

# The Second Coming

Sequence of events

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# **Introduction**

The following has been made possible as a result of teaching received since becoming a Christian almost 50 years ago, and more recently reading books related both to Dave Hunt, Ray C Steadman and Peter Michell.

In addition study has been made of various articles on the internet.

Bible verses are taken from the NKJV.

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## **Points for Consideration**

Before considering biblical passages related to end times, I feel it is relevant to provide bullet point statements of personal belief that have resulted in me drawing the conclusions I have made in relation to the sequence of end time events.

- Believers have passed from judgment. Due to the cross there is no more judgment for believers.
- In the Old Testament there were two groups of people, the Gentiles and the Jews, Gods chosen ones. Both groups of people were dealt with differently by God.
- In the New Testament there are three groups of people. The Gentiles, the Jews and the Church, which is made up of both Jew and Gentile believers. We see these three groups of people mentioned in the following verse:

***‘Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks (Gentiles) or to the church of God’ 1 Corinthians 10 v32***

- God has never given up on His chosen people Israel.
- The Church has not replaced Israel.
- When considering prophecy, it is important to recognise whether the prophecy relates to the Church or to Israel.
- There are in effect 'two returns' of Jesus. One where He comes for His bride and it is the church who will see Him. The second where He comes for believing Israel and the whole world will see Him. At the first return Jesus does not put His feet on the earth but meets believers in the air, the second is where He actually returns to the earth putting His feet on the Mount of Olives.
- Without a recognition that there are in effect two returns of Jesus, one where He meets His body the church in the air, and secondly when He actually returns to earth with His bride for Israel, there are difficulties in reconciling some scriptures together.

## **Sequence of Events to be Considered**

The following is the sequence of events being considered in this study:

- The Rapture – the Body of Christ caught up to meet Jesus in the air.
- Seven years of tribulation during which time the Antichrist reigns.
- End of the tribulation, Armageddon with the second coming of Jesus.
- Satan locked up for one thousand years during the period of the millennium. During this time believers rule the earth with Jesus.
- End of the thousand years, satan is released for a short time with him seeking to bring about a dreadful war, marching on Jerusalem.
- The Great White Throne.
- Satan and unbelievers thrown into the lake of fire.
- A new Heaven and a new Earth.

## The Rapture

Although the word 'rapture' does not appear in our bible this does not mean that it is not a biblical event that takes place, just as the word Trinity does not appear in our bible but is a word used to describe the Godhead.

- The word rapture means caught up or catch away. We see a similar principal when Philip is 'caught up or carried away' and when Paul was caught up to the third heaven.  
*'Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing.'*  
*Acts 8v39*  
*'I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago—whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows—such a one was caught up to the third heaven.'* *2 Corinthians 12v2*
- The rapture is when the church will be '**caught up**' to meet the Lord in the clouds.  
*'For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 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.'* *1Thessalonians 4v16-17*  
*(Note that there is nothing mentioned in these verses indicating that Jesus actually puts His feet on the earth.)*
- If the church was not raptured prior to the tribulation it would mean that the Bride of Christ would experience God's judgment upon the earth. And yet we see a principal in the word of God that believers do not go through the judgment of God.
- There are two clear examples of this principal in Old Testament:  
Noah and his family and Lot and his family.  
Noah and his family were saved in the ark when God's judgment fell on the earth in the form of the flood and Lot and his family were rescued from Sodom and Gomorrah when God's judgment fell on those cities.
- In New Testament we read these words:  
*'For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,'* *1 Thessalonians 5v9*  
*'There is therefore now no condemnation (judgment) to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.'* *Romans 8v1*  
*“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has*

*passed from death into life.’ John 5v24*

- We can surely conclude from the above verses that there is no judgment for the believer. Equally the following verse surely indicates the removal of the church prior to the tribulation which could be described as the '**wrath to come**' - *‘and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come’. 1Thessalonians 1 v10*
- If from the above we conclude that there is no judgment for believers, then it is unthinkable that the church would go through the tribulation - a time when God's judgment is released upon the earth.
- Jesus has gone to prepare a place for His Bride and will come again to take her to be with Himself. This surely refers to a particular point in time when Jesus comes again to receive His bride to Himself.  
*“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 v1-3*
- A point worth noting from the following verses:  
It was not a mixture of believers and unbelievers who saw Jesus ascend into the clouds but believers only. In **Acts 1 v11** the angel states *'This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.'* This would suggest that when Jesus comes again it will be just believers who will see Him in the clouds. And yet in other passages of scripture it is clear that when Jesus comes again the whole world will see Him. Like wise at the Rapture Jesus will meet His bride in the air. But when Jesus returns to the earth a second time, He will place his feet on the Mount of Olives when the whole world will see Him. It is surely reasonable to conclude therefore that there is a point in time when Jesus returns for His bride to meet her in the air, and there is a time - the second coming, when Jesus actually returns to earth placing His feet on the Mount of Olives.  
*‘Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. 10 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 1v9-11*
- In **Matthew 24** we find Jesus is talking to His disciples about His second coming. The following verses show a selective removal of people from the earth. This is surely paralleled with the body of Christ meeting Jesus in the air, which is equally a selective number of people who will be caught up to meet

Him.

*'Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. 41 Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. 42 Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming.'*  
Matthew 24 v40-42

- A temple will one day be built on the spot where the Dome Rock (the Islamic shrine) now stands. It is here that the **Man of lawlessness** will take his seat and proclaim himself to be God. One might ask why the delay for this to happen. It is because **the Restrainer** is still at work. God would not destroy the earth until Noah and his family were safe in the Ark. God would not destroy Sodom and Gomorrah until Lot and his family were safely out of the city. Likewise God will not judge the earth through the time of tribulation until **the Restrainer** is removed.

*'Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way.'* 2 Thessalonians 2v5-7

- The Restrainer is surely the Holy Spirit working through the church holding back the forces of darkness from having full reign.
- When we meet Jesus in the air we will all be changed as in the twinkling of an eye.  
*'Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.'* 1 Corinthians 15v51-52
- When Jesus comes for His church it will be like a thief in the night. He will not be seen except by His children meeting Him in the air. However, when Jesus comes to earth a second time at the end of the tribulation, then every eye will see Him.

## The Antichrist

*Mention of the antichrist is clearly portrayed in scripture. He is also referred to as the man of lawlessness, the man of sin, the son of perdition. He cannot be revealed until the church is removed.*

- We note from the following verses that the second coming of Jesus, the time when He places His feet on the earth, cannot happen until '**the man of lawlessness**' is revealed.

*'Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin (or lawlessness) is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.'* 2 Thessalonians 2v1-4

- From the above verses we realise several things. Firstly the Day of the Lord cannot come until the Man of Lawlessness is revealed. Equally the Man of Lawlessness cannot be revealed until some **restraining** power is removed. (2Thessalonians 2v7) If we accept the restraining power is the Holy Spirit working through the church, then the church has to be removed from the earth before the antichrist can be revealed and the tribulation period begins.

*'Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.'* 2 Thessalonians v5-8

- Jesus is the Light of the world

*'Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."'* John 8v12

- We know that the church, as the body of Christ, represents the Light of Jesus on the earth. Light and darkness cannot mix. We also know that the church is a restraining force preventing the powers of darkness from having free reign in the earth. It therefore makes complete sense that the church has to be removed - The Rapture – before the antichrist can be revealed.

- When Jesus spoke about His second coming, to the disciples on Mount Olivet, He used a particular phrase which was recorded in Daniel.

*"Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place"(whoever reads, let him*

*understand),’ Matthew 24v15 -*

*‘And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days.’ Daniel 12v11*

- Jesus spoke of the '**abomination of desolation**' as a sign for His coming again. It is the sign of a man who demands to be worshipped as God. In other words the antichrist. Paul equally mentions this person in **2 Thessalonians**.

*‘Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin (or lawlessness) is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.’ 2 Thessalonians 2v3-4 3*

*Purely as an aside I would suggest a point worth consideration at this time - We know from scripture that satan hates any worship given to God but instead craves that worship for himself. As I write not only is the local church in the UK (and no doubt other countries), affected in how it meets together, but equally all singing, (worship) is banned due to Covid 19.*

- The antichrist is a political ruler and the human incarnation of satan on earth.
- It is worth noting that the temple has to be rebuilt in order for the antichrist to be able place himself there proclaiming to be God.
- The tribulation is a seven year period split into three and half years and three and half years. It is after the first three and half years that the antichrist will sit in the temple proclaiming to be God.  
*‘And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months.’ (42 months represent three and half years.) Revelation 13v5*
- This man, the antichrist will enter the rebuilt temple and claim power and worship that is due to God alone. This precipitates the greatest crisis the world will ever face.  
*‘For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be’ Matthew 24v21*

## The Tribulation

With the church removed the time of the tribulation begins.

- We see the theme of tribulation prophesied in the Old Testament. **Zephaniah** uses the words '*day of wrath*' and **Joel** states '*the awesome (or terrible) day of the Lord.*'  
*'The great day of the LORD is near; It is near and hastens quickly. The noise of the day of the LORD is bitter: There the mighty men shall cry out. 15 That day is a day of wrath, A day of trouble and distress, A day of devastation and desolation, A day of darkness and gloominess, A day of clouds and thick darkness,' Zephaniah 1v14-15*  
  
*'The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome (terrible) day of the LORD.'*  
*Joel 2v31*
- In the New Testament we see Jesus Himself speaking of the tribulation to come. *For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's (or chosen ones) sake those days will be shortened. Matthew 24v21*
- Paul talks about a wrath which is to come.  
*'and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.'* *1Thessalonians 1 v10*
- So what is this '*wrath to come*' or time of '*tribulation*'? It is a time when God's judgements will rain down upon the earth.
- During this time there will be two witnesses whom God places on the earth.  
*'And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth.'*  
*'Revelation 11v3*
- So who are the two witnesses. It is clear from scripture that one of the witnesses is Elijah. Most likely the second witness is Moses.  
*'These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire.'* *Revelation 11 v6*
- When the angel is talking to Zacharias about Elizabeth having a son, he doesn't say that the son will be Elijah himself, but that he will come in the spirit and power of Elijah.  
*'He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, 'to turn the*

*hearts of the fathers to the children,' and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." Luke 1v17*

- Therefore if John the Baptist was not the return of Elijah, then this still remains to happen.
- In **Revelation 11** one of the two witnesses is described as having the power to shut the sky so that it does not rain for three and half years. James makes it clear who this person is.  
*'Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months.'*  
*James 5v17*
- We have therefore identified one of the witnesses to be Elijah. What about the second witness? The only person to turn waters to blood and to strike the earth with plagues was Moses.
- It is also worth noting that it was Elijah and Moses who appeared with Jesus on the mount of transfiguration and Moses and Elijah represent the Law and the Prophets.
- Although the church has been removed, it is apparent that people will still become believers during the tribulation period.  
*'For in those days there will be tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the creation which God created until this time, nor ever shall be. And unless the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake, whom He chose, He shortened the days.'* *Mark13 v19-20*
- The believers during the tribulation are not part of the church. The church has been removed.
- The believers who are still alive, go on after the tribulation into the millennium reign to repopulate the earth.
- During the tribulation, despite the horror of it all, man will still not repent.  
*'But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk. And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.'* *Revelation 9 v20-21*
- Also during the time of the tribulation 144,000 Jews come to believe in the Lord.  
*'Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on*

*their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps. They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth. These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.’ Revelation 14 v1-4 (Firstfruits among those who missed the rapture.)*

- We can confirm that these 144,000 are Jews by referring back to *Revelation 7* ‘*And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed:*’  
*Revelation 7v4*
- By continuing to read the same chapter we discover that the 144,000 are made up of 12,000 from each of the tribes of Israel with the exception of the tribe of Dan who was guilty of gross idolatry. (*Judges 18v14-31*)  
*‘of the tribe of Judah twelve thousand were sealed;  
of the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand were sealed;  
of the tribe of Gad twelve thousand were sealed;  
of the tribe of Asher twelve thousand were sealed;  
of the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand were sealed;  
of the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand were sealed;  
of the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand were sealed;  
of the tribe of Levi twelve thousand were sealed;  
of the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand were sealed;  
of the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand were sealed;  
of the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand were sealed;  
of the tribe of Benjamin twelve thousand were sealed.’ Revelation 7v5-8*
- The 144,000 Jews go on to proclaim the gospel to the whole earth. There will therefore be other believers during this time in addition to the 144,000 but as already stated they will not be the church. The church has been removed. Many of these believers will be martyred during this awful time.
- During the tribulation mankind will be forced to receive a mark in order to be able buy or sell and without this mark buying and selling will not be possible. This one fact alone displays how the antichrist will seek to gain complete control over the whole of mankind. Those that do not submit to this control in the form of receiving the mark, as well as worshipping the antichrist, will go through terrible persecution.  
*‘He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of*

*his name. Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666.'*  
*Revelation 13v16-18*

*It is worth observing that at this very time, technology exists to mark every human being with a microchip.*

- At the end of the tribulation period Jesus is seen coming on the clouds in great power and glory and will destroy the antichrist.  
*“Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect (or chosen ones) from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.’ of heaven to the other.’* Matthew 24v29-31

*‘And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.’*  
*2 Thessalonians 2v8*

- In the context of speaking to His disciples about His second coming, Jesus has these words to say:  
*“But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.’*  
*Luke 21v20-24*

- In *Revelation* we see how the gathering of this world army is satanically motivated.  
*‘And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.’* Revelation 16v13-14

*It is interesting to note that satan does nothing original but copies and counterfeits. In v13 satan's counterfeit trinity is mentioned, **the dragon, the beast, the false prophet.***

- Here we see the climax of the hatred towards Israel. The armies that come against Jerusalem is a huge number.  
*‘Now the number of the army of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them’. Revelation 9v16*
- But God has not forsaken His people and remains faithful.  
*“Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples, when they lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall happen in that day that I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples; all who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces, though all nations of the earth are gathered against it.’ Zechariah 12v2-3*
- Just at the point when the armies have managed to enter Jerusalem and it is looking that defeat has finally come, Jesus returns to earth a second time and places His feet on the Mount of Olives.  
*‘Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written:  
**KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.’ Revelation 19v11-16***  
  
*‘Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, And your spoil will be divided in your midst. For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; The city shall be taken, The houses rifled, And the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, But the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then the LORD will go forth And fight against those nations, As He fights in the day of battle. And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, Which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, From east to west, Making a very large valley; Half of the mountain shall move toward the north And half of it toward the south.’  
Zechariah 14v2-4*
- We now find that the beast and the false prophet are cast into the lake of fire.  
*‘Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.’ Revelation 19v20*

- To end this period of time, satan is locked up for one thousand years as we enter the Millennium period.
- When Jesus is seen by the whole world there will be mourning on a global scale and prophecy will be fulfilled concerning the mourning of Israel as the following verses reveal.  
***'Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.'* Revelation 1v7**

And concerning Israel:

***'It shall be in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. "And I will pour on 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, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn. In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning at Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo.'* Zechariah 12v9-11**

- Then Jesus will gather His elect the 144,000 believing Jews, and in addition other Jews who have believed during this time as well as the believing Gentiles, from the four corners of the earth.  
***'And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.'* Matthew 24v31**
- For those who would suggest that the church has replaced Israel, it is worth observing that right to the very end we can see how God is interested in His chosen people Israel. Forty years after the crucifixion the Jewish nation is dispersed throughout the whole world and yet on 14<sup>th</sup> May 1948 at 4pm David Ben Gurion, the recognised leader of the Jewish people, declares the existence of the sovereign State of Israel. And in the above verses we note how Jesus returns to gather the believing Jews from the four corners of the earth. Equally in the context of ***Romans 11*** which is talking about Israel we read the following verse:  
***'For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.'* Romans 11v29**
- Despite Israel's disobedience and rejection of the Messiah, God has not gone back on His word. He has not reversed His calling of Israel. He called Israel into being as a nation and that calling has not been revoked. God has been and will be, faithful to His chosen people right to the very end.
- Throughout history the nation of Israel has been hated and through one means

or another has been picked out to be destroyed. I would suggest there can only be one logical reason related to the intense hatred towards Israel which is that there is a spiritual force behind it. Satan knows the prophecies related to the Jews. He knows they are God's chosen people and as we have seen in the above verses, that Jesus will return to gather His people from the four corners of the earth. He equally knows that if he can stop the word of God from being fulfilled he has in effect made God out to be a liar and therefore will be justified in getting away scot free. This is surely the one and only reason for the continued historic persecution of Israel. And the outworking of this hatred of Israel is brought to a climax when all of the nations will rise against Jerusalem at the end of the tribulation.

***'Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, And your spoil will be divided in your midst. For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; The city shall be taken, The houses rifled, And the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, But the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then the LORD will go forth And fight against those nations, As He fights in the day of battle. And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, Which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, From east to west, Making a very large valley; Half of the mountain shall move toward the north And half of it toward the south'.  
Zechariah 14v1-4***

*Having observed the hatred towards Israel that can be seen throughout history let alone the hatred that has yet to be displayed, how very sad that even some Christians could believe that the church has replaced Israel. There is absolutely no question in my mind but that the word of God demonstrates God's continued interest in His people right to the very end of time. Although possible harsh words, I would suggest that this is a deception of the devil. In other words, there is a spiritual force behind the world's hatred towards the Jews. Without in anyway suggesting that there is hatred towards the Jews in the hearts of believers who believe the church has replaced Israel, however if Satan can deceive believers into taking their eye off Israel then he can cause believers to take their eye off biblical prophecy, so much of which focuses on the nation of Israel.*

## The Millennium

At the end of the tribulation satan is bound for 1000 years often referred to as the millennium.

***'Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. 2 He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; 3 and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.'*** *'Revelation 20v1-3'*

- Just in the space of three verses '*thousand years*' is mentioned twice. In the whole chapter '*thousand years*' is mentioned six times. The word Millennium comes from two Latin words, *mille annum*, meaning 'a thousand years'
- There can be no doubt from this chapter alone that the Millennium is a definite period of time representing one thousand years which immediately follows the end of the tribulation. Believers who are still alive at this time will go on to populate the earth during the millennium. Jesus will set up His kingdom on earth whilst satan is bound for the thousand years.
- Some may argue that satan is bound now in that he was defeated at the cross. In some respects this is correct in that his power against believers is limited and believers are given authority over satan and his demons. However, scripture shows that satan still has power at this time. He has the power to blind the eyes of unbelievers as well as being called the god of this age.  
***'But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.'*** *2 Corinthians 4v3-4*
- In addition we see that satan is still at work with regards to seeking to come against the believer. In other words he may have been defeated at the cross but his influence is still very much evident.  
***'Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. 9 Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.'*** *1 Peter 5v8-9*
- By contrast to this present age, satan will be bound during the millennium and will have absolutely no influence on the world at all. He is not only chained, (restrained) but is completely removed from the earth.

***'Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.'***  
***Revelation 20v1-3***

- In the thousand year period the world will be completely different from how has been now that satan is bound and Jesus is reigning with His saints.  
***'And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.'*** Revelation 20v4
- Referring back once again to v3 as well as reading v7, it is clear that after one thousand years has elapsed satan is set free for a short period of time.  
***'But after these things he must be released for a little while. Revelation 20v3b***  
***'Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison.'*** Revelation 20v7
- The obvious questions to ask at this point is why wasn't satan thrown into the lake of fire at the end of the tribulation. Why was he bound for one thousand years only to be released again for a short period of time before being thrown into the lake of fire.
- The answer surely lies in the fact that many people will blame their circumstances, their upbringing, the traumas they have been through, or even 'the devil made me do it,' as an excuse for how they live. During the millennium period humanity will not have any of above excuses. Yet despite this, people will still not believe therefore proving there is no justified reason for not believing in the only One who offers salvation and thereby removing all and any excuse when the unbeliever appears before God's throne of judgment.
- When satan is released he once again goes to the four corners of the earth drawing the unbelievers to march against Jerusalem yet again showing right to the very end the hatred of mankind towards Israel. This is the final attack satan will attempt as fire comes down from God out of heaven concluding with the devil being thrown into the lake of fire for all eternity.  
***'Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down***

*from God out of heaven and devoured them. The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.'*  
*Revelation 20v7-10*

## **The Great White Throne**

After this event we come to the Great White Throne. The Judge who sits on the throne is Jesus. He now gathers all the unbelieving dead as well as those who are still alive at the end of the millenium before Him. The one question which is considered at this point relating to those appearing before this throne is '*Are your names written in the Book of Life.*'

*'Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.'* Revelation 20v11-15

## **A New Heaven and a New Earth**

We began with the Rapture and have just noted the White Throne of Judgment taking place at the end of the millennium period. We now conclude by seeing that there is a new heaven and a new earth. One day, at the end of the millennium, every believer will experience the new heaven and the new earth. There will be no more suffering, no more pain and we will spend all of eternity in the Presence of God our Father, Jesus our Lord and the Holy Spirit our Comforter.

*‘Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.” Revelation 21v1-4*

## **One Final Personal Comment**

There is no question that the present days we live in with a global pandemic makes room for a multitude of conspiracy theories. There is equally no doubt that one could very easily be taken up with each of these theories, dismissing some whilst considering whether others may have some truth. Without getting caught up with any of these theories we do know the following from the Word of God in relation to the coming tribulation and the revealing of the antichrist.

The antichrist is going to be the one ruler of the whole world. He is going to demand worship from every living human and will seek to be in control over all that happens on earth. He is going to be one who will rule over the whole political system as well as being the answer to the world's financial crisis.

Without taking the path of speculation, it is easy to see that even just within a few months of the pandemic arising, the world is potentially heading towards a financial crisis. It is also clear to observe how many of the experts are now stating that the only real way of dealing with covid19 is not by continual lockdowns whether on a local scale or a national scale, but by a completely effective way of tracing and tracking people.

I would suggest that by considering just these two points alone, the world is coming ever closer to being willing to accept a one world leader. Willing to accept someone who can demonstrate the answer to the world's financial crisis. Rapidly getting closer to accepting some form of identification, or even the insertion of a chip, in order to provide an effective trace and track system thereby eliminating the need for lockdown and allowing for people to live a normal life.

With this in mind the question which surely has to be considered by every believer is how close are we to the world seeing the emergence of the antichrist. How close are we to the reality of the mark of the beast. And yet the tragic reality seems to be that any teaching which considers biblical prophecy in relation to future events is often not taught to believers. This has surely resulted with the emergence of a generation of believers who have received no or very little teaching, on biblical prophecy and are therefore completely ignorant of future events. This surely is something of great concern that present day believers could be unaware of important biblical truths and are therefore not noting the signs of the end times. I would suggest that it is the duty of every local church to teach bible prophecy. Not for the purpose of wanting everyone within the local body to believe the same thing, but for the purpose of at least motivating their congregation to consider end time events and to conduct their own study allowing each person to draw their own conclusions from scripture.

For those of us who believe the rapture takes place before the tribulation, knowledge of bible prophecy laid alongside observing the signs of the times, motivates the need for making sure our hearts are right before the Lord and we are ready to meet Him in the air. Equally, for those who take the view that believers go through the tribulation, knowledge of bible prophecy laid alongside the signs of the times allows for sober preparation for the terrible time the world will face. Sadly without there being any bible prophecy teaching, there is little to none observance of the signs of the times and

equally there is not the motivation for preparation.

My one purpose for the above study is not that others would believe as I do, but that the study will at least provoke biblical research and consideration of end time events and observation of the signs of the times.