?

Satan then released for a little while. The final White Throne Judgment. The Tabernacle of God is with Men. Definitely future

Revelation Chapter 21

The New Heaven and the New Earth. New Jerusalem comes down out of Heaven

Revelation Chapter 22

The Pure River of the Water of Life

Day 4

The Main Events

Their Essential Elements and Their Chronology

The Last Week of Daniel

The traditional Dispensational Futurist view is that one more week of Daniel's Seventy Week Period remains which will be fulfilled in a two stage tribulation following the Rapture of the Church.

Daniel word's in Dan.9:24-27 state a period of 62 "weeks" of prophetic years from the edict to build Jerusalem to Messiah being cut off which is a total of 483 years when the 49 years of building in troubled times are added, making 69 "weeks" in all.

If we get the truth right and the dates right, it all fits perfectly.

Cyrus issued the edict to rebuild the Temple in BC 538. But not the City! (Ezr.1:2, 3).

But Artaxerxes issued the edict to rebuild the City in BC457. Ezra went immediately in BC457 followed by Nehemiah in BC445 (Ezr.7:11-13).

BC 457 plus 483 years is exactly AD 26. Daniel's 69 weeks were perfectly fulfilled.

One week therefore still remained for God to complete His covenant with the Jews

Jesus was born in BC4 and He began His ministry in AD26 on His 30th Birthday. This began the Last Week of Daniel

He was cut off in the middle of this week at Passover in AD 29/30, 3.5years later exactly as Daniel had prophesied. Therefore 3.5 years still remained of Daniel's last week.

The Church was born at Pentecost a few weeks later in AD29/ 30. At first the Apostles went only to the Jews, the Lost Sheep of the House of Israel, until AD 34, (another 3.5 years later).

In AD34, after the martyrdom of Stephen, and the following persecution, Philip went to Samaria and preached to the Samaritans.

Shortly after that Peter went to the house of Cornelius and the Spirit was poured out upon these Gentiles just as He had been at the beginning.

Daniel's Last Week was thus fulfilled and God's covenant with Israel came to an end and now the Apostles were free to go to the Gentiles. In fact they had already been

commanded by Jesus to do so.

(See:- Seventy Weeks - The Historical Alternative - by Robert Caringola Companion Press).

The Great Tribulation

As you read the words of Jesus concerning a time of trouble such as never was and never will be again (Matt.24:15-22) many things were fulfilled in a local Jewish way when Jerusalem was destroyed in AD 70.

For this reason Preterests and Historicists have argued that the Great Tribulation has already taken place. But the Futurists point out, rightly, that many other things such as the wars, the earthquakes and natural disasters and the Gospel of the Kingdom going to all nations etc. were not fulfilled.

But it was promised by Jesus that all these things would be fulfilled within one generation (Matt 24:33, 34). Many of these things did not take place, therefore the Futurists argue that this was not the Great Tribulation, which is still to come.

I believe that we can apply the prophetic principle of multiple increasing prophetic fulfillments to this problem and successfully solve it in this way.

This means it was fulfilled in a Jewish, Local, Limited way like many other prophecies at the beginning of the Church age, but the worldwide fulfillment involving all nations at the end of the age is yet to come.

(To study the two main conflicting views see: "The Great Tribulation Past or Future?" By Thomas Ice and Kenneth L. Gentry. Kregel Publications).

The Sudden Rapture Theory

This has been an intrinsic part of the Classic Dispensational-Futurist teaching though it is now denied by some Futurists.

It basically teaches that the last Week of Daniel is still to come and that its fulfillment will begin with the true believers being raptured out of the way suddenly without

warning. The Great Tribulation period will begin probably with the Jews rebuilding their Temple and restarting animal sacrifice.

Then suddenly because of some cataclysmic event the Jews will turn to Christ be converted and for 3 1/2 years will powerfully and vigorously advance the Kingdom and evangelize the World with the church watching from Heaven.

Then they will be taken up for the last 3 1/2 years while God pours out His direct wrath on all who still resist and hate Him.

Then comes the triumphal return of Christ bringing all His saints with Him to rule with Him for 1,000 years during the Millennium. During this time Satan will be bound in chains in the bottomless pit and will not deceive the nations.

Satan is then loosed for a short time and all those who follow him are cast into the Lake of Fire with him and the judgment is then complete.

Then finally the New Age with a New Heaven and a New Earth is ushered in which only righteousness reigns.

This is clearly contains a lot of heresy which was started by a Jesuit Priest called Ribera in 1580-85 who was commissioned by the Pope to counter the strong Reformation teaching that the Pope was the Anti Christ and that the Papacy with it's seat in Rome were the "Babylon" of the Book of Revelation.

This teaching by Ribera has been carefully researched and powerfully refuted by many notable leaders of the Reformation and during the great Revivals under Wesley, Whitefield, Jonathan Edwards and Finney in the 17th and 18th centuries. Many other great 19th century leaders such as C.H. Spurgeon could be added to that list. However, D.L. Moody did embrace this teaching and it is still taught by that Institute.

In 1826, S. R. Maitland the Librarian of the Archbishop of Canterbury re-published Ribera's teaching which later caught the attention of one John R. Darby who late in the 19th century began to teach and influence many with this dispensational-futurist view.

John R. Darby came into contact with C.I. Scofield who incorporated all these ideas

into the footnotes of the Scofield Bible in 1909. Since then it has swept through Evangelical Christianity in a most amazing way and at one time had influenced and perverted the end-time view of almost everybody.

A lot could be written about the very dishonest and doubtful reputation of C. I. Scofield concerning whom there is ample proof of his crimes and misdemeanors.

The Anti - Christ

This is a very difficult subject to come to clarity about.

The Spirit of Anti Christ is clearly about and active as Jesus and John warned us. Jesus said that there would be many False Christs who would arise and deceive many, especially as His return draws near.

But whether it will still end up in a literal single Person having rule over all the Earth and all the saints for a short period is hard to be sure about.

To the Preterist, this was already fulfilled in Nero and his persecution of the Church in AD65-69.

To the Historicist, this was fulfilled in the evil Popes and their persecution of the emerging Protestant Church during and after the Reformation around AD 1500-1580.

To the Futurist, this is still to be fulfilled at the end of the age.

It is clear in my mind, that although there have been manifestations in the past, there is a final manifestation yet to come. I feel that it will primarily be an Anti Christ system rather than a person, but it will seek World conquest and will literally hate the True God and His glorious Son Jesus and will seek to destroy everything of His Kingdom on Earth. Militant Islam could easily fit the bill and it may or may not have a discernable human head emerge to lead it.

The Millennium

There is only one clear place in Scripture where this is mentioned (Rev.20:1-10). It may be hinted at in one of two other places but not with any great clarity.

However it does come with such force and clarity in this one passage that it is hard to pass it by and not regard it as a major event concerning His coming which we need to understand.

Certain clear things are stated. The first is that Satan will be bound in the bottomless Pit for a thousand years and will not be able to deceive the nations any more.

Secondly, Jesus will reign with a certain select company, “the souls of those who have been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the Word of God.....etc.”

They “lived” and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. The rest of the dead did not “live” again until the thousand years were finished.

It does not say that this reign takes place from Jerusalem or even on Earth at all. It could be from the Heavens

Satan will then be loosed and a very large number will immediately go after him and rebel against Christ’s reign.

Then will come the final showdown centered around the “camp of the saints and the beloved City”, possibly present Jerusalem.

Then will come the final judgment and the ushering in of the Eternal State.

I personally cannot see any point in History when these events have clearly happened or are presently happening. So to me this is still literal and future.

There are several Schools of thought concerning this event which have raised certain questions.

- 1) Is it literal or in some way figurative? If it is figurative what does it represent?
- 2) What are the essential elements of this event?
- 3) Even though the event may occur, is the time period literally a 1,000 years or is it a

poetic term that just mean a long time.

4) How do we fix the time? When does it begin and end.

5) What is the point and purpose of this time?

According to the Preterists The Millennium began when Jesus took His throne after His Resurrection and began to reign. Some fix it slightly later, beginning after the Great Tribulation of Nero or at the end of the first century when the Temple of Diana or Artemis was cast down.

To them it is an indefinite period lasting until Christ's second coming. The 1,000 years simply means a long time not a literal exact time period.

To them the Tribulation is past and they look forward to an ever increasing manifestation of the Kingdom with no Great Tribulation or Anti Christ or any great end-time battle centered around Jerusalem. To them, there is no time of trouble and a final show down with evil, still to happen in the future.

At the end, Christ will simply come in a one time event to be glorified in a victorious Church that has brought the nations to His feet and after a final judgment, He will usher in The Eternal State.

In the last two decades as the teaching and rediscovery of the Kingdom has appeared with its message of hope and victory there has been an understandable reaction against Dispensationalism. This has caused a major surge of Preterist thinking and writing.

While there have been some very good points made I feel it has gone too far in certain respects. It is certainly much nearer the truth in a number of respects.

According to the Dispensational - Futurists, The Millennium is literal and will come at the end of the seven year period of Daniel's last week of tribulation which is yet to come. For them it will be a strongly Jewish Kingdom with Jesus reigning from the present City of Jerusalem.

According to the Non-Dispensational -Futurists, The Millennium is literal and will also begin after Jesus' return with His saints, at the end of the last week of Daniel,

(some say if that is still to come). But it will be Christian not Jewish in character, though Jews will be part of it they will not be specifically identified as Jews or Gentiles, just Christians.

According to the Historicist. It's hard to find any clear teaching or expectation concerning the Millennium.

The majority of Historicist teachers however, can see only one valid way to interpret Revelation 20 and that is a literal thousand year period that will precede the one final Rapturous Coming of the Lord and the Eternal State. Many admit they do not fully understand its point or purpose but believe this will, like many other things, only be made clear at the time.

Who is right and which Position, if any, do we Follow?

The Historicist position has been the position of the vast majority of conservative Bible believing Evangelical teachers from the Reformation period right up until the end of the 19th century and even into the early years of the 20th century.

(Read the great Classic “The Puritan Hope” by Ian Murray - Banner of Truth Trust).

Then, quite suddenly, the Dispensational -Futurists teaching began to spread like wildfire through the ranks of the Evangelicals and took away the victorious hope and posture of much of the Church. The first warning of Jesus concerning the end-times was “Don't let anyone deceive you”.

Although many good and godly men and women have innocently received this teaching and taught it to others, I believe this has been a major deception from the devil which produced certain evil fruit which can be summarized as follows:-

- 1) A passive submission to our worsening world circumstances, letting the devil take over and believing it to be the will of God.
- 2) A convenient excuse for our failure in evangelism.
- 3) A failure to love the World redemptively and do something to change it. But rather a longing to escape, catch the Rapture bus and be out it.

4) A convenient excuse for our laziness and willingness to do nothing about the serious inroads of Satan into our society.

4) A seriously skewed understanding of the role of the Jews and God's end-time purpose for Israel.

God's End-time Plan for The Land of Israel, Jerusalem and The Jews

Let's Avoid the Subject?

This subject can generate such strong emotions that it's hard to get Christians to take a calm objective look at all the Scriptures have to say about it.

Something, however, needs to be said about some of the unbalanced and seriously erroneous views being promoted on either side of this controversial subject.

Extreme Replacement School

They see no special spiritual and prophetic significance in the events in the Middle East and the re-establishment of the nation of Israel. They believe that God washed His hands altogether with the destruction of The Temple, the City of Jerusalem and the nation of Israel in AD 70. They do not believe God has any special end-time plan or purpose for the former promised land of Israel, Jerusalem or the Jews and they regard them as no more than another peoples group needing to be evangelized.

Extreme Pro-Israel School

They seem to think that the whole of God's great end-time purpose is entirely focused on restoring the natural Jews to their own promised land and protecting them from their enemies regardless of Israel's political and military behavior.

Although their passion for Israel's economic and political well being is great, they seem to have little interest in getting these precious Jews to come to Jesus and be saved. Their only concern is to blindly support Israel politically in everything it says or does regardless of the rights or wrongs of the matter.

The declared purpose of this movement is that the Church should show its gratitude to its Jewish origins by embracing the outward forms of Jewish culture and return to its original Jewish roots. Only then, in their opinion, can the Gentile Church be truly blessed of God.

The fact is that all the historic evidence points the other way. Once the Council of Jerusalem settled the matter, as recorded in Acts Chapter 15, and James gave his famous judgment, no further attempts were made to get the Gentiles to behave like Jews. In fact, from that time on, many of the Jewish Christians abandoned their Jewish religious traditions and embraced a glorious new freedom in Christ, and the most ardent protagonist of this movement was the apostle Paul himself.

But when these natural Jews become Abraham's descendants by faith, along with all other believers, whether circumcised or uncircumcised, they enter the Kingdom of God and qualify for a much greater inheritance, which is to possess the whole earth!

The truth is, that getting the Jews saved and bringing them into their full end-time role in the Kingdom should be the passion of every Christian. We will be greatly enriched by their coming in. Therefore, this should have a high priority with everyone who truly loves Jesus and longs for His appearing.

What is God's True End-time Purpose for the Jews?

To understand this, our first major step is to come to clarity about what the Bible really says. A lot of Scripture is devoted to this subject and it is evidently an important subject to God, especially as we approach the dramatic events of these last days.

We need to understand what God is truly saying through all these Scriptures taken together as a whole. We must not cling to a few "proof texts" that seem to support our point of view and ignore the many others which do not.

One of our next problems is to understand how many of these Scriptures are to be understood in strictly literal terms and how many of them are allegorical. Do they all apply literally to the physical City of Jerusalem which now exists on Earth?

Do they apply to all the natural descendants of Abraham? Or do they only apply to Isaac and to Jacob (Israel) who are called the sons of promise.

God makes it very clear that the true descendants of Abraham were selected not by natural ethnic descent but by Divine sovereign choice. This choice was then sealed by a right response of faith on the part of those selected but only after they were chosen.

If we therefore restrict these promises of Scripture to the descendants of Jacob (or Israel) only, but then from that point start including all the natural descent of Jacob, are we any better off? Why, after several generations of selection by God's sovereign choice accompanied by promise and faith should the covenant and the promises suddenly revert back and begin to apply to all natural descendents regardless of their attitudes of faith and obedience.

Is it not much more reasonable to conclude that God still continues to selectively choose and then elect those who make a right response of faith and obedience? This was clearly the teaching of Jesus and Paul plus the other writers of the New Testament.

So why should God in these last days suddenly start to include all the Jews simply because of their ethnicity when in the past He has always consistently rejected the large majority of Israel's descendants because of their unfaithfulness and disobedience?

Such claims of natural descent were made by the Jews in Jesus' day.

But Jesus said those that hated Him and tried to kill Him were not Abraham's children but were of their father the devil! (John 8:37-56).

As we move into the greater revelation of the New Testament we find that ethnicity, circumcision and other such factors have been completely eliminated and are now totally irrelevant. Faith alone will determine who will inherit all the promises that God made to believing Abraham.

Many Christians today argue that the Scriptures of God's promises to Abraham do not apply to natural Israel at all but only to God's "New Israel" the Church, which is made up from all the nations of the earth, including of course all the Jews who believe.

Are These Scriptures Literal or Allegorical?

In the New Testament, the Church is several times called “the Israel of God”, “God’s Chosen People”, “The True Jews”, “The True Circumcision”, “The True Tabernacle”, “The Temple or House of God”. These terms are used a number of times by several New Testament writers and even some of the Old Testament prophets.

On the other hand, in other parts of the New Testament, particularly in the Roman letter from Chapter 9:1 to Chapter 11:35, the writer is clearly talking about Ethnic Israel, the natural descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and it would be bending Scripture to think otherwise.

The Natural and the Spiritual are Running to Climax together

Elsewhere in Romans and in some of the Prophets, the most compelling interpretation is that there are two equally valid interpretations running to parallel fulfillment and are applicable to both natural and spiritual Israel at the same time. Events concerning natural Israel are like a visible clock indicating where we are on God’s plan of countdown to the end of the age.

Is it Possible to Sort All this Out?

We must always allow the superior revelation of Jesus and the New Testament writers to define, explain and correct the meaning of the Old Testament Scriptures.

1. What is a Jew?

a. The Historical Definition

The definition of this term has changed significantly over the Centuries. In the Old Testament it first meant literally a descendant of Judah, who was one of the sons of Jacob and one of the original twelve tribes of Israel. It was never used to describe the whole Nation of God’s people at that time. The whole nation were called Hebrews, or sometimes Jacob or Israel but never Jews. Abraham was known as a Hebrew even before Isaac and Jacob were born but he was never called a Jew.

The Southern Kingdom of Judah continued for more than 100 years after the Northern

Kingdom Israel had disappeared, but the whole population of Judah was finally carried away to Babylon in three stages beginning in BC 608. Most sought to retain their identity in their forced dispersion.

A small minority returned as Jews 70 years later to begin to re-occupy the original promised land in BC 538 under the leadership of Zerubbabal.

The vast majority of the Jews, however, remained scattered among the nations of the former Babylonian Empire, now the Persian-Median Empire. They gathered in small synagogues to pray and read the ancient Scriptures. No animal sacrifice was practiced, as it was understood this could only take place in the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem.

These returned exiles normally used the term Jew but sometimes used the wider terms of Israel or Jacob although only Judah and Benjamin remained.

So the term Israeli or Jew gradually became synonymous for those who returned to live in Judah, the southern part of the former Promised Land. But it was also used to describe those who continued to live as Jews in the lands to which they had been scattered.

b. In the Period of the New Testament

At the time of the New Testament, the understanding of the term “Jew” would be similar. It would describe those who lived in Palestine or Israel and adhered to the Jewish religion. It would include those who remained scattered in the many nations of the Roman Empire but kept their Jewish identity and followed their Jewish religious traditions. It would also include proselytes of many nations who had embraced the Jewish religion during the dispersion. A good example would be Simon of Cyrene with his wife and his two sons Rufus and Alexander. They were a black African family from Cyrene in North Africa mentioned in Scripture, located in present day Libya.

c. The Present Day Definition

Today, the term “Jew” is much more vague. The present day nation of Israel officially recognizes as a Jew or Israeli anyone who can prove Jewish nationality by birth from Jewish parents within present day Israel or by direct descent within the last

two generations from undiluted Jewish stock living elsewhere. They can also become a “Jew” by marriage to a Jew if they accept and practice the Jewish religion, or they can become a “Jew” by embracing the Jewish religion as a practicing convert. Present day Israel is largely secular and is full of ethnic “Jews” who are strongly patriotic concerning their nation Israel but are atheists, agnostics or nominal non-practicing Jews concerning their religion.

d. The Definition of Jesus

In John’s Gospel Chapter 8, verses 37-59, Jesus is facing a hostile crowd who claim to be the children of Abraham. Jesus carefully defines Abraham’s true descendants. They are those who love and receive Jesus, just as Abraham did, because they truly know and love the Father. Those who hate Him and try to kill Him are defined as the children of the devil even though they claim natural descent from Abraham.

From then on, throughout the Gospels, the Book of Acts and the Epistles, the term “The Jews” is used to describe a company of orthodox, religious, Jewish fanatics who opposed Jesus and persecuted the Early Church. They were the ones that crucified Jesus, stoned Stephen and caused the death, imprisonment and persecution of many Christians in the early years of the Church.

All who suffered at their hands because of their faith in Jesus were themselves ethnic Jews. However, they refused to be called Jews any more but preferred to be called Believers, followers of the Way, or Christians who were “of the circumcision”.

This collective term “the Jews” occurs about 160 times in the Gospels, Acts and the Epistles. All but one of the writers of the New Testament were themselves ethnic Jews but they write about “the Jews” as some separate group, apart from themselves, to which they no longer belong, and who have become the enemies of Jesus and of the Gospel of the Kingdom.

e. The Apostle Paul’s Definition

The Apostle Paul gives a more precise definition. He writes, “For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the

letter; whose praise is not from men but from God”. (Romans 2:28)

He also defined the true circumcision. “We are of the true circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, who glory in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh” (Philippians 3:3-7). The true circumcision must glory in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in its natural Jewish ethnicity. See also Galatians. 6:15, which states “For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love”.

2. Who Are the Seed of Abraham?

In purely natural ethnic terms, all the Arab nations have the same claim as the Jews on Abraham as their Father and on that basis could also claim an equal right to the Promised Land. Ishmael was circumcised along with Abraham, long before Isaac was born. The purpose of that circumcision was to seal God’s covenant promise concerning the Land (Gen. 17:7, 8, 26).

Therefore, Abraham pleaded with God that Ishmael should be his heir but God emphatically said “No”. God then made a sovereign, elective choice and said the “son of promise” Isaac would be Abraham’s sole heir. This was said even before Isaac was born (Gen. 17:15-21).

Later, God commands Abraham to listen to his wife and cast out the bondwoman Hagar with her son Ishmael because Ishmael would not be allowed to inherit along with Isaac, the son of promise. (Gen. 21:10, 12). This is repeated prophetically several times in other Scriptures (Isa. 54:1; Gal. 4:2, 30).

Nevertheless, God did appear to Hagar and make certain specific promises of blessing to her concerning her son Ishmael. He also promised he would become a great nation.

3. Paul makes it very Clear to Whom the Promises were really made

“But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. For they are not all Israel who are of Israel, nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, in Isaac your seed shall be called. That is, those who are the children of the flesh (i.e. natural descendants of Abraham or even Isaac), these are not the children of God; but only the children of the promise are counted as the seed” (Rom. 9: 6-8).

Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham (Gal. 3:7).

4. There Is only One Seed which will inherit The Promises. This Seed is the one new Corporate Seed made up of all who have come to faith in Christ with Jesus as their Head whether Jew or Gentile.

(Gal 3:14-18) “that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. Brethren, I speak in the manner of men: Though it is only a man’s covenant, yet if it is confirmed, no one annuls or adds to it. Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, “And to seeds,” as of many, but as of one, and to your seed, who is Christ. And this I say, that the law, which was four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by **God in Christ**, that it should make the promise of no effect. For if the inheritance is of the law, it is no longer of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise.”

So, God confirmed the Abrahamic Covenant in Christ four hundred and thirty years before the Law was given and three generations before Judah was even born. So the Jews have no ethnic rights to the covenant and only become partakers of the covenant by faith in the same way that the Gentiles do.

Also these Scriptures make it very clear that the inheritance cannot come through the vehicle of the observance of Moses Law but can only come by promise and faith.

Note that God made the Abrahamic Covenant **in Christ** four hundred and thirty years before the Law and Moses Covenant came into existence. So the Covenant of Promise through faith in Christ Jesus was and still is the way that Abraham and all his seed must come to God.

5. Like the Risen Christ, this One Seed has no earthly ethnicity.

Writing to the Gentile Believers in Galatia Paul writes:-

“For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s Seed and heirs according to promise” (Gal 3:27-29).

Writing to the Gentile believers in Colosse, Paul writes:-

“You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. ⁸But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. ⁹Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices ¹⁰and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. ¹¹Here (in the new Man) there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, Barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all. ¹²Therefore, as ***God’s chosen people***, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience”. (Col 3:7-12 NIV).

Therefore becoming the seed of Abraham, inheriting the promises and becoming “God’s chosen people” has got nothing to do with ethnicity and it certainly cannot be a matter of who is or who is not a natural Jew. But it’s all a matter of faith through Christ. Whether we are Jew or Gentile is irrelevant. It is only those who are of faith who are of the true line of the seed of promise.

The Olive Tree

This again is a vast subject which would take a long time to treat exhaustively.

Let me just mention a few relevant things

Jesus is called the **Root** of David (Rev 5:5) and the **Root** of Jesse (Isa.11:1) out from which the Branch grows. Isaiah. 53:2 tells us that Jesus will grow “as a **root** out of a dry ground”.

The Eternal Christ who is without origin or natural ethnicity is the root out from which the true Olive Tree of God grows, not Abraham or David.

The Son in His eternal nature is the Root out from which the branches of His Olive Tree grow to become His Holy Nation.

The first branch was probably Abel then Enoch, Noah and many others were already there before Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Abraham and David were glorious “natural” branches grafted into that Holy Stock.

In His incarnation Jesus Himself became the BRANCH prophesied by several prophets.

In his humanity, He became a wonderful Branch that grew out of that Stock to become the Savior of the World.

As the Eternal Christ He was the ROOT. But when He became a Man, He became a BRANCH out of that Root which came through the lineage of David. He is the Root and Offspring of David (Rev.22:16).

Jesus is the Root to which Paul is referring in Romans 11:16-24. It is not a Jewish Olive Tree, though the Jews as natural branches should be grafted in much more easily and bring great enrichment.

The theme of the Olive Tree goes right from Genesis to Revelation and it is outside the scope of this School to try to cover it all.

B. The Land of Promise

1. A Physical and A Spiritual Promised Land

Hebrews 11:8 -16 When Abraham came to dwell physically in the land that God had promised him, he dwelt there “as in a *Foreign Country*, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise” (verse 9).

Abraham regarded this land of Canaan as a land of temporary dwelling. So he dwelt in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the sons of promise, because he was looking for another City and another Land.

The City was Heavenly Jerusalem. It had foundations and its builder and architect was God.

The Land was also in the Heavens (verse 16). It was to be occupied by building this heavenly, spiritual, City of Jerusalem. Once this Heavenly Land is fully possessed, it brings the canopy of the Kingdom of God over the whole Earth.

What about the Earthly land of Israel?

Nevertheless, God made clear, unambiguous promises concerning a small physical piece of land on Earth of approximately eight thousand square miles whose boundaries were very clearly defined geographically. This land was known as Canaan and later became Israel.

We are forced by these Scriptures to recognize two lands. One is spiritual in the Heavens and the other is physical on Earth.

God revealed to Abraham that he and his seed would inherit the whole earth (Rom.4:13). Paul wrote to the Corinthians “The whole earth is yours” (1 Cor.3:21).

That’s why Abraham did not say “We’ve arrived” when he got to Canaan and just settle down there.

Instead he dwelt as a stranger and sojourner along with Isaac and Jacob, heirs of the same promise, looking for the City and the Land which were heavenly and were the means to his full inheritance.

THE CITY OF JERUSALEM

The Two Jerusalems

In Galatians, Chapter 4 verses 21-32 Paul, and also in Hebrews Chapter 12:18-24, the writer to the Hebrews, speak of Two Jerusalems.

a. Physical Jerusalem - The City which now exists on Earth

This is the present earthly physical Jerusalem and is described as still being in bondage with her children. She represents the Old Covenant, Hagar and Mount Sinai and is definitely not of the line that will receive the promises. We are in fact commanded to cast her out, for neither she nor her son can inherit with the woman (or City) of promise (Gal 4:30). She is a City that represents the Law and practices an outward form of the Jewish Religion. So how can this City inherit the blessing and promises made to Abraham and his seed which can only be received by faith?

b. Heavenly Jerusalem - The City which now exists in the Heavens

The second Jerusalem is not on earth at all, but nevertheless, it does already exist in the heavens. This Jerusalem is free and is already the Mother of us all who believe and is of the line that will receive all the promises (Gal. 4:26-31; Heb. 12:22-29).

She will be the Mother of countless multitudes from all nations tongues and peoples, without striving or effort, through the power of the Cross, instead of being married to the Law (Isa. 53:1 - 54:17; Rom. 7:1-4). She is the Church.

This Heavenly Jerusalem that will one day come out of Heaven adorned as a Bride for her Husband and is clearly not a City of stone but built entirely of people who are joined to Christ and to one another in love and who have become His Bride.

This City will then be the glory and center of His Kingdom forever within a New Heaven and a New Earth. Once David's Tabernacle is established, this spiritual City can be built in the heavens starting at Mount Zion which is also spiritual in the heavens (Rev. 21:9-27).

In the light of this, which City should we be concentrating on? Which City should be the focus of our prayers and our passion? Read as an example Ps. 87:1-7 (written in David's Tabernacle). Which City is God talking about here?

Consider Ps.122:1-9 In what way should we be praying for the Peace of Jerusalem? Bible Peace begins with a right reconciled relationship with God. It is only to be found in the coming of the Kingdom (Isa.9:6, 7; Eph 2:14-17).

God has a Special End Purpose for Jerusalem on Earth

He's going to use it as a provocation to gather the God (Jehovah) hating nations, who hate the natural Jews and who also hate Jesus and His Church and the Jews. These nations will be gathered against physical Jerusalem on earth. God will bring them to battle at Jerusalem and thus to judgment (Zech 12:1 to Zech 14:11).

This battle over Jerusalem will be the provocation that God will use to cause that generation of Jews to look on Him whom their forefathers pierced in their blindness and their fury long ago when He came to be their King and protect them and make

that City the center and launching place for His glorious Kingdom.

They will come to loath themselves and repent and turn with great sorrow to Him whom they crucified. They will believe and be saved (Zech 12:10-14).

What about The Temple?

Understanding The Tent, The Tabernacle and the Temple

The Tent

From the days of Abraham right through to this present day there have always been people who longed for God's presence and who were prepared to pay the price for it.

The Tabernacle

In Moses Tabernacle the Levitical Priesthood could minister to the needs of the people without any of the Priests or the people having to get near to God.

The Tabernacle of David was a further development of Moses' Tent. During the whole of David's reign David's Tabernacle stood on Mount Zion. Moses Tabernacle was moved to Mount Gibeah about 7 miles or ten kilometers away.

Everybody had a Choice

The Temple

Towards the end of David's reign he had this great longing to build a house for God which was more glorious than his own house (2 Samuel 7:1-4). It seemed a very laudable desire and Nathan the prophet told him to do all that was in his heart.

But he did it without consulting God first. Then, that night, God spoke to Nathan and showed him how wrong he had been to give the go ahead to David. So Nathan came back with a word of correction which made God's heart very clear (2 Sam 7: 6-17).

Also God states His passion is to dwell with people who are of a humble and a contrite spirit who will pay the price of intimacy. (2 Sam 7: 4-17; Isa. 66:1, 2). Nathan

also gave a prophecy concerning David's seed who is clearly not Solomon but Jesus.

Jesus will build a house made up of People who are living Stones, not a physical building. This is the only building God is willing to dwell in. Jesus prophesied this at the beginning of His ministry in John 2: 19-22. Paul develops this in Ephesians 2:19-22. Peter refers to this in 1 Peter 2:4-10

During His early reign Jesus obviously never liked the magnificent Temple that Herod had built. It was built for political reasons by a corrupt evil man and not to glorify God at all. The First Temple became a great stumbling block to Israel in the days of Solomon and Herod's Temple was an offence to Him in Jesus' day, so He prophesied its destruction.

The Other Side of the Coin

1. God's Unchanged Heart for Ethnic Israel

In spite of their rebellious history and consistent unfaithfulness, God still sent His Son Jesus to Bethlehem in Judea to be born a Jew after the flesh and so become the Savior of the World.

Jesus first proclaimed the Kingdom of God to the Jews to give them one final opportunity to repent and fulfill their destiny.

The first twelve Apostles, all Jews, were initially sent only to the "lost sheep of the House of Israel" to proclaim the Kingdom of God first of all to them (Luke 9:1-6).

The Apostle John writes "He came unto His own but His own did not receive Him" (John 1:11). Apart from a believing remnant, they refused Him as their King and refused to come into the Kingdom of God.

In Luke chapter 17 and 19, Jesus weeps over the earthly City of Jerusalem and declares how often through the prophets and other messengers He had tried to bring them to accept Him as their King so He could protect them, as a hen protects her chickens under her wings.

But with tears streaming down His face He finally declares “But you would not receive Me, therefore your City is left to you desolate”. He also says “You did not perceive your time (kairos moment) of opportunity.

In Matt. 21:33-43, Jesus first taught the parable of the wicked vine dressers clearly referring to himself as the Son and owner and the Scribes and Pharisees as the rebel servants who would finally kill him.

He then proclaimed to the Jews “The Kingdom is taken from you and given to another nation bearing the fruits of it” (Matt.21:43).

After they had crucified Him, the Jews were the main persecutors of the church for several decades until they ceased to exist as a nation.

It would be reasonable to think that as a result of this, that God would forever be finished with the Jews. Hence Paul’s question in Romans 11:1 "Has God cast away His people"? The answer is “Certainly not”!

God has promised through the apostle Paul that He will do something fantastic among the Jews at the end of the age so that “all” Israel would be saved, (probably a poetic all).

Ephesians Chapter 2 verses 11-22 declares that God, through the Cross, has made peace between Gentile and Jew in the Kingdom and has made One New Man from the two. As we unite as one redeemed, multi-racial, New Israel under God, we will have great power to sweep away all opposition and on the foundation of apostles and prophets build the Kingdom with great power and authority.

Amos Chapter 9 is the very chapter where God promises to raise up again The Tabernacle of David which has fallen down as the means of reaping the great end-time harvest. Just prior to this great promise, the prophet in verse 6 makes a clear distinction between Israel as a House, and Israel as a Kingdom. He promises the House will continue but the Jewish Kingdom will be irrevocably destroyed.

From that day to the present time Israel (or Judah) has never been permitted to become a Kingdom again.

Jesus was temporarily a Jew on Earth, but not after His Resurrection

In Romans Chapter 9, as Paul begins to share his burden for his brethren after the flesh, he declares in verses 4-5 “who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; of whom are the fathers and from whom, **according to the flesh, Christ came**, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen”.

Several times in the Epistles Paul is careful to refer to the Jewish ethnicity of Jesus as something He had temporarily during his earthly life as He fulfilled the role of the Last Adam. Jesus, we are told, was of Judah **according to the flesh**; Paul states in 2 Corinthians 4:14 that he once knew Christ according to the flesh but now knows Him thus no longer.

The Risen Christ is clearly The Lord from Heaven (1 Cor.15:45-49) and not of this earth at all. He is Melchizedek, The faithful High Priest of the New Covenant and of the Heavenly Tabernacle (Heb. 7:1-14). This Man is without genealogy. In His resurrection Jesus is without human ethnicity and is now no longer a Jew.

All of us who have been to the Cross and are now raised with Him have experienced the same transformation. We are citizens of Heaven and of his Kingdom and our earthly ethnicity is now of no consequence.

3. Should the Church therefore become More Jewish?

We have already seen that in both Old and New Testament, the full power of the Kingdom was not released until David’s Tabernacle was raised. In the Tabernacle, David, along with everybody else, ceased to be a practicing religious Jew.

Melchizedek was clearly the high priest of that Tabernacle of David. No sacrifice for sin was ever offered there because they had, like Abraham, seen and believed in the perfect sacrifice of the Lamb.

The Tabernacle of David had to become free from the bondage of Jewish Law and Tradition to allow the full authority and liberty of the Kingdom. It had the power to throw down demonic principalities and powers in order to become more effective in reaching the world and reaping a great end-time harvest.

The Original Language of the New Testament

Although all the writers of New Testament Scripture were Jews (except for Luke), they did not use Jewish terms or words at all even when writing to Jews. The original manuscripts were written in Koine Greek, not Aramaic as some erroneously have tried to teach.

All passages from the Old Testament Scriptures quoted in the New Testament were from the Greek Septuagint version and not from the Hebrew text.

By the year AD 50-55, when the New Testament began to be written, the first Jewish believers did not appear to be interested in maintaining a Jewish culture or imposing this on the Church. They never spoke once of “Messiah” or “Yeshua” but always of “Christos” and “Jesus” in their Greek forms. Many Jews did not even speak Hebrew and were much more familiar with Greek. For this reason the Old Testament had already been translated into Greek and many Jews only read this Septuagint Greek version of their Scriptures and were not able to read the Hebrew.

Paul, more than many, was one who had once been a prisoner to these legal binding deceptions of Jewish Religion and was once in deep bondage to the religious demons who had taken control of many of these Jewish traditions.

As a result, he saw more clearly than many how these traditions must be rejected and that they could not be part of the New Covenant. He fiercely resisted every attempt to “Judaize” the new Gentile believers.

He said of those who brought such a message, it was another gospel, it was another Jesus and exclaimed “let them be accursed who bring such error” (Galatians 1: 6-12).

In the Philippian letter Chapter 3, Paul describes his impressive Jewish pedigree and then declares it to be dung or trash and of no value, compared with the excellencies of knowing Christ and the power of His Resurrection.

In the first two chapters of Romans, Paul, writing to a mixed readership of Jews and Gentiles, so destroys the idea that Jews have a special place in the Kingdom simply

because of their ethnicity that he is forced to ask and answer a question.

At the beginning of Chapter 3 he asks “Is there any advantage in being a Jew”? He replies “There is much in every way” (Rom.3:1, 2) The chief thing being that to them was committed the “Oracles of God” a phrase which roughly means the “actual speakings of God”.

It is obviously very desirable for a Jew to continue to express his culture, as with any culture, within the multicolored fabric of the Body of believers. This is part of the multicolored wisdom of God (Eph.3:10). But it must not take away the simplicity that is in Christ.

The True Remnant

There is something particularly special and precious about that true Jewish Remnant and their culture which has preserved from generation to generation the true gradually emerging written revelation of who God really is and what He is really like. These men and women had their wonderful encounters with God, lived in His presence, heard what He said, wrote it down and pondered its deep meaning. As a result there has emerged a rich culture peculiar to this remnant group.

But this was not true of the majority of ethnic Jews who simply practiced the empty externals of their religion without ever knowing or desiring God Himself. They honored Him with their lips but their heart was far from Him.

Each succeeding generation of this remnant group that truly sought God did not have to start from scratch but built upon the discovery and knowledge of God imparted to them by their godly forefathers.

It was this small group, within Israel, who in every generation sought to know God rather than just practice a religion. It was such people who were alive in the generation in which Jesus was born who recognized Him as the Messiah, received Him joyfully and at great cost to themselves became the foundation and pillars of the Church of Jesus Christ.

The Hebrew Language

Unlike any other language, the Hebrew language was shaped primarily by the desire to accurately put into words the things the true God was showing to such people concerning Himself. They gradually began to see the true nature of God, the nature of Sin, the nature of Man and the relationship that God desired to have with Man.

The Greek Language

The Greek language is also a very rich language but its weakness is that although many of their great philosophers thought and pondered their way through the mysteries of God, Man and the Universe, they were without spiritual knowledge of the true God.

Appreciating the Remnant

Every true believer is greatly enriched in his understanding and appreciation of the one true God if he recognizes and receives this remnant Jewish heritage.

It is only right that Gentile believers should remember the Jewish roots of their faith with deep gratitude. They need to appreciate the enormous price
But this must not be carried past the point where the truth and simplicity of Christ and the Gospel of the Kingdom is compromised.

Some Dangers we must Resist

a. Embracing the Shadow rather than the Reality

The Shadows which were contained in the ceremonial Law must never be allowed to obscure or replace the Reality that has now come in Christ. That would be an insult to Christ and His so Great Salvation and is an anathema to God.

b. Taking Secular Jewish culture and godless Zionist activism and its attendant political aspirations, and confusing it with God's true end-time purpose for His People and His Kingdom.

Do we cheer for the Nation of Israel and stand with the Jews whatever they do?

c. Confusing dead apostate Jewish religious ceremony and activity with the true spirituality of the faithful Remnant Culture

3. What is our Responsibility to the Jews?

In Romans Chapters 9-11 Paul gives us some guidelines as to how the Jews will respond to Christ at the end of the age. We are told they will be provoked to jealousy when they see God's blessing upon the Gentiles and this will convict them and cause them to be saved (Rom. 10:19-21; Rom. 11:11-14).

Therefore, the greatest practical thing we can do to bring the Jews to Christ is to make the Church so magnificent, so glorious, so evidently blessed of God and so rich in all the promises which God made to Abraham, that the Jews are forced to take notice and see beyond any doubt that God is with us and understand it is through the Church that the Kingdom which many Jews are longing for is evidently and powerfully being established.

The honest ones like Nicodemus will have to cry out "I know that you are sent from God for no one could do the things which you do unless God was with you. They will then be provoked to seek God for themselves so they might be saved and come into His glorious Kingdom as equal partners with us of this one nation under God.

4. God's Affection for Certain Geographical Locations

God's purpose has always been for the whole Earth. He declares "The whole Earth is Mine and the fullness thereof". He has given the whole Earth to Abraham and his Seed as an inheritance (Rom. 4:13).

Nevertheless, He has deep affection for certain geographical places that are very precious to Him because of the things that happened there.

There are many such places in the land of Israel and a number in present physical Jerusalem such as Mt. Zion, Mt. Moriah, the Mount of Olives and the Garden of Gethsemane to name but a few.

Certain prophetic Scriptures concerning end-time events are given a definite geographical location involving one or more of these places.

D. The Literal and the Spiritual Are Running Together to Conclusion

1. The Existence of Israel is a Present Day Miracle

As a cynical agnostic, Napoleon Bonaparte once said to one of his godly Bishops “Give me a proof for the existence of God.” The Bishop simply replied “The Jews my Lord”. The fact that Israel even exists is clearly a supernatural miracle. The hand of God is evidently upon the nation to preserve it.

One by one, the words of the prophets are being fulfilled concerning Ethnic Israel as well as for Spiritual Israel. The physical fulfillment is like a visible clock we can see and read, telling us the time and the place where we are at in the end-time purposes of God.

The physical is the Shadow and the spiritual is the Reality. Ethnic Israel may inherit at the natural level but it is much more important, even for Jews, to inherit with us as Spiritual Israel all the fullness of God’s promises to Abraham concerning the whole Earth. Only that will last.

2. God Also Loves the Palestinians and Wants Them in His Kingdom

There is no solution to the Middle East problem. The problem is spiritual not political. There can be no peace until all parties lose their natural ethnicity and come into the Kingdom of God. As the Israel of God with their natural enmity crucified, they can live in love and harmony as the One New Man in Christ (Eph.2:11-18).

Isaiah makes an amazing prophetic prediction concerning Egypt, Assyria and Israel (Isaiah 19:18-25). After chastening them, God will cause them to become one with Israel and they will all worship the Lord. Can we even imagine such a thing?

Eventually, only the Kingdom of God will remain. Even the earthly physical City of Jerusalem along with everything else on this present Earth will one day be burned

up and disappear.

Then there will be a New Heaven and a New Earth in which righteousness dwells. Then, Heavenly Jerusalem will come down out of Heaven as a Bride adorned for her Husband and will become the glory of the whole Earth.

There will not be one Scripture left unfulfilled.

God is bringing all things to climax at the same time

God has divided the world into three basic ethnicities and is bringing all things to Conclusion at the same time.

- a) The Kingdom - made up of all nations including believing Jews
- b) The Unbelieving Jews
- c) The Gentile nations which can be subdivided into
 - i) The Sheep nations and ii) The Goat nations

Day 4

What manner of People Ought We to Be?

Don't be Scoffers or Cynical 2 Peter 3:1-15

The time delay was obviously a problem even in Peter's day which was about AD 66-68 as he was about to be executed for his bold stand for Jesus in difficult days.

A lot of time had already passed and the imminent expected return of Jesus just hadn't happened.

Secondly, at that time the Kingdom wasn't making a lot of progress and was experiencing much opposition and some serious setbacks.

He makes several points.

a) They made the same mistake in the days of Noah and were suddenly swept away.

b) God doesn't see time the way we do. A day can be a thousand years or a thousand years can be as a day.

c) God's isn't slack, just long suffering and merciful concerning His promise. He's not willing that any should perish. The only purpose of Tomorrow is another chance to get more people saved!

d) It's also an opportunity for loose living Christians to get right before that day comes so as to escape His judgment.

e) But That Day will definitely will come "as a Thief in the night".

It seems from all the Scriptures especially the direct sayings of Jesus that we are to view His coming as imminent with an element of surprise so we never quite know when to expect Him. We should be permanently busy and ready at any time.

Therefore since all these worldly things will be dissolved they shouldn't be occupying our time and energy except to serve His eternal Kingdom purposes. We should concentrate on:-

1) A Holy Life Style

The Second coming of Jesus doesn't have any sudden transforming effect. We will be treated on that Day just as we really are. It's only the Cross which has the Power to change us and we must grab it's Power before that day.

There are a number of Scriptures, many directly from the lips of Jesus, which warn that many will think they are OK on that Day only to be turned a way at His coming. (Matt.7:21-23; Matt. 25:41-46; Luke 13:23-28; Romans 2:4-11).

Such a prospect is too frightening to contemplate and we need to keep a million miles away from any such possibility. The next to last scene in the book of Revelation is in Chapter 22:11-15 where we read these words

“he who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still. Behold I am coming quickly and My reward is with Me to give to everyone according to his work”.

Blessed are those who are doing His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of Life and may enter through the Gates of the City. But outside are the dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters and whoever loves and practices a lie.

A Holy Life enables Us to hasten the Day of His coming in Three Ways.

- a) He doesn't have to wait for us to get right before He brings judgment.
- b) Our lives become a testimony and a power house to bring others to Him.
- c) Particularly, this is the best Biblical way to get the Jews saved. Just by the quality of the Life we live before them. According to Rom.10:19 & Rom.11-14; when they see the glory of God upon us and see His mighty works through us, it will provoke them too jealously and make them seek Him for themselves.

A God Directed Busy Life will Hasten His coming

We must be busy and active to about the Work of His Kingdom and not slothful, lazy or Self-Seeking. There are many Parables teaching these principles. We need to ponder them very carefully.

Jesus is certainly reigning in the Heavenly Realm and already has all authority in Heaven and on Earth.

Bu there is a process of Righteousness which we don't yet fully understand by which that authority and power is enforced on Earth.

That's why understanding and practicing Luke 18:1-8 is so important. God needs His importunate “Widows”. Hear His cry “ When the Son of man comes will He find faith on the Earth?”

We can then work with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit as well as the angels to bring His Mighty Kingdom on Earth in increasing measure and cast all His enemies down until they are all literally subdued under His feet.

So as quickly as we can we need to work with His two End-time Prophetic Ministries of Elijah and Moses to bring about the Restoration of all things so as to hasten His coming (Matt.17:11; Acts 3:18-24).

We need the Apostolic and Prophetic ministries working together to build Heavenly Jerusalem over our Cities so they may be transformed.

We don't need to know all the detail

The experts who searched the Scriptures for generations before Jesus first coming were totally taken by surprise by the manner in which every Scripture was fulfilled. They got almost everything wrong.

Many Scriptures only became clear before or after the event and could not have been understood beforehand.

Let's Learn the Lessons of that great Crowd of Witnesses

First Jesus Himself - Hebrews12:1, 2

¹Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares *us*, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ²looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Peter at the time of his departure - 2 Peter 1:10-15

¹⁰Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; ¹¹for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. ¹³Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding *you*, ¹⁴knowing that shortly I *must* put off my tent, just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me. ¹⁵Moreover I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my decease.

Peter's final exhortation 2 Peter 3: 1- 14

¹Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in *both of* which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), ²that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of [•]us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior, ³knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, ⁴and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of creation." ⁵For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, ⁶by which the world *that* then existed perished, being flooded with water. ⁷But the heavens and the earth *which* are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

⁸But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day *is* as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. ⁹The Lord is not slack concerning *His* promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward [•]us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be [•]burned up. ¹¹Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, ¹²looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? ¹³Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

¹⁴Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless;

Paul as he is about to depart - 2 Timothy 4:1-8

¹I charge *you* therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead [•]at His appearing and His kingdom: ²Preach the word! Be ready in season *and* out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. ³For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, *because* they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; ⁴and they will turn *their* ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. ⁵But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, and fulfill your ministry.

⁶For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. ⁷I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.