

THE 12 TRIBES OF ISRAEL

Chapter 4

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New International Version used throughout unless otherwise stated.

From the beginning of mankind's existence God set forth a plan to reestablish His Kingdom and domain on earth, and to ensure that rebellion would never arise again. Throughout the timeline of humanity He called certain men to represent Him on earth – men who would serve Him faithfully and believe Him. Numerically, these were always relatively insignificant in comparison to the vast hordes that never knew God. The purpose of these representatives was to make plain God's Eternal Purpose and to warn of the ultimate consequences of rebellion.

Very early in God's instruction manual – the Bible – God called to duty a man called Noah. All the great prophets have consequently spoken of Noah, and all his actions are set as an example for all humanity **for all time**. Even Christ ensured that this was clearly understood (**Matt 24:36-39**). What God did in the days of Noah are a warning for all, and again, **for all time**. The examples in the Bible will be recalled by all generations for ever, and at that time, all humanity will understand God's reasons for it all.

God makes it plain that all that's happened in the course of six thousand years was done as examples for all those on whom the **end of the ages** have come: **1Cor 10:6** *“Now these things occurred as examples, to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did.”* **V11** *“These things happened to them as examples and were written down as **warnings** for us, on whom the **FULFILLMENT OF THE AGES** has come.”*

Christ also spoke of this **fulfillment** when everything will be **accomplished**: **Matt 5:17** *“Do **NOT** think that I have come to abolish the **Law or the Prophets**; I have **NOT** come to abolish them but to **fulfill** them. I tell you the Truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by **any** means disappear from the Law **until everything is accomplished**.”*

It's important to realize that there is an ongoing purpose that will be fulfilled at the end of the ages. Those who believe that Christ fulfilled everything during His first appearance obviously don't believe the Book of Revelation, which was delivered to John many years after His departure. Now the Book of Revelation **does** detail the **fulfillment** of everything – when all is **accomplished**. The Book of Revelation is a part of the Prophets (Nevi'im), in fact the Grande Finale of all that is written. Those who believe Christ abolished the Law and the Prophets obviously don't believe the Book of Revelation is a part of Sacred Scripture.

There are many examples in the Bible for us – on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come. God gives infinite detail of all that will occur. The Book of Revelation states it plainly blow by blow. But all the prophets gave the details so that all would know what to expect, but more importantly, the purpose of it all. And even just before His death, Christ confirmed that His Kingdom had not yet been established: **John 18:36** *“Jesus said, “My Kingdom is **not** of this world [**age**]. If it were, my servants **would fight** to prevent my arrest by the Jews. **But now my Kingdom is from another [time]**.”* There are some foolish people who believe that God's Kingdom is now reigning on this earth. According to them, what you see on earth today is God's way of governing! How blasphemous these people are!

God called Abraham from the very heartland of Babylonia to be the father of all the faithful. It was through the seed of Abraham that all nations would be blessed. God promised to increase his seed to a huge multitude of people. Figuratively, they were to be like the sand of the seashore. Yet out of all the vastness of Abraham's seed, God speaks only of a remnant who would be selected for salvation: **Rom 9:27** *“**Isaiah** cries out concerning Israel: “Though the number of Israelites be like the sand by the sea, **only a remnant will be saved**. For the Lord will carry out **His SENTENCE** on earth **with speed and finality**.”* This remnant is referred to in **Rev 7:4-8** and **Rev 14:1-5**. This is to fulfill God's promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. And notice what Paul added while quoting **Isaiah**: **Rom 9:29** *“It is just as **Isaiah** said previously: Unless the LORD Almighty had left us descendants, we would have become like Sodom, and we would have been like Gomorrah.”* So this **remnant** or **descendants** have been appointed by God to be the bastion against the evil generations immediately before God's **SENTENCE** that will come **with speed and finality**! God is the Great Judge who will deliver His

SENTENCE according to **HIS LAW!** Those lawless wretches that hate **GOD'S LAW** will be judged according to the very **LAW** they hate!

When God called His chosen nation Israel out of Egypt, He sent them to reclaim the land He promised to Abraham. He told them the land was occupied by seven nations larger and stronger than they were (**Deut 7:1, Acts 13:19**), and they were required to destroy these nations and occupy the land. It was within God's power to destroy these nations Himself, but He didn't do it. Instead He appointed His armies – the armies of Israel – to do it. From the time of the crossing of the Red Sea (**1Cor 10:1-5**), everything that was done was for examples for us on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come.

Additionally, it was God's purpose to ensure that the seven nations who were occupying His Holy Land had reached the full measure of their evil ways: **Gen 15:16** *"In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached full measure."* Notice the seven nations identified in **Deut 7:1** are collectively called Amorites. It was God's purpose to allow these evil degenerates to reach the full measure of their evil, and then bring judgment on them by the might of His army. Joshua son of Nun, was assigned this task.

Whatever you may think of God's methods in times past, the time will come when you will realize the sheer brilliance of all that God has done – and even more importantly – why He did it! If you listened to mainstream Christianity today, you would get the impression that everything God did was a strategic blunder and totally unnecessary. Their silly rendition of God's Great Plan is that God now admits that He made big mistakes and Christ came along and papered over them. These people are convinced that nothing recorded in Holy Scripture, which has happened in the past, are examples for us.

Yet all the events in days of old were specifically recorded as examples for the very endtime. All the men of God throughout the ages understood this, and longed for this day. Jacob was inspired to utter a prophecy in his final days, which concerns all his sons, and the nationhood they would achieve at a future time.

Concerning his son Judah, he said this: **Gen 49:8** *"Judah, your brothers will praise you; your hand will be on the neck of your enemies; your father's sons will bow down to you. You are a lion's cub, O Judah; you return from the prey, my son. Like a lion he crouches and lies down, like a lioness – who dares to arouse him? The Sceptre will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until [he comes to whom it belongs – rather, until Shiloh comes] and the obedience of the nations is his."* It's true that Jacob was indicating Messianic fulfillment, but he also made it clear that Shiloh would come. Shiloh was a town in Ephraim, the place where Joshua set the Tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant (**Josh 18:1**). The translators of the NIV decided to abandon the Shiloh fulfillment and go straight to the Messianic fulfillment; hence the substitution of 'until he comes to whom it belongs.' The **KJV** retained the true meaning: **Gen 49:10** *"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh comes; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be."* (**KJV**).

That it was a prophecy of Messianic fulfillment is evident in the next verse: **Gen 49:11** *"He will tether his donkey to a vine, his colt to the choicest branch; he will wash his robes in the blood of grapes. His eyes will be darker than wine, his teeth whiter than milk."*

Christ called upon His disciples to fetch a donkey and her colt. We find these words in **Matt 21:4** *"This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet: "Say to the Daughter of Zion, 'See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'" And we find that Christ quoted the prophet Zechariah: **Zech 9:9** *"Rejoice greatly; O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey."* And the prophecy continues: **V10** *"I will take away the chariots of Ephraim and the war-horses from Jerusalem, and the battle-bow will be broken. He will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea and from the [Euphrates] River to the ends of the earth. As for you, because of the blood of My Covenant with you, I will free your prisoners from the waterless pit. Return to your fortress, O prisoners of hope; even now I announce that I will restore twice as much to you. I will bend Judah as I bend my bow, and fill it with Ephraim. I will rouse your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O Greece, and make you like a warrior's sword."**

You will notice that Christ never fulfilled that latter part of this prophecy at that time. Nor did He intend to! It was not a prophecy for His first appearance.

From the evidence of **Gen 49:10** we can know that from the days of Jacob it was determined that the ruler would come from Judah, and we can also know that the Law was entrusted to the Jews. This was clearly understood by the Apostle Paul in **Rom 3:1-2**. The **scepter** represents the office of authority that God exercises over the 12 tribes. This scepter had its fulfillment in the kingly reign of David. From the time of David and his son Solomon, this kingly office was all downhill until the birth of Jesus Christ.

The events of Christ's birth were indelibly etched into the minds of all the Jewish people following Herod's attempt to kill Him as soon as He was born. It was widely known that a King had been born. The Jewish people had a wide expectation that He, Christ, would gather the people, and establish His

Kingdom in accordance with Jacob's prophecy. It didn't happen! Instead, Christ was brutally beaten and executed.

Yet the legacy of those early days remained, and the Jews had an expectation that He would grow up and appear at the Temple (**Mal 3:1**). In fact, He did, but only as a 12-year-old boy, and with astounding knowledge of the Scripture. The keepers of the Law, the Jewish people, were amazed at the explanations this 12-year-old gave them. They taught the Law, but didn't understand the intended meaning behind it. For three days, this young lad dazzled them with His understanding of God's Word (**Luke 2:41-50**).

This was the early fulfillment of Jacob's prophecy, when the rightful Heir would come to the Temple. This is evident in Christ's words: **Luke 2:49** *"Why were you searching for me? Didn't you know I had to be in MY FATHER'S HOUSE?" But they did not understand what He was saying to them.* Even at the age of 12, Christ was fulfilling what was written about Him.

All these things serve to teach us some very great principles. Not least of which is how the human mind is capable of rejecting sound reasoning. Everything surrounding the birth and development of this young Prince of Judah was a sign, which should have been heeded. There was also the time of His circumcision, eight days after He was born. It's worth reviewing these events because Peter also spoke of the prophets who searched long and hard to find the exact time of Christ's arrival (**1Pet 1:10**). One of these prophets was a man called Simeon.

Here is the account in **Luke 2:25** *"Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. It has been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ. Moved by the Spirit, he went into the Temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for Him what the custom of the Law required, Simon took Him in his arms and praised God, saying: "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all people, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for THE GLORY OF YOUR PEOPLE ISRAEL."*

So yet again, nothing was hidden under a bushel, but was openly discussed and acknowledged in the **sight of all people**. In the passage of thirty years, it seems, all these things were forgotten as the expectation of a Kingdom being reestablished was envisaged, with all the glory anticipated. People became obsessed with their own glory and set about projecting their own 'righteousness' as a means for establishing their niche in the coming Kingdom. They obviously expected God to acknowledge their righteousness and worthiness. Yet again, they failed to note the plain words of the prophet: **V33** *"The child's father and mother marveled at what was said about Him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, His mother: "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many IN ISRAEL, and to be A SIGN that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce you own soul too."* Mary, being the woman who gave birth to this child, was a forerunner of another woman spoken of much later, who also gave birth to this child. And it was this woman for whom Christ was **both root and offspring** (**Rev 22:16**). This woman was the House of David, and Christ was the Son of David. It's this woman who will come to prominence in the very endtime.

It's rarely spoken of, but Mary, as a young virgin, uttered an amazing prophecy – about herself! But neither she nor her famous Offspring fulfilled it at that time. Here it is in full: **Luke 1:46** *"And Mary said, "My soul praises the Lord and my Spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for He has been mindful of the humble state of His servant. FROM NOW ON all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me – holy is His Name. His mercy extends to those WHO FEAR HIM, from GENERATION TO GENERATION. He has performed mighty deeds with His arm; He has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble. He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty. He has helped His servant ISRAEL, remembering to be merciful to Abraham and his descendants FOR EVER, EVEN AS HE SAID TO OUR FATHERS."*

It may be seen as a fair description of the past, but in fact, it was a prophecy for the future! It's those **who fear God** that will serve Him, and a great **distinction** will be made between **those who do and those who don't** (**Mal 3:16-18**). The words *"who are proud in their inmost thoughts"* is a reference to Simon's prophecy *"the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed"* (**Luke 2:35**). And those who become bloated with their own importance are riding for a fall! Christ had plenty to boast about, after all, He was the Son of God! Yet we find that any boastfulness or pride was absent from all His teachings. The same was true of John the Baptist.

And who was Mary praying to? It was the Father! The Christ was still in her womb. She says, *"He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble."* It's God's intention to bring down all rulers from their thrones, and to achieve this, **He will lift up the humble**. Remember David! He was a man after God's own heart (**Acts 13:22**), who was to fulfill all His will (**same verse**), and who, as a young lad, challenged the mightiest of rulers – Goliath! He fearlessly strode up and struck him down. At that time, David gave his reasons for his actions; he said, *"Who is this Philistine dog that dares to stand before the ARMIES OF THE LIVING GOD!"*

You will note that Mary's prophecy relates to '*His servant ISRAEL*' and to '*Abraham and his descendants*' – not to all the generations of humanity! Yes, all generations will call this woman 'blessed' all right, especially when this woman confronts them. What is more, this 'woman' will fight beside the Mighty Christ when He brings all the generations against Jerusalem (**Zech 14:14**), and Judah will collect all the spoils of war (**same verse**).

When the northern ten tribes abandoned Almighty God, only the Tribe of Judah remained faithful to Him and His Temple in accordance with the prophecy. But in addition to Judah, God's own Tribe Levi whom He chose as His own in place of the firstborn, also remained and continued their service. The service of the Levites continues to the very day when the Mighty Commander of Armies – Christ – returns to crush all the rulers and authorities and to fill the whole earth with the Father's Kingdom – a Kingdom that will never be destroyed!

It should be considered elementary that David did indeed establish a Kingdom of God on earth. All the people of Judah expected to see it **reestablished** in their lifetime at the first appearance of the Messiah. Even Christ's disciples asked Him, "*Lord, are you at this time going to RESTORE the Kingdom to Israel?*" (**Acts 1:6**). And why wouldn't His disciples have this expectation? All the prophets spoke of it!

David established a Kingdom for the glory of God, but he never ruled the whole world – but only Israel. All 12 Tribes! Christ made it clear that He would establish a Kingdom, and it would be like a tiny mustard seed, or like the leaven in three measures of flour (**Matt 13:31-35**). Yet Daniel spoke of an event that would see all the Kingdoms of the world become the Kingdom of our Christ. Daniel spoke of four kingdoms that would be prominent in the endtime and would exist together – **NOT** sequentially!

Daniel wrote this: **Dan 2:35** "*Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were broken to pieces AT THE SAME TIME and became like chaff on the 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."*

Now doesn't it beat all to hear the 'prophecies' of the false prophets twisting this Scripture to conform to their fanciful ideas? They couldn't deny that Babylon was the head of gold because Daniel plainly said it was! So they had to dispense with the gold, silver and bronze, and consign it to antiquity. The iron and clay became the target of their fanciful imaginings. They could twist these feet and ten toes to mean anything they choose. One self-proclaimed 'prophet' actually twisted it to imply that the European descendants of Israel were the ten nations that Christ plans to crush out of existence! Some of the things that this man claimed were so outrageous they were blasphemous! How could any servant of God teach such things? This same man contradicted God by saying that Babylon is Rome. And his Biblical proof of this? There is none! Not a single word! This sort of madness comes about when people imagine themselves to be a prophet of God. They know very well they are not! **A true prophet is taught by God.** Therefore, he doesn't have to 'invent' prophecy or weave a spell with stories he has made up (**see 2Pet 2:3**), or plagiarized from others. And those who dare to utter a prediction had better have received it from God! God doesn't take kindly to those who utter predictions in His Name without His authority! This right is given only to God's true prophets and the offspring or extended family of the prophets.

Do you recall what happened at Shiloh? Well, Shiloh did come, and it was glorious! For a while! **Jer 7:12** "*Go now to the place in Shiloh where I first made a dwelling for my Name, and see what I did to it because of my people Israel. While you were doing all these things, declares the LORD, I spoke to you again and again, but you did not listen: I called you but you did not answer. Therefore, what I did to Shiloh I will now do to the house that bears my Name, the Temple you trust in, the place I gave to you and your fathers. I will thrust you from my presence, just as I did ALL YOUR BROTHERS, THE PEOPLE OF EPHRAIM."* What followed this was the destruction of Solomon's Temple by Nebuzaradan, the commander of the King of Babylon's armies. The point being that in the absence of obedience to God's righteousness and His Way, nothing is sacred. God does not permit even the most sacred things to stand when His people are undeserving of it. Daniel's prayer of lament (**Dan 9:4-19**) says it all! This should be fair warning to all those who think they can serve God in any manner they please.

Of course, Jacob's prophecies concerned the national characteristics of his twelve sons as they developed to tribal statehood. It's interesting that the prophecy states that a **lawgiver** will not depart from **between his feet**. When God commands us to **walk** in His Ways, and not turn aside, He is speaking of **HIS WAYS AND HIS LAWS**. Well, at Shiloh, the people of Israel refused to listen even though God spoke again and again. Remember Jacob's words that "*the Ruler's staff will not depart from between his feet, UNTIL SHILOH COMES, AND the obedience of the nations is His* (Christ the Ruler)." The **obedience of the nations** has not been fulfilled, and neither has the prophesied coming of Shiloh!

Shiloh was a town in the territory of **Ephraim** where the Tabernacle stood, together with the Ark of the Covenant.

It's a matter of historic record that every time God established His nation of Israel, subversives quickly infiltrated it. It's also a matter of historic record that the Church Christ built was quickly infiltrated by subversives. As soon as God established His Way and His Law, treachery began immediately. God knew it would happen, and permitted it to happen. When Christ was on earth, He identified the culprits! They were then, and still are today, **the evil generation that killed righteous Abel!** (Matt 23:35-36). This evil generation lived long before the Israelites were born. These evil brutes cannot stand God's Way or His Laws. Presently and historically, these brutes have stood ready to devour all those who would honour God. It should come as no surprise that these pose as angels of light! They are not normal like Christ and John the Baptist; instead, with great flair and panache, they present themselves with words that sound very righteous, and use mannerisms that promote their prestige to the unwary. It's not enough to be normal human beings; they have to exceed Christ's righteousness. Their feigned 'humility' is betrayed by their boastfulness as they recount stories they have made up (2Pet 2:2-3). To the unwary, they do appear righteous. The evil generation, at Christ's time on earth, masqueraded as super-righteous religious leaders. The population at that time groveled before them and made them feel real good.

This same evil generation wants to control everything, and particularly the things of God. Because their master is Satan the devil, they must defend Satan's way as being equal to God's Way, and equally desirable. They think there's a contest going on, one which will determine the future of this planet. They think they have built their case on the fact that God has destroyed His people Israel on many occasions for disobedience, while they have continued to prosper and outnumber the people of God. Sure they've killed their own people on many occasions, but the net result is still far better than God's – **SO GOES THEIR REASONING!**

And isn't this the reasoning of mainstream Christianity today? Don't they believe that as long as someone says the magic words '*I accept Jesus as my personal Saviour*' they have won another 'soul' for Christ? They don't care that the person doesn't stand in awe of Almighty God. Neither do they care that the person doesn't fear nor tremble before Him. The 'magic words' constitute their entire doctrine! By mouthing these, their own words (and not the Words of Almighty God, let it be known) they declare themselves to be saved. Well, how convenient for them! The entire Bible becomes superfluous because they have spoken the 'magic words'.

Satan's reasoning in relation to God's servant Job says it all. God said to Satan, "*Have you considered my servant Job?*" Oh yes, Satan had considered God's servant Job all right! In the opening dialogue of the Book of Job, Job is described as '*blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil*'. Job is also described as '*the greatest man among all the people of the east*'.

To God's question Satan replied: **Job 1:9** "*Does Job fear God for nothing? Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has?*" **V11** "*But stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face.*" Strangely enough, Satan was speaking from experience. It was he who did this very thing when he attacked God and was rebuffed. He was certain that every other intelligent being would do the same. Satan suggested that Job only **feared** God because of the many blessings he possessed. How wrong he was to suggest such a thing of a true servant of God!

God has a son – a human son – called Ephraim (**Jer 31:9, 20**). He loves that son! (**same verse**). Ephraim exhibits many of the kindly, merciful qualities God has imparted to him. When Ephraim sees injustice, he **gores** nations to the ends of the earth (**Deut 33:17**). He is a bull (**see also Isa 1:3**), but exhibits the foolishness of a young heifer (**Hos 10:11**). God put a hedge around Ephraim, and protected all that he has. When Ephraim speaks, men tremble! (**Hos 13:1**). The nations of the earth shrink back at the slightest word from Ephraim. Satan has no nation the equal of God's human son.

Satan has utilized the doctrine of Balaam, to infiltrate, to divide and conquer. Ephraim, the silly young heifer, has failed to notice. God describes it this way; he has grey hairs on his head but he fails to see it **as foreigners sap his strength** (**Hos 7:9**).

And now, you silly young heifer, hear what God has to say. Though it's a long quote, every word has significance for our time now. **Hos 10:11** "*Ephraim is a trained heifer that loves to thresh; so I will put a yoke on her fair neck. I will drive Ephraim, Judah must plough, and Jacob must break up the ground. Sow for yourselves righteousness, reap the fruit of unfailing love, and break up your unploughed ground; for it is time to seek the LORD, until He comes and showers righteousness on you.*" Notice the link between **Ephraim** and **Judah**? Recall that anciently Ephraim separated from Judah and actually went to war against them! God appointed a servant of the king, Jeroboam, to bring about this betrayal. Jeroboam was only too willing to do it to gain his own ends. For the rest of the quote from Hosea, bear in mind that God plans to reunite Ephraim and Judah as one staff in His hand. God has spoken of this in **Zech 11:4-17** and **Eze 37:15-22**.

Continuing in **Hos 10:13** "*But you have planted wickedness, you have reaped evil, you have eaten the fruit of deception. Because you have depended on your own strength and on your many warriors, the roar of battle will rise against your people, so that all your fortresses will be devastated – as Shalman devastated Beth Arbel on the day of battle, when mothers were dashed to the ground with*

their children. This will happen to you, O Bethel, because your wickedness is great. When that DAY DAWNS, the king of Israel will be completely destroyed."

Note: Bethel means 'House of God'; Betharbel means 'house of wickedness'. Shalman is the Shalmaneser king of Assyria, mentioned in **2Kings 18:9**, who conquered the ten northern tribes and led them away in slavery. They became the 'lost tribes of Israel', which Christ Himself referred to (**Matt 15:24, 10:6**) as still being in existence in His time. Notice that the conquest of Shalmaneser had already occurred when this prophecy was written. Yet the prophet speaks of the **dawning of another day** when the king of Israel will be completely destroyed.

The United States of America is Ephraim. God loves His son Ephraim! Ephraim, together with all his brothers, are the House of Israel (**Jer 7:15**). And it's Ephraim that rules over them. But Ephraim also wants to rule over Judah, and God forbids this! The reason is that Ephraim wants to favour the enemies of God over Judah. They want to concede the things of God to Satan's horde that want Jerusalem.

Let me make a point here! At the death in 1986 of the foolish shepherd that God raised up in the endtime, and named in a parable (**Zech 11:16-17**), many people turned away, finding fault with this shepherd and his teachings. Some clung to his teachings even though God also calls him a worthless shepherd. Others discarded all the teachings and chose to believe the Gentile's version of Christianity. None chose to **build** on the foundation begun by this man! None searched the Scriptures for truth! Instead, some set in concrete all that he taught; others discarded it all. Even the most immature student of the Bible would realize the Bible contains many things they have never understood. And some of the things that were glaringly obvious, they blanked from their minds. That generally covers the core of Christianity today, and their present state of confusion.

But far more powerful were the counterfeit Churches, which sprung up in great proliferation. Foremost in their agenda was to deny all the Laws of God, and claim salvation by grace. Contrary to what they believe, grace is a legal term, which means unmerited pardon. A felon can be pardoned for his crimes under certain circumstances. The prime prerequisite being that he turns from his wicked ways.

God makes the point that all sin is committed under the First Covenant. **Heb 9:15** "**For this reason** Christ is the Mediator of a New Covenant, that those **WHO ARE CALLED** may receive the promised eternal inheritance – now that He has died as a ransom to set them free from **THE SINS committed under the First Covenant**." Notice they were **NOT** set free from the **LAWS** under the First Covenant – but from the **SINS!** And who are being called? Certainly **NOT** those who won't acknowledge the **Laws of God** under the First Covenant!

Notice the words '**For this reason...**'. It's speaking of sacrifices, and the one sacrifice that is able to cleanse us of our sins – but only for those **WHO ARE CALLED!** They are set free from the ultimate penalty for all their past sins – and the penalty for sin is death! Does the death of Christ ransom us from our sins so that we can **continue** to sin? What sort of madness is that?

It should not go unnoticed that the great bastion of Christianity is the United States of America. This nation has spawned more variations of Christianity than any other nation. But their record pales in comparison to the rising forces of Islam. Whole nations are embracing Islam, and their primary focus is the destruction of Christianity and the nation that predominates in upholding it – the U.S. But that's not all! They also want to destroy Judah, the fledgling nation of Israel, and seize Jerusalem and all the Holy Land.

But the minions of deception keep telling you to watch the Roman Catholic Church. They claim the big bogey is Catholicism. They've structured reams of fanciful 'prophecies' based on their own imaginings.

From earliest times, God has told us that the very threshold of rebellion arose in ancient Babylon and will arise again in this same area. A parable is told in the Book of Zechariah relating to the establishment of the same rebellion against God. **Zech 5:5** "*Then the angel who was speaking to me came forward and said to me, "Look up and see what this is that is appearing." I asked, "What is it?" He replied, "It is a measuring basket. And he added, "This is **the iniquity of the people throughout the land**." Then the cover was raised, and there in the basket sat a woman! He said, "This is wickedness," and he pushed her back into the basket and pushed the lead cover down over its mouth. Then I looked up – and there before me were two women, with the wind in their wings! The had wings like that of a stork, and they lifted up the basket between heaven and earth. "**Where are they taking the basket?**" I asked the angel who was speaking to me. He replied, "**To the COUNTRY of BABYLONIA to build a house for it. When it is ready, the basket will be set there in its place.**"*

This parable identifies the basket as being the **iniquity of the land**. And the region is the **COUNTRY of Babylonia** – the land where the city of Babylon resides. The house that is now being built on the site of ancient Babylon is to be their **HOUSE of parliament**, and a lot of parley will be done there! It will center on world conquest! It may seem to some that the city of Babylon is insignificant considering it has been a ruin for thousands of years. But there is a game plan in place.

It's no secret that God has planned to make Jerusalem the center of the earth in many different ways. Foremost is God's desire to rule the entire universe from Jerusalem. It was to be expected that

the arch-rebel of the universe would endeavour to gain strategic positioning in the outlying regions of the Holy Land. What is more, his contingency planning has been meticulous. Even Satan knows where the **great final battle** will be fought (**Zech 14:2**), and he has set up all defences by completely surrounding the Holy City with his rebels.

At every turn in the road, and from earliest times, Satan has made attempts to gain control of God's City. Then David was called to duty, and for 33 years he slaughtered the seed of Satan and finally arrived triumphant into the City of God, and the threshing-floor became the Temple of God. It was that ancient mighty commander David and his mighty men that finally established the City of Jerusalem. But David spoke of someone far greater than he, and revered that Mighty Being. He stood in awe of Him. David knew this Mighty Being would be born of his very seed, and would be called the **Son of David**.

In support of all that David wrote, and all that history records, that Mighty Being, the Son of David, and the Son of God, was born of a woman. Christ came to reveal the truth and He was born to be a King. But He confirmed that His Kingdom was not from that time, but for a future time (**John 18:36-37**). Christ is that Ruler! He suffered the baptism of death, but longed for the time when a fire would be kindled (**Luke 12:49**).

Christ spoke of a time when people would begin to say 'the Lord delays his coming'. According to their expectations, Christ is supposed to arrive in the nick of time, and whisk them away while the rest of the world goes up in a fireball.

One particular lunatic in a flurry of madness is teaching that Christ has delayed his coming because his followers are not yet good enough. He wants to see more boot-licking groveling in his presence to reinforce his view that he is in control of the government of God. This little howdy-dooody clown thinks he has established God's Kingdom on earth.

One thing that all these people can be certain of is the fact that circumstances will arise that will lead people to imagine that Christ has delayed His Coming. This will result from people ignoring the prophecies that God has appointed for the very endtime. And those who do acknowledge some of the prophecies have taught that everything will be funneled into the space of a year or two, and then "viola!" the rewards will all be passed out and they will live in peace for ever.

There is some very bad news for such people. They have never understood the Great Plan of God, and neither do they acknowledge His Truth, therefore, they have comfortably assumed that God's only plan is to get them saved and then to destroy all the baddies.

Well, a Kingdom is to be established – in JERUSALEM! Not a pretend kingdom masquerading as 'church government' – but a real Kingdom, with territory, subjects and Laws. And while most don't want to know this, those Laws are the Laws given by God's servant Moses! And God makes this very plain: **Mal 4:4** *"Remember the Law of my servant Moses, the decrees and Laws I gave him at Horeb FOR ALL ISRAEL. See, I will send the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes."* There would be no point in remembering these Laws if they were never to be enforced, now would there?

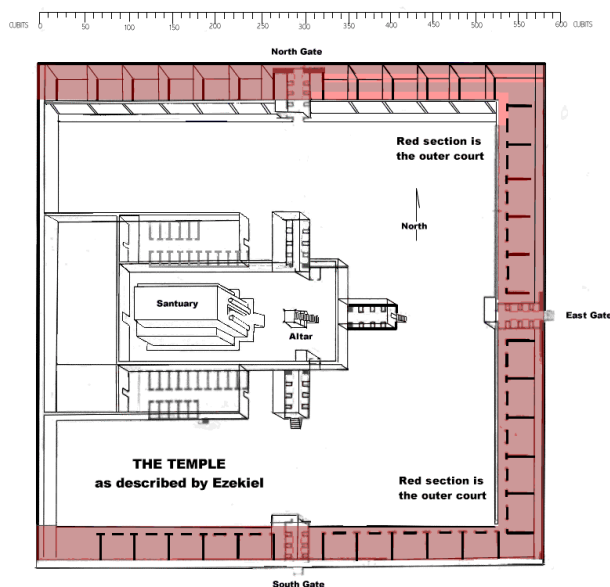
Conveniently, the disgusting rebels who hate God's Laws say that the Laws of God cannot be kept today, and have listed 613 laws which would need to be kept. These, they say, cannot be kept since many of them are designed for governing a kingdom or country. And this is partly true. No single individual today has the right to put an adulterer to death for instance. This is the province of the government of the land. And as long as there is no kingdom or country exists with the power or determination to enforce the Laws of Moses, many cannot be kept. For this reason, Christ gave the Church, which He founded, the right to live in peace and to accept the law of the land wherever they dwell. They were to submit to the government of the day, as good citizens, and as if the government were the government of God. The only exception being where any government decree conflicts with the decrees of God. Then a Christian is required to obey God rather than man.

Christianity has indeed enjoyed a very privileged position during the past nearly two thousand years. They were not permitted to arise in sedition against the government that God appointed over them, nor were they permitted to try to modify the perceptions of governments with force. They were however, required to be as wise as serpents but as harmless as doves, and to live in peace with all men.

They were required to look for, and hope for, a country where God's righteousness dwells. Most Israelites today acknowledge they are privileged above all other nations on earth. The descendants of Western Europe know that their standards of living far exceeded all those in the rest of the world. This has been true for hundreds of years.

Abraham was a man of very great wealth, yet he longed for a country of his own. This is confirmed in **Heb 11:13** *"All these people were still living in faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them at a distance. **And they admitted they were aliens and strangers on earth. People who say such things show 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. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.**"*

It's convenient for some to assume this speaks of the New Jerusalem; in fact it's speaking of the City that God calls Holy today – Jerusalem, and particularly the Temple Mount. And this is what the Father recorded: **Rev 11:1** *“I was given a reed like a measuring rod and was told, “Go and measure the **Temple of God** and **the altar**, and count the worshippers there. **But exclude the OUTER COURT**, do not measure it, because it has been given to **the Gentiles**. They will trample on the **HOLY CITY** for 42 months.”* And still the dizzy rationale of those who refuse to believe God says that no Temple will be built. But which part of the Temple is the **OUTER COURT** that is to be excluded? Here it's filled in red:



Why doesn't Christianity believe God today? How can they possibly understand His precious Word if you don't understand the most elementary principles, which He has proclaimed. Christianity today believes God requires them to live **by grace**. How strange they should think this! God **demand**s that the righteous live **by faith**. In fact, God even identifies what righteousness is. He says Abraham **believed** God, and it was counted to him as **righteousness**.

How do you live by 'grace'? Grace is something that God grants to those who **BELIEVE** Him and **OBEY** Him! **JUST LIKE ABRAHAM!** (**Gen 15:6, Gen 26:5**).

Those who truly love God look for a City wherein dwells righteousness. Their ultimate reward will be the New Jerusalem, which will come down from heaven. In the meantime, God's Holy City is right here on earth. This City is spoken of again and again in the Bible. This is the City that will be trampled on for 3½ years by the Gentiles – but not all the Temple Mount – **only the outer court**. This period will immediately precede the gathering of all the nations of the earth against Jerusalem for the final showdown (**Zech 14:1-4**).

So what's to stop the Gentiles from barging in and overrunning the Temple area? Zechariah recorded the same measuring of the Temple in **Zech 2:1**, now notice **V5** *“AND I MYSELF WILL BE A WALL OF FIRE AROUND IT,” declares the LORD, “AND I WILL BE ITS GLORY WITHIN.”* Zechariah also recorded this: **Zech 8:1** *“Again the Word of the LORD Almighty came to me. This is what the LORD Almighty says: “I am very jealous for Zion; I am burning with jealousy for her.” This is what the LORD says: “I will return to Zion and dwell in Jerusalem. Then JERUSALEM will be called the CITY OF TRUTH, and the mountain of the LORD Almighty will be called the HOLY MOUNTAIN.”*

Some who **think** they can walk through that **wall of fire** will be burnt up – to ashes! This will be a warning to all! But many people will walk through the flames and not be burnt; the Bible refers to these as the Sons of Jerusalem. Like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego (**Dan 3:19-26**), they will be unaffected by the flames. But Satan's offspring will not have this immunity. It will be an early warning for all who have aspirations of entering the Holy Place without the Spirit of Christ (**see Heb 10:19**). God gives fair warning of these things in **Mal 4:2-3**.

It's a very strange thing that most Christians have believed that all prophecy will be fulfilled in the twinkling of an eye. They teach that at worst there will be a great tribulation that will last for 3½ years. They keep speaking of this as if it were the next major event. Do they actually **read** the Bible? Perhaps not!

The tiny nation of Israel had their moment of glory back in 1967 when they captured the Holy City, and almost immediately handed it back to the Gentiles. So they are useless for fulfilling God's Word! Did God expect it would be otherwise? No! He made plans long ago for His daughter Zion to fulfill all His Words. They will be called to arms just like David. Not as a huge army, but as a diminutive, fledgling army, with all the **power of David**, but more importantly, with the **power of**

God. This is what Zechariah recorded: **Zech 12:7** “The LORD will save the dwellings of Judah first, so that the honour of the House of David and of Jerusalem’s inhabitants may not be greater than that of Judah. **ON THAT DAY** the LORD will shield those who live in Jerusalem, so that the feeblest among them **WILL BE LIKE DAVID**, and the House of David **WILL BE LIKE GOD**, like the angel of the LORD going before them. **ON THAT DAY** I will set out to destroy all the nations that attack Jerusalem.”

Which **DAY** is that? It’s the **DAY** that follows the six millennial days – the seventh Day! The millennial **rest** from the evil of the arch-rebel of the universe. We have a serious situation here. On the one hand, some of Christianity says that Christ could return at any moment. Others say the tribulation could start at any moment and Christ will return 3½ years later. Both are wrong!

Those who will be like David will know how long it took David to establish the kingdom in his day. It’s convenient for Christians to sing their siren song and lull everyone to sleep with the promise of good outcomes. The truth is entirely different! How different it will be will become more apparent in upcoming articles.

And just when it’s realized things are not going according to the foolish script, which mainstream Christianity has devised from their own imaginations they will desperately seek answers. And the Word of God speaks plainly of these things. Notice what Amos recorded: **Amos 8:1** “This is what the Sovereign LORD showed me: a basket of ripe fruit. “What do you see, Amos?” He asked. “A basket of ripe fruit,” I answered. Then the LORD said to me, “The time is ripe for my people Israel; I will spare them no longer.” God makes the point that when the full measure of the ripe figs, which He craves (**Mic 7:1**), is completed, the time will also be ripe for His people Israel – the full measure of their evil rebellious ways will be punished – and God will **spare them no longer**.

V7 “The LORD has sworn by the **PRIDE** of Jacob: “I will never forget anything they have done. Will not the land tremble for this, and all who live in it mourn? The whole land will rise like the Nile; it will be stirred up and sink like the river of Egypt. In that day,” declares the Sovereign LORD, “I will make the sun go down at noon and darken the earth in broad daylight. I will turn your religious feasts into mourning and all your singing into weeping. I will make all of you wear sackcloth and shave your heads. I will make that time like mourning for an only son, and the end of it like a bitter day.”

God has a son whom He calls Ephraim (**Jer 31:9**) and He loves him dearly. The reference to ‘an only son’ is in some ways a double whammy! At the time when God no longer spares Jacob (Ephraim and all his brothers that are with him – **Jer 7:15**), another group will arise to prominence who will mourn for a firstborn Son, and will bitterly regret all that they have done (**Zech 12:10**), and their deep repentance will result in the **Spirit of Grace and Supplication** being poured out on them. They will be called the **House of David**. They will be the custodians of all the rights and privileges granted to their father David – the ruler of all 12 Tribes. The House of David will secure the Temple Mount and build the Temple (**Zech 6:12-15**) – the one described by Ezekiel (**Ch 40-48**). And notice **V15** “Those who are far away will come and help build the Temple of the LORD, and you will know the LORD Almighty has sent me to you. This will happen if you diligently obey the LORD your God.”

Of course, Christianity today doesn’t consider this important. They have other things on their agenda. How well Christ described, as tares growing among the good wheat, all those who refuse to believe Him. For instance, the only sign of His Messiahship that was given, was the sign of Jonah. Christ said, that like Jonah, He would be in the grave for three days and nights. After this event, no one (**not even the Pharisees or Herodians**) challenged Him, or denied that He had fulfilled this. **Everyone knew!**

Paradoxically today, those who **claim** to follow Him, deny it! They say He was only in the grave for one and a half days. **In so doing, they are denying that He is the Messiah!** Of course their agenda is to dispense with anything that links Christ to the Holydays. One of the most fundamental principles of Christianity is, that Christ was their Passover. Mainstream Christianity denies this, preferring to call the Passover ‘Easter’ or the ‘Lord’s supper’ or anything that diminishes its importance. They know that if they acknowledge Christ as the living sacrifice, killed on the day of the Passover, they must also observe all of God’s Sacred Holydays that are linked to the Passover.

“Too Jewish!” they say. How odd that they should think this. Christ said this: **John 4:22** “You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, **FOR SALVATION IS FROM THE JEWS**”. Such people prefer to believe the Samaritans and the Gentiles who corrupted everything because they worshipped what they did not know.

And who was it that decided the canon of the New Testament that we use today? It was the Gentiles! Hundreds of years after the writers of these Books had died, Constantine, the Eastern Emperor of Asia Minor, decided to produce 30 complete manuscripts to be distributed to the Churches. It was these books that were to be copied in perpetuity as the Sacred Scriptures. Consequently, he demanded that a complete canon be delivered to him for this purpose. The Gentile Church leaders had to decide then and there what books to include. They had long been steering a course that removed them from Jewish teachings. They also knew from the manuscripts in their possession that **God entrusted His Word to the Jews – not them!** This is found in the Book of Romans: **Rom 3:1** “What

advantage, then, is there IN BEING A JEW, or what value is there in circumcision? MUCH IN EVERY WAY! First of all, THEY HAVE BEEN ENTRUSTED WITH THE VERY WORDS OF GOD.

It was a tough call for the Gentiles. They knew the Jewish people had preserved all the original manuscripts with the exception of a few of Paul's letters addressed specifically to the Gentiles. They seized the moment to add a book that would challenge the teachings of Jewish Christianity. With great subtlety they presented their masterful stroke of deceit. They injected outright lies, and the deceitful misquoting of Scripture to a book that would forever be the bastion of those who hate the Laws of God. The Gentiles realized they couldn't openly contradict the Scriptures, but by careful manipulation, they could cast serious doubts on Jewish teachings – the teachings of the most famous Jew of all – Christ!

And which book is this? It's the book of Galatians. This is the book quoted most frequently by those who hate the Laws of God. These lawless wretches have no regard for the origins of the canon of this book. **They even use it to contradict Christ Himself!**

Of course many people have fallen for the subtlety of the Gentiles and believed them. There are some people that believe God entrusted His very Words to the Gentiles, and so they try to explain away, in a plausible fashion, what the Gentiles have written.

So what advantage is there in being a Jew? **MUCH IN EVERY WAY! Every way?** What does this mean? The Apostle Paul was of the Tribe of Benjamin, but he called himself a Jew. He recognized that the southern Kingdom (Judah and Levi and some of the Benjamites) was entrusted with the very Words of God. But he also recognized that the Law and the Prophets were designed for all the Tribes of Israel. And for those who believe that Christianity is a license to do as they please without regard for God's Laws, note what Paul said, and which he confirms **AS A CHRISTIAN: Rom 9:1 "I SPEAK THE TRUTH IN CHRIST – I am not lying, my conscience confirms it in the Holy Spirit – I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. For I wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, THOSE OF MY OWN RACE, THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL."** Still speaking the **TRUTH IN CHRIST** he continues: **"THEIRS is the adoption AS SONS; THEIRS the DIVINE GLORY, THE COVENANTS, the RECEIVING OF THE LAW, the TEMPLE WORSHIP and THE PROMISES. THEIRS are THE PATRIARCHS, and FROM THEM IS TRACED THE HUMAN ANCESTRY OF CHRIST, who is God over all, forever praised. Amen."** And lest we forget, the only people of all the families on the face of the earth that God ever chose for Himself are the 12 Tribes of Israel – the very ones He brought out of Egypt (**Amos 3:1, Deut 7:6**).

Gentile Christianity, it seems, has decided that God has abandoned all the Tribes of Israel. It's very convenient for them to contradict God to enhance their status. What they don't realize is that their status is tenuous at best. Paul had this to say: **Rom 11:16 "If the part of the dough offered as firstfruits is holy (see Matt 13:33), then the whole batch is holy; if the root is holy, so are the branches. If some of the branches have been broken off, and you, though a wild olive shoot, HAVE BEEN GRAFTED IN AMONG THE OTHERS and now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root, do not boast over those branches. If you do, consider this: YOU DO NOT SUPPORT THE ROOT, BUT THE ROOT SUPPORTS YOU."** **V20 "...Do not be arrogant, but be afraid. For if God did not spare the natural branches, He will not spare you either."**

Did Christ come to bring peace? **He says He didn't!** On the contrary, He says He came to bring a sword. And anyone who disbelieves Him in this is in serious trouble! This is what He says: **Matt 10:33 "But whoever disowns Me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven. Do NOT suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did NOT come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to turn 'a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law – man's enemies will be the members of his own household.'" And in the same context, Christ added this: V41 "Anyone who receives a prophet will receive a prophet's reward."**

When Christ spoke these words He was speaking of a future time. He also quoted from the Book of Micah clearly showing that Micah's message is for our time. To put into context all that Christ was saying, we'll start at **Micah 7:1 "What misery is mine! I am like one who gathers summer fruit at the gleaning of the vineyard; there is no cluster of grapes to eat, none of the early figs that I crave. The Godly have been swept from the land; not one upright man remains. All men lie in wait to shed blood; each hunts his brother with a net. Both hands are skilled in doing evil; the ruler demands gifts, the judge accepts bribes, the powerful dictate what they desire – they all conspire together. The best of them is like a brier, the most upright worse than a thorn hedge. THE DAY OF YOUR WATCHMAN HAS COME, THE DAY GOD VISITS YOU. Now is the time of their confusion."** And now the part that Christ quoted: **V5 "Do not trust a neighbour; put no confidence in a friend. Even with her who lies in your embrace be careful of your words. For a son dishonours his father, a daughter rises up against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law – a man's enemies are the members of his own household."** And just so we understand who the **watchman** is, notice what the prophet said: **V7 "But as for me, I WATCH in hope for the LORD, I wait for God my Saviour; my God will hear me."** Yes, the watchman is a real prophet (not a pretend one!)

At the time when God has gathered the full measure of ripe figs, which He craves, **He will spare Israel no longer** (**Amos 8:1-2**). Notice what else He says: **Amos 8:9** *“In that day,” declares the Sovereign LORD, “I will make the sun do down at noon and darken the earth in broad daylight. I will turn **YOUR religious feasts** into mourning and all your singing into weeping. I will make you all wear sackcloth and shave your heads. I will make that time **like mourning for an only son** (Jer 31:9), and the end of it like a bitter day.”* I think we all know which ‘religious feasts’ God finds detestable! How about Xmas and Easter for starters! The whole nation of Ephraim seems to prefer these religious feasts to God’s Holyday feasts. And God adds more in **V11** *“The days are coming,” declares the Sovereign LORD, “when I will send a famine through the land – not a famine of food or a thirst for water, **but a famine of hearing the Words of the LORD**. Men will stagger from **SEA TO SEA** and wander from **NORTH TO EAST**, searching for the Word of the LORD, **but they will not find it.**”*

Listen carefully, God is telling you something very important! The Bible, which is the Word of God, is NOT going to suddenly disappear from the land, **but those who understand it will!** So seek the truth while it may be found! God is about to make fools of all those who have invented their own prophecies and beguiled all of Christendom. They will have no answers for anything! And next time you are singing ‘America, the Beautiful’ and the words ‘from sea to shining sea’, remember which ‘Israel’ God is speaking of with the words ‘**SEA TO SEA**’ and ‘**NORTH TO EAST**’, and you may understand where the final Work of God is going out from within your land of Ephraim (U.S).

When that day comes, and the full force of all that God has said descends on the nation of Ephraim, then people will seek answers. In desperation they will search for those who spoke the Truth of God – the very ones they rejected! But they will have left their run too late! When they search, they will not be found. There will be tough times that will last for many years, and many will reap what they have so willfully sown.

And when this son, Ephraim (**Jer 31:9, 20**), literally falls on his own sword, and there is great mourning in the land, there will be mourning in another land – the Holy Land. The people in Jerusalem will truly mourn for their most famous Son, the ever-living Christ – the Mighty Messiah (**Zech 12:10**). These deeply repentant people will be enjoined to the **House of David**, and the Tribes of Judah and Levi (**V12**) will become the mightiest force the world has ever known. (And let’s not forget little Benjamin, and Zebulun, and Naphtali, which God’s singles out for special mention - **Ps 68:27**).

After speaking of the famine of God’s Word in the Book of Amos, God pronounces sentence on all the lost tribes of Israel: **Amos 9:9** *“**For I will give the command**, and I will shake the **House of Israel** among all the nations as grain is shaken in a sieve, but not an ear will fall to the ground. All the sinners among my people will die by the sword, all those who say, ‘Disaster will not overtake or meet us.’ In that day **I will restore David’s fallen tent**. I will repair its broken places, restore its ruins, and build it **as it used to be**, so that they may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations that bear my Name,” declares the LORD, who will do all these things.”*

So **David’s fallen tent** will be restored to what **it used to be**, and the **House of David** will possess **‘all the nations that bear [God’s] name.’** The Bible makes no secret of God’s intentions to bring all the Tribes of Israel to the Promised Land to possess it forever. What has never been understood is God’s description of this great event. Ezekiel describes it, but no-one believes it, it seems. Carefully notice what God Himself has said: **Eze 37:11** *“Then He said to me, “Son of man, these bones are the whole House of Israel. They say, ‘Our bones are dried up and our hope is gone; we are cut off.’ Therefore prophesy and say to them: ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: **O my people, I am going to open your graves and bring you up from them; I will bring you back to the land of Israel. Then you, my people, will know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves and bring you up from them. I will put my Spirit in you and you will live, and I will settle you in your own land. Then you will know that I the LORD have spoken, and I have done it, declares the LORD.**’”* Here we have a resurrection of a physical nation of human beings – the whole House of Israel. This has not happened yet, and neither has God put His Spirit in them. (There was however, a minor fulfillment of this immediately after Christ’s death – **Matt 27:52**)

And God describes the means that He will use to bring this about: **V15** *“The Word of the LORD came to me: “**Son of man**, take a stick of wood and write on it, ‘Belonging to **Judah** and **the Israelites associated with him**.’ Then take another stick of wood, and write on it, **Ephraim’s** stick, belonging to Joseph and **all the House of Israel associated with him**.’ Join them together into one stick so that **they will become one in your hand.**”*

So this ‘son of man’, this prophet, presides over a resurrection of fleshly human beings where their flesh and tendons are put back on their bones (**Eze 37:5**), and they will live in the land that God promised to Abraham, and they will have children, and their children will have children (**V25**), and God will also raise up David to be king and prince over them forever (**V24**).

God says they will have very long lives, and if a man only lives to be a hundred, he will be considered accursed (**Isa 65:20**). A man of one hundred years old will be considered a mere youth (**same verse**).

Out of all the chaos, confusion and destruction of endtime events will emerge a special group of people whom God refers to as the **servants of God**. They will emerge from the utter chaos that will

develop. These are, specifically, 12,000 from each of the Tribes of Israel (with the exception of Dan – Joseph gets a double portion). A total of 144,000. They don't get divine protection, just as Christ didn't when He went to His death, but they do receive the Seal – the Spirit of Christ. These will faithfully and obediently fulfill all that God requires of them. They follow Christ as living sacrifices, and refuse deliverance. An example of this is found in **Heb 11:35**.

And this is the account of the sealing of the Tribes of Israel: **Rev 7:2** *“Then I saw another angel coming up from the east, having the Seal of the Living God. He called in a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm the land and the sea. Do not harm the land or the sea or the trees until we put a Seal on the foreheads of the servants of God.” Then I heard the number of those who were sealed: 144,000 from ALL THE TRIBES OF ISRAEL.”*

The 144,000 are mentioned again in **Rev 14:1** *“Then I looked, and there before me was the Lamb, standing on Mount Zion, and with Him 144,000 who had His Name and His Father's Name written on their foreheads. And I heard a sound from heaven like the roar of rushing waters and like a loud peal of thunder. The sound I heard was like that of harpists playing their harps. And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders. No-one could learn the song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth. These are they who did not defile themselves with women, for they kept themselves pure. They follow the Lamb wherever He goes. They were purchased from among men and offered as firstfruits to God and the Lamb. No lie was found in their mouths; they are blameless.”* The ‘women’ referred to here are the harlot nations who will enforce the ‘mark of the beast’ on the foreheads of all who submit to it. God says this: *“If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives his mark on the forehead or on the hand, he, too, will drink of the wine of God's fury.”* (**Rev 14:9**). And **V12** *“There is no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and his image, or for anyone who receives the mark of his name. This calls for PATIENT ENDURANCE on the part of the saints WHO OBEY GOD'S COMMANDMENTS and REMAIN FAITHFUL TO JESUS.”*

Herbert Armstrong was blind in only one eye, but the bearded burglar from Pasadena seems to be blind in both eyes. He teaches that those WHO OBEY GOD'S COMMANDMENTS are *denying* Jesus. He can't seem to agree with God on anything! And how the ‘tares’ love to follow him. They hang on his every deceitful word. Have you read of the fate of the ‘tares’? It's written in **Matt 13:29-30**. How cheaply these lawless wretches have sold their lives!

God calls for patient endurance of the saints yet again in the previous chapter. Again it speaks of the beast, but this time he is making war with the saints and conquering them. **Rev 13:7** *“He (the beast) was given power to make war against the saints and to conquer them. And he was given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation. All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast – all whose names have NOT been written in the Book of Life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world. He who has an ear, let him hear. If anyone is to go into captivity, into captivity he will go. If anyone is to be killed with the sword, with the sword he will be killed. This calls for PATIENT ENDURANCE and FAITHFULNESS ON THE PART OF THE SAINTS.”*

Amid all the chaos and destruction that lies ahead, do you imagine that God won't send prophets with a final warning? God said He always does! Most Bible students know God will vest enormous power in the hands of two men – the prophets of God. It seems that most people believe that things will continue the way they are now, and that people are free to teach whatever they want to believe. God's Way is not this way! For nearly 390 years Ephraim has been at liberty to do whatever was right in their own eyes. God did plant a seed in that land and it grew. This nation departed from the ways of their forefather Jeroboam who led them away from God in the time of Solomon's son, and they began to acknowledge the great God of heaven. Devout men arrived on its shores – men who diligently sought the ways of God. But throughout this period Ephraim lacked one important thing – there were no true prophets of God. There was only a system of human judges who devised statutes and laws according to the will of the people.

To a large degree this system has served them well. They acknowledged the Word of God by ensuring it a prominent place in the courts of the land, in the legislative assemblies, and in the schools. This, at least, was pleasing in the eyes of God. But the legacy of everyone doing what is right in their own eyes has reached monumental proportions, and it's the rebels against God's ways that are steering the ship – to utter destruction!

God says His Purpose will stand! What He began in the Garden of Eden, with the creation of this present world of life forms, including mankind, will continue to the end. God has placed mankind on this earth, and given him dominion over all the life forms. But He made them a little lower than the angels.

Jesus Christ was both God and man. The rulers of the heavenly realm seem to have no trouble understanding this. Christianity has a take on it, but utterly fail to understand the meaning in its entirety. For instance, Christ confirmed He would drink wine in His Father's Kingdom (and note whose Kingdom this is! It's the Father's.) The Father also confirms that He will dwell among men (**Eze 37:27, Rev 21:3**) and we will see His face (**Rev 22:3**). We will see Him as He is, and we will

recognize that man has been created in His image. Is this too hard to understand that God will appear like a man? Or that He will live His life in the manner in which He has created for mankind?

The general perception today is that God sits around doing nothing. And according to this false logic, since God owns everything there is no purpose in Him doing anything. Yet Christ said He Himself works, and so does the Father (**John 5:16**). God is a Creator – **THE** Creator! And what He designs and builds He does with perfection.

After His resurrection, Christ appeared to His disciples as a man. They touched Him and saw His wounds, and what is more, being in the form of a human, Christ was hungry and asked for food. On another occasion, on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, Christ cooked a meal and ate with His disciples.

God said He loved the **cosmos** so much, that He gave His only begotten Son... Let's first understand what God meant by the **cosmos**. It means the sun, moon and stars and all the planets; that is, His whole creation! Christ said He came to save this cosmos and to restore it to its former glory.

And what sort of a being is this Mighty Christ? God has entrusted to Him the task of restoring all things, and cleansing the earth of the wicked brood of Satan (**1Cor 15:24-27**). When He arises to do this, it will be with great fury! The long-suffering of God will be no more. And yes, God has suffered – more than you could imagine! He, like His faithful Son, is well acquainted with grief.

Did you know that Christ didn't have to suffer death by crucifixion? No, Christ could have called it all off in a moment and **because He never ever broke God's Law**, he would have been restored to his former position. But He refused deliverance! This is what He said: **Matt 26:53** *"Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and He will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels? But how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen this way?"* Yes, it was within Christ's power to call an end to it all at any time right up to the point where the Father turned His back on Him immediately before His death. Had Christ not refused deliverance, the Father would have utterly destroyed the whole cosmos – which He loved.

Christ loves the Father more than His own life. He was with the Father as His companion and craftsman before the cosmos began. Christ is the very personification of the **Wisdom of God** and the **Power of God** (**1Cor 1:24, see also V20-25, 2:6-8**). **He is the Wisdom of God!** And God has recorded the beginnings of this Mighty Being in **Pro 8:12** *"I, Wisdom, dwell together with prudence; I possess knowledge and discretion. To fear the LORD is to hate evil; I hate pride and arrogance, evil behaviour and perverse speech. Counsel and sound judgment are mine; I have understanding and Power. By Me kings reign and rulers make laws that are just; by Me princes govern, and all nobles who rule the earth. I love those who love Me, and those who seek Me find Me. With Me are riches and honour, enduring wealth and prosperity (see Rev 5:12). My fruit is better than fine gold; what I yield surpasses silver. I walk in the way of righteousness, along the paths of justice, bestowing wealth on those who love Me and making their treasuries full."*

This is certainly a description of all Christ's attributes. God chose Solomon to record this. Solomon was perhaps the wisest man who ever lived apart from Christ. Solomon was most assuredly not speaking of himself as the following verses show. He was speaking of One far greater than himself: **V22** *"The LORD possessed Me at the beginning of His work, before His deeds of old. I was appointed from eternity, from the beginning, before the world began. When there were no oceans, I was given birth, when there were no springs abounding with water, before the mountains were settled in place, before the hills, I was given birth, before He made the earth or its fields or any of the dust of the world. I was there when He set the heavens in place, when He marked out the horizon on the face of the deep, when He established the clouds above and fixed securely the fountains of the deep, when He gave the sea its boundary so that the waters would not overstep His command, and when He marked out the foundations [landmass] of the earth. **THEN I WAS THE CRAFTSMAN AT HIS SIDE. I was filled with delight day after day, REJOICING ALWAYS IN HIS PRESENCE, rejoicing in His whole world and delighting in mankind."***

And how the Wisdom of God loved Adam and Eve. He taught them and talked with them as a father to his children. And they were innocent. God had reproduced Himself – in His own image. But they chose to believe a being who did not appear in the image of God – but a serpent! And so began six long, dark millennial days of human suffering and degradation.

And just while in the Book of Proverbs, let's also quote **Pro 9:1** *"Wisdom has built her house; she has hewn out its seven pillars. She has prepared her meat and mixed her wine; she has also set her table."* **V10** *"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of Wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. For through Me your days will be many, and years will be added to your life. If you are wise, your Wisdom will reward you; if you are a mocker, you alone will suffer."*

Christ is not only called the **Wisdom of God** and the **Power of God**, He is also called the **Word of God**: **John 1:1** *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made. In Him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, **BUT THE DARKNESS HAS NOT UNDERSTOOD IT.**"* The **Word of God** and the **Wisdom of God** are the same Person.

Mainstream Christianity has made many assumptions based on their own greed and avarice, and their arrogance! To promote their own importance, they've insisted that God has abandoned His promises to Abraham and discarded the Twelve Tribes of Israel. Christ said He came only to the Tribes of Israel (**Matt 15:24**). They further insist that Christ did away with all the Laws of God and the Prophets – even though Christ said He didn't! (**Matt 5:17**). They go to extraordinary lengths to flange together obscure verses to prove Christ wrong!

And the outcome of it all? God plans to rain utter terror on this earth, together with such destruction that there will be few men left. And why? So that every being in the entire universe will know that God's Way and His Laws are greater than every physical thing that exists. The Father's House – the Temple in Jerusalem – has been destroyed twice, and God didn't hesitate to do it (**Dan 9:14-19**). Daniel knew why: **Dan 9:1** *"O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps His COVENANT OF LOVE with all who love Him and obey His Commands, we have sinned and done wrong. We have been wicked and rebelled; we have turned away from your Commands and Laws. We have not listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your Name to our kings, our princes and our fathers, and to all the people of the land."*

God says He doesn't change. His objectives are the same yesterday, today and forever. This is what He says: **Mal 3:6** *"I the LORD do not change. So you, O descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed. Ever since the time of your forefathers you have turned away from my decrees and have not kept them. Return to me and I will return to you," says the LORD Almighty.*" God would have destroyed any other nation with whom He was not pleased, and wiped them from the earth just as in the days of Noah. But because of His promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, He will not utterly destroy the House of Israel. He will, instead, bring a remnant back to the land He promised Abraham, and there they will live in peace forever. And they will be a light for the Gentiles. And Jerusalem and the Holy Land will be the center of the new landmass of the earth.

Zech 14:16 *"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 FEAST OF TABERNACLES. 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 FEAST OF TABERNACLES. This will be the punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all nations that do not go up to celebrate the FEAST OF TABERNACLES."* Is God suggesting here that the FEAST OF TABERNACLES should be kept and celebrated?

YOU'D BETTER BELIEVE IT!

And that time is further described: **V20** *"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 sacred bowls in the front of the altar. Every pot in 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. And on that day there will no longer be a Canaanite in the House of the LORD Almighty."*

One thing the House of Israel will be forcefully made to understand is that all God has said He will do – HE WILL DO! They've lived through the halcyon years of power and prosperity and have drifted further and further from their roots. Today they even deny their heritage. The emphasis is on the heritage of the Gentiles that live among them. In increasing proportions, the descendants of Abraham – the 12 Tribes of Israel – are becoming second-class citizens in their own country. The doctrine of 'affirmative action', an offshoot of political correctness, has denied God's chosen people the rights that He Himself set for His beloved people.

Like Esau, Israel has despised their heritage and treated it contemptuously. In the Levite Book – the Book of Malachi – God gives the instruction for the messenger to prepare for the Day of the LORD (**Mal 3:1**). Just as in the Days of Moses, a Levite (like John the Baptist) will prepare a people for the LORD Almighty. He is to establish a Kingdom and a country (just like David), and this fledgling nation will ENFORCE the Laws of God's servant Moses, and all will be required to remember them – always! And in this Book of Malachi, God begins by strongly making a point: **Mal 1:2** *"I have loved you," says the LORD. "But you ask, 'How have you loved us?' Was not Esau Jacob's brother, but Esau I have hated, and I have turned his mountains into a wasteland and left his inheritance to the desert jackals."*

And why did God so forcefully state this?

Because Israel has gone the way of Esau and despised their heritage, and what God did to Esau, He plans to do to the whole house of Israel – the people of Ephraim. In addition to despising their heritage, they have forgotten that it was the LORD Almighty that blessed them. It's not by accident that they have achieved such preeminence among the nations of the earth. God says: **Hos 11:3** *"It was I who taught Ephraim to walk, taking them by the arms; but they did not realize it was I who healed them. I led them with cords of human kindness, with ties of love; I lifted the yoke from their neck and bent down to feed them."* And God gives the timeframe: **V5** *"Will they not return to Egypt and will not Assyria rule over them because they refuse to repent? Swords will flash in their cities, will destroy the bars of their gates and put an end to their plans. My people are determined to*

turn from me. Even if they call to the Most High, He will by no means exalt them.” You will notice that Ephraim has not yet returned to Egypt – but they will! So says Almighty God!

To be continued in Chapter 5...

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