

## FOCUS ON THE ENDTIME : PART ONE

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God Wants Us To Know, Prophecies Were Sealed Up By God Until Endtime, Focusing The Camera, Post-Tribulation Rapture View, Having Humility In Our Understanding, The Lord's Unlimited Provision, Seven-Year Holy Covenant, The Syrian Question, A Day For A Year And Jewish Week Or Shabuwa, Seventy Weeks And Last Seven Years, Israeli-Palestinian Peace Accord, The East Jerusalem Problem, War Coming To Israel, Jerusalem Divided, Assassination Of Yitzak Rabin & Anwar Sadat, American Goals

A Word From The WordWeaver: Please note that this series was originally written in 1998. While I have taken the time to make some graphical improvements -- such as a new header at the top of the page, spelling corrections, colorized verse references and better line formatting -- the actual contents of the series remains basically the same. As a result, you will probably come across certain political events which are now outdated, as well as certain politicians who are now out of power, and possibly even dead. I have updated a few of these, but not all. Despite these discrepancies, the series still contains a lot of truth and relevant information which has not changed. I will conduct a more thorough update of the series when my time permits. Thanks for your patience.

Contrary to the view held by some modern-day Christians, I do not believe that the Lord wishes for us to remain in the dark concerning the events of the Endtime. He is not in the habit of playing a game of "hide-and-go-seek" with His children. In the article "As a Thief in the Night? Not for Me!", I share the following verse which clearly shows that we are not to walk in darkness or be spiritually ignorant concerning the Lord's plans:

"But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief."  
1 Thessalonians 5:4, KJV

As a study of that chapter and the aforementioned article will reveal, Paul was referring to the Day of the Lord's Coming. Thus we see that God wants us to know and to understand exactly what is happening, or what is going to happen, so that it will strengthen our faith, and also encourage us to hang on a little longer until the final events have been fulfilled. Not only that, but by knowing what is going to happen, we can better prepare our hearts for them by having the right attitude. It's possible that we may even be able to better prepare ourselves physically for them as well. When the Lord sent His Angelic Messenger to deliver the Seventy Weeks Prophecy to the Prophet Daniel, the Celestial Emissary specifically told Daniel to "know therefore and understand". He wanted to make sure that the

Prophet fully understood the important message he was being given:

"Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times."

Daniel 9:25, KJV

As another confirmation that the Lord does indeed want to enlighten us concerning these final events of the Endtime, consider the following verse found in the writings of the Old Testament Prophet Amos:

"Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets."

Amos 3:7, KJV

So again we see that while the Lord may hide things from the children of the world, just as Jesus sometimes spoke in parables to conceal their true meanings from His enemies; because of His special Love for us, He will reveal things beforehand to we His children:

"And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand."  
Luke 8:10, KJV

It should be clear then that the mysteries of the future are contained in the Scriptures. They are there just waiting for us to read and understand them with the help of God's wonderful Spirit. In fact, we are told that these things would be sealed up, or concealed, until the Time of the End; at which time the knowledge would be given, and our eyes would be opened to the realities of the events which are about to transpire:

"But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased . . . And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand."

Daniel 12:4, 8-10, KJV

Thus we see that while it was given to Daniel to understand certain events which would occur in his near future, the meanings of other prophecies were purposely concealed by the Lord until our present day. It is because of the fact that we are now gaining a much clearer understanding of some of these events, that Bible students like myself are convinced that we are very close to the end of this current worldly system. Exactly how close we are is still a bit difficult to ascertain. Based upon my current understanding of the Scriptures, I personally believe that we may still have at least another seven years to go before we will see the completion of all of the events I will be describing in this

series.

As I was pondering these thoughts, a fitting example came to mind which demonstrates how our current understanding is slowly coming into focus. Consider one technique used in the production of a movie or television program. Sometimes when we are first introduced to a particular scene, the director will instruct the cameraman to purposely allow the image to be a bit fuzzy or hazy so that the various objects in the picture are indistinguishable the one from the other; but then he slowly adjusts the camera lens to bring the picture into focus until it is crystal clear; and we can see all of the details perfectly. In this case, God is like the Producer making the Endtime movie. Jesus is similar to the Director who is telling everyone else what to do. The Holy Spirit is like the Cameraman who conveys God's understanding to us so that the picture slowly becomes clearer, and all of the various Endtime events fall into their proper place and sequence.

Before actually sharing my particular "review" of this "Endtime movie", it is important that you the reader understand that my views and explanations in this article are based upon a Post-Tribulation Rapture. My reasons for adopting this position are fully explained in such articles as "From Armageddon to the New Earth", and in "The Great Tribulation and the Rapture". I encourage you to take the time to read them so you can gain a better understanding of the Post-Tribulation Rapture position. In addition, I wish to clarify that I by no means consider myself to be a Prophet of God. I view myself simply as one of the Lord's many scribes and teachers who is trying his best to gain a more perfect knowledge of the Word of Truth, so that I can share that knowledge with others. Consider the following verse from the Book of Acts:

"And when Felix heard these things, having more perfect knowledge of that way, he deferred them, and said, When Lysias the chief captain shall come down, I will know the uttermost of your matter."  
Acts 24:22, KJV

The word "perfect" in the previous verse is derived from the Greek word "akribesteron", which means more exactly or more perfectly. It is synonymous with more fully or more completely. Our Salvation will also be more perfect, full and complete on the Day of the Lord's Return when we will receive our new Resurrected Bodies, and enter into the full realities of the Spirit World. It is for this reason that at the sound of the Seventh Trump, we are told the following:

"But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets."  
Revelation 10:7, KJV

The main point I wish to make is that while I believe that the information I will be presenting in this series is close to being accurate, there is obviously no way that I can absolutely guarantee that it is so. This same rule applies to all of my articles. While there are certain things within my current belief system about which I am very adamant, such as

the need for all men everywhere to believe in and accept Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour, I do not apply this same attitude to Endtime prophecy. I humbly admit that I am not an infallible creature in this area; no one is except for the Lord Himself because He is the One who gave it. As such, as He chooses to reveal more to me, and as I am able to understand and accept it, I will continue to update this and all of my articles as is my custom, until the day that I do have a more perfect knowledge of the Truth. As Paul wrote in his Epistle to the Corinthians:

"When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."  
1 Corinthians 13:11-12, KJV

While this verse is speaking in terms of spiritual maturity, it can also be applied to our quest for Biblical Truth. The mysteries of the Word of God are given to each of us to understand according to our personal faith and willingness to accept them. Sometimes we become so bogged down by, or so attached to our personal ideas concerning what the Scriptures might mean, that these speculations of ours can become idols which prevent us from discovering the Real Truth. Through our lack of faith and willingness to believe in and accept the things which the Lord is trying to reveal to us, we unknowingly place a limit on what He is able to give us; and it is indeed limitless; for as King David wrote in the Book of Psalms:

"I am the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it."  
Psalms 81:10, KJV

While the above verse may actually be referring to physical miracles of the past in which the Lord provided for His children during their forty years of wandering through the wilderness, and thus is a promise of the Lord's provision, it also reflects a spiritual reality as well. In a sense, we are spiritual children; we are babes; and similar to a real mother, the Lord has an unlimited supply of Spiritual Milk from which we can draw our spiritual nourishment. This is precisely what the Apostle Peter was referring to in the following verse:

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:"  
1 Peter 2:2, KJV

The Prophet Malachi also wrote the following regarding the Lord's provision for we His children. Not only does the Lord promise to provide for us, but He encourages us to challenge Him to prove Himself, just as He proved Himself to Jacob for twenty years in the Book of Genesis:

"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

Malachi 3:10, KJV

Notice that in order to be partakers of the Lord's many blessings, we must first meet His conditions. Following are some additional verses which can be applied in both a physical and a spiritual sense. The Lord is more than able to provide both our physical and our spiritual needs when we are pleasing Him. All we have to do is ask in faith and believe that we have been heard:

"Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart."  
Psalms 37:4, KJV

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."  
Matthew 7:7-8, KJV

"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive."  
Matthew 21:22, KJV

"But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways."  
James 1:6-8, KJV

"And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him."  
1 John 5:14-15, KJV

In this case, we are most interested in obtaining a clearer understanding of Endtime events. If we sincerely ask the Lord to show us what the ancient prophecies mean, then we must have the faith to believe that the understanding we are given is one which has been guided by His Spirit. I am reminded of something Mary said when she was moved by the Holy Spirit to go visit her cousin Elizabeth in the hill country of Judah:

"He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away."  
Luke 1:53, KJV

Most Christians who study Endtime prophetic events are familiar with the term the Last Seven Years. As I explain in other articles, if my understanding is correct, this final period of man's rule on Earth may commence with the signing of a Middle East peace accord between the government of the state of Israel, and the leadership of the Palestinian National Authority. As has been the case with previous agreements, the signing of this important document may be brokered by the government of the United States of America. It is most likely that this will be a bilateral treaty; however, it is possible that it may include other signatories such as Egypt, Syria, and Jordan which will be

directly affected by such a historic accord.

As I write this in the first quarter of 1998, I do have some serious reservations regarding Syria entering into such an agreement with Israel. My reasons for this are spelled out in such articles as "The Kings of the North and the South", as well as in "The Seven Heads" series. Despite overtures from the West, as of this date, Syria continues to resist making peace with Israel. This stiff Syrian resistance is due primarily to the unresolved issue of the Golan Heights which Israel annexed following the 1967 Six-Day War. Like Egypt and Jordan, it is possible that if the West continues to apply pressure to President Hafez al-Assad of Syria, he may eventually soften up and sign a bilateral agreement with Israel; however, even if he does, I honestly do not believe that it will last. I base this view on such verses as the following from the Book of Daniel:

Update 02-21-12: Hafez al-Assad is of course now dead, and his son -- Bashar al-Assad -- is fighting for his political life, as the world at large condemns him due to the violent atrocities he has been committing against his own people over the past year. With both Russian and Iranian ships now docked at Syria's port -- Tartus -- only time will tell how this dangerous standoff will end.

"And both these kings' hearts shall be to do mischief, and they shall speak lies at one table; but it shall not prosper: for yet the end shall be at the time appointed. Then shall he return into his land with great riches; and his heart shall be against the holy covenant; and he shall do exploits, and return to his own land."  
Daniel 11:27-28, KJV

Thus, while I currently view an Israeli/Palestinian agreement as the most likely fulfillment of the Seven-Year Covenant mentioned in the Scriptures, I also believe an accord with Syria offers the next best possibility. If the covenant applies to the Israelis and the Palestinians, then its primary purpose will be to resolve the question of East Jerusalem and a Palestinian State. While I cannot possibly numerate all of the clauses which may be included in such a document, according to the Scriptures I have shared in other articles, I believe that one of the primary clauses will contain language which will permit the Jews to build the Third Temple on the top of Mount Moriah in East Jerusalem. This is the current site of the controversial Dome of the Rock and the Al-Aqsa Mosque. I believe the following verse mentions this covenant:

"And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate."  
Daniel 9:27, KJV

As I have explained in other articles, this word "week" is derived from the Hebrew word "shabuwa", or "shabua", and actually refers to a seven-year period, and not to a period of seven days. This symbolism of a day-for-a-year is used

in various places in the Scriptures such as in the following example where the Lord tells the Children of Israel that, just as the spies spent forty days spying on the land of Canaan, they will wander for forty years in the wilderness because of their constant complaining and murmuring against the Lord:

"After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise."

Numbers 14:34, KJV

Another clear example of the day-for-a-year symbolism can be found in the writings of the Prophet Ezekiel where we read:

"And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee each day for a year."

Ezekiel 4:6, KJV

Based on these verses, and a few others, it is my view that the "one week" mentioned in the above prophecy, is actually referring to the final seventieth week, or the Last Seven Years, of the Seventy Weeks Prophecy given to the Prophet Daniel. For more details concerning this interpretation, please refer to the aforementioned articles, to the article "The Seventy Weeks Prophecy of Daniel" -- which is yet to be released -- and to others which deal with this topic.

If this accord is finalized in the near future, the primary signatories will most likely be Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat.

Update 02-22-12: Yasser Arafat is obviously now dead, and Mahmoud Abbas is now the leader of Fatah, as well as of the Palestinian Authority. However, at this current time, the so-called "peace talks" appear to be dead in the water, and Abbas has seemingly placed his faith in the United Nations, as well as in reconciliation with Hamas.

According to the material I have been reading lately, it appears that Netanyahu wants to skip all of the interim talks and go straight to the final agreement. This has included the tough work of defining Israeli borders and security zones, and the extent of Palestinian-controlled lands in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Thus far, the Israeli Prime Minister has only been willing to give the Palestinians a small fraction of what they are asking for. Recently, Yasser Arafat referred to Netanyahu's offer of less than ten per cent of additional land as "peanuts". It has become obvious to everyone that while Netanyahu is good with the rhetoric, when it comes to delivering the goods, he has failed miserably. Of course, this should come as no surprise; after all, this has been the tactic of the Jews for years. A March 1998 CNN news clip clearly reveals that the Israelis and the Palestinians are still very far apart in their negotiations; which makes them all the closer to war in my view:

----- Begin Quote -----

## ARAFAT MULLS U.S. PEACE PLAN

"The Egyptian government reportedly has urged Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat not to reject a U.S. peace initiative, although both the Israeli and Palestinian Cabinets have voted against it. Under the plan, Israel would cede 13.1 percent of the West Bank to the Palestinians over 12 weeks. The Palestinians have said they want 30 percent. Israel said it won't release more than 9 percent, because that figure does not compromise national security."

----- End Of Quote -----

The biggest stumbling block to peace has been the fate of East Jerusalem. With each passing day, the threat of war looms closer as Palestinian patience runs thin. Despite Palestinian objections, and even objections from Big Brother the United States of America, the Israelis continue to try to dominate East Jerusalem by sending in settlers; and by building new, or expanding upon current housing projects in the occupied territories. Given the staunch positions of the parties involved, it is difficult to see how the current situation can culminate in anything but war. Netanyahu has sworn that he will never give up East Jerusalem, while Arafat claims that he will never agree to anything short of a Palestinian state with its capital in East Jerusalem. The minute Netanyahu was elected into office, I knew that it spelled trouble for the peace process. Netanyahu is a hawk. It is written all over his face. He is an unbending reed who refuses to bow to the winds of adversity; and it may result in his own fall from power.

It is because of the above issues that the peace talks have been at a standstill for over a year now; and it is a very dangerous sign. The fact that U.S. President Bill Clinton was unable to close the gap between these two men earlier this year is quite significant. This is a clear sign that neither party is going to allow himself to be pushed into a corner despite American pressure. Both Netanyahu and Arafat know exactly what they have to deliver to their people if they expect to remain at the helms of their respective governments. Both of these men have been facing a lot of political turmoil ever since these talks began. Netanyahu's coalition has basically fallen apart in recent months with the resignation of some of his key players; and there is talk that the fundamentalist members of the Israeli government may soon force him to resign. At the same time, Arafat is also losing popularity with the more radical elements of the Palestinian population who view him as a compromiser who has betrayed their ideals since he ascended to his position of power and affluence. Thus, both of these men have been walking a political tightrope.

Considering the volatile situation which exists in Israel, and the extreme fanaticism which is prevalent in both the Jewish and the Arab camps, we should not rule out possible assassination attempts against both Netanyahu and Arafat. Regardless of what the fate of these men might be, I am still convinced that this peace accord will be signed sooner or later. It may be temporarily halted or delayed by a war, but eventually, an agreement will be reached; even if it is



doomed to failure. God's unerring Word clearly tells us that this is so. As I have mentioned in other articles, over twenty-five hundred years ago, the Lord, through the Prophet Zechariah, foretold of the Endtime war in Israel, and the coming division of Jerusalem. Notice that this amazing prophecy specifically says that half of Jerusalem will go into captivity. This is exactly what is going to happen. Jerusalem is already divided into East and West; and someday soon, when Palestinian patience runs out, there is going to be a war; and the Palestinians are going to grab East Jerusalem for their capital:

"For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle."

Zechariah 14:2-3, KJV

I believe that this may happen towards the very end of the seven-year period; for as we see here, after the Lord has allowed Jerusalem to be punished for her sins against Him, He is finally going to come to her defense at the Battle of Armageddon. Prior to the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzak Rabin, events seemed to be headed towards the creation of a Palestinian State with its capital in East Jerusalem. Under Rabin's government, an aggressive yet face-saving land-for-peace formula was being carefully implemented. As we all know, just like Anwar Sadat who lost his life when he opposed the radical elements of his country, Rabin's life was cut short by those who viewed him as a traitor to Israeli interests.

While the setback in the peace process appears to be occurring in opposition to the wishes of the government of the United States of America, Israel's primary financial supporter and ally, I truly wonder if this is really the case. It almost appears as if Prime Minister Netanyahu and the Israelis are purposely making a suicidal push for war. It may be that behind-the-scenes talks have already taken place; and that despite the current outward American "condemnation" of the settlements and expansion by Clinton and Albright, Israel has already received assurances that her friend will come to her aid should the situation deteriorate to a state of war. The threat of all-out war might in fact be the event the United States government has waited for in order to justify an even stronger military presence in the Middle East. This would assure her ability to protect her own interests there. Eventually the Iraqi "threat" will disappear, and America will need to replace it with something else. An Israeli/Palestinian war would suit American purposes perfectly.

Considering the many shady deals which are made out of view of the public eye, I personally would not be surprised in the least if this is exactly what the government of the United States is hoping for. However, if Israel is relying upon American military backing in the coming war, it will prove once again, as I have discussed in such articles as "The Children of God and Politics" and "The Kings of the

North and the South", that she has still not learned the lesson the Lord has been trying to teach her for the past four thousand years. Israel still depends upon the wisdom and the military might of men; and her alliances with the same to deliver her from her enemies; and not upon the Lord. This was her sin throughout the Old Testament, and it continues to be her sin today. During the forty years that Jeremiah prophesied against the leadership of Israel, he said the following:

"Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD."  
Jeremiah 17:5, KJV

Several hundred years before, during the reign of one of her few good kings, Israel was threatened from the north by Sennacherib, the haughty king of Assyria. In my view, this proud king was clearly a foreshadow of the Beast to come in the Endtime. Just as the Beast will magnify himself above all gods, including the God of gods, Sennacherib did the very same thing. Consider his taunting words to Hezekiah, the king of Judah:

"Know ye not what I and my fathers have done unto all the people of other lands? Were the gods of the nations of those lands any ways able to deliver their lands out of mine hand? Who was there among all the gods of those nations that my fathers utterly destroyed, that could deliver his people out of mine hand, that your God should be able to deliver you out of mine hand? Now therefore let not Hezekiah deceive you, nor persuade you on this manner, neither yet believe him: for no god of any nation or kingdom was able to deliver his people out of mine hand, and out of the hand of my fathers: how much less shall your God deliver you out of mine hand?"  
2 Chronicles 32:13-15, KJV

Please go to part two for the continuation of this series.

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FOCUS ON THE ENDTME : PART TWO

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Exploits Of The King Of The North/Beast, King Sennacherib's Defeat, Archangel Michael Stands Up For Israel, Satan Ousted From Heaven, Israel's Antichrist Nature And Her Refusal To Repent, Israeli-Palestinian Peace Accord, Role Of Syria And Egypt, Benjamin Netanyahu Yasser Arafat And The Palestinians, The Great Tribulation, Jesus Christ Returns In The Clouds,

Sign Of The Son Of Man, Moses Prophesied Of Jesus' Coming, Elijah And John The Baptist, Prophetic Pairs In The Bible, Will The Sign Be A Physical Event?, Jesus' Physical Nature Following His Resurrection From The Dead, Battle Of Armageddon

In describing the military exploits of the modern-day King of the North, whom I believe is synonymous with the Beast, the Prophet Daniel wrote the following which sounds very similar to the verses above describing the haughtiness of this ancient Assyrian king:

"And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done. Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all. But in his estate shall he honour the God of forces: and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things. Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory: and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain."  
Daniel 11:36-39, KJV

Clearly then, the final Beast of the Endtime will follow in the proud footsteps of vain King Sennacherib. Despite the fact that the chances for victory against Sennacherib were not in Jerusalem's favor, Hezekiah trusted in the Lord and encouraged his people to not lose hope with the following words:

"Be strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that is with him: for there be more with us than with him: With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the LORD our God to help us, and to fight our battles. And the people rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah king of Judah."  
2 Chronicles 32:7-8, KJV

Just as the Beast from the north will be destroyed at the Lord's Coming during the Battle of Armageddon, we are told that King Sennacherib also met his doom through Divine Intervention after Hezekiah and the Prophet Isaiah sought the Lord in desperate prayer:

"And for this cause Hezekiah the king, and the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz, prayed and cried to heaven. And the LORD sent an angel, which cut off all the mighty men of valour, and the leaders and captains in the camp of the king of Assyria. So he returned with shame of face to his own land. And when he was come into the house of his god, they that came forth of his own bowels slew him there with the sword."  
2 Chronicles 32:20-21, KJV

Not only was Sennacherib's army miraculously defeated, but upon returning to his own land, the Assyrian king was killed by members of his own family. While the name of the angel is

not mentioned in the above account, based on things I have shared in the article "Who is Hindering the Antichrist?", I can only wonder if it might not have been Michael the Archangel. Following the Endtime military victories of the King of the North in Daniel chapter eleven, notice how the twelfth chapter begins:

"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book."  
Daniel 12:1, KJV

Sadly, today the situation is very different. Because of her rejection of the true God, and His Son Jesus Christ, modern Israel cannot possibly expect the same Divine Protection which was given to Israel during the days of King Hezekiah; even though she hypocritically claims to worship the one true God through her corrupt religion of Judaism. I discuss the deception of Judaism more at length in such articles as "Revelation's Babylon the Great", and "Is God a Racist?". What I find interesting in the above verse is that it isn't until after the Beast has ravaged Israel during the three and a half years of Great Tribulation that Michael stands up in the final chapter of Daniel. In other words, the implication is that after Michael ousts Satan from Heaven in Revelation chapter twelve, he sits down for about three and a half years in direct accordance with the Will of God:

"And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."  
Revelation 12:7-9, KJV

As I point out in "Who is Hindering the Antichrist?", it appears that Michael will temporarily be taken out of the way so that the Endtime characters can come to power. This will include such people as the Jewish Antichrist, and the Islamic team of the Beast and the False Prophet. Remember, one of the primary reasons for the Great Tribulation will be to purge and purify the Saints; and Israel certainly needs to be purged of her unbelief! I am reminded of one of the Lord's pleadings with ancient Israel in the Book of Isaiah:

"For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer."  
Isaiah 54:7-8, KJV

Despite the Lord's constant call to repentance which He has made to His rebellious unfaithful wife, Israel has continued along her wayward path. Her rebellion was epitomized by her rejection of her own Saviour in the First Century. In more recent times, Israel has once again confirmed her rebellion against the Lord Jesus by the introduction of a bill in the

Knesset which makes it virtually impossible to distribute Christian Gospel tracts in the state of Israel. Thus, as Jesus Himself said, the Lord is going to have to totally break her pride through military invasion and defeat, so that she will finally bow the head and bend the knee in total submission to her one true King:

"Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

Luke 13:35, KJV

Almost two thousand years have now passed since the Lord uttered His judgment against the hardhearted rulers of Israel. She has had almost two millennia to turn from her wicked ways. Surely, the time of her judgment will soon be at hand. However, before that day arrives, certain events must yet transpire. One of those events is the peace accord I have been discussing. The main point to remember in all of this is that, whether war breaks out this year or perhaps later, the Holy Covenant will indeed be signed; even though it will only last for a few short years. I have a very strong hunch that what we are seeing right now in the Middle East, is that both the Israelis and the Palestinians are jockeying for the best positions. It is a common tactic in the political world to act bullish before arriving at the negotiation table, so that when the parties involved finally do sit down for serious talks, they will be in a better position to achieve their objectives. The danger in the current peace process is that both bulls seem to want to keep on dancing even though the red flag of warning has already gone up!

Update 02-22-12: The following section contains some outdated information. When my time permits, I will update it. However, even though both Hafez al-Assad of Syria, and Yasser Arafat of the PLO are now dead, and Egyptian dictator Hosni Mubarak has been ousted from power, a similar scenario may possibly still play out with current or future leaders of these two nations. While Bashar al-Assad may also soon fall from power, it is interesting to note that Benjamin Netanyahu is back in power again, and he is clearly a hard-liner.

As I explain in "The Kings of the North and the South", I believe that the two kings mentioned in the Book of Daniel may be the presidents of Syria and Egypt. If the final peace accord is more than just a bilateral affair between the Israelis and the Palestinians, it is possible that Hafez al-Assad and Hosni Mubarak may go to Jerusalem to add their signatures to the document along with other Arab nations. It is also possible that the final signing by whatever parties are involved, may occur in Washington, D.C. If the treaty only involves the Jews and the Palestinians, then as I stated earlier, King Assad may end up signing a separate agreement with Israel which he will then turn around and break. One possibility I have considered is that King Assad may be using the Palestinian situation to his own advantage in order to further his personal agenda of a "Greater Syria". This might possibly include Lebanon, Jordan, and Egypt, as well as Israel. As I have noted in other articles, there has been a long history of wars between Syria and

Egypt, with Israel caught in the middle of their wrangling.

While the Syrian agenda is speculation on my part, it is a well-known fact that King Assad is currently the primary supporter of Yasser Arafat and the Palestinians. I don't think that Arafat makes a move without consulting with Syria. Despite the fact that the peace process is currently at its most difficult point in many months, it is possible that we may yet see a land exchange occurring in which the Palestinians will get their capital somewhere in East Jerusalem, and the Jews will get their new Temple on Mount Moriah. I don't think the Jews will ever give up East Jerusalem entirely, but Benjamin Netanyahu may surprise us by giving a small corner of it to Yasser Arafat for his Palestinian capital; particularly if it means getting their Temple. If Netanyahu is somehow able to accomplish this feat without destroying what is left of his government, I think the word "Moshiach" might be on the mouths of a lot of Israelis. However, as we have already seen from previous verses, this plastic peace agreement is not going to last:

"Then shall he return into his land with great riches; and his heart shall be against the holy covenant; and he shall do exploits, and return to his own land."  
Daniel 11:28, KJV

At this point in time, it is still difficult to know the proper chronology of events. The Israeli/Palestinian peace accord may delay the coming war for some three and a half years, or it may evolve as a means of stopping a war which is already in progress. My current feelings are that unless there is soon a serious breakthrough in the peace process, we may see a war before this year is over, possibly even sooner! The other issue which is still unclear in my mind is the exact role which will be played by Hafez al-Assad of Syria. As I have already stated, he may participate directly in the Israeli/Palestinian peace accord, or he may sign a separate agreement later. One distinct possibility is that with Syrian assurances, Arafat and the Palestinians may finally say that enough is enough, and go to war with Israel. Assad may then use the war to his advantage as I described earlier. Of course, the war will quickly escalate as other Arab nations join in, most of them siding with the Palestinians. It may then be that a treaty will evolve in which Assad will be one of the primary signatories.

If the president of Syria is indeed the King of the North, or the Beast, as I have speculated in other articles, then ultimately, he is going to renege on the agreement and show his true colors. This is going to usher in what is commonly known as the Great Tribulation, or Jacob's Trouble, when the Saints of the Most High will be persecuted by the Beast. One school of thought suggests that these Saints are Messianic Jews in Israel, while another states that they are the body of Christian believers everywhere. It is all a question of how far the Beast's power and influence will extend beyond the borders of Israel. In the prophetic Books of Daniel and Revelation, this period of persecution is described as lasting a time, times and an half, or time and times and the dividing of time, or forty and two months, or a thousand two hundred and threescore days. In other words, it will last for only three and a half years, and not the full seven-year

period as some erroneously believe:

"And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time."  
Daniel 7:25, KJV

"And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished."  
Daniel 12:7, KJV

"But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months. And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth."  
Revelation 11:2-3, KJV

"And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days."  
Revelation 12:6, KJV

"And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations."  
Revelation 13:5-7, KJV

Following this period of Great Tribulation, the final three and a half years of man's evil rule upon the Earth, we are told that Jesus will return in the clouds of Heaven with power and great glory in order to rescue His children, to defeat His enemies, and to set up His Father's Kingdom upon the Earth:

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."  
Matthew 24:29-30, KJV

"Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen."  
Revelation 1:7, KJV

"And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the

stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"  
Revelation 6:12-17, KJV

Concerning the reference to the mountains and the islands fleeing away in Revelation 6:14, I currently do not believe that this is meant to be understood in a literal sense. As I explain in the article "The Comet Hale-Bopp, Chernobyl and the DeathStar Wormwood", while the Book of Revelation does contain a number of prophecies which may be fulfilled in a literal sense, it also contains a lot of deep symbolism. To properly understand this symbolism, one must judiciously study and compare other Scriptures which contain the same terminology. If the mountains and the islands were to actually flee away, then the events described in the following verses could not possibly occur as everyone would already be dead. Notice that the mountains and islands flee, and then the people also try to flee and hide. Therefore, it is my opinion that these mountains and islands probably symbolize the rulers of the nations and the peoples of the world. This view is substantiated by such verses as the following:

"And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space."  
Revelation 17:9-10, KJV

"Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth . . . And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."  
Daniel 2:34-35, 44-45, KJV

The "sign of the Son of man" mentioned in Matthew 24:30 above is something which has always intrigued me. In the



Greek lexicon, I discovered that the word "sign" is derived from the Greek "semeion" which has the following meanings:

----- Begin Quote -----

semeion {say-mi'-on}

- 1) a sign, mark, token
  - 1a) that by which a person or a thing is distinguished from others and is known
  - 1b) a sign, prodigy, portent, i.e. an unusual occurrence, transcending the common course of nature
    - 1b1) of signs portending remarkable events soon to happen
    - 1b2) of miracles and wonders by which God authenticates the men sent by him, or by which men prove that the cause they are pleading is God's

----- End Of Quote -----

Initially, I assumed that the "Sign" described by Jesus was referring to the fact that the Sun and the Moon will be darkened, and that the stars will fall from the heavens; however, a closer examination of the above verses will reveal that this may not be the case. Notice that Matthew tells us that all of these astronomical events will happen and "Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven". This "Sign" appears to be a separate event which follows the previous signs. Matthew then says "and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory". The participle "coming" might indicate an ongoing process which involves a lapse of time. In other words, this "Sign" may be something which will be visible in the heavens for some time; just as comets are visible in the night sky for periods of weeks or months before they once again disappear into the blackness of deep space.

If this idea is difficult for you to accept, consider the following: If a great celestial sign appeared in the night sky as the "Star of Bethlehem" at the time of our Savior's birth, it seems appropriate to me that the conclusion of God's Great Plan of Salvation should likewise be accompanied by another awe-inspiring celestial event. The Lord clearly enjoys working in pairs; after all, He is the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. In many of my articles, I have made clear connections between verses found in the Old and the New Testaments. Consider, for example, that Jesus was the fulfillment of a prophecy given by Moses, who clearly said that another Prophet would come like unto him:

"I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him."  
Deuteronomy 18:18, KJV

"Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."  
John 1:45, KJV

"Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?"  
John 5:45-47, KJV

"For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you."  
Acts 3:22, KJV

Another example can be found in John the Baptist who was the fulfillment of the Prophet Elijah spoken of by the Prophet Malachi. I discuss this topic at length in the series called "Elijah: Where Are the True Prophets of God?". Aside from these two examples, there are many other such prophetic pairs found in the Bible. Thus, in my view, an Endtime sign in the heavens just prior to the arrival of Christ seems quite appropriate. One interesting possibility is that the Lord's Second Coming may involve a warp or vortex being created in the time-space continuum. This might be what John was referring to in the previous verse where he describes the Lord appearing in all of His glory:

"And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places."  
Revelation 6:14, KJV

While this verse may be suggesting a sudden appearance of the Lord, as when the brilliant Sun suddenly appears from behind a cloud bank, another possibility is that this "Sign" might actually be the Lord arriving from distant space. Sometimes we get so caught up in the spiritual aspects of the Kingdom of Heaven, and Heaven itself, that we forget that there is a physical or semi-physical side to it as well. You will recall that when Jesus appeared to His Disciples following His Resurrection. He was in a physical body; yet He clearly possessed attributes which were of a Divine Nature. I have discussed this in a number of other articles. Here are some very convincing examples:

"And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight."  
Luke 24:30-31, KJV

"And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them."

Luke 24:36-43, KJV

"Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you . . . And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing."

John 20:19, 6-27, KJV

Here we see Jesus appearing out of nowhere on several different occasions, in a locked room! We also see Him disappear before the Disciples' very eyes; we see that He is able to eat; and we see that He still possesses a physical body which they are able to touch and handle. Based on my study of the Scriptures, it also seems to me that the coming Millennium is going to be a very physical reality for both the Lord and ourselves. In order to rule the world with a Rod of Iron, the people and nations of the world are going to have to see and experience the Lord ruling in a very physical sense. Likewise, when the Lord returns for the Battle of Armageddon, it is my understanding that He is going to physically stand upon the Mount of Olives:

"And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee."

Zechariah 14:4-5, KJV

I discuss the importance of the Mount of Olives in Endtime prophecy in another article entitled "The Triumphant Touchdown of Jesus Christ!". I encourage you to read it. Notice that in the last part of verse five above, the Prophet Zechariah says ". . . and the LORD my God shall come, and all of the saints with thee". I believe that this may be a direct reference to the Battle of Armageddon in which we, the Resurrected Saints, will accompany the Lord in the Battle against the Beast, the False Prophet, and their evil followers. You will find this Battle discussed in more detail in such articles as "From Armageddon to the New Earth". In the New Testament, Jude briefly reminds us that thousands of years ago, the Patriarch Enoch also wrote of these amazing events:

"And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him."

Jude 1:14-15, KJV

As you can see by the following quote taken directly from the Book of Enoch, Jude quoted him almost word for word. If you are one who has doubts regarding the validity of the Book of Enoch, you may be interested in reading my companion article "The Book of Enoch: Truth or Heresy?" which explores the various links between this apocryphal work and the officially-accepted canon of modern Christianity:

"And behold! He cometh with ten thousands of His holy ones To execute judgement upon all, And to destroy all the ungodly: And to convict all flesh Of all the works of their ungodliness which they have ungodly committed, And of all the hard things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."

Enoch 1:9-10, KJV

Please go to part three for the continuation of this series.

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FOCUS ON THE ENDTME : PART THREE

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Physical Reality Of The Kingdom Of Heaven, Sign Of The Son Of Man, Look Up And Lift Up Our Heads, As A Thief In The Night, Beast's Kingdom Cast Into Darkness, New Age Space Brothers

Considering the Scriptural evidence, is it possible that the Kingdom of Heaven isn't just an unseen Spiritual Realm which surrounds us, and is within us when we accept the Lord, but that it is also a physical or semi-physical place hidden somewhere out of our sight in the depths of space, or even on the other side of outer space? For me personally, it is a difficult to imagine the Beast, the False Prophet and their followers fighting against the Lord and His Heavenly Host at the Battle of Armageddon if they are merely invisible spiritual beings. While one might argue that it will be the invisible spiritual beings which control the Beast and his horde which will be fighting against the invisible forces of Jesus Christ, we need to remember John's words when he tells us that "every eye shall see him". I further explore these possibilities concerning the location of Heaven in the article "It Is Written in the Stars", which, as of this date, has not been released yet.

Based on all of the above, it is quite possible that the

"Sign" of the Lord's Coming might actually be the Lord and His Heavenly Host physically arriving from the depths of outer space, from wherever New Jerusalem is currently located. Just as some comets appear in the night sky for a period of several weeks or months while they follow their course through our solar system, it may very well be that once the Lord's "Sign" appears in the heavens, it is going to be some time before the Lord actually arrives here. With each passing day, that Celestial Light in the sky is going to grow larger and brighter until the Earth is totally engulfed in the Lord's magnificent splendor! Consider the following interesting verse found in the Book of Proverbs:

"But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."  
Proverbs 4:18, KJV

If you recall the definition I provided earlier concerning the word "perfect", it certainly seems to fit. The day that the Lord arrives, the Perfect Day, God's Plan of Salvation is finally going to be fulfilled; as we will then be made complete when we are resurrected, and/or changed, and taken up to be with Him in our Heavenly Bodies! Just as I pointed out that the celestial "Sign" follows the astronomical signs in Matthew chapter twenty-four, there is evidence in that same verse which suggests that there may be a timelapse between the moment when the "Sign" first becomes visible in the night sky, and when the Lord actually arrives in the clouds surrounding the Earth. Consider again what Matthew said:

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."  
Matthew 24:29-30, KJV

Notice the sequence of events here. First we are told that the world will witness the signs of the Sun and the Moon being darkened, and the stars falling from the heavens. While these may be actual astronomical events, I offer another interesting perspective in the article "The Comet Hale-Bopp, Chernobyl and the DeathStar Wormwood". Following this first event, the "Sign" of the Son of Man will appear in the sky. When the people of the Earth see this "Sign", we are told that they are going to mourn. Obviously, a lot of them are not going to be too happy about this; probably because they have foolishly rejected the Lord and accepted the Mark of the Beast. Finally, we are told that they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

It seems to me that what the Lord is describing might be a progression of events and not all one simultaneous event. As I have said before, being as the Bible is printed material, we tend to read it sometimes without consciously recognizing or realizing that there are time gaps in between certain events. As I was writing this article, a verse came to mind which definitely seems to fit this picture of the "Sign"

appearing in the sky for some time while the Lord draws closer and closer to the Earth; all the while becoming brighter and brighter, just like a visiting comet! Consider what the Lord said in the twenty-first chapter of the Gospel of Luke:

"And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."  
Luke 21:28, KJV

In the above verse, the words "these things" are referring to all of the Endtime signs Jesus has just spent the whole chapter describing for His Disciples; and of course for us, since we will hopefully still be alive when these events occur. The Lord then specifically tells us that when we see these things, to LOOK UP and LIFT UP our heads. The first words "look up" are derived from the Greek word "anakupso" which means to lift up one's self or to look up; and the words "lift up" are derived from the Greek "epairo" which basically means the same, to lift up or raise up one's self. This can be understood in two ways:

In a spiritual sense, some believers are going to be feeling very downcast, discouraged, and maybe even doubting their faith due to the onslaught of the Beast, the False Prophet and their followers. As I have described in other articles, some are indeed going to fall under the delusion of Satan and forsake the Faith due to the severe persecution; but we must remember that this time, while it will seem very dark for the Believers, is exactly what we need; because it will be a time of chastening and purification; a time to purge the Saints in the fires of the Lord's tribulation. This is why the Lord is telling us that when we see these signs occurring on the Earth, we are to LIFT UP our heads. This is precisely what Paul told the Hebrews when he likewise wrote concerning the Lord's chastisements:

"Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed."  
Hebrews 12:11-13, KJV

Let me again remind you that the purpose of the Great Tribulation is two-fold. It isn't only to purge and purify the Believers, thus making them more righteous in God's eyes, but it is also to allow the wicked to fill their cup of iniquity; so that when the Lord pours out His judgments, everyone will know without a doubt that they are righteous judgments. So then, the Lord said to LIFT UP our heads, and the Apostle Paul said to LIFT UP our hands. In other words, be encouraged! Lift up your hands and praise the Lord! Why are we to lift up our heads and our hands? Jesus gave us a very clear answer: "for your redemption draweth nigh". He is coming for us! Notice again that a lapse of time is very apparent. Jesus said to be encouraged because our Redemption is drawing near. It isn't here yet, but it is getting closer with each passing day! He is coming for us!

While this is the spiritual interpretation of this verse, Jesus was also speaking in a very literal sense as well. Not only is He saying to pick up our spirits, but He is also saying to literally LIFT UP our heads! Look to the sky because you are going to see something wonderful coming! You are going to see the "Sign" of His Coming from afar! Perhaps at first it will be just a fuzzy glow in the night sky similar to a comet; but with each passing day, it will grow brighter and brighter, and bigger and bigger! You are going to get so inspired, that by the time the Lord actually arrives in the clouds for us, you will be so high on the Spirit that you won't care what they will be doing to your physical body! In the story of the martyrdom of the Prophet Isaiah, we are told that while Isaiah's enemies had his old body stretched out in the racks, and were literally sawing him in half, a common form of torture in those days, Isaiah was so in the Spirit that he was just praising the Lord the whole time; which upset his enemies all the more! He probably didn't feel a thing; just like the martyr Stephen in the Book of Acts when he was stoned to death:

"When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth. But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep."

Acts 7:54-60, KJV

Notice when Jesus told us to lift up our heads. He didn't just say to do it when we see these things happening on the Earth; He said "And when these things begin to come to pass". This seems like another confirmation to me that whatever this "Sign" is, it is going to appear in the heavens for some time before Jesus actually arrives here. As I discussed earlier, the "Star of Bethlehem" wasn't just there one minute and gone the next. The Magi from the East didn't have a pick-up truck to cut across all of those mountains and deserts at one hundred miles an hour. They had to travel by mules and camels and such; and it took time. In fact, if you read the Gospels closely, you will see that it took them perhaps two whole years to arrive at the house of Joseph and Mary where they presented the young child Jesus with gifts.

At this point, some of you may be wondering how this idea of the Lord arriving at a slower more leisurely pace can be reconciled with the belief that He will arrive suddenly and unexpectedly as a thief in the night. Allow me to refer you to my article "As a Thief in the Night?: Not for Me!" where I fully explain my perspective regarding this belief. The fact that the Lord will arrive as a thief in the night brings us to another interesting point. According to my understanding of the Scriptures, when Jesus comes, not only

will it be dark in a spiritual sense due to the wickedness in the world, but it may be dark in a physical sense as well. Consider again what the Lord said in the above verses. If the Sun and the Moon are going to be physically darkened, and the stars are going to fall from the heavens, it is going to be very dark indeed. In fact, according to the Book of Revelation, one of the Last Seven Plagues is going to throw the Kingdom of the Beast into total darkness:

"And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain,"  
Revelation 16:10, KJV

The full extent of the Kingdom of the Beast is one question which remains unanswered. Some students of the Bible believe that it will be limited to the Middle East, while others suggest it may be worldwide in scope. At this point in time, I honestly do not know. As I have said in other articles, we need to remember that the majority of the Endtime prophecies are written from the perspective of how they are going to directly affect Israel. This is why, for example, in the prophecies of Daniel, the Angelic Messenger specifically says "thy people", meaning the Jews, as in the following verse:

"Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days."  
Daniel 10:14, KJV

If the Lord is going to extinguish the celestial bodies and not just cause a regional eclipse, then it would seem that the entire world is going to be covered in darkness. This may be an implication that the Beast's power will eventually cover the entire planet. The implementation of the UPC, or Universal Product Code, and the Smart Card, seem to point to a worldwide Kingdom of the Beast. Time will certainly tell. While I hesitate to accept the above verse as an actual physical darkening of the Sun, Moon and stars, it does offer a very interesting possibility concerning the wicked gnawing their tongues for pain. Instead of a "Nuclear Winter", the world might experience a "Divine Winter". If the Lord were to really "turn off" the Sun, the Earth would literally freeze causing many to gnaw their tongues for pain! In fact, some time ago, I recall reading an article which theorized that the Sun isn't so much like a self-contained hydrogen bomb, but rather it is more like a great light, exactly as the Book of Genesis describes it. Perhaps it is similar to a heat lamp. What I also find interesting is that only five verses after the Kingdom of the Beast is covered in darkness, we find the following verse:

"Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame."  
Revelation 16:15, KJV

The fact that the Kingdom of the Beast is thrown into darkness during the Fifth Trumpet, may be an indication of when we might be able to begin seeing the "Sign" of the Lord's Coming. As we discussed earlier, the "Sign" will



appear after the Sun and the Moon have been darkened; and here we see that occurring during the Fifth Trumpet. Thus it appears that the "Sign" may appear in the latter part of the Great Tribulation. It's not at the very beginning; and it's not at the very end either. Jesus said when we begin to see these things happening; He never said to lift ourselves up at the very beginning; He said when we begin to see these things happening. This may be an indication that some of them will have already happened by the time we realize what is going on. Different people are going to begin realizing what is happening at different times. It is similar to our current situation. Some of us understand the deep mysteries of the Endtime while others do not. We are all helping each other along in our understanding.

The point is, prior to the Lord's arrival, if we accept a literal interpretation of these verses, it is going to become very dark; because there will be no sun shining, no moon shining, and fewer stars shining as well. It may not be pitch-black, but it will be close to it! By doing this, the Lord, whom I earlier described as a movie director, may be preparing those who are still here, for the Greatest Show on Earth! When you go into a movie theater, they normally turn off all of the lights right before the show is going to begin. Well, at least that is how they used to do it. Nowadays, with so many things going on in movie theaters, some theater managers prefer to leave the lights on all the way up to showtime. But if they do turn them off, or at least turn them down, it adds a bit of thrill and excitement to the air. A sudden hush comes to the crowd as they watch the screen in eager anticipation. Then the curtains are drawn, and the show begins! In the following verse, perhaps we see the Lord drawing back the "curtains" of Heaven to prepare the way for the leading star of His show!:

"And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places."  
Revelation 6:14, KJV

The Lord is going to draw back the curtains in order to reveal the Greatest Show on Earth in spectacular glorious celestial colors! Previously, I suggested that this might be referring to the actual sky, or heavens, rolling back because of some type of warp or vortex being created in the time-space continuum; in other words, an opening into the unseen Spirit Dimension around us. Since we already know it is going to be very dark when this occurs, this would indeed make the arrival of Jesus Christ and the Angelic Host even more dramatic! However, let me again say that this is not the only possible interpretation. It might not be a sudden quick event. Jesus may arrive from the depths of deep dark space, or perhaps it would be better to say, from the other side of the "cloud of darkness" discussed in the Bible. Again, allow me to refer you to the article "It's Written in the Stars!", which may be published at some point in the future.

In some of my articles which discuss the topic of aliens and UFO's, I explain that there are some New Age advocates who are expecting the imminent arrival of beings, or "Space Brothers", from Outer Space. These beings are said to belong

to a higher spiritual order. If we accept that these beings are real, then they and their leader might be nothing more than Satan and the rebellious angels who have been cast out of Heaven by Michael and his angels. Of course, these evil intruders are not going to reveal their dark secret to the people of Earth; they are going to create a lie and a delusion. In fact, it may very well be that they already have; and some people are foolishly falling for this evil deception. According to the "Space Brother" scenario, these beings are a benign technologically-advanced race from Outer Space who are coming in their glowing flying disks to assist "Mother Earth" in her "Ascension Plan". This belief is very central to New Age thought. There are quite a few New Age channelers, Native American shamans, etc., who are currently pushing this program of delusion on the ignorant American public, as well as on others around the world.

If the Red Dragon and a third of the stars, or angels of Heaven, are going to arrive first in order to deceive the world through strong delusion and many miraculous signs and wonders, pretending to be our saviors, it make sense that when the Lord returns, He and His Angelic Host might also originate from the depths of deep space, that is, from Heaven. There is an old saying which says, "It's curtains for you, buddy!". Perhaps this is what the drawing back of the curtains, or the scrolling away of the heavens, is for; to announce the soon arrival of the true King of Kings and Lord of Lord, who is going to dethrone the evil Usurper, Satan, the king of empires! This possibility seems to fit our picture perfectly; because after the kingdom of the Beast is cast into darkness, with the very next vial, the Sixth Vial, we witness the Euphrates River being dried up so that the armies of the kings of the East can come to the Battle of Armageddon in Israel, where they will fight along the side of those who have already surrounded Jerusalem:

"And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty . . . And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon."  
Revelation 16:12-14, 16, KJV

I discuss the possible identity of these kings of the East in my six-part series "The Seven Heads". If we assume that the "Sign" of the Lord's Coming is going to be physically visible in the heavens for some time; and that it will become brighter and brighter with each passing day as the Lord and the Heavenly Host approach, it is easy to imagine what kind of an effect it will have upon the darkness which has fallen upon the kingdom of the Beast. Instead of a sudden brightness occurring, it seems to me that the darkness might slowly peel or scroll away as it is penetrated by the brilliance of the Lord's Coming. It is this very same brightness which will destroy the Son of Perdition, that is, the Jewish Antichrist, who will have

usurped the place of God by sitting in the soon-to-be-built Temple on the top of Mount Moriah:

"And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:"

2 Thessalonians 2:8, KJV

According to one ancient prophecy from the book of Zechariah, it may be that when the Lord arrives, all of the evil human followers of the Beast who arrive for Armageddon, are going to melt like wax, just as if they were standing on "zero ground" of an atomic blast!:

"And this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth."

Zechariah 14:12, KJV

This is precisely what happened over fifty years ago to the poor souls who were looking in the direction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki when the American government dropped its demonic devices of death upon the inhabitants of those two Japanese cities. Their bodies were literally vaporized in seconds! This possible scenario of the Lord arriving from deep space presents another question: How can the Lord come as a thief in the night if this "Sign" is going to be so apparent in the heavens for some time prior to the Lord's arrival? Allow me to offer one possibility. We need to remember that by the time these events occur, the world will be under very strong delusion. To them, the "Sign" might be interpreted as being nothing more than a great astronomical event, such as another comet arriving from deep space. They may be absolutely blinded to the Truth. Only too late will they realize their error. In this sense, the Lord could still come as a thief in the night for those who have not discerned the signs of the times:

"He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather to day: for the sky is red and lowring. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?"

Matthew 16:2-3, KJV

On the other hand, another possibility presents itself if we again consider the delusion embraced by some adherents of New Age thought. If Satan and his cohorts do arrive from the heavens feigning to be a technologically-advanced race from the stars, it is quite possible that they will trick the world into believing that they have come to warn us of an impending invasion by another evil race from Outer Space which will soon follow in their footsteps. Short of total insanity, and complete demonic deception, I cannot possibly imagine how anyone on Earth could rise up to fight against Christ at His Coming. They would have to be tricked into believing that He and His Heavenly Host are something which they are really not: evil space aliens! If this idea seems absurd to you, consider the subtle brainwashing which has been going on for several decades now. Through the

exportation of films produced by the American cinematographic industry, people the world over are being psychologically prepared for a war against invading aliens.

I suspect that there are certain people in power today who are very well aware of what the future holds; and even now they are making preparations for it. No one can deny that the governments of the world, including the government of the United States of America, have secret agendas which are concealed from the general public. In some cases, these secret agendas cannot be as easily concealed; so they are presented to us the public under a different guise. Such may be the case with the Hubble Space Telescope. There have already been a number of reports and rumors circulating which state that this telescope may have been designed for other purposes far greater than what has been revealed publicly. To add to this mystery, the Vatican also recently built an observatory in the western part of the United States of America. One must truly question why an organization which is supposed to be dedicated to the spiritual welfare of the people, needs such a thing. Could it be that both the U.S. government and the Vatican are waiting for these visitors from the stars? If time is as short as some believe, it's possible that they have already detected something on the fringes of our solar system, or even beyond. You may recall that the comet Hale-Bopp was discovered three years before it finally made its closest approach to the Earth.

There is one other point worthy of discussion concerning the "Sign" of the Son of Man and the Lord coming as a thief in the night. If Satan and his demonic horde, and the Lord and His Heavenly Host, will be coming from the depths of outer space, we should question how long such an arrival will take. Will it require years, or decades, or even longer? If they were to require technology such as man would require to make such a journey, then this would seem to be the case; however, we are dealing with superior beings here. One topic which has mystified many Bible students over the years, is the mention in the prophecies of Daniel of certain time extensions right after the period of Great Tribulation. There is an additional thirty-day period, followed by another forty-five day period as can be seen by the following verses:

"And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days."  
Daniel 12:11-12, KJV

I am wondering if either one of these time periods at the end of the Great Tribulation might have something to do with the "Sign" and the Coming of the Lord. Even if it were to take thirty days, or forty-five days to traverse the universe to get here, that would still be extremely quick by our current standards and means of deep space travel. Thus, in my view, the Lord could still come as a thief in the night for those who have not discerned the signs of the times. To add weight to this possibility, there is a very unusual descriptive link between Satan being cast down to the

Earth by Michael, and the Lord's Second Coming. Consider the following two verses:

"And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven."  
Luke 10:18, KJV

"For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."  
Matthew 24:27, KJV

No one can deny that if there are two words which perfectly describe lightning, it is that it is fast, and it is very bright; and both Satan's fall, and the Lord's coming are described the same in that regard, right out of the mouth of the Saviour! Why did the Lord use this comparison? Is it possible that He was issuing a warning to us? The Apostle Paul gave us a similar warning in his second epistle to the Corinthians when he wrote:

"And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light."  
2 Corinthians 11:14, KJV

As I have pointed out in articles such as "Under the Cloud: UFO's and the Holy Bible", there is substantial Scriptural evidence which points to the fact that the Lord may use some kind of a Celestial Vehicle. I am very well aware of the dilemma this creates for some of us. The immediate question which arises in our minds is: "If God and Jesus are all-powerful spiritual beings, why do they require any kind of vehicle whatsoever?" Truly, this is a difficult question to answer; and I humbly admit that I currently do not have a good answer for it; however, as shown in the aforementioned article, the Prophet Ezekiel and others saw things which, according to their descriptions, certainly sound like glowing, spinning circular craft with brilliant lights, or eyes, on them. They sound exactly like what we refer to today as UFO's, OVNI's or flying saucers!

Please go to part four for the continuation of this series.

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FOCUS ON THE ENDTME : PART FOUR

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Physical Aspect Of Heaven, Will Satan Arrive On The Earth As A "Benign" Alien From Outer Space?, Resurrection And Rapture Of The Saints, He Cometh With Clouds, Are They Actual Clouds

Or Celestial Spacecraft?, A Cloud Received Jesus, Difference Between Beast False Prophet And Antichrist, Marriage Feast Of The Lamb, Battle Of Armageddon, Beast And False Prophet Cast Into Lake Of Fire, Destruction Of Babylon The Great, The Destruction Of Jerusalem In 70 AD, Is Jerusalem Babylon?

As I have already explained in this series and elsewhere, there is a very physical or semi-physical aspect to Heaven and the Spirit World. God and Jesus sit on real thrones. The Heavenly City, New Jerusalem, is a real City. After His Resurrection, Jesus still had a real physical body. Now, if some people can interpret the locusts of Revelation chapter nine as Apache helicopters, is it possible that the horses and chariot of fire which took up Elijah to Heaven were something entirely different from what we imagine? Is it possible that we have totally misunderstood the "dove" John saw up in the sky, and the voice from Heaven at the time of Jesus' baptism? What about the "bright cloud" which Peter, James and John entered into when Jesus was transfigured before them? Finally, are the "horses" upon which Jesus and the Celestial Army ride at the Battle of Armageddon really just that? If there is one common description given to UFO's, it is that they are extremely fast, they are very bright, and they zip across the sky at very high rates of speed, just like streaks of lightning.

If you are open-minded enough to consider these possibilities, then perhaps you too will understand that perhaps Jesus was warning us of the arrival of the False Messiah from the stars, before His own arrival a few years later. Having faced his final defeat in the heavens by the forces of Michael and his angels, will Satan, the "angel of light", soon arrive with his space fleet of glistening craft as a "benign" visitor from outer space? If time is as short as some of us believe it to be, I don't believe we have long to find out. Let me make clear that I am not saying that this is exactly the way it will be. I honestly do not know. Perhaps all of these things will occur behind the scenes in the Spirit World; however, we would all be wise to not thoroughly reject the possibility of an actual physical invasion. Again, it is no mistake that we are currently living in an age of scientific and technological wonders. It is no mistake that there is so much UFO hype nowadays. It is no mistake that the United States of America has its eye in the sky. They are looking and watching for something very specific which they don't want you to know about; and maybe the Vatican knows what it is!

Regardless of what you personally believe concerning these things, and regardless of what the "Sign" of the Son of Man may be, when it appears in the sky, those of us who have believed, will give shouts of joy and a sigh of relief; knowing that it will soon be over; while the unbelieving nations of the world are going to mourn and wail and seek to hide themselves in the mountains and dens of the Earth, because they will know that they are in big trouble! At the time of the Lord's Second Coming, whenever and however it occurs, all of the dead Saints of all time will be suddenly resurrected, their bodies changed, and then raptured -- taken up -- to Heaven to be with the Lord. This will also include

the two sackcloth witnesses of Revelation chapter eleven who will be punishing the wicked with plagues during the final three and a half years, while at the same time encouraging the faith of the persecuted Saints:

"And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

Matthew 24:31, KJV

"Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."

1 Corinthians 15:51-52, KJV

"For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."

Philippians 3:20-21, KJV

Following the Resurrection and Rapture of all of the dead Saints of God of all time, we the living Saints will also be changed and raptured to meet the Lord in the air. This is another possible reason why there may be a thirty-day period followed by a forty-five day period. It may require some time for the thousands, if not millions of dead Saints to be resurrected and raptured all around the world; then to be followed by the living Saints. Remember, we will still be living on the Earth which is governed by all of the laws of physics, including time, when this occurs. Indications are that the Lord's Second Coming may only be an aerial event; He and His Heavenly Host may not touch down on the Earth at this time. We will simply be called up, just as the two sackcloth witnesses will be called up:

"For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

1 Thessalonians 4:15-17, KJV

"And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them."

Revelation 11:11-12, KJV

Let me again remind you of this usage of the word "cloud". During the Transfiguration, we are told that a "bright cloud" overshadowed Peter, James and John; that God Himself spoke out of the "cloud"; and that the three disciples entered into the "cloud":

"While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud."  
Luke 9:34, KJV

Could this mean that they were simply surrounded by some kind of brilliant Heavenly Mist, what the Jews refer to as the Shekinah Glory? Possibly. In Matthew chapter twenty-four we are told that the Lord will come in the clouds of Heaven. Could this simply be a reference to the atmospheric clouds? Again, it is quite possible. As we have already seen, in the Epistle to the Thessalonians we are told that we shall be caught up together IN the clouds. Here again, floating up to the clouds in the high atmosphere is a distinct possibility, but is this what it really means? In the first chapter of the Book of Revelation we are told that He will come with clouds. I have always found this verse interesting as it says "with clouds" which appears to indicate that they will accompany Him. This could be a reference to the angelic beings which will accompany Him; but does it? Consider the following Scriptures:

"Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen."  
Revelation 1:7, KJV

"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,"  
Hebrews 12:1, KJV

"And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean."  
Revelation 19:14, KJV

We are also told that the two sackcloth witnesses of Revelation chapter eleven will ascend up to Heaven IN a cloud after they have been dead for three and a half days laying in the streets of Jerusalem:

"And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them."  
Revelation 11:12, KJV

Everywhere we look where there is a mention of being transported to Heaven, there is this mention of clouds. When the Lord has His servants the Scribes and Prophets repeat something over and over again in the Scriptures, it is for a good reason. I don't believe that the Lord likes to waste words. If you are not yet convinced that perhaps there is a wonderful Truth which has been hidden in the Scriptures for literally thousands of years, consider this next verse which describes Jesus' own return to the Heavenly Realm. I discuss this topic in more detail in my article "The Triumphant Touchdown of Jesus Christ"; but there is a very important point I wish to bring to your attention:

"And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight."



## Acts 1:9, KJV

I have read that verse many times; yet it wasn't until now that my curiosity caused me to look up a word in my Greek lexicon which has given me a whole new understanding of this verse. The word "cloud" is derived from the Greek words "nepfos" and "nephele" which mean exactly that, a cloud. There is nothing unusual or revelatory about this word. Perhaps this is exactly what the writers meant and nothing more. However, I think it would be foolish of us to totally reject other possibilities. Without anything else with which to compare it, how else could the ancient writers have described a glowing vehicle of Celestial Origin which was totally outside of anything they had ever seen or witnessed before? While the word "nepfos" by itself may not cause any excitement, it is the verb which accompanies it which may thrill you as it has just thrilled me! For years I assumed that the phrase "a cloud received him out of their sight" simply meant that some large billowy cumulus cloud passed in front of their line of sight, and thus the Disciples could no longer see Jesus as He rose to the Heavens; however, that may be a totally wrong conclusion. This verb "received" is derived from the Greek word "hupolambano", pronounced hoop-ol-am-ban'-o, which has the following definitions according to the Greek lexicon:

----- Begin Quote -----

- 1) to take up in order to raise, to bear on high
- 1a) to take up and carry away
- 2) to receive hospitably, welcome
- 3) to take up

----- End Of Quote -----

Isn't that wonderful?! A normal cloud cannot raise anyone up; it cannot take up and carry away anyone; it cannot receive or welcome anyone hospitably, but a Celestial Vehicle with an Angelic Crew inside certainly could! While some rigid traditional Christians may view this as nothing short of blasphemy, perhaps it is they who are being a bit short-sighted due to carefully-controlled indoctrination over the centuries which has been purposely crafted to spiritually blind people to the facts.

If there is any truth to the idea that Some UFO's might possibly be of Divine Origin, then it should also shed some light on how Satan, the false "angel of light", might make his grand appearance into the world as the "savior" of New Age advocates; and maybe even of the Jews! As I discuss in other articles, the fact that the advent of the UFO age occurred less than one year prior to Israel becoming a nation in May of 1948, may be significant. Let me caution you that I am by no means stating any of this as fact; but I do believe you should be made aware of these possibilities. Regardless of what the exact specifics are concerning the Lord's aerial Second Coming, as I mentioned earlier, it may be at that time that the Jewish Antichrist will be destroyed by the brightness of His Coming:

"And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with

the brightness of his coming:"  
2 Thessalonians 2:8, KJV

Within eschatological circles, there is a bit of a debate concerning the proper identity of the one being described by the Apostle Paul in the above verse. Some have assumed that Paul is referring to the Beast who will take over the Middle East, and possibly regions beyond. He is often referred to as the Antichrist; however, I feel that this is due to a lack of a proper understanding of what is meant by some of these Biblical terms. As I explain in such articles as "Who is Who?: Defining Important Endtime Terms", according to the Daniel prophecies, the Beast will be a political/military man like President Hafez al-Assad of Syria, or quite possibly Saddam Hussein of Iraq. I explore this topic in great detail in "The Seven Heads" series. At any rate, I do not believe that this is who the above verse is describing.

According to the Book of Revelation, the Second Beast known as the False Prophet, may be a powerful Islamic spiritual leader who will team up with the Beast. He will rally the Islamic hordes around the Beast as he undertakes his military campaign against Israel and Jerusalem. While Muhammad was indeed a false prophet, I believe there will be someone else in the near future, who will serve as the catalyst to unite the Muslim nations, the Ten Horns, behind the Beast. My current feelings are that he may possibly be of Iranian origin. The current ayatollah makes a perfect candidate as he is extremely powerful, and very anti-U.S., and very anti-Israel.

Finally, there is the Endtime character referred to by many as the Antichrist. I personally feel that this term is most appropriately applied to the false religious leader of Israel who will convince Orthodox Jews that he is their long-awaited messiah. He is commonly referred to as "Moshiach ben David", which loosely translates as "messiah, the son of David". You will find this topic discussed in great detail in part two of "The Kings of the North and the South", as well as in "Who is Hindering the Antichrist?". While many have embraced the idea that the Roman Catholic pope may be the Antichrist, or the False Prophet, again, I feel that they are in error. There is only one man who will be permitted to sit in the new Temple in Jerusalem; and that is the Jewish Antichrist, who will claim to be God:

"Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God."  
2 Thessalonians 2:4, KJV

Following the Rapture of the Saints into Heaven, my understanding is that we will participate in the Marriage Feast of the Lamb. Again, this may somehow be related to the extra thirty and forty-five day periods added to the end of the Last Seven Years, at the end of the Great Tribulation:

"And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath

made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God."

Revelation 19:6-9, KJV

For more information regarding the Bride of Christ, I encourage you to read such articles as "Revelation's Babylon the Great". It may be while we are enjoying the Marriage Feast of the Lamb in Heaven, that the Lord will be pouring out His Wrath upon the wicked Kingdom of Darkness of the Beast and the False Prophet. The Seven Plagues, or Vials of Wrath, are discussed in the fifteenth and sixteenth chapters of the Book of Revelation. What adds some weight to this possibility is the fact that the Seventh Vial of Wrath appears to culminate in the Battle of Armageddon and the Lord's Third Coming. I believe that it is at this time that we may see the fulfillment of the prophecies of Zechariah as I discussed earlier. In other words, unlike the Second Coming which was only an aerial Coming, this will be a physical landing on the Earth at the Mount of Olives in preparation for the Battle of Armageddon in northern Israel:

"Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south."

Zechariah 14:1-4, KJV

"And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon. And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done."

Revelation 16:16-17, KJV

This event will occur after the Sixth Vial of Wrath in which the River Euphrates is dried up to make a way for the kings and armies of the East, to join the Beast in the Great Battle against the Lord and His anointed:

"And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty."

Revelation 16:12-14, KJV

All of these events are further discussed in the Endtime articles I have named throughout this current paper. From the description given in Revelation chapter nineteen, one thing which is apparent, is that as a result of their defeat at this decisive battle, both the military leader known as the Beast, and the religious leader known as the False Prophet, will be cast ALIVE into the Lake of Fire burning with fire and brimstone:

"And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone."  
Revelation 19:20, KJV

However, this is not the only event which will be occurring at this time. Revelation chapter sixteen also makes clear that it will be at this possible Third Coming, when the Seventh Vial of Wrath is poured out, that the mysterious Babylon the Great will finally meet her destruction:

"And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath."  
Revelation 16:19, KJV

The physical destruction of Babylon the Great is described in the seventeenth and the eighteenth chapters of the Book of Revelation. In the six-part series entitled "Revelation's Babylon The Great", I explain how there have been a number of speculations regarding the identity of this mysterious woman who rules over the kings of the Earth. These various possibilities include the ancient city of Babylon in Iraq, which at one time was being excavated and reconstructed by Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein; Rome, which is the power base of the Roman Catholic Church and a great financial power in its own right; New York City, the epitome of power, wealth and glory of Western capitalism; and London, said by some to be the European equivalent of New York City.

However, as revealed in that article, after a close study of the Scriptures, I have come to the conclusion that Babylon the Great might in fact be Jerusalem herself which is guilty of spilling all of the blood of the ancient Prophets. If I were to summarize my findings, it would be based on the following verses from the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, and John's description of Babylon the Great in the Book of Revelation:

"Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell? Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto

thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."  
Matthew 23:33-38, KJV

In the above verses, Jesus is clearly prophesying the destruction of Jerusalem due to the Prophets whom she slew in the Old Testament. Jesus clearly calls the Scribes and the Pharisees the children of those murderers. In the Gospel of Luke, He again prophesies this destruction:

"And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh."  
Luke 21:20, KJV

While these prophecies did indeed have a partial fulfillment in 70 A.D. with the invasion and destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple by the Roman General Titus, through previous verses I have shown that there will yet be a final Endtime fulfillment. Why will the Lord allow this to occur? Because even after His own warning, the unbelieving Jews continued in their very same sins; beginning with the crucifixion of their very own Saviour! As the Book of Acts reveals, others followed in Jesus' footsteps like Stephen and James; and the Lord only knows how many more! There was a major persecution in the eighth chapter of the Book of Acts which was possibly spearheaded by Saul. I discuss this in "A Biblical Cafeteria or the Whole Course". It is for this very reason that John describes Jerusalem as Babylon the Great in the following verses:

"And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration . . . Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her . . . And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth."  
Revelation 17:6, 18:20, 24, KJV

This is the exact same thing that Jesus said regarding Jerusalem. There is no other city mentioned in the Bible which is accused of these sins. Jerusalem has been invaded and destroyed a number of times throughout her long history; and it has always been for the very same reason: because she has forsaken her true God, and killed those who have tried to warn her of her sins. It wasn't Babylon in Iraq, or New York City, or even Rome. Yes, Rome truly has her share of sins, and she did persecute and kill many of the First Century Christians, but the Prophets of old were not sent to Rome; they were sent to Jerusalem, exactly as Jesus and John both said. Furthermore, the prophecies very specifically tell us that Jerusalem will continue to kill those sent to her right up to the very end until she is destroyed. Remember what I shared earlier. Her final persecution against God's children will result in the deaths of the two Sackcloth Witnesses. This is again a clear sign of to whom John is referring. Some have speculated that these two mighty Endtime witnesses might be two of the greatest Prophets Israel has ever known; Moses and Elijah:

"And when they shall have finished their testimony, the

beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified."  
Revelation 11:7-8, KJV

Notice how Jerusalem is referred to as the "great city" in the above verse. In Revelation chapter twenty-one, the New Jerusalem is also referred to one time as "that great city"; however, what is most interesting about this is that this very same term is used seven times to describe Babylon the Great in the Book of Revelation! Can the connection be any more obvious than that? Jerusalem the great city, and Babylon the great city are one and the same! Truly then, her cup of iniquity will finally be filled to the brim after she has slain the two Prophets of the Lord. It is for this reason that we are told that the Ten Horns will unite with the Beast to destroy Jerusalem in one hour:

"And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings ONE HOUR with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast . . . And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled . . . Therefore shall her plagues come in ONE DAY, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her . . . Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in ONE HOUR is thy judgment come . . . For in ONE HOUR so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off,"  
Revelation 17:12-13, 16-17, 18:8, 10, 17, KJV

Notice that these Ten Horns, whom I believe to be ten Arab nations, will only give their power and strength to the Beast for one hour. Notice that Babylon's destruction also comes in one hour. This is exactly why they unite with the Beast; to destroy Jerusalem with all of the fire power that they've got! It is going to be a total holocaust, possibly nuclear in nature! This is why Jesus specifically warned the Jews to flee to the mountains when they see the Abomination of Desolation standing in the holy place in the newly built Temple at Jerusalem. This is exactly what the angels told Lot and his family to do before they destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities of the plains:

"When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: For

then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." Matthew 24:15-21, KJV

"And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed." Genesis 19:17, KJV

Please go to part five for the conclusion of this series.

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FOCUS ON THE ENDTME : PART FIVE

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Beast Destroys Babylon The Great, Will Jerusalem Be Destroyed By Nuclear Fire?, Ancient Jerusalem: City Filled With Blood, Jerusalem's Importance As Hidden International Economic Power, Revelation's "Beloved City", Old Jerusalem vs New Jerusalem

At the very end of this three and a half years of terrible persecution, which Daniel and Jeremiah both referred to as the time of Jacob's trouble, I suspect that when the Satan-inspired Beast and his Islamic followers realize that their defeat is at hand, in one final act of desperation, they may decide to bomb Jerusalem, thus fulfilling their destiny to destroy Babylon the Great. The attitude of the Beast, the False Prophet and their followers will be, "If we can't have Jerusalem, then nobody can!" If these things occur while Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu is still in power, I wouldn't be the least bit surprised if he flees and deserts his own people; because he is a U.S.-bred and a U-S.-educated hireling! The minute things begin to get too hot, he is going to take his immediate family and advisors and flee to the land of Uncle Sam or some other safe place of refuge! Jesus said the following regarding such people:

"But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep." John 10:12-13, KJV

If the Beast and the False Prophet will be reigning from Jerusalem, why will the Lord land upon the Mount of Olives,

which is not far from Jerusalem, and then fight the Battle of Armageddon way up in Megiddo in northern Israel, not far from his boyhood town of Nazareth? Could it be because there will be nothing left of Jerusalem? It certainly offers a plausible reason for this battle occurring away from Jerusalem. Naturally, there are some who totally reject the idea that Babylon the Great might be Jerusalem. They cannot accept that God would destroy His "beloved city". As far as I am concerned, this is a false idea based upon a total misunderstanding of the Scriptures; and the result of falling under the Jewish delusion of the "chosen people". The Apostle Paul also felt the wrath and heat of the Jerusalem church when he began his ministry to the Gentiles declaring that what we are in the flesh has absolutely no bearing on our Salvation. I have covered this topic more thoroughly in such articles as "Is God a Racist?".

One argument often used is that Jerusalem has never been viewed as a city of any major importance by anyone outside of Israel; thus it can in no way be compared to Babylon the Great which is described as follows:

"And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth."  
Revelation 17:18, KJV

Contrary to this view, if we read the lamentations of the Prophet Jeremiah following the fall of Jerusalem, we discover that the kings of the Earth did in fact hold Jerusalem in high regard; and were surprised when the seemingly impregnable city was destroyed by the forces of Nebuchadnezzar:

"The LORD hath accomplished his fury; he hath poured out his fierce anger, and hath kindled a fire in Zion, and it hath devoured the foundations thereof. The kings of the earth, and all the inhabitants of the world, would not have believed that the adversary and the enemy should have entered into the gates of Jerusalem. For the sins of her prophets, and the iniquities of her priests, that have shed the blood of the just in the midst of her,"  
Lamentations 4:11-13, KJV

Notice too how these verses mention that Jerusalem was destroyed by fire, just as Babylon the Great will face the same fate in the near future when she is destroyed by nuclear fire. Also similar to Babylon the Great, we are told that in Jerusalem was found the blood of the just. This has a much more significant meaning than you may realize. In this regard, Jerusalem was guilty on three counts. First, the people of Jerusalem sacrificed their young children and babies to the false pagan gods such as Molech. The way they did this was by actually throwing them into a furnace located in the belly of the idol built to honor this god! Second, the people of Jerusalem persecuted and slew all of the Prophets the Lord sent to them. Finally, to give you a vivid picture of how terrible things might be in the future when Jerusalem is once again invaded, consider that following Nebuchadnezzar's invasion of Jerusalem, mothers were forced to either eat their own children or else die of starvation!:



"Their visage is blacker than a coal; they are not known in the streets: their skin cleaveth to their bones; it is withered, it is become like a stick. They that be slain with the sword are better than they that be slain with hunger: for these pine away, stricken through for want of the fruits of the field. The hands of the pitiful women have sodden their own children: they were their meat in the destruction of the daughter of my people."  
Lamentations 4:8-10, KJV

When Solomon ruled in Jerusalem, we are also told that the kings of the Earth went up to Jerusalem to witness his vast wealth, which exceeded their own, and to hear his wisdom:

"And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom . . . So king Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom"  
1 Kings 4:34, 10:23, KJV

"And all the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom, that God had put in his heart."  
2 Chronicles 9:23, KJV

The fact that in ancient times, empire after empire sought to invade and control Jerusalem is also a clear sign of the importance they attributed to the city. In our modern day, the fact that the United States of America, whom some now consider to be the "king of the Earth", invests literally billions of dollars into Israel every single year, is also a clear sign of Jerusalem's important status. Furthermore, the fact that the Arab nations seek to control and/or to destroy Jerusalem is also proof enough that they despise her looking down upon them as if she is some presumptuous queen; just like Babylon the Great who also sits as a haughty queen:

"How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow."  
Revelation 18:7, KJV

Finally, as I point out elsewhere, Jerusalem's true power and influence is not easily recognized by all. This is the financial power she wields through her international bankers and businessmen, the primary organs of which are the IMF, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank, which are both Jewish controlled. Nation after nation has been forced into submission to the will of these men through crafty loans and other shrewd financial dealings. It is these kings and merchants of the Earth who will bewail the fall of Babylon the Great, their beloved Jerusalem:

"And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come. And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more . . . And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the

bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived."  
Revelation 18:9-11, 23, KJV

Thus, to say that Jerusalem cannot be compared to Babylon the great city which rules over the kings of the Earth, is completely false in my view. Absolutely no one can deny the cunning subtlety of the Jewish businessmen, who John refers to as "the great men of the Earth". From Jerusalem to London to Tokyo to New York, these are the true kings of the Earth, and not the people who take on the titles of president, king, sheik or prime minister. These are only the pawns of the real rulers. It is because they control the American economy that so much money is invested into the tiny country of Israel. According to the last report I read, even though she is a nation of less than six million people, Israel receives the highest amount of American financial aid per capita in the world! In other words, while other countries may actually receive more financial aid from the United States of America, compared to their actual populations, Israel still beats them all!

It is my view then that based on all of these verses, the coming destruction of Jerusalem is going to be a very literal event. I currently do not believe that there is any symbolism implied here. Those who disagree with the view that Babylon the Great and Jerusalem are one and the same further argue that this cannot be so because, according to them, Jerusalem will still be in existence following the Battle of Armageddon. I disagree. A close study of the Book of Revelation reveals absolutely no mention of the Earthly city of Jerusalem following the destruction of Babylon the Great and the Battle of Armageddon. There is only one verse which I have seen used to try to support this erroneous interpretation; and that is the following:

"And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them."  
Revelation 20:9, KJV

To place this verse in its proper chronological sequence, this event occurs towards the very end, or possibly right at the very end of the Millennium. This is a period of one thousand years during which we the resurrected Saints will rule with Christ on the Earth. This is thoroughly discussed in such articles as "From Armageddon to the New Earth". As the following two verses will show, this is in fact what is commonly referred to as the Battle of Gog and Magog:

"And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea."  
Revelation 20:7-8, KJV

According to some, the usage of the words "camp" and "beloved city" in verse nine above is said to be referring to the current Jerusalem, even though the verse does not say this whatsoever. As such, it should be viewed as a mere

piece of speculation; and a very poor one at that. One reason I say this is because there is not one single verse in the entire Bible where Jerusalem is referred to as "the beloved city". I verified this for myself. Furthermore, how could Jesus say that Jerusalem is full of the blood of the Prophets, that it is run by the children of the Devil, that it will be destroyed, and then turn completely around and call it "the beloved city" in this prophecy? It just doesn't make sense, does it? It is totally contradictory to everything we have seen in the Endtime prophecies. In fact, according to my Greek lexicon, this word "city" is derived from the word "polis", pronounced pol' is, which has the following definitions:

----- Begin Quote -----

- 1) a city
- 1a) one's native city, the city in which one lives
- 1b) the heavenly Jerusalem
- 1b1) the abode of the blessed in heaven
- 1b2) of the visible capital in the heavenly kingdom, to come down to earth after the renovation of the world by fire
- 1c) the inhabitants of a city

----- End Of Quote -----

While "polis" can refer to any city, notice that the emphasis in the above definition is on the Heavenly Jerusalem, with absolutely no mention of the Earthly Jerusalem. If this "camp" and "beloved city" are anything, perhaps they are the New Jerusalem which will descend from Heaven during the Millennium. I have read in times past that it might possibly hover just above the surface of the Old Earth throughout the duration of the Millennium, thus keeping it pure from pollution. The Lord and His Saints are definitely going to need some kind of capital city from which to rule the Earth. Why would the Lord choose old decrepit and war-torn Jerusalem which is full of not only the blood of the Prophets and Saints, but His own Blood as well, when He specifically told us that He was going to prepare a place for us?:

"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

John 14:2-3, KJV

In Zechariah chapter fourteen, following the Battle of Armageddon, we discover that there is also talk of Jerusalem. Some have erroneously assumed that this is the Earthly Jerusalem; but a closer reading will reveal that this is also a misguided understanding of the Scriptures. As with other Prophets like Daniel and Isaiah, it appears that Zechariah may possibly be taking a leap a thousand years into the future after the Battle of Armageddon. Consider these example verses:

"And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and

half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be. And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one . . . . And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain."  
Zechariah 14:8-9, 16-17, KJV

First of all, notice the term "living waters". Does the Earthly Jerusalem have living waters? Definitely not; but the New Jerusalem does:

"And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."  
Revelation 22:1-2, KJV

Notice also how we are told that the survivors of all of the nations which were not destroyed during the Battle of Armageddon, go up to worship the Lord from year to year. Obviously, these people must be the redeemed of those nations. We find the exact same scenario described in Revelation chapter twenty-one after the description of the New Heaven and the New Earth, and after the descent of the New Jerusalem upon the New Earth:

"And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it."  
Revelation 21:24-26, KJV

Clearly then, the Jerusalem Zechariah must be talking about is not the Old Jerusalem, but the New Jerusalem. In the article "From Armageddon to the New Earth", I explain another common prophetic misconception in which some Bible students have erroneously assumed that the wolf, the lamb and the lion dwelling together, described in Isaiah chapters eleven and sixty-five, occurs during the Millennium. A closer reading of the Scriptures reveals the same thing: the Prophet was not referring to the Millennium at all, but rather to the New Heaven and the New Earth. Some have also misinterpreted Isaiah's prophecies concerning the New Jerusalem and assumed that they are referring to the Earthly Jerusalem when they are not. As I will show in a minute, from the description provided by John in the Book of Revelation, it appears that the Heavenly City may be pyramidal or mountain-like in shape, with the Supreme Headquarters at the apex. With that in mind, consider the Jerusalem which Isaiah describes:

"And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and

all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD."

Isaiah 2:2-5, KJV

These verses are clearly referring to the Last Days as the opening verse reveals. Keeping in mind the things I shared previously, notice the phrase "mountain of the LORD's house". This is the "my Father's house" which Jesus was referring to in John chapter fourteen in which He said there are many mansions! It is as big as a mountain; bigger in fact; that is why it is "the mountain of the LORD'S house"! It is a humongous golden pyramid-shaped wonder which measures approximately one thousand five hundred miles on each side of its square base; and its height is equal to its length and breadth!:

"And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel. And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass."

Revelation 21:15-18, KJV

There is no way that such a structure could possibly be sitting in the tiny country of Israel which is only a fraction of the size of the Heavenly City! Perhaps that is why Isaiah says "it shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills". Maybe it will hover in the air as I described previously. So then, it is obvious to me that this Zion is not Old Jerusalem; it is New Jerusalem, the Heavenly City! Notice the final verses I shared from the Book of Isaiah. They definitely appear to be speaking of the Millennium when the Lord will rule with a rod of iron, exactly as King David wrote thousands of years ago in the second Psalm:

"Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

Psalms 2:9, KJV

Perhaps after the New Earth has been created, the Heavenly City will actually settle upon its surface; but before that time, it will hover somewhere above it during the Millennium. Maybe everyone will have to be shuttled up to it in order to make their offerings to the Lord. I really don't know. At this point in time, all we can do is speculate. With that inspiring description, I am going to bring this series to a close. I trust that you have gleaned some useful information

from it; and that it has been a blessing and an inspiration in your life. Remember, keep your eyes on Jesus, but also turned towards the Middle East; because that is where it is all going to be happening! Most of all, when things look their darkest, and it appears that Satan has won, LOOK UP, because your redemption draweth nigh; and you are going to see something bright and wonderful coming in the sky! How is that for a bit of Scriptural poetry? It won't be long!

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