

“For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to battle?” 1 Corinthians 14:8

KJV

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# The Original BAPTIST OBSERVER



“Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls...” Jeremiah 6:16

## Sounding Out The Faith

January 2021

# “The Second Coming of Christ”

No more important subject can occupy our minds than the second coming of Christ. Most men have false concepts about the return of Jesus. Some falsely believe that it is Jesus’ coming when a person dies. Others falsely believe that Jesus’ coming is every time a person is saved. If these ideas were true, it would make it necessary for Jesus’ coming to be in many “returns”, destroying the hope of His coming again as in Titus 2:13. **“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;”** Others have set dates for His return even though the Bible is clear, **“But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.”** Mark 13:32

The truth in the Bible is that Jesus did leave the earth but He promised He would return. John 14:1-3 says, **“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”** Luke 24:50-51 and Acts 1:10-11 tell us that He departed but that He would return someday. **“And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.”** **“And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.”**

Nevertheless, the Bible does teach that Jesus is coming again in Revelation 22:12, **“And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.”** He has given us signs to look for the seasons in which He will come. The Bible gives us the conditions that would be prevailing on the earth at the time of Jesus’ return. It is a mistake to think that the Lord’s New Testament churches will “take the world” for Christ before He comes again. This false doctrine is called “post-millennialist”. Let us consider what the Bible teaches.

**“But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.”** (Matthew 24:37-39) Notice in Genesis 6:5-8, **“And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.”** We see these conditions prevailing all over the world today.

II Peter 3:3-7 shows us that there will be scoffers with unbelief in the coming of Jesus in the last days. There will be those that will cast doubt on the Word of God believing that everything has continued to be the same since the beginning of creation. The Bible says they are willingly ignorant. Notice that even in their scoffing

and unbelief they are fulfilling the Scriptures showing that Jesus is coming soon. **“Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.”**

There will come a falling away from the truth in the Lord’s New Testament churches in the days when Jesus returns. **“Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;”** (II Thessalonians 2:1-3) It is impossible to fall away from truth if you do not have truth to begin with. The Lord’s New Testament churches are where He preserves and upholds His truth today. In the times before Jesus returns, there will be a falling away. However, it does not require that YOU have to fall away. God saw the future and recorded what He saw happening, but it does not mean we have to let it happen to us.

In the last days before Jesus returns, there will be a “formalism” in religion and the world will have a break down of morals, Biblical influences, and principles of righteousness. **“This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.**

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For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.” (II Timothy 3:1-5) II Timothy 4:1-4 says, “I charge *thee* therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.”

There will be a “Laodicean” attitude in a lot of the Lord’s churches in these times of falling away before Jesus returns. Revelation 3:14-22 reveals this attitude. “And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and *that* the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”

The sign of the fig tree, typifying Israel becoming a nation, will take place before Jesus returns. In Jeremiah 24:1-6, God uses figs to picture the future of Israel as a nation with the tribe of Judah. “The LORD shewed me, and, behold, two baskets of figs *were* set before the temple of the LORD, after that Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon had carried away captive Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, and the princes of Judah, with the carpenters and smiths, from Jerusalem, and had brought them to Babylon. One basket *had* very good figs, *even* like the figs *that are* first ripe: and the other basket *had* very naughty figs, which could not be eaten, they were so bad. Then said the LORD unto me, What seest thou, Jeremiah? And I said, Figs; the good figs, very good; and the evil, very evil, that cannot be eaten, they are so evil. Again the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel; Like these good figs, so will I acknowledge them that are carried away captive of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place into the land of the Chaldeans for *their* good. For I will set mine eyes upon them for good, and I will bring them again to this land: and I will build them, and not pull *them* down; and I will plant them, and not pluck *them* up.” Matthew 24:32-36 shows that before Jesus returns the “fig tree” will bloom and mature. This pictures Israel will be prospering before Jesus comes. “Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer *is* nigh: So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, *even* at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. But of that day and hour knoweth no *man*, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.”

Now, let us consider the events of Jesus’ return. The rapture, or catching away, will occur when Jesus returns in the clouds for all the saved and specifically for His New Testament churches. II Thessalonians

2:13-18 says, “But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 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. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.” Notice there are two groups here. There are those that are saved, have died, are in Heaven and come with Him. Those are the bodies that are resurrected and glorified when He returns in the clouds. Then those that are alive are caught up, changed and glorified at His return, not resurrected because they had not died. This is the rapture, the main harvest of the resurrection. “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.” (I John 3:2)

First of all, Jesus compares the resurrection to a harvest. In a harvest, there is first-fruits, a main harvest, and then the gleanings. The first-fruits of the resurrection were Jesus’ resurrection and the other saints around Jerusalem that were resurrected from the dead when He arose. “But now is Christ risen from the dead, *and* become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man *came* death, by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming.” (I Corinthians 15:20-23) “And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.” (Matthew 27:52-53)

After the coming of Jesus in the clouds, the judgment seat of Christ will take place in Heaven. This judgment is for the saved from Adam to the last person saved prior to Jesus coming in the clouds. This judgment is for reward for those that have been saved. This judgment does not determine someone’s salvation. Remember, I Thessalonians 4:13-18 said that those that believed that Jesus died and rose again, those that were in Christ, or in Jesus, were resurrected or caught up. The judgment seat of Christ is for those that are already saved. “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad.” (II Corinthians 5:10) The Bible says in Romans 14:10-12, “But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.” I Corinthians 3:11-15 says that rewards can be gained or lost at the judgment seat of Christ, but even if rewards are lost, they are saved no matter what! “For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is. If any man’s work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.”

After the judgment seat of Christ, the marriage supper of the Lamb will take place in Heaven. “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 19:7-8)

After Jesus resurrects the dead in Christ and raptures the saved off of the earth, the seven year tribulation will take place on the earth. The anti-Christ will begin his rule and reign for seven years on the earth at this time. In II Thessalonians 2:3-12 the Bible teaches us that the anti-Christ will deceive and portray himself as “God” and will demand worship. “Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; 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. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth *will let*, until he be taken out of the way. 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: *Even him*, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”

The seven year tribulation is determined upon Israel to bring her to Jesus Christ. The anti-Christ will reinstate the law covenant with Israel, declaring himself as their “messiah” for the first three and a half years of the tribulation. Jeremiah 30:7 says, “Alas! for that day *is* great, so that none *is* like it: it *is* even the time of Jacob’s trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.” Daniel 9:24-27 says, “Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. 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. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof *shall be* with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. 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.” These weeks are periods of seven years. “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.” (Daniel 12:11)

There will be a one-world religion and a one-world government working together. Revelation 13:3-8 shows us that the whole world will turn to worship the anti-Christ in the middle of the tribulation. Notice how that in the beginning of the tribulation he is proclaiming himself as “God”. Now, he has revealed himself and blasphemes against God. “And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who *is* like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? 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. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” In Revelation 13:11-18, the Bible shows us that the second beast, the religious ruler, and the first beast, the



anti-Christ, are working together to establish worship of the devil, the dragon, through the anti-Christ. People are no longer “deceived” by his proclaiming himself as “God”. They now fully understand who he is, take the mark, and willingly accept him as their “savior”. That is why their doom is sealed for an eternity in Hell. “And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by *the means* of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number *is* Six hundred threescore *and* six.” This is the “abomination of desolation” that Daniel 9:27 and Matthew 24:15-21 talk about. “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.” “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.” This is when the Jews will then realize the anti-Christ is not their Messiah. They will turn to Jesus Christ and reject the anti-Christ because he broke God’s law of not worshipping a graven image. Then the anti-Christ will pursue after the Jews as well as continue to persecute and kill any that have accepted Christ as Savior.

At the end of the tribulation period on the earth, after the judgment seat of Christ and the marriage of the Lamb have taken place in Heaven, Jesus will return physically to the earth. He will then bring His saints with Him for the battle of Armageddon. Jude 13 and 14 says, “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.” Zechariah 14:3-5 says, “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. 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.” In Revelation 19:11-21 we see the details of this battle, “And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him *was* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes *were* as a flame of fire, and on his

head *were* many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he *was* clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies *which were* in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on *his* vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all *men, both* free and bond, both small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. 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. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which *sword* proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.” Revelation 16:16-20 calls this battle “Armageddon”. “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. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, *and* so great. 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. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.” Revelation 14:14-20 shows the devastation of this battle and the fierce hatred that the followers of the anti-Christ will have for Jesus Christ and His saints. “And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud *one* sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped. And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast *it* into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand *and* six hundred furlongs.”

Then after this battle, the judgment of nations will take place. Matthew 25:31-46 describes the events of this judgment. Those that will take their lives in their hands to help protect Israel and those that are saved during the tribulation period would only do so knowing that Jesus is God. Those that will not help, show themselves to have trusted only in the anti-Christ as their “savior” and will spend eternity in the Lake of Fire. “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was

an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed *thee?* or thirsty, and gave *thee* drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took *thee* in? or naked, and clothed *thee?* Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did *it* not to one of the least of these, ye did *it* not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.” Remember Zechariah 14 prophesied of the Messiah judging nations. Also, in Joel 3:2,9-16 the Bible says, “I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and *for* my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land. Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears: let the weak say, I *am* strong. Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O LORD. Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness *is* great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the LORD *is* near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The LORD also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the LORD *will be* the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel.”

After the judgment of nations, the lost in the tribulation that were still alive are cast into the Lake of Fire body, soul, and spirit, with the beast and the false prophet as previously mentioned in Revelation 19. The saved of the tribulation period that are still alive, will go into the millennium in their physical bodies. In Revelation 20:1-3 we see that Satan is then chained in the bottomless pit for the 1,000 year reign, or the millennial reign of Christ. “And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.” Ezekiel 39:12-29 prophesied of this taking place and the turning of Israel once again to God. “And seven months shall the house of Israel be burying of them, that they may cleanse the land. Yea, all the people of the land shall bury *them*; and it shall be to them a renown the day that I shall be glorified, saith the Lord GOD. And they shall sever out men of continual employment, passing through the land to bury with the passengers those that remain upon the face of the earth, to cleanse it: after the end of seven months shall they search. And the passengers *that* pass through the land, when *any* seeth a man’s bone, then shall he set up a sign by it, till the buriers have buried it in the valley of Hamongog. And also the name of the city *shall be* Hamonah. Thus shall they cleanse the land. And, thou son of man, thus saith the Lord GOD; Speak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, And, thou son of man, thus saith the Lord GOD; Speak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, Assemble yourselves, and come; gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat

flesh, and drink blood. Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, of rams, of lambs, and of goats, of bullocks, all of them fatlings of Bashan. And ye shall eat fat till ye be full, and drink blood till ye be drunken, of my sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you. Thus ye shall be filled at my table with horses and chariots, with mighty men, and with all men of war, saith the Lord GOD. And I will set my glory among the heathen, and all the heathen shall see my judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid upon them. So the house of Israel shall know that I *am* the LORD their God from that day and forward. And the heathen shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity: because they trespassed against me, therefore hid I my face from them, and gave them into the hand of their enemies: so fell they all by the sword. According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions have I done unto them, and hid my face from them. Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel, and will be jealous for my holy name; After that they have borne their shame, and all their trespasses whereby they have trespassed against me, when they dwelt safely in their land, and none made *them* afraid. When I have brought them again from the people, and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations; Then shall they know that I *am* the LORD their God, which caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen: but I have gathered them unto their own land, and have left none of them any more there. Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord GOD.” In the beginning of the Millennium, the gleanings of the first resurrection takes place. Those that were saved during the tribulation period and were martyred, are then resurrected. Revelation 20:4-5 says, “And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This *is* the first resurrection.” The “dead” these are referring to are the dead in trespasses and sins that will only experience that resurrection to shame and everlasting contempt as in Daniel 12:2, “And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame *and* everlasting contempt.”

Jeremiah 23:5-8 tells us of Jesus’ reign in Jerusalem upon David’s throne during this thousand year reign. “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this *is* his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that they shall no more say, The LORD liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, The LORD liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land.” The earth and the natural creation will receive its promise of having the curse of sin removed. Notice, in Romans 8:19-23 the earth doesn’t receive its promise of “resurrection” from the curse of sin until the last of the children of God receive the resurrection of their bodies in the gleanings of the first resurrection at the end of the tribulation period, the beginning of the millennial reign. Remember, a resurrection requires a death. “For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected *the same* in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only *they*, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the

adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body.” During this millennial reign, there will be no death. Isaiah 65:17-25 tells of the longevity of life. “For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever *in that* which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner *being* an hundred years old shall be accursed. And they shall build houses, and inhabit *them*; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree *are* the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they *are* the seed of the blessed of the LORD, and their offspring with them. And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust *shall be* the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the LORD.” Remember, the saved going into the millennial reign will have off-spring and physical reproduction will continue. The world’s population will soar for 1,000 years. Each person in that population will have seen Jesus with their own eyes, they will have seen those faithful, called, and chosen that will rule and reign with Him. However, each person will still have to accept Jesus Christ personally. They will have to believe with their heart in the truths that they will be seeing, hearing, and experiencing in order to be saved.

At the end of the millennium, there will still be those that will have refused to accept Jesus as their Savior. Revelation 20:7-15 shows us that even after all the experiences people will have seen during the thousand year reign, some, no, many will still reject Jesus Christ. Then the battle of Gog and Magog will take place. “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. 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. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet *are*, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” It is at this point that the second resurrection takes place. All the dead in trespasses and sins will be resurrected unto shame and everlasting contempt. They will be judged for their degree of punishment and then cast into the Lake of Fire. Luke 10:12-14 shows us there are degrees of punishment; specifically it will be worse for those that have had more opportunities to repent. “But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for that city. Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment, than for you.” At some point during this time frame, according to II Peter 3:7-10, God will destroy the “heavens and the earth, which are now”. “But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by

the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.” All of the saved from the millennium will be changed, translated, to their glorified bodies. The first resurrection is passed and there was no death during the thousand year reign.

Then God will create a new Heaven and a new Earth. Revelation 21:1-5 describes the eternal age. “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.” I Corinthians 15:23-28 says that after Christ reigns and puts death under His feet, He will deliver the kingdom up to God the Father. “But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then *cometh* the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy *that* shall be destroyed *is* death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under *him*, *it is* manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.” Revelation 20:14 says that “death and hell” were cast into the Lake of Fire. The Great White Throne Judgment at the end of the millennial reign is when death is destroyed.

The eternal age is when real peace and joy will be found. Death and sin are destroyed and can never harm God’s creation again. The faithful of God will receive their reward and all of their labors come to fruition. “And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.” Revelation 21:9 through chapter 22!



**Just For A Good Laugh!**



At the Baptist church, the squirrels had taken an interest in the baptistery. The deacons met and decided to put a waterslide on the baptistery and let the squirrels drown themselves. The squirrels liked the slide and, unfortunately, knew instinctively how to swim. So, twice as many squirrels showed up the following week.

Meanwhile, the Lutheran church decided that they were not in a position to harm any of God’s creatures. So, they humanely trapped their squirrels and set them free near the Baptist church.. Two weeks later, the squirrels were back when the Baptists took down the waterslide.

The Episcopalians tried a much more unique path by setting out pans of whiskey around their church in an effort to kill the squirrels with alcohol poisoning. They sadly learned how much damage a band of drunk squirrels can do.

The Catholic church came up with a more creative strategy. They baptized all the squirrels and made them members of the church. Now they only see them at Christmas and Easter!

There wasn’t much heard from the Jewish synagogue, however. They took the first squirrel, circumcised him, and they haven’t seen a squirrel since! 😊