

The  
King  
is  
coming

Peter Michell

# The King is coming

*Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am you may be also.'*

John 14:1-3

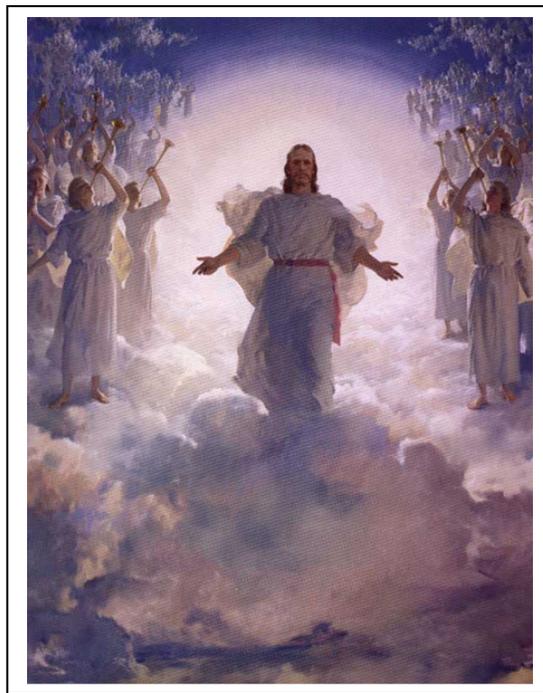


**The King is coming.....**

## The King is coming

*‘And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, ‘Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.’*

Acts 1:10-11



**The King is coming.....**

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*‘Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord’* 1 Thessalonians 4:17

*‘Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed – in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.’* 1 Corinthians 15:50-52



**The King is coming.....**

*We are to be -  
'Looking for the blessed hope and glorious  
appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus  
Christ.'*

Titus 2:13

**When He came as a babe to Bethlehem, He  
came exactly on time, to the day.**

**When He returns to earth it will be exactly on  
time to the day.**

**Time to believe it and look forward to His soon  
return.**

**The King is coming.....**

# **The King is coming.....**

This study in six parts will address how, why, when and the signs.

- 1) Awareness of the times and the great expectation of the born again church.
- 2) What about Israel?
- 3) The nations – then, now and tomorrow.
- 4) Understanding time.
- 5) Walk through the book of Revelation – its much easier than you think.
- 6) The age to come - Jesus Reigns

## **The King is coming.....**

**There is a saying, ‘It’s time to wake up and smell the coffee.’  
It is a bit like that for the church, the bride of Christ for the  
time is near.**

**Awareness of the times**

The church has largely been ‘lulled or duped,’ into thinking that we should not seek to understand the times, by the inaccurate application of scripture:

***Example 1***

Acts 1:7 - *‘it is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority,’* This was Jesus reply to the question, *‘Lord, will you at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel.’*

This is specifically spoken to the disciples about the restoration of the Kingdom to Israel – it has nothing to do with us now.

***Example 2***

Matthew 24:36 *‘But of that day and hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, but My Father only.’*

Context – Jesus is talking about the coming of the Son of Man.

Note carefully, it is specifically the day and the hour that no one knows. No restriction on knowing the year or the month!

***In complete contrast Jesus was scathing of those who did not discern the signs of the times:***

***Quotation 1***

*‘He answered and said to them, ‘When it is evening you say, It will be fair weather, for the sky is red; and in the morning, It will be foul weather for today for the sky is red and threatening.’*

*Hypocrites! You know how to discern the face of the sky, but you cannot discern the signs of the times.’*                      Matthew 16:2-3

## **Quotation 2**

*'For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, and level you and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation.'* Luke 19:43-44

Israel's failure to see and know and understand the times, when Jesus was born in Bethlehem, had dire consequences, which were duly fulfilled. Later we see how gentiles, the Magi, did understand!

## ***We should be different as we are children of light:***

Paul writing to the Thessalonians in his first letter, chapter 5: 1-11:

*'But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they say, 'Peace and safety!' then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labour pains upon a pregnant women. And they shall not escape.*

*But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this day should overtake you as a thief. You are sons of the light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober.*

*For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation.*

*For God did not appoint us to wrath\*\*, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.*

*Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.'*

Paul states clearly that the day (of the Lord) will not overtake us, for we are sons of the light, therefore time now to understand and to be watchful.

We are called and expected to be aware of the times. It is time to wake up and to realise that the return of Jesus gets closer day by day.

**\*\*Wrath** – it is important to understand the judgements poured out in the book of Revelation are the wrath of God expressed over an unbelieving world whose ‘cup of iniquity’ has become full and are not intended for the bride, for whom Jesus Christ took the whole and complete penalty for sin on the cross at Calvary.

### **The bible is our benchmark**

Already you will see that we are taking the bible as our authority. There is good reason for this. We believe the bible to be the inspired word of God – it was given through men, nevertheless it was ‘God-breathed.’

Paul to Timothy:

*‘All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.’*  
2 Timothy 3:16.

So - accurate, infallible, without error or contradiction when properly understood and in its original manuscripts.

[An example of an apparent contradiction: Joel 3:10 Micah 4:3. Joel instructs the beating of ploughshares into swords and pruning hooks into spears whilst Micah has exactly the opposite. Contradiction – NO – Joel is preparing the people for a time of war whilst Micah talks of a different time, a time of complete peace.]

Therefore:

*‘Be diligent to present yourself approved to God a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.’*  
2 Timothy 2:15.

Rightly dividing means to ‘cut straight.’ The scripture has to be divided so that we apply the right part to the right period of time.

It is the Holy Spirit's job to lead us into all truth. Jesus promised He would do so in John 16 :13 so we can co-operate with this process by praying 'Holy Spirit please lead me into all truth – more and more and more.'

*'However, when He , the Spirit of truth has come, He will guide you into all truth; for he will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; He will tell you things to come.'*

***He will tell you things to come*** - we should expect to understand the times and to know what is coming!  
So we will proceed on the basis that the scripture is accurate and helpful.

### **The great expectation and hope of the born again church.**

#### ***1 We are going to be changed in an instant:***

Paul writes to the Corinthians in his first letter, chapter 15: 35-58. In summary – there are earthly bodies and celestial bodies – only the latter can inherit the kingdom of God. We shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye – in a moment.

..... And to the Thessalonians in their first letter,

*'then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them (the previously deceased) in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we will always be with the Lord.'* chapter 4:17.

#### ***2 We should be really looking forward to His coming:***

Paul writes to Titus chapter 2: 11-13. –  
Grace brings salvation, teaching us to deny ungodliness and to be righteous – '*looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ.*'

Is this reality for you and me – are we really looking forward to His coming? Are we really in love with Him? Or fearful, or

daunted by the prospect? Or just apathetic? Or want a different agenda?

**3      *Expect the fulfilment of the promise given in Acts 1: 9-11***

*'As they watched He rose from amongst them and was taken up – a cloud received Him and He was then out of their sight. Two men stood by - "Men of Galilee why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."'*

**Points to note:** 'This same Jesus' Not Jesus in some other form. Not Jesus manifest in the church – but the same Jesus.

**'In like manner'** - they saw Him in the clouds – so will we, and we will meet Him there in the clouds.

**4      *Then we will always be with the Lord:***

Jesus made this promise:

*'Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.'* John 14:1-3.

**5      *We are the spotless bride:***

Betrothed to one husband - Paul's second letter to the Corinthians, chapter 11:2.

*'I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.'*

John the Baptist saw Jesus as the one who has the bride – John 3:29. *'He who has the bride is the bridegroom.'*

Paul explains to the Ephesians chapter 5:25-7

*'Christ loved the church, and gave Himself for her that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.'*

The bride receiving loving, caring attention - not being battered into submission or harshly treated!

So we have established – we are His chosen bride:-

***So then we are called to love the Lord*** – we are His bride – this is a love relationship. Matthew 22:34-38 - *'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul and all your mind.'*

Prayer: 'Holy Spirit fill me with more and more love for Jesus.'

### ***Judging the kingdom***

Revelation 19: 11- 16 has the bride (now referred to as the armies of heaven) returning to earth with Jesus when He comes to set up His millennial kingdom on earth.

The 12 tribes of Israel will be judged by the apostles – promised by Jesus in Matthew 19:28 and Luke 22:30

The saints will judge the world and the angels.

Paul writes this to the Corinthians in the first letter, chapter 6:2-3.

*'Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life.'*

Paul makes it clear that this responsibility is shared with Jesus in his second letter to Timothy, 2:12. *'we shall also reign with Him.'*

**Summary:**

Looking for His appearing, meeting Him in the clouds, taken to the place He has prepared, made spotless, married, returning to earth with Him to rule the Kingdom.

**No wonder** *'The Spirit and the bride say 'Come'* Revelation 22:17.  
Jesus says, *'Behold I am coming quickly and My reward is with Me'* Revelation 22:12

This is the expectation of the born again bride, the true church

This chapter has been about, what is referred to as, the 'rapture of the church.'

There is much more on this subject in the booklet, including a comparison of different views, in 'Will the church be caught away.'

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This is Jesus coming for His bride – yet there are promises to be fulfilled in relation to Israel. So now we will take a look at God's promise to His ancient people and their expectations.

### **What about Israel?**

We saw in chapter 1 that Israel was criticised for not discerning the times – specifically, that is, they did not recognise the Messiah at the time of His visitation.

Jesus came as Messiah and had Israel accepted Him as such He would have set up His Kingdom on earth there and then. But the Lord knows the end from the beginning, He knows everything, and had hidden a mystery to be revealed later through the apostle Paul.

### **His coming did not go unseen.**

The Magi from the east were the ones who did recognise the time and the significance of Jesus birth – they came to worship the King of the Jews.

*‘Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold wise men (Magi) from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, ‘Where is he who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.’*

Matthew 2:1-2

The Magi, the kingmakers of the period, would have understood the time of the coming of the King of the Jews from the prophecy handed down by Daniel, who had been appointed head over them, found in Daniel chapter 9. They would have arrived with a significant entourage. They were the king makers from a foreign power – no wonder all Jerusalem was troubled. (Matthew 2:3)

### **Gentiles recognised Him whilst Israel, His own, did not.**

#### ***The rejection of Jesus***

Although it is abundantly clear, from the things Jesus said and did, that He was indeed the awaited Messiah, nevertheless He was rejected by the religious authorities.

Under Jewish wisdom of the day there were things which only the Messiah could do:

One thing was to heal leprosy. They had come to this conclusion due to the fact that the rules for the cleansing of lepers, stated in Leviticus 14, had never been applied. Therefore they reasoned only the Messiah could heal leprosy and fulfil the scripture. (Naaman, who was healed of leprosy in 2 Kings 5, was not a Jew and therefore Leviticus 14 did not apply to him)

Another thing was to cast out a dumb demon. Whilst Jews did cast out demons they had to know the name of the demon. Hence they could not cast out a dumb demon.

Jesus had already cleansed a leper in Matthew 8:2-4 and told him to present to the priest and to offer the gift according to Leviticus 14 ***as a testimony to the priest.***

*'And behold, a leper came and worshipped Him, saying, 'Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean.' The Jesus put out His hand and touched him, saying, 'I am willing, be cleansed.'*  
*Immediately his leprosy was cleansed. And Jesus said to him, ' See that you tell no one; but go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.'*

In Matthew 12:22-3 Jesus delivers one who is demon possessed and dumb. The reaction of the crowds is *'Could this be the Son of David'* (a reference to the Messiah)

*'Then one was brought to Him who was demon-possessed, blind and mute; and He healed him, so that the blind and mute man both spoke and saw.. And the multitudes were amazed and said, 'Could this be the Son of David?'*

***The religious rulers answer the crowd's question.***

It was one of the responsibilities of the religious rulers to weigh any claims to Messiahship.

This was done in stages:

First there was observation. The claimant was observed. If the claimant broke the Law he could be dismissed. This can be seen in Matthew 9 where scribes observe Jesus forgiving sins and, whilst questioning it in their hearts, they do not speak out.

Second there was the questioning. Matthew 12:2 *'Look your disciples are doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath.'*

By Matthew 12:14 the Pharisees are plotting to kill Jesus. So when the crowd ask the question, *'Could this be the Son of David'* they reply with their judgement.

So this is their judgement - *'this fellow does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of demons.'* (12:24) Their conclusion - this is not the Messiah – this is 'a son of the devil.' But Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them that a kingdom divided against itself would come to desolation.

### ***The consequence***

Luke 19: 42-44 *'the things that make for your peace are hidden from your eyes, enemies will now come, you will be levelled to the ground, not one stone left upon another.* Fulfilled in AD70 when the Romans overran Jerusalem and completely demolished the Temple.

Furthermore many look upon Israel as a stubborn and stiff necked people – actually so does the Lord (Exodus 32:7-10) - a people who resist the Holy Spirit (Acts 7:51-52)

This has led many to conclude that there is no future for Israel.

But.....

In the last session we read of the disciples asking the risen Jesus, *'Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?'*

What were they thinking? Were they thinking ‘simply getting rid of the Romans?’ Or were they thinking more along the lines of restoring the kingdom to its glory and splendour under David and particularly Solomon?

***Under Solomon Israel was the chief nation on earth:***

I Kings 10 has the details:

The Queen of Sheba visits (1-13) with fantastic gifts for Solomon (inc 3.6 tons of gold)

..... but when she sees the outstanding wealth of Solomon’s kingdom, *‘there was no more spirit in her.’*

The weight of gold coming to Solomon was in excess of 20 tons annually plus that coming from travelling merchants (duty), traders (taxes) and other kings (tribute) and governors – of provinces ruled by Israel. (verses 14-15)

In addition every three years Solomon’s ships returned from their voyages bringing gold, silver etc. (verses 22)

2 Chronicles 9: 23-4 sees all the kings of the earth coming bringing their tribute at a set rate each year. This is dominion.

*‘And all the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart. Each man brought his present; articles of silver and gold, garments, armour, spices, horses and mules, at a set rate year by year.’*

**So let the scripture tell Israel’s story step by step:**

**1 *Israel scattered.***

The result of the rejection of the Messiah was the scattering of Israel amongst the nations of the world. Ezekiel 36:16-19

16 *Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying:*

17 *"Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, they defiled it by their own ways and deeds; to Me their way was like the uncleanness of a woman in her customary impurity.*

18 *"Therefore I poured out My fury on them for the blood they had shed on the land, and for their idols with which they had defiled it.*

19 *"So I scattered them among the nations, and they were dispersed throughout the countries; I judged them according to their ways and their deeds.*

**2 In their unbelief He will regather them**

Ezekiel 20:33-42 -He will regather them from the nations and purge their rebels and transgressors.

33 *"As I live," says the Lord GOD, "surely with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out, I will rule over you.*

34 *"I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered, with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out.*

35 *"And I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I will plead My case with you face to face.*

36 *"Just as I pleaded My case with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will plead My case with you," says the Lord GOD.*

37 *"I will make you pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant;*

38 *"I will purge the rebels from among you, and those who transgress against Me; I will bring them out of the country where they dwell, but they shall not enter the land of Israel. Then you will know that I am the LORD.*

39 *"As for you, O house of Israel," thus says the Lord GOD: "Go, serve every one of you his idols-- and hereafter-- if you will not obey me; but profane My holy name no more with your gifts and your idols.*

40 *"For on My holy mountain, on the mountain height of Israel," says the Lord GOD, "there all the house of Israel, all of them in the land, shall serve Me; there I will accept them, and there I will require your offerings and the firstfruits of your sacrifices, together with all your holy things.*

41 *"I will accept you as a sweet aroma when I bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you have been scattered; and I will be hallowed in you before the Gentiles.*

42 *"Then you shall know that I am the LORD, when I bring you into the land of Israel, into the country for which I lifted My hand in an oath to give to your fathers.*

### **3 God is jealous of His Name.**

Israel is His chosen nation. For the sake of His own Name He will redeem Israel. Ezekiel 36:21-23

21 *"But I had concern for My holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations wherever they went.*

22 *"Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "I do not do this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for My holy name's sake, which you have profaned among the nations wherever you went.*

### **4 The process of restoration - trouble**

*'And it shall come to pass in all the land, says the Lord, that two thirds in it shall be cut off and die, but one third shall be left in it. I will bring the one third through the fire, will refine them as silver is refined and test them as gold is tested. They will call upon My name. I will answer them.'* Zechariah 13:8-9

Jeremiah refers to this period as the 'day of Jacob's trouble.'  
Jeremiah 30:4-7

It is a time when every nation gathers together against Israel -  
Zechariah 14:1-9

### **5 They will look upon Him whom they pierced.**

*'I will pour upon the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son'.* Zechariah 12:10

## **6      *They call for the Messiah***

Jesus said, 'You will see Me no more till you say, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord"' Matthew 23:39 – this will be the key for Israel in the future.

## **7      *Israel renewed***

The Lord will cleanse them, will give them a new heart and put a new spirit within them. Ezekiel 36:24:28

24      *"For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land.*

25      *"Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols.*

26      *"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.*

27      *"I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.*

28      *"Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God.*

## **8      *The absolute certainty of the promise***

*Thus says the LORD, who gives the sun for a light by day, the ordinances of the moon and the stars for a light by night, who disturbs the sea, and its waves roar (The LORD of hosts is His name):*

*"If those ordinances depart from before Me, says the LORD, then the seed of Israel shall also cease from being a nation before Me forever."*

*Thus says the LORD: "If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, says the LORD.*

*"Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, that the city shall be built for the LORD from the Tower of Hananel to the Corner Gate.*

*Jeremiah 31:35-38*

**9      Confirmed in the New testament.**

Paul in Romans 11 gives the confirmation.

*1    'Has God cast away His people? Certainly not! .....*

*11   I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not! But through their trespass, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles.*

*12   Now if their fall is riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness!*

*13-14   For I speak to you Gentiles; in as much as I am apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, if by any means I may provoke to jealousy those who are my flesh and save some of them.*

*15   For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?*

*16-18   For if the firstfruit is holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root is holy so are the branches. And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and the fatness of the olive tree, do not boast against the branches.*

*But if you do boast, remember that you do not support the root, the root supports you.*

*19   You will say then, 'Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in.'*

*20   Well said, because of unbelief that were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear.*

*21   For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either.*

*22   Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God; on those who fell, severity, but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you will also be cut off.*

*23   And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again.*

*24   For you were cut out of the olive tree that is wild by nature, and were grafted, contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, who are natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?*

*25   For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that the*

*blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in*

**26** *And so all Israel will be saved as it is written: ‘The deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;*

**27** *For this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins.’*

**28** *Concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers.*

**29** *For the gift and calling of God are irrevocable.’*

Points to note in relation to Israel:

First the question – has God cast away His people? Answer a definite No. (verse 1)

What happened then - they stumbled and salvation came to the Gentiles. (verse 11)

Israel are branches not the root – some of the natural branches were broken off (verses 17,21)

Grafted in again - when they believe (verse 23-24)

All Israel will be saved - (verses 26-7)

God’s promise is irrevocable (verse 29)

For the Gentiles:

You have been grafted into the root (verse 17)

The root is the favour, the fatness of God (verse 17)

Do not boast against Israel [the natural branches] (verse 18)

Beware for unbelief you too could be broken off (verse 21)

### **The chief of the nations**

So Israel does have a future and will fulfil her destiny as chief of the nations in due course.

Jesus will establish His throne in Jerusalem – He will be the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords and David will sit on the throne of Israel.

All nations will come to worship - ‘*and it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which come against*

*Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.'*

Zechariah 14:16

*'The nations also will know that I, the Lord, sanctify Israel, when My sanctuary is in their midst forevermore.'* Ezekiel 37:28.

**Jesus is coming as the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords and He will reign on earth from Jerusalem – Israel will be the chief nation.**

More on this subject in the booklet, 'Israel present and future - Israel and the church not in competition.

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**Now we have established that the expectation of Israel and the expectation of the born again bride of Christ are very different. In the coming pages we will see how this comes to pass.**

**The nations, then, now and tomorrow.**

We are on a journey – to herald the coming of King Jesus.  
So far we have seen that we should look forward to His coming and discern the times we live in.

We have seen that meeting Jesus in the air is the great expectation of the church.

We have seen that Israel, the ancient people of God, are not forgotten and do have a future with Jesus as King of Kings, reigning in Jerusalem, Israel again becomes the chief nation on earth.

*"Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'I am zealous for Zion with great zeal; with great fervour I am zealous for her.'*

*"Thus says the LORD: 'I will return to Zion, and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Jerusalem shall be called the City of Truth, the Mountain of the LORD of hosts, the Holy Mountain.'*

Zechariah 8:2-3

*'And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.'*

Zechariah 14:16

**Now we will consider the gentile nations.**

Context - the Lord knows the end from the beginning. He knew that Israel would reject Him as Messiah. So from the beginning He had another plan – a plan that would see the rise and blessing of the gentile nations.

Israel had been warned often enough that they had strayed away from the Lord by a series of prophets sent by the Lord. They were given the opportunity to repent and did not. Finally they were

warned that they would be taken into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar, for 70 years, by the prophet Jeremiah.

9 *'behold, I will send and take all the families of the north,' says the LORD, 'and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant, and will bring them against this land, against its inhabitants, and against these nations all around, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, a hissing, and perpetual desolations.*

10 *'Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the lamp.*

11 *'And this whole land shall be a desolation and an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.*

12 *'Then it will come to pass, when seventy years are completed, that I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity,' says the LORD; 'and I will make it a perpetual desolation. Jeremiah 25:9-12*

### **The rise of the Gentile nations through to today – starts with Nebuchadnezzar**

Nebuchadnezzar saw a vision in a dream:

He calls his advisors – the magicians, the astrologers, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans to tell him the dream and its interpretation on pain of death. Daniel 2:5

Daniel hears and asks for more time. In the night Daniel receives the same dream and its interpretation:

31 *"You, O king, were watching; and behold, a great image! This great image, whose splendour was excellent, stood before you; and its form was awesome.*

32 *"This image's head was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze,*

33 *"its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.*

34 *"You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces.*

35 *"Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.*

36 *"This is the dream. Now we will tell the interpretation of it before the king.*

37 *"You, O king, are a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory;*

38 *"and wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, He has given them into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all-- you are this head of gold.*

39 *"But after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth.*

40 *"And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all the others.*

41 *"Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay.*

42 *"And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile.*

43 *"As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay.*

44 *"And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.*

45 *"Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the*

*bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold-- the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure."* Daniel 2:31-45.

The vision and its interpretation go to Nebuchadnezzar's head, he builds an enormous statue and commands everyone to worship it. However, Nebuchadnezzar learns humility through another dream and its interpretation which sees him put out to grass for 7 Babylonian years. When he is restored he becomes a true believer - Daniel 4:34.

(The statue represents spiritual powers which have a physical manifestation on earth. i.e. The spiritual power of Persia manifests in the Kingdom of Medo Persia – see Daniel 10:13. for reference to the spiritual power.)

### **We can identify the kingdoms – right up to today**

- 1) Babylon – specified by Daniel in the interpretation.
- 2) The Medes and Persians – specified in Daniel 8:20 – confirmed in history.
- 3) The Greeks – specified in Daniel 8:21 – confirmed in history.
- 4) A different kingdom – one with two legs and feet of iron and clay and with ten horns and another horn emerging. (Daniel 7:19-20), History confirms its initial manifestation as being Rome.

Their identity is further explained in Daniel through picture language and interpretation:

- 2 *Daniel spoke, saying, "I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the Great Sea.*
- 3 *"And four great beasts came up from the sea, each different from the other.*
- 4 *"The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings. I watched till its wings were plucked off; and it was lifted up from the earth*

*and made to stand on two feet like a man, and a man's heart was given to it. (Babylon)*

5 *"And suddenly another beast, a second, like a bear. It was raised up on one side, and had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. And they said thus to it: 'Arise, devour much flesh!' (Medes and Persians)*

6 *"After this I looked, and there was another, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird. The beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it. (Greece)*

7 *"After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns. (Rome .....)*

8 *"I was considering the horns, and there was another horn, a little one, coming up among them, before whom three of the first horns were plucked out by the roots. And there, in this horn, were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking pompous words.*

Daniel 7:2-8

Example of identification:

The leopard, which we have identified as Greece, is described as having four heads. When Alexander the Great (known for the speed of his conquest – thus leopard) died young, his empire was split into four and ruled by four generals:

Cassander ruled Macedonia and Greece

Lysimachus ruled Thrace, Bithynia and most of Asia Minor

Seleucus ruled Syria and Babylon

Ptolemy ruled Egypt.

**Most of the vision of the statue is now past history –** but the conclusion of the matter is still future.

The system of gentile dominion which is referred to as 'Babylon' or 'Babylonian' comes to an end in the vision when a stone cut without human hands falls on the statue and destroys it.

The system of gentile dominion is driven by spiritual power – Revelation 17 describes the spiritual power as '*Mystery Babylon*

*the great, the mother of harlots*' – a 'Queen of heaven' figure. It also has a human element – particularly seen in the feet where clay, representing mankind, forms part of the feet and toes. The stone not cut with human hands is yet to fall and smash the statue - such that there is no sign of it at all.

### **More about this fourth beast**

The book of Revelation is the revelation of Jesus Christ – it outlines the things which will come to pass as His coming draws close and is manifest.

Chapter 13 sees a beast which comes out of the sea. The sea is used as a type representing the peoples of the world. (Rev 17:15)

Here is the description of this beast:

Like a leopard

Feet of a bear

Mouth of a lion

Has 7 heads

Has ten horns

It is quite easy to see that this beast encompasses and sums up the gentile nations represented in the Nebuchadnezzar's statue.

The 7 heads represent the kingdoms.

John tells us, in Revelation 17, that at the time he received the revelation 5 had fallen, one is and one is to come.

We have identified Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece – all fallen.

Whilst the scripture does not identify the other two, already fallen, we could surmise Egypt and Assyria.

The kingdom John describes as 'one is' must be by definition Rome, the ruling power at the time.

### **The one to come with ten horns**

..... if anything in scripture has given rise to speculation it is this.

There is a sound bible based expectation that 10 kings will rise on earth – Revelation 17:12 expressly says so:

*'The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast.'*

We just do not know what form these ten kings will take -

When the EEC (later became the European Union) first emerged people speculated that it would eventually have 10 countries within it – thus fulfilling this expectation. Now there are over 20 and more seeking to join. Britain has just voted to leave and it is possible that the European Union may shrink back to ten.

What we know from scripture shows that the 10 kings (which arise out of the fourth beast – Daniel 7:24) are at the very end of the time of the gentile nations, as they are also represented by the ten toes of the statue, – they are the last manifestation before the stone cut without human hands destroys the lot.

Revelation 17 tells us that when the 10 kings do take power (and they certainly will) it is only for a short time and that they give their power to the beast (verse 17) – who will now be seen in the shape of a man. Now the time of dominion of the gentile nations is ending and a 'christ' rules; a one world ruler instead of Jesus Christ – he is known as antichrist, whom Jesus will return to defeat.

Daniel saw him, the antichrist, as a 'little horn' coming up amongst the 10 horns (7:8) uprooting three of them and persecuting the saints.

### **So 10 kings will arise – is there any sign of them?**

The Club of Rome - Rome! published a map in 1973 called 'The 10 Kingdoms.' In this map they split the world into 10 kingdoms – and latter called it 'The 10 economic regions.'

The regions may start to seem familiar:

Europe.

North America including Canada and Mexico

Japan

Australasia  
Most of what was the USSR  
South America  
North Africa  
South Africa  
India, Indonesia and the countries around  
China

On the ground these economic regions seem to have either formed or are in the process of forming.

If they follow the pattern of Europe they will become political unions not just economic regions. (The clearest examples are Europe and North America)

Of course this may not be the way in which the 10 kingdoms arise – it may just be a fore runner or an example – at this time we do not know, but it is clear ‘which way the wind is blowing.’

When they arise, the ten kings destroy the harlot and they hand over their power to the ‘little horn’ – antichrist. [The harlot is named as ‘Mystery Babylon the great the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth’ (Revelation 17:5). and represents the system of occult worship and corruption adopted by gentile nations from the days of Nimrod who established his own kingdom - Genesis 10]

### **The collapse of business as we know it.**

It is also clear from scripture that ‘Mystery Babylon’ encompasses trading as we know it today. Chapter 18 of Revelation has details of the breakdown of trade – *‘The merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, for no one buys their merchandise anymore.’* (Verse 11)

### **Anti-semitic**

One of the things we know about the future is that the emerging antichrist will be anti-semitic. In the first instance he will enter into a 7 year peace treaty with Israel but half way through he will break

the covenant and seek to destroy Israel. All the nations of the earth will join with him and come against Jerusalem. (Daniel 9:26-27 and Zechariah 14:1-2)

The fact that this antichrist comes out of Rome is specified in Daniel 9:26 where it is the people (Romans) of the 'prince who is to come' (antichrist) who destroy Jerusalem and the temple – fulfilled in AD70

### **The irony of Isaiah 49:8**

Just as we are seeing that the gentile nations band together to come against Israel, it is worth noting, that they seek to destroy the very people given by God as a covenant for their own future.

The Lord speaking to Israel, *'I will preserve you and give you as a covenant to the people, to restore the earth, to cause them to inherit the desolate heritages.'* Isaiah 49:8

### **Insight into Nebuchadnezzar's time eating grass - from Grattan Guinness.**

When he read of Nebuchadnezzar's 2<sup>nd</sup> dream – the one in which a huge tree, representing Nebuchadnezzar is cut down, and its interpretation – that Nebuchadnezzar will be put out to grass for 7 times, he considered that the dream might represent gentile dominion.

A Babylon time or year was 360 days long. Guinness considered that this may be a biblical type and that 7 times 360 = 2520 might, when expressed in terms of years, be relevant to the ending of gentile dominion and the re-establishment of Israel.

Israel was taken into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar in four stages over a 19 year period. So from those dates, Guinness by adding 2520 years, predicted:

1914 Turned out to be: 1<sup>st</sup> world war.

1917 “ The Balfour Declaration and the release of Jerusalem from the Turks.

- 1923           “           The granting of the ‘Palestinian  
Mandate’ to Britain by the League of  
Nations.
- 1933           “           The gentile nations are ‘cut off’ from  
the Olive Tree as Paul warned in  
Romans 11.

In 1918 a group of bible teachers noticed that the world war ended at 11am on the 11<sup>th</sup> day of the 11<sup>th</sup> month. They sought the Lord - ‘Is this a significant.’ They felt the Lord tell them that they had entered the last hour. 15 years, which chronologically can be taken to represent one hour, later they were warned in advance of a very specific date – the 12<sup>th</sup> of June 1933. It turned out to be the World Economic Conference, held in London, with the purpose of seeking a way out of world recession. The King of England, George V, wanted, but was not allowed, to open the conference in prayer, calling on the Lord. The conference of 66 nations ended with the conclusion - ‘It is not beyond the wit of man to solve the problem.’ An opportunity to call upon the Lord was lost and the gentile nations slipped into unbelief and as branches, were broken off from the olive tree of God’s blessing – now Israel would be restored.

Which leads us to the next chapter – Understanding Time.

**Understanding Time.**

In very short summary this chapter maintains that the bible gives masses of evidence of times and dates – for example the length of reign every King of Israel and Judah is specified. Read Ezekiel and see how some of his prophecies are clearly dated – for example, ‘*and it came to pass in the 12<sup>th</sup> year, in the 12<sup>th</sup> month, on the first day of the month, that the word of the Lord came to me saying...*’ chapter 32:1

From very detailed study of the times and the dates given in the scripture, together with the understanding of biblical chronologies, it has been possible to ascertain a very important overview of time:

Before Israel there was what is called ‘The Age of Conscience.’ This lasted exactly 2,000 chronological years.

The Age of Israel also lasted exactly 2,000 chronological years.

We know from Revelation chapter 20 that the personal rule of Jesus, when He returns, will last 1,000 years.

2,000 years	2,000 years	?	1,000 Years
Conscience	Israel	Church	Jesus

*The early church fathers would certainly have added 2,000 years in the box for the church age – see the quotations which follow later in the chapter.*

*'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.'*

Genesis 1:1

*'The earth was (literally – became) without form and void and darkness was on the face of the deep.'*

Genesis 1:2

So in the very first words of scripture we are introduced to the earth as a wasteland covered in water and darkness.

Then the scripture describes a process of making the earth inhabitable and the placing of life upon it. It takes 6 days of work followed by a day of rest.

Peter tells us that there is a biblical type:

*'But, beloved do not forget this one thing, one day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day'.*

2 Peter 3:8

**The early church expected the world to last for 6,000 years followed by a 1,000 period**

Revelation tells us of a 1,000 year period to come when Jesus reigns in person – Revelation 20 - the fact that the period is one thousand years is stated 6 times – for emphasis!

Quotations from early church writers:

*'Even in the beginning of creation He makes mention of the sabbath, and God made in six days the works of His hands and He finished them on the sixth day and He rested on the seventh day and sanctified it. Consider my children what that signifies, in 6,000 years the Lord will bring all things to an end. For with Him one day is as 1,000 years as Himself testifieth saying "Behold this day shall be a thousand years" therefore children in 6 days, that is 6,000 years shall all things be accomplished.'*

Epistle of Barnabas

*'6,000 years must needs be fulfilled that the sabbath may come, even the rest, that Holy day on which God rested from all His work.'*

*The sabbath then is a type and image of the future kingdom of the saints, when they will reign with Christ after His coming down from heaven as John declares it in the apocalypse.’ Hippolytus*

We do not seek to consider these early church writings on the same level as scripture – but to show that some early church thought, expected man to enjoy 7,000 years of existence on this earth.

Here is another – this time foreseeing 6,000 years before things come to an end and change:

*‘For in so many days as this world was made, in so many thousand years shall it be concluded .... In six days created things were completed; it is evident that, therefore, they will come to an end after 6,000 years.’*

What Irenaeus thought would happen after 6,000 years is not clear from this quotation.

Detailed study of chronology will prove the assertions above but is beyond the scope of this book. Please go to ‘Ostrich Christianity’ or ‘Last Orders’ for the full study – available as already noted.

In simple summary we can expect to see some significant events in the next few years:

2018 sees the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the re-establishment of Israel and, as we have no other information in the scripture, is likely to see the rise of the 10 kings.

10 Kings rule for 1 hour – chronologically likely to be 15 years. Which takes us to 2033 which possibly could be the return of Christ – 2,000 years after His resurrection and departure.

Warning – in this chapter I have detailed what we know – there is always the fact that we don’t know what we don’t know – only time will reveal whether we have the full picture or not.

**Now that we have established a good over view we will ‘Walk through the book of Revelation’ – it is much easier than you might think.**

**John.**

Revelation is the record of a vision given to John on the isle of Patmos in the late 90’s of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century.;

John is instructed to:

*‘Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.’*

Revelation 1:19

**The key to understanding.**

Immediately we can see a time line. Things you have seen (past) things which are (present) and things which will take place after this (future). Understanding the progressive nature of Revelation is the key to understanding the book.

Chapter 1 describes the receiving of the vision and the instruction to record it. John is completely overcome by the vision of Jesus amongst the churches and falls at His feet as if dead, and is revived.

Chapter 2 and 3 record letters to 7 representative churches in Asia. The letters do not cover all the churches known to have existed – i.e. Corinth, Phillippi and Thessalonica are not mentioned - but then they are not in Asia. Also not mentioned are Galatia, Hierapolis, Lystra and Iconium – all of which were in Asia.

So the churches (‘ecclesia’ means meeting – would contain believers and unbelievers) are representative of all churches, and history shows us that they are also representative of the dominant feature of the church through time.

**Considering the churches over the ages we can consider the following pattern.**

**Ephesus** (meaning 'desired'), the first church mentioned is the apostolic church – already losing its first love, followed by:

**Smyrna** (meaning myrrh, death, embalming) the church of the Roman persecution, followed by:

**Pergammon** (meaning thoroughly married – in this case to the state) the Church of the age of Constantine, followed by:

**Thyatira** (meaning continual sacrifice) the church of the dark ages, followed by:

**Sardis** (meaning those escaping) the church of the Reformation, followed by:

**Philadelphia** (meaning brotherly love) the great missionary church that will be followed by:

**Laodicea** (meaning man ruling) – seems to contain only unbelievers – the 'church' of the Tribulation.

Each letter contains the words of Jesus for that church – some complementary, some critical, some instructive. In each case the letter ends with a promise – 'to he who overcomes.'

(This gives rise to a line of thinking that we must be overcomers in order to enter heaven. The same writer, John, has defined for us an overcomer - *'Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God (and thereby becomes a born again believer) ..... for whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world – our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.'*  
1 John 5:1, 4-5 )

So being born again is vital. In the current age when one is born again, the human spirit is brought back to life from death, and indwelt by the Holy Spirit. (1 Corinthians 6:17-19) For a full understanding of being born again go to the booklet – 'Inherent Power.' – available as the others already noted.

So we have seen that, whilst every aspect of every church has been present all the time, a predominant feature has emerged in each period.. We now live in the age when the characteristics of the church of Philadelphia are predominant.

**The open door.**

John writes to the church of Philadelphia.

*'See I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word and have not denied My name. Indeed I will make all those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie – indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet and to know that I have loved you. Because you have kept My command to persevere (literally to wait patiently) , I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world to test those who dwell upon the earth.'*

Revelation 3:8-10

Please note this church is kept from the hour of trial that will come upon the earth.

Chapter 4 opens with ..... after this I looked and behold, a door standing open in heaven ..... Come up here and I will show you the things that must take place after this. (Verse 1.)

And there are the elders (verse 10 ) who describe themselves as those redeemed by the blood of the Lamb ( 5:9)

**The great expectation of the church is fulfilled.**

We saw in the first study how the church, that is the born again believers, were to look for His glorious appearing (Titus 2:13) and that we would rise to meet Jesus in the air. (1 Thessalonians 4:13) Here we see that it is fulfilled. We have risen to meet Jesus in the air before the events of rest of the book of Revelation.

**Understanding the final part of the age of Israel.**

We saw in the last study (number 4) that we now have an understanding of time.

We saw the coming of the Messiah promised in the book of Daniel:

24 *"Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy.*

25 *"Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times.*

26 *"And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; and the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, and till the end of the war desolations are determined.*

27 *Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; but in the middle of the week he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, even until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate."* Daniel 9:24-27

Key points:

The Messiah finishes transgressions, ends sin, reconciles iniquity and brings in everlasting righteousness ... This should have happened when Jesus came 2,000 years ago, but His own people rejected Him. God knew Israel would reject Jesus, their Messiah, and had already planned for the mystery of the church to come into being.

Messiah the Prince (quoted by Daniel) would cover a 7 year period. The ministry of John the Baptist which heralded the coming of the Messiah and the ministry of Jesus together cover this 7 years.

Rejection of the Messiah gives rise to the destruction of the Temple.

Now there is a gap before the last part of Daniel's prophecy is fulfilled.

In the far future, the alternative prince who is to come, antichrist, will confirm a peace treaty with Israel and default half way through it. This prince is described as being, 'of the people' who destroy the city and the temple – thus antichrist in some way comes out of Rome as it was the Romans who destroyed city and Temple in AD 70.

This is the backdrop for understanding the remainder of Revelation.

- 1) The seven year period illuminated by Daniel has to be run again.
- 2) It is part of the age of Israel – not the age of the church. i.e. in the age of Israel no one was indwelt by the Spirit of God as they are in the church age. Therefore no one had power over the works of Satan. In the Tribulation we see that antichrist has power over the saints of that time Revelation 13:7 Whereas now we have authority over the works of Satan from whom antichrist derives his power. Were the born again believers still on earth at that time antichrist would be subject to the power the church has over the works of Satan and unable to fully function. We know that the gift and calling of God are irrevocable, from Romans 11:9, so we must be taken out of the way as antichrist cannot have authority over us who are in Christ Jesus and who have Christ in us the hope of glory.
- 3) It is a time of judgement – described in Jeremiah 30: 4-7 as 'the day of Jacob's Trouble' and recorded in Zechariah as a time when only one third of Jews survive the refining process. 13:8-9.
- 4) It is a time of the wrath of God - Matthew describes it – *'For then there will be great tribulation, such has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be'*. Matthew 24:21.

(Colossians 3:6 – the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience.)

Just a reminder from 1 Thessalonians 1:10 – we are not destined for wrath – Jesus delivers us from that.

**Back to our time line:**

After the removal of the church to allow the emergence of antichrist (the ‘man of sin’ in 2 Thessalonians 2:3) then.....

- 1) The rise of antichrist who arranges a peace treaty with Israel.
- 2) The events of the Tribulation as recorded in the following chapters of Revelation:

Chapter 5 sees Jesus, the Lamb of God, the only one worthy, taking and opening the scroll. Now Revelation will go on to detail the pouring out of judgement over the unrepentant world. Those who do repent will be saved, Many will be martyred. Those who survive will repopulate the earth.

Chapter 6 sees the opening of the scroll which has 7 seals . 6 of the seals are opened in progressive order – events of judgement occur on the earth as described in the scripture.

- 1) Conquering,
- 2) the removal of peace,
- 3) scarcity of food,
- 4) widespread death (25% die),
- 5) martyrdom of new believers,
- 6) cosmic disturbances - described as *‘the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand.’* (verse 17)

Chapter 7 tells us some background information, - God’s provision of evangelists for this time. Jews, 12,000 from each tribe. It also tells of multitudes who have come to believe and have been martyred.

Note the evangelists are specifically Jewish. (The believing church has already risen to meet Jesus in the air.)

Chapter 8 and the 7<sup>th</sup> seal is opened – it reveals 7 angels with trumpets – the next section of the outpouring of God’s wrath:

- 1) 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of trees and all grass consumed

- 2) 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the sea turned to blood as 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of ships destroyed.
- 3) 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of rivers turned poisonous.
- 4) 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the sun and stars darkened.

#### Chapter 9

- 5) A plague of stinging locusts released for 5 months.  
Tormenting of mankind. (Those who have the seal of God are exempted – the witnesses above and those who had come to believe in Jesus in this period.)
- 6) Fire, smoke and brimstone kill 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of mankind.

Chapter 10 refers to the absolute bitterness of the prophecy and the writer, John, is instructed to consume the little book of prophecy (verse 10), which will taste sweet but turn bitter, and to continue and prophesy again.

Chapter 11 records that fact that 2 witnesses with the power to shut heaven (like Elijah) and to turn waters to blood (like Moses) witness in Jerusalem. They are killed after 1,260 days and are seen by all the world which rejoices at their death. They are resurrected after 3.5 days, seen by the whole world, and are called to heaven.. (When written this passage was prophetic regarding the development of modern communications. In John's day there was no way that news could cover the whole world in 3 and a half days – now modern technology makes that very simple. The seventh Trumpet is sounded and the Kingship of Jesus is announced. Lightenings, noises, thunderings, earthquake and great hail strike the earth.

Chapter 12 John is shown a vision of what has happened in the past - a great sign appears, a woman (representing Israel) clothed with the sun, moon under her feet and a garland of 12 stars, she is giving birth. A great fiery red dragon with 7 heads and ten horns trying to devour the Child who was caught up to heaven. The dragon (described as that serpent of old, called the devil and satan) persecutes the woman, who is taken to a place of safety, and the dragon then turns on the rest of her offspring.

By letting the bible interpret itself we know from Genesis 37:9 that this picture represents Israel. (Joseph's dream of his mother and father and brothers) Israel gives birth to the Messiah – who is caught up to heaven at His resurrection.

Chapter 13 gives more information, introducing us to the rest of the satanic trinity:

(We saw the dragon, satan, in chapter 12)

**The beast from the sea** – looks exactly like the dragon and receives his authority from him. This is antichrist.

(He is slain about half way through the tribulation and then he is healed and given a further 42 months to live.) This is antichrist – the 'christ' instead of Jesus Christ..

He is worshipped by the people who dwell on earth.

**The beast from the earth** who can do wondrous signs and he causes all people to have the mark – 666 on their right hand or forehead. This is the false prophet – representing the Spirit in the satanic trinity. In the same way that the Holy Spirit points us to Jesus, the false prophet will turn mankind to the beast.

Chapter 14 shows us the 144,000 witnesses and angels come with messages:

*'Fear God and give glory to Him.'*

*'Babylon is fallen, is fallen.'*

*'If anyone receives the mark of the beast he shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God.'*

The 'reaping' of the 'harvest' of the earth is recorded.

Chapter 15 sees the last seven judgements released by the seventh trumpet. This time it is bowls of wrath carried by angels as described in chapter 16:

- 1) Loathsome sores upon those who had received the mark of the beast.
- 2) The rest of the sea becomes like blood – nothing survives in it.
- 3) Rivers and springs turn to blood.
- 4) Men are scorched by the power of the sun – but do not repent.

- 5) The beast's kingdom becomes full of darkness and pain – but they do not repent.
- 6) The Euphrates dried up and demons released to go and gather the kings of the earth to Armageddon.
- 7) Thunders, lightnings, mega earthquake, great hail – the earth is utterly shaken.

Chapters 17 and 18 take us back to fill in detail of what happened to Babylon.

Babylon representing the gentile nations, and particularly their spiritual rulership (which we saw in the statue depicted in Nebuchadnezzar's dream) – the spiritual beast 'ridden' by the 'Mystery Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and of the abominations of the earth; with whom the kings of the earth fornicated and the inhabitants of the earth became drunk with the wine of her fornication.

Both the picture of the statue and the image of the beast represent the gentile nations and conclude with 10 toes or horns representing 10 kings who rule for a short time with the beast.

The fall of Babylon is recorded for us – the 10 kings destroy the harlot (false bride) whose name is Babylon – this is the spiritual power, and the city – the physical presence – is also destroyed.

So, whilst the outpouring of God's wrath as described in Revelation is happening, at the same time, antichrist is exercising his rulership on earth. This rulership involves authority over the saints of the time, the introduction of the mark of the beast for all commercial transactions, widespread martyrdom of new believers, the worship of antichrist by the world's population and further extensive wars as Daniel 7:8 is also fulfilled. (The rise of antichrist [little horn] displaces three of the 10 horns.)

Trade and business finally cease entirely.

The destruction of the harlot by the 10 kings is God's plan as He instigates it.

Chapter 19 is now at the end of the tribulation period – we see heaven rejoicing saying

*'Alleluia Salvation and glory and honour and power belong to the Lord our God.' .....*

*'Alleluia for the Lord God omnipotent reigns.'*

The marriage of Jesus and His bride takes place and the announcement of the marriage feast.

Jesus and His bride (now as an army) return to earth and Jesus treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God as He puts an end to the Battle of Armageddon.

## **Jesus has come to establish His rule on earth.**

Now for the marriage feast at the return of Christ with His bride:

### **The wise and foolish virgins are waiting**

(Now we can understand the parable )

1        *"Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.*

2        *"Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish.*

3        *"Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them,*

4        *"but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.*

5        *"But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept.*

6        *"And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!'*

7        *"Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps.*

8        *"And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.'*

9        *"But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.'*

10       *"And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.*

11       *"Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!'*

12 *"But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.'*

13 *"Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.*

Matthew 25:1-13

We, the bride, go into the marriage feast, having returned to earth with Jesus, along with believers from the Old Testament, those who have been martyred out of the tribulation, and those who will go on to repopulate the earth having survived the tribulation – the wise virgins.

The other virgins, religious ones following other religions and other Gods, cannot enter and, from Matthew 25:46, we are told that they go into eternal punishment.

**The Millennial Kingdom – what it's all about.**

We ended the last session with the parable of the 10 virgins. There they are - 10 virgins waiting for the coming Messiah. 5 wise and 5 foolish. We can see the comparison with the Middle East wedding – the bridegroom goes and collects the bride from her Father's House {John 14:1-3) and takes her to His own house for the marriage feast.

In like manner Jesus collects His bride from her Father's House and takes her to His own for the marriage feast at the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom on earth. Waiting for Him are the 10 virgins (no surprise here – the tribulation is a very religious period with the majority worshipping the beast.)– only those who became believers by the end of the tribulation go to the feast. Matthew 25:41 shows us that the unbelievers at His return are cast into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

Revelation 19 pictures this time with the bride ready, dressed in white linen and then accompanying Jesus on white horses as He returns to His earth.

**To get to this point we have seen:**

The great expectation of the church - fulfilled in the rapture when we rose to meet Jesus in the air and were taken to His Father's house where He had prepared a place for us. In the twinkling of an eye we were changed and given incorruptible immortal bodies. We saw the open door in heaven at the beginning of chapter 4 of Revelation, before the Tribulation started. We saw Jesus open the scroll to start the tribulation process later in the chapter.

How Israel is in the process of being restored. How at the end of the coming Tribulation 1/3<sup>rd</sup> come to recognise Jesus and call for Him to return saying – *'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the*

*Lord.* ' ..And how Israel will become the chief nation on earth when Jesus rules from Jerusalem.

How the gentile nations have turned away from the Lord, how they have, and are in the process of, coming together against Israel and how they eventually come to Armageddon for the last great battle on earth. We are seeing and will see increasing anti-semitism.

**So we see very different expectations:**

King Jesus is coming to collect His bride and take her to the place He has prepared – in His Father's house.

King Jesus is coming to establish His kingdom with Israel as the chief nation.

King Jesus is coming for the gentile nations to judge them for their unbelief and for the way they have divided up His land. Joel 3:2 *'They have divided up My land' .....* – *'all that devour him will offend. Disaster will come upon them.'* Jeremiah 2:3

King Jesus is coming at the end of the Tribulation for those who have come to believe during the Tribulation period and have not been martyred – to establish them in His kingdom, and for unbelievers in judgement.

The Tribulation is a period of terrible judgement and wrath – poured out on the world whose iniquity has reached its fill. This period is so bad that *'unless the days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.'* Matthew 24:22.

In the previous verse Matthew describes it: *'for then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been seen since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.'*

**So now we are going to ask the big question -why? or what's it all about?**

To understand the full picture we have to go back to the story of creation itself. Here in Genesis 1:1 we find:

*'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.'*

Isaiah, in 45:18 tells us: *'Who did not create it in vain or without form.'*

Job 38:4, 7 *'where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth ..... when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy.'*

.... And so back to Genesis where we find the earth, *'without form (literally 'face') and void.* It certainly looks like it was not created in that state!

So what could have happened to the earth so that it became void, dark and covered in water.

We need to look elsewhere to find a potential answer:

In Job 1: 6 and 7 we find God asking satan where he has come from. Satan answers that he has come from earth where he has been going to and fro, and walking back and forth on it.

This is an idiomatic expression – satan is saying it's mine. He is of course then challenged by God and we see the extraordinary events that follow. Poor Job knew nothing of the spiritual duel between satan and God.

So satan lays a claim to ownership of the earth. (Though Isaiah describes it as God's footstool. (66:1)

The claim is actually founded at some level on fact:

In Ezekiel 28: 12-19 Lucifer, as he then was, is described under the pseudonym 'King of Tyre.'

Lucifer was found: In Eden, the garden of God, surrounded by precious stones of every type. The Eden of God was then a mineral garden.

Lucifer fell through his own pride and ambition to become like God. His light (Lucifer means light bearer - he was an anointed cherub) was switched off. His access to heaven was restricted. The

earth was thrust into darkness and became void – the earth now needs redemption.

So we find the Lord God in the rest of Genesis 1 putting a new 'face' on the earth and creating man in the process. Man was told to 'fill the earth and subdue it.' God wanted His garden back and flourishing.

We know the story that follows: Satan (previously known as Lucifer until his light was switched off) appears in the form of a serpent, deceives Eve who falls from grace and then Adam deliberately chooses to join her. Whilst Eve was deceived, Adam deliberately sinned. Both are now in a fallen state. God's plan of redemption of the earth must now include redemption of fallen mankind.

### **Stage 1**

In our study of time we saw the first 6,000 years. The first 2,000 are called 'the age of conscience.' There is no law and man is expected to live by conscience. This fails completely.

### **Stage 2**

In the second 2,000 years God chooses Israel to be His show piece – gives them Laws which strike them out as different from all the other nations. They will be so blessed by their obedience that all the other nations will know that the God of Israel is the great 'I am.' This utterly fails.

### **Stage 3**

In the third (2,000 year) period Gentile nations are now favoured, the church is God's witness on earth. The church is hugely successful to a point – in that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord is saved. But the majority of the world population continue to disbelieve. The gentile nations fail completely.

Now we are earnestly waiting for Jesus to return to reign on earth. The church still witnesses to the Lord until it is removed. The

earth, the garden of God ,will be fully restored when Jesus returns to rule in what is known as the Millennium.

Satan's nature has been seen right through the period of gentile dominion – the dragon with 7 heads and 10 horns was named as satan himself. The beast who looked exactly like the dragon was Antichrist. Their very image depicted the gentile nations and was seen to be ridden by the Harlot – the spirit of Babylon.. No wonder Jesus described satan as the prince or ruler or the one first in authority, of this world.

Jesus predicted the desolation of satan's kingdom in Matthew 12:25. The Pharisees had just accused Him of casting out demons by the power of Beelzebub, the ruler of demons. Jesus said, '*a kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation.*' When we saw the 10 kings destroy the harlot we saw a kingdom divided against itself. Desolation then was to follow. In predicting His death on the cross Jesus said, '*Now is the judgement of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out.*' John 12:31

So how should we act .... Paul writing to the Ephesians tells them they are full of power (chapter 1:15-23) in the prayer he offers for them. Then he tells them '*to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places.*' 3:10 Satan is the ruler of this world but he is not all powerful and we have been given authority over all his works – its up to us to exercise that power and so demonstrate God's manifold wisdom as we are led by the Spirit of God.

So what we have seen is not just a story about man – man was put on earth with a purpose – to have dominion over God's garden by filling it with his offspring. The story is about redemption of the earth which also necessitates the redemption of mankind. It is also about the sovereignty of God and His power over satan.

## **Environmental disaster.**

By the end of the tribulation the earth is in a terrible state. The grace of God gave man opportunity after opportunity to repent. Even in the very last battle, immediately before Jesus returns with His bride, there is still the opportunity to repent:

Joel 3 records how the earth will be covered in darkness – described as the valley of decision – *‘multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision.’* Verse 14

This is the battle of Armageddon. The nations have been gathered together for battle.

## **Jesus puts an end to the battle of Armageddon and establishes His rule.**

So what will Jesus rule be like:

There will be massive differences when compared to the world as we have known it:

- 1) It will become extremely fruitful - *‘the mountains will drip with new wine and the hills will flow with milk.’* Joel 3:18
- 2) It will be extremely peaceful – *the wolf will lie with the lamb ... and the nursing child will sit by the cobra’s hole .... For they shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain. For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.* From Isaiah 11.

Here we should note that the earth is populated with human beings, who marry and have children. This is quite important and shows us that the rapture must have taken place before the Tribulation. At the rapture of the church we are changed into immortal beings. At the end of the Tribulation, when Jesus returns, the humans then living are separated into two groups believers and unbelievers. Unbelievers are removed into the lake of fire.

If the rapture took place at the end of the tribulation there would be no one in human flesh bodies left to populate the earth as all would have risen to meet Jesus in the air and receive immortal bodies.

- 3) The people do all the human things – they build homes, they plant vineyards, they grow crops. The Lord will answer their prayers before they ask. Isaiah 11.
- 4) The devil is bound and can have no effect whatsoever on the earth. Revelation 20.
- 5) There will be no more infant death – 100 will be the minimum age – and that is for those, born in the millennial reign, but who fail to become believers during that time.

### **The nature of Jesus reign on the earth.**

We can get some further insight from the picture of the throne seen in the first chapter of Ezekiel. The throne is supported by four living creatures who each have four faces.

One face looks like a man, another like a lion, the third like an eagle and the fourth like an ox.

Again we find them in Revelation 4:6-11 where they are leading the worship of the Lord upon the throne. Surely these are picturing aspects of the reign of Jesus Himself –

The perfect **man**, without sin and thus qualified to rule. Jesus fulfils the instruction of God the Father, to take dominion over the earth as a perfect man. *‘Then God said, let us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness and let him have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, over the cattle, over all the earth and every other thing that creeps on the earth.’* [Genesis 1:26]

The **lion** – Jesus is described as the lion of Judah - the one called to rule like a lion – strong and powerful. *‘The scepter (the symbol of Kingship) shall not depart from Judah’* [Genesis 49:10.] *‘Behold the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll, and to loose its seven seals.’* [Revelation 5:5]

The **eagle** depicts soaring with the Spirit, high above every other name. Reigning in the power and wisdom of God through the Holy Spirit. *‘Those who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles. They shall run and not*

*be weary. They shall walk and not faint.*’ [Isaiah 40:31] Fulfilled in Jesus as He operated by the power of the Holy Spirit doing what He saw and heard His Father doing.

The **ox** demonstrates power, and particularly the power to carry the load. Jesus said, *‘Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.’* [Matthew 11:29-30] This is Jesus invitation to us to be yoked together with Him in like manner to oxen yoked together. His invite - let Me take the load and the weight.

In Revelation 5 Jesus is seen as The Lamb, the only one worthy to take up rulership, and chapter 11, verse 15 sees the announcement of Jesus Kingdom – He shall reign for ever and ever. **The Lamb upon the throne.**

#### **What will we be doing:**

Reigning with Jesus. *‘He who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne.’* Revelation 3:21

#### **Israel is restored to chief nation on earth.**

*‘So you shall know that I am the Lord your God dwelling in Zion My holy mountain. Then Jerusalem shall be holy.’* Joel 3: 17.  
*‘And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be that whichever of the families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, on them there will be no rain.’* Zechariah 14:16

#### **After 1,000 years - the end of the Millenium.**

When the millennium has run its course satan will be released again - again he deceives the nations and again there is rebellion against the Lord. Again armies gather against Jerusalem. There is

no delay this time, the rebels are devoured by fire. The devil is cast into the lake of fire.

Mankind has been shown that he is inherently evil – for there is no lack of any sort in the millennium, and Jesus Himself is ruling - but still many of those born in this period do not believe in Him so are not born again so as to receive eternal life.

### **The great white throne judgement**

All the dead are resurrected. This does not include the bride – the bride is sitting on the throne with Jesus. This is a last check through the book of life to make certain no one has been missed. Anyone not found in the book of life is thrown into the lake of fire.

### **Redemption is complete.**

The earth has been redeemed and is now ruled by Jesus. Everyone who placed their trust in Him has been given eternal life. Now eternity can begin.

### **The new heaven and the new earth**

Now God lives with mankind in a new heaven and earth – all things are made new. The New Jerusalem comes down out of heaven – the details are in Chapter 21:9-27.

God's throne is established here. The river of life proceeds from the throne. The tree of life is there. This is perfection.

### **The last word**

'Behold I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book' ... and Behold I am coming quickly and My reward is with Me..

**No wonder then .... The Spirit and the bride say,  
'Come.'**

**You must be saved to be part of this wonderful redemption process.**

(From Romans)

*'All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.'* 3:23

*'The wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life  
in Christ Jesus our Lord.'* 6:23

*'For whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.'* 10:13

*'There is no other name under heaven given among men by which  
we must be saved.'* And from Acts 4:12.

**The King is coming** ..... Soon.

Are you ready?

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