

The Unity Series

# One Hope

Vol. 2



*Tom and Angelica*  
*January 2019*  
*Antiguo Cuscatlán, El Salvador*

## **Table of Contents**

### Volume II

#### **III. Looking Forward: Jesus' Second Coming**

- Kingdom Highlights, points 44-217

#### **IV. Judgments**

#### **V. Appendices**

A. The "wishful thinking" kind of hope

B. NT "not-Kingdom" hope passages

C. Parables not Directly about the Kingdom

D. Passages Erroneously Thought to be Parables

E. The Nearness of the Kingdom

F. Jesus Took Captivity Captive

G. Ten Difficult Passages

☞-One Hope-☞

## Volume II

### Jesus and we will arrive triumphantly at Jerusalem

#### 44. Jesus will touch down on the Mount of Olives, just east of Jerusalem.

On that day, his [the Messiah's] feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which faces Jerusalem on the east... (Zechariah 14:4; LEB)

#### 45. As his feet settle on the Mount of Olives,<sup>1</sup> it will be split in two, forming a huge valley and two new mountains—one to the north and the other to the south of the new valley.

... and the Mount of Olives will be split in half, from east to west, by a very great valley; and half of the mountain will withdraw toward the north, and the other half toward the south (Zechariah 14:4; LEB).

#### 46. God will shake the land, the seas, and the atmosphere above—as the world welcomes the Kingdom.

This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'In a little while I will once more shake the heavens and the Earth, the sea and the dry land. I will shake all nations, and what is desired by all nations<sup>2</sup> will come... (Haggai 2:6-7a)

<sup>1</sup> This will likely be as he dismounts his horse because we know that he will be arriving at the Mount of Olives as he comes from flying over the plains of *Har-Magedon*, where he never actually touches down. The Plain of Armageddon will undoubtedly be littered with corpses—the bodies of the soldiers slaughtered by Jesus' swift sword—and flooded with blood.

With dead bodies strewn all around the Plain of Armageddon, it will have become a loathsome place—so Jesus will head towards Jerusalem. How will he get there? Well, he won't walk because Armageddon (modern-day Megiddo) is some 80 miles north of Jerusalem, and it's going to be a busy day. Rather, he'll remain on his horse and fly to the Mount of Olives—an arrival worthy of the rightful heir of the Throne of David.

<sup>2</sup> This means *the Kingdom*, but the most popular Christian interpretation of the *Desire of the Nations* is that it means *Jesus*—ruling as both King and High Priest. There's nothing wrong with interpreting it that way either.

**47. With supernatural power, God will make Zion the tallest mountain in the world.**

In the last days the mountain of the Lord's Temple [Zion] will be established as the highest<sup>3</sup> of the mountains; it will be exalted above the hills... (Isaiah 2:2)

**48. Jerusalem will be raised up**

But Jerusalem will be raised up high from the Benjamin Gate to the site of<sup>4</sup> the First Gate, to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the royal winepresses, and will remain in its place<sup>5</sup> (Zachariah 14:10).

**49. The inhabitants of Jerusalem, people who supported the Antichrist's regime, will run away in terror. Frightened by Christ's arrival, they will make their way through the newly-formed valley.**

And you will flee by the valley of my mountains, because the valley of the mountains will reach to Azal, and you will flee like you fled from the earthquake in the days of King Uzziah of Judah (Zechariah 14:5a; LEB).

**50. Jesus and we will enter the city of Jerusalem to dwell there!**

And Yahweh my God [Jesus] will come, and all the holy ones with him (Zechariah 14:5b; LEB).

---

<sup>3</sup> This goes to explain how the water proceeding from the Temple can water all of the surrounding lands (Ezekiel 47:12). The only direction from the Temple will be *down*, and gravity will take the water far away.

<sup>4</sup> That doesn't mean that the First Gate is actually there, just the site of it. Even if the gate is there, that does not mean that the wall is set in stone. Notice that this passage says nothing about the wall around Jerusalem—that's because it's made of fire!

<sup>5</sup> Jerusalem will become a permanent location, not to be moved again. Think about it: This means that when the New Jerusalem comes down from Heaven, it will not replace the Millennial Jerusalem. The Millennial Jerusalem will indeed be surrounded by Gog's troops at the end of the 1000 years, but Gog will do it no harm, and it will never be destroyed.

... and I will dwell in your midst. And you will know that Yahweh of Hosts<sup>6</sup> has sent me to you. And Yahweh [Jesus] will inherit Judah as his portion in the Holy Land, and he will again choose Jerusalem' (Zachariah 2: 11-12; LEB).

...he [Jesus] will come like a pent-up flood that the breath of the LORD drives along. 'The Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who repent of their sins,' declares the LORD (Isaiah 59:19).

Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion, for look, I am coming and I will dwell in your midst,' declares Yahweh (Zachariah 2:10; LEB).

### 51. **Jerusalem will be called *the Faithful City* and Zion will be called *the Holy Mountain*. Jesus will dwell there.**

Thus says Yahweh [Jesus]: 'I have returned to Zion, and I will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and Jerusalem will be called *the Faithful City*, and the mountain of Yahweh of Hosts will be called *the Holy Mountain*' (Zachariah 8:3; LEB).

'Then you will know that I, Yahweh your God, dwell in Zion, my holy hill (Joel 3:17).

Yahweh dwells in Zion (Joel 3:21)!

## The Initiation of the Millennium

### 52. **Jesus will sit on the Throne of David.<sup>7</sup> Then, a dramatic shift in the global order will take place—Jesus calls it *the Renewal of All Things*.**

Truly I tell you, at the Renewal of all Things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious Throne... (Matthew 19:28)

<sup>6</sup> Notice that Yahweh (Jesus) is speaking in the passage about *Yahweh of Hosts* (God) sending him. Zachariah chapter 3 also distinguishes between the two.

<sup>7</sup> That Throne is transportable. Shortly afterwards, it gets moved to the Valley of Decision. Since God's Throne has wheels on it (Ezekiel 10:2-6 and Daniel 7:9), the portability of Jesus' Throne should not come as a surprise to us.

You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called *the Son of the Most High*. The Lord God will give him the Throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his Kingdom will never end (Luke 1:31-33).

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the gov-ernment will be on his shoulders... Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end.

He will reign on David's Throne and over his Kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this (Isaiah 9:6-7).

- 53. From Jesus' seat of government—Mount Zion—God will destroy death, sadness, and disgrace. His power will remain on that mountain.**

On this mountain he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; he will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove his people's disgrace from all the Earth... The hand of the LORD will rest on this mountain (Isaiah 25:7-8, 10).

- a. Jesus will begin to rule—and to be worshipped.**

He [God] rebukes them [the nations and kings of the Earth who reject his Kingdom] in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath, saying, 'I have installed my King on Zion, my holy mountain' (Psalm 2:5-6).

[God says of the heir to the throne of David] ...my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. Your house and your Kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever (2 Samuel 7:14-16).

As I looked, thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took his seat... I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of Heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence.



He [the one who is like a son of man] was given authority, glory, and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him.<sup>8</sup> His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his Kingdom is one that will never be destroyed... (Daniel 7:9, 13-14)

**54. The people will rejoice because their God and King Jesus will be among them. Jesus will rejoice over his people and break out into song over them.**

Shout for joy, O daughter of Zion! Cry aloud, O Israel! Rejoice and be jubilant with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem! ... The King of Israel, Yahweh, is in your midst; you shall no longer fear misfortune. On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, 'Fear not, O Zion; your hands shall not hang limp.

Yahweh your God is in your midst; a Mighty Warrior who saves. He shall rejoice over you with joy; he renews you in his love; he will exult over you with singing (Zephaniah 3:14-17).

**55. Jesus will lead the Jews as their King, Prince, Ruler, and Shepherd.**

There will be one King over all of them... My servant David [through his descendant, Jesus] will be King over them, and they will all have one Shepherd... David my servant will be their Prince<sup>9</sup> forever (Ezequiel 37:24, 25).

I the LORD will be their God, and my servant David will be Prince among them (Ezekiel 34:24).

---

<sup>8</sup> Jesus will be worshipped! The women who met him after his resurrection worshipped him. Are you ready to worship Jesus?

Jesus met them [the women who met him after his resurrection]. 'Greetings,' he said. They came to him, clashed his feet and worshiped him (Matthew 28:9).

<sup>9</sup> This reference to Jesus as the *One Shepherd*, David, the eternal Prince of the Jews, will assist you in understanding all of the priestly work that he'll do in the Temple—work which is detailed for us in Ezekiel 40-47.

But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, too small to be among the clans of Judah, from you one will go out for me, to be Ruler in Israel; and his origins are from of old, from Ancient Days... (Micah 5:2; LEB)

Their Leader will be one of their own; their Ruler will arise from among them. I will bring him near and he will come close to me... (Jeremiah 30:21)

#### 56. Jesus will reign over all the Earth.

His [Jesus'] rule will extend from sea to sea and from the River [Euphrates] to the ends of the Earth (Zechariah 9:10).

... he [the Shepherd who is from Bethlehem] will be great unto the ends of the Earth (Micah 5:4; LEB).

Your eyes will see the King in his beauty and view a land that stretches afar (Isaiah 33:17).

#### 57. Jesus will earn at least six new honorific titles—names by which ‘he will<sup>10</sup> be called.’

And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6-7).

‘The days are coming,’ declares Yahweh, ‘when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land. In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety.

This is the name by which he will be called: Yahweh Our Righteous Savior<sup>11</sup> (Jeremiah 23:5-6).

---

<sup>10</sup> Notice the use of the future tense. At this moment in history, Jesus is not called by these titles. He is not called *Everlasting Father* right now, for example. If someone does use that title for him now, it's probably out of his or her Trinitarian confusion. Those who use it during the Millennium will use it rightly, and with a full knowledge of the One God and Father.

<sup>11</sup> In Hebrew, this will be *Hashem Tzidkeinu*. So another name for Jesus when he comes in his Kingdom is ‘The Name [is] our Righteous Savior.’

**58. Jesus will resurrect the believers who died during the Great Tribulation. This is called the *First Resurrection* or the *Resurrection of the Righteous*.<sup>12</sup>**

They [those who resisted the Antichrist during the Great Tribulation and died for it] came to life... (Revelation 20:4)

This is the First Resurrection. Blessed and holy are those who share in the First Resurrection... [they] will reign with him [Christ] for a thousand years (Revelation 20:5-6).

... [Jesus says to believers] you will be blessed. Although they [poor people] cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the Resurrection of the Righteous (Luke 14:14).

**59. We begin to rule.**

**a. We will receive the Kingdom.**

... the holy people [saints] of the Most High will receive the Kingdom and will possess it forever—yes, for ever and ever...

... the Ancient of Days came and pronounced judgment in favor of the holy people [saints] of the Most High, and the time came when they possessed the Kingdom... But the court will sit,<sup>13</sup> and his [the Antichrist's] power will be taken away and completely destroyed forever. Then the sovereignty, power, and greatness of all the king-

<sup>12</sup> The First Resurrection is only for the righteous—it brings back to life those who will reign in the Millennium. In contrast, the Second Resurrection will be mostly for the unrepentant. Only one kind of righteous person will participate in the Second Resurrection—a believer who dies during the Millennium.

The Second Resurrection is mainly for sinners God retrieves from the fires of Hell only to condemn them eternally in resurrected bodies. The Second Resurrection will take place right before the Final Judgment—and everyone participating in it will have to stand before the Great White Throne of God—yes, even Millennial believers!

<sup>13</sup> A court will convene in Heaven. When it says 'The Ancient of Days came and pronounced judgment,' it means that the One God, Yahweh came to that court and sat as Judge. Who will be sitting as jury? God knows, and maybe there will be none.

doms under Heaven will be handed over to the holy people [saints] of the Most High. His Kingdom will be an everlasting Kingdom... (Daniel 7:18, 22, 26-27)

Therefore, since we are receiving a Kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe... (Hebrews 12:29).

For if we died with him [Jesus], we will also live with him; if we endure, we will also reign with him (2 Timothy 2:11-12; NASB).

- b. We will inherit the Earth. God's promise to us is that we will be his heirs. If we are righteous and humble, we will get the land God has promised.**

Trust in the LORD and do good; dwelt in the land and enjoy safe pasture... For those who are evil will be destroyed, but those who hope in the LORD will inherit the land... the meek will inherit the land and enjoy peace and prosperity... those the LORD blesses will inherit the land, but those he curses will be destroyed... The righteous will inherit the land and dwelt in it forever...

Hope in the LORD and keep his way. He will exalt you to inherit the land; when the wicked are destroyed, you will see it (Psalm 37:2-3, 9, 11, 22, 29, 34).

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven... Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the Earth (Matthew 5:3, 5).

Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the Kingdom prepared for you since the Creation of the World' (Matthew 25:34).

Listen, my dear brothers! Did not God choose the poor of the World to be rich in faith, and heirs of the Kingdom that he has promised to those who love him? (James 2:5, LEB)

The Spirit himself confirms to our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, also heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer together with him so that we may also be glorified together with him (Romans 8:16-17, LEB).

... giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light (Colossians 1:12; NKJV).

Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the Gospel in advance to Abraham: ‘All nations will be blessed through you...’

The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. Scripture does not say ‘and to seeds,’ meaning many people, but ‘and to your Seed,’ meaning one person, who is Christ... If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise (Galatians 3:8, 16, 29).

... envy, drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the Kingdom of God (Galatians 5:21).

**c. Each of us will rule well. We’ll do a great job!**

... a King will reign in righteousness [that’s Jesus] and rulers will rule with justice [that’s us]. Each one [each ruler] will be like a shelter from the wind and a refuge from the storm, like streams of water in the desert and the shadow of a great rock in a thirsty land (Isaiah 32:1-2).

**d. Among us will be the Twelve Apostles. They will each sit on a throne and rule over the twelve Tribes of Israel.**

... you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the Twelve Tribes of Israel (Matthew 19:28).

- e. **Among those who rule as priests in the Kingdom are believers who die during the Great Tribulation. Jesus will resurrect them on time to reign in the Millennium.**

... I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge.

They [those who resisted the Antichrist during the Great Tribulation and died for it] came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. (The rest of the Dead<sup>14</sup> did not come to life until the thousand years were ended) ... they [Great Tribulation believers who were martyred] will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years (Revelation 20:4-7).

- f. **There will be levels of status in the Kingdom—different grades of authority. That is, some of us will be called *great*, while others will be called *least* in the Kingdom.**

... anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven... (Matthew 5:19).

- g. **We will rule over the angels—you didn't *know* that?**

... do you not know that the Lord's people will judge the World? And if you are to judge the World, are you not competent to judge trivial cases? Do you not know that we will judge<sup>15</sup> angels? (1 Corinthians 6:2-3)

---

<sup>14</sup> These people, 'the rest of the Dead,' are those who died in their sins. They have to wait for the Second Resurrection.

<sup>15</sup> The word *judge* is a synonym for rule. To study that, you can see Strong's entry #2919, point 6, that says about κρινω: Hebraistically equivalent to to rule, govern; to preside over with the power of giving judicial decisions, because it was the prerogative of kings and rulers to pass judgment (Retrieved from <http://biblehub.com/greek/2919.htm> on June 24, 2017).

... [God] has not put the World to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels.<sup>16</sup> But one testified in a certain place, saying: ‘What is man that you [God] are mindful of him, or the son of man that you take care of him? You have made him a little lower than the angels. You have crowned him with glory and honor, and set him over the works of your hands. You have put all things in subjection under his [man’s] feet.’<sup>17</sup>

For in that he [God] put all in subjection under him [man], he [God] left nothing that is not put under him. But now we do not yet see all things put under him [man], but we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels,<sup>18</sup> (for the suffering of death) crowned with glory and honor (Hebrews 2:5-9; NKJV).<sup>19</sup>

#### **h. Jesus will establish us in righteousness.**

And they will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of Yahweh, to show his glory (Isaiah 61:3).

---

<sup>16</sup> Paul wants us to know that angels are not going to rule in the World to Come. Upon hearing this, Paul’s readers were supposed to immediately ask themselves: Then who *will* rule the world to come? The answer: We will.

<sup>17</sup> Do you remember the Bible passage that demonstrates how God put all things under man’s feet? You can read about it in Genesis 1:26-28, where it says:

God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the Earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the Earth...’

... God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the Earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the Earth.’

<sup>18</sup> This little phrase is just a way to remind us that Jesus became a mortal man, making him hierarchically lower than angels for about 33 years.

<sup>19</sup> The point of this passage is that God has promised that man will rule over all. Even though that promise hasn’t been fulfilled yet in us, it has been fulfilled in our Lord Jesus—making it certain that we will also rule, even over the angels (although, for now we’re a little lower in God’s hierarchy than they are).

i. **Rewards for the victorious**

The Lord has made proclamation to the ends of the Earth: “Say to Daughter Zion, ‘See, your Savior comes! See, his reward is with him, and his recompense accompanies him” (Isaiah 62:11).

[Jesus says] Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done (Revelation 22:12).

**1) Jesus will grant us the right to sit on his Throne with him.**

To the one who is victorious, I [Jesus] will give the right to sit with me on my Throne, just as I was victorious and sat down with my Father on his Throne (Revelation 3:21).

**2) We will rule over the inhabitants of Earth with iron scepters, exercising strict authority over them.**

To the one who is victorious and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations—that one ‘will rule them with an iron scepter and will dash them to pieces like pottery’—just as I have received authority from my Father (Revelation 2:26-27).

**3) Jesus will reward good [Bible-teaching] pastors by putting them in charge of all of all of his possessions.**

Peter asked, ‘Lord, are you telling this parable to us, or to everyone?’

The Lord answered, ‘Who then is the faithful and wise manager, whom the master puts in charge of his servants to give them their food allowance at the proper time? It will be good for that servant whom the master finds doing so when he returns. Truly I tell you, he will put him in charge of all his possessions’ (Luke 12:41-44).



**4) We will get 100 times as much as we have given up for Christ.<sup>20</sup>**

... everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life (Matthew 19:29)

**5) Tattoos are cool! If we overcome, Jesus will triple tattoo us to demonstrate that we belong to God, to the New Jerusalem, and to himself.**

The one who is victorious... I will write on them the name of my God and the name of the City of my God, the New Jerusalem, which is coming down out of Heaven from my God; and I will also write on them my new name (Revelation 3:12).

**j. All the peoples on Earth will be subjected to Jesus.**

**1) They will fear Jesus as he rules over them with an iron scepter.**

She [Mary] gave birth to a son, a male child, who 'will rule all the nations with an iron scepter' (Revelation 12:5).

[Jesus says] I will proclaim the Lord's decree: He said to me, 'You are my Son; today I have become your Father. Ask me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the Earth your possession. You will break them with a rod of iron; you will dash them to pieces like pottery.'

Therefore, you kings, be wise; be warned, you rulers of the Earth. Serve the LORD with fear and celebrate his

---

<sup>20</sup> For example, if we leave a home behind, we'll get 100 homes. If we leave two of our biological brothers for Christ, we'll get 200 spiritual brothers to replace them.

rule with trembling. Kiss his Son, or he will be angry and your way will lead to your destruction, for his wrath<sup>21</sup> can flare up in a moment (Psalm 2:7-12).

- 2) **All world governments will be shattered, and the Kingdom of God will fill the Earth. God will establish it as the sole global government forever.**

[God revealed to Daniel the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, and Daniel told the king] ...there before you stood a large statue—an enormous, dazzling statue, awesome in appearance. The head of the statue was made of pure gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of baked clay.

While you were watching, a rock was cut out, but not by human hands.<sup>22</sup> It struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay<sup>23</sup> and smashed them. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were all broken to pieces and became like chaff on a threshing floor in the summer. The wind swept them away without leaving a trace. But the rock that struck the statue became a huge mountain and filled the whole Earth.

This was the dream, and now we will interpret it to the king... You are that head of gold [Babylon]. After you, another kingdom [Persia] will arise, inferior to yours. Next, a third kingdom, one of bronze [Greece], will rule over the whole earth.

---

<sup>21</sup> Have you ever reflected on the wrath of Jesus Christ? It can flare up in a moment! It's no fun being his enemy. We live in times when the wrath of God is rarely preached—how much less common is it to hear a pastor teach on the wrath of Jesus?

<sup>22</sup> This *rock* is Jesus. His life took shape under the tutelage of God, not of men.

<sup>23</sup> Jesus will strike Europe, the seat of the Antichrist's empire. How so? By defeating the Antichrist at Armageddon. When he does, the collective history of the kingdoms of this world will be abased. All the wisdom they have accumulated, with their strategies of conquest and human-inspired laws will fall flat.

Finally, there will be a fourth kingdom [the Roman Empire], strong as iron—for iron breaks and smashes everything—and as iron breaks things to pieces, so it will crush and break all the others. Just as you saw that the feet and toes [the European Union] were partly of baked clay and partly of iron, so this will be a divided kingdom... this kingdom will be partly strong and partly brittle... the people will be a mixture and will not remain united,<sup>24</sup> any more than iron mixes with clay.

In the time of those kings,<sup>25</sup> the God of Heaven will set up a Kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end,<sup>26</sup> but it will itself endure forever (Daniel 2:31-44).

#### **60. Jesus will disarm Israel, and declare an era of global peace.**

I will take away the chariots from Ephraim and the warhorses from Jerusalem, and the battle bow will be broken.

He [Jesus] will proclaim peace to the nations (Zechariah 9:10).

<sup>24</sup> That's the European Union (E.U.) Partly strong countries in it include Germany, Switzerland, Belgium, France, and Sweden. Partly weak countries include Bulgaria, Romania, Portugal, and Estonia. There are 28 countries in the E.U. as of June 2018. It will not remain united. Great Britain officially voted to leave the E.U. in 2016. God's Word says that the Europeans are a mixture that can't be homogenized, and history [especially the two World Wars] have proven that to be true!

<sup>25</sup> Those kings could mean the kings of Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome—empires which continue even now through Iraq, Iran, and the European Union of which Italy and Greece are member states. But it's better to understand those kings as the ones that make up the feet, being 10 of them, just as there are 10 toes on our bodies. In that case, they are the kings who will give their power to the Antichrist during the Tribulation (Revelation 17:12-13).

<sup>26</sup> Jesus will not eliminate ethnic groups, only the governments that rule them. That is, people will still be Babylonian-Iraqis, Persian-Iranians, Greeks, and Roman-Italians—but each of those groups will be governed by Christ, not by autonomous national bodies.

61. **The Gentile nations will not fight against each other anymore, nor will they train for war anymore. In place of military build-up, they will reorganize industry towards agricultural production. There will be no more professional soldiers, only farmers, and peace will prevail on Earth.**

They [the nations] will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore.

Everyone [among the Jews] will sit under their own vine and under their own fig tree, and no one will make them afraid, for the LORD Almighty has spoken (Micah 4:3-4).

They [the Gentiles] will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore (Isaiah 2:4).

### More on Jesus' authority

- a. **God will raise up Jesus as a wise and righteous King.**

‘The days are coming,’ declares Yahweh, ‘when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land. In his days, Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: *Yahweh Our Righteous Savior*’<sup>27</sup> (Jeremiah 23:5-6).

- b. **Jesus will be King and High Priest at the same time, earning the namesake *the Branch*.**

... this is what the LORD Almighty says: ‘Here is the man whose name is *the Branch*, and he will branch out from his place<sup>28</sup> and build the Temple of the LORD. It is he who will

<sup>27</sup> This is another name for Jesus: ‘Yahweh is our Righteous Savior’ (Hebrew: *Jehovah-Tsidkenu*). It means that Jesus is the one who demonstrates that Yahweh is our Righteousness Savior. Glory to God through Jesus!

<sup>28</sup> The meaning of Jesus' honorific title *the Branch* is that he will spread out,

build the Temple of the LORD, and he will be clothed with majesty and will sit and rule on his Throne (Zachariah 6:12-13).

And he will be a Priest on his Throne. And there will be harmony between the two<sup>29</sup> (Zachariah 6:13b).

The Angel of the LORD gave this charge to Joshua: “This is what the LORD Almighty says: ‘If you will walk in obedience to me and keep my requirements, then you will govern my house and have charge of my courts, and I will give you a place among these standing here.”

Listen, High Priest Joshua, you and your associates seated before you, who are men symbolic of things to come: I am going to bring my Servant, the Branch” (Zachariah 3:6-8).

- c. Christ Jesus (here called *Yahweh*) will direct the government completely by leading the judicial, legislative, and executive branches.**

... Yahweh is our Judge, Yahweh is our Lawgiver, Yahweh is our King... (Isaiah 33:22).

- d. We will see angels ascending to Heaven and descending on Jesus, bearing his correspondence to the Father, and bringing the Father’s correspondence to him. A stairway to the Gate of Heaven will be the basis of their communication while Christ reigns from Earth.**

He [Jacob] had a dream in which he saw a stairway resting on the Earth, with its top reaching to Heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. There

---

reach out, and extend. What is Jesus’ place from which he will branch out? His Throne where he sits as King. From that place of political authority, he will extend his influence to the spiritual realm by building the Temple of Yahweh, and there acting as High Priest.

<sup>29</sup> The two refers to Jesus’ Throne (kingship) and priesthood. In other words, Jesus will harmoniously be both High Priest and King during the Millennium. As Ezekiel calls him: *Prince and Priest*.

above it stood Yahweh<sup>30</sup> and he said: “I am Yahweh, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying...’

When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he thought, ‘Surely Yahweh is in this place, and I was not aware of it.’ He was afraid and said, ‘How awesome is this place! This is none other than the House of God; this is the Gate of Heaven’ (Genesis 28:12-13; 16-17).

Jesus said, ‘You [Nathaniel] believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree. You will see greater things than that.’ He then added, ‘Very truly I tell you, you will see Heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man (John 1:50-51).

## 62. **God will be a wall of fire around Jerusalem, and will be her glory.**

‘And I will be<sup>31</sup> for it [Jerusalem] a wall of fire all around,’ declares Yahweh, ‘and I will be the glory in its midst’” (Zachariah 2:5; LEB).

And I looked up and I saw, and look, a man, and in his hand was a measuring rope! And I asked, ‘Where are you going?’ And he answered me, ‘To measure Jerusalem to see what is its width and what is its length.’ And look, the angel who was talking to me was coming forward, and another angel

<sup>30</sup> That would have been Yahweh God, the One God, since this was a dream and Jacob didn’t actually see God face to face. Notice that Yahweh was standing up, not sitting.

<sup>31</sup> God will be a wall of fire around Jerusalem—and he will use the Holy Spirit to perform this powerful sign, but what does it mean? Of course a wall means safety, but the fact that it’s a wall of fire means that God wants Jerusalem to grow. Its initial population growth will not be limited by stone walls. Its wall will be mobile.

Now, using fire is reminiscent of what God did when he led the Jews through the wilderness as a pillar of fire by night—only this time he’ll encircle them. So as not to asphyxiate the people, this fire won’t smoke. It will be like the fire that enveloped the burning bush.

was coming forward to meet him. And he said to him, “Run, say to that young man, ‘Jerusalem shall be inhabited like villages without walls<sup>32</sup> because of the multitude of people and animals in its midst (Zachariah 2:1-4; LEB).

**63. Jerusalem will be made holy and secure from that day onward.**

Jerusalem will be holy; never again will foreigners invade her (Joel 3:17).

They will live in safety, and no one will make them afraid (Ezekiel 34:28).

... they will no longer be victims of famine in the land or bear the scorn of the nations (Ezekiel 34:29).

**64. No one will harm or destroy in Zion, reason being that everybody on Earth will know Yahweh.**

They will neither harm nor destroy on all my Holy Mountain, for the Earth will be filled with the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea (Isaiah 11:9).

They will neither harm nor destroy on all my Holy Mountain [Zion],’ says Yahweh (Isaiah 65:25).

**65. The people chosen by God to live there (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, the Twelve Apostles, etc.) will begin to dwell in Judah and Jerusalem.**

[From the day of judgment in the Valley of Decision] Judah will be inhabited forever and Jerusalem through all generations (Joel 3:20).

---

<sup>32</sup> Jerusalem will not have fixed walls while it is growing. At the time of the writing of the Bible, every city had a wall around it. Only the villages did not since they were in their developmental stages. Here we see Jerusalem in a stage of development. What wisdom of God! He’s a city planner like no other, even using fire as a material in his design.

---

 The Judgment of the Gentiles<sup>33</sup> / The Valley of Decision

**66. Jesus will rush out from Jerusalem to the Valley of Decision—causing the Earth and its atmosphere to shake.**

The LORD [Jesus] will roar from Zion and thunder from Jerusalem;<sup>34</sup> the Earth and the heavens will tremble (Joel 3:16).

**67. God, with the help of angels, will gather every mature<sup>35</sup> mortal Gentile on Earth to the Valley of Decision.**

... I will gather all nations and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat<sup>36</sup> (Joel 3:2).

Swing the sickle,<sup>37</sup> for the harvest is ripe. Come, trample the grapes, for the winepress is full and the vats overflow—so great is their wickedness! (Joel 3:13)

All the nations will be gathered before him [the Son of Man]... (Matthew 25:32)

Multitudes, multitudes in the Valley of Decision! For the Day of the Lord is near in the Valley of Decision (Joel 3:14).

---

<sup>33</sup> No Jews will be there, which is what makes it the Judgment of the *Gentiles*. Where will the Jews be? Well, remember that all Israel will be saved at the time the Great Tribulation. They will persevere in their faith, and by the time the Great Tribulation finishes, all Jews will either been raptured to Heaven (i.e., the 144,000), will have been attacked, almost martyred, and raptured), or will be still living in some corner of the globe, filled with a desire to return to their homeland.

<sup>34</sup> The fact that Jesus will come from Zion-Jerusalem indicates that he has defeated the Antichrist's armies at Armageddon, and has gone to Jerusalem to establish his Kingdom already. Then he will leave Jerusalem for this judgment. So this little verse helps us greatly in understanding the timeframe of the Judgment of the Nations!

<sup>35</sup> By *mature*, we mean not children and not adults who are intellectually challenged (i.e., those with mental retardation).

<sup>36</sup> No geographical location is given for this place in the Bible, so it must be the wide valley formed when the Mount of Olives is split in two, a valley lying east to west, beginning from Zion's heights in the west.

<sup>37</sup> This Biblical expression indicates that angels are harvesting souls.



**68. Jesus will separate the multitudes into two groups: one on his right, and one on his left.**

... he [the Son of Man] will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left (Matthew 25:32-33).

**69. The trial will begin as Jesus takes his seat on his glorious Throne.**

When the Son of Man comes... he will sit on his glorious Throne (Matthew 25:31).

... for there I will sit [in the Valley of Jehoshaphat] to judge all the nations on every side (Joel 3:12).

**70. Jesus will judge the Gentiles according to the way they treated his people the Jews—and particularly according to their actions towards persecuted Great Tribulation believers.**

There [in the Valley of Jehoshaphat] I will put them on trial for<sup>38</sup> what they did to my inheritance, my people Israel, because they scattered my people among the nations and divided up my land... (Joel 3:2)

[Jesus will tell one group that they are welcome in the Kingdom]... For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me... Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me' (Matthew 25:34-36, 40).

---

<sup>38</sup> This *for* is a very important word because it indicates the purpose of the judgment: To judge the Gentiles over whether they assisted God's people in their suffering or not. There was great hate directed towards the Jews during the Great Tribulation period—did these Gentiles participate in the hate, or could they overcome it with love?

[Jesus will tell the other group that they must go away—to Hell]... For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me... Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me' (Matthew 25:41-43, 45).

- 71. A final sentence will be given to the Gentile mortals who will have survived the Great Tribulation. One group of them will go to Hell, and the others will enter into the Millennial Kingdom.**

Then the King<sup>39</sup> will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the Kingdom prepared for you since the Creation of the World... [then] the righteous [will go on] to eternal life (Matthew 25:34, 46).

Then he [the King] will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the Devil and his angels... Then they will go away to eternal punishment... (Matthew 25:41, 46)

### A New Generation of Mortals

- 72. People will not have to suffer for the sins of their parents. Everyone will get a fresh new start in life.**

'In those days people will no longer say, 'The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge.'<sup>40</sup> Instead, everyone will die for their own sin; whoever eats sour grapes—their own teeth will be set on edge (Jeremiah 31:29-30).

<sup>39</sup> Notice that Jesus is called the *King* here, indicating clearly to us that he was already installed as King.

<sup>40</sup> This expression meant that the consequences of a person's sins fall upon their children. For example, if a woman smokes marijuana during pregnancy, her children are born with health problems. The ancient Israelites used this saying to illustrate this reality.

---

**Changes to Animals****73. Animals will not fear humans, but will dwell close to us, as they did in the Garden of Eden and in Noah's Ark.**

... out of the ground Yahweh God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky, and he brought each to the man to see what he would call it. And whatever the man called that living creature was its name. And the man gave names to every domesticated animal and to the birds of heaven and to all the wild animals (Genesis 2:19-20; LEB).

Pairs of clean and unclean animals, of birds and of all creatures that move along the ground, male and female, came to Noah and entered the ark (Genesis 7:8-9).

**a. We will live alongside dangerous animals (like lions and cobras) who have become tame—so tame they will serve as entertainment for children.**

The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. The infant will play near the cobra's den, and the young child will put its hand into the viper's nest (Isaiah 11:6-8).

**b. Israelites will be able to sleep in the forest, not fearing wild animal attacks.**

... nor will wild animals devour them (Ezekiel 34:28).

... and rid the land of savage beasts so that they may live in the wilderness and sleep in the forests in safety... (Ezekiel 34:25)

**c. All animals will be at peace with each other and they will change their diets.**

The wolf and the lamb will feed together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox, and dust will be the serpent's food (Isaiah 65:25).

God will create a new atmosphere<sup>41</sup> and a new Earth

**74. God will create a new Earth, with a new atmosphere, and new space. Creation will undergo a dramatic renewal!**

‘See, I will create new heavens and a new Earth... be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create... (Isaiah 65:17-18).<sup>42</sup>

Israel will be given abundant fresh water

**75. Springs, pools, streams, and broad rivers will gush out in Israel.**

Water will gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert (Isaiah 35:6).

The burning sand will become a pool, the thirsty ground bubbling springs. In the haunts where jackals once lay, grass and reeds and papyrus will grow (Isaiah 35:7).

It [Zion] will be like a place of broad rivers and streams (Isaiah 33:21).

In that day [the day of judgment in the Valley of Decision] the mountains will drip new wine, and the hills will flow with milk; all the ravines of Judah will run with water (Joel 3:18).

---

<sup>41</sup> The air that surrounds the Earth has 5 layers: the exosphere, the thermosphere, the mesosphere, the stratosphere, and the troposphere—the last one being the layer in which we live and breathe. Jesus will chemically transform each of these when he returns in glory.

<sup>42</sup> This clearly refers to the Millennium, as we can see from the context which is about the city of Jerusalem and the lifespan of those who dwell there. You'll recall that in the Eternal Kingdom there will not be any lifespan. There won't be any mortals in the Eternal Kingdom. Everyone will live forever—that's in contrast with the Millennium, an era in which mortals inhabit the Earth.

Since similar wording is used to describe the Eternal Kingdom in other passages such as 2 Peter 3:12-13 and Revelation 21:1, 6-7, we understand the new Earth and heavens described in the passage to be a renewed Earth and a purified atmosphere—in which pure rain may fall. Both the Earth and its atmosphere will require renewal after the destructive effects of industrialization and the catastrophes of the Tribulations.

Effects of water in the Land of Israel: abundant vegetation and God's glory

76. **God will transform Israel's<sup>43</sup> barren heights, dry valleys, parched ground, deserts, and wastelands by irrigating them. Many varieties of trees will grow there, making it like Eden. That's when everyone will see God's glory, and recognize that *he has done it*.<sup>44</sup>**

I will make rivers flow on barren heights, and springs within the valleys. I will turn the desert into pools of water, and the parched ground into springs.

I will put in the desert the cedar and the acacia, the myrtle and the olive. I will set junipers in the wasteland, the fir and the cypress together, so that people may see and know, may consider and understand, that the hand of Yahweh has done this, that the Holy One of Israel has created it (Isaiah 41:18-20).

The desert and the parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom. Like the crocus, it will burst into bloom; it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy. The glory of Lebanon will be given to it, the splendor of Carmel and Sharon; they will see the glory of the LORD, the splendor of our God (Isaiah 35:1-2).

Yahweh will surely comfort Zion and will look with compassion on all her ruins; he will make her deserts like Eden, her wastelands like the Garden of Yahweh (Isaiah 51:3).

---

<sup>43</sup> We know that he's talking about Israel here because the phrase that immediately precedes this verse calls God *the Holy One of Israel*. That's the context, as we can also see in v. 14, which says:

'Do not be afraid, you worm Jacob, little Israel, do not fear, for I myself will help you,' declares Yahweh, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.

<sup>44</sup> This initial miracle of God, the one that transforms the land of Israel, is distinct from the transformation of the land achieved through the labors of the people who cut, mow, landscape, sow, and harvest their fields. God's transformation is instantaneous, while the latter is achieved through time.

**77. The land south of Jerusalem will become flat.**

The whole land, from Geba to Rimmon,<sup>45</sup> south of Jerusalem, will become like the Arabah [a plain]. But Jerusalem will be raised up high<sup>46</sup> (Zachariah 14:11).

**78. God will bless the land in order to draw the Jews back to it.**

But you, mountains of Israel, will produce branches and fruit for my people Israel, for<sup>47</sup> they will soon come home (Ezekiel 36:8).

**79. Those who return to Israel will inherit a fourfold combination of healthy seeds, fruitful trees/vines, fertile ground, and precipitation from God.**

The seed will grow well, the vine will yield its fruit, the ground will produce its crops, and the heavens will drop their dew. I will give all these things as an inheritance to the remnant of this people (Zachariah 8:12).

I will provide for them a land renowned for its crops... (Ezekiel 34:29)

The trees will yield their fruit and the ground will yield its crops... (Ezekiel 34:27)

---

<sup>45</sup> The difficulty with this verse is that Geba [Jeba] is presently located to the north of Jerusalem, and Rimmon doesn't exist anymore. Some say Rimmon was north and others say that it was south of Jerusalem. Either way, there is going to be a large plain (a flatland expanse) south of Jerusalem. The city will be established on Zion, the highest of mountains.

<sup>46</sup> Notice the Hebrew parallelism is the contrast between plains and mountains, lowlands and highlands. When God refers to the Arabah here, his emphasis is not its dryness, but its *height above sea level*. God has already informed us that there will be no deserts in Israel when the Kingdom comes, so there's no need for him to restate that fact. His emphasis here is contrasting altitudes.

<sup>47</sup> This tiny word *for* is packed with meaning. It shows that God will bless the land with abundance in order to draw the Jews back to it. They have a subsequent harvest as a result of their working the land, agricultural success, but that comes after they have arrived in Israel. The initial blessing on the land is God's way of drawing the Jews back to it.

I will send down showers in season; there will be showers of blessing (Ezekiel 34:26).

### The Israelites will be free from disabilities and illness

#### 80. In Israel, the blind, deaf, mentally and physically disabled, and the dumb will all be healed!

Then the eyes of those who see will no longer be closed, and the ears of those who hear will listen. The fearful heart will know and understand, and the stammering tongue will be fluent and clear (Isaiah 32:3-4).

Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy (Isaiah 35:5-6).

#### 81. No inhabitant of Jerusalem will get sick, and each person's sins will be forgiven.

No one living in Zion will say, 'I am ill'; and the sins of those who dwell there will be forgiven (Isaiah 33:24).

### Freed from Captivity

#### 82. A remnant of Jews will be saved.

Isaiah cries out concerning Israel: 'Though the number of the Israelites be like the sand by the sea, only the remnant will be saved' (Romans 9:27).

Proclaim, praise, and say, 'Save, O Yahweh, your people, the remnant of Israel'<sup>48</sup> (Jeremiah 31:7)

---

<sup>48</sup> Not everyone who is genetically a Jew will be saved, but a remnant. As Paul says (quoting Isaiah):

Though the number of the Israelites be like the sand by the sea, only the remnant will be saved. For the Lord will carry out his sentence on Earth with speed and finality (Romans 9:27-28).

**83. God will free the Jews from captivity and will give the city dwellers, village people, farmers, and shepherds their land.**

‘... I will bring my people Israel and Judah back from captivity and restore them to the land I gave their ancestors to possess,’ says Yahweh (Jeremiah 30:3).

This is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says: “When I bring them back from captivity, the people in the land of Judah and in its towns will once again use these words: ‘The Lord bless you, you prosperous city, you sacred mountain.’ People will live together in Judah and all its towns—farmers and those who move about with their flocks. I will refresh the weary and satisfy the faint (Jeremiah 31:23-25).

**84. The Jews will be freed from exile, slavery, and fear. Yahweh will bring them to their land to serve him and to serve their king, Jesus.**

‘In that day,’ declares the LORD Almighty, ‘I will break the yoke off their necks and will tear off their bonds; no longer will foreigners enslave them. Instead, they will serve the LORD their God and David their king, whom I will raise up for them.’<sup>49</sup>

So do not be afraid, Jacob my servant; do not be dismayed, Israel,’ declares the LORD. ‘I will surely save you out of a distant place, your descendants from the land of their exile. Jacob will again have peace and security, and no one will make him afraid (Jeremiah 30:8-10).

**85. God will bring his people, the Jews, from every corner of the Earth to Jerusalem.**

Thus says Yahweh of Hosts: ‘Look! I am going to save my people from the Land of the East, and from the Land of the

---

<sup>49</sup> This *David* of whom the passage speaks is actually Jesus Christ, the descendant of David. King David is in Jesus *genetically*.



West, and I will bring them and they will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. They will be my people and I will be their God in faithfulness and in righteousness' (Zachariah 8:8; LEB).

Look, I am going to bring them from the Land of the North, and I will gather them from the remotest part of the Earth. Among them the blind, and the lame, those who are pregnant, and those who give birth, together, a great assembly, they will return here.<sup>50</sup> With weeping they will come, and with pleas for mercy I will bring them... (Jeremiah 31:8-9)

In that day the Lord will reach out his hand a second time to reclaim the surviving remnant of his people from Assyria, from Lower Egypt, from Upper Egypt, from Cush, from Elam, from Babylonia, from Hamath, and from the islands of the Mediterranean.

He will raise a banner for the nations and gather the exiles of Israel; he will assemble the scattered people of Judah from the four quarters of the Earth... (Isaiah 11:11-12)

'Return, faithless people,' declares the Lord, 'for I am your husband. I will choose you—one from a town and two from a clan—and bring you to Zion' (Jeremiah 3:14).

In those days the people of Judah will join the people of Israel, and together they will come from a northern land<sup>51</sup> to the land I gave your ancestors as an inheritance (Jeremiah 3:18).

Thus says Yahweh: 'Restrain your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears, for there is a reward for your work,' declares Yahweh, 'and they will return from the land of the enemy. And there is hope for your future,' declares Yahweh, 'and your children will return to their territory' (Jeremiah 31:16-17).

---

<sup>50</sup> Jews who were not raptured, but who instead passed through the Great Tribulation—mortal men and women—will return to the land of Israel and will inhabit it. The *land of the west* referred to here is likely the United States where 5.7-7 million Jews live, approximately the same amount as in Israel itself. No other country in the world has nearly as many Jews, whose total global population is 14 million. The *land of the north* would be Europe.

<sup>51</sup> This *northern land* would be Europe.

... I will take the Israelites out of the nations where they have gone. I will gather them from all around and bring them back into their own land. I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel (Ezekiel 37:21-22).

### The Highway of God

**86. In the once-arid places, there will be a new road—a road that will be completely safe. It will lead the returnees straight to Zion.**

And a highway will be there [in the desert that has become fertile and green]; it will be called the Way of Holiness; it will be for those who walk on that way. The unclean will not journey on it; wicked fools will not go about on it. No lion will be there, nor any ravenous beast; they will not be found there. But only the redeemed will walk there, and those the LORD has rescued will return [to Jerusalem] (Isaiah 35:8-10).

Set up road signs; put up guideposts. Take note of the highway, the road that you take. Return, Virgin Israel, return to your towns. How long will you wander, unfaithful Daughter Israel? The Lord will create a new thing on Earth—the woman will return to the man (Jeremiah 31:21-22).

### A Trumpet will Sound

**87. A great trumpet will sound as God gathers his people from the Euphrates to the Nile Rivers. Exiled Jews will flock to Jerusalem to worship God in his holy Temple.**

In that day the LORD will thresh from the flowing Euphrates to the Wadi of Egypt, and you, Israel, will be gathered up one by one. And in that day a great trumpet will sound. Those who were perishing in Assyria and those who were exiled in Egypt will come and worship the LORD on the Holy Mountain<sup>52</sup> in Jerusalem (Isaiah 27:12-13).

<sup>52</sup> Notice that worship on *the mountain* is mentioned, but not the Temple. That's because it hasn't been constructed yet. It will take almost three years to build.

---

The Return of the Jews to Israel—the *Ingathering*

**88. God will bring his people back to the land of Israel.**

I will surely gather them from all the lands where I banish them in my furious anger and great wrath; I will bring them back to this place and let them live in safety (Jeremiah 32:37).

I will rejoice in doing them good and will assuredly plant them in this land with all my heart and soul (Jeremiah 32:41).

I will take you from the nations, and I will gather you from all of the lands, and I will bring you to your land (Ezequiel 36:24; LEB).

**89. God will gather the Jews from every nation, and will prosper them like never before in history.**

... Yahweh your God will restore your fortunes and have compassion on you and gather you again from all the nations where he scattered you. Even if you have been banished to the most distant land under the heavens, from there Yahweh your God will gather you and bring you back (Deuteronomy 30:3-4).

**90. The travelers to Jerusalem will arrive with great joy, singing, and dancing!**

They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away (Isaiah 35:10).

Those Yahweh has rescued will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away (Isaiah 51:11).

From them will come songs of thanksgiving and the sound of rejoicing. I will add to their numbers, and they will not be decreased; I will bring them honor, and they will not

be disdained. Their children will be as in days of old, and their community will be established before me; I will punish all who oppress them.

I will again build you, and you will be built, O virgin Israel. You will again adorn yourself with your tambourines, and you will go forth in the dancing in a ring of the merry makers (Jeremiah 30:19-20).

**91. The Jews will take permanent possession of the Promised Land—they will *never* lose it again.**

... all your people... shall take possession of the land forever (Isaiah 60:21; LEB).

He [Yahweh] will bring you to the land that belonged to your ancestors, and you will take possession of it (Deuteronomy 30:5).

I will plant Israel in their own land, never again to be uprooted from the land I have given them,' says Yahweh your God (Amos 9:15).

**92. They will be the most prosperous and numerous generation in the history of Israel.**

He will make you [the Jews who return to Israel] more prosperous and numerous than your ancestors (Deuteronomy 30:5).

I will increase the number of people and animals living on you, and they will be fruitful and become numerous. I will settle people on you as in the past and will make you prosper more than before.<sup>53</sup> Then you will know that I am the LORD (Ezekiel 36:11).

---

<sup>53</sup> This expression 'more than before' should be understood to be in comparison to the times of Solomon. Remember that he was the greatest king in the world, and Israel was the richest country on the planet.

... there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be. Moreover, I will give you what you have not asked for—both wealth and honor—so that in your lifetime you will have no equal among kings (1Kings 3:12-13).

I will establish them [the Israelites] and increase their numbers... (Ezequiel 37:26)

**93. God will fulfill his promises to the patriarchs, giving the Jews the land of Israel.**

Yahweh said to Abram after Lot had parted from him, ‘Look around from where you are, to the north and south, to the east and west. All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring forever’ (Genesis 13:14-15).

[God spoke to Jacob] ... I am Yahweh, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying (Genesis 28:13).

[Jacob prophesied to Joseph]... I am going to make you fruitful and increase your numbers. I will make you a community of peoples, and I will give this land as an everlasting possession to your descendants after you (Genesis 48:4).

**94. All the Jews will be gathered like a flock of sheep in Israel, which will be filled with people.**

I will surely gather all of you, Jacob; I will surely bring together the remnant of Israel. I will bring them together

The king made silver and gold as common in Jerusalem as stones, and cedar as plentiful as sycamore-fig trees in the foothills (2 Chronicles 1:15).

The weight of the gold that Solomon received yearly was 666 talents [about 25 tons], not including the revenues from merchants and traders and from all the Arabian kings and the governors of the territories (1 Kings 10:14-15).

Arriving with a very great caravan—with camels carrying spices, large quantities of gold, and precious stones—she [the Queen of Sheba] came to Solomon and talked with him about all she had on her mind... she gave the king 120 talents of gold, large quantities of spices, and precious stones. There had never been such spices as those the Queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon (2 Chronicles 9:1, 9).

Year after year, everyone who came [to Solomon] brought a gift—articles of silver and gold, robes, weapons and spices, and horses and mules (1 Kings 10:25).

like sheep in a pen, like a flock in its pasture; the place will throng with people (Micah 2:12).

... and I will cause many people to live on you—yes, all of Israel (Ezekiel 36:10).

### God will establish a New Covenant with Israel

#### 95. **The ark of the covenant will be forgotten—the Jews will not be concerned about going back to the Old Covenant.**

“In those days, when your numbers have increased greatly in the land,” declares the LORD, “people will no longer say, ‘The ark of the covenant of the LORD.’ It will never enter their minds or be remembered; it will not be missed, nor will another one [another ark] be made” (Jeremiah 3:16).

#### 96. **God will cleanse the Jews.**

And I will sprinkle on you pure water, and you will be clean from all of your uncleanness, and I will cleanse you from all of your idols (Ezequiel 36:25; LEB).

#### 97. **God will forgive the Jews for all their sins.**

... for this is my covenant with them, when I take away their sins’ (Romans 11:27; NKJV).

I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more (Jeremiah 31:34).

#### 98. **God will establish a new covenant with Israel.**

‘The days are coming,’ declares Yahweh, ‘when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them,’ declares Yahweh (Jeremiah 31:31-32).

**99. God will write his law on their hearts, and they will love him and obey him.**

‘This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time,’ declares Yahweh. ‘I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts’ (Jeremiah 31:33).

**100. All the Jews will know God.**

‘No longer will they teach their neighbor, or say to one another, ‘Know Yahweh,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,’ declares Yahweh (Jeremiah 31:34).

**101. All of the Jews will be righteous and honest.**

... all your people shall be righteous (Isaiah 60:21; LEB).

They will follow my laws and be careful to keep my decrees (Ezequiel 37:24).

... then I shall remove from your [Israel’s] midst those exulting in your pride, and you shall no longer be haughty in my holy mountain. And I will leave in your midst a people afflicted and poor, and they shall take refuge in the name of Yahweh. The remnant of Israel shall not do wickedness; they shall not speak deception, nor shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth (Zephaniah 3:11-13).

**102. God will hear all of the prayers of the Jews.**

They will not labor in vain, nor will they bear children doomed to misfortune; for they will be a people blessed by Yahweh, they and their descendants with them. Before they call I will answer; while they are still speaking I will hear (Isaiah 65:23-24).

**103. The Jews will be known as ministers and priests.**

... you [Israel] will be called priests of Yahweh, you will be named ministers of our God (Isaiah 61:6).

---

 Israel will become the Global Superpower

**104. God will pour out so many blessings on his people Israel that they will be the world's greatest country. All other nations will fear them and recognize that God is with them.**

If you fully obey the LORD your God and carefully follow all his commands I give you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations on Earth. All these blessings will come on you and accompany you if you obey the LORD your God:

- You will be blessed in the city and blessed in the country.
- The fruit of your womb will be blessed, and the crops of your land and the young of your livestock—the calves of your herds and the lambs of your flocks.
- Your basket and your kneading trough will be blessed.
- You will be blessed when you come in and blessed when you go out.
- The LORD will grant that the enemies who rise up against you will be defeated before you. They will come at you from one direction but flee from you in seven.
- The LORD will send a blessing on your barns and on everything you put your hand to. The LORD your God will bless you in the land he is giving you.
- The LORD will establish you as his holy people, as he promised you on oath, if you keep the commands of the LORD your God and walk in obedience to him. Then all the peoples on Earth will see that you are called by the name of the LORD, and they will fear you.
- The LORD will grant you abundant prosperity—in the fruit of your womb, the young of your livestock and the crops of your ground—in the land he swore to your ancestors to give you.



- The LORD will open the heavens, the storehouse of his bounty, to send rain on your land in season and to bless all the work of your hands.
- You will lend to many nations but will borrow from none. The LORD will make you the head, not the tail.
- If you pay attention to the commands of the LORD your God that I give you this day and carefully follow them, you will always be at the top, never at the bottom (Deuteronomy 28:1-13).

## The Eternal Covenant and the Holy Spirit

**105. Through an everlasting covenant, God will transform the hearts of his people, giving them his Spirit. Then they will fear him, love him, obey him, and never turn away from him again.**

I will make a covenant of peace with them [Israel]; it will be an everlasting covenant (Ezequiel 37:26).

... I, the Lord... will reward my people and make an everlasting covenant with them (Isaiah 61:8).

I will give them singleness of heart and action, so that they will always fear me and that all will then go well for them and for their children after them (Jeremiah 32:39).

Yahweh your God will circumcise your hearts<sup>54</sup> and the hearts of your descendants, so that you may love him with all your heart and with all your soul, and live... You will again obey Yahweh and follow all his commands I am giving you today.

And I will give a new heart to you, and a new spirit I will give into your inner parts, and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh, and I will give to you a heart of flesh. And I will give my Spirit into your inner parts, and I will make it so that you will go in my rules, and my regulations you will remember, and you will do them (Ezequiel 36:26-27; LEB).

<sup>54</sup> This is a recurring Bible promise—that during the Millennium, God will circumcise the hearts of mortal Jewish believers.

I will make an everlasting covenant with them... I will inspire them to fear me, so that they will never turn away from me (Jeremiah 32:40).

**106. From that point on, God will never cease to do good to Israel.**

I will never stop<sup>55</sup> doing good to them (Jeremiah 32:40).

**The Construction of the Temple of Yahweh**

**107. Under Christ's leadership, we will start to build the new Temple of Yahweh.**

'When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his Kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his Kingdom forever (2 Samuel 7:12-13).

[*The Branch*, Jesus, will]... build the Temple of the LORD. It is he who will build the Temple of the LORD... (Zachariah 6:12-13a)

**108. Believers will come from distant lands to help in the construction of the Great Temple of Yahweh.**

Those who are far away will come and help to build the Temple of the LORD,<sup>56</sup> and you will know that the LORD Almighty has sent me<sup>57</sup> to you. This will happen if you diligently obey the LORD your God (Zachariah 6:15).

---

<sup>55</sup> Any time the Scriptures promise a point in time when God from then on will *never stop* doing good, or that his people will *never* turn away from him *again*—obviously it is speaking of the Kingdom!

<sup>56</sup> From the context we know that those who will help to build the Temple will work under the leadership of the one called *the Branch*—and we know that *the Branch* is a title for Jesus.

<sup>57</sup> *Me* refers to Zachariah in the passage, but for our purposes in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it's *Jesus*. What happened in the times of Zachariah will happen again. This "telescopic prophecy" reveals times to come.

### 109. The Temple is going to be gloriously silver and gold— like nothing ever built before it!

‘The glory of this present house<sup>58</sup> will be greater than the glory of the former house,’ says the LORD Almighty. ‘And in this place I will grant peace,’ declares the LORD Almighty (Haggai 2:6-9).

‘... I will fill this house with glory,’ says the LORD Almighty. ‘The silver is mine and the gold is mine,’ declares the LORD Almighty (Haggai 2:7b-8).

### 110. It will take just 2 years and 10 months<sup>59</sup> for the Temple

<sup>58</sup> The architectural blueprints and details of the Temple are found in Ezekiel chapters 40-48, a passage so long that we cannot print it in this book. We encourage you to read it meticulously, so that you might comprehend how glorious the Millennial Temple will be. Read and see what a grand undertaking it will be!

<sup>59</sup> This will be done quickly and efficiently—finished within 2300 evenings and mornings (6 years and 4 months) after the start of the 3.5 year Great Tribulation, when the Antichrist desecrates the Temple. These are *literal days*, just like the Creation account’s literal days. There is no way to interpret them as being *years*, as we may in other passages of the Bible where the Hebrew word *yom* is used.

So, the Temple will be complete 2 years and 10 months after the return of Christ. It will be our Lord Jesus’ capstone project. He’ll harness the talents of the world’s most skilled artisans to complete this endeavor. Therefore, if the Millennium begins in 2034 AD, then the Temple should be *properly restored* (Daniel 8:14; NASB) or *reconsecrated* (NIV) before 2037 AD!

Can the project really be completed this quickly? Well, the Jews who returned from Babylon built the Second Temple in 5 years (they took from 521 to 516 BC) in the midst of strong opposition. Admittedly, others say that it took 20 years (see information retrieved on June 1, 2018 from <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/second-temple/>), and the Pharisees in John 2:20 said that it took 46 years under Herod’s restoration efforts—but under Christ’s leadership, and the full support of every inhabitant on the planet, it’s very realistic to say that it will be finished in just 2 years and 10 months.

Remember that although we’re not going to implement the technology of Babel or that of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Jesus will have an unlimited number of people willing to contribute to the work.

Although the finest stones, fabrics, metals, and wood will be selected and processed, he can get it done! The best materials will be mined, collected, and organized. Then the finest precious stones will be cut. Every metal will be

**to be properly restored.**

‘How long will the vision be, concerning the daily sacrific-  
es and the transgression of desolation, the giving of both the sanctuary and the host to be trampled underfoot?’ And he said to me, ‘For two thousand three hundred days [lit., even-  
nings and mornings]; then the Sanctuary shall be cleansed [NIV, reconsecrated]’ (Daniel 8:13-14; NKJV).

**111. The Temple Sanctuary will be among the Jews forever—  
God will officially be their God, and they’ll officially be  
his people.**

... I will put my Sanctuary among them forever.<sup>60</sup> My dwell-  
ing place will be with them; I will be their God, and they  
will be my people (Ezequiel 37:26-27).

**112. The Gentiles will take notice of God’s favor on Israel.**

Then the nations will know that I the LORD make Israel  
holy, when my Sanctuary is among them forever’ (Ezequiel  
37:28).

**113. Judah and Jerusalem will be so consecrated to God that  
every single pot found there will be set apart for prepar-  
ing the meat sacrificed to God. The bells hanging from  
horse’s necks will be engraved with the words: *Holy to the  
Lord.***

On that day *Holy to the LORD* will be inscribed on the bells  
of the horses, and the cooking pots in the LORD’s House will  
be like the sacred bowls in front of the altar. Every pot in

---

smelted to the finest purity. No noise, not a sound will be heard at the site of construction (1 Kings 6:7). Still, under Christ’s leadership, it can be built quickly!

<sup>60</sup> As we wrote in a previous footnote: This Temple will never be destroyed. Even when the New Jerusalem comes, it will have no temple to replace this Temple. Nor will the New Jerusalem land on top of the Millennium Jerusalem.

I did not see a temple in the city [New Jerusalem], because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple (Revelation 21:22).

Jerusalem and Judah will be holy to the LORD Almighty, and all who come to sacrifice will take some of the pots and cook in them (Zachariah 14:20-21).

**114. The Jews will rebuild Jerusalem upon its ruins, also rebuilding the Palace.**

I will restore the fortunes of Jacob's tents and have compassion on his dwellings; the city will be rebuilt on her ruins, and the Palace will stand in its proper place (Jeremiah 30:18).

**115. The Jews will buy land in the countryside all around Israel, and God will restore their prosperity... this implies that there will be currency in the Kingdom.**

This is what Yahweh says: "As I have brought all this great calamity on this people, so I will give them all the prosperity I have promised them. Once more fields will be bought in this land of which you say, 'It is a desolate waste, without people or animals, for it has been given into the hands of the Babylonians.'

Fields will be bought for silver,<sup>61</sup> and deeds will be signed, sealed and witnessed in the territory of Benjamin, in the villages around Jerusalem, in the towns of Judah and in the towns of the hill country, of the western foothills and of the Negev, because I will restore their fortunes," declares Yahweh (Jeremiah 32:42-44).

I am concerned for you [Israel] and will look on you with favor; you will be plowed and sown (Ezekiel 36:9).

**116. The Jews will rebuild the abandoned cities, ruins, and walls.**

They [the Jews who return to Israel] will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated; they will renew

---

<sup>61</sup> Purchases will be made according to their value in silver weighed out. Gold will also be used as currency.

the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations (Isaiah 61:4).

The towns will be inhabited and the ruins rebuilt (Ezekiel 36:10).

‘In that day I will restore David’s fallen shelter—I will repair its broken walls and restore its ruins—and will rebuild it as it used to be, so that they may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations that bear my name,’ declares Yahweh, who will do these things... They will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them (Amos 9:11-12, 14).

... and I will bring my people Israel back from exile. They will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them. They will plant vineyards and drink their wine; they will make gardens and eat their fruit (Amos 9:14).<sup>62</sup>

Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “On the day when I cleanse you from all of your iniquities [the time of the Millennial Covenant], I will cause the cities to be inhabited, and the ruins will be rebuilt (Ezequiel 36:33; LEB).

## Christ’s World Conquest

### 117. King Jesus will lead us out of Jerusalem to conquer / bless the world.

Gird your sword on your thigh, o mighty one, in your splendor and majesty! In your majesty ride out victoriously for the cause of truth and meekness and righteousness; let your right hand teach you awesome deeds! Your arrows are sharp in the heart of the king’s enemies; the peoples fall under you (Psalm 45:3-6).

The one who breaks open the way [Jesus] will go up before them; they will break through the gate and go out. Their King [Jesus] will pass through before them, Yahweh at their head (Micah 2:13).

<sup>62</sup> The first part of this passage, Amos 9:13, demonstrates that the blessing on the land is what attracts the Jews to return to it. They are drawn to its agricultural abundance.

**118. Jesus will begin to subject all his enemies (demons in high places) to himself.**

... [Jesus will have] destroyed all dominion, authority, and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet... (1 Corinthians 15:25)

The LORD says to my Lord: 'Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool' (Psalm 110:1).

But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet (Hebrews 10:12-13).

**119. We will let out a shout, cheering on Jesus, the Head of the Nations.**

For thus says Yahweh, 'Sing for joy for Jacob with gladness, and shout out for the Head of the Nations' (Jeremiah 31:7).

**120. We (the resurrected children of Abraham by faith) will spread out in every direction, and God will make us a blessing to every nation.**

... I swear by myself, declares Yahweh, that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore... (Genesis 22:16-17)

Your [Jacob's] descendants will be like the dust of the Earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on Earth will be blessed through you and your offspring (Genesis 28:13-14).

---

 Victory over all nations

**121. We will go out, but will not find Israel's prior enemies.  
We'll have overwhelming success.**

Though you search for your enemies, you will not find them. Those who wage war against you will be as nothing at all... See, I will make you into a threshing sledge, new and sharp, with many teeth. You will thresh the mountains<sup>63</sup> and crush them, and reduce the hills to chaff. You will winnow them, the wind will pick them up, and a gale will blow them away (Isaiah 41:12-16).

**122. Israel will plunder their old enemies: Egypt, Edom, Moab, and Ammon [these last three constitute modern-day Jordan]. Egypt and Jordan will be left desolate, and be subjected to Israel.**

Egypt will be desolate,<sup>64</sup> Edom [southwestern Jordan] a desert waste, because of violence done to the people of Judah, in whose land they shed innocent blood (Joel 3:19).

'But all who devour you [Israel] will be devoured; all your enemies will go into exile. Those who plunder you will be plundered; all who make spoil of you I will despoil. But I will restore you [Israel] to health and heal your wounds... (Jeremiah 30:17)

---

<sup>63</sup> These *mountains* are the obstacles that obstruct the rule people of God, for example, the arrogance of the nations which have opposed Israel. Her progress will not be hindered or obstructed any longer. This is a poetic way of saying that Israel will overpower and overwhelm all Gentile nations.

<sup>64</sup> The Egyptians were already defeated by Israel in the Six Day War of 1967. God let the Egyptians suffer the consequences of their opposition to God's people (as prophesied in the passage below), but that was just a foreshadowing of the times to come when they'll be subjected to Israel!

In that day, the Egyptians will become weaklings. They will shudder with fear at the uplifted hand that Yahweh Almighty raises against them. And the land of Judah will bring terror to the Egyptians; everyone to whom Judah is mentioned will be terrified, because of what Yahweh Almighty is planning against them (Isaiah 19:16-17).



... they [the Jews] will plunder the people to the east. They will subdue Edom and Moab [Jordan east of the Dead Sea], and the Ammonites [the Jordanians of Amman] will be subject to them... (Isaiah 11:14)

### God's People Plunder the Nations

**123. The Jews will take possession of enemy cities (like Mecca, Paris, Baghdad, Tokyo, Rome, New Delhi, Beijing, and New York)—not to destroy them, but to bless them.**

[God said to Abraham] Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies... and through your offspring all nations on Earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me (Genesis 22:17-18).

**124. From the plunder, God will fill Zion with treasure—especially spiritual riches (like justice, righteousness, salvation, knowledge, and wisdom)!**

At the uproar of your army, the peoples flee;<sup>65</sup> when you rise up, the nations scatter. Your plunder, O nations, is harvested as by young locusts; like a swarm of locusts people pounce on it.

Yahweh... will fill Zion with his justice and righteousness. He will be the sure foundation for your times, a rich store of salvation and wisdom and knowledge; the fear of Yahweh is the key to this treasure (Isaiah 33:3-6).

Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion, for your horn I will make as iron and your hooves as bronze. And you will break many peoples in pieces, and their gain you will devote to destruction to Yahweh, and their wealth to the Lord of the whole Earth (Micah 4:13; LEB)

---

<sup>65</sup> Who are these people? They are the mortal Gentiles who survived the Great Tribulation and previously passed through the Judgment of the Nations as *sheep* at Jesus' right hand.

125. **The inhabitants of Jerusalem will enjoy the riches of other nations. Even those who are handicapped will obtain spoils.**

The wealth of all the surrounding nations will be collected—great quantities of gold and silver and clothing... (Zachariah 14:14)

... an abundance of spoils will be divided and even the lame will carry off plunder (Isaiah 33:23).

126. **Israel will see an influx of immigrants, many of whom will voluntarily serve the Jews as slaves.**

But Yahweh will have compassion on Jacob, and he will again choose Israel and set them on their land, and the immigrant will join himself to them, and they will attach themselves to the house of Jacob.

And the nations [Gentiles] will take them [the immigrants to Israel] and bring them to their place, and the house of Israel will take possession of them in the land of Yahweh as slaves and female slaves. And this will happen: they will take their captors captive and rule over their oppressors (Isaiah 14:1-2; LEB).

### Kingdom Pastors and Priests

127. **Not only will we be kings, but *priests* on the Earth. That is, we will teach the people, intercede for them, and lead them in worship.**

... [the Lord Jesus] has made us to be a Kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him [Jesus] be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen (Revelation 1:6).

... they [the 24 elders in Heaven] sang a new song, saying: ‘You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them [us] to be a Kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the Earth’ (Revelation 5:9-10).

**128. Many of us will be the good pastors who will assist Jesus to care for and teach the Jews.**

'I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I have driven them and will bring them back to their pasture, where they will be fruitful and increase in number. I will place shepherds over them who will tend them, and they will no longer be afraid or terrified, nor will any be missing,' declares Yahweh (Jeremiah 23:3-4).

Then [after the Jews have returned to Zion] I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will lead you with knowledge and understanding (Jeremiah 3:15).

**129. Jesus will be the One Shepherd over the one flock, Jews and Gentiles. He will be with us and will care for us.**

I [Yahweh God] will save my flock, and they will no longer be plundered... I will place over them One Shepherd, my servant David [Jesus], and he will tend them; he will tend them and be their Shepherd (Ezekiel 34:22-23).

And he [the one who is from Bethlehem] will stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of Yahweh, in the majesty of the name of Yahweh his God. And they will live... (Micah 5:4; LEB)

The LORD is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul; he leads me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me (Psalm 23:1-4).

For this is what the Sovereign LORD [Jesus] says: I myself will search for my sheep and look after them. As a shepherd looks after his scattered flock when he is with them, so will I look after my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places where they were scattered on a day of clouds and darkness. I will bring them out from the nations and gather them from the countries, and I will bring them into their

own land. I will pasture them on the mountains of Israel, in the ravines and in all the settlements in the land.

I will tend them in a good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel will be their grazing land. There they will lie down in good grazing land, and there they will feed in a rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. I myself will tend my sheep and have them lie down, declares the Sovereign LORD. I will search for the lost and bring back the strays. I will bind up the injured and strengthen the weak, but the sleek and the strong I will destroy. I will shepherd the flock with justice (Ezequiel 34:11-16).

I am the Good Shepherd... I have other sheep [God-fearing Gentiles] that are not of this [the Jewish] sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock [Jews and Gentiles together]<sup>66</sup> and one Shepherd [Jesus] (John 10:11-16).

## Jerusalem Restored

### 130. God will rebuild the city of Jerusalem, and it will never be destroyed again.

‘The days are coming,’ declares Yahweh, ‘when this city will be rebuilt for me from the Tower of Hananel to the Corner Gate. The measuring line will stretch from there straight to the hill of Gareb and then turn to Goah. The whole valley where dead bodies and ashes are thrown, and all the terraces out to the Kidron Valley on the east as far as the corner of the Horse Gate, will be holy to Yahweh. The city will never again be uprooted or demolished (Jeremiah 31:38-40).

### 131. Foreigners will come to build Jerusalem’s walls, and they will serve Israel through their kings.

... foreigners shall build your [Zion’s] walls,<sup>67</sup> and their kings

<sup>66</sup> Jesus was talking about the *One Body*, the Church after the integration of the Gentiles into the Christian Jewish community. History will repeat itself and the Gentiles will again join the Jews in service to God in the Millennium Kingdom. Even then, Jesus will be the Good Shepherd.

<sup>67</sup> Since God is a wall of fire around Jerusalem in the beginning of the Millennium, these walls are built later on, after the number of Jerusalem’s inhabitants is complete.

shall serve you... they shall call you the City of Yahweh, Zion of the Holy One of Israel (Isaiah 60:10, 14; LEB)

**132. Jerusalem will be inhabited, and made permanently secure.**

It [Jerusalem] will be inhabited; never again will it be destroyed. Jerusalem will be secure (Zachariah 14:11).

... the people will be secure in their land. They will know that I am the LORD, when I break the bars of their yoke and rescue them from the hands of those who enslaved them. They will no longer be plundered by the nations... (Ezekiel 34:27-28)

**133. The Jews will build their own houses and live in them securely. They will enjoy their gardens.**

They will build houses and dwelt in them; they will plant vineyards and eat their fruit. No longer will they build houses and others live in them, or plant and others eat (Isaiah 65:21-22).

The LORD's justice will dwell in the desert, his righteousness live in the fertile field [of Israel]. The fruit of that righteousness will be peace; its effect will be quietness and confidence forever. My people [speaking of Israel] will live in peaceful dwelling places, in secure homes, in undisturbed places of rest (Isaiah 32:16-18).

**Blessings on young and old in Israel**

**134. Children will fill the streets of Jerusalem, and they'll play there safely. The Kingdom will belong to the children too.**

The city streets will be filled with boys and girls playing there (Zachariah 8:5).

Then people brought little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples rebuked them. Jesus said, 'Let the little children come

to me, and do not hinder them, for the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these' (Matthew 19:13-14).

**135. Senior citizens will advance in age greatly, and will still sit in the public squares of Jerusalem, bearing staffs in their hands.**

For as the days of a tree,<sup>68</sup> so will be the days of my people; my chosen ones will long enjoy the work of their hands (Isaiah 65:22).

Thus says Yahweh of hosts: 'Old men and old women shall again sit in the public squares of Jerusalem, each with staff in hand because of great age'<sup>69</sup> (Zachariah 8:4; LEB).

Never again will there be in it [Jerusalem] an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not live out his years; the one who dies at a hundred will be thought a mere child; the one who fails to reach a hundred will be considered accursed (Isaiah 65:20).

### Social Equality between Genders

**136. Male and female believers together will inherit the *gift of life*, as *co-heirs* of the Kingdom. The dominance of men<sup>70</sup>**

<sup>68</sup> The oldest known tree on Earth is more than 5,000 years old: the Great Basin bristlecone pine located in the White Mountains, California, USA.

<sup>69</sup> How old will they become? According to Isaiah 65:20, a 100-year old will be considered a child. If a child for us is only 8 or 10 years old, and most people live 8-10 times as much—that means that Millennial believers could live to be 800-1000 years old. Think about it—some of those who were born at the start of the Millennium may even see it through to its conclusion!

<sup>70</sup> This dominance was established under the curse when God said that the husband will rule over his wife:

Then the Lord God said to the woman, 'What is this you have done?'... To the woman he said, 'I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labor you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you' (Genesis 3:13, 16).

Her punishment justly corresponded to her sin in that Eve took herself out of God's order, abandoning submission to her husband, and obeying the Serpent

**will end. From then on, all Kingdom men will be like brothers to Kingdom women—living in equality like siblings!**

There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female,<sup>71</sup> for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise (Galatians 3:28-29).

Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them... as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life... (1 Peter 3:7; LEB).

At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like<sup>72</sup> the angels in Heaven (Mat. 2:30).

Treat younger men as brothers... and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity (1 Timothy 5:1-2).

## Jerusalem will be a city of peace

### 137. Jerusalem will be established in peace, free from naval invaders.

Look on Zion, the city of our festivals; your eyes will see Jerusalem, a peaceful abode, a tent that will not be moved; its stakes will never

---

without Adam's oversight. Since then, women desire men's authority, but men in every culture will not cede that authority. Indeed, many have become chauvinists and misogynists, which is wrong.

<sup>71</sup> This passage is famous for being manipulated by liberal-thinking pastors and priests to justify modern feminism. If you read it closely, you'll realize it has nothing to do with gender roles in society. Rather, it's about the equal treatment God will give both men and women *at a future time*, when we will be joint heirs of the Kingdom!

<sup>72</sup> We know that angels are not supposed to marry because there was a time when they did, and it displeased God greatly. Some fallen angels from Antediluvian times were so rebellious that they created a race of super humans, heroes called the *Nephilim*. They were a race of hybrid demon-humans.

... the sons of God saw that the daughters of humans were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose... The Nephilim were on the Earth in those days—and also afterward—when the sons of God went to the daughters of humans and had children by them. They were the heroes of old, men of renown... The LORD regretted that he had made human beings on the Earth (Genesis 6:2, 4, 6).

be pulled up, nor any of its ropes broken... No galley with oars will ride them [the rivers<sup>73</sup> of Zion], no mighty ship will sail them... (Isaiah 33:20-21).

### Jerusalem, the capital of the World

- 138. Jerusalem will be the legislative capital of the World. God's laws and decrees will be issued from it. It will also be the seat of the highest-level international court. Jesus will sit there as Judge.**

The Law will go out from Zion, the Word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He [Jesus] will judge between many peoples and will settle disputes for strong nations far and wide (Micah 4:2-3).

### A Feast for All Peoples<sup>74</sup>

- 139. God will prepare a succulent feast<sup>75</sup> on Mount Zion—and he'll invite representatives from every ethnic group. It will be a banquet with the choicest meats and wine.**

On this mountain the LORD Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine—the best of meats and the finest of wines (Isaiah 25:6).

<sup>73</sup> Currently there are no rivers in Israel navigable for large boats—so the passage speaks of rivers to exist in times to come.

<sup>74</sup> This event is not to be confused with #22-24 (the Wedding Feast of the Lamb) or the Feast in the Kingdom of God (event #186).

<sup>75</sup> How do we know that this event takes place at this point in history, and that it's not the *Marriage Supper of the Lamb* or the *Feast in the Kingdom* that occurs simultaneously with the Final Judgment? The context lets us know that it takes place when Jesus arrives at Mount Zion, and when he establishes his Kingdom, destroying death forever.

On this mountain he will destroy... death forever... The hand of the Lord will rest on this mountain (vv. 7-10).



## Jerusalem's Joy

**140. Jerusalem will be such a great place that we will not care to recall<sup>76</sup> our previous life. The Jews won't use the Exodus as a historical point of reference anymore. Instead, they'll use the Millennial Ingathering as their point of reference.**

The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create, for I will create Jerusalem to be a delight... (Isaiah 65:17-18)

“So then, the days are coming,” declares Yahweh, “when people will no longer say, ‘As surely as Yahweh lives, who brought the Israelites up out of Egypt,’ but they will say, ‘As surely as Yahweh lives, who brought the descendants of Israel up out of the land of the north and out of all the countries where he had banished them.’ Then they will live in their own land” (Jeremiah 23:3-8).

The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind (Isaiah 65:17).

**141. Jerusalem will be a joy, and its people will be forever happy.**

... I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy (Isaiah 65:18).

I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people; the sound of weeping and of crying will be heard in it no more (Isaiah 65:19).

**142. The Jews will never again be displaced**

They will live in the land I gave to my servant Jacob, the land where your ancestors lived. They and their children and their children's children will live there forever... (Ezequiel 37:25).

<sup>76</sup> Be clear about what we're talking about here: No memory loss, just super-abundant joy! God won't reprogram our brains to forget certain things; we just won't care to remember them. They'll be thoughts “filed away” in the back of our memory.

---

 The nations subject themselves to Jesus
143. **Egypt will submit to Christ**

... when they [the Egyptians] cry out to Yahweh because of oppressors,<sup>77</sup> he will send them a Savior and a Defender, and he<sup>78</sup> will deliver them (Isaiah 19:20-20).

144. **Many government leaders from around the world will travel to Jerusalem so that they might speak with a Jew there. They will seek to associate with the Jews to get God's blessing.**

And many peoples and powerful nations will come to seek Yahweh of Hosts in Jerusalem, and to entreat the favor of Yahweh. Thus says Yahweh of Hosts: "In those days' ten men from all the nations of every language will take hold of the hem of a Judean man, saying, 'Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you!'" (Zachariah 8:22-24; LEB)

145. **God will establish Zion as the main pilgrimage destination of the world. Massive caravans of people will pour into the Temple daily, seeking instruction and wisdom from Jesus—the Great Teacher.**

In the last days the mountain of the LORD's Temple... peoples will stream to it. Many nations will come and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the Temple of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths' (Micah 4:1-2).

In that day the Root of Jesse [Jesus] will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his resting place [Jerusalem] will be glorious (Isaiah 11:10).

---

<sup>77</sup> Who could these *oppressors* be? Firstly, they are the military leaders who have been ruling Egypt in modern times: Nasser, Mubarak, Sadat, and Sisi. God will free Egyptian believers from them. But even later, during the times of the Millennium, after we rule, there will be mortals who—although they entered the Millennium in God's good grace—eventually turn evil. Involving themselves in government, they will be the precursors of Gog, the rebel leader of the world.

<sup>78</sup> The *he* here refers to the Savior and Defender of all people, Jesus Christ.

146. **Jesus will teach people the right way to go. He will judge between the nations, settling disputes as Judge.**

He [Jesus] will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths.' The Law will go out from Zion, the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He [Jesus] will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples (Isaiah 2:3).

147. **Our Lord Jesus will be the wise King the world has always needed. He will reign with justice in favor of the poor, and against evil people.**

A Shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord—and he will delight in the fear of the Lord.

He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the Earth. He will strike the Earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked (Isaiah 11:1-4).

148. **All nations will recognize the greatness of Israel, and know that God has blessed them. Jerusalem will become the praise of the Earth, and will get the new name *Hepzibah*, while Israel will get the new name *Beulah*.**

Their [the Jews'] descendants will be known among the nations and their offspring among the peoples. All who see them will acknowledge that they are a people the Lord has blessed (Isaiah 61:9).

'... I will save the lame and gather the outcast. I will change them from shame to glory and renown throughout the whole world.

At that time I will bring you [Israel] in; at the time of my gathering you together. For I will make you renowned and praised among all the nations of the Earth when I restore

your fortunes before your eyes,' says Yahweh (Zephaniah 3:19-20).

I have posted watchmen on your walls, Jerusalem; they will never be silent day or night. You who call on the LORD, give yourselves no rest, and give him no rest till he establishes Jerusalem and makes her the praise of the Earth (Isaiah 62:6-7).

... you [Jerusalem] will be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will bestow. You will be a crown of splendor in the LORD's hand, a royal diadem in the hand of your God. No longer will they call you *Deserted*, or name your land *Desolate*. But you will be called Hephzibah [My Delight is in Her], and your land Beulah [Married]; for the LORD will take delight in you (Isaiah 62:3-4).

#### 149. God will draw the nations to Jerusalem.

Listen to me, my people; hear me, my nation: Instruction will go out from me; my justice will become a light to the nations. My righteousness draws near speedily, my salvation is on the way, and my arm will bring justice to the nations (Isaiah 51:4-5).

... nations shall come to your [Jerusalem's] light, and kings to the bright light of your sunrise. Lift up your eyes all around and see! All of them gather; they come to you (Isaiah 60:3-4; LEB).

... the children of those who oppressed you shall come to you [Israel] bending low, and all those who treated you disrespectfully shall bow down at the soles of your feet (Isaiah 60:14; LEB).

#### Gentile mortals who entered the Millennium will remain wor-shippers of Yahweh

#### 150. People will come from east and west to honor Yahweh.

From the west, people will fear the name of Yahweh, and from the rising of the sun, they will revere his glory (Isaiah 59:19).

**151. The gates of Jerusalem will be opened continually so that the nations might bring their offerings.**

And your [Jerusalem's] gates shall continually be open, day and night they shall not be shut, to bring you the wealth of nations, and their kings shall be led (Isaiah 60:11; LEB).

**152. All people will flock to the Temple of Yahweh to seek God there.**

... all nations will stream to it [Zion]. Many peoples will come and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of Yahweh, to the Temple of the God of Jacob (Isaiah 2:2-3).

'Many nations will join themselves to Yahweh on that day, and they will be my people... (Zachariah 2:11; LEB)

At that time they will call Jerusalem 'The Throne of Yahweh,' and all the nations will be gathered to it, to the name of Yahweh, to Jerusalem, and they will no longer go after the stubbornness of their evil heart (Jeremiah 3:17; LEB).

**153. Island nations will bring their wealth to Jerusalem.**

The islands will look to me and wait in hope for my arm (Isaiah 51:5).

Who are these that fly along like clouds, like doves to their nests? Surely the islands look to me; in the lead are the ships of Tarshish, bringing your children from afar, with their silver and gold, to the honor of Yahweh your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has endowed you [Jerusalem] with splendor (Isaiah 60:8-9).

... the abundance of the sea shall fall upon you [Jerusalem] (Isaiah 60:5; LEB)

**154. The nations of the world will bring their wealth to Jerusalem as an offering to God.**

... the wealth of the nations shall come to you [Jerusalem]. A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young male

camels of Midian and Ephah. All those from Sheba shall come; they shall bring gold and frankincense, and they shall proclaim the praise of Yahweh (Isaiah 60:5-6; LEB).

You [Israel] will feed on the wealth of nations, and in their riches you will boast (Isaiah 61:6).

**155. The Gentiles will bring their products (the very best livestock, lumber, and metals) to Jerusalem as an offering to Yahweh in his Temple.**

All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered to you [Jerusalem]; the rams of Nebaioth shall serve you. They shall present a sacrifice for favor on my altar, and I will glorify my Honorable House (Isaiah 60:7; LEB).

The glory of Lebanon shall come to you [Israel]; the cypress, the plane, and the pine together, to glorify the place of my Sanctuary, and I will do honor to the Place of my Feet (Isaiah 60:13; LEB).

Instead of bronze I will bring gold, and instead of iron I will bring silver, and instead of wood, bronze, and instead of stones, iron (Isaiah 60:17; LEB).

### The Feast of Tabernacles

**156. Gentiles from countries that were former enemies of Israel will start a new annual tradition: Going to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles.**

Then the survivors from all the nations that have attacked Jerusalem will go up year after year to worship the King, the LORD Almighty, and to celebrate the Festival of Tabernacles (Zachariah 14:16).

**157. We will see righteousness and praise become the norm in every nation.**

... as the soil makes the sprout come up and a garden causes seeds to grow, so the Sovereign Lord will make righteousness and praise spring up before all nations (Isaiah 61:11).

Effects of the Kingdom on the worship and language of other nations

**158. The Egyptians will worship Yahweh, and he will restore them.**

On that day, there will be an altar for Yahweh in in the middle of the land of Egypt, and a stone pillar for Yahweh at her border and it will be a sign and a witness to Yahweh of Hosts in the land of Egypt (Isaiah 19:19-20).

And Yahweh will make himself known to Egypt, and Egypt will know Yahweh on that day, and they will worship with sacrifice and offering, and they will make vows to Yahweh, and they will fulfill them. And Yahweh will strike Egypt, striking and healing; and they will return to Yahweh, and he will respond to their prayer, and he will heal them (Isaiah 19:20-22).

**159. The Assyrians and Egyptians will worship God together, and will build a highway between them.**

There will be a highway for the remnant of his people that is left from Assyria, as there was for Israel when they came up from Egypt (Isaiah 11:16).

In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria. The Assyrians will go to Egypt and the Egyptians to Assyria. The Egyptians and Assyrians will worship together (Isaiah 19:23).

**160. Five Egyptians cities will speak Hebrew (out of a commitment to God). One of those cities will be called *City of the Sun*.**

On that day, there will be five cities in the land of Egypt that speak the language of Canaan and swear an oath to Yahweh of Hosts. One will be called *City of the Sun* (Isaiah 19:18).

**161. All nations of the world will begin to speak Hebrew. God will reverse the effect of Babel. Out of a desire to serve God in unison, humans will seek the best communication, and will agree on Hebrew as our *lingua franca* (like English is now, and as Latin and Greek were in the past)!**

... then I will make the speech of the nations pure;<sup>79</sup> that all of them might call on the name of Yahweh, to serve him in unison (Zephaniah 3:9).

**162. Northern Iraq and Egypt will become the two leading countries on Earth, with Israel third. That means that the blessings of Israel will affect other nations in such a way that they'll be even more capable of blessing than Israel!**

In that day Israel will be the third, along with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing on the Earth. The Lord Almighty will bless them, saying, 'Blessed be Egypt my people, Assyria my handiwork, and Israel my inheritance' (Isaiah 19:24).

### Agricultural Bonanza in Israel

**163. A fountain will flow from the Temple in Jerusalem—moving all the way to the eastern side of the Jordan River, north of the Dead Sea, watering Judah.**

A fountain will flow out of the Lord's House and will water the Valley of Acacias<sup>80</sup> (Joel 3:18).

---

<sup>79</sup> This is widely interpreted to mean that God will give us one universal language during the Millennium. We will overcome the linguistic barrier he established at Babel, and serve God in unison. No other language would be more appropriate for such worship than Hebrew—the language of the Bible, the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and Christ himself. This is why five Egyptian cities will be speaking it at the beginning of the Millennium. Those cities start a trend.

<sup>80</sup> The Valley of Acacias (Valley of Shittim) is located on the eastern side of the Jordan River, to the north of the Dead Sea. It was where the King of Moab sent Moabite young women to the men of Israel to seduce them sexually and lead them into idolatry (Numbers 25:1-3). It was also the launching site for the armies of Israel when they set out against Jericho and Canaan in the days of Joshua (Joshua 2:1 and 3:1) [taken on August 18, 2017 from [https:// enduring-word.com/bible-commentary /joel-3/](https://enduring-word.com/bible-commentary/joel-3/)].



**164. Israelites won't be able to keep up with the overwhelming harvest. Wine-producing grapes will easily grow in abundance.**

'The days are coming,' declares Yahweh, 'when the reaper will be overtaken by the plowman and the planter by the one treading grapes.<sup>81</sup> New wine will drip from the mountains and flow from all the hills... (Amos 9:13)

**165. God will cause the fruits and crops to increase in Israel, and will end famine there forever.**

And you will  dwell  in the  land  that I gave to your ancestors, and you will be to me as a  people , and I will be to you as  God . And I will save you from all of your uncleanness, and I will call to the  grain , and I will cause it to  increase , and I will  not  bring  famine  upon you. And I will cause the  fruit of the tree  and the  crop of the field  to  increase , so that you will  not suffer again  the disgrace of  famine  among the nations... (Ezequiel 36:28-30; LEB)

**166. Desolate lands will be cultivated in Israel as a testimony to the Gentiles.**

And the  land that was desolate  will be  cultivated  in the very place that it was desolate  before the eyes  of  all of the persons  crossing over (Ezequiel 36:34; LEB).

And they will say, 'This  desolate land  has become like the  Garden of Eden , and the  wasted  and  desolate  and  destroyed cities , now being  refortified , are  inhabited ' (Ezequiel 36:35; LEB).

... the nations who are left all around, you will know that I,  Yahweh , I  built  that which was  destroyed ; I  planted  the  desolate land ; I,  Yahweh , I have spoken, and I will act (Ezequiel 36:36; LEB).

---

<sup>81</sup> Everyone working in agriculture is "stepping on each other's' feet." That means that there's so much work to do that the workers can't keep up with it! Notice that this passage mentions workers who are already in Israel, so it describes the times after the migratory influx of Jews.

- 167. Israel will have abundant harvests of fruits, vegetables, grains, nuts, and cereals, which will be used to supply the rest of the world with food. They will be the #1 exporter of food in the world!**

In days to come Jacob will take root, Israel will bud and blossom and fill all the world with fruit (Isaiah 27:6).

I will make them [the Jews] and the places surrounding my hill [Zion] a blessing (Ezekiel 34:26).

- 168. The Jews will enjoy their own harvests, and no other nation will ever take advantage of them again.**

Never again will I give your grain as food for your enemies, and never again will foreigners drink the new wine for which you have toiled; but those who harvest it will eat it and praise the LORD, and those who gather the grapes will drink it in the courts of my Sanctuary (Isaiah 62:8-9).

- 169. The Jews will sow and reap in Samaria, and will enjoy what they harvest.**

You will again plant vineyards on the mountains of Samaria. The planters will plant, and they will enjoy it (Jeremiah 31:5).

### Population Explosion

- 170. God will build up Israel and Judah with babies and newborn animals, *causing* the population to multiply, thereby prospering Israel.**

Then Yahweh your God will make you most prosperous in all the work of your hands and in the fruit of your womb, the young of your livestock and the crops of your land. Yahweh will again delight in you and make you prosperous, just as he delighted in your ancestors (Deuteronomy 30:6; 8-9).

Thus says the Lord Yahweh: ‘Again this time I will let myself be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do something for them; I will cause them to increase their population like a

flock. Like the flock of the sanctuary, like the flock of Jerusalem at its festival, so the desolate cities will be filled with flocks of people; and they will know that I am Yahweh' (Ezekiel 36:37-38; LEB).

'The days are coming,' declares Yahweh, 'when I will plant the kingdoms of Israel and Judah with the offspring of people and of animals. Just as I watched over them to uproot and tear down, and to overthrow, destroy and bring disaster, so I will watch over them to build and to plant,' declares Yahweh (Jeremiah 31:27-28).

**171. The inhabitants of Zion will be exuberant and joyful—drinking wine, eating meat, in beauty the young men and women will dance and sing.**

[Due to her fertility,] Joy and gladness will be found in her [Zion], thanksgiving and the sound of singing (Isaiah 51:3).

... I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy. I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people; the sound of weeping and of crying will be heard in it no more (Isaiah 65:18-19).

And they will come, and they will sing for joy on the height of Zion, and they will be radiant over the goodness of Yahweh, over the grain, and over the wine, and over the olive oil, and over the young ones of the flock, and over the cattle. And their life will become like a well-watered garden, and they will never<sup>82</sup> languish again (Jeremiah 31:12).

'Then the young woman will rejoice in the dancing in a ring, and the young men and the old men together. And I will turn their mourning to jubilation, and I will comfort them, and I will gladden them from their sorrow. And I will saturate the appetite of the priests with fatness, and my people will be satisfied with my goodness,' declares Yahweh (Jeremiah 31:13-14).

<sup>82</sup> This has not been fulfilled yet, for it says *never again*. Israel still has times when it languishes.

...you will inherit a double portion in your land, and everlasting joy will be yours (Isaiah 61:7).

... your days of mourning shall come to an end (Isaiah 60:20; LEB).

They [God's people] will sparkle in his land like jewels in a crown. How attractive and beautiful they will be! Grain will make the young men thrive, and new wine the young women (Zechariah 9:16-17).

### Private Property

**172. Every Israelite will enjoy his own private property, and will invite his neighbors over to enjoy fresh figs and grapes. Someone greater than Solomon<sup>83</sup> will be King.**

'In that day each of you will invite your neighbor to sit under your vine and fig tree,' declares the LORD Almighty (Zachariah 3:10).

Everyone will sit under their own vine and under their own fig tree, and no one will make them afraid, for the LORD Almighty has spoken (Micah 4:4).

During Solomon's lifetime Judah and Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, lived in safety, everyone under their own vine and under their own fig tree (1 Kings 4:25)

---

<sup>83</sup> Luke 11:31 says:

The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the Earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater-than-Solomon is here.

## International Crises

**173. As time passes during the Millennium, perhaps some 500 or 900 years into it, some nations will refuse to serve Israel, and God will devastate them.**

... the nation and the kingdom that will not serve you [Israel] shall perish, and the nations shall be utterly devastated (Isaiah 60:12; LEB).

**174. God will punish with drought any nation that does not participate in the annual pilgrimage of the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem. Unfortunately, Egypt will be one of those nations.**

If any of the peoples of the Earth do not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD Almighty, they will have no rain. If the Egyptian people do not go up and take part, they will have no rain. The LORD will bring on them the plague he inflicts on the nations that do not go up to celebrate the Festival of Tabernacles. This will be the punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all the nations that do not go up to celebrate the Festival of Tabernacles (Zachariah 14:17-19)

## The Revolt against Christ's Kingdom

**175. The Devil will be released from the Abyss, and will go out to deceive mortals everywhere—organizing them for a military revolt against Christ.**

When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the Earth—Gog and Magog—and to gather them for battle (Revelation 20:7-8).

**176. Satan will sow a plan in the mind of Gog to conquer Israel. It will seem to Gog to be an unprotected and vulnerable place.**

Thus says the LORD Yahweh: “And then on that day, things will come up on your [Gog’s] mind, and you will devise evil

plans. And you [Gog] will say, ‘I will go up against a land of open country; I will come to the people being at rest in safety, all of them dwelling without a wall and crossbars and without doors, to loot loot, and to plunder plunder, to assail inhabited ruins and a people gathered together from various peoples and who are acquiring livestock and goods and dwelling at the center of the world...’<sup>84</sup> (Ezequiel 38:10-12)

**177. Gog will amass an impressive international army against Israel. Along with mobs of civilians, they will come by foot and on horseback. All will bear swords, various shields, and helmets.**

In number they [Gog and Magog<sup>85</sup>] are like the sand on the seashore. They marched across the breadth of the Earth and surrounded the camp of God’s people, the city he loves (Revelation 20:8-9).

... set your face toward Gog of the land of Magog, the head leader of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him. And you must say, “Thus says the LORD Yahweh: ‘Look! I am against you, Gog... I will bring you out and all of your horses and horsemen fully armed, all of them, a great crowd, holding a shield, and small shield, and holding swords,<sup>86</sup> all of them. Persia [Iran], Cush [Sudan-Ethi-

---

<sup>84</sup> These are God’s official coordinates for Jerusalem—regardless of what Greenwich geographers say about the Prime Meridian and Ecuador’s Center of the World Monument—*Jerusalem is at the center of the world*. To understand God’s wisdom better, just study a world map and you see that it’s located right where three continents meet. It is highly accessible from each of the four cardinal compass points.

<sup>85</sup> When the Bible refers to *Magog*, it is referring to an ethnic group: the descendants of Magog. This Magog was the son of Japheth, a grandson of Noah (Genesis 10:2). He has long been associated with the *Scythians* (who inhabited the Caucuses and the plains north of the Black Sea) and the *Tatars* (who inhabited what is today Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkistan—the lands surrounding the Aral and the Caspian Seas). The first name Gog is common among the Tartar people group even today!

<sup>86</sup> At the beginning of the Millennium, Jesus established the law that no more swords should be made and no more armies should be organized. They beat their swords into plowshares in the beginning of the Millennium,

opia], and Put [Libya] are with them, all of them, with a small shield and helmet...” (Ezekiel 38:1-4)

After many days you will be mustered; in the last years<sup>87</sup> you will come to a restored land from the sword, gathered from many peoples on the mountains of Israel which were as permanent ruins but from peoples it was brought out, and they will dwell in safety, all of them. And you will advance like a storm; you will come, and you will be like a cloud covering the land, and all of your troops and many nations along with you...” (Ezekiel 38:8-9)

Therefore prophesy, son of man, and you must say to Gog, “Thus says the Lord Yahweh: ‘Will you not realize on that day when my people Israel are dwelling in safety, and so you will come from your place, from the remote areas of the north,<sup>88</sup> you and many people with you, horsemen all of them,<sup>89</sup> a great crowd and a vast army, and you will advance against my people Israel like a cloud covering the land; it will be in the last days,<sup>90</sup> and I will bring you against my land... O Gog!” (Ezequiel 38:14-16)

---

but they find a way to forge them again at the end of the 1000 years—that means that they will have developed heavy industry. Nonetheless, it’s not today’s technology for making guns, missiles, or bombs. They will not have the industrial capacity for building warships, submarines, tanks, or aircraft either.

<sup>87</sup> This phrase ‘in the last years’ is synonymous with ‘after many days’ (which you’ll find in the same sentence).

<sup>88</sup> The origin of Gog, the land of Magog, is in the far north, a land which historically been associated with what lies south of Russia—the Caucasus [Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan]. For the Israelites, that was the *far north*. In the Millennial Kingdom, it could also include Russia and Scandinavia since the far north of Millennial times will extend further north than it did at the times of Ancient Israel.

<sup>89</sup> Those who are arriving to attack Jerusalem are horsemen. They do not use motorized vehicles, but horses for transportation. This further demonstrates that they will not have developed modern advanced technology.

<sup>90</sup> This will occur in what God calls *the last days*. That is, the last days of the Millennium Kingdom.

**178. There will be a catastrophic global earthquake—one which will shake absolutely every creature and every person on Earth. Every mountain will crumble and every wall will fall.**

... certainly on that day a great earthquake will be on the land of Israel. And the fish of the sea and the birds of the heaven and the animals of the field and all of the creeping things that creep on the Earth and all of the humans who are on the surface of the Earth will shake at my presence; and the mountains will be demolished, and the steep mountain sides will fall, and every wall on the Earth will fall (Ezequiel 38:19-20).

**179. God will cause his enemies to react to the earthquake by panicking, and fighting against one another with swords.**

‘And I will call against him [Gog] in all of my mountains a sword,’ declares the Lord Yahweh, ‘And the sword of each person will be against his brother (Ezequiel 38:21).

**180. God will send down a plague of blood, rain, hailstones, fire, and brimstone—to fall upon those who have come against Jerusalem.**

**God will do this to show his authority to all the people of the Earth, and with it he will give Christ his long-awaited final victory over his enemies.<sup>91</sup>**

... fire came down from heaven and devoured them [Gog and Magog] (Revelation 20:9).

---

<sup>91</sup> It is necessary that God make Jesus’ enemies his *footstool* (Hebrews 10:13) before Jesus hands the Kingdom over to the Father. That’s why 1 Corinthians 15:24-25 says that Jesus must first have ‘destroyed all dominion, authority and power’ and must ‘reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet’ previous to the time that he ‘hands over the Kingdom to God the Father.’ This making Jesus’ enemies his *footstool* is mentioned seven times in the Bible (Psalm 110:1; Matthew 22:44; Mark 12:36; Luke 20:43; Acts 2:35; Hebrews 1:13; and 10:13). The Hebrews 10 passage is particularly important because it clarifies that Jesus has not had this victory yet. It’s still pending for the future. Are you looking forward to it?



And I will execute justice with him with a plague and with blood and torrents of rain, and hailstones; fire and sulfur I will cause to fall on him [Gog] and on his troops and on many peoples who are with him.

And so I will exalt myself, and I will show myself holy, and I will make myself known before the eyes of many nations, and they will know that I am Yahweh' (Ezequiel 38:22-23).

I will send fire on Magog and on those who live in safety in the coastlands,<sup>92</sup> and they will know that I am Yahweh.

I will make known my holy name among my people Israel. I will no longer let my holy name be profaned, and the nations will know that I Yahweh am the Holy One in Israel.

It is coming! It will surely take place, declares the Sovereign Lord. This is the day I have spoken of... 'I will display my glory among the nations, and all the nations will see the punishment I inflict and the hand I lay on them' (Ezequiel 39:6-8, 21).

Son of man, prophesy against Gog and say: "This is what the Sovereign LORD says: 'I am against you, Gog, chief prince of Meshek and Tubal.'<sup>93</sup> I will turn you around and drag you along. I will bring you from the far north and send you against the mountains of Israel. Then I will strike your bow from your left hand and make your arrows drop from your right hand. On the mountains of Israel you will fall, you and all your troops and the nations with you... (Ezequiel 39:1-4)

<sup>92</sup> This reference to the *coastlands* demonstrates (through Hebrew parallelism) that the inhabitants of Magog lived near a coast. That makes perfect sense since the descendants of Magog inhabited the strip of land that lies between the Caspian Sea and the Black Sea.

<sup>93</sup> These regions are today known as the *Caucuses*—which include Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, and southwestern Russia.

181. ~~Jesus will send angels around the globe to take all sinners out of the Millennial Kingdom<sup>94</sup> and the angels will cast perpetrators into the blazing furnace.~~

~~The Kingdom of Heaven<sup>95</sup> is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared.~~

~~The owner's servants came to him and said, 'Sir, didn't you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?'~~

~~'An enemy did this,' he replied.~~

~~The servants asked him, 'Do you want us to go and pull them up?'~~

~~'No,' he answered, 'because while you are pulling the weeds, you may uproot the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds<sup>96</sup> and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn...'~~

~~His disciples came to him and said, 'Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field.'<sup>97</sup>~~

---

<sup>94</sup> We're talking about the other mortals around the world who did not join Gog's armies, but who still were stumbling blocks in the Kingdom of Christ.

<sup>95</sup> Christ started many of his parables with this expression, even when his parable doesn't necessarily refer to the events of the Kingdom after its arrival—but this time the expression does refer to future Kingdom events!

<sup>96</sup> If this parable were about the Rapture, then it would not mention a "collecting of weeds"—right? We know that believers will be raptured and unbelievers will not. There is no "collecting of weeds" in the Rapture. That's why we deduce that this passage refers to the end of the Millennium.

<sup>97</sup> This parable is more commonly known as the Parable of *the Wheat and the Tares*.

He answered, ‘The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world,<sup>98</sup> and the good seed stands for the people of the Kingdom. The weeds are the people of the Evil One, and the enemy who sows them is the Devil. The harvest is the End of the Age, and the harvesters are angels.

As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the End of the Age. The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his Kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. They will throw them into the blazing furnace,<sup>99</sup> where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matthew 13:24-30, 36-42).

**182. Satan will finally be hurled into the Lake of Fire to begin his eternal torment.**

And the Devil, who deceived them [Gog and Magog], was thrown into the Lake of Burning Sulfur, where the Beast and the False Prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever (Revelation 20:9-10).

**183. The birds of prey and scavenging animals will come to eat the bodies of Gog’s fallen armies.**

I will give you as food to all kinds of carrion birds and to the wild animals. You will fall in the open field, for I have spoken, declares the Sovereign LORD (Ezequiel 39:5).

Son of man, this is what the Sovereign LORD says: ‘Call out to every kind of bird and all the wild animals: ‘Assemble and come together from all around to the sacrifice I am preparing for you, the great sacrifice on the mountains of Israel. There you will eat flesh and drink blood. You will eat the flesh of mighty men and drink the blood of the princes of

<sup>98</sup> If the field is *the World*, then the field cannot be *the Church*. This parable is not about God taking hypocrites out of the Church, but about him ridding the Kingdom of evil. It is often preached erroneously, but since Jesus provides us with such a complete explanation, there’s no excuse for erroneous interpretations.

<sup>99</sup> This *furnace* must be the same place as the Lake of Fire [a.k.a., the Lake of Burning Sulphur]. Jesus is using yet another illustration to describe this infamous place.

the Earth as if they were rams and lambs, goats and bulls—all of them fattened animals from Bashan. At the sacrifice I am preparing for you, you will eat fat till you are gluttoned and drink blood till you are drunk. At my table you will eat your fill of horses and riders, mighty men and soldiers of every kind,’ declares the Sovereign LORD” (Ezequiel 39:17-20).

- 184. The Israelites will use the weapons of Gog’s armies for their cooking and household fires. Those weapons will serve the Israelites as fuel for seven years. This indicates: 1) that there will be no more war, and 2) that the weapons of Gog’s armies will be mostly wooden!**

Then those who live in the towns of Israel will go out and use the weapons for fuel and burn them up—the small and large shields, the bows and arrows, the war clubs and spears. For seven years they will use them for fuel. They will not need to gather wood from the fields or cut it from the forests, because they will use the weapons for fuel (Ezequiel 39:9-11).

- 185. It will take more than seven months to bury the bodies of those who died with Gog. A large-scale social program will finally cleanse the land of corpses.**

On that day I will give Gog a burial place in Israel, in the valley of those who travel east of the Sea. It will block the way of travelers, because Gog and all his hordes will be buried there. So it will be called the Valley of *Hamon* [the *multitude* of] Gog.

For seven months the Israelites will be burying them in order to cleanse the land. All the people of the land will bury them, and the day I display my glory will be a memorable day for them, declares the Sovereign Lord. People will be continually employed in cleansing the land. They will spread out across the land and, along with others, they will bury any bodies that are lying on the ground.

After the seven months they will carry out a more detailed search. As they go through the land, anyone who sees a human bone will leave a marker beside it until the gravediggers bury it in the Valley of Hamon Gog, near a town called

~~Hamonah [multitude]. And so they will cleanse the land (Ezequiel 39:12-16).~~

**186. ~~Believers will come from the four cardinal directions of Earth to join the patriarchs and all the prophets at a stellar banquet, while unbelievers are thrown out of the Kingdom.~~**

~~... many will come from east and west<sup>100</sup> and be seated at the banquet with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven (Matthew 8:11; LEB)~~

~~There will be weeping there, and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the Kingdom of God, but you yourselves thrown out. People will come from east and west, and north and south, and will take their places at the Feast in the Kingdom of God... (Luke 13:28-29)~~

~~‘Although they [the poor] cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the Resurrection of the Righteous.’ When one of those at the table with him heard this, he said to Jesus, ‘Blessed is the one who will eat at the Feast in the Kingdom of God’ (Luke 14:14).~~

**187. ~~Although they were Kingdom citizens, the mortals who turned against Christ will be snatched by angels and cast into the Outer Darkness, into a Furnace of Fire. How miserable and sad they will be!~~**

~~... many will come from east and west and be seated at the banquet with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven. But the sons of the Kingdom will be thrown out into the Outer Darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth! (Matthew 8:11-12; LEB)~~

<sup>100</sup> If people are arriving from the four corners of the planet, this feast is not in Heaven. Let's not confuse this, the "Feast in the Kingdom of God," with the Wedding Feast of the Lamb (event #22-24), and let's not confuse it with the Feast for All Peoples (event #139) either.

~~... at the End of the Age. The angels will go out and separate the evil from among the righteous and throw them into the Fiery Furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth! (Matthew 13:49-50; LEB)~~

~~... at the End of this Age. The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will gather out of his Kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the Furnace of Fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth (Matthew 13:49-50; NKJV)~~

### The Day of God—everything will be made new

**188. The *Day of God* will come, in which the atmosphere, space, and the material elements on Earth will be completely burned up. That's when God will create a new atmosphere, a new space, and a new Earth—and righteousness will reign on the Earth!**

... hastening the coming of the Day of God, because of which the heavens<sup>101</sup> will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt<sup>102</sup> with intense heat! But accord-

<sup>101</sup> As a reminder: In general in the Bible, the word *heavens* (plural) means the atmosphere and space. These two are also called the *first* and *second* heaven. When you read the singular word *Heaven*, the Scriptures are referring to the abode of God, which is also known as the *Third* Heaven. The NIV does a miserable job, actually blurring this distinction. Most of the time they do not translate the Hebrew *heavens* as it is in the original script, but take license to change it to *Heaven*.

<sup>102</sup> The material elements that will not be burned up are the city of Jerusalem (Zachariah 14:11) and the Temple in it (Ezequiel 37:26-27). When the city and Temple are built during the Millennium, it is for them to be established forever. Indeed, those who are in the Banquet when the fiery judgment comes are going to be in the city of Jerusalem.

Since it's unlikely that every heir of the Kingdom will fit into the city of Jerusalem, we expect that many of us who are already resurrected will ascend to Heaven temporarily while God purifies the Earth and atmosphere with fire. Jerusalem will again be a refuge just as it was when the fire came down on Gog's armies. Since no other Israeli town is under the same promise as

ing to his promise we are looking for new heavens and a new Earth, in which righteousness dwells (2 Peter 3:12-13; NASB).

## The Eternal Kingdom

### 189. The New Jerusalem will descend from Heaven to Earth—and how beautiful it will be!

[an angel]... showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of Heaven from God. It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. It had a great, high wall with twelve gates, and with twelve angels at the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. There were three gates on the east, three on the north, three on the south and three on the west. The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

The angel who talked with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city, its gates and its walls. The city was laid out like a square, as long as it was wide. He measured the city with the rod and found it to be 12,000 stadia in length, and as wide and high as it is long. The angel measured the wall using human measurement, and it was 144 cubits thick. The wall was made of jasper, and the city of pure gold, as pure as glass.

The foundations of the city walls were decorated with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, the fifth onyx, the sixth ruby, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth turquoise, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst (Revelation 21:10-20).

---

Jerusalem (they will be inhabited as per events #83, 91, and 116 but not “established forever”), they will be burned up with the rest of planet Earth. Not to fear, since they will be renewed in the Eternal Kingdom!

“The End” finally comes, and Jesus delivers the Kingdom over to the Father

**190. Jesus will hand over the Kingdom to the One God, and will subject himself to God.**

Then the End will come, when he [Jesus] hands over the Kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power.<sup>103</sup> For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet...

When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to “him who put everything under him” [God]... (1 Corinthians 15:24-25, 28)

**The Second Resurrection**

**191. Hades will finally be emptied—the righteous and evildoers will be raised.**

Truly, truly I say to you, that an hour is coming—and now is here—when the Dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and the ones who hear will live. For just as the Father has life in himself, thus also he has granted to the Son to have life in himself...

Do not be astonished at this, because an hour is coming in which all those in the tombs will hear his voice and they will come out—those who have done good to a Resurrection of Life, but those who have practiced evil to a Resurrection of Judgment (John 5:25-29).

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

---

<sup>103</sup> When exactly does Jesus destroy Satan's leading demonic principalities, authorities, and powers? *Gradually*, during his 1000-year reign! They fall as we minister the truth and establish true religion throughout the World. By the time the Devil is freed from the Abyss, he won't have any demonic helpers to inspire false religion, psychology, theologies, or philosophies. One by one they will be destroyed through the Kingdom government.



... there will be a Resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked (Acts 24:15).

### 192. Those who drowned at sea and those who were in Hades will come out.

The sea gave up the Dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the Dead who were in them... (Revelation 20:12)

**The Eternal Judgment** (an expression found in Hebrews 6:2)

### 193. Judgment Day will arrive

... the Lord knows how to... keep the unrighteous under punishment for the Day of Judgment (2 Peter 2:9).

And the angels who did not keep to their own domain but deserted their proper dwelling place, he has kept in eternal bonds under deep gloom for the judgment of the Great Day (Jude 1:6).

‘For behold, the Day is coming, burning like a furnace; and all the arrogant and every evildoer will be chaff; and the Day that is coming will set them ablaze,’ says the LORD of hosts, ‘so that it will leave them neither root nor branch’ (Malachi 4:1).

On that Day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and expel demons in your name, and perform many miracles in your name?’ And then I will say to them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Depart from me, you who practice lawlessness!’ (Matthew 7:22; LEB)

Truly I say to you, it will be more bearable for the region of Sodom and Gomorrah on the Day of Judgment than for that town! (Matthew 10:15; LEB)

**194. God will take his seat on his Great White Throne—an inevitable and frightening moment for all.**

Then I saw a Great White Throne and Him who sat on it [the One God], from whose face the Earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them (Revelation 20:11; NKJV).

**195. All people—even *we*—will stand before God, to bow the knee and acknowledge him with our lips.**

And I saw the Dead, small and great, standing before God... (Revelation 20:12)

... we will all stand before God's Judgment Seat. It is written: "As surely as I live," says the Lord, 'every knee will bow before me; every tongue will acknowledge God'" (Romans 14:10-11).

**196. Books with everyone's actions will be opened, and the Book of Life will be opened.**

... books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the Book of Life (Revelation 20:12).

**197. Every person—yes, even *we*—will render an account of our lives to God, and be judged according to our actions.**

So then, each of us will give an account of ourselves to God (Romans 14:12).

And they were judged, each one according to his works... (Revelation 20:13).

### The Lake of Fire

**198. Death and Hades will be cast into the Lake of Fire—the *Second Death*. A person's first death is death in the body, but the second is when a person's spirit is lost forever.**

Then Death and Hades were cast into the Lake of Fire. This is the Second Death (Revelation 20:15).

**199. Anyone not found in the Book of Life will be hurled into the Lake of Fire.**

And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the Lake of Fire (Revelation 20:15).

**Entering into Glory****200. We will enter into eternal glory.**

... the God of all Grace... called you to his eternal glory... (1 Peter 5:10)

**201. We will shine with glory.**

Then the righteous will shine like the sun<sup>104</sup> in the Kingdom of their Father... (Matthew 13:43).

... Moses... was not aware that his face was radiant because he had spoken with the Lord. When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, his face was radiant, and they were afraid to come near him... When Moses finished speaking to them, he put a veil over his face...his face was radiant (Exodus 34:29-30, 35).

**God with us****202. God will be with us, and we'll be his people.**

I will be their God, and they will be my people (Jeremiah 31:33).

They will be my people, and I will be their God (Jeremiah 32:38).

... I will be their God and they will be my children (Revelation 21:7).

---

<sup>104</sup> The last stanza of *Amazing Grace* says "When we've been there ten thousand years bright shining as the sun, we've no less days to sing God's praise than when we first begun." Now you know where the composer, John Newton's, inspiration came from.

---

 New Jerusalem

**203. We will happily enter the New Jerusalem through its giant-pearl gates.**

Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they... may enter by the gates into the city (Revelation 22:14; NASB).

The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each gate made of a single pearl (Revelation 21:21).

**204. We'll arrive at the New Jerusalem to be with angels, the Church, and with God.**

... you have come to<sup>105</sup> Mount Zion, to the City of the Living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the Church of the Firstborn, whose names are written in Heaven. You have come to God, the Judge of All, to the spirits of the righteous made perfect... (Hebrews 12:22-23)

**205. We'll enter into the city that Abraham longed to see—the heavenly country he and all the patriarchs so desired.**

... [Abraham] was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose Architect and Builder is God...

... [men like Abraham] show that they are looking for a country of their own. If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. Instead, they were longing for a better country—a heavenly one... God... has prepared a city for them (Hebrews 11:10, 13-16).

---

<sup>105</sup> This phrase “you have come to” means that this is the hope to which we have access once we are in the Lord Jesus Christ. It’s our new focus when we are born again. These are the promises of which we are to be participants when all is fulfilled.

**206. God's glorious Throne—which he shares with Jesus—  
will be in the New Jerusalem.**

The Throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city...  
(Revelation 22:3)

**207. We will serve God.**

... his [God's] servants will serve him (Revelation 22:3).

**208. We will get to be with our true Mother, the one who gave  
birth to us spiritually: The New Jerusalem.**

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

**209. The city will not have a temple building. Rather, the  
Temple will be God and Christ, who will continually  
illuminate the city with their glory! Because of their light,  
night will cease to exist *in the city*.<sup>106</sup>**

I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its Temple.

The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it,  
for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp  
(Revelation 21:22-23).

There will be no more night. They [the inhabitants of the city] will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light (Revelation 22:5).

The sun shall no longer be your light by day, and for bright light the moon shall not give you light, but Yahweh will be

---

<sup>106</sup> Notice that the Bible never says that *night* will cease to exist on the Earth. There will still be normal days and nights everywhere else on the globe. The New Jerusalem will be the exception, enjoying this special glory-light from God and Christ, and will not require the light of the sun. Don't take these verses to mean that the sun won't shine upon the city. It's just that the New Jerusalem won't need the sun's light.

your everlasting light, and your God your glory. Your sun shall no longer go down, and your moon shall not wane, for Yahweh Himself will be your everlasting light (Isaiah 60:19-20; LEB).

## 210. Each victorious believer will planted eternally in God's Temple.

The one who is victorious I will make a pillar in the Temple of my God. Never again will they leave it<sup>107</sup> (Rev. 3:12).

---

<sup>107</sup> We've already explained that the Millennial Temple will continue to exist when the Eternal Kingdom comes. We also just saw that in the New Jerusalem there won't be a physical temple building. Yahweh and Jesus are the Temple of the city. Hence, our concept of what a temple is will change drastically. How will it change? Being in God's Temple will mean being in *God's presence*. This passage could not mean that we'll be confined to one space for all eternity. It means that we'll be with God, and God is not confined to just one space. He's the freest and most mobile of all, since he's Sovereign God.

Being a *pillar* is metaphorical. Being a pillar means that we'll support God's glory (he's more glorified when more people serve him). There won't be one particular building where God will dwell. He'll be everywhere, and so will those who receive this great honor.

Remember that God never has been, nor ever will be confined to one space. His Throne has wheels, he flies on the wings of the cherubim, and he walks where he will. That means that when he leaves the New Jerusalem to visit other parts of the planet, that the people who receive the honor of being pillars, will accompany him. They get the blessing of always being with him. *His presence* is the True Temple! The same goes for Jesus—being with him is being in the Temple!

Here's a Bible passage that proves that God moves about as he wills:

Moses said, 'Now show me your glory.' And the Lord said, 'I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, Yahweh, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. But,' he said, 'you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live.'

Then the Lord said, 'There is a place near me where you may stand on a rock. When my glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft in the rock and cover you with my hand until I have passed by. Then I will remove my hand and you will see my back; but my face must not be seen' (Exodus 33:18-23).

**211. The kings of the Earth will bring their glory to the New Jerusalem.**

The nations will walk by its [the New Jerusalem's] light, and the kings of the Earth [that's us]<sup>108</sup> will bring their splendor into it. On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there. The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it... (Revelation 21:24-26).

**212. We will inherit the New Earth: The same planet but with no oceans, renewed soil / land / atmosphere, and a Spring from which we may drink the Water of Life.**

Then I saw a new heaven and a new Earth, for the first heaven and the first Earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea... He who was seated on the Throne said, 'I am making everything new... To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the Spring of the Water of Life. Those who are victorious will inherit all this... (Revelation 21:1, 6-7)

**213. We will see God's face.**

They will see his [God's] face... (Revelation 22:4)

**214. God will take away all of our sadness and pain.**

He [God] will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain... (Revelation 21:5).

**215. We'll get God's name tattooed on our foreheads, indicating that we belong to God.**

... his name will be on their foreheads (Revelation 22:4).

---

<sup>108</sup> A remarkable fact: There will be kings on the Earth during the Eternal Kingdom. Those kings will not only rule during the Millennium, but forever!

**216. We will enter a fantastic park, the Paradise of God, after passing through the gates of the city New Jerusalem. There we'll eat delicious fruits, benefit from the Tree of Life, and walk down a great boulevard of pure gold. We'll walk along the River of the Water of Life.**

Then the angel showed me the River of the Water of Life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the Throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the Great Street of the city.

On each side of the river stood the Tree of Life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations (Revelation 22:1-2).

The Great Street of the city [New Jerusalem] was of gold, as pure as transparent glass (Revelation 21:21).

To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to eat from the Tree of Life, which is in the Paradise of God (Revelation 2:7).

... Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the Tree of Life and may go through the gates into the city [New Jerusalem] (Revelation 22:14).

**217. We will reign eternally.**

... they [the servants of God] will reign for ever and ever (Revelation 22:5).<sup>109</sup>




---

<sup>109</sup> What a great verse! It proves that our authority will be *eternal*, not just during the 1000-year reign of Christ. We will reign forever!



## IV. Judgment

So you don't like to study Revelation? Does it have too much violence, war, and judgment? Well, how about reading the narrations of the Flood, Sodom and Gomorrah, or the Ten Plagues of Egypt? What about the countless judgments God sent to Israel? Do you remember the plague God sent to wipe out 70,000 Israelites? God was so angry that he was at the point of destroying every inhabitant of Jerusalem with a sword-wielding angel.

...the LORD sent a plague on Israel, and seventy thousand men of Israel fell dead. And God sent an angel to destroy Jerusalem. But as the angel was doing so, the LORD saw it and relented concerning the disaster and said to the angel who was destroying the people, 'Enough! Withdraw your hand.' The Angel of the LORD was then standing at the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.

David looked up and saw the Angel of the LORD standing between heaven and Earth, with a drawn sword in his hand extended over Jerusalem... (1 Chronicles 21:14-16).

Or how do you feel about the time God was going to wipe out the entire nation, about three million<sup>110</sup> Jews altogether? Moses interceded, saving them—but have no doubt, God was bent on destroying the whole lot of them!

---

<sup>110</sup> Jacob's family came to Egypt with a total of 70 people (Exodus 1:5). After 430 years of brutal slave labor, that number rose to about 600,000 men (Exodus 12:37)... The book of Numbers begins with a national census (1:45-46)... conducted after the exodus from Egypt and it totals 603,550 men above the age of 20. Since these figures apply only to adult males, it has been traditionally assumed that the total number of participants including women and children, could have approximated 2.5 million people... reached by estimating that the men would have been married and each family having at least 2 children.

Among the Jewish people of ancient culture, large families were considered an honor... If the number of children per family were just four, then the number of people that left Egypt could have been 3.5 million people (Taken from <http://journeyrevolution.blogspot.com/2009/05/how-many-jews-left-egypt.html> on February 7, 2017).

'I have seen these people,' the LORD said to Moses, 'and they are a stiff-necked people. Now leave me alone so that my anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them. Then I will make you into a great nation' (Exodus 32:9-10).

## Feeling Good

If you feel a degree of rejection towards those passages of the Bible, then you should ask yourself whether your feelings are in agreement with the will of God. Are they? Christians should long for God's judgments. Has anybody ever taught you that? His judgments should actually be something we desire. We should even be praying for them to come.

Arise, LORD, in your anger; rise up against the rage of my enemies. Awake, my God; decree justice. Let the assembled peoples gather around you, while you sit enthroned over them on high. Let the LORD judge the peoples...

My shield is God Most High, who saves the upright in heart. God is a righteous judge, a God who displays his wrath every day. If he does not relent, he will sharpen his sword; he will bend and string his bow. He has prepared his deadly weapons; he makes ready his flaming arrows (Psalm 7:6-7, 10-13).

Save me, O God... for zeal for your house consumes me, and the insults of those who insult you fall on me... I looked for sympathy, but there was none, for comforters, but I found none. They put gall in my food and gave me vinegar for my thirst... Pour out your wrath on them; let your fierce anger overtake them... Charge them with crime upon crime; do not let them share in your salvation. May they be blotted out of the Book of Life and not be listed with the righteous (Psalm 69:1, 9, 20, 24, 27-28).

## God's judgments—our joy

God's judgments should bring joy to our hearts, producing a happy song in our hearts because through such judgments we know that justice will prevail in the end. Longing for his judgments is longing for justice—and justice is a good thing!

Like your name, O God, your praise reaches to the ends of the Earth; your right hand is filled with righteousness. Mount Zion rejoices, the villages of Judah are glad because of your judgments (Psalm 48:10-11).

Shout joyfully to Yahweh, all the Earth. Be cheerful and sing for joy and sing praises. Sing praises to Yahweh with lyre, with lyre and melodious sound. With trumpets and sound of horn, shout joyfully before the King, Yahweh.

Let the sea with its fullness roar, the world and those who live in it. Let the rivers clap their hands. Let the hills sing joyfully together before Yahweh, for he is coming to judge the Earth. He will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with equity (Psalm 98:4-9; LEB).

At midnight I will rise to give thanks to you, because of your righteous judgments (Psalm 119:62; NKJV).

He said in a loud voice, 'Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come...' (Revelation 14:7).

They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying: '... Who shall not fear you, O Lord, and glorify your name?... For your judgments have been manifested' (Revelation 15:3-4; NKJV).

## Hope and Judgment

As we move towards the arrival of the Kingdom, many events will take place—among which are many divine judgments. Most of us know that times are going to get tough—but few Evangelical teachers are preaching this key concept: Christians will not be spared from the judgments of God. We will have to undergo his judgments just like anyone else. Granted we will be spared from God’s *wrath*, but we will not be spared from his *judgments!*

God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thessalonians 5:9; NASB).

We repeat: Being spared from God’s wrath does not mean that we won’t be *judged*. On the contrary, we’ll get judged harder than anyone will. Indeed, a Christian could easily get punished *more severely* than a non-believer. Know this: As a Christian, you could be condemned in a fearful and severe way! Your punishment could be worse than that of an unbeliever.

If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God (Hebrews 10:26-27).

Anyone who rejected the Law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. How much more severely do you think someone deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified them, and who has insulted the Spirit of Grace? For we know him who said, ‘It is mine to avenge; I will repay,’ and again, ‘The Lord will judge his people.’ It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the Living God (Hebrews 10:28-31).

Judas was a believer—and much more than a *believer*. Indeed, he was much more than a *pastor*, and much more than a *missionary*—he was one of the Twelve Apostles! Nonetheless, let’s not forget what Jesus said about Judas: It would have been “better for him if he had not been born.”

The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born (Mark 14:21).

Esau is another example for us to avoid. As a son of Isaac, and grandson of Abraham, he knew all about the Gospel. Regardless, Esau considered food to be more important than an eternal inheritance. He chose eating over the Promised Land. After he gave up the promise of God for a bowl of lentil soup, he could not find any room for repentance. His tears of repentance were rejected by God, and he was not forgiven.

... that there be no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a single meal. For you know that even afterwards, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought for it with tears (Hebrews 12:16-17; NASB).

## Judgment starts with us

Judgment starts with the Church. Even now, we are being put to the test. God pushes us to our limits, and keeps us under his close scrutiny. The trials we face daily come through people, but they are indirectly from God. He designs trials with the express purpose of testing our faith.

The world judges us and condemns us. We’re guilty in their eyes—just as Jesus was. Many of us have been rejected by our siblings, fired by our bosses, disinherited by our parents, arrested by police, convicted by judges, and some have even been lynched by angry mobs. We’re under judgment.

For it is time for judgment to begin with the household of God... it begins with us first... (1 Peter 4:17; LEB).

If we are judged, it's not just for our benefit. Obviously, we examine our consciences more closely when others judge us. They say that we are guilty, and we ask ourselves whether that's true or not. Their judgments against us inspire self-examination, which is always a good spiritual exercise. However, the judgments we undergo benefit others also.

Those who live in sin, live day-by-day under the condemnation of God. They observe us closely when they judge us. If we demonstrate grace, they'll notice it. What they'll see is that we do not fear eternal judgments. That will help them to realize that a human being can face judgment without fear. Such a truth will shock them—why? Because in the deepest part of their hearts, they fear judgment. That's why when they see us face judgment with hope, it opens their eyes to grace, inspiring them seek the Lord through repentance.

... if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. 'Do not fear their threats; do not be frightened.' But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander (1 Peter 3:14-16).

## God judges his Church

Here's something not often taught in churches: If a believer turns from God and towards sin, God will judge him, maybe even with death. How does this kind of judgment take come about? Well, normally God will act through the sinning believer's congregation. They are tasked with calling the sinning brother or sister to repentance. If the

sinning brother or sister refuses to repent, the congregation is supposed to “hand him over to Satan.”

... hand this man [a fellow believer] over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh... (1 Corinthians 5:5).

Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan to be taught not to blaspheme (1 Timothy 1:20).

This sounds horrible, of course, but it’s not. It’s fair and effective for saving souls. It simply means cutting off fellowship with the sinning brother or sister. It is a strong measure, to be sure, but the Church only takes this measure after due process has been carried out:

... if your brother sins against you, go correct him between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take with you in addition one or two others, so that by the testimony of two or three witnesses every matter may be established. And if he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses to listen to the church also, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector (Matthew 18:15-17; LEB).

... there is sexual immorality among you... Shouldn’t you... have put out of your fellowship the man who has been doing this? For my part... I have already passed judgment in the name of our Lord Jesus on the one who has been doing this. So when you are assembled... hand this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved on the Day of the Lord.

... I am writing to you that you must not associate with anyone who claims to be a brother or sister but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or slanderer, a drunkard or swindler. Do not even eat with such people.

What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? God will judge those outside. ‘Expel the wicked person from among you’ (1 Corinthians 5:1-13).

An effect of being cut off from fellowship, is that the sinning brother or sister may get sick or die. Those are horrible prospects, but both are far far better than being condemned with the rest of the world!

... Peter said, ‘Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit... You have not lied just to human beings but to God.’ When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died (Acts 5:3-5).

For those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves. That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep [died].

But if we were more discerning with regard to ourselves, we would not come under such judgment. Nevertheless, when we are judged in this way by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be finally condemned with the world (1 Corinthians 11:29-32).

This last passage tells us what the purpose of our *being judged* is: to prevent us from being “condemned with the world.”

Now, these warnings are particularly important for those who lead in the Church. It’s a fact that pastors and teachers run the greatest risk of being condemned. Pastors could get the worst judgment of all if they’re hypocrites.

The master [Jesus] of that servant [a pastor] will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he is not aware of. He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the unbelievers (Luke 12:46).



Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly (James 3:1).

A Christian pastor is either a true Christian or a hypocrite. If he is a hypocrite, Jesus will give him severe eternal punishment, putting him in the fiery place where unbelievers belong.

## Judgment Fire

Are you, as a Christian, aware that you will face the fire of judgment? We must come to grips with the very real Bible truth that Jesus will judge us. Yes, Christians will be judged by Jesus with fire.

I [John the Baptist] baptize you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire (Matthew 3:11-12).

When John warns that Jesus will baptize us “with the Holy Spirit and fire,” the *fire* he speaks of is none other than the fire of *judgment*. It’s not the *tongues of fire* (Acts 2:3) the apostles received on the day of Pentecost. It’s not the *fire* of evangelization. Those interpretations are way off and are easily disproven by the context of John’s statement. What is John’s very next sentence right after he warns us of Christ’s fire baptism? It’s this: John describes Christ “burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” Does that sound like the gift of tongues or evangelism? Of course it’s not. It’s Hell!

Let’s move on. If you observe closely, you will notice how in the following passage Paul mentions *fire* three times. Also notice how he mentions *the Day*. Now, what is that Day? It’s none other than the Day we will be judged by fire,

as we stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ (after the Rapture, in Heaven).

... each man's work will become evident; for the Day will show it because it [a man's work] is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire (1 Corinthians 3:11-15; NASB).

Peter warns us of the day we'll be tested by fire also:

... so that the genuineness of your faith, more valuable than gold that is passing away, but is tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:7).

## The Fear of God

You're a Christian? Great. That should give you a degree of peace with God, but it shouldn't make you complacent. The fear of God is the beginning of all wisdom. You originally became a Christian through the fear of God, and you should still feel afraid of God's judgments even now. David said the following:

My flesh trembles for fear of you, and I am afraid of your judgments (Psalm 119:120; LEB).

Does Jesus want Christians to fear God? Absolutely, yes. Do you remember the Ananias and Sapphira passage we already looked at? It says "great fear seized all" in the congregation (Acts 5:5), and then it adds: "Great fear seized the whole church" (Acts 5:11).

Jesus wants us to fear God! He couldn't have been more direct when he told his disciples:

I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that can do no more. But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear him who, after your body has been killed, has authority to throw you into Hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him (Luke 12:4-5).

Any difficulties interpreting that passage? No. And it wasn't just Jesus. Paul wants us to fear God too!

... continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you... (Philippians 2:12-13)

Peter agrees. He wants us to fear God because he knows that God will judge each of us by our works.

And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's work, conduct yourselves with fear during the time of your temporary residence (1 Peter 1:17; LEB).

## The beginning of wisdom

We're not talking about some optional fear for the super-spiritual. We're talking about a fundamental fear. Don't you know that the fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom? In other words, the fear of God is where wisdom starts! It doesn't matter how many PhDs you have, you have no wisdom—zero—until you have the fear of God in your heart. Now, the fear of God means being conscience of the fact that he can judge you, condemn you, and throw you into Hell if he wishes—yes, even if you've already been converted and baptized! Consider these five passages:

And to the human beings he said, 'Look, the fear of the LORD is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding' (Job 28:28).

The fear of Yahweh is the beginning of wisdom (Psalm 111:10; LEB).

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge... (Proverbs 1:7).

Then they will call to me but I will not answer; they will look for me but will not find me, since they hated knowledge and did not choose to fear the LORD (Proverbs 1:28-29).

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding (Proverbs 9:10).

Nuff said? No. There's more. The fear of God is the conclusion of all arguments.

Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind. For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14).

It's logical: You either live by fear now, or you die of fear later. Either judge yourself now, or be judged by God later. What child will not misbehave? The one who fears his father's punishment. Who does not steal? The one who fears the police. And what person will repent of sin? The one who fears God.

### **Every person to be judged by their actions**

There are more, but the following 16 passages state that we will be judged by our works. God couldn't be clearer. It's bad enough that pastors don't preach judgment—but the situation is actually much worse. Pastors actually teach the opposite! They're brazenly telling Christians that we will not be judged at all!

Why such blatant contradiction of a fundamental truth? Pastors teach that Christians will not be judged by our works. Pastors say that we won't be judged at all! In spite of their lies, here's what the Bible says:

For the Son of Man will come in the glory of his Father with his angels [the Rapture], and then he will reward each according to his works (Matthew 16:27; NKJV).

For we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad (2 Corinthians 5:10; NASB).

‘Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, each according to his conduct,’ declares the LORD God (Ezekiel 18:30; NASB).

... I will judge each of you according to your own ways (Ezekiel 33:20).

He repays everyone for what they have done; he brings on them what their conduct deserves (Job 34:11).

Also to you, o LORD, belongs mercy; for you render to each one according to his work (Psalm 62:12; NKJV).

God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil (Ecclesiastes 12:14).

I the LORD search the heart and examine the mind, to reward each person according to their conduct, according to what their deeds deserve (Jeremiah 17:10).

Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the Kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me’ (Matthew 25:34-36).

Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for

the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me' (Matthew 25:41-43).

[Paul speaking to Christians wrote:] But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to each person according to his deeds: to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness—wrath and indignation.

There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek, but glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek (Romans 2:5-10; NASB).

If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay on Earth (1 Peter 1:17; NASB).

... all the churches will know that I am he who searches hearts and minds, and I will repay each of you according to your deeds (Revelation 2:23).

[the servants' of Satan's] ... end will be according to their deeds (2 Corinthians 11:15; LEB).

Alexander the metalworker did me much harm; may the Lord pay back to him according to his deeds (2 Timothy 4:14; LEB).

Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done (Revelation 22:12).



## God's books

God has written all of our actions down. Every single thing we have done has been recorded in one of many books, the chronicles of our lives—books kept in Heaven's libraries. No, God did not film our actions—rather, he has legal records, statements that were written down by an angel as official divine records. Once an angel reads them in our hearing, our memories will be activated, and we will recall everything we did. We will remember each event clearly on that day.

And I saw the Dead, small and great, standing before God [the Great White Throne Judgment, the Second Resurrection], and books were opened... And the Dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books... And they were judged, each one according to his works (Revelation 20:12-13; NKJV).

The Judge sat, and the books were opened (Daniel 7:10; LEB).

## What is the Book of Life?

What is the book the Bible refers to as the *Book of Life*? Firstly, it is a literal book. Its pages are bound with a spine and it has (what must be) a beautiful front and back cover. It is, after all, the most important book in the Universe.

Secondly, it's in Heaven—and very secure there. Is it in the Temple? We don't know, but it must be in a very special location, and surely is kept under close watch by angel guardians.

Thirdly, it contains a list. The list consists of God's chosen—those who fear God, those who hold him in high regard. No one on the list is impure, deceitful, or does what is shameful. It is God's list. He approves or disapproves of those who are recorded in it. No less than ten distinct Bible

verses speak to us about this book:

... a book of remembrance was written before him [God] for those who fear the Lord and who esteem his name (Malachi 3:16; NASB).

All inhabitants of the Earth will worship the Beast—all whose names have not been written in the Lamb's Book of Life... (Revelation 13:8)

The inhabitants of the Earth whose names have not been written in the Book of Life from the creation of the world will be astonished when they see the Beast... (Revelation 17:8)

... I saw the Dead, the great and the small, standing before the Throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the Book of Life... (Revelation 20:12; NASB).

... if anyone's name was not found written in the Book of Life, he was thrown into the Lake of Fire (Revelation 20:15; LEB).

Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life (Revelation 21:27).

## Names Erased

Here's an amazing fact: Our names can very well be erased from the Book of Life. This is another truth that preachers contradict continually. Especially in the act of evangelism, it's popular for Evangelicals to assure the person being evangelized that once their names are written down, they'll remain on God's list forever. However, the Bible says the following:

But now, if you will, forgive their sin—and if not, please blot me out from your Book which you have



written!" The LORD said to Moses, "Whoever has sinned against me, I will blot him out of my Book (Exodus 32:32-33; NASB).

May they be blotted out of the Book of Life, and not be listed with the righteous (Psalm 69:28).

Jesus, if he wishes, may erase a person's name from the Book of Life. The fact that he promises not to do that to anyone who is victorious over temptation means that there is no guarantee that he will *not* erase a person's name from the Book. Indeed, God will blot out of his book whoever has sinned against him!

The one who is victorious... I [Jesus] will never blot out the name of that person from the Book of Life, but will acknowledge that name before my Father and his angels (Revelation 3:5).

If you are strong in Christ, rejoice today that your name is in the Book! Let that be your primary source of joy. If your primary source of joy is that you are anointed with power, and are able to cast out demons, speak in tongues, prophesy, or do miracles—you're missing the main point. The main point is that God has chosen us for eternal life. Our temporary ministry is nothing compared to the glory that will come when we enter the Kingdom!

... do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in Heaven (Luke 10:20).



## Four Principles for Church Judgment

This matter of judgment is very practical because we, as members of God's Church, absolutely *must* judge one an-

other. This happens to be one of the most neglected duties of Christians: If someone in our congregation is in sin, it's our God-given duty to judge that person. Often, due to fear, weak character, ignorance of the Scriptures, and (mostly) a lack of love, believers do not judge a sinning brother or sister—but the fact remains that they *should*.

... I am writing to you that you must not associate with anyone who claims to be a brother or sister but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or slanderer, a drunkard or swindler. Do not even eat with such people.

What business is it of mine to judge those outside the Church? Are you not to judge those inside?<sup>111</sup> God will judge those outside. 'Expel the wicked person from among you' (1 Corinthians 5:9-13).

That's quite a passage. After reading it, and believing that it's the right approach to dealing with sin in a congregation, let's ask ourselves "What exactly must church members *do* when they exercise judgment?" In other words, "What exactly do we mean by *judging* an unrepentant brother or sister?" The answer is (quite simply): cutting off fellowship with that person.

We already looked at this scenario previously in the chapter on fellowship, but there are four additional aspects related to judgment we need to emphasize at this point in our study:

1. How important *due process* is in judgment. The sinning brother or sister should get three opportunities to repent before the church cuts off fellowship. The following instructions from Jesus demonstrate how we administer those three opportunities:

If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your broth-

<sup>111</sup> The answer to this rhetorical question should be a resounding "Yes!"

er. But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every fact may be confirmed. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector (Matthew 18:15-17).

2. Believers carry out this process for a reason: to save the lost brother or sister's soul! We do these things so that the sinning brother or sister might not be condemned with lost people on Judgment Day. So, it's a *temporary* judgment to save people from *eternal* judgment.

... if we were more discerning with regard to ourselves, we would not come under such judgment. Nevertheless, when we are judged in this way [getting sick or dying] by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be finally condemned with the world (1 Corinthians 11:31-32).

3. This is not done in a spirit of criticism. Believers are not judgmental people; we're ready to judge sin, not to condemn sinners. Church judgments are designed to help others. When we deal with matters of conscience [issues related to foods we eat, days we set aside for worship, or holidays we celebrate], we refrain from judging a brother or sister on those "disputable matters."

Accept the one whose faith is weak, without quarreling over disputable matters [beliefs which are not fundamentals]. One person's faith allows them to eat anything, but another, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables. The one who eats everything must not treat with contempt the one who does not, and the one who does not eat everything must not judge the one who does, for God has accepted them. Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To their own master, servants stand or fall. And they will stand, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

One person considers one day more sacred than another; another considers every day alike. Each of them should be fully convinced in their own mind. Whoever regards one day as special does so to the Lord. Whoever eats meat does so to the Lord, for they give thanks to God; and whoever abstains does so to the Lord and gives thanks to God (Romans 14:1-6).

Any judging in the church should be done out of love, seeking the fruit of repentance in the sinning brother or sister so that God might forgive them! We want everybody to be in fellowship, but only repentance and forgiveness make it possible to receive them again into fellowship. Once they repent, we must forgive them, and receive them back in the church. Why must they be restored to fellowship? So that they won't become *too* sad—and if they've not become sad, it's because they haven't yet repented.

This punishment which was inflicted by the majority [of church members] is sufficient for such a man [the sinning brother], so that—on the contrary—you ought rather to forgive and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one be swallowed up with too much sorrow. Therefore I urge you to reaffirm your love to him (2 Corinthians 2:6-8; NKJV).

4. We don't determine the standards for fellowship in the Church. We don't set the requirements for Church membership—God does. Human pride tempts us to consider ourselves more merciful than God himself. That very pride is what the Corinthians demonstrated when they opened their arms to a brother who had become an unrepentant fornicator, thinking that they were being *tolerant*.<sup>112</sup> On the

---

<sup>112</sup> *Tolerance* has become the great guiding virtue of Western society, have you noticed? It has been unacceptable since the 1990s to condemn certain sins such as homosexuality, false religion, or inappropriate dress—because we sound “intolerant.” However, the world's brand of tolerance is actually a wicked sin. It's pride disguising itself as a virtue. It's no real virtue, but a vice. It's inspired by an ignorance of sin, weak character, and peer pressure—fear. It's better to call tolerance *permissiveness*, because that's what it is. They present it as *love*, but there's really no love in it at all.

contrary, God told them they were being proud! There's a difference between being merciful and being *permissive*. Permissive people are actually proud people—but why? Because they think they're more merciful than God Himself.

It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that even pagans do not tolerate: A man is sleeping with his father's wife. And you are proud! Shouldn't you rather have gone into mourning and have put out of your fellowship the man who has been doing this? (1 Corinthians 5:1-2).



## Jesus the Judge

Father God has given all judgment to his Son, and he did it for a reason. He did it so that everybody might honor the Lord Jesus. We honor those who have authority over us. We respect those who can condemn us. Jesus is precisely that, a man who—with God's full authorization—can condemn us! Watch how the word *that* is used in the next passage:

... the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son, that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father (John 5:22-23a; NKJV).

Knowing that Jesus has such authority granted to him, we should have the fear of Christ in us! This *fear of Christ* is hardly ever mentioned in churches, although it's in the Bible, and it's exactly what will cause us to behave well.

... be subject to one another in the fear of Christ (Ephesians 5:21; NASB).

Is the fear of Christ a new teaching? Not by any means. Over three thousand years ago, the psalmist spoke of the authority of God's Son. The psalmist warned us that God's Son should be feared since his wrath can flare up in the blink of an eye.

Serve the LORD with fear and celebrate his rule with trembling. Kiss his Son, or he will be angry and your way will lead to your destruction, for his wrath can flare up in a moment (Psalm 2:11-12)!

So, for right now, Jesus is the Judge of All. God will never de-authorized Jesus. However, when God is finally *all in all* (1 Corinthians 15:28), then he will again assume his role as the primary Judge. At that point, at the end of the Millennium, Yahweh the One God will sit over the Final Judgment, in which he will execute his final sentence over both human beings and angels.

I saw the Dead, great and small, standing before the Throne, and books were opened... The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books (Revelation 20:11-12).

That great day will come, the day when God will be “all in all,” and will pass a sweeping final judgment on all created beings. In the meantime, by the will of the Almighty God, Jesus is the only Judge we have to deal with.

### **Can a Believer be Condemned?**

Although God has chosen us for eternal life, and we are secure in him,<sup>113</sup> it is very possible that [God forbid] a be-

---

<sup>113</sup> Eternal security is feeling that the chosen few—God's elect—deserve to have. If you are one of Christ's sheep, nothing can separate you from him. You will not be led astray, nor will you ever be snatched out of the hands of the Good Shepherd:

At that time if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Messiah!’ or, ‘Look, there he is!’ do not believe it. For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. So be on your guard; I have told you everything ahead of time (Mark 13:21-23).

My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will

liever turn back from the faith, embracing the World and sin once more. Consider, for example, what happened to Judas, one of the Twelve:

Then one of the Twelve—the one called Judas Iscariot—went to the chief priests and asked, ‘What are you willing to give me if I deliver him over to you?’ So they counted out for him thirty pieces of silver. From then on, Judas watched for an opportunity to hand him [Jesus] over (Matthew 26:14-16).

Please also consider Peter’s solemn warning against leaving the straight way, wandering off, getting entangled in the world, and being overcome by it.

But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord [Jesus] who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves... They have left the straight way and wandered off to follow the way of Balaam [a good prophet who turned against God]... If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and are overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them (2 Peter 2: 1, 15, 20-21).

What happens to people who are freed from their Egypt (worldliness), and are supposed to be on the road to the Promised Land, but then *stop* believing? What happens to the angels, who are messengers of God, who abandon their position of authority? Nothing good.

---

snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand (John 10:27-29).

Though you already know all this, I want to remind you that the Lord at one time delivered his people out of Egypt, but later destroyed those who did not believe. And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their proper dwelling—these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the Great Day (Jude 5-6).

These will get a stronger judgment than they would have if they had never known the truth.

But they [the Jews] were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but tremble. For if God did not spare the natural branches [the Jews], he will not spare you either. Consider therefore the kindness and sternness of God: sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you, provided that you continue in his kindness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off (Romans 11:20-22).

We must pay the most careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away. For since the message spoken through angels [the Law] was binding, and every violation and disobedience received its just punishment, how shall we escape if we ignore so great a salvation? (Hebrews 2:1-3)

It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, who have tasted the goodness of the Word of God and the powers of the coming age and who have fallen away, to be brought back to repentance. To their loss, they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace.

Land that drinks in the rain often falling on it and that produces a crop useful to those for whom it is farmed receives the blessing of God. But land that produces thorns and thistles is worthless and is in danger of being cursed. In the end it will be burned (Hebrews 6:4-8).



## We will be judged

Although we who are in Jesus Christ will not be *condemned*, we will be *judged*. There's a big difference between being *judged* and being *condemned*. We will be judged not only according to our actions, but also according to our words, the thoughts of our heart, and for the things we didn't do due to spiritual laziness.

I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into Hell (Matthew 5:28-29).

Furthermore, just being ashamed of Jesus and his words could result in our condemnation. That means that even our feelings can condemn us. That's why we must control any feelings of fear. If we don't, God will condemn us as cowards.

If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels (Mark 8:38).

But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars—they will be consigned to the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the Second Death (Revelation 21:8).

The Judgment is for both believers and unbelievers. There is no partiality with God. Nobody will get any preferred treatment on the Day of Judgment. Rather, God will judge each human being according to our works. That means that if you have not stored up a treasure of good deeds, you will have nothing to show for yourself. It doesn't matter whether you *say* you have faith. Your criteria is not God's. Your faith is dead if it's not accompanied by actions.

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,’ but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

But someone will say, ‘You have faith; I have deeds.’ Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds (James 2:14-18).

### **Only the righteous**

Only the righteous will be justified—that means that life’s big question is “Are you righteous?” Have you asked yourself that question recently?

‘Suppose there were five less than the fifty righteous; would you destroy all of the city for lack of five?’ So he [Yahweh] said, ‘If I find there forty-five, I will not destroy it’ (Genesis 18:28; NKJV).

The righteous will inherit the land and dwell in it forever... The salvation of the righteous comes from the LORD; he is their stronghold in time of trouble (Psalm 37:29, 39).

Surely the righteous will praise your name, and the upright will live in your presence (Psalm 140:13).

Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the Kingdom of their Father (Matthew 13:43).

This is how it will be at the End of the Age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous (Matthew 13:49).

Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink?’ (Matthew 25:37).

... you will be repaid at the Resurrection of the Righ-  
teous (Luke 14:14).

... the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil (1 Peter 3:12).

It’s highly unlikely you’ll ever hear this point being preached in any Evangelical circle, but study the following passages and you’ll discover a great truth, one that’s been not only hidden, but contradicted again and again: that righteous people will be saved by their righteousness.

Yet you say, ‘Why does the son not bear the guilt of the father?’ And since the son does justice and righteousness and he keeps all of my statutes and does them, he shall surely live! (Ezekiel 18:19).

And if even the three of these men were in the midst of it—Noah, Daniel, and Job—they, through their righteousness, would save only themselves!” declares the Lord Yahweh (Ezekiel 14:14, 20; LEB).

Suppose there is a righteous man who does what is just and right. He does not eat at the mountain shrines or look to the idols of Israel. He does not defile his neighbor’s wife or have sexual relations with a woman during her period. He does not oppress anyone, but returns what he took in pledge for a loan. He does not commit robbery but gives his food to the hungry and provides clothing for the naked. He does not lend to them at interest or take a profit from them. He withholds his hand from doing wrong and judges fairly between two parties. He follows my decrees and faithfully keeps my Laws. That man is righteous; he will surely live, declares the Sovereign LORD... (Ezekiel 18:5-9).

Wow. So what do we do with the oft-quoted Bible verse Isaiah 64:6, a passage used to prove the Reformation doctrine<sup>114</sup> of the total depravity of man?

All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away.

The nation of Israel during Isaiah's time was so hypocritical and rebellious against God that God had to reprove them. Their thought was that in the midst of their sins, they could do some good works and make up for their evil, but they were wrong. Isaiah 64:6 does not negate the truth that only the righteous will be saved, it just proves that Isaiah included himself among the guilty nation he was born into, and that he recognized their hypocrisy.

Now, let's take this a step further (since we're on a roll). Could you actually invite God to vindicate you *according* to your righteousness and integrity? Could you pray as David prayed?

LORD my God, if I have done this and there is guilt on my hands—if I have repaid my ally with evil or with-

---

<sup>114</sup> The doctrines of the Protestant Reformation were defined by John Calvin and Martin Luther more than any other reformers. Luther stated that "The most damnable and pernicious heresy that has ever plagued the mind of man is that somehow he can make himself good enough to deserve to live forever with an all-holy God" (Retrieved from <https://www.gotquestions.org/filthy-rags.html> on December 29, 2018). So we cannot make ourselves good enough to deserve to live with God forever, *even* if we need to depend on him working in us (by his grace) to do that?

If believing that we must be righteous to be saved is a heresy, then what fundamental doctrine does it contradict? It does not contradict any of the fundamentals, much less that of "faith in God," so it's *not* a heresy. Rather, Luther taught heresy. He who loved the book of Romans more than any other, but completely ignored Romans 2:6-7 which states the following:

God will repay each person according to what they have done. To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life...

out cause have robbed my foe—then let my enemy pursue and overtake me; let him trample my life to the ground and make me sleep in the dust...

Let the LORD judge the peoples. Vindicate me, LORD, according to my righteousness, according to my integrity, O Most High (Psalm 7:3-5, 8).

We would hope that every person could pray this way, but we have to be free from hypocrisy to do so. If we don't have integrity, then how can we ask for anything from God? If we are guilty of sin, won't he punish us accordingly?

### Who will be justified?

At this point, many brothers from an Evangelical background will cry out “This can't be a NT truth!” They disagree that “since... [a person] does justice and righteousness and he keeps all of my [God's] statutes and does them, he shall surely live!” (Ezekiel 18:19); and they can't bear the thought of Noah, Daniel, and Job “through their righteousness... [saving] themselves.” Their way to escape these truths is to declare that the NT is different from the OT—but they're wrong. On this topic, it is not. That the righteous will be saved through their righteousness is also a NT truth. In the NT we find the same message we find in the Old: Only the *doers* of the Law will be justified.

There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek, but glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good... it is not the hearers of the Law who are just before God, but the doers of the Law will be justified... Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law... they show the work of the Law written in their hearts (Romans 2:9-10, 13-15; NASB).

Indeed, as influential as Martin Luther has been with his doctrine of *sola fide*, the Bible never says that salvation is

by faith alone—never! In fact, the Scriptures say the opposite, using these words: *not by faith alone*. Therefore, let's declare with confidence that a person is justified by works. When we say it, we're quoting the God-breathed Holy Scriptures. Only foolish people say differently.

... are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is useless? Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar? You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected; and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, 'And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness,' and he was called the friend of God. You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone.

In the same way, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead (James 2:20-26).

What matters to God is the keeping of his commandments. Do you keep them or not? If you don't, your faith is dead because each of us must be righteous to inherit the Kingdom of God. How righteous? More righteous than the Pharisees.

Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but what matters is the keeping of the commandments of God (1 Corinthians 7:19; NASB).

I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the Law, you will certainly not enter the Kingdom of Heaven (Matthew 5:20).

---

## How can we be righteous?

We've discovered some big truths related to how we can be ready for judgment. Now, it all boils down to righteousness. So, the big question is "How can we be righteous?" Please ask yourself that question. Ask it in the deepest part of your heart. Then, meditate on what it will take for you to possess what the Bible calls the "righteousness which is by faith." That kind of righteousness, the only kind that will make us worthy of eternal life, is spoken of in the following passage:

... that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith (Philippians 3:8-9; NKJV).

This faith-generated righteousness is necessary for salvation. Only if you understand man's need to be righteous—a doctrine which is denied in Evangelical churches everywhere—will you be able to say "amen" to the following passages:

... if the wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed and observes all my statutes and practices justice and righteousness, he shall surely live; he shall not die. All his transgressions which he has committed will not be remembered against him; because of his righteousness which he has practiced, he will live (Ezekiel 18:21-22; NASB).

Again, when a wicked man turns away from his wickedness which he has committed and practices justice and righteousness, he will save his life. Because he considered and turned away from all his transgressions which he had committed, he shall surely live; he shall not die (Ezekiel 18:27-28; NASB).

***Not all were made sinners / not all will be made righteous***

Are you still with us? Do you agree with the teaching so far? We hope so. If you do, then let's move forward. We invite you to read the following passage carefully:

... just as through the disobedience of the one man [Adam] the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man [Jesus] the many will be made righteous (Romans 5:19).

Question: How were the *many*<sup>115</sup> made sinners through the disobedience of Adam?

Answer: Those who have followed Adam's example of disobedience, being of age [approximately age 12 or beyond, which is the "age of accountability"], who understand God's holy commandment, and who of their own free will decide to disobey God. Those are all made sinners.

If you have followed the answer to the previous question, then you should be able to say how the *many* (not *everybody* because *many* is different from *all*) will be made righteous through the obedience of Jesus.

What is the answer? How will many people be made righteous *through* the obedience of Jesus? The answer is that we accomplish such righteousness *by faith* following Christ's example. Following Christ is an act of faith!

Here's the contrast again: Not everybody [*many* people but not *all* people] have become sinners through Adam because not everybody has followed his example. Who are those who have not followed his example? Well, it's impossible for children under age 12 and the mentally challenged to follow Adam's example since they don't yet have their understanding and free will developed as Adam did.

---

<sup>115</sup> The word *many* is opposed to the word *all*. Note that the passage does not say *all*. If it did, it would affirm the false doctrine of "original sin."



In like manner, when Romans says “the many will be made righteous” (5:19), we understand that not everybody is made righteous because not everybody follows Christ’s example [*many* people do, the Christians, but not *all* people do].

### The righteousness based on faith

Therefore, there is a kind of righteousness, the righteousness based on faith, which saves. This is the very kind of righteousness Jesus died to transmit to us. He didn’t die to simply save us from sins—that was only half of his purpose. He also died to make us *the righteousness of God*. If you’ve only repented of your sins, you’re halfway there. Don’t fall short of Christ’s goal for your life. Be righteous by faith!

God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Okay, so what is this *righteousness of God*? Well, first of all it is a righteousness which *belongs* to God. The Father has made a plan to save us from sin through a justice that is so perfect that each of our sins is completely expunged, blotted out with blood, and paid for. We should marvel at his righteousness. His law of eye for eye, tooth for tooth, and life for life is fulfilled at Calvary. Through the Cross, God meets out justice for every sin.

This is all so awesome—but it doesn’t stop at that. It’s not just justice being met out. God’s righteousness is actually transferrable. His justice is so well executed that it inspires and empowers those who know it. In other words, we live in the same righteousness of God when it is revealed to us. God transmits and transfers his righteousness to us. It starts with God, and flows through Jesus, finding its consummation in us. That’s why the following passage says that God’s righteousness is *through* faith in Jesus *to* all who believe.

Pay close attention to the prepositions *through* and *to* as you read here:

But now, apart from the Law, the righteousness of God has been revealed, being testified about by the Law and the prophets—that is, the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe (Romans 3:21-22; LEB).

What a supremely important passage! It proves that the Gospel is about a righteousness that becomes ours—a righteousness that becomes integrated into our life. In short: Those who believe in the Gospel are made able to do things *right*. Doing things right is the meaning of *righteousness*. But *why* do we start doing things right? The answer is quite simple: Because we walk *by faith* in Christ. Let's study an example of what this means.

### Abraham's Example

The life of Abraham is a magnificent example of the righteousness of God. To see that, we have to first understand that Abraham started his life as an idolater (Joshua 24:2). He was a sinner before he met the True God, and a pretty bad sinner at that. How so? Well, worse than his idolatry, Abraham practiced *first degree* incest (Genesis 20:1–2a, 12). He had a relationship God Himself describes as sin (Leviticus 18:9).

Now, since Abraham never read Leviticus (Moses wrote it about 500 years later), and therefore did not know God's Law, we should ask ourselves how he got from being a sinner to becoming righteous. The answer simple: He trusted in God. He had faith in God.

It was not through the Law [the Commandments given by Moses] that Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the World, but through the righteousness that comes by faith (Romans 4:13).

From the time Abraham decided to trust God, he began to prove himself worthy of being an heir of the World to Come. How did Abraham's newfound righteousness—one he got by faith—manifest itself? Through many actions performed by faith, such as:

- worshipping the One God
- making peace even when it involved personal sacrifice
- being hospitable to God's messengers
- loving a brother in the faith enough to risk his life for him
  
- bravely taking up arms when the odds were against him
- showing financial integrity
- interceding for others
- passing on the faith to the next generation
- resolving family conflict
- believing in the resurrection
- paying a fair price always
- forgiving those who did him evil

So Abraham, by faith, became a man who truly lived in righteousness, even though he started off as a very bad sinner. The faith which transformed Abraham was based on this: God's "promise that he would be heir of the World." He believed that God would reward him. He believed in the God who gives awards, prizes, and an inheritance.

### **Righteousness Credited to Us**

God credits righteousness to us when we believe in him. Having righteousness *credited* [or *imputed*]<sup>116</sup> to us means that such a righteousness is not *from* us. Far be it for us to say or even imagine that we're saved from a righteousness that's *from* us. The righteousness that saves is not *from* us—however, such a righteousness must be *in* us.

Think of what happens when money is credited to a bank account. If you get financial credit, you're getting money

---

<sup>116</sup> *Imputed* righteousness is mentioned in the NKJV from Romans 4-5 some six times. Theologians still use the term, but most every modern translation now uses the term *credited*.

that was not yours to start with. It's not from you, but it is money located *in* your bank account. So it's *in* your account, and the money legally *becomes* yours once it's there. It is the same thing with faith-based righteousness—although it's not *from* us, it's *in* us and it belongs to us. The following passage illustrates this principle quite nicely:

Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, 'So shall your offspring be.' Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead—since he was about a hundred years old—and that Sarah's womb was also dead. Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised.

This is why 'it was credited to him as righteousness.' The words 'it was credited to him' were written not for him alone, but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the Dead [God] (Romans 4:18-24).

What did Abraham believe, exactly? Like us, he believed in God—but not just that God exists. His belief was much greater than that! Demons believe that God exists, and it makes them tremble in fear to think of him (James 2:19). Abraham's belief was this: He was *fully persuaded* that God was powerful enough to do a miracle through Abraham's aged loins. In other words, Abraham's faith was that God could do something in him! Abraham believed that although he was 'as good as dead' [due to old age], that God would create a child through him. But not only that! Abraham believed that from the child God would lift up a nation—and not just any nation. Abraham believe that that nation would bless every other nation on Earth!

Do you believe in the God who will do something in you? He's the God who—if you die—he'll resurrect you. If you

do what is good, he'll reward you. If you receive his Spirit, he'll perform supernatural wonders through you. He'll do things you've never imagined through y-o-u.

Jesus sought God out. Jesus did what was right in the midst of his generation, died, and God resurrected him. People who believe Jesus' story have put their faith in the One who raised Jesus from the Dead. "Believing in Jesus" is precisely that, it's believing in the God who justifies the righteous, rescues them from Hades [death], and rewards them.

... anyone who comes to him [God] must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him (Hebrews 11:6)

Is that the kind of God you believe in—one who rewards those who seek him? If you live by *that* faith, then he will credit righteousness to you!

Abraham 'believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness' (Genesis 15:6; Galatians 3:6).

Following in the footsteps of Abraham and Jesus, the righteous (even today) live by faith!

The righteous will live by faith (Galatians 3:11; Romans 1:17).

... the righteous will live by his faith (Habakkuk 2:4; NASB).

## Salvation Defined

Along these same lines, here's a critical truth: Only those who are saved from *sin* will be saved from God's *judgment*. Did you get that? You must be saved from the power of sin, or you won't be saved from the Judgment. Are you still under the power of sin? You'll know this way: If you can't keep a clear conscience, then you are under sin's power. That's the litmus test—your conscience.

To be saved, you have to be free from the evil, wicked generation you were born into. Its influence will destroy you. That's why Peter's final words after his famous Pentecost sermon were these:

Be saved from this crooked generation! (Acts 2:40; LEB)

Far be it for us to ever say that people are saved by their own righteousness...

... it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast (Ephesians 2:8-9).

... he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy (Titus 3:5).

Rather, salvation is achieved by faith in Jesus. When we say that, there is a huge need to define *faith* correctly. Most of the time, preachers define it wrongly. They make it out to be *agreement*, something that happens in your mind when you say “amen,” but it's not. Faith is *not* mental assent, but love manifested through our actions. Faith in Jesus is *faith working*—a faith that works. The Bible says so:

... in Christ Jesus neither circumcision counts for anything nor uncircumcision, but faith working through love (Galatians 5:6; LEB).



---

**V. Appendices**

- A. The *wishful thinking* kind of hope
- B. NT not-Kingdom *hope* passages
- C. Parables not Directly about the Kingdom
- D. Passages Erroneously Thought to be Parables
- E. The Nearness of the Kingdom
- F. Jesus Took Captivity Captive
- G. Ten Difficult Passages

## Appendix A: The *wishful thinking* kind of hope

Feel free to use the word *hope* in any of its diverse meanings. Don't feel restricted and think that you may only use the term *hope* to refer to the Kingdom, because 21 times in the NT the word *hope* is used to refer to wishful thinking, and not the Kingdom.

1. Here's the first case: a passage which clearly speaks of a *wishful thinking* kind of hope—the hope we feel when we long to get money back from people we lend to.

... if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back (Luke 6:34; NKJV).

2. Have you ever wished that you'd be saved from trouble? That's another kind of hope the Bible speaks of. Here you'll see that even an apostle as filled with faith as Paul can sometimes give up hope that he'll be saved from trouble.

When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days and the storm continued raging, we finally gave up all hope of being saved (Acts 27:20).

3-8. Then there's the kind of hope that is a simple desire that things work out the way we want them to. For example, in the following passages, Paul expresses his desire to carry out missionary work. He *hopes* to get the job done by getting assistance, getting lodging, and by sending certain missionary partners to the churches.

I hope to see you while passing through [Rome] and to have you assist me on my journey there [Spain]... (Romans 15:24)



For I do not want to see you now and make only a passing visit; I hope to spend some time with you, if the Lord permits (1 Corinthians 16:7).

I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, that I also may be cheered when I receive news about you (Philippians 2:19).

Therefore I hope to send him at once, as soon as I see how it goes with me (Philippians 2:23; NKJV).

These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly... (1 Timothy 3:14; NKJV)

At the same time also, prepare a guest room for me, for I hope [trust] that through your prayers I will be restored to you (Philemon 1:22; LEB).

9-10. The apostle John also had high hopes and big expectations for his ministry. John wanted to see his flock face-to-face. He wanted to be with them so that he could talk with them personally.

I hope to visit you and talk with you face to face... (2 John 1:12)

... I hope to see you right away, and to speak face to face (3 John 1:14; LEB).

11-17. Paul hoped many things for his hearers. Here are some examples from the NT:

- He hoped that they would receive consolation and comfort from God:

And our hope for you is firm, because we know that just as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our comfort (2 Corinthians 1:7).

- Paul hoped that they would gain understanding.

I hope that, as you have understood us in part, you will come to understand fully that you can boast of us (just as we will boast of you) in the day of the Lord Jesus (2 Corinthians 1:13-14).

- He hoped that his followers would understand the type of people he and his partners were.

What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience (2 Corinthians 5:11).

- Paul and his missionary partners hoped that those who heard his preaching would first give themselves to the Lord Jesus.

... not only as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us by the will of God (2 Corinthians 8:5; NKJV).

- Their hope was also that they would have a successful ministry, one of vast outreach.

Our hope is that, as your faith continues to grow, our sphere of activity among you will greatly expand (2 Corinthians 10:15).

- He hoped that his disciples would recognize that he was a qualified Christian pastor.

And I hope [trust] that you will recognize that we are not unqualified (2 Corinthians 13:6)!

- Paul also hoped that he would never be ashamed, but would have the courage to face persecution, physical attacks, and even death.

I eagerly expect and hope [trust] that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that

now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death (Philippians 1:20).

18-20. We're here proving that the Biblical term *hope* can also mean *wishful thinking*, and doesn't only refer to the one Hope, the Kingdom. Let's now reflect upon this fact: that even evil people wish for things. They also *hope*—even if it's for their evil desires. When the Bible describes the wishes of certain bad people, we get a glimpse into the world of *evil* hopes:

When Herod saw Jesus, he was greatly pleased, because for a long time he had been wanting to see him. From what he had heard about him, he hoped to see him perform a sign of some sort (Luke 23:8).

When her [the slave girl prophetess] owners realized that their hope of making money was gone... (Acts 16:19)

Meanwhile he [Felix, the governor] also hoped that money would be given him by Paul, that he might release him. Therefore he sent for him more often and conversed with him (Acts 24:26; NKJV).

21. Although the last two passages might make you think that hoping for money is an evil hope, the next verse will change your mind. It's okay to hope for money, as long as you hope to get it legitimately (for example, by serving God in the ministry).

... the one who plows ought to plow in hope and the one who threshes ought to do so in hope of a share (1 Corinthians 9:10; LEB).



## Appendix B: NT not-Kingdom *hope* passages

Now, let's look at 24 NT passages which will help us to understand that *hope* is not always used in the Kingdom sense.

1. The first example speaks of a confidence you feel towards another person. For example, there is such thing as a hope *in Moses*.

Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father!  
The one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you  
have put your hope (John 5:45; LEB)!

2-8. But who greater to hope in than in God? There are seven<sup>117</sup> passages which state that believers hope in God.

And in his [God's] name the Gentiles will hope [trust]  
(Matthew 12:21; NASB).

He [God] has delivered us from such a deadly peril,  
and he will deliver us again. On him [God] we have  
set our hope (that he will continue to deliver us) (2  
Corinthians 1:10).

... train yourself to be godly... godliness has value for  
all things, holding promise for both the present life  
and the life to come. This is a trustworthy saying<sup>118</sup>

---

<sup>117</sup> There are actually nine passages if we include Acts 2:24-27, 31-32 and Acts 24:15, but we've listed them under the topic of the *Kingdom as our hope*, because although they give reference to God, those two passages point at the Kingdom as our primary hope.

<sup>118</sup> What's the *trustworthy saying*? Paul just stated it:

Godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the  
present life and the life to come.

In other words, this was a saying in the churches, something believers repeated often, perhaps in the form of a rhyme or a hymn.

that deserves full acceptance. That<sup>119</sup> is why we labor and strive, because we have put our hope in the Living God, who is the Savior of all people... (1 Timothy 4:7-10)

Now she who is a widow indeed and who has been left alone, has fixed her hope on God and continues in entreaties and prayers night and day (1 Timothy 5:5; NASB).

Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment (1 Timothy 6:17).

Through him [Jesus] you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God<sup>120</sup> (1 Peter 1:21).

... this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope [trust] in God used to adorn themselves. They submitted themselves to their own husbands... (1 Peter 3:5)

9-12. Four<sup>121</sup> other passages identify Jesus as the object of our hope.

... The Root of Jesse will spring up, one who will arise to rule over the nations; in him the Gentiles will hope [trust]' (Romans 15:12).

---

<sup>119</sup> Here, the demonstrative pronoun that refers to the *life to come*, the Kingdom.

<sup>120</sup> The hope of the resurrection is also called our *hope in God*—but why? Because it's God who resurrects us.

<sup>121</sup> There are really two others [1 Corinthians 15:19 and 1 John 3:3], making a total of 6 NT references to Jesus as our hope. However, we presented the explanation of the other two in the section on the Kingdom hope, since Jesus is named as a part of that Kingdom hope.

... in order that we, who were the first to put our hope<sup>122</sup> in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory (Ephesians 1:12).

We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thessalonians 1:3).

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope... (1 Timothy 1:1)

13-20. *Hope* is also referred to in the NT as a virtue:

... we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame... (Romans 5:3-5)

... rejoicing in hope... (Romans 12:12)

For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope (Romans 15:4).

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit (Romans 15:13).

[Love]... bears all things, believes all things, hopes [trusts] all things, endures all things (1 Corinthians 13:7; NASB).

---

<sup>122</sup> For those of you who are interested in NT Greek, this passage has a word which only occurs only once in the NT, *proyilpikotas* (προηλπικότης), which has the root word *hope* in it, but is best translated as *the first to put our trust in*.

And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love (1 Corinthians 13:13; NKJV).

... at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world... (Ephesians 2:12)

... our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope... (2 Thessalonians 2:16)

21. Hope is closely related to faith. In fact, faith is defined as the substance of and the evidence of the things we *hope* for. In other words, you can't understand faith without first understanding hope. Faith is defined by hope!

Now faith is the substance of things hoped [trusted] for, the evidence of things not seen (Hebrews 11:1; NKJV).

22. Indeed, hope is waiting for the things we don't have yet. It is the source of patience because *if* we hope, we wait *patiently*.

But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes [trust] for what they already have? But if we hope [trust] for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently<sup>123</sup> (Romans 8:24-25).

---

<sup>123</sup> This verse undoes all the empty arguments of the pastors who treat the Christian hope is like something we don't have to work for—we do!

23-24. The next two passages will require a bit more meditation, but you will surely understand them if you read them in context.

The first speaks of the *hope of righteousness*. What does that mean? It means that we don't see perfect righteousness in us yet, but (by faith) we believe that the day will come when everything (even we) will be fair, just, and right! You can't have this hope if you live according to the OT Law, but you can have it if you live by faith in Christ! Such a hope will be fulfilled in the Kingdom, when we are resurrected.

You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by Law; you have fallen from grace. For we through the Spirit, by faith, are waiting for the hope of righteousness (Galatians 5:4-5; NASB).

The second difficult passage speaks of a *better hope*—that is, one that's better than what the OT Law with its commandments could give us. The better hope is that of obtaining a perfect conscience. It's about the hope of actually living a life that's pleasing to God, thereby fulfilling our covenant with him.

... another priest arises [Jesus] according to the likeness of Melchizedek, who has become such [a priest] not on the basis of a law of physical requirement [being born of the family of Levi], but according to



the power of an indestructible life [because he was resurrected]. For it is attested of him, ‘You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.’

For, on the one hand, there is a setting aside of a former commandment because of its weakness and uselessness (for the Law made nothing perfect [that is, the human conscience did not reach perfection]), and on the other hand there is a bringing in of a better hope,<sup>124</sup> through which we draw near to God (Hebrews 7:15-19; NASB).

The 24 passages we just looked at should help you to understand how the word *hope* is used in the Bible, so that when you see it used to refer to the One Hope, you’ll be all the more sure about what that means!




---

<sup>124</sup> Like pretty much any passage after 7:1 of the book of Hebrews, this is deep—but it’s not impossible to understand. The idea here is that through the better hope we get something greater than anything the Law could give us. The better hope can make us perfect—and chapters of Hebrews like 8-9 make it abundantly clear that that such perfection is in our conscience.

Indeed, a close examination of the passage will demonstrate that the matter at hand is *a perfect conscience*. You’ll see that particularly in the contrast being drawn—a contrast between the Law and living under Christ’s High Priesthood.

Someone may interpret it to mean that the hope is the High Priesthood of Jesus—but it’s not. Rather, Jesus’ priesthood, inasmuch as it helps us to approach God, guarantees the fulfillment of our hope for a clear conscience. Having a clear conscience allows us to draw near to God, meaning that we’ll get our prayers (for mercy and grace) answered! That’s why it says:

Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God... Let us therefore come boldly to the [God’s] Throne of Grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need (Hebrews 4:14-16; NKJV).

---

**Appendix C: Parables not Directly about the Kingdom**

We've asserted that the parables are about the Kingdom, but there is a handful of them which don't have the Kingdom as their specific theme. Here are the eleven which are not directly related to the Kingdom:

1. *A Moneylender who Forgives Debts*. This parable is about measuring one's love for God with the benchmark of how much God has forgiven us (Luke 7:41-43).
2. *The Unfruitful Fig Tree*. God's patience has its limitations, so we must either be fruitful or be destroyed (Luke 13:6-9).
3. *The Lost Sheep and the 99*. God's priority is seeking the lost, not retaining the righteous (Matthew 18:12-13; Luke 15:4-7).
4. *The Lost Coin*. There is joy in Heaven when a sinner repents (Luke 15:8-10).
5. *The Prodigal Son*. This is by far the longest of our Lord's parables. It illustrates the sin of ingratitude, the misery of a sinful life, and repentance. It highlights God's joy when a sinner returns to him as well as the error of those who think they're righteous (Luke 15:11-32).
6. *The Sheepfold*. Jesus demonstrates what a gatekeeper, thieves, and a shepherd each do with sheep. Sheep heed the voice of their shepherd, and will not follow another (John 10:1-6).
7. *The Sheep's Gate*. Jesus is the gate of the sheepfold. Others are thieves and robbers, but he gives freedom and fulfillment to his sheep (John 10:7-10).

8. *The Good Shepherd.* Jesus demonstrates the difference between a *shepherd-for-hire* and himself. He knows his sheep and is prepared to defend them from wolves, even laying down his life for them. He promises that he will bring more sheep—the Gentiles—into the fold (John 10:11-16).
9. *The Good Samaritan.* Jesus defines the term *neighbor* as anyone in need. God prohibits us from discriminating against others. We should love all people from all backgrounds (Luke 10:30-37).
10. *A Friend in Need.* We should be persistent as we bring our prayers to God (Luke 11:5-8).
11. *The Pharisee and the Tax Collector.* Jesus rebukes those who are confident of their own righteousness—those who, despising others, refuse to recognize their own sin (Luke 18:9-14).



---

**Appendix D: Passages Erroneously Thought to be Parables**

Jesus used real names of real people (*Lazarus* and *Abraham*) in the story of ‘Lazarus and the Rich Man.’ In this story, Jesus also described a real place—Hades—in detail. We should not call this story a *parable* because parables consist of symbolism and metaphors, while this story tells us of real people and real places.

‘The Separation of the Sheep and the Goats’ (Matthew 25:31-46) is not a parable either. Jesus said that he’ll separate people like a shepherd separates sheep and goats—and that’s exactly what he’ll do. This metaphor shows quite literally how mortals will be judged when the Millennium begins. The Judgment of the Gentiles is a future event. You can place it on a historical timeline. It’s then when Jesus will classify mortals into two groups—the sheep and the goats—in preparation for the Millennium.

The ‘Lamp on a Stand’ and the ‘Your Eye is the Lamp of your Body’ (Matthew 5:14, Mark 4:21-22, Luke 8:16, Luke 11:33) teachings are illustrations of spiritual truths—they are *not* parables. The ‘New Cloth on an Old Coat’ (Mat-

thew 9:16, Mark 2:21, Luke 5:36), and ‘New Wine in Old Wineskins’ (Matthew 9:17, Mark 2:22, Luke 5:37) are also illustrations—they are much too short to be deserve the designation *parables*. They’re only about one verse long each.

Our Lord’s two ‘Calculate the Costs’ warnings are just that—*warnings*. The first is about someone who wants to build a tower (Luke 14:28-30), and the second is about a king who wants to go out to war (Luke 14:31-33). These illustrate the level of commitment it takes to follow Christ to the end. There’s little reason to call them *parables* since Jesus didn’t call them so.

Jesus’ illustration of the owner of a house who brings out of his storeroom new treasures and old treasures (Matthew 13:52) was our Lord’s way of showing us how scribes who get to know the Gospel will be able to incorporate elements of the New Covenant in their teachings.

Finally, the ‘Unworthy Servants Doing as We Ought’ (Luke 17:7-10) passage is a comparison of the attitudes people can have as they serve God. Some Bible teachers consider it a parable, but there is little warrant for doing so.



---

## Appendix E: The Nearness of the Kingdom

Is the Kingdom already here, is it coming soon, is it a long way off, or is can we not know the time of its arrival? Let's investigate this matter. To do so, we do well to start with the following six passages:

... John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea and saying, 'Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven has come near' [is at hand; NKJV, NASB] (Matthew 3:1-3).

From that time on [after his baptism] Jesus began to preach, 'Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven has come near' [is at hand; NKJV, NASB] (Matthew 4:17).

Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the Good News of God. 'The time has come,' he said. 'The Kingdom of God has come near [is at hand; NKJV, NASB]. Repent and believe the Good News!' (Mark 1:14-15)

These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel. As you go, proclaim this message: 'The Kingdom of Heaven has come near'" (Matthew 10:5-7).

... the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go... Heal the sick who are there and tell them, 'The Kingdom of God has come near to you.'

But when you enter a town and are not welcomed, go into its streets and say, 'Even the dust of your town we wipe from our feet as a warning to you. Yet be sure of this: The Kingdom of God has come near' (Luke 10:1, 9-11).

From the looks of the previous verses, the Kingdom had *come near* or was *at hand* at the time of Jesus, so that must mean that either:

- a) John the Baptist, Jesus, and the apostles were grievously mistaken [since it didn't come], or
- b) the Kingdom still *is really near* (in the same way it was back then), or
- c) the Kingdom is long overdue by about 2000 years.

The flagship proclamation of John the Baptist, Christ Jesus, and the 84 apostles<sup>125</sup> was that the Kingdom of God had *come near*, or (as other translations put it), that 'the Kingdom was *at hand*.' To understand what these men meant, we must begin with the obvious: Each of them was trying to bring people to repentance! This is so important.

Examine their proclamation of 'Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand' closely, and you'll see that their words essentially paint a dichotomy. In other words, they were summarizing a diametric relationship—which one? The one that exists between repentance and the Kingdom! What does this dichotomy demonstrate? That only repentant people are Kingdom ready. Correspondingly, unrepentant people are in no way ready for the Kingdom. If you comprehend this diametric relationship, then you're on your way to understanding the fundamental proclamation of these 86 men:

repentant people = Kingdom ready

unrepentant people  $\neq$  Kingdom ready

---

<sup>125</sup> You get this figure by adding the original 12 apostles to the 72 additional men Jesus sent.

Again, John the Baptist, Jesus, and our Lord's apostles intended for people to take the nearness of the Kingdom as a *warning*. They proclaimed 'Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand' to *warn* people of the nearness of judgment. That's the motivation and meaning behind their proclamation. And *oh* did they proclaim it!

### **Not near**

Now, let's go deeper. There's a peculiarity about the 'Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand' proclamation that we must understand: The Kingdom was *not* near when John the Baptist, Jesus, and the apostles preached! This may sound contradictory, but it's not. Any close reader will notice that they never said that the Kingdom was *near*. They said that it had *come* near. There's a subtle but significant difference between the two expressions: *being* near and *coming* near.

Here's an example: If I call you while I'm on a trip to your house, and I am driving up the highway 50 miles from the house, I can say that I'm *coming near* you. However, I can't say that I'm *near*, just yet. I'd have to be about 10 miles away to say that—right? Indeed, I could legitimately say that I'm *coming near* even if I were on another continent, as long as I'm on a flight that's headed in your direction—correct?

What effect would my call have on you? It would keep you on your toes, wouldn't it? Now, that's *exactly* the effect John, Jesus, and the apostles wanted to have on their hearers. They wanted people to be on their toes for the Kingdom, which clearly had *gotten closer*. Don't forget what we just looked at: That the expression was used as a *warning*—it's an expression designed to motivate people to repent, so that they might be prepared for judgment.



Just to hammer this issue home: You'll never read the apostles<sup>126</sup> say that the Kingdom *is near*. What you will see is that some translations mistakenly use the word *near* when it should be translated as *drawn near* or *is at hand*. That's unfortunate, isn't it?

Consider the following three exhortations from Paul, James, and Peter. The original texts each use the same word we studied above in the statements by John the Baptist and Jesus: Greek ἤγγικεν, which is most accurately translated *come near*. If some modern translations use the term *near*, then they're simply mistranslating.

The night is far gone, and the day has drawn near [is almost here (NIV)]. Therefore let us throw off the deeds of darkness and put on the weapons of light... (Romans 13:12; KJV)

... be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand [has drawn near] (James 5:8; NKJV).

... the end of all things draws near. Therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for your prayers (1 Peter 4:7; LEB).

Did you read the previous passages carefully? If you did, you will have noticed that every time the apostles stated that the Last Times are *at hand*, they coupled their statement with a warning! That is, their idea is this: The Kingdom is drawing near *so*... repent of dark deeds, be patient, be self-controlled, or be sober-minded. So how is the “nearness of the Kingdom” used by Holy Spirit-inspired writers? Clearly it's used to warn us.

---

<sup>126</sup> Unfortunately, many modern translations are poorly done, so we're talking about the original NT Greek texts here.

Reinforcing that point, it will help us if we go back to "... the coming of the Lord draweth nigh" which we just saw in James 5:8 (KJV). Let's examine the expression *draw near / draweth nigh* by considering the context. Read the following verses, and you'll surely notice that James is all about warning Christians to repent. His point is that judgment is pending.

... You have heaped up treasure in the last days... You have lived on the Earth in pleasure and luxury; you have fattened your hearts as in a day of slaughter... Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord.

See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the Earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge [that's Jesus] is standing at the door!<sup>127</sup> (James 5:3, 5, 7-9; NKJV)

## Right and Wrong

We've just proven what the expression "the Kingdom has drawn near" means, so now we can declare with confidence that it's wrong to say that the Kingdom is *near*. Yes, that's right: To say that the Kingdom is near is an error. The reason? The signs which indicate the nearness of the Kingdom have not yet manifested themselves. The word *near* (for Jesus) is synonymous with *at the door*, and he has already told us exactly what needs to happen for the Kingdom to be *near*:

... immediately after the tribulation of those days [the first tribulation, not the Great Tribulation], 'the sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of

---

<sup>127</sup> Is this your concept of Jesus? Is he the Judge standing at the door? Paint that picture in your mind, and you'll be enlightened.

heaven will be shaken. And 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 arriving on the clouds of heaven... when you see all these things, know that he is near, at the door (Matthew 24:29-30, 33; LEB)

When will Jesus' return be near? Only when we 'see all these things,'—and *seeing* means actually witnessing of these literal catastrophic occurrences—things which include the darkening of the sun and moon, meteorites falling from the sky, and disturbances in space. Only *then* will Jesus be 'at the door.' Only *then* will we 'know that he is *near*.' Do you understand how Jesus uses the word *then* in the following passage?

And then they will see the Son of Man arriving in a cloud with power and great glory... when you see these things happening, know that the Kingdom of God is near (Luke 21:27, 31).

This is a serious issue we're addressing. We're not just splitting hairs. Yes, it's subtle, but there is no excuse for misinterpreting the nearness of the Kingdom. Jesus adamantly warned us that anyone who says that the Kingdom is *near* [when it's not] is a liar—a false prophet. Only and exclusively when the above-mentioned events occur will the Kingdom be *near*. If anyone says differently, they are deceivers. In other words, you should steer clear of those teachers! Our Lord Jesus warns us this way:

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

What a verse! It clearly says that if any pastor currently says that 'the time is near,' then you must not follow them. So, what does your pastor teach about the return of Christ? If you don't know—either he doesn't teach about it (which would make him a heretic for not proclaiming the Kingdom),

or he has been unclear. If he's been unclear, you should demand that he be clear.

Ask him whether he subscribes to the doctrine the imminent return of Christ. If he does, he is promoting a grave error. Unfortunately, the imminent return of Christ is what pastors teach in the majority of Evangelical churches.<sup>128</sup>

How can we combat this all-too-common error? One thing we can do is explain to believers what Jesus meant when he said that the Kingdom of God had *come near*. Clearly, Jesus didn't mean that the Kingdom *was* near—since 2000 years have passed since he said so and he hasn't returned yet. Surely, John the Baptist, Jesus, and the 84 apostles were not preaching in error—so what then did they mean? What they meant was that humanity had entered into the second-to-last era of history, the penultimate period that precedes the Kingdom—and what pray tell is that era? Can you name it? You live in it: the Time of the Gentiles!

### **No Kingdom Until the Current Dispensation is Over**

What does the Bible say about the current dispensation, the Time of the Gentiles? It says that while the Jews have become hardened, the Gentiles have become sensitive to the Gospel. The Jews have become disobedient, producing obedience in the Gentiles. We Gentiles get a taste of God's mercy, while the Jews feel his wrath.<sup>129</sup> You're supposed to be aware of the times we live in:

---

<sup>128</sup> The popular website *Got Questions?* states "The imminence of Christ's return is generally taught among evangelicals" (Retrieved on December 31, 2018 from <https://www.gotquestions.org/imminent-return-Christ.html>).

Furthermore, a 2010 article states that "Six in 10 evangelical leaders, or 61 percent, say they believe in the Rapture of the Church" (retrieved on December 31, 2018 from <https://www.christianpost.com/news/global-evangelical-leaders-believe-in-rapture-imminent-second-coming-of-jesus.html>).

<sup>129</sup> The ones who felt God's wrath most sharply were those Judeans who crucified Christ and persecuted the apostles. Was not Jerusalem burned in 70AD? Josephus reports that 1.1 million were killed by the Roman siege and Jewish witnesses state that another 97,000 were captured and enslaved.

I do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, of this mystery, so that you will not be wise in your own sight, that a partial hardening has happened to Israel, until the full number of the Gentiles has come in...

With respect to the Gospel, they [the Jews] are enemies for your sake, but with respect to election, they are dearly loved for the sake of the fathers... For just as you formerly were disobedient to God, but now have been shown mercy because of the disobedience of these, so also these have now been disobedient for your mercy... (Romans 11:25-31).

Got that? Here's the scoop: Right now, we (the non-Jews) get our big chance. We can be God's people. You will miss all that the Bible says about us if you don't know that the Gentiles are called *the nations* throughout the Bible—so recognize that! If you understand that truth, now read the hundreds of verses that talk about *the nations* as if they were talking about us! For example:

And this Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations [Gentiles], and then the end will come (Matthew 24:14).

Get it? Once all the Gentiles [ethnic groups of the world which are not Jews] have the Gospel preached to them, then the World will end. So that's another passage that clearly defines the Times of the Gentiles, and how these times will conclude, right? Now, consider what our Lord says in the next passage:

Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the Times of the Gentiles are fulfilled (Luke 21:24).

---

... the Judeans, who killed both the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us... they do not please God and are contrary to all men, forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved, so as always to fill up the measure of their sins; but wrath has come upon them to the uttermost (14b-16; NKJV).

Jesus calls the epoch of history that began at Pentecost and has proceeded until now *the Time of the Gentiles*. This epoch has to be completed if Jesus will return. In other words, it has to run its course and every ethnic group has to have had the Gospel preached to them.

Just so you know: The word *epoch* is not commonly used in Evangelical circles, but the term *dispensation* is. Either way, as long as you understand that we're talking about a particular period of history in which God accomplishes certain goals, you understand what the Bible refers to with the words *time / epoch / dispensation*.

The term *dispensation* is a great term for what we're talking about, a term popularized by men such as John Nelson Darby (d.1882) and C.I. Scofield (d.1921), who promoted an interpretation of the Bible called *Dispensationalism*. Why do we mention them? Only because one prophecy of the last times given to Daniel was:

... you, Daniel, roll up and seal the words of the scroll until the time of the end... I heard, but I did not understand. So I asked, 'My lord, what will the outcome of all this be?' He [the angel] replied, 'Go your way, Daniel, because the words are rolled up and sealed until the Time of the End...' (Daniel 12:4, 8-9)

The revelations given to Daniel are concealed, hidden, and not open to interpretation *until the Time of the End*. Since an authentic enlightenment and a revelation has been granted to some of the men of this age, men such as Darby and Scofield, allowing many of us to dig deeper into the meaning of passages like Daniel's Seventy Weeks (9:24-25)—it's safe to conclude that Daniel's words have finally become unsealed! God has granted to the current generation an understanding that Daniel could only dream about.

Finally, mark this: The Time of the Gentiles will be the final dispensation to run its course before tribulation breaks out. Now, the Tribulation and Great Tribulation will last only

seven years. Therefore, the completion of the Times of the Gentiles (which we see at present) is a clear sign that the Kingdom has come closer.

## OT Revelation of our Times

Long ago God revealed that there would be a Time of the Gentiles. In other words, he made it clear that there would be a time when the Gentiles would become God's people. Imagine yourself as a Jew reading these passages in times when no other nation on Earth but your own, Israel, had a revelation of God:

Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all of the peoples praise you. Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, because you judge the peoples with equity and guide the nations on the Earth (Psalms 67:3-4; LEB).

Sing to Yahweh; bless his name. Announce his salvation from day to day. Tell his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples... For all the gods of the peoples are idols, but Yahweh made the heavens... Say among the nations, 'Yahweh is king!' (Psalms 96:2-10; LEB)

Praise Yahweh, all you nations; extol him, all you peoples (Psalms 117:1; LEB).

Just a word on Psalm 67:4, quoted above. The Evangelical pastor John Piper published a book in 1993 named *Let the Nations Be Glad*, in which he interprets the Church's goal to be producing worshippers for God. He says:

Missions exists because worship doesn't. Worship is ultimate, not missions, because God is ultimate, not man. When this age is over, and the countless millions of the redeemed fall on their faces before the throne of God, missions will be no more.<sup>130</sup>

---

<sup>130</sup> Retrieved on July 9, 2018 from <https://www.desiringgod.org/books/let-the-nations-be-glad>.

Mr. Piper is close, but still misses the mark. The Church's goal is not to fill Heaven with worshippers from every nation, language, tribe, and tongue. God in his sovereign will assures us that this will happen. He will make heavenly worship complete, and—to Mr. Piper's credit—Evangelical mission strategies may very well assist so that this goal is reached. However, God's greater goal in missions is to bring this age, the Time of the Gentiles, to a close, so that we might be one step closer to the next age: the Millennium! If we do missions well, in the words of Peter, we *hasten* the coming of the Day of God! We're not looking for a worship experience. We're looking for something much greater: A new heavens and a New Earth!

... the day of the Lord will come like a thief... what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness? Looking for and hastening the coming of the Day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new Earth... (2 Peter 3:10-13; NASB).

So here's the big question: How do we *hasten* the coming of the Kingdom? How can we speed its coming? The only way we are told to do so is to fulfill our role of evangelizing all Gentiles. Only when that task is completed will the end come. That's why Jesus ordered us:

... go and make disciples of all nations... (Matthew 28:19)

It's also why Jesus told us that...

... repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his [Jesus'] name to all nations... (Luke 24:47)



... you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the Earth (Acts 1:8).

### a. God will eventually save the Jews

As a side-note, God is reaching the Gentiles now, but his overriding plan is to save *all Israel*.

... how much more will these who are the natural branches [the Jews] be grafted into their own olive tree? For I do not want you, [Gentile Christian] brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery—so that you will not be wise in your own estimation—that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; and so all Israel will be saved (Romans 11:24-26; NASB).

### b. God's Promises to Abraham Signaled the Current Times

Here's something to chew on: What was God prophesying when he made his original promise to Abraham? Remember that God told Abraham that he would make him a father of many nations! You can decide for yourself whether God was talking about the times we live in now, the times of the Gentiles. Here's the original promise as it was given to Abraham:

... Yahweh said to Abram, 'Go out from your land and from your relatives, and from the house of your father, to the land that I will show you. And I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you, and I will make your name great. And you will be a blessing. And I will bless those who bless you, and those who curse you I will curse. And all families of the Earth will be blessed in you' (Genesis 12:1-3; LEB).

## Questions:

1. Did Abraham become a great nation?  
Yes, the nation of Israel.
  
2. Did God bless Abraham, and make him famous?  
Yes, most religions honor him to some degree; especially Jews, Christians, and Muslims.
  
3. Has Abraham become a blessing?  
Yes, his deeds, performed in faith, have enlightened people around the world and have allowed them to know God.
  
4. Has God blessed those who bless Abraham, and cursed those who curse him?  
Yes. Nations that bless Israel are prospered (currently the US), and those which curse Israel are laid low (currently Iraq, Syria, and Venezuela).
  
5. Are all families of the Earth blessed in Abraham?  
Yes, every family with a believer, someone who follows Abraham's faith, is blessed.

Are all the nations of the Earth blessed through Abraham today? You bet they are. God's promise has been fulfilled. Now, to drive it home, God reiterated the same promise in later passages:

Then Yahweh said... 'Abraham will surely become a great and strong nation, and all the nations of the Earth will be blessed on account of him' (Genesis 18:17-18; LEB).

All the nations of the Earth will be blessed through your offspring, because you have listened to my voice (Genesis 22:18; LEB).

To make his promise even more abundantly firm, God even repeated it to Isaac:

... I will establish the oath that I swore to Abraham you father... And all nations of the Earth will be blessed through your [Isaac's] offspring, because Abraham listened to my voice and kept my charge: my commandments, my statutes, and my laws (Genesis 26:3b-5; LEB).

Our God is so great that he gave Jacob the same promise he gave to Abraham:

Your descendants shall be like the dust of the Earth, and you will spread out to the west, and to the east, and to the north and to the south. And all the families of the Earth will be blessed through you and through your descendants (Genesis 28:14; LEB)

In case you're not totally sure of the correct interpretation of these passages, you would do well to heed Paul's NT interpretation below:

Just as Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him for righteousness, then understand that the ones who have faith, these are sons of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, proclaimed the Good News in advance to Abraham: 'In you all the nations will be blessed' (Galatians 3:6-8, 16; LEB).

Got that? Clearly we're to understand God's promise to Abraham as the evangelization of the Gentiles through faith in the Gospel. So God's promise to Abraham is being fulfilled as we speak, since we live in the Times of the Gentiles!

Was it only Paul, or were the other apostles also keen on applying God's promise to Abraham to the current times? Well, Peter interprets the promise of the "families of the Earth" being blessed as applying to "these days."

... all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and his successors onward, also announced these days [Peter was referring to Post-Pentecost, our current age]. It is you [the Jews] who are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, ‘And in your seed all the families of the Earth shall be blessed’ (Acts 3:25).

### c. What Jesus meant by *Times of the Gentiles*

Up to the present day, Jerusalem is *trampled* (desecrated and mistreated) by the Gentiles. For example, the United Kingdom claimed political control over Israel in 1922. After that, in 1948, the United Nations decreed that the Jews had to share governance of the land with Palestinian Muslims [descendants of Syrians and Egyptians], sworn enemies of the Jews.

Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the Times of the Gentiles are fulfilled (Luke 21:24).

Since 1948, in spite of the miraculous victory the Jews had in the Six Day War (1967) and their victory during the 1973 Arab–Israeli War (Yom Kippur War), the Palestinians have captured the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and also East Jerusalem. With East Jerusalem, the Palestinians have dared to lay claim to the most sacred site in the Jewish religion: the Temple Mount.

Things look bad, but they’ll get worse because Israel has yet to fall into the trap of the Antichrist who will promise them 7 years of peace. The *trampling* won’t stop until he is destroyed.

The Jews who established Israel as a nation did so in 1948—this group turns 80 in 2028, thereby concluding their stint as a *generation*. Certainly, that very group of Jews are the ones Jesus referred to in the following passage:

Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened (Matthew 24:34; which is similar to Mark 13:30; Luke 21:32).

The Devil has done his best to make sure that this generation of Jews never arise, but God has stood with Israel up to this point in history. If you consider how the Nazis, led by Adolf Hitler, tried to destroy the Jews, and actually annihilated 6,000,000 Jews during the Holocaust, you'll notice how strong spiritual opposition has become against Israel. In spite of such opposition, the Jews have only become stronger.

In the next passage, Israel is represented by a woman. Notice the divine protection she gets from the attacks of the Devil:

... the woman [Israel] fled into the wilderness where she had a place prepared by God, so that there she would be nourished (Revelation 12:6).

Here's a promise you can trust in: The Jews will once again be grafted into the trunk that is their patriarchs. They will once again be God's people, with their roots strong in God's Word.

...if they [the Jews] do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. For if you were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these who are the natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree? (Romans 11:23-24; NASB)

Jesus himself mentioned that the Jews would persevere until the last times. In the following passage, our Lord makes two things very clear: 1) the cities of Israel will remain until his return, and 2) Christians will evangelize the Jews of Israel until he returns.

You [the apostles] will be hated by everyone because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another. Truly I tell you, you will not finish going through the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes (Matthew 10:22-23).

After two days [2000 years] he [God] will revive us; on the third day [when the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium after the crucifixion begins] he will restore us, that we may live in his presence (Hosea 6:2).

## Conclusion

Let's not forget the main issue here: We're talking about the Times of the Gentiles, the period of human history in which we find ourselves today. It must run its course and be completed for the Kingdom to arrive. John the Baptist, Jesus, and the apostles all preached that the Kingdom had *come* near, *not* that it *was* near. It had *come* near in the sense that it was just two days away, but a day is like 1000 years for God. It had *come* near in the sense that from the time of Jesus, only one phase of history would have to take place before it would be near—the Times of the Gentiles.

We've just studied a lot, but a big question remains: When can we legitimately say that the Kingdom is *near*? There will be a time when we can say that.

## Thief in the Night

It's true that Jesus will come like a thief in the night, but his arrival will only be a surprise for those who do not know the Word of God.

[Jesus taught:] If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into (Matthew 24:43).

... the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare (2 Peter 3:10).

The following promise of our Lord's return is delivered during the bowls of wrath. In other words, Jesus says that he'll be "like a thief," but to those who have missed the Rapture. The bowls are only poured out after the Rapture has taken place.

Behold, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who is on the alert (Revelation 16:15; LEB).

Although it's one of the false teacher's favorite tricks to use the "thief in the night" passages to convince us that we cannot know the time of Christ's return, the Scriptures cannot be silenced. They clearly teach that we will *not* be surprised by the return of Christ. Indeed, those of us who are waiting for Christ's coming are informed, alert, and ready!

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 labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape.

But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. You are all sons of 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 (1 Thessalonians 5:1-6; NKJV).

That day will not surprise us because we understand the times. As we have proven throughout this book: We can know when Christ is near! We can read Revelation and all the Bible. Have we not learned the lesson of the fig tree? If not, we greatly disappoint our Lord Jesus.

Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it [he] is near, right at the door (Matthew 24:32-33).

If you're not yet completely convinced, there's yet another passage which might help you to know that we know when Jesus will arrive. This one warns us to avoid the deception of those who speak as if they were apostles—people who say that the Day of the Lord will come unannounced, with no warning. This passage warns against those who preach that Jesus' return is imminent. Read it, and you'll learn (without a doubt) that the Apostasy and the Antichrist must both become manifest, before Jesus returns. Any other teaching *shakes us from our composure* and *disturbs* us. Avoid any teaching to the contrary!

Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to him [the Rapture], that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the Apostasy comes first, and the Man of Lawlessness is revealed... (2 Thessalonians 2:1-3; NASB)

Let's get the meaning straight here: We simply won't get to witness the Return of Christ until we witness the Apostasy and are able to identify the Antichrist. It is a deception to say that the Return of Christ is near until these two signs are clearly manifest. In other words, we have to know without a doubt that this current dispensation—the Times of the Gentiles—has concluded. Then and only then will the first tribulation begin. At that time, after the Seven Seals are broken, the Seven Trumpets are blown, and the Jews have all been converted, the Kingdom's dawn will be upon us. Only then can we preach with confidence: "The Kingdom is near!"



## The Kingdom of God was Upon Them

There's still another passage of Scripture we've got to look at to undo the lies of the false teachers and to dispel misinterpretations. The following verse is but another used by detractors of the doctrine of one hope—they use it to deny that the Kingdom is yet to come.

... if I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the Kingdom of God has come upon you (Luke 11:20).

Now, let's rightly divide the Scriptures here. Jesus cast out demons and his critics misunderstood what his deliverances were about. Patiently, our Lord attempted to correct his enemies by explaining the essence of a ministry of deliverance [i.e. a ministry of *exorcism*]. Here's the context:

... he [Jesus] was expelling a mute demon. Now it happened that when the demon came out, the man who had been mute spoke, and the crowds were astonished. But some of them said, 'By Beelzebul the ruler of demons he expels demons!'

... But he, knowing their thoughts, said to them, 'Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and a divided household falls. So if Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say that I expel demons by Beelzebul... But if I expel demons by the finger of God, then the Kingdom of God has come upon you! (Luke 11:14-20 LEB)

Here's the same passage in Matthew:

Every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and every city or household divided against itself will not stand. If Satan drives out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then can his kingdom stand? ... But if it is by the Spirit of God that I drive out demons, then the Kingdom of God has come upon you (Matthew 12:25-28).

From the parallel passage Mark 3:22-30, we know that Jesus was directing these words to some Jewish teachers of the Law who had come down from Jerusalem.

Now, to interpret this passage rightly, you must first understand that Jesus is drawing a contrast. The contrast is the power of the Devil versus the power of God—a stark contrast that God expects every sensible-minded human being to fathom. Unfortunately, Jesus’ critics couldn’t even understand the difference between Satan’s kingdom and God’s Kingdom.

Since Jesus was dealing with spiritually blind people, people who called good *evil*, and evil *good*, he had to give them a lesson in logic. That’s why he started with this lesson: A kingdom, city, or household divided against itself cannot stand. This statement is so obvious that even a politician can use it to knock some sense into voters.<sup>131</sup> It’s so obvious that everyone has seen what a divided country or family looks like, and is a witness to this common life event.

To get his point across, our Lord calls God’s power [the Gospel of Mark is clear that he’s referring to the power of the Holy Spirit] *the finger of God*. Then Jesus states that the manifestation of the power of God in exorcisms is an indication that *the Kingdom of God had come upon* his hearers. Our Lord’s logic is the following:

exorcisms = hand of God = Kingdom of God

His expression ‘the Kingdom of God has come upon you’ must be interpreted in the light of who the *you* is. It certainly does not mean that the Kingdom of God had come to *us* who are believers. It also couldn’t mean that the Kingdom had come to the whole world. Rather, it meant that the Kingdom had *come upon* a certain group of people that day. It was a group of people Jesus wanted to warn—a hardened group of

<sup>131</sup> The 16<sup>th</sup> US president Abraham Lincoln used this expression in 1858 when he was running for senator of Illinois, and debating on slavery against Stephen Douglas. He was trying to prove that every state should be united against slavery, and states shouldn’t make their independent decision on whether it’s good or not.

people whose minds were so corrupt and backward, that they were guilty of committing the *unpardonable sin* (Mark 3:30)!

Just as our Lord used his proclamation *the Kingdom of God has come near* to warn sinners to repent, so did he declare that the Kingdom had come *upon* his unbelieving critics that day. Remember: Jesus' Jewish opponents that day not only criticized his miracles—they brazenly declared that his miracles were from the Devil! Therefore, Jesus was confronting not only unbelief, but loud opposition—even *slander*. Calmly and in the love of God, Jesus identified their error, which you can observe in the following formula:

exorcisms = Satan's power = ministry of Jesus

Jesus' correction of their error looks like this:

exorcisms  $\neq$  Satan's power

He proved that the prior formula was impossible, and that the following was possible:

Satan's power = kingdom of Satan

Jesus' basic premise (which any rational person should be able to agree upon easily) is the following:

Kingdom of God  $\neq$  kingdom of Beelzebul

Our Lord tried ministering to his opponents through his actions—performing miracles of deliverance. However, since they denied the obvious testimony of miracles, he ended up having to confront their unbelief with words of concrete logic. Do you agree with our Lord's logic? His hammer blow statement was that the Kingdom of God had *come upon* them! That was a shocking announcement for the ears of those who accused Jesus of using the Devil's power. But Jesus turned the decks on them, and he obligated them to think things through. Have you thought it through?



## Appendix F: Jesus Took Captivity Captive

### Introduction

Confusion surrounds the interpretation of to whom the Ephesians 4:8 *captivity* refers. What *is* clear is that Jesus led a group of prisoners (called *captivity*) to Heaven. It is also clear that Jesus went before these captives to Heaven, and that he did it during his ascension.

Today's popular interpretation holds that this group consists of all OT believers (i.e., Noah, Abraham, Sarah, David) who were waiting in the Paradise of Hades up until the time Christ ascended. Furthermore, pastors teach that the Hades Paradise was translated to Heaven. Consequently, they affirm that whenever believers have died since Christ's ascension, they do not go to Hades, but to Heaven. That interpretation is wrong, and we will explain why.

The passage under question in context is Ephesians 4:3, 7-13, which states:

... keep the unity of the spirit... Now to each one of us was given this grace according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it says,

'Ascending on High, he [Jesus] led captivity captive; [and]<sup>132</sup> he gave gifts to men.'

Now 'he ascended,' what is it, except that he [Jesus] also descended to the Lower Regions of the Earth? The one who descended himself is also the one who ascended above all the heavens, in order that he might fill all things.

---

<sup>132</sup> We have supplied the conjunction *and* since the word is found in 4 of the 5 best original Greek manuscripts and almost all of the most literal English translations (you can examine this more closely in <http://www.greeknewtestament.com/B49C004.htm>, retrieved on February 14, 2018).

And he himself [Jesus] gave some as apostles and some as prophets and some as evangelists and some as pastors and teachers for the equipping of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all reach the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to a measure of the maturity of the fullness of Christ... (LEB).

We're not going to speak in detail about the strengths and weaknesses of different Bible translations. It suffices to say that the King James Version (KJV) and the Lexham English Bible (LEB) are the most true to the original Greek text. Nonetheless, in order that there may be no question at all about what makes a good translation, let's consider what the text says in the original Greek. The most literal translation should say something like this:

Having ascended up on High, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men (Ephesians 4:8).

### Six Tools for Interpretation

God's Word was written for our enlightenment and edification, not to produce a sense of mystery and uncertainty. This Bible verse is a revelation from God, and there is a right interpretation which God wants us to discover. Anyone with the Holy Spirit will be led into the truth, particularly if he uses the tools God has left at our disposal. Those tools for discovering the most accurate interpretation are:

- the primary parallel passage (Colossians 2:15)
- a secondary parallel passage (Romans 10:6-10)
- the OT passage Paul is quoting (Psalm 68)
- the general context of the verse (the Letter to the Ephesians)

These four tools would certainly be enough for us to deduce the correct interpretation, but God has also given us a fifth tool:

- the historical context

What we mean is that we can know from a study of history of what ‘taking captives captive’ meant in the times of Paul. With a simple search on the Internet, we glean information on how victorious Roman armies treated their *captives* in war.

In addition to any understanding of world history, we have a sixth tool:

- Biblical history

There are at least two biblical examples of how military leaders treated their captives and rewarded their people after they won battles. The Bible, with its Holy Spirit-inspired stories sheds great light on the matter.

With these six tools at our disposal, we’re ready to start interpreting. Let’s begin by asking ourselves some basic questions about Ephesians 4:8, such as:

- Are God’s people ever called his *captives* in any other passage of the Bible?
  - \* Answer: No, never.
- Were there any notable spiritual changes in the world after Christ ascended on High? Did Christ’s ascension have any effects upon the world’s spiritual landscape?
  - \* Answer: Yes. The greatest religious revolution in the history of the World took place after Christ ascended to Heaven.
- Is it logical for a victorious general to parade his own rescued people down a street? Would common sense lead him to do that?
  - \* Answer: Not at all, it’s unheard of and completely illogical.

Now, for the most important question of all:

- Is there a fundamental Christian doctrine God at stake with the interpretation of this verse?
  - \* Answer: Yes, if interpreted wrongly the doctrine of the Resurrection is in jeopardy.

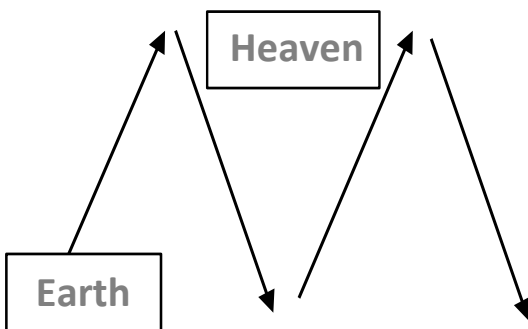
The last question the most important of all. Why? Because, if the popular interpretation of “taking captivity captive” undermines a fundamental teaching of the apostles, then we must contend with those who teach it, and argue against it. In fact, the popular teaching *does* undermine a foundational doctrine—the Resurrection of the Dead.

Since it is our God-given duty to “contend earnestly for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3), we must defend the doctrine of the Resurrection of the Dead from those who would deny it. The doctrine has power, but false teachers deactivate that power every time they say that people go to Heaven after they die, or that people don’t go to Hades anymore—and they say such things a lot!

As a general principle, men called by God to pastor should lay foundations for believers by teaching the fundamental truth of the Christian faith. We should not focus on disputed passages. There are so many basic passages to teach from. The interpretation of Ephesians 4:8 has been under dispute for at least a century in the Church, and (not surprisingly) false teachers attempt to build an entire theory upon it. Like the Jehovah’s Witnesses, they use a relatively obscure passage to build their man-made “fundamentals” upon it. They prefer to promote a man-made theory at the expense of teaching real fundamentals. Certainly, God wants us to understand all of his Word, but where in the Scriptures does he want us to *start*? Faithful pastors will start with the foundations as they are presented to us in the Scriptures.

## A Carousel

Even those who teach “the souls of dead believers go to Heaven” are easily brought to admit that it’s odd for Jesus to make believers loop around the Universe. According to their theory, believers travel this “M” circuit between Earth and Heaven:



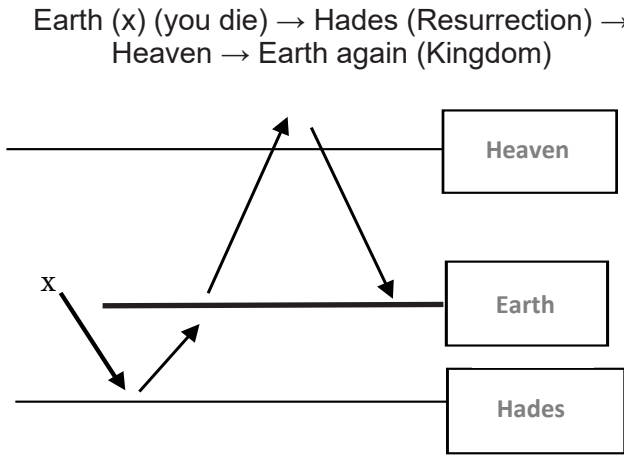
Earth (where we die) → to Heaven (theoretically) → Earth again (for the Resurrection) → Heaven again (with Raptured believers) → Earth again (to reign in the Kingdom)

Quite elaborate, isn’t it? But what’s Jesus’ purpose in bringing our souls to Heaven if we haven’t yet been resurrected from the Dead? False teachers have a hard time answering that question. They can’t admit that what they espouse is really a theory of back and forth trips from Earth to Heaven, a spiritual carousel.

Let the truth be told: They have invented this theory for one basic reason. To avoid a scary truth—that *believers die*. Our flesh hates that truth, but a humble Christian will accept death as his reality—scary as death may be. Isn’t that the example our Lord Jesus left us? Didn’t he command us to take up our cross?



The true loop we will take is not an “M”, but something like this:



### Misinterpretation

The false teachers say “When he [Jesus] ascended on High, he led captive a host of captives” (Ephesians 4:8) means that Jesus took the believers who were in Hades up to Heaven with him during his Ascension. However, the fundamental problem with that interpretation is that believers are never Jesus’ *captives*, we’re his *redeemed*. The term *captives* can only be understood as referring to Jesus’ enemies, of whom he...

... made a public display... having triumphed over them through it [the Cross] (Colossians 2:15).

Jesus’ victory over Satan’s delegates in high places occurred when Jesus, in whom we...

... have been brought to fullness... the head over every power and authority<sup>133</sup>... had disarmed the rulers and authorities (Colossians 2:10, 15).

<sup>133</sup> This word pair (ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐξουσίας in Greek) is the same one found in verse 15. Unfortunately, not all versions of the Bible translate them as the same words. They mean “powers and authorities,” and without a doubt, refer to demons in high places.

---

## Correct Interpretation

Again, carefully note that Colossians 2 is parallel to Ephesians 4:8. They go together like twins, like bread and butter—and both passages express spiritual triumph. The only way we'll avoid misinterpretation, is to define exactly the spiritual triumph Jesus obtained when he was resurrected; so let's do that:

Hundreds of false gods were never heard of again after the resurrection of Christ. Baal, Dagon, Moloch and the many gods of Egypt, so famous for hundreds of years, were suddenly forgotten. Where were the gods of the Greeks and Romans after Jesus was resurrected? Where were Zeus, Apollo, Artemis, Bacchus, and Hermes? They lost their place in the world. They were defeated!

So there was an unprecedented global spiritual awakening—a worldwide enlightenment, after Christianity became a world religion. Why? Simply because Jesus took the demons that impersonated the world's false gods captive! Nobody believes in Baal, Zeus, or Hermes anymore. Those false gods (demons in disguise) were roundly defeated by Christ. The spiritual authorities that were once behind the false gods of Canaan, Rome, and Greece no longer wield power. Jesus has taken their power from them.

Spiritual powers continue to be Jesus' strongest enemies—demons who control the minds of entire nations. These powers also inspire world religions (like Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism), ethnic traditions (like holidays and legends), and ideologies-worldviews (like Communism, Humanism, Rationalism, and Secularism) Jesus will eventually destroy them completely—after he has reigned on Earth for 1000 years.

... the End will come, when [Jesus]... has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet (1 Corinthians 15:24-25).

Here's the next question: Where do these demons abide? From whence do they wield their power?

Answer: In a place called “the heavenly realms.”

... [Paul's job was] to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God... [whose] intent was that now, through the Church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms (Ephesians 3:9-10).

Are you following along? Now things get interesting, because God has actually blessed us *in* those places. What do we mean by that? Well, God has given us a claim to those realms. It's as if he's given us the deed to own them.

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ (Ephesians 1:3).

We are on Earth right now, but the promise we have in Christ is that we'll have authority over the entire Universe. Ruling the *Universe* (as compared to only ruling on *Earth*) means that we will rule over the heavenly realms as well. Having authority in *heavenly realms* means places up in the atmosphere and in space (yeah, near the planets and stars)—locations currently governed by powerful demons.

... God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace... (Ephesians 2:6-7)

Now that you've got this matter “under your belt,” you should be able to understand why the spirit<sup>134</sup>

---

<sup>134</sup> Could this *spirit* be the Devil himself? If it were, Paul probably would have said so.

called *the Ruler of the Kingdom of the Air* is so dangerous. Yes, there is a demon-spirit who rules (like a prince) in the air in the atmosphere above us!

... [Paul speaks of the way we...] used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the Ruler of the Kingdom of the Air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient (Ephesians 2:2).

Paul was no shallow man. His words reflect his depth of thought and his spiritual understanding. He understood how different spiritual forces work in the World, and more importantly, he understood God's Kingdom. Notice how he describes the Kingdom as "the fullness of the times" in the next passage.

... [God] made known to us the mystery of his will... with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of [better translated: *gather together in one*; NKJV or *to bring unity to*; NIV] all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the Earth (Ephesians 1:9-10).

Only if you understand that Paul is talking about Kingdom here will you be able to deduce what "an administration suitable to" the Kingdom *fullness* is. It means is that we'll reign in the Kingdom. It means that we'll administer the government.

Now, read the passage above carefully and answer this question: How *much* of the administration will we manage? We'll administer *all* things, it says. That includes "things in the heavens," and not only things on the Earth.

We often read in the Bible about *the heavens* (the plural form of *heaven*)—which is a term used for the atmosphere and space. Note well that it is not a term for the Third Heaven, where God dwells. If you understand that, then ask yourself "What goes on in the heavens?" As we've seen, spiritual forces govern from there. The ones that govern it

currently are demons, but you and I will govern from those locations when God's Kingdom is established.

The spiritual forces we speak of are powerful demons—they are currently the object of the prayers of billions of people. These demons are *invoked* in prayer in idolatrous worship. They are extremely powerful, but... Jesus is *far above* them!

... [God] raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked... (Ephesians 1:20-21).

These very same principalities and powers in high places are our archenemies. We have a massive struggle against them. We struggle to defeat them through prayer, evangelism, missionary work, teaching, the spiritual gifts, fellowship, and overcoming temptation.

... our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms (Ephesians 6:12).

Now, are you following along? These powerful demons [rulers, authorities, powers, dominions, and forces of evil in heavenly realms] have already been largely defeated by Jesus when he gave his life at Calvary. Since then, these demons either had to adapt to a world in which the Gospel is preached, and change their strategy, or they got locked up in the Abyss.

Jesus will order Satan to be locked up in the Abyss when the Millennium begins (Revelation 20:1-3), but many other demons are already locked in there now. That's what the Bible means when it says that many demons are in "eternal bonds under darkness" (Jude 6). That's why demons express grave fear of being cast into the Abyss:

When he [the demoniac of Gadara] saw Jesus, he cried out, fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, ‘What have I to do with you, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me!’ For he [Jesus] had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man...

Jesus asked him, saying, ‘What is your name?’ And he said, ‘Legion,’ because many demons had entered him. And they begged him that he would not command them to go out into the Abyss (Luke 8:28-31; NKJV).

### Historical Context

Would a victorious general ever lead a parade consisting of the prisoners of war (POWs) he had just freed from the hands of his enemy? Of course not! It would be preposterous. How *humiliating* it would be for the POWs. How wrong and arrogant it would appear to the crowds to see a general parading his own people as if they were his trophy. He would disgrace himself and lose any admiration he otherwise would have had with the people.

On the contrary, military leaders immediately free civilian captives, and they encourage POWs to do what they most desire to do—to be joined again to their families. A victorious general’s glory is to reunite freed captives with their loved ones. It would be unthinkable for him to force his own rescued people to march behind him. Even if a general attempted such an unwise thing, the moment the freed POWs spotted their loved ones among the crowds, they would run to embrace them, making it a short-lived parade.

On the other hand, a general would boast about the capture of his enemies. Indeed, he might be particularly enticed to make a spectacle of them if they had been powerful foes, enemies whom he had been fighting for many years.

The following Bible passage gives us insight into an ancient military tradition: The victorious general would exhibit his spoils of war. He would boast of his booty.

Out of the window she looked and lamented, the mother of Sisera [a great Assyrian general] through the lattice, ‘Why does his chariot delay in coming? Why do the hoofbeats of his chariots tarry?’... ‘Are they not finding, are they not dividing the spoil? A maiden, two maidens for every warrior; to Sisera a spoil of dyed work, a spoil of dyed work embroidered, dyed work of double embroidery on the neck of the spoiler?’ (Judges 5:28, 30)

And how about the following snippet from Israel’s history? David took the plunder from the plunderers. He regained what had been lost:

... there they were [the Amalekites who raided David’s city], scattered over the countryside, eating, drinking and reveling because of the great amount of plunder they had taken from the land of the Philistines and from Judah. David fought them from dusk until the evening of the next day...

David recovered everything the Amalekites had taken... David brought everything back. He took all the flocks and herds, and his men drove them ahead of the other livestock, saying, ‘This is David’s plunder...’

When David reached Ziklag, he sent some of the plunder to the elders of Judah, who were his friends, saying, ‘Here is a gift for you from the plunder of the LORD’s enemies’ (1 Samuel 30:16-26; NIV).

Notice how David, a model military leader, was eager to share the spoils of war with his people. He gloried in his victory with the grace of sharing.

## Roman Celebration of Conquest

David was not out of character. Rather, he was acting the way many victorious generals have acted throughout history. The following passage from Roman history demonstrates what Roman citizens like Paul would often witness as they observed the Romans' celebrations of their military conquest:

Caractacus [a famous enemy of the Romans, a prince taken prisoner by the Roman army]... was put in chains and delivered up to the conquerors, nine years after the beginning of the war in Britain. His fame had spread thence, and travelled to the neighbouring islands and provinces, and was actually celebrated in Italy. All were eager to see the great man, who for so many years had defied our power. Even at Rome the name of *Caractacus* was no obscure one...

The people were summoned as to a grand spectacle; the praetorian cohorts were drawn up under arms in the plain in front of their camp; then came a procession of the royal vassals, and the ornaments and neck-chains and the spoils which the king had won in wars with other tribes, were displayed. Next were to be seen his brothers, his wife and daughter; last of all, Caractacus himself.<sup>135</sup>

Did you notice the words *a grand spectacle*? Does that sound familiar?

And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the Cross (Colossians 2:15).

---

<sup>135</sup> Perseus Digital Library, Retrieved on October 15, 2013 from <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.2.78%3Abook%3D12%3Achapter%3D36>



## Back to Colossians

Again, let's remind ourselves why Colossians is so important to us as we interpret Ephesians 4:8. Well, Colossians is the Bible book most similar to Ephesians. It's parallel to Ephesians since Paul wrote the two epistles at the same time, from the same place (a Roman prison), and with the same thoughts in mind.<sup>136</sup> The passage we just saw is, in fact, the parallel passage to the text we are studying now:

Ascending on High, he led captivity captive (Ephesians 4:8).

The two passages speak of one event. Jesus paraded his spiritual enemies in the same way victorious Roman captors paraded their enemies through the streets of Rome. Those captors made it a point to humiliate and make a spectacle, a public display, of their foes.

The Senate [of Rome] was then assembled, and speeches were delivered full of pompous eulogy on the capture of Caractacus. It was as glorious, they said, as the display of Syphax by Scipio, or of Perses by Lucius Paulus, or indeed of any captive prince by any of our generals to the people of Rome.<sup>137</sup>

## Other Commentators

So, let's recall what we're doing here: We are interpreting Ephesians 4:8, a passage that is often misconstrued to teach the false doctrine that Jesus took believers out of Sheol

---

<sup>136</sup> The Prison Epistles were all written at about the same time. They were also written to congregations or individuals in the same area. Therefore, they are alike in many ways... Ephesians and Colossians are called "twin epistles" because they are so much alike. About one half of the verses in Ephesians are also found in Colossians in very similar language (Retrieved on January 1, 219 from <https://truthfortheworld.education/lesson/preview/79>).

<sup>137</sup> Retrieved from the Perseus Digital Library on October 15, 2013 at <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.278%3Abook%3D12%3Achapter%3D38>

when he was resurrected—a teaching which has caused millions of Christians to believe that people die and go to Heaven. Supposedly, according to this interpretation, the Gates of Heaven are now open to receive any believer who dies.

In case our interpretation of Ephesians 4 seems subjective or *private*<sup>138</sup> to you, let's consider what other Christian commentators have said about it:

The whole of this verse, as it stands in the psalm, seems to refer to a military triumph. Take the following paraphrase: Thou hast ascended on high: the conqueror was placed in a very elevated chariot. Thou hast led captivity captive: the conquered kings and generals were usually bound behind the chariot of the conqueror, to grace the triumph.

... at such times the conqueror was wont to throw money among the crowd. Even to the rebellious: those who had fought against him now submit unto him, and share his munificence; for it is the property of a hero to be generous (From *Clarke's Commentary on the Bible*, Retrieved on October 14, 2013 from <http://biblehub.com/commentaries/ephesians/4-8.htm>).

[Speaking of “making captivity captive”] The allusion is to the public triumphs of conquerors, especially as celebrated among the Romans, in which captives were led in chains (Tacitus, Ann. xii. 38), and to the custom in such triumphs of distributing presents among the soldiers; compare also Judges 5:30, where it appears that this was also an early custom in other nations.<sup>139</sup>

We have to study the customs of Roman generals to understand this passage. Paul, who wrote it, lived under the influence of Romans. So, for them, what was a

<sup>138</sup> Peter insists in 2 Peter 1:20 that “no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation” (NKJV).

<sup>139</sup> Barnes' Notes, Retrieved on October 14, 2013 from <http://biblehub.com/commentaries/ephesians/4-8.htm>

*triumphal procession*? Here is some further historical insight:

He [the victorious Roman general] was drawn in procession through the city, in a four-horse chariot, under the gaze of his peers and an applauding crowd, to the temple of Capitoline Jupiter. The spoils and captives of his victory led the way; his armies followed behind... Rome's earliest "triumphs" were probably simple victory parades, celebrating the return of a victorious general and his army to the city, along with the fruits of his victory, and ending with some form of dedication to the gods...

Pompey, the great general, had particularly interesting attempts at carrying out the triumphal march, which reminds us of the importance of the triumphal gate, the most famous of which is today found in Paris, France:

To represent his African conquest – and perhaps to outdo even the legendary triumph of Bacchus – his chariot was drawn by a team of elephants. They proved too bulky to pass through the Triumphal gate, so Pompey had to dismount while a horse team was yoked in their place... For his second triumph (71 BCE – the last in a series of four held that year) his cash gifts to his army were said to break all records... 6000 sesterces (about six times their annual pay) to each soldier and about 5 million to each officer.<sup>140</sup>

## The Arch

The well-known architectural phenomenon of the Roman triumphal arch is mentioned in the previous historical text, and it deserves a word of mention here. You probably have seen Roman triumphal arches in pictures before. Knowing what they are and what they represent will help you to understand the Ephesians passage at hand. The Romans built

---

<sup>140</sup> Wikipedia, Roman Triumph, Retrieved on October 15, 2013 from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman\\_triumph](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_triumph)

such arches for a very specific reason: to commemorate their military victories.

A triumphal arch is a monumental structure in the shape of an archway with one or more arched passageways... one of the most influential and distinctive types of architecture associated with ancient Rome... the triumphal arch was used to commemorate victorious generals or significant public events.<sup>141</sup>



---

<sup>141</sup> Retrieved from Wikipedia, *Triumphal Arch* on October 15, 2013 at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Triumphal\\_arch](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Triumphal_arch)

---

## Appendix G: Ten Difficult Passages

As a conclusion, we will present 10 passages that cause some degree of confusion with regard to the Kingdom. The first seven are covered lightly. We reserve our most thorough explanations for the last three. We hope that these passages will challenge you, inspire healthy discussion, and will draw you deeper into an understanding of the one hope.

### Difficult Passage #1: The Keys of the Kingdom

The Biblical terms *binding* and *unbinding* describe the process of forgiveness, a process which Christ has granted us the authority to administer. Watch how they are used here:

If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’ If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on Earth will be bound in Heaven, and whatever you loose on Earth will be loosed in Heaven (Matthew 18:15-18).

Any misunderstanding of this passage has to do with what *binding* and *unbinding* mean, and how they are related to a person’s access to the Kingdom of Heaven. Churches bind and unbind by setting the standard for who should get baptized—now, what standard is fair? What standard should pastors use? According to the example of John the Baptist, they should only baptize those who have demonstrated the fruit of repentance. So churches test fruit, and then baptize people to *unbind* or *loosen* people from sin.

Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have? And he [Peter] commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord (Acts 10:47-48; NKJV)

This same process is described with the metaphor of “the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.” Churches unlock the doorway to the Kingdom to anyone we allow to receive the forgiveness of sin. That forgiveness starts at baptism, and it goes on. For example, any time a believer rebukes a brother for their sins, or encourages a brother to repent, he’s using the keys of the Kingdom.

I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven; whatever you bind on Earth will be bound in Heaven, and whatever you loose on Earth will be loosed in Heaven (Matthew 16:19).



**Difficult Passage #2**

You may have read the following passage from Colossians, and asked yourself: “How are we *fellow workers in the Kingdom*, even now?”

...we are ‘fellow workers for the Kingdom of God’  
(Colossians 4:11; LEB, NKJV, NASB).

The only difficulty in interpreting this passage lies in the fact that people read it wrongly. There are only two (not so well-known) versions of the Bible (the Aramaic Bible in Plain English, and the Douay-Rheims Bible) that use the preposition *in* instead of *for* here, making the passage say “in the Kingdom of God.” The great majority of reputable translations<sup>142</sup> use the preposition *for* and a handful use the expression “*unto* the Kingdom.”<sup>143</sup>

Since we’re clearly *not* in the Kingdom yet, anyone who reads the passage with that slant (saying that it teaches that we’re in the Kingdom) is obviously trying to impose their false belief on others. Be careful of such people.



---

<sup>142</sup> Those include the following 20: the LEB, NKJV, NASB, NIV, NLT, ESV, BSB, CSB, CEV, GNT, HCSB, ISV, NET, NHEB, GWT, NASB 1977, Darby, WNT, WEB, and Young’s Literal Translation.

<sup>143</sup> There are four that use this acceptable translation: the KJV, the Jubilee 2000, the ASV, and the ERV.

---

**Difficult Passage #3**

Has God *brought us into* Jesus' Kingdom already?

... [God] has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the Kingdom of the Son he loves (Colossians 1:13).

Again, the problem with poor interpretations of this passage lies in the translation. Whereas the vast majority of translations do *not* use “brought us *into*” but “*transferred us to*,” it’s clear that the latter is the preferred translation of the Greek word *methistémi* (μεθίστημι).

As per Thayer’s, *methistémi* is best translated as “transpose or transfer... [and refers to a] change of situation or place.” Here in Colossians, the context clearly leads to interpreting it as our transfer to a change of *situation*, and not of a change of place. Our current *situation* is Kingdom citizenship. Our place is (without a doubt) the current World.





**Difficult Passage #4**

What does it mean to *take the Kingdom by force*? Why is this something that only *violent* people do? Does God want violent people in the Kingdom?

Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he. And from the days of John the Baptist until now the Kingdom of Heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John (Matthew 11:11-13; NKJV).

Interpretation: God wants us to be fervent—that’s what Jesus meant by being *violent*. Taking the Kingdom of Heaven *by force* means making a mighty effort to enter it. Lazy people, and those who are not willing to fight with all their might will not get into the Kingdom!

The prophets and the Law gave us some light, and John the Baptist was the last representative of that OT tradition. John was an OT man. Although it pointed people *towards* the Kingdom, it did not give people access to it. Only from the times of the New Covenant do we get access to the Kingdom. With the New Covenant in Christ, a new age dawned in which we actually become citizens of the Kingdom. As Jesus said, we are “in the Kingdom.”

Now, some are *lesser* and others are *greater* citizens of the Kingdom, but John did not reach the level of faith to even *qualify* as a Kingdom citizen. His faith in God was never strong enough. We can observe in the following passage that he doubted Christ at the end of his life—and if you doubt Christ, you’re not firm in the Kingdom. Only the New Covenant produces firm faith, allowing us to be part of the Kingdom.

... when John had heard in prison about the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples and said to him, “Are you the Coming One, or do we look for another?” (Matthew 11:2-3; NKJV)



---

**Difficult Passage #5**

How did the teachers of the Law and the Pharisees shut the door of the Kingdom to other people, and impede people from entering the Kingdom? How does a person shut the door of the Kingdom of Heaven?

Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You shut the door of the Kingdom of Heaven in people's faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to (Matthew 23:13).

“Shutting the door of the Kingdom” means having spiritual authority, but using that authority wrongly, not helping people, but blocking their access to God's grace. Such hypocrites will not allow people who are trying to enter the Kingdom to ever get there.

Many people want access to eternal life through things like a solid knowledge of God's Word, baptism, the forgiveness of sins, the anointing of the Holy Spirit, and participation in the Lord's Supper. If you know a teacher who impedes people's access to these blessings (all which would open the door of the Kingdom to these people), then you know the kind of person Jesus is talking about. Stay away from them.



**Difficult Passage #6**

The Kingdom is indeed a real government, not a mere spiritual dimension or a concept. Those who deny the physical return of Christ would have us think that the Kingdom is a mystical experience, but they're wrong. It's actually a vocation—a *calling* to rule on the Earth in our bodies. They love to misconstrue passages like the following one to give people the idea that the Kingdom is metaphysical.

But I will come to you very soon, if the Lord is willing, and then I will find out not only how these arrogant people are talking, but what power they have. For the Kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power (1 Corinthians 4:19-20).

So, a false teacher would quote the part about “the Kingdom of God is... power” and remove it from its context. Their goal would be to make you think that the Kingdom is a metaphysical experience. However, Paul's objective here was to shut the mouths of those who do not have the Holy Spirit—men whose used empty words to challenge his apostleship. He founded the Corinthian church, but enemies there questioned his leadership! Therefore, Paul pointed out that the Kingdom of God is *power*—so that those who had no power would clam up.

Paul was trying to put those men in their place, and the most direct way to do so was to confront them with the reality that they were not at all prepared to minister the Gospel, the message of the Kingdom, which is “a matter of... power.” Paul reminded them that a true pastor does not deal with the subject matter of the Kingdom with empty words, but with supernatural anointing.



**Difficult Passage #7**

This next passage is a contrast about how Jesus speaks to different kinds of people. He spoke to both unbelieving Pharisees and to believing disciples about his coming, but each one got a different message. Pay close attention to how Jesus directs himself to the two groups:

Now when he was asked by the Pharisees when the Kingdom of God would come, he answered them and said, “The Kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, ‘See here!’ or ‘See there!’ For indeed, the Kingdom of God is within you.”<sup>144</sup>

Then he said to the disciples, “The days will come when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it. And they will say to you, ‘Look here!’ or ‘Look there!’ Do not go after them or follow them. For as the lightning that flashes out of one part under heaven shines to the other part under heaven, so also the Son of Man will be in his Day (Luke 17:20-24, NKJV).

Interpreting this passage, let’s start with this: The translation “the Kingdom of God is *within* you” is a poor translation. Admittedly, it’s well-known (even famous), but it has become much less common in modern translations due to the fact that we know more about Biblical Greek now. A more accurate translation is ‘the Kingdom of God is *in your*

---

<sup>144</sup> Let’s say that you want to minister to people who are KJV only, or who insist that the passage has to say “the Kingdom of God is within you.” Then, what do you do? Well, we can still explain the meaning by using the context. Try telling them this: Were the Jews not the ministers of God’s Word, of the Covenant, and of God’s forgiveness? Authority was within them, Kingdom authority. Even though they wouldn’t let other people in, the Jewish leaders actually had the keys to the Kingdom. The Kingdom would be taken away from them—although by birthright, it belonged to them.

*midst*' (NIV, LEB, NASB, Mounce). The latter not only fits better in the context, lending harmony to Christ's teaching, but it frees us from the confusion of false teachers who would make the Kingdom metaphysical, an invisible personal experience and not a coming World government.

The context of the passage is "the *Days of the Son of Man*," the approximately 33 years in which Jesus walked among us. Our Lord spoke of the *Days of the Son of Man* as the times his apostles would long for, saying that they "would desire to see" one of those days after he died. In stark contrast, the Pharisees *hated* the Days of the Son of Man—they hated the fact that Jesus was among them. They did not want to see any more of the Days of the Son of Man. On the contrary, they wished that those days would stop right then and there.

Therein is the meaning: The Pharisees had the King of the Kingdom among them, but hated him. That's why Jesus told them that they had the Kingdom "in their midst." He was trying to help them to see that his presence (as the King of the Kingdom) should have made the Kingdom obvious to them. The Pharisees didn't have to go looking for the Kingdom like someone would go looking for a battle or go looking for a political party.

Their expectations of the Kingdom were wrong. They expected to overcome the Romans through military might or God's supernatural hand. They were waiting for something like the plagues of Egypt, or for God to wash away their enemies like he did with Pharaoh in the Red Sea; but they had it all wrong. The Kingdom was right there *in their midst* through the ministry of the King.



### Difficult Passage #8: Did Jesus resurrect himself?

God resurrected Jesus—we know that, and we’ve already covered this matter fully in the book *One God*. However, one passage continues to be a stumbling block for many believers. Using it, lots of pastors would have us believe that Jesus resurrected himself. They’ll argue that self-resurrection is what Jesus was teaching in John 10, but was it?

The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father (John 10:17-18).

Let’s start our interpretation with the most fundamental principle of hermeneutics: identify the context. Indeed, this passage has a context—the parable of the Good Shepherd. The concept of laying down one’s life is Jesus’ theme in the Good Shepherd parable. A good shepherd makes the sacrifice of laying down his life for the sheep. The passage is basically about the risks a shepherd takes when he wards off predators such as wolves, bears, and lions—preventing them from devouring his sheep.

I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep (John 10:11-13).

So, the context proves that Jesus was speaking about his role as the Shepherd of God’s people. For those who think that Jesus was trying to prove that he self-resurrected, or that he was the “Second Person of the Trinity,” or (worse off) that he was equal to God—they’re reading something *into* the passage—they are performing *eisegesis*. The line

of thought here is that Jesus is the Good Shepherd, that's all he was trying to prove!

So let's overcome additional confusion the old-fashioned way, through Q&A. The following series of questions and answers should help us to understand the meaning of the passage at hand, and to determine whether Jesus really resurrected himself or not.

- According to the text, why does the Father love Jesus?

Because Jesus, of his own free will, laid down his life for God's people.

- Did Jesus have authority to lay his life down?

Yes. But what does 'having authority to lay down his life' mean exactly? It means that:

1. Nobody actually took Jesus' life from him—not *even* God.
2. Jesus wasn't *victimized*—he was no hapless victim.
3. Jesus chose crucifixion, and he chose it *freely*—by faith.

- Did Jesus have authority to take his life up again?

Yes, but what does 'having authority to take his life up again' mean? Parallel to and corresponding with the last point, it means:

1. Nobody had a right to keep Jesus dead—not even God.
2. Jesus wasn't resurrected against his own will—he got what he asked for.
3. Jesus chose to be resurrected, and he chose it freely—by faith.

- What is *this command*, the one Jesus refers to in the passage?

The command was his Father's order for Jesus to lay down his life. We saw Jesus struggle with that command in the Garden of Gethsemane, where he prayed:

My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will... My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done (Matthew 26:39, 42).

- a. Does the fact that Jesus has authority exempt him from being under God's authority?

No, even with his vast authority Jesus is still under God's. In fact, all authority is established by God (Romans 13:1) even Jesus'. Furthermore, even though Christ is sovereign, he has absolutely *no* authority over God (1 Corinthians 15:27).

... there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God (Romans 13:1).

... when it says that 'everything' has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God Himself, who put everything under Christ (1 Corinthians 15:27).

- b. Do any Bible passages clearly state that God resurrected Jesus?

Yes, there are at least 26 of them. Two of those are in Acts 2, straddling the prayer that Jesus lifted up to God to resurrect him.

God raised him [Jesus] from the Dead, freeing him from the agony of death...

God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it (Acts 2:24, 32).

- c. How can the John 10 passage be harmonized with the overwhelming testimony of Scriptures that *God* resurrected Jesus?

Because John 10 never *states* that Jesus resurrected himself! In fact, Jesus simply couldn't do such a thing, since he was dead.<sup>145</sup> No dead man can bring himself

---

<sup>145</sup> Jesus only became a *life-giving spirit* (1 Corinthians 15:45) when he was resurrected. God gave Jesus the power to give life to the Dead only after God resurrected him. Study the following passage (vv. 42-45) about the Resurrection of the Dead, and pay particular attention to its six points which point



to life. That's precisely the problem with being dead, you can't bring yourself back to life.

The sooner we accept this simple reality, the sooner we'll develop a sincere interest in and desire for the Resurrection. The sooner we come to grips with the fundamental reality of death and life, the sooner we'll seek God—our source of resurrection power. Indeed, that's exactly what Jesus did, he sought God's resurrection power by seeking God!

What Jesus was saying in John 10 is that God authorized him to do two amazing things:

- lay his life down
- take it up again

Now, if *laying his life down* meant boldly standing before the leading priests in self-defense and declaring that he was the Messiah,<sup>146</sup> then what did it mean to *take it up again*? Try this: Boldly standing before God in prayer and declaring that he was the Messiah.<sup>147</sup> In fact, that's exactly what our Lord Jesus did!

---

six contrasting ideas. Follow its powerful logic, and you will see that God only made Jesus a "life-giving spirit" after he resurrected him.

- The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable;
- it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory;
- it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power;
- it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.
- If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.
- So it is written: 'The first man Adam became a living being;' the last Adam [that's Jesus], a life-giving spirit.

<sup>146</sup> Jesus knew that this course of action would get him killed, but he did it anyways because he knew that his death was the only way to make salvation available to humanity.

<sup>147</sup> Jesus knew that this course of action would get him resurrected, because he believed in God's promises and kept a clear conscience his whole life long.

What we've just described is the extent of Christ's role in his own resurrection. What was it? Jesus made a bold claim for a resurrection to God! Great, but let's examine how this all played out. It all started with a prayer Jesus lifted up from Hades.

Jesus' prayer to the Father is recorded for us in Acts chapter 2. It's a prayer that expresses our Lord's overwhelming trust in God. Notice how much Jesus trusts God to rescue him from Death (he mentions *God* 6 times in 3 short sentences):

I saw the Lord [God] always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest in hope, because you will not abandon me to the Realm of the Dead, you will not let your holy one see decay. You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence...' (Acts 2:25-28)

Remember what we stated at the outset: The context of the passage is that Jesus is the Messiah. From that fundamental truth, we're supposed to understand that Jesus' service to God as Messiah is *why the Father loves Jesus*. We're supposed to understand that the Father loves Jesus *for a reason*: because Jesus obeys the Father.

Now, this truth is completely foreign to Trinitarians. They imagine a Jesus who is mysteriously part of the One God—not subject to the Father, but One God with him and the Holy Spirit. If you tell a studious Trinitarian that Jesus is subordinate to the Father, he'll call you a heretic.<sup>148</sup> The reality is that *they* are the heretics!

---

<sup>148</sup> This all depends on how much they think about the Bible, of course. See CARM for a brief summary of the doctrine of subordination (<https://carm.org/subordinationism>).

Say what they might about us, here's the saddest thing: Trinitarians, because of their erroneous theology, are unable to correctly apply God's Word to their lives. For example, they miss the essential truth that we should obey God so *that* he might love us. It sounds like common sense, but they would call it false doctrine. They often say, "You can't do anything to make God love you any more than he already does," even though there are dozens of Bible passages that exhort us to try to please God, and many more which warn us against falling into his displeasure.

Furthermore, since the main idea of the passage is the authority God has given Jesus—something they are blind to because they see Jesus as God independent of the Father—they miss God's instruction about how a person like you or me might obtain Kingdom authority.



---

**Difficult Passage #9**

Who among the apostles has not died yet, and will only taste death when he sees Jesus coming in his Kingdom? We know that James, John, and Peter have each died—Jesus confirmed so with his own words. Judas Iscariot died too, of course, but he was replaced by Matthias. That means that some among the remaining nine apostles must have been raptured—indeed, being raptured is the only way not to taste death! Then, when Jesus comes in the Kingdom, they will be placed in Hades, actually *tasting death* for a very short period of time, and then get their resurrection bodies.

Assuredly, I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in his Kingdom (Matthew 16:28; NKJV).

Truly I say to you, that there are some of those standing here who will never [lit. *not*] experience death until they see the Kingdom of God having come with power (Mark 9:1; LEB).

There's no way to deny that in Mark 9:1 Jesus is speaking about his Glorious Return—the moment when he returns in the Kingdom, 3.5 years after the Rapture. He was not speaking of the Transfiguration, an event that occurred some 6 days after he made this statement. Many Bible teachers interpret the passage that way, but they are very mistaken.

So the question is: Which of the 12 apostles who were standing with Christ there would not die physically until his Return? The only reply would be: “Not Peter, or James, or Judas.” The Bible confirms the death of those three. That leaves another nine. Among them, there must have been some who were raptured because being raptured (consider men like Enoch and Elijah) is the only way for a person to be freed from experiencing death. Let's say that it was

Thomas, James, and Simon the Zealot who were raptured. For the sake of argument, let's just say those three were raptured at some point during their lives.

Now, when Jesus said that they would 'not experience death until they see the Kingdom of God having come with power,' that means that [in our hypothetical situation] Thomas, James, and Simon the Zealot *would* taste death when the Kingdom of God comes, right? Of course—and there's only one way to explain why they would experience death when Jesus returns. It goes like this: Jesus is the only resurrected man right now. He's the firstfruits of the Resurrection. All other resurrections will take place either at the Rapture, after his Return, or at the end of the Millennium.

Right now, the 24 elders in Heaven are not *resurrected*, they're just *raptured*—which means that they're not in their resurrection bodies yet. They are only souls. When Jesus comes down during his glorious Return, we who have already been raptured will come down with him in resurrection bodies. The 24 elders are different from us—they will have already been sent to the Paradise of Hades as bodiless souls. Therefore, they will taste death briefly, and it will happen at some point before Jesus returns. When the Lord does return, they'll promptly get their resurrection bodies and they will begin to reign with Christ.

As a final note: Do you know what Jesus' cryptic statement has to do with what happened six days later? He took three of his apostles and they met with *two* of the 24 elders! Yes, they met two of the men who were living as souls in Heaven—Moses and Elijah. The connection between these two passages is this: What Moses and Elijah were *at the time*, is what some of the apostles *would be*. The honor of those apostles would be the same one that Enoch, Moses, and 22 other elders got: a rapture to Heaven.



---

**Difficult Passage #10: Seeking Rewards**

We've heard many people, especially Jehovah's Witnesses, say that we should love God with no self-interest; that is, with zero desire to benefit personally in Eternity. Many people make it out to be selfish of a Christian to seek glory—but they're wrong. It's a natural and healthy desire for each person to seek what's best for them. It's only selfish if we want to see others *not* obtain good things. The apostles were very interested in obtaining glory in the Kingdom.

... they [the apostles] gathered around him and asked him, 'Lord, are you at this time going to restore the Kingdom to Israel?' (Acts 1:6)

Then the mother of Zebedee's sons [James and John] came to Jesus with her sons and, kneeling down, asked a favor of him. 'What is it you want?' he asked.

She said, 'Grant that one of these two sons of mine may sit at your right and the other at your left in your Kingdom.'

'You don't know what you are asking,' Jesus said to them. 'Can you drink the cup I am going to drink?' 'We can,' they answered.

Jesus said to them, 'You will indeed drink from my cup, but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared by my Father' (Matthew 20:20-23).

Furthermore, Jesus invites all of us to follow him in order to reign with him. Pay close attention to how Jesus spoke to his apostles. He used the rewards of the Kingdom to motivate them to serve him.

You are those who have stood by me in my trials. And I confer on you a Kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me, so that you may eat and drink at my table in my Kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Luke 22:28-30).

Jesus teaches us to seek treasures that will last forever. The opposite would be to seek *earthly* treasures. The opposite is not *abstaining* from seeking treasures!

Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on Earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal... your Heavenly Father knows that you need all these things [food and clothes]. But seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you (Matthew 6:19-2, 32-33; NKJV).

Are you pursuing rewards earnestly? Are you a “violent” person taking the Kingdom by storm? Do you believe that God is a rewarder of those who earnestly seek him? If so, then you are seeking the Kingdom of God—keep it up! You won’t be disappointed.



*Notes:*



*Notes:*