

## The Rapture and The Second Coming

### Preface

The *Aleph-Tav* Principle in our work suggests God's Plan to rescue the World, i.e., from the disasters ensuing from sin and Adam's fatal error in Eden, is a process. Logically, the process is relatively short and occurs at the end of an era. That 'process' begins with The Rapture. It concludes with the Second Coming. Then God's reign on Earth commences. Contrary to popular opinion or speculation, neither the World nor the Universe go up in fire and smoke neither at The Rapture nor at The Second Coming. The completion of this relatively *short* Process ushers in the Messianic-Millennial Kingdom.

Admittedly, Jesus' words, as recorded in the Gospels, concerning His institution of The Kingdom of God on Earth via the Messianic Millennial Kingdom, do appear confusing for many readers. They indicate on one hand a **known** date. That is the "Second Coming". It occurs at the conclusion of a period of "Tribulation" that lasts exactly seven years. On the other hand, Jesus' recorded comments indicate a "**Day that only the Father knows**".

So this paper suggests that the Bible implies there will be at the *End of the Last Days* a comparatively short, brief **Process**, resembling a *pacE* of events in the like of a woman pregnant with a baby, that is initiated by the sudden occurrence of The Rapture. Fairly soon, in the wake of the Rapture, there will be a series of events that follow in relatively short order concluding with the Second Coming. By 'short' one refers to a period encompassing seven years of Tribulation plus a bit more time. We do not know how much time passes between The Rapture and Second Coming but it will indeed be short in comparison with six thousand years of *His Story* to date.

Jesus' comments seem to be heavily disguised or even coded. He clearly He deliberately veiled or disguised His comments in the Parables once it was clear Israel's leaders were rejecting Him. However, as far as the Parables were concerned He privately explained or *decoded* what they meant at non-public meetings with the Disciples who then passed that information on to us via the Gospel texts. What we are referring to here is other *disguised* or *veiled* information via prophecies, oracles, Psalms and especially 'word-plays' about which we discuss elsewhere but will do so in this paper where relevant.

Furthermore, in an insight only made possible by our level of science and technology, and in accordance with Daniel 12:4 & 9, we have been discovering the prophecies of the "End Times" are scattered throughout the Scriptures much like a document on a computer disk. In case the reader is unaware of this, a word processing or data processing 'program' simply has the codes and keys to know where to find all the different bits of a document or data, The people who designed the program wrote this 'software' to do this for you on your computer hardware (screen, monitor of your computer). With these programs and software, the programmers enable you to file and retrieve that information in

exactly the same form you last configured it. When you save and close a program, all the data is thrown all over the place. Only when you re-open the program does the data reappear in the way you last left it. The Bible, in respect to prophecies seems to have been written that way. Our Creator may even have 'Inspired' the Bible to appear that way especially for our 'Last Generation' (before the Messianic-Millennial Kingdom). Our 'program' to read that information is God's Holy Spirit guiding and leading us toward understanding as long as we are diligent and assiduous in our search methods and practice.

That is not surprising in itself because there would be no room for faith if the timing of God's Plan for the Physical and Soteriological Salvation of Mankind was outlined in a sort of technical manual and timetable. Each individual can experience or know God's Salvation at any time along one's own lifetime within the time-line of History (*His Story*). One cannot know the timing of the end of that *Time-line*. God has, however, indicated the **season** of that ending and that is the main topic of this paper. What is required of each one of us for Soteriological Salvation (refer below) is plain and simple. God's overall Plan for the World, however, and how it plays out 'line by line', so to speak, is not as clearly outlined. Following Adam's disrespect for God's tutelage, mankind has had to come to God in Faith. Nevertheless, various clues were given as Daniel 8:26, 12:4 & 9 clearly indicate. Only in The Last Days could prophecies about events leading up to them be fully or adequately comprehended or open to understanding and that in itself is a key to understanding them.

This paper will consist of two parts. Part One considers Luke 17:22-37 argued or contended here to be about the Rapture, not the Second Coming. Having argued that, we move to Part Two where we see how Matthew and Mark deal with the Rapture then how with Luke they all discuss the Second Coming in their reports of the "Olivet Discourse" given in Jerusalem. Jesus' discussion in Luke 17:22-37 was an earlier episode **before** He got to Jerusalem for the last time before His Crucifixion. As far as the author knows from his survey of the theologians, they have not considered Luke 17:22-37 is a separate discourse given a little bit earlier than the Olivet Discourse and in a different place somewhere outside but perhaps not far from Jerusalem. It is a Discourse on the rapture, not on the Second Coming. In that critical point, the author believes the following analysis will be significantly different from most others. However, this analysis critically depends on that assumption. The reader should keep that in mind. Unlike most other commentaries, this paper works from the perspective that the texts are almost certainly to be **literally** interpreted and they should not be seen as metaphors, analogies, typologies, allegories etc.

## Introduction

As the paper on the Seven Key Events indicates, one needs to keep apart, distinct or separate, two special days regarding the Return(**s**) of Jesus to *intervene* in this world's affairs. This comes from our Aleph-Tav Model for Bible Study being discussed in these pages. From that perspective, Jesus 'intervenes' in two rather different and starkly contrasting ways [the *Aleph* (א) and the *Tav* (ת)]

or the *Alpha* (A) and the *Omega* (Ω)]. These 'interventions', if one can describe them as such, occur within a wider set of conditions that are **common** to both. This implies the two interventions happen to occur sometime near each other. They occur during a relatively short and unique period of history of perhaps only a few decades in length. One picture of the uniqueness of this last relatively brief period is that Luke 17:26-7 ("*Days of Noah*") and 17:28-29 ("*Days of Lot*") occur at the same time although Matthew refers only to the 'Days of Noah' and then only in the context of the *Peri Di* discussion in Matthew 24:37-42 section which is about the Rapture. We also distinguish between the different natures of these 'Days'.

Or, one might suggest, putting things in a slightly different way, the **Two Events** ('Rapture' and 'Second' Coming) occur within an environment where on the one hand some highly unusual or even unique situations exist on Earth, but on the other hand normal activities still can and do happen and calm and orderly *civilization* continues from place to place.

In this paper, we will consider the probability that the "Day" which Matthew 24:36 and Mark 13:32 refer to as "The Day that only the Father in Heaven knows" is separate and distinct from the "Second Coming" (or 'Last or *Tav* or *Acheron* 'Coming' as is preferred in these papers). Unfortunately, most translations fail to put the Greek in these passages (Matthew and Mark) in clear *English* language. That's probably because they have failed to understand the point really being made by The Lord. This crucial distinction regarding the '**Day**' that only the '**Father**' knows has been pioneered by Dr Arnold Fruchtenbaum in recent times. Thus, the point is usually overlooked by most other commentators. The 'Second (or Last) Coming' is actually the Day when Israel is rescued from Antichrist-666 on the very last day of the Seven-Year Tribulation (Daniel 12:11-12).

However, or in contrast, that '**Day**' which only "God the **Father** knows", can or will come at any time. That '**Day**', would seem, according to the text of Luke 17:22, to be one His Disciples (then) "**would not see**". The text also describes this other '**Day**' as Just or Only '**ONE**' of the days of the Son of Man (NASB)". Oddly, the text also says of this '**Day**' as one the Disciples "will long (ASV 1901, 'desire') to see". But of course they won't. What on Earth does this really mean? As if that were not enough, commentators are further confused by the use of three metaphors used both in this Rapture Text of Luke 17:22ff and in the Olivet Discourses In Jerusalem about the Second Coming. That is indeed confusing.

In this paper, one will show, or argue, two things to help sort out the confusion. Firstly, one argues those metaphors are used to indicate two **different** events (Rapture and Second Coming) occur against the **same** background or unique events. Secondly, we look at the ways metaphors and word-plays are applied in these New Testament passages in the same special way they are used in other parts of the Old *Hebrew* Testament. Thus 'One' of those '**Days of the Son of Man**' must be the event commonly known as "The Rapture". Although the actual term 'rapture' nowhere appears in the Bible. Another "Day of the Son of Man" must be the Second Coming. Perhaps there are more!

Thus, it is important to carefully and closely analyse exactly what the particular day in Luke 17:22 actually refers or applies to. Jesus also says there will be a 'yearning' or 'longing to see **One** of the Days of the Son of Man'. Most commentators, the author included for a longtime, fail to look closely at that important rider or qualification, "and (or but) **you** will not see it". With that very odd and enigmatic introduction, the following verses in Luke 17:22, appears to describe the same event described by the special day of the *Peri Di* situation in Matthew 24:36ff and Mark 13:32ff. A crucial point about the "Second Coming" is that everyone who is alive will see it. In stark contrast, in Luke 17:22, Jesus' Disciples will **not see it** but presumably some people either other than them or more likely after they die **will see it!** Furthermore, if Dr Fruchtenbaum and other Pre-Millennialists are correct, we also know that Jesus returns with a crowd of saints that includes eleven of Jesus' pre-crucifixion disciples. Jesus' disciples, (Judas excluded) **will see** the Second Coming. So what is the day they will **not see?**

The last day of the Seven-Year Tribulation is a known day, if one counts the days from the start of the Tribulation or, more specifically, from its 'Mid-Point' (Daniel 12:11-12, Revelation 11:2 or 42 months, 11:3, 12:6 and 12:14) when Antichrist reneges on his deal (*covenant*) with Israel. The Tribulation is initiated when Antichrist signs the Seven-Year Covenant of Daniel 9:27. That is a subtle but crucial distinction almost always overlooked when commentators discuss the "Imminency of the Rapture". The Rapture was and is always "imminent". It has no particular date known to anyone other than God Himself and is something that believers must be *on their toes for* because it comes unexpectedly for absolutely everyone. The Tribulation's beginning is also unexpected but only from the point of view of the godless people who are supporting Antichrist's programme. Any Bible student at that time watching that event and the peace that seems to briefly break out then will be expecting *all hell* to break loose on Earth in the wake of the Antichrist covenant with Israel. Of course it is highly likely that believing saints would have been raptured out by then. If, as we are prepared to accept, the Rapture could take place soon after that covenant-signing, then we will certainly, by then, be well aware of the way events are going to occur. To that group the troubles set-off by that godless covenant will be expected and anticipated. That cannot be the situation with the Rapture. On the other hand, the saints that will in the final analysis experience The Rapture will at least be able to anticipate it. As we will explain below in connection with the "Feast of Trumpets", the Rapture's "imminence" must take place within the 'unique' era referred to here.

So, in this paper the view is taken, or made, rightly or wrongly, that the verses in Luke 17:22-37, and an earlier verse (Luke 12:40) are specifically and only about The Rapture. Luke 12:40 comes within the context of quite a chunk of Scripture (Luke 12:22-53) about followers, believers or disciples of Christ living each day for the day (Luke 12:22-3, 34) and in effect being *at-the-ready* for The Rapture Day. Jesus concludes that discourse by pointing out that the life the Christian leads will be a cause of friction and division even within families quite apart from our extra-*familiar* relations. These divisions come at the end of this discourse

with His Disciples suggesting that the intra-familial tensions will be a sign of the End of the Church on pre-Millennial Earth Age which comes at The Rapture.

Having concluded His point about the rich man who unexpectedly died prematurely in Luke 12:21, Jesus told the Disciples they are not to rely on building up earthly or material treasures. That reminds us blessings for the Church are mainly **spiritual**. Whereas under the Mosaic Covenant **material** blessings were an integral part of the '*Deal* or Covenant.' God witnessed to the nations through material blessings to Israel especially in connection with uniquely beneficial agricultural, environmental and commercial conditions. Spiritual and God-fearing Gentiles would have understood the nature of Spiritual Blessing Israel received under the Mosaic System. However, unbelievers would only appreciate the material blessings through which God hoped to convince them of His Grace, Mercy and loving kindness.

We will also endeavour to show that many scriptures together in context indicate "The Rapture"; although a separate and distinctly different event from the Second Coming; is, nevertheless, **connected** with, or **related** to, the Second or Last Coming. Although the Tribulation will be a very unusual time, events leading to it, including The Rapture itself as perhaps an early stage of the Process, all occur within the same general surrounding 'environment' and probably within one generation. It is impossible to precisely define 'environment' or 'generation' but Jesus Himself certainly used the latter term. Likewise, the timing of this chapter seventeen passage in Luke's *sequential* or *chronological* account shows there must be a clear and vital distinction between "The Rapture" and "The Second Coming". Luke documents the latter in his twenty-first chapter. Thus, they can hardly be the same event. There must be a distinct and significant period between them. Perhaps a decade separates them. It certainly now seems clear from this perspective from Luke 17 that Jesus, at His "Olivet Discourse" just before His Crucifixion, **had already talked about the Rapture** to His Disciples. Furthermore, in Luke 17, Jesus had referred to The Rapture as a "Time of Longing for the **One** of the Days of the Son of Man" (Luke 17:22). Thus, if one accepts or strictly upholds the good doctor's Gospel account (Luke 1:3, 'Treatise', KJV) that the events he wrote about appear in sequential "order" (KJV) and that Luke's objectives regarding 'chronology' and 'sequence' were completely or at least substantially achieved, one must conclude the following:

The 'Rapture' Discussion (Luke 17:22-37) took place **before** Jesus met Blind Bartimaeus between Old- and New-Jericho **before** Jesus got to Jerusalem for His Crucifixion. Other references to The Rapture e.g., Luke 12:40, may have been given on even earlier occasions **after** the Rejection in Matthew 12:24 and Luke 11:15. Jesus' discourses on The Second Coming were only at *Olivet*. Jesus spoke about The Rapture both at Olivet and beforehand.

There could be two scenarios here. Firstly, Matthew and Mark, using the Greek *Peri Di* conjunction, chose to **append** that particular 'Luke 17:22-37' discussion on The Rapture to their more thematically oriented accounts. Therefore they

appended Jesus' teaching in Luke's 17-22-37 Rapture Account onto the so-called Olivet Discourse on the eve of the Crucifixion. Secondly, it is equally possible that in the later "Olivet Discourse" Jesus delivered a shorter summary of what He had earlier said about The Rapture on His last journey to Jerusalem before the crucifixion.

The Olivet Discourse itself primarily (in both senses of firstly and principally) answered three questions the disciples asked following Jesus' shock denunciation of the grandeur of Herod's Temple. Having answered those three questions, also recorded by the Gospel writers, Jesus then or next **re-iterated** (perhaps with slightly different choice of words or phrases) what He already had said about 'The Rapture'. It is described as "**One of the Days of the Son of Man**" (Luke 17:22) rather than 'Rapture' which is a modern collective term for this event. Jesus referred to 'Days of Longing for the Son of Man' as recorded in Luke 17:22-37. In that *second* scenario concerning the way in which these texts are delivered to our day, both the 'Second Coming' and 'The Rapture' were described by Jesus at Olivet except that it was at least the second occasion Jesus had given a 'Rapture Discourse'. Having already recorded the earlier Rapture Discourse in Luke 17:22-37, Luke chose not to say anything more of it in his record of the Olivet Discourse even if Jesus had repeated the Rapture details, or at least some of them, at Olivet. On balance, we must assume Jesus almost certainly did say something again about The Rapture judging by Matthew's and Mark's accounts. It's possible Jesus said nothing about The Rapture at Olivet. It was Matthew's and Mark's decision to record the two accounts in the quite legitimate thematic, though possibly confusing, way that they did

Either of those two scenarios might therefore explain why Jesus words at Luke 17:22-37 slightly differed from His words in Matthew 24:36-44 and Mark 13:32-37 after their *Peri di* conjunctions. Possibly, none of the three Gospel authors would have been there on the spot at any of these discourses. For example, Matthew may have been in a second group of 'The Twelve' as they all passed out from the Temple Compound and moved towards the Mount of Olives. Certainly, Luke and probably Mark (the latter could have been present) must have received second-hand reports. Hence another reason for the slight differences in language and style between all three Gospel writers' accounts of Jesus' Words about The Rapture. That point only serves to **authenticate** the reality, historicity (or **His-Stor-icity**) and accuracy of these accounts as we receive them today. That means the reader would be well advised to sincerely and seriously heed and study the words of these passages!

Anyway, in the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, either one or both of these 'Separate-Event', 'End-Time', 'Rapture-Second-Coming' discussions evidently occurred in Jesus' last week in Jerusalem. Jesus delivered these end-time discourses as 'The Twelve', and others in attendance perhaps, were leaving the Temple Compound one evening. They were heading up the slopes of the Mount of Olives. Luke places his version of the Olivet Discourse in a separate place to the statements about The Rapture later in his Gospel (Luke 21:5-36) because he

realised from his interviews that there had been an interval, though perhaps of only a few days, between both discourses. That does not negate the possibility that Jesus re-iterated, or repeated, the Rapture discussion immediately following the Second Coming discussion at Olivet.

Whatever the situation, Luke obviously saw little point **repeating** what he thought had first been adequately explained in some detail days or weeks before the Olivet incident. Furthermore Luke's methodology necessitated him to separate the two different discourses on two different end-times events and to sequentially and chronologically 'record' them as and when they originally took place. It is in fact that very methodology that really requires us to carefully note that the two discourses were separate and distinct. So Luke did not repeat the 'Rapture' discussion even if it had been re-iterated at the Olivet Discourse in his 21<sup>st</sup> chapter. The problem is that modern commentators therefore assume that Luke 12:22-37 is simply a jumbled re-iteration of Matthew 24:1-42 and Mark 13:1-37.

However, if one asks, "was there just 'The **One** Earlier Discussion' of 'The Rapture'", the answer might be "yes" given Luke's writing policy in contradistinction to Matthew's and Mark's theme-based policy. The other two Gospel authors consequently **had** to adopt the Greek conjunction *Peri di* to introduce Jesus' earlier Rapture Discourse and thematically tie it in with the Second Coming Discourse. Modern commentators fail to recognise such a possibility in their commentaries. Apostle Paul often used *Peri di* in his epistles when changing the subject of discussion or sub-theme. By running the Rapture Discourse on the heels of the Olivet Second Coming Discourse, Matthew and Mark used the Greek *Peri di* conjunction to make it explicitly clear the 'Day the Father alone knows', i.e., The Rapture, will be a **very different day** from the actual Day of the Second Coming. Matthew's and Mark's use of the *Peri di* conjunction, having told us of the Son of Man's Coming in clouds of "Heaven" and "Glory" (presumably one of the several 'Days of the Son of Man') requires us to realise this 'Rapture' logically **precedes** the Second (or 'Last') Coming in Matthew 24:30 and Mark 13:26.

### **Physical versus Spiritual Salvation**

Also, to help readers clear their minds from some of the confusion that abounds, one needs to clearly delineate and distinguish between **physical** and **spiritual** salvation:

- In particular of the surviving nation of currently-apostate Israel. We exclude here 'Jesus-Believing-Jews' who are also in the Church of Christ. They are the believing or 'Messianic' Jews or "the *Notzrim*" as unsaved modern Israeli Jews describe them. Logically, if God still abides by His Unconditional Covenants, including the New Covenant which is the basis for the Church's Communion Service, Israel must be physically preserved even if in an unbelieving state (Ezekiel 37:8, "no breath in them") so that Abrahaham can receive the remaining outstanding Promises God made to him. Therefore, by necessity, Israel must eventually be soteriologically

saved **as well**. This is also in order to fulfill prophecies for Israel in the Millennium or 'Messianic' Kingdom of God. Those Prophecies include hitherto clearly and obviously **un-fulfilled** promises made under the Covenant(s) God has with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, as well as the Covenant God has with David. Israel is being saved or preserved physically for a future soteriological salvation.

- There is also the yet-to-come **physical-only** salvation from "The Wrath to Come (I Thessalonians 1:10, Revelation 3:10) of the **already soteriologically-saved** Church of Christ (including its Jewish '*Notzrim*') at the end of its sojourn on the pre-Tribulation then pre-Millennial Earth; **and**,
- The Rapture completes the current aspect of God's Kingdom Programme. That is the Church of Christ stage of the The Mystery Kingdom or the Church Age between Pentecost-Shavuot and The Rapture. This (current) stage of God's overall or over-arching Kingdom Programme is described in the parables of Matthew 13:3-51, Mark 4:2-34 and Luke 8:4-18. The Church Age is itself a subset of the broader facet under the umbrella of the Full Kingdom of God Programme known as the **Spiritual** Kingdom of God which begins with Adam and continues right through to the end of the Millennium. After The Rapture, Tribulation, Armageddon and The Second Coming the last aspect of God's Kingdom Programme on this Earth is introduced with the full manifestation of the **Physical** Kingdom of God in the Millennium ('Thousand Years') as Revelation 20:2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 identified. The **Spiritual** Kingdom continues right through the Millennium with all the **Physical** Blessings it will deliver to mankind.

**In general, the Rapture and Second Coming have specific and sometimes differing objectives regarding those Spiritual, Physical and Soteriological issues.**

Edit to 15/9/17

Furthermore, in connection with these discussions, there must also be space (*and time*) for the Marriage of the Lamb (Jesus) to *at-the-Cross*-saved Church of *the Christ*. In attendance will be the wedding guests and "friends of the Bridegroom" being other saints from the previous two eras (Adam to Abraham then Abraham to *the Christ*). Those two eras; sometimes labelled, and somewhat misleadingly-labelled, 'Conscience' (Adam to Abraham) and 'Law' (Abraham-Moses to Christ); were two test-periods for post-Fall Mankind in the Plan of God that is His "Good, Acceptable and Perfect Will" (Romans 12:2).

This type of outline is how the 'Dispensations' are specifically delineated in these papers. One could, as some do, define a 'Dispensation' as an 'Economy' though perhaps it is better to use a term we could borrow from Pharmacies who

"dispense" medicines for the patients' care. Thus, one might say, God used three *dispense* periods to help mankind get through the awful side-effects of the Fall. Supposedly in this 'Third' or 'Church' Age (*Dispensation*) we are in the 'Era of 'Grace'. But these terms are a misnomer. Law, Grace and Conscience have to a greater or lesser extent (Law) been present throughout the Ages or Eras whether one counts three of them or more as some other 'Dispensationalists' do. "Conscience" and "Grace" were and are no more nor less active in all three eras. So one cannot differentiate an 'Era' or 'Dispensation' on the basis of Grace or Conscience or 'Law'. In these papers, we differentiate the Dispensations on the basis of Three Men: The First *Adam* (Adam), Abraham then The Last *Adam* (Jesus of Nazareth, Son of Man, Son of David, Son of God). Apart from adding the possibility that 2000 years were allotted to each 'Dispensation' before the Introduction of the Seventh Day or Last Millennium the Messianic One, we leave further discussion on the Dispensations to other papers.

### **Some 'Salvation' (Soteriological) Issues**

From a Human perspective, all saints of all **Time** are saved soteriologically 'At-the-Cross' and only there. So those of the pre-Christ eras were saved *ex-post*, so to speak, whereas people who repented and became saints in the two thousand years since the Cross, plus those who will repent in the future up to the end of the Messianic or Millennial Kingdom, were saved *ex-ante* by comparison. That is to say, 'The Cross' "had already occurred before saints of the last two millennia and *beyond* came (*will come*) into this world and in due course had or have repented, or will repent, and become regenerated". From God's perspective, all this was fore-ordained and/or fore-known anyway.

'Old Testament Saints' came into the world, accepted God's revelation about the Seed of the Woman to come' (Genesis 3:15). They believed in no other god but the One True God, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, i.e., Jehovah of Whom the Bible speaks. They had to obey the command given to Adam, Eve, Cain, Abel, to offer animal sacrifices for the sin they knowingly committed. Of course that requirement ended after Jesus of Nazareth made the Supreme One-Off and Once-For-All payment for the redemption of man which He paid on the Cross for one-and-all. Animal sacrifices were also a form of acknowledgement or acceptance of the enormity of the cost to God to administer Perfect but Saving Justice to get Man out of his post-Adamic-Fall Predicament. Church folk do a similar thing at "The Communion" by prayerfully considering the cost, suffering and rejection Jesus had to bear, whenever one attends such a service.

What Jesus did on the Cross, prepared on behalf of Jew and Gentile by the Roman Government at the time, was to pay or meet The Redemption Price and Standard of Righteousness only God Himself could pay and meet as the Son Graciously, Mercifully and Lovingly elected to do. There is no direct evidence anyone between *circa* 4004 BC and AD 30 could possibly foretell and believe what Jesus of Nazareth, "**The Prophet**" that Moses spoke so especially of, was going to do for us on a Roman 'Cross' of two pieces of sawn lumber representing

a 'Tree'. Nor is there any evidence, that **prior** to The Cross, anyone could or would know how God might achieve these ends, as part of His overall Plan to declare His Glory through that particular route of saving (soteriologically) mankind from his folly. Eventually, God will physically save Mankind too (Rapture, Resurrection etc).

On that point of what men may or may not have understood before The Cross, there was the enigmatic reference to Satan 'bruising the heel' of the One that would save man (Genesis 3:15).

There is one passage in Genesis which indicates that one could perhaps have understood, foretold or presaged what Jesus would have to do. However that passage was an event about two thousand years **before** the Cross. In that passage, according to the words of Abraham, God "**Himself**" would or could (somehow) **Be** the "lamb for a burnt offering" (Genesis 22:8). God would do this through **His Only begotten** Son ("My Son"). That understanding could possibly be inferred from the discussion, read in its Hebrew original, between Abraham and Isaac at the altar at Mt Moriah Genesis 22:2, 7-8. However, the Hebrew in this passage is rather too enigmatic to explain things this way except from an *ex post* perspective. Again, it is one of those rather enigmatic passages like Exodus 4:8 or, for that reason, Luke 17:22 ("... and you will **not** see it").

Although not necessarily wrong or dangerous to do, indeed at times one must do so, we are now entering the realm of Conjecture. However, Genesis 22:2, 7-8, for example, is one of those verses we suspect exists in the text as a vestige or archive of something that was quite widely understood a long time ago. Christendom, as it does for the most part with all the Bible these days sees the passage in purely typological terms. Ultimately, really, or practically speaking, it is virtually impossible to see how a pre-Cross Saint could know the detail of the Death, Burial and Resurrection after "Three Days and Nights", as per "The Sign of Jonah" (*circa* 700 BC) as **we** obviously know. However, it is equally impossible for any saint after the Cross, in order to receive Salvation and be Regenerated, to **fail to acknowledge this** as I Corinthians 15: 3-5 commands.

If a woman was to one day conceive a boy child, who would be the world's saviour, but without the seed of a man then that child would have to be a son conceived by God Himself. One might conclude that if an animal had to die to cover the sins of people then the or a son of God would have to be the ultimate sacrifice. But there is no real evidence that people before the Cross did conceive such soteriological solutions. So what is the difference between an Old Testament and a New Testament believer?

### **The Oft-Neglected Content of Saving Faith**

Since 'The Cross', the specific **content** of a saved person's faith has changed. It has since had to accommodate those new facts as explained in I Corinthians 15:3-6. But nothing else in relation to Soteriological Salvation (in contrast to any physical salvation that is offered) has been or will be altered between Adam's fall

(4000 BC) and the yet-future salvation of saints right up to the very end of "The Millennium". Future saints are yet to be saved in the post-Rapture and Tribulational era, as well as future saints saved in the Millennium (AD 2000+ to 3000+). All of them, like us now, must likewise acknowledge the Sin of Adam, its imputation to and inheritance in each and every descendant thereof, the Historicity of the Cross and Resurrection etc. Only pre-Cross Saints were not required to include the historicity of the Cross in their statements of belief though they presumably believed in Resurrection of the dead. King David, at the depth of his sorrow at the loss of Bathsheba's first baby with him, believed in Resurrection. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob must surely have believed they would see and meet all their descendants **after** they went to their graves. And Jesus said of the Three Patriarchs of Israel that "God is the God of the Living not of the Dead" ('death' being ancient Egypt's national religion).

Confusion about Salvation issues like those just discussed above, or failure to properly delineate or 'rightly divide the Scriptures', arises for many reasons. But one new reason, being uncovered here, has been the failure to properly identify the key event-pairs and many other event-pairs that we now believe are discernible in the Biblical Text. At least 60 or so have so far been described in these studies. So there is much confusion, especially between The Rapture and The Second Coming. There is a tendency to combine them into being the same event or two parts of the same event. However, as is suggested by Jesus' reference to a 'longing' or 'yearning' (Luke 17:22), there are two distinctly different rationales behind each event. Some of this confusion hopefully is untangled below.

## **Part One**

### **Explaining The Rapture and Second Coming - Begin With Luke**

The importance of a literal reading, in context, of the Scriptures is a cornerstone of the *Aleph-Tav* 3-D Bible Study. Luke 1:3 states the writer was listing events in Jesus' Ministry in "Consecutive Order" (NASB). Luke wrote his Gospel by interviewing a lot of witnesses a decade or two **after** Jesus' Ministry. He had to mainly rely on those witnesses' sense of sequence and chronology to achieve his own 'Sequence' and, or, 'Chronology' of events. There seems little doubt he was able to fulfill that objective for the earlier and latter parts of Jesus' Life and Ministry, the *Aleph* and *Tav* or *Rishon* and *Acheron* aspects as we would say in these pages. Elsewhere, in these papers, it is suggested that for some incidents in the middle of Luke's Gospel, the Good Doctor may have not been able to precisely pinpoint or sequence **all** the events or places Jesus visited as he attempted to narrate an exact chronological order. Not that it matters much and it does not negate the general principle that Luke managed to adhere to an almost exact chronological order. It goes without saying, therefore, as per our Pithom-Memphis Rule, by recording one conversation **outside** Jerusalem on the subject of the 'End Times' and another **inside** Jerusalem later on apparently about the same or similar subject, Luke was recording two different events not the same event twice within four chapters (17 and 21). Nevertheless both events

could still be in the same set of circumstances. [For clarification, one discovered that "Pithom and Raamses" were two capital cities on the same site in two different eras, not two capitals in two different places in Egypt in the same era, refer *Memphis, Merneptah and Ramesses and the Winged Disk of Judah*].

However, as we note in the appendix to this paper (*Rapture & Second Coming Per Fruchtenbaum and Edersheim*), Professor Edersheim overlooks the sequence Luke has in placing the eschatological discourse of Luke 17:22-37 separate to his later 'End Times' discourse in chapter 21. And the Professor overlooks the divergence in subject, if one reads the scriptures quite literally. The Pharisee's question in Luke 17:20 is about the 'coming of the kingdom'. In contrast, Jesus' aside to His Disciples is about a 'Day of Longing' for 'The Son of Man'. Reading between the lines, the Pharisees' question is addressed to "The Messiah of Israel, The Son of David, *The Nazar*. Jesus' aside concerned 'The Son of Man'. He is both, of course, but the difference in nomenclature here may have been very deliberate and pointed. Jesus expects later readers (or a particular later generation of disciples) to see the point. He is definitely changing the subject in Luke 17:22 from the subject raised in Luke 17:20! Surprisingly, Edersheim did not stop to think there could be a distinct and vitally important difference between the two in subject matter or content. Luke 17:20-21 is about the coming of the Kingdom of God. Luke 17:22ff is about "One of the Days of the Son of Man", or just "one" of them! Furthermore, in Luke 17:22 He was talking about the "Longing" for one of those days there being others one assumes or presumes. Then, astonishingly, Jesus says, "And you **will not** see it" but by implication they **will** see the other days of the Son of Man!

The *null hypothesis* to this is that there is, indeed, no difference there in subject matter. But that still leaves open the question, why did Luke divide, split or separate an important discourse on eschatological matters into two different sections in his Gospel and have the discourses being delivered in two different geographical locations? Geography and sequence were important elements in Edersheim's overall analysis of Luke's writings in his Gospel. Yet here in Luke 17 Edersheim, and Fruchtenbaum following him in his footsteps, relegated these aspects of time and place and appeared to gloss over them whereas, almost universally, Edersheim and Fruchtenbaum are normally very professional and systematic in their approach. Theology Professor Paul Morris of Victoria University of Wellington once said to me that "Edersheim was lightweight" but he was coming from yet another perspective.

### **Context, Luke 11:1-12:41**

In Luke 11:2-4, The Lord cited a basic prayer for us all to follow. Usually, it is mis-named "The Lord's Prayer" which is probably what he prayed at Gethsemane (John 17) where one version (NASB) describes that prayer as "His High Priestly Prayer". Not that these *editorial* headings count for anything. Anyway, following the prayer in Luke 11:2-4, there are some words of instruction for the *Twelve* Disciples. In Luke 11:9-10, there is an injunction to "seek and you will find: knock, and it will be opened to you". The work behind the writing of this

paper would seem to confirm the veracity of that!

However, in Luke 11:14 comes the massive break in Jesus' Ministry, something that Dr Arnold Fruchtenbaum, in his writing, majors on. No one had made that very important and crucial point in British or New Zealand churches in the author's experience until Fruchtenbaum in 1989. New Zealand churches still do not. They do not learn. This is one of only two or three stages in His Ministry where Jesus *lets it all go*, so to speak. The Pharisees accused Him; but worse for Jesus, in effect also accused God's Holy Spirit; of complicity with the Devil in performing a deception on the people observing the event. This was the healing of a demonised man who could neither hear nor speak. Such a person was one the Pharisees had years earlier said "only Messiah could heal" because only Messiah could dig deeply enough into the man's soul other than through conversation. Or only a Messiah could force a demon to leave such an audibly and orally handicapped man. So when the Pharisees rejected the genuine nature of the miracle, Jesus proceeded to deliver a series of "woes" (Luke 11:37-55). He levelled these 'woes' on two segments of the Jewish Leadership (Pharisees and Lawyers). In Luke 11:29-32, Jesus cited the Men of Ninevah and the Queen of the South (Sheba-Hatshepsut of whom we have written much). They had received just One Sign from God on which to appropriately act (*repent*). They all believed. Yet Israel's leadership had Three Messianic Miracles, the Raising of Lazarus and many other lesser signs, if one can ascribe 'lesser' to them, in order to receive confirmation of Jesus' status and role. Yet they refused to repent. Instead, as is still the official reason for Israel's rejection of Jesus, they charged Jesus with sorcery. That was one of the bases on which they tried to have Jesus executed but had to get the Romans to do that under Imperial Law.

It is from this time that Jesus began teaching in parables. As Fruchtenbaum taught us, Jesus did that in order to confuse an already rejectionist public and leadership. Again, the churches do not understand that reasoning when they come to explain or teach the parables usually leaving their congregations little the wiser about what was really going on back then. However, Jesus was always careful to explain the parables in private to the genuine believers. And today, the seeking believer receives explanations in private. The Disciples wrote down the explanations and they are delivered to us via the Gospels.

So after the *Great Rejection* and Jesus equally great denunciation of the leaders, Luke 12:53 notes the Pharisees and Scribes "began to be very hostile and question Jesus closely". But that was only because they were stung by their own stupidity. In their ensuing questions, as in Luke 17:20 Israel's woe-stung leaders were anyway just trying to convince themselves they were correct. Therefore, on various occasions they asked ridiculous semi-theoretical questions. Or they posed what **they** thought were difficult ramifications or situations arising out of Jesus various Statements or Prophecies.

In the wake of that stunning rejection, Luke 12:1 begins by noting there are massive crowds around so Jesus begins extricating the disciples away from the

melee to discuss some matters privately. Thus a clear pattern of private and revealing instruction issued to disciples begins. Among these private instructions or words of advice, Jesus began talking in Luke 12:35 about **being in readiness**. It is in that context that Jesus makes probably His first point about The Rapture in Luke 12:40. In Luke 12:41, it is the point at which Peter asks whether these words are addressed to them or to, in effect, some other disciples, other people or believers or even to people of another 'later' generation (implied from this context). As one noted in *The Rapture (Passages Concerning it and the Church)*, "They certainly could not foresee the necessity for a Rapture under these circumstances. *Ex Post*, we can see that it now makes tremendous sense indeed". This problem in the Gospels, partly one of translation too, must be borne in mind whenever there is discussion about "The Rapture" in them or in the Epistles (I Corinthians 15:52, I Thessalonians 4:13-18 and probably Titus 2:13). The translation factor comes in because between the original Hebrew in the mind of the gospel or epistle author and the Aramaic, Greek or Latin translations subsequently used, subtle distinctions go missing. Although the audience at the time would have been in the dark about the important distinction between Second Coming; about which before the Cross they would have no concept of whatsoever; modern translators without a proper perspective on the plan of God the Gospels are trying to present would at best fudge the meaning or at worst give quite a false interpretation. Nevertheless, a believer; like a bee in a hive, or as long as he or she is a bee in the true hive and belongs to that hive; can work out God's Plan. That is especially true in the *Last Days*. Believers before 1948 would realise they were not in the Last of the Last Days because Israel had not yet returned to the Holy land. They would realise they were only in the Last Days in the context of Hebrews 1:1. Discovering or uncovering God's Plan comes by diligently exercising faith, prayer and Bible study. Sadly, too many people are trying to discover God's Plan for their Lives in the Bible. Instead, they should be studying God's Plan, including the Soteriological aspect of that overall Plan, for Humanity in the wake of the Fall of Man

Thus having first introduced the subject of The Rapture in Luke 12:40, which we read in the immediate context of Luke 11:1 to 12:40-41, in response to Peter's question in Luke 12:41 we see the Lord gives an obtuse response. His parable about good and wise servants ("faithful and sensible stewards", NASB) working while the Master is away is as close as He is prepared to come in answering Peter's question. Although, Jesus gave Peter a clue sometime later via what the Apostle wrote in II Peter 3:8 ("A day is a thousand years ...etc.,"). In retrospect, with the knowledge we now have on the matter, it seems Peter actually asked in Luke 12:41 if Jesus was talking to people of another era. After all in Luke 17:22 Jesus specifically said they would **'not'** see "One of the Days of the Son of Man". It was not a matter of the parable of at-the-ready- servants being "addressed to us or to everyone else as well" for that would not really make any sense even then.

This sort of exchange shows just how delicately and enigmatically the Lord has to tip-toe around the questions now posed, and to some extent even questions posed by the still sometime logically-thinking leaders. The Pharisees' question in

Like 17:20 was not ridiculous. It was their sceptical attitude that annoyed Jesus. Here too with Peter, the questions are quite legitimate but they cannot be directly answered because the world still has to exercise faith until the Plan is complete.

Quite literally, everyone has or had to be kept guessing. So Jesus avoided telling Peter whether the readiness should, or should not, apply to his generation. The most important reason Jesus had to be obtuse is that He could not in any way pre-empt the Father's decision when to send the Son to fetch His Bride. Jesus' point is that some believers and disciples, at one time or another, would be alive at the time of the '*fetching*'. That point could be made known without prejudicing or pre-empting God's Decision. Jesus needed to make sure that message got through especially to that *much later* generation that would experience The Rapture, without tipping everyone off regarding the **timing** of The Rapture. One **possible** outcome would be that Jesus' Twelve Disciples could be dead by the time of The Rapture whereas some others listening, especially young ones, may still be alive then. As it happened, no one in either the First nor Second Centuries of this Age saw The Rapture. In fact it became virtually an *academic* matter for twenty centuries. But Jesus could not let any of that be **known**. Believers may infer such things, believe what they infer to be true and act on that faith for the rest of their lives for which they will be well and truly rewarded.

Thus, five chapters and an unknown period of time later, The Pharisees come back at Jesus with one of their smarmy theoretical questions in Luke 17:20-21. Jesus, as noted, quickly dismisses them with the briefest of answers which Christendom has since mis-used to describe the Kingdom of God. Dismissing or turning away from the Pharisees, Jesus proceeded in Luke 17:22-37 to discuss what in this paper must be regarded as the First and main Rapture Discourse, certainly as recorded in the Gospels even if Jesus had been talking about The Rapture in Luke 12:40. It seems that only after the rejection of the Third Messianic Miracle (healing the deaf and dumb demoniac) did Jesus begin obliquely talking about The Rapture.

### **Luke 17:20-37**

Therefore, one suggests here, we begin the detailed discussion on the important distinction between The Rapture and The 'Second' Coming, Part One of our paper, with Luke 17:20-37. Within these seventeen verses the good doctor reports **two different** conversations Jesus had with **two different groups** in the **same place** one immediately following the other at **about the same time**. Firstly, a very brief aside with the Pharisees about the "Coming of the Kingdom of God" (17:20-21). Then secondly, a significantly longer and private discourse with the disciples about 'their' "longing" or intense desire; probably because of much persecution and world-wide scepticism towards God; for the 'Coming of the Son of Man'. Even at this point, one can see with a careful reading from a literalist approach, though admittedly *ex-post*, that the advent of the Kingdom of God is a different concept to Christian disciples' longing to be with Christ or a longing for Christians and Him to be back in each other's Physical Presence, and, by

implication, away from the persecuting vultures around us! Even though many commentators assume the underlined clauses effectively amount to the **same event**, they are not necessarily the same! Again, they are not the same even though both have comforting aspects for us, they both have objectives in common and they both occur within the same general overall *bad* environment.

Put simply, Christ returning to rescue a persecuted Church and the introduction of the Full Physical Kingdom of God need not necessarily be the same thing. That's in spite of Christendom's longstanding narrow assumption they are the same. Furthermore, if they are different, one situation almost certainly must precede the other. The Rapture, it is implied from I Thessalonians 1:10 and Revelation 3:10, saves living believers from the Tribulation Wrath that is only ended by the Second Coming. The two are separated by about seven years or very nearly that. We are going to have to compare or contrast the evidence for both ideas.

To many people, and in much *Christendomite* thinking, it is dogmatically assumed there is no distinction between Rapture and Second Coming as posed in the previous paragraph and the same event is in view. This interpretation is adopted, mostly, one suspects, for comforting reasons! But comfort should not blind us to reality. Adopting a comfort-seeking stance is understandable. But life, as we regularly note in the wake of 'Adam's Fall', is not always 'comfortable'! The Church and the earlier saints, by then resurrected, will be physically with Christ, in Heaven, at 'The Marriage of the Lamb', for a short period after the Rapture, during the Tribulation down on Earth and before the Introduction of the Millennial Messianic Kingdom. Amongst the Church saints will be that special group of living believers raptured away from Earth, and having received 'in the air' our resurrected bodies (I Corinthians 15:51).

But all that comes **prior** to the actual **advent** of the full, physical and literal Kingdom of God on Earth with Jesus ruling the world from Jerusalem. [Anyone who thinks the churches with their poncey bishops and cardinals are going to bring Peace, Good Government, Sanity and Order to this Earth is crazy]. Another subtle hint of this distinction probably comes in Titus 2:13, where Paul refers to the 'Blessed Hope' then to the 'Glorious Appearance of Christ', where 'and' (*kai*) does not just imply but can only mean two **different** events. Romans 13:12 reinforces the urgency with which one should be ready ("The night is far spent") and what we should be doing in the meantime. Again, the emphasis here is on a **precisely literal** reading of the text versus allegorical, typological, *spiritual* or other metaphysical *mis*-interpretations. But we are not just left with 'subtle hints' to justify the reality of The Rapture and its distinction from the Second (or Last) Coming.

In the brief discussion with the Pharisees (Luke 17:20-21), Jesus pointed out that the Kingdom that He and John had been heralding and announcing was there within their grasp to take ("in your midst", Luke 17:21, NASB). If only they would accept that Jesus had come to fulfill the prophecies of the Woman's Seed (e.g., Genesis 3:15 and Isaiah 7:14 etc). They had to accept Jesus of Nazareth is The

Messiah and "The Prophet" that Moses had said would come (Deuteronomy 18:15 and likewise reported in John 6:14). Moses had said that Prophet would be like himself in that He would speak to God "Mouth to Mouth" (Numbers 12:8) as Moses had done. By AD 27-30, no other prophet, in fact no one, had claimed to have done that, not even Isaiah, Jeremiah nor Ezekiel. Neither had even Daniel who relied on dreams and visions, either his or someone else's. Daniel also relied on communication with angels in order to communicate prophecies. Of course the Pharisees had to admit they were sinners too and needed redemption. Unfortunately, they seemed to believe they were clean because their web of rules (*Talmud* etc.), purportedly built around the *Torah* (Pentateuch, Genesis to Deuteronomy) had perfected them.

Another reason for the Pharisees' rejection of Jesus, one has since discovered via a re-appraisal of the sequences of the **Three Major Jewish Feasts** of *Pesach*-Passover, *Shavuot*-Pentecost and *Sukkoth*-Tabernacles, is that Jesus' Birth did not occur on the **High Day** of Tabernacles. The High Days of *Pesach* and *Shavuot* fulfilled the one-time and for-all-time sacrifice (*Pesach*) and, as it turned out, the beginning of the harvest of saints at the Church's foundation (*Shavuot*-Pentecost). So why didn't the birth of Jesus fulfill Tabernacles-*Sukkoth*? The reason we now realise is that Exodus 4:8 *ex ante* foresaw Israel's rejection of the Messiah that we now see *ex post*. So the First Advent had Jesus arriving around the Eight-Day-Week of *Sukkoth* perhaps even on one of the seven days after the High Day. The period of *Sukkoth* is effectively two to three weeks from preparation of the huts or *sukkas* to their final dismantling. Furthermore, the problems with Herod the Great and his successor enforced the domicile of Jesus away up north in Nazareth ("*of all places*") but that only fulfilled other enigmatic passages of prophecy in Isaiah 9:1-2 and 11:1. Almost impossibly, from an *ex ante* perspective those verses in Isaiah are (or were) impossible to understand and even *ex post* it seems most commentators have overlooked their significance. Furthermore, Jesus' domicile in Nazareth for some 35 years paves the way for Antichrist to emulate Him as the Devil's son bases his International Armageddon Army on the plains surrounding Nazareth.

So, all that was hidden from these players (Jesus aside) *ex ante* and has only lately been discovered *ex post*. The author has also discovered some very interesting topographical and geographical implications of *Nazar eth* (Nazareth) relating to Isaiah 9:1-2 and 11:1. Now the only question here is whether Jesus' Second Coming occurs on the High Day of *Sukkoth*-Tabernacles in the Seventh Year of the Tribulation at the end of the 1288-90<sup>th</sup> days of Daniel 12:11-12, Hosea 6:2, Zechariah 12:10ff, Leviticus 26:40-42, Ezekiel 16:61 etc., while Israel is encamped in Bozra. Once again, probably, in Bozra, Israel may be *temporarily* domiciled in huts in that rocky-desert place, the stars peeking through the palm leaves that may form rooves for their huts.

Interestingly, if one sets aside *Pesach* as "beginning of months" (Exodus 12:2) *Sukkoth* is the **First** major Jewish Festival. By "major" one means it is one of three where one had to go "up to Jerusalem to celebrate". *Sukkoth* arrives just a

few days after the 'Head of the Year' (New Year) at *Rosh Hashanah*. In that sense, *Sukkoth* is the "**First**" of the three major feasts, not the "**Last**". [Jesus made an enigmatic point on this although in a different context perhaps in Luke 13:30]. Thus on this Exodus 4:8 scenario in the event Israel **refuses** to believe the "Voice of the First Sign", which happened of course, *Sukkoth-Tabernacles* becomes the '**Last** of the Three'.

In terms of its positioning in relation to crop harvests, *Sukkoth* comes at the end of the harvest. But *Sukkoth* also represents the times of refreshing after Israel has been freed from the shackles of slavery in Egypt. But the entry to the Promised Land is just ahead so should not Israel's Saviour arrive to lead them into the Promised Land? It's a good question and not at all frivolous. As it happened, '*Joshua*' led them into Canaan. One would therefore expect *Yeshua*-Jesus to arrive at *Sukkoth*. Now, that may well occur in the future if *Yeshua* arrives (this time "Second Coming") at the end of The Tribulation and on the High Day of *Sukkoth* in that last 'Seventh Year' of the Tribulation. Of course, harvests are begun at *Shavuot* so now it actually turns out to be the point at which all the saints of the First Six Thousand years, as well as all Israel at Bozrah or scattered further afield on the last day of The Tribulation (Romans 11:26), will have been revealed and enumerated, 'gathered-in' or 'harvested' (Romans 11:25). *Tabernacles-Sukkoth* will be celebrated throughout the (*Seventh*) Millennium at the end of which there will be one last harvest of Millennial saints (Endnote 1). No wonder all these prophecies looked so mysterious and enigmatic *ex ante* and, for a considerable period, *ex post* so only becoming understandable at the **end** of the Last Days. It seems, if the Exodus 4:8 and *Aleph-Tav* Prophecy-**His Story** Model used here is correct, all these things including the enigmas and mysteries have been part of God's End-Time Plan all along. Above the mystery and enigma, the Bible nevertheless has a very simple basic theme running all through it that anyone can follow and decide whether to accept or reject God's "oracles" (Romans 3:2) contained therein. One does not need to understand the enigmas and mysteries to get the basic important messages in, as Mr Satinover put it, the "plain message-bearing text" (*Discovering the Bible Code*).

When that future 'Prophet', of whom Moses (*circa* 1485 BC) spoke about, eventually did arrive about 1450 years later, Herod hunted out the baby Jesus. Apparently, the Sanhedrin stood back and let Herod murder many Bethlehem babies in the process. They ignored Jesus after the incident in the temple when (*circa* AD 5-6) Jesus showed His great understanding of the Scriptures at the first Passover He attended. During His Ministry (AD 27-30), they rejected the Three Messianic Miracles that Jesus was accomplishing for the Sanhedrin. Many years before Jesus, The Sanhedrin had promulgated the Three Messianic Miracles for Messianic candidates. The successful candidate for Messiah had to fulfill them precisely in order to identify Himself. Other previous Messianic Candidates (*circa* 50-7 BC) had abysmally failed to meet these tests.

So Jesus Who then **did** meet the Sanhedrin's test that He was indeed the Prophet Moses instructed Israel to "listen to" got the 'thumbs down'.

Presumably, if the Sanhedrin could come up with the Three Messianic Miracles they could have added a rider that Messiah be born, as per Genesis 3:15, Isaiah 7:14 etc., on the High Day of *Sukkoth*. But that rider was not there. Anyway, faith requires that we do not have all the evidence even if we have 99% of it. If the Sanhedrin, and Israel, had expressed the correct faith, no doubt Jesus could than have explained why His birth was not on *Sukkoth's* High Day. Then again, if they **had** accepted Jesus as the 'Christ' or 'Messiah', He would have come on that High Day. It is one of those *Back to the Future* scenarios, enigmas or conundrums the Hollywood film Trilogy explores so well in an entertaining way. One wonders deep down if Mr Stephen Spielberg somehow sensed all this when he designed the film series!

But many, the Leaders especially, were not listening to Jesus. The Leaders claimed to be "disciples of Moses". Though in fact they had buried the *Torah* under a mass of other regulations which they, not Moses, had invented. Individual Jews, even a few in the Sanhedrin, such as Simon the Pharisee (Lazarus), Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, and latterly Paul, did listen but they were in a small minority. Zechariah the Priest, Anna of Asher and the elderly Simeon also believed away back at Jesus' birth (7-6 BC). It seems by AD 30 the Pharisees were really sceptical there even would be a Kingdom of God to come as modern christendomite theologians and ministers likewise disregard these days. Jesus, The Son of God, The Son of David, The Nazarene of Matthew 2:23, Who was standing right in the midst of the Pharisees in Luke 17:20-21 was there to be accepted and *grasped* (metaphorically speaking). Thus Jesus had to make the point He did in John 18:36.

Now it will be the case that just as Antichrist's army is about to *swallow-up* and destroy Israel at Bozrah-Petra, Jesus will return at repentant Israel's request and plea to snatch Victory for Israel out of imminent demise. Jesus will then cut Antichrist's army to pieces (Isaiah 63:1-6) and will not enlist the assistance of anyone else in doing this alone (Isaiah 63:5), not even His Servants (John 18:36). After the slaughter of Israel's opponents at Bozrah and all the way up the Valley of Jehoshaphat, Jesus will arrive in Jerusalem and ascend the Mount of Olives on foot to announce the Introduction of the Kingdom of God.

The egregious mistake most christendomites make is to believe Jesus was saying at that discussion in Luke 17:21, "the Kingdom is within you" i.e., inside each believer. In the context of that particular situation or scene, that thinking might have an elementary basis in the sense of an inheritance, hope and expectation but the real implementation of that kingdom, the full Truth of Jesus' Words, can only come, now, when Israel as a nation accepts it, or more precisely, accepts its **Offeror**, as John 18:36 indicated. Luke 17:21 is also wrongly cited to explain what Ephesians 5:18, and the "mystery" in Colossians 1:27 teach.

But Israel's leaders threw away the opportunity as Exodus 4:8 implied *might well happen*. Thus, a future generation of Israel, if not this one of our time, now has to come into place to make the correct decision, revoke the decisions of Israel in

AD 30 and, in effect, apologise for the wrong decisions of their's and the AD 30 Generation (Leviticus 26:40-42, Ezekiel 16:61). It is that repentance and decision (e.g., Isaiah 53, Hosea 5:14 - 6:3, Zechariah 12:12) that will precipitate the Second Coming. That's one reason why it makes no sense to say The Rapture and the Second Coming are the same because the Church of Christ alive at these times has already accepted the truth of Isaiah 53 etc. Nor at any stage, could the truly-saved members of the Church of Christ pray what Leviticus 26:40-42 and Isaiah 53 demand. The true Church of Christ consists entirely of saved believers in every single generation of its existence since AD 30. Logically, they cannot pray Isaiah 53 and Leviticus 26:40-42 if one takes the verses literally. However, if one allegorises those verses, which means one can make them appear to say anything one wants them to, then, as most Christendomite theologians do, one turns the verses into Church-only relevance.

The Second Coming brings about the implementation of the **full physical** Kingdom of God. The Resurrected Jesus Physically will be at its helm as King reigning from Jerusalem in the Messianic Kingdom of Israel for a millennium. We are currently examining the possibility the Messianic Millennial Kingdom is the Seventh to *cap-off* in Glory, so to speak, the previous six millennia of disaster (*circa* 4004 BC to AD 20??+). And that's where and when Abraham (and Moses for that matter), King David too, will walk the length and breadth of the Land (*Eretz Israel*) with their physical descendants and with all other saints of all the families of the Earth blessed by all this (Genesis 12:3c). Saved foreigners, or "Gentiles", will also traverse the Land from time to time during the Thousand-year era. There's a lot of very interesting things to come awaiting those who believe! Lots of interesting people to meet and personal *histories* to recount but no more weeping or suffering for the Resurrected saints. Carnal believers entering the Kingdom at the end of the Tribulation will continue to procreate offspring who may suffer various colds and flu or whatever during their carnal life but if they too believe (Isaiah 65:20) they likewise will receive a resurrected and Glorified body at the end: a long way off from now of course!

In Luke 17:22, The Lord specifically and privately turned aside to the Disciples. That was immediately after the *tete-a-tete* or brief stand-off between Jesus and the Pharisees in verses 17:20-21. Also, that was at least four chapters covering many days or even a week or two before Luke's report of Jesus' Olivet Discussion or Discourse on the "Last Days" for Israel (*Beroshit Rabbah* and *Zohar Chadash*). One must emphasise here, Jesus **turned right away** from His discussion with the Pharisees about the "Kingdom of God". With the Disciples, He raised **a completely different or separate topic** to the Second or Last Coming **and its concomitant arrival** of the 'Messianic Kingdom of God'.

One should note here, that Jesus had just been telling the Pharisees that Kingdom, i.e., God's reign on Earth, would not come with signs "to be observed" (Luke 17:20, NASB). That of course was to get the Pharisees to make a **Faith-based** decision without signs. Jesus' curt response did not mean there would not be any signs at all! The need to express **Faith in The Word of God** must

come first but that does not rule-out there being signs portending one thing or another. As shown in the Olivet Discourse reported in Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21, Jesus mentioned all sorts of signs to **preamble** or precede the (Second) Coming of the long-promised Messianic Kingdom, Salvation of Israel and Return of Jesus in all His Divine and Heavenly Glory. In those chapters covering the Gospel writers' versions of the Olivet Discourse, Jesus answered **three specific questions** from the eleven believing Disciples plus the apostate Judas presumably. Those questions [Matthew 24:2 (2-3), Mark 13:4 (2) and Luke 21:7 (2)] were quite different to the Pharisees' question about the Kingdom. Their questions were serious. So serious that they believed the answers and ensured they were written for posterity! So Jesus gave them, or those reading what they wrote down, several signs that would precede or precipitate some of the warnings Jesus had given.

On a technical note, Dr Fruchtenbaum points out, by observing a couple of 'Day-Counts' in the Bible (Daniel 12:11-12, the 1290 days and the 1335), that there will be a break of a few weeks (45 days). That 'break' begins at Jesus' arrival at the Mount of Olives as he comes up from Bozrah-Petra and it allows for some renovation of the damaged Earth and Environment. It ends as The Kingdom officially begins with the Wedding Breakfast that accompanies the Marriage of the Lamb to the Church of Christ. The Wedding is in Heaven but the Breakfast is, as usual, at a different venue, i.e., on the renovated post-Armageddon Earth and specifically in Israel! [That is why "Seventy Nations" met in Paris under French President Hollandais' invitation on 16 January 2017 to declare Jerusalem an "International City". But God will eventually determine who gets Jerusalem!] So there will be future **signs** but only for the prelude to, or for, the penultimate set of events before the Institution of that Kingdom. It would seem that after the dramatic last-minute rescue of Israel from Antichrist there will be a calm period where some matter-of-fact things, if renovating the environment can be described thus, will be achieved. Then the Kingdom starts with the Wedding Breakfast ensuing from Heaven's 'Marriage of the Lamb'. It's all very sensible and logical if read literally!

However, having dealt with the sceptical Pharisees, on one subject and refusing to give them any signs, in Luke 17:22-37 Jesus actually does iterate about three signs and some general conditions in operation broadly summarised under the terms 'Days of Noah' or 'Days of Lot' (re "Sodom"). However, **these** signs on the **different** topic Jesus is about to raise with the Disciples, will not tell anyone anything about the **actual day** concerning the occurrence of this different event Jesus is about to refer to, because **only God knows what it is**. The Days of Noah and Lot will indicate a general set of events that the Disciples, **of every Church generation, must (now)** watch out for. Whereas the Olivet Discourse, as reported in the Three Synoptic Gospels seem to refer to days concerning a special focus on one or two particular generations of Israel and not much to do with Gentiles of any particular generation. The generation clearly was not going to be His own Generation of Israel. Jesus directed His Olivet message from a purely Jewish or Israelite perspective to a later, much later or future Israelite

generation(s). Reiterating, one also has to remember and be very conscious that these "general set of events" (Days of Noah and, or of Lot), or a subset of them, can also apply to **two**, not just **one**, important and clearly distinctive and separate event(s) that also happen to arrive quite close to each other. Thus we are dealing with **Two Different Events** (Rapture and Second Coming) and, apparently in the Olivet Discourse **Two Different Particular Generations of Israel**. But we will leave those details for Part Two.

However, both events could still be one of a set called "Days of the Son of Man" whereof we suggest, reiterating, there are three: Rapture; Wedding of Christ; and Second Coming. Luke 17:22 clearly explains that there are at least two 'Days of the Son of Man', not one alone. In the paper on *Seven Key Event Pairs* the time between each of the two events in each pair can vary from a few days to millennia. The trick is how to 'rightly divide these things'. In particular, here, we want to work out how closely the distinctively different Rapture and Second (*Last*) Coming are related to each other concerning **Time, Place, Body or Entity!**

It seems as though Jesus decided, there and then; after in Luke 17:21 despatching the unbelieving Pharisees and their probably cynical question about the Kingdom of God; that He would describe to the Disciples another event. We suggest Jesus did this even though in effect He was delivering this message to **future** disciples. It was an event that would come one day **in addition** to the coming of the Kingdom of God. That did not mean the Kingdom of God in the manner of that Glorious Era when Messiah rules the World was not coming. Of course it will come but, as it has turned out, not in their time! Nor would that group of disciples see or better 'witness' this 'other day' as the last clause of Luke 17:22 stated! In regard to the Coming of the Messianic Kingdom of God, Jesus just didn't want to bother talking about it with sceptical unbelieving Pharisees just as we don't waste our time debating nonsense or trivialities with unbelievers. Of these Two Events, i.e., "The Rapture", as Matthew 24:36 and Mark 13:32 note, "only the Father in Heaven" would know the **precise** day of this 'Other Day of the Son of Man' that was on the way at some point in **His Story**. Not even the Son, except perhaps in His Divinity, would know when **it** would take place, **The Day**, in effect, when Jesus comes to fetch His Bride. Exactly how the Triune Divinity handles that issue is not up to us to worry about. Indeed, it probably is the sort of question, one of a very small number, that our Lord will hold back an answer to until a future Age, perhaps not even in the near-future Messianic Kingdom but only on the New Earth in the New Universe when we can consume from the Tree of Life with its "fruit and leaves" in Revelation 22:2. Otherwise, we get most answers to most questions from the Bible as long as the time is ripe for them to be answered (Daniel 8:26, 12:4 & 9).

One needs to explain here that The Rapture is connected with the Jewish Wedding concept whereby the Father sends the son to fetch his already-betrothed (engaged) bride at a time The Son is unaware of. The Father sends The Son when the marriage home is ready and prepared (John 14:2). God the Father was married to Israel (at Sinai) but separated then divorced from Israel,

according to the Prophets, because of Israel's adultery in worshipping false gods [Jeremiah 3:8, Hosea 2:2, 7, 16 (*Baali* and *Ishi*), 19, 20, 5:15 - 6:3]. God's Plan involves restoring that marriage relationship with Israel whereas the Son is currently betrothed or engaged to be married to the Church *of the Christ*.

In Luke 17:22, perhaps by moving a few yards away down the road, Jesus had taken the Disciples aside to hear His discourse on the Days of Noah and Lot-Sodom. Between Luke 17:21 and 17:22, there is a distinct change of audience and almost certainly an important change of subject and a very small shift in location. Here, the Disciples did not raise the subject and never showed any intention to do so. The points made were purely on Jesus' own or sole initiative. In contrast, in the Olivet Discourse, Jesus only started talking about the matters following the three questions the Disciples asked Him. And that was **after** they were adoring the construction going on in the temple. Jesus had softly rebuked them by caustically or perhaps sarcastically pointing to the temporal impermanence of that building. Not could Jesus forget the godless and murderous attitude of the building's patron of whom Caesar had said, "It was safer to be Herod's pig than his son".

Thus, the later scene where Jesus delivered His 'Olivet Discourse', the Disciples marvelling at the massive stones the Herodians (and Edomites) had sculptured for the temple base and walls etc., clearly was not the same scene or anything like the one between Luke 17:21 and 17:22. The Pharisees were bad enough but the current (AD 27-30) Herod's father, i.e., Herod *The Great*, had tried to kill Jesus. The Disciples must have forgotten about that affront to their Master.

By way of background, the "Herodians" of Jesus' Day (AD 27-30) were descended from converted Edomites who had inter-married with Jews between *circa* 400-50 BC. Some of those Edomites had genuinely converted to the true faith in Israel's redeemer, the Promised Deliverer of Genesis 3:15 and practised the Judaism of that era. Unfortunately, as always, later generations (descendants) had become scoundrels compared to some of their forebears majjy of whom had themselves buried in tombs at Petra. Those saints at Bozrah-Petra were probably Edomites, or even Old Testament Jewish saints, who believed the Jewish prophecies about Bozrah-Petra (Isaiah 34:6, 63:1, Jeremiah 49:22, Micah 2:12 and Habakkuk 3:3). One of the tombs at Petra, dating to about 150 BC, probably the most well-known after the one at the end of the long narrow ravine-entrance, belongs to "Aretas". That was a Grecianised form of the Aramaic for 'Herod'.

The Temple re-construction area by the Mount of Olives is where Jesus' true knowledge of History (and Prophecy) prompted Him to talk about the Last Days (*for Israel*) there on the Mount of Olives as recorded in Matthew 24:1-35, Mark 13:1-32 and Luke 21:5-36. Those talks metioned an awful destruction of the wonderful temple, apparently in the near-future, an event used as Jesus' starting point for introducing the fate for Israel over the next 2000 years or so culminating with the end of the Campaign of Armageddon at Bozrah-Petra (Endnote 2).

Perhaps Jesus was frustrated that His Disciples were slow to learn what was happening in *the real world* of AD 30. As modern disciples are frustrated by the rest of the current flock's apathy on matters concerning Prophecy and **His Story**. Perhaps as part of a brief moment of frustration Jesus launched into a discourse there at the *Olivet*. Or, Olivet was a matter of timing for Jesus had to deliver that prophecy so perhaps in that moment as the Disciples were glorifying Herod's temple Jesus took the opportunity to deliver! Again, Olivet's Discourse took place in a starkly or sharply contrasting scene compared with the discourse Jesus had with the Disciples on the way to Jerusalem in Luke 17:22ff. But, in both or either discussion, were Jesus Words mainly for the benefit of the Disciples at the time (AD 30)? Or, were they directed at a **future** generation of Disciples who would be alive at the **Time!** (c.f., Daniel 8:26, 12:4 & 9, Luke 12:2)? The parables of Luke 12:16ff, and Jesus' comment in 12:40 noted above were followed by Peter's question in 12:41, "Are you addressing this parable to us or to everyone else as well?" Luke 12:36-9 quotes Jesus praising the person who is ever-waiting for the master to return. "... Whether He comes in the Second Watch, or even the Third ..." (Luke 12:38).

As noted already, we assume the discussions in Luke 12 followed close on the heels of the leaders' denunciation of Jesus over the Beelzebul incident and the deaf-dumb man being freed from demonic possession. Thus between Luke chapters 11 and 21, there may have been at least two occasions in chapters 12 and 17 when Jesus specifically spoke of the Rapture of the Church. He only addressed Daniel 9:24-7 and the Last Seven Years of Israel's 'End-of-the-Age' scenario a bit later-on at Olivet. If, as Edersheim noted, Jesus' thoughts turned to " 'The End' " as he approached the Cross on that last journey to Jerusalem, the Disciples' fascination with Herod's masonry was just the catalyst to pour out thoughts on matters of 'The last days'. These may be the two main reasons why Matthew and Mark placed Jesus' earlier 'Rapture' discourse as a *Peri-Di* addendum to their report of Jesus' answers to the Three Questions of the Disciples there at Olivet.

Unfortunately, that seems to have confused many later commentators who have not been able to clearly distinguish between the Two Separate Events - Rapture and Second Coming.

So, that is another perspective we will touch on in Part Two of this paper. Precisely, which generation of Israel, or disciples, as the case may be, was Jesus talking to scripture by scripture? Look at Exodus 4:8. Who, precisely was God addressing there? These are matters raised by integrating Exodus 4:8 with Revelation 1:8, 21:6, 22:13 and 19:10 and comparing both **Audiences** and **Eras** addressed in passages like Isaiah 7:11-16 (Endnote 3).

Putting speculation aside, whatever actually motivated Jesus to present these two discourses, Luke 17 versus Matthew 24:1-35, Mark 13:1-32 and Luke 21:5-36, at those particular times and places remains uncertain for now. That the way these things were written is a source of considerable confusion may be deliberately intended until clarification can be given at the *right time*.

Also in the background is Jesus' knowledge that Israel is in the process of rejecting the First Sign of Exodus 4:8 (Raising Lazarus). As we note elsewhere, that was why "Jesus wept" in John 11:35. Our explanation of Exodus 4:8 is the only way to explain why Jesus did indeed weep there. None of the normal explanations suffice or even make any sense. Israel's leaders were in the process of leading most of the nation to reject Jesus' claims and His offer to institute the full and physical Kingdom of God then at His First Advent (Coming). In consequence, Jesus said what He did in John 18:36. The Kingdom "would not be", or *no longer be*, of that "Age", "Era" or "World" depending on one's choice of English words for the Greek (or Hebrew) original (or equivalent). The Disciples simply could not fathom these complexities in the outturn of prophecy fulfilling almost in front of them, but Jesus could. That meant Jesus at some point had to begin the task of preparing His Disciples (and/or future ones) for "His" Church or *Kohel* or Kirk. Jesus had to train the Disciples to present this new congregation to the world and explain the Church's role in the world for the next era. Jesus emphasised He would "build" this new synagogue or church and of course it would be specially equipped with the indwelling Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18) or "Christ in you, the Hope of Glory" (Colossians 1:27). Jesus knew most of His prophecies would now be for the long haul (2000 years) but He left that timing issue *deliberately* vague in His Discourses. So Jesus had to explain to the Disciples what would happen in their (or children's) lifetimes (the destruction of Jerusalem by Vespasian and Titus) and explain to future disciples *such as us*, primarily, about the promise to remove and rescue a certain generation of living believers in His *new* Church from the times of trouble (I Thessalonians 1:10, Revelation 3:10 ) at the End of the Age. That 'removal', we understand, will be in the manner of the Rapture of the Church. For Israel, those times of trouble end with the Rescue of Recalcitrant Israel on Her Repentance perhaps seven or so years after the Rapture assuming it turns out to be "*pre-Trib*" ['Prior to the Seven Year Tribulation' (Daniel 9:26-7)].

Of course, at the time, no one really understood what Jesus was getting at, and that is certainly clear from the text. The Disciples, and other *adherents*, probably had difficulty figuring out these words, later, when they came around to recording, through Matthew, Mark and Luke, the discussions in **Writing**. No doubt people took written notes as the events and discourses unfurled. Although even then, when we look at our lecture notes, we sometimes wonder what our handwriting is telling us. Nevertheless, no matter how much they remembered (assisted later by the Helper, Comforter, Holy Spirit, John 14:17, 26) or recorded at the time, Jesus' Disciples, and the followers and adherents Luke later interviewed, could not reasonably conceive of a 2000 year period, or era for the Church of Christ, unfolding **before** the Days of Noah would come upon the world. Nor could they conceive, nor be expected to, what the world would be like two millennia later. Also, notwithstanding Daniel 12:4 & 9, Jesus seems to have painted the scene of those *future* days in terms that would encourage **each and every generation** of the Church of Christ in order for it to be always on-the-ready, Waiting, Watching and Witnessing (WWW).

But one particular generation of the Church, obviously, will actually and literally see these 'Days of Noah' emerge. It is our's, we believe, even if it is only because we are the generation listening to scientists telling us the world's environment, especially its temperature, is returning to that which preceded the formation of the ice caps at the poles, they say was 40 or 70 million years ago. We say that was the environment 4500 years ago on the Eve of the Great Flood of Noah. Yes, the world is getting warmer and that's a sign we are getting back to the Days of Noah. That freaks out the evolutionist Bible-secpitics. The world is returning to the ambient temperature that existed before the dried-up flood waters formed snow at the poles and on the newly-formed (in 2450 BC) mountains.

There are of course many other characteristics of the days of Noah which would be operating at the time of the Rapture. Although the world will still be in that situation immediately after the Rapture and continue into the *Times of the Tribulation* when, perhaps, most of the putative damage from Global Warming occurs. Anyway, in the Seven Year Tribulation, there will be plenty of trouble from the vials the angels of Revelation pour out over the Earth as the Apostle John (*fore*)-saw in the Book of Revelation. Conditions existing at the "Days of Noah" therefore can still be pertinent both to the Rapture and to the Tribulation and days, weeks, months, or years before the Rapture or between it and the Tribulation.

### **(1) Introductory Signs & Warnings in Luke 17:22-24;**

#### **(a) Verse 22a;**

#### **"One of the Days of the Son of Man"**

'One' here is deliberately stressed. Few people ever dare to think that perhaps when Jesus said "one" He meant that His prophecies actually referred to at least **Two** days of that type. It is also possible Jesus had in mind more than 'two'! Could He have meant a **Third** 'Day of the Son of Man' as well? It does not seem likely there would be more than 'Two' or 'Three'. The 'Third' would be in respect to His Marriage to the Church in Heaven. A wedding day is, after all, very special to those who do get married - **or it should be!** Whether there is one, or two or three such 'days" (there must be at least two) is important for our *Aleph-Tav* Event-Pairs Thesis which also posits a number of Triplets of events (Endnote 4). But we leave that discussion for elsewhere. Here we are interested in this as an Event-Pair of Rapture and Second Coming.

Luke 17:22, if we can rely on translations such as the NASB, in itself may have been a veiled reference to the need to distinguish between The Rapture and The Second (or 'Last') Coming and to retain them in our thinking as two distinctly different events or 'Days'. Most commentators seem to brush-off Luke 17:22-37 as part of the Olivet Discourse but that would be surprising in view of the way Luke composed his writings (*Luke and Acts*).

There are other ways to distinguish the two events. One is in respect to the Church of Christ. It is a 'body' of people from many nations including saved Jews. The other is in respect to Israel or unsaved Jews. Israel is the Father's and by extension Jesus' **nation**. One 'Day' is The Rapture for the Church of living believers and disciples (I Corinthians 15:51-2) on some far-in-the-future day. This is in order for believers to escape any of the Tribulation (I Thessalonians 1:10, 4:15, Revelation 3:10) and for deceased Church or Body of Christ Saints to be resurrected (I Thessalonians 4:14) to join the Marriage of the Lamb (Revelation 19:7ff). Old Testament Saints will be "Friends of the Groom", probably at the Wedding Breakfast as the Millennium begins on the renovated Earth at the end of The Tribulation. Jesus saved the 'Friends' even though they lived before He came. The 'Friends' could not 'know' Him as we do so they are 'Friends' rather than 'Bride' to the 'Groom'. The other 'Day' is a few years later, perhaps seven or more, at the end of The Tribulation. That 'Second' or 'Other' Day will be The Last Coming as Jesus comes to rescue Israel.

It would seem, in Luke 17:22, that Jesus had clearly said, "One of the Days of the Son of Man". However, the reader has to be aware that in quoting the NASB here, that is an American-English translation of the Greek phrase which in turn was an expression of a thought, or perhaps a metaphor, originally conceived in Hebrew. In Luke's report or record, this also comes via second- or third-hand reports or accounts derived from interviews. It may therefore be the case that too much is being read into the statement in the manner here. However, one trusts the Lord's Omnipotence over-rides any human failings in the production, and delivery to our time, of a Divinely-Inspired text. God confused the languages in the first place at Babel. Thus, one presumes that in His Sovereign Will God could over-ride that, or other consequences of the confusion of languages, in order to reveal wisdom to the saints or to a particular group of saints whatever the case may be.

The last condition in this verse, " .... and you will not see it", seems hard to reconcile with other passages that a particular generation "will see" various things or "will not pass away" before they take place (Mark 13:30). Put this way, The Lord could be saying here at the end of Luke 17:22, "well you may well long for that day and you may *indeed* see it but alternatively you may **not** see it either". This condition could exist down through many generations. Each successive generation will 'yearn' or 'long' for this particular day but not actually witness it and dying, or going to its grave, in the meantime. Then one generation **will** see it! Mark 13:30 and similar verses are clearly relating to a whole lot of events occurring **within one generation** though that could mean a period ranging from 20 to 120 years, Biblically-speaking. If our 6000-year mis-rule-of-Man hypothesis is correct, and as it has happened anyway, one assumes Jesus knew only too well that about 2000 years ('Two Days', II Peter 3:8) would pass before this special day for the Church occurs. This condition, 'you will not see it', must refer to the Rapture, or to a situation that the verses we believe point to the Rapture, actually do speak of.

Whatever that day is about, the phrase "and you will not see it" (Luke 17:22b) can hardly apply to the Second Coming because once that situation gets underway Daniel 12:11-12 tells us one can count the days toward the *Day of Rescue*. In those early days of the Church in the First Century the distinction would indeed be very difficult to comprehend. After 2000 years (or 1987 years as at AD 2017), it is far simpler for the Church to comprehend especially under current world conditions. It may well be our unique task to comprehend these verses.

### **(b) Verse 22b;**

#### **"And you will not see it"**

In this clause, 'And' will be the Hebrew *vav*. It is a single letter and in Hebrew, if used as a conjunction, it is always attached to the first word in a sentence. It does not stand alone as 'and' or 'but' do in English. Thus in Hebrew, as the first letter of any word in a sentence, *vav* is or means 'and', 'but', 'now' or perhaps 'however'. (When *vav* is in any other place in a word it is a vowel representing either 'o' or 'u'). Everyone involved here was Jewish and spoke Hebrew. That Hebrew background or perspective is reflected in the way they wrote their Greek. The reader or translator must keep that in mind when reading the New Testament. That is an important example of the *Hebrew Perspective* we make as the z-Axis to the *Aleph-Tav* 3-D Bible Study System.

Translators may have been better to write, "**But** you will not see it" or even " ... **you** will not see it", meaning *sotto voce* 'but someone else will'. In the overall eschatology of 'The Last Days', both Daniel and Jesus seem to indicate a particular generation is going to witness **all** the major events that lead up to the Second Coming. Thus, in all likelihood, The Rapture counts as one event within a set of Last Day Events. For example, there are events such as: the special set of wars under the heading "Nation against Nation, Kingdom against Kingdom" (Matthew 24:7); The Abomination of Desolation (Daniel 9:27, Matthew 24:15); and the many Old Testament passages about the Day of Jehovah, or the Day of Jacob's Trouble, the Day of God's Wrath, Strange Act etc. That seems to have been known for a long time, i.e., a set of troubles that would very quickly usher in the Messianic Kingdom of God and involve some dramatic rescue of Israel from enemies and from God's Wrath.

So hot on the heels of the Pharisees' question about the coming of the Kingdom of God, Jesus then told the Disciples there would be a day they **would not see**. Yet, the general discussion seems to be about a period that everyone **will quite clearly see**. Of course, if the Kingdom offer by John and Jesus were to be accepted, one might legitimately ask why the signs such as The Day of Jehovah's Wrath and the Time of Jacob's trouble had not yet taken place. Certainly, there had been terrible times before 50 BC when the *Pax Romana* arrived to *cover* or *subjugate* Israel. Those days could have fulfilled those prophecies. As we know from Exodus 4:8, some prophecies were in place in order to become necessary once Israel did officially reject the Messiah (Exodus

4:8a, Lazarus, John 11). Once Israel had failed the implicit hurdle in Exodus 4:8 ("First Sign"), Jesus' point in John 18:36 came into play. The Kingdom would henceforth be of another later era ("world"). Jesus also talked about giving the Kingdom to another better or more fruitful generation (Matthew 21:43, 23:37-9, Mark 8:12). Many people, if not most, have since assumed that meant a generation of a different nation or nations. But Jesus always intended that comment to apply to an Israelite generation of descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Arab Muslims of course took and still do take that to mean descendants of Ishmael and Esau (Arabia and Edom). Mark 8:12 even seems to suggest that although "No sign will be given to **this** generation (emphasis added)" some signs will be given to later generations or at least one other later generation.

In some ways, Israel's rejection of Jesus could be regarded as having taken place back in *circa* 5 BC when Herod tried to kill the infant or toddling Jesus. Or the rejection was beginning in *circa* AD 6-7 when the religious establishment blithely ignored those three days when the Twelve-year-old Jesus amazingly taught, questioned or debated in the Temple (Luke 2:47) "Doing **My** Father's Business". Although, as one studies the development of the Talmud etc., one can envisage the process of Israel moving into a messiah-rejectionist frame of mind began soon after the death of Ezra and his generation in *circa* 500 BC. Whatever, it seems clear to this author that the rejection of Jesus was beginning, or had begun, long before His Ministry started in *circa* AD 27 but that has to remain in the realm of opinion. God, apparently, foresaw Israel's rejection of Jesus in *circa* 1485 BC!

What is not a matter of opinion but a really big difficulty is the following. On the one hand the prophecies talked about 'counting the days' (Daniel 12:11-12) awaiting, by implication, a day that one **will** see; on the other hand Jesus is saying to a group of disciples you '**will not** see it'. This is not just a warning to ignore obviously false claims Jesus is here or there. It is simply a bold statement that throughout many generations there will be a day everyone who is a believer yearns for but only one particular group of believers will actually see it. It is a 'day' **belonging** to "The Son of Man" and there will only be a special group that will observe or see it although a vast congregation of dead people will benefit from it. As we proceed, it should become obvious this 'day' is indeed the Rapture. It will indeed be yearned for, and by many generations of the Church Age, but it will be seen by one particular generation of disciples *surrounded by vultures but awaiting eagles* to snatch it away to Heaven! (Endnote 5)

### **(c) Verse 23;**

#### **"Look there! Look here!"**

Firstly, there is a warning not to go chasing after hare-brained nutters. Israel's rabbis had to deal with such (*nut*)-cases or deluded fantacists for a few decades before Jesus was born (*circa* 50-7 BC). Probably, most Messianic claimants between *circa* 50-7 BC overlooked the necessary condition explained by Genesis

3:15a and Isaiah 7:14. Throughout the last two thousand years there have been many such folk paying little attention to any of the Bible's actual messages about the Rapture, the End of the World or Age, the Second Coming etc., or indeed almost anything the Bible says. As the Englishman Nicholas Byfield knew in 1608, there could be no Second Coming until Israel returned as a nation-state as it had been in Biblical times.

Byfield also could have taught that the Rapture might be near because it does seem on some readings as if there is a deliberate purpose in keeping the possibility of the Rapture's occurrence alive for each generation of the Church's approximate 2000-year history. However, as we are beginning to realise, if one understood all scriptures about the Rapture it *typologically* coincides with, or is *foreshadowed by*, the Festival of Trumpets. Without examining the rest of Byfield's writings it is possible he did understand this and he realised the imminence of the Rapture really had to come into prominence only when Israel returned back to The Land (*Eretz Israel*) (Endnote 6).

If believers (AD 100-1850) did understand these points they might have placed the Rapture relatively low in expectation **but kept watch anyway**. Hopefully we are not also fulfilling Luke 17:23 here with wild speculation. However, the world's chaos and widespread scepticism toward God and His power etc., leaves little risk now of falling into that trap. Paul's warning about sexual and other nonsense in the last days (Romans 1:18-32), and its links with Evolutionism (disbelief in "Creation"), has never come close to fulfillment except in the last decade or two. There is one clear, almost indisputable difference between the actual Days of Noah's and Lot's eras and the *Days of Noah* or *of Lot* that we may be experiencing. That is, no one back then would have been fooled by theories or ideas of Higgs-Boson-Particle to Man Evolution occurring via chemical pools in the primaevial Earth billions of years ago. And certainly not when top scientific institutions like NASA and the European Space Agency are now admitting the earliest forms of life got here on comets from totally unknown and unseen places deep in the outer Universe and that they only on arrival here did they then evolve into more sophisticated life-forms. Although, of course, even that idea is nonsense.

#### **(d) Verse 24;**

##### **"Just like the lightning"**

This likens the Rapture via metaphor, assuming this analysis is accurate, to a lightning bolt in the skies. To use a word 'like' or 'as' signifies what we term a "simile". These devices, called 'cliches' if over-used, exist in most languages. It is sometimes difficult explaining them in one's own language let alone explaining a metaphor (the generic term) that emanates from its home language and enters a foreign language. In any language, a metaphor may use words that can have at least two meanings thus the metaphor itself can be read in two different, contrasting or parallel ways. Let's assume in these verses a word used as a metaphor is intended to have two, but only two meanings.

We begin here with the Lightning metaphor but there are two other 'metaphors' in Luke 17:22-37 that we shall dissect. Firstly, "Where the Vultures (Eagles?) are gathered; there the Body (Carcase?) will also be". Here we see some specific words ('Vulture' or 'Eagle' and 'Body', 'Carcase' or 'Corpse') with, at least in our modern languages, normally distinctly different meanings. Secondly, in Luke 17:31 there is the Husetop metaphor.

But does one have to infer such 'distinctions' in the much older Hebrew or Greek words? **That probably is the one of the most significant points in this paper.** In the older languages, with less complex vocabularies, a single word has other- or subtle double-meanings or variations (Endnote 7) for example to express different species of 'birds' as the Vulture-Eagle metaphor is concerned. Furthermore, with these metaphors, almost certainly their culture and origin were expressed only in Hebrew until transmission via Greek into English. That raises further etymological issues we will analyse below.

- **The Lightning, the Husetop & the Vulture are the three metaphors that pervade these crucial Rapture and Second-Coming passages.**

Luke refers to "lightening" only in Luke 17:22-37 but not in his version of the Olivet Discourse. Matthew's reference to "lightening" appears only in his report of the Last Days of Israel in the Tribulation i.e., in His Second Coming section of his report of the Olivet Discourse. Mark does not even mention "lightening" at all in either his Second Coming section or Rapture section. The nearest Luke comes to mentioning 'lightening' in his account of the Olivet Discourse concerning Israel's long-term fate for the next twenty centuries, is in references to "terrors and great signs from heaven" (21:11), "Signs in Sun and Moon and Stars" (21:25), "powers of the heavens ... shaken" (21:26) and "The Son of Man coming in a cloud with power" (21:27).

However, many, if not the majority, think the reference to "lightening" in Luke 17:24 **does** refer to the same event or to exactly the same situation as Matthew 24:27. That assumption is weakened by Mark making no mention of lightening at all combined with the opinion shared by most theologians (Endnote 8) that Matthew and Luke had Mark's Gospel as a guide for the writing of theirs! The Null Hypothesis to this paper's Hypothesis is that just the two references to Lightening in Matthew's and Luke's Gospels precisely **does** indicate One Single Event being referred to by that metaphor - i.e., Rapture and Second Coming being the same.

But Matthew's reference to "lightening" is also strongly or distinctively qualified by Matthew 24:29-30. Dr Fruchtenbaum in *Footsteps of the Messiah* describes this as a period of great darkness falling over the Earth on the last two or three days of the Tribulation. Fruchtenbaum suggests it is possible to identify **four** occasions in Prophecy where the Earth is going to be enveloped in terrible darkness. Each occasion must be clearly identified, as he excellently does in *Footsteps of the Messiah*, and must be contrasted or integrated with the other things going on. On the last occasion of terrible "Darkness" over the Earth, the

*Shedinah* Glory of God will pierce the gloom as Jesus returns. Possibly, that will look something like the Sun breaking through a cloudy sky. Conditions get ever-brighter as the clouds lose their density in the face of the oncoming **Glory**. Suddenly, out of this phenomenon, in another situation that could be described as "like lightening", but in a somewhat different visual effect to "lightening" as one conventionally experiences it - Jesus of Nazareth **bodily** (or physically) appears. Like lightening, Jesus *suddenly* bodily appears in view of those on the ground looking upwards as He comes to rescue Israel from the clutches of Antichrist-666.

Jesus returning to Earth like that certainly will be a *bolt-out-of-the-Blue* (or *Goomy Dark*) to all those unbelievers who have been convinced for a long time that there is no one alive in Heaven such as Jesus of Nazareth. It certainly will be a shock for all those evolutionists, materialists etc. After 2000 years of widespread disbelief in a bodily resurrection of the Lord Jesus *the* Christ, the sudden appearance of His Body up there in the air, probably in a Transfiguration-like mode, will have the same effect as a massive bolt of lightening, hence, again, a sensible use of the metaphor.

The armies on the ground surrounding the enclosure at Bozrah-Petra will not have been expecting Jesus to return. They will have been brainwashed or deceived into thinking Antichrist-666 is the real messianic personage of the Scriptures. Now, suddenly, like a bolt of lightening hitting them, they will realise they have been tricked. Though by then, presumably, it will be too late to repent. Therefore, they will attempt to mitigate **their** now dire circumstance and fight in futility for their survival as Isaiah 63:1-6 describes.

Only a metaphor can express in written words what that scene would be like until the actual day transpires and one will no longer need a metaphor. Likewise, the same metaphor could be used to describe a related but earlier and different event. As noted elsewhere, if there was any confusion amongst the narrators in applying Jesus' reference to lightening, a well-balanced analysis of the Scriptures should uncover any such problem inadvertently delivered down to our age. One believes the arguments presented in this paper prove Jesus did use the lightening metaphor for both The Rapture and The Second Coming. Good analysis should allow the proper conclusion to stand and not leave any doctrine of the Inspiration of Scripture damaged in any way with human failings being what they are!

If the passage in Luke 17:23-37 is his record or attempt to report on Jesus' somewhat **earlier** comments regarding the "Days of Noah" i.e., "The Rapture", there is no reason for any mention of the terrible gloom descending over the atmosphere as in Matthew 24:29. That is because no sign of any sort whatsoever can herald the Rapture as Matthew 24:29 does for the Second Coming. Hence Jesus only used the lightening metaphor there to describe the Rapture specifically in the sense of suddenness and as being an event that is *all over* and completed in an instant.

To reiterate, there is no reason why Jesus should not relate the same metaphor to two different events. Or, assuming the one metaphor could have two subtle meanings packed into the one clause (refer Endnote 7), Jesus used one subtle meaning for one event and another subtle meaning for the different event. As the endnote points out that subtlety lay in the way the listeners heard the spoken Word.

The Second or Last Coming brings Christ all the way back to Earth, not just to the upper atmosphere as in The Rapture. Jesus can destroy His enemies or save His followers in any way he chooses. In order to exactly fulfill Isaiah 63:1 ff, Jesus must come back to *Terra Firma* to rescue encircled and about-to-be-destroyed Israelites (Jews) who, together with Antichrist's armies, witness that **Bozrah Experience**. The Church of Christ and other resurrected saints from the previous Two Eras will have a separate perspective, from *the gods* of the Opera House as it were, as we too arrive back toward Earth with our Glorious Saviour and *Husband* and we then watch the final proceedings there at Bozrah-Petra.

Luke's 'lightening' in verse 24 flashes from "one part of the sky to the other" (NASB). Matthew's "lightening" in 24:27 "comes from the East and flashes even to the West" (NASB). Again, or admittedly, it is easy to see why, therefore, many commentators seriously think just **one overall event** i.e., the "Second Coming" is being described in all the passages from the Three Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke). Commentators don't realise Jesus applied one metaphor about lightening to **two different events**. Also, it's possible that in the original Hebrew Jesus used two different words for some 'lightening'-like phenomenon but for which there was only one equivalent Greek word (Endnote 9).

To reiterate, nor do many commentators consider the two events, though probably close to each other in time by seven or so years perhaps, also are, or also can be, backgrounded by, or set against, an environment consisting of a common sub-set, or mix, of uniquely unusual **and** (or **plus**) quite normal circumstances existing side-by-side or alongside. That requires us to look carefully for the unique characteristics pertaining to each or any event.

Furthermore, one can observe that Matthew's use (24:27) is distinctively qualified and amplified by the following verses (24:29) which Luke pointedly does not use in chapter 17 and only uses in rather different language to Mark and Matthew in his chapter 21 eschatological account. But the point is that "suddenness" can surely apply to two separate events. For example, when Jesus on one occasion comes just **near** the earth to sweep up all the living believers, **and those from their graves**. Then a little later (seven or so years?) Jesus comes back literally to *Terra Firma*, with both feet on the ground, to rescue Israel and stay here after defeating Antichrist to introduce the Messianic Kingdom. Both 'Returns' (or 'Events') will have a degree of **suddenness**. To the Disciples of Jesus' Day, there is no reason why they should **not** have applied this point about the lightening in the sky:

**Firstly** to the suddenness of The Rapture, if indeed they were able to

conceive of The Rapture, in those days, either separately or as part of the Second Coming;

and **Secondly** or **Lastly** to the relative suddenness of things like the villainous double-crossing of Israel by Antichrist or to the urgency of the 'Last Three Days' at Bozrah (Hosea 6:2).

Any of these things could be likened to, or be associated with, a simile of a bolt of lightning coming from "East to West" or "from one part of the sky to the other".

From the point of view of a literary analyst, any re-location of Jesus from His seat at the Right Hand of God to the environs of this Earth, either just to its upper atmosphere or to its actual surface, could only be described in metaphors that inevitably can only give partial, approximate or descriptive explanations. So here we see a metaphor applied to what may really be two separate events. There is no literary reason, nor any scientific reason for that matter, to doubt this. Or, it could even be a metaphor for one event but be an actual description of something also happening at the other.

In Part One of this paper, the author is mainly addressing and analysing Luke's account in 17:22-37. Then in Part Two we look at some of the Olivet passages in more detail. Dr Fruchtenbaum in his *Footsteps of the Messiah* puts forward the best analysis of all the eschatological passages in the Bible. In the Appendix attached to this paper, the author explains why this paper is written to explain a couple of significant shortcomings, in regard to the separation of Rapture from Second Coming, in *Footsteps of the Messiah* and in Professor Edersheim's *The Life and Times of Jesus The Messiah*. So there is little point here analysing the accompanying signs in Matthew 24:29-31 to the lightning in Matthew 24:27 except to note the Sun and Moon lose their light and even stars fall around and about. Those stars may well be asteroids and comets. In fact, as we now realise, they almost certainly are the latter and are not likely to be massive suns we see in the galaxies of deep outer space falling down somehow.

There is another possible explanation for the "falling stars" being suns (stars) we see in the galaxies, though the Bible says there will not be a repeat of the last occasion this happened. If the Earth were to suddenly start rolling over its axis as happened in Joshua 10, then one would experience or see the **appearance** in the skies of stars falling about all over the heavens (or *second* heavens). However, if there are actual 'Clouds' involved in the hiding or concealment of light from the sun and moon, then the balls of fire or 'falling stars' people see would almost certainly have to be asteroids and comets because under those stated conditions the stars are blocked from view (Endnote 10).

Astronomers now commonly think showers of asteroids could happen one day, or on any given day, because there is so much of this interstellar debris out there. And, of course, Velikovsky pointed out the Earth had been in that situation before, perhaps even several times before. Even in Joshua 10, "great stones" and "ice-balls" fell down to Earth. That phenomenon we explain elsewhere. Also

"elsewhere", we explain how such phenomena were observed world-wide i.e., concerning the events of Joshua 10:1-14 where the text says, "There was no day like that, before it or after it". That's not likely to re-occur so some other mechanism must be responsible for some of the outer-space events described in the Last Days. The events in Joshua are also recorded in other Jewish literature and in the often-oral-only legends of many other international tribes - if not by nearly all of them, i.e., by all ancient nations.

Whatever, in Luke 17:22-37 and especially in verse 24 there is no suggestion of these wider 'cosmological' apparitions, appearances or ramifications as in Matthew's and Mark's ("lightening" excepted) accounts of those particular *cosmological* aspect of Jesus' Olivet Discourse.

In Luke, there is just a **brief**, succinct, unqualified or unamplified reference to "lightening". Luke's use of the metaphor is mainly in its context of suddenness in (or of) both appearance (of Jesus) **then** disappearance (of Believers). Matthew's use of the metaphor is far more likely to apply to the *Shecinah* Glory piercing some sort of terrible Darkness enveloping the Earth as described by the ensuing verses there. Incidentally and importantly, this shows how proper study of the context and surrounding text enhances one's understanding of metaphors in the Bible. Thus without sound literary analysis one cannot understand the book's allegories, similes, typologies, metaphors, poetic couplets etc.

In regard to Matthew's use of the metaphor, Fruchtenbaum suggests there will be a gradually growing intensity, or even a quite rapidly growing intensity of light piercing the gloom on the eve of the Second Coming. After the Rapture, there could be, one could suppose, a catastrophe from outer space like an asteroid hitting the Earth and sending it reeling and causing much dust to occlude or *blot out* the sun and moon. Depending on the composition of the dust and debris, different colours will dominate the skylines. Something like that may be what the earth-bound unbelievers are going to see, perhaps, but not necessarily, in the immediate aftermath of The Rapture. After The Rapture, people will have to decide whether to repent (*re-think*) and belatedly become believers to await the events that Mark 13:24-25 or Matthew 24:29-30 refer to.

If one could summarise foregoing points within one clause or sentence, one might say, "**sameness of description does not necessarily indicate sameness in event or timing thereof.**".

However, we may also have to ask exactly what degree of clear-mindedness the Disciples and others had composing, writing, copying, editing and reading these accounts. They wrote the accounts between AD 50-100. There may have been some further editing between AD 100-300 as Greek then Aramaic translators, scribes and copyists delivered to us the earliest manuscripts we have. In that 250-year process we may need to consider to what extent the two discourses were confused (Endnote 11). Furthermore, a succession of editors and commentators may also have thought Jesus was talking about one general or overall event even though the Gospel writers go to the extent of recording the

precise questions the Disciples had for Jesus concerning what we suspect is "Israel's" *End Times* or *Eschatology* (Matthew 24:3, Mark 13:4 and Luke 21:7).

Luke, a very clear-minded academic and professional, obviously was not present at any or either of the discussions. One assumes Matthew, quite possibly trained in Roman law and accounting, attended the discourses, though Mark 13:3 suggests everyone has to rely on just Peter, James, John and Andrew as the sole direct, first-hand hearers of this information. Matthew 24:1&3 suggest Jesus spoke to the Disciples then some of the Disciples, perhaps the four mentioned, approached him privately with the recorded specific questions on the matters apparently raised by Jesus in His perhaps rather surprising or bold response to the bragging about Herod's temple extensions and masonry. That might mean Matthew was present at the discussion of Matthew 24:1-2 then just the four mentioned actually privately asked for more detail. Therefore, Matthew, and Mark if he happened to be hanging around (Mark 14:51-2), got most of the detail *second-hand* from Peter, or James, or John or Andrew or any combination of those four. Luke 21:5 ("Some") and 21:7 ("They") suggest Jesus gave the 'Olivet Discourse', or the initial part of it, while still near the Temple. Although that is not necessarily a conflict because they may have been on the 'Mount of Olives' side of the temple, or temple compound-wall adjacent to the Mount (or hill slope). Or, while some were still inside a gate talking about the temple project, Jesus had already walked on further and was a few meters outside the gate on a track leading to the Mount of Olives, as The Lord elaborated further, on their Three Questions, putatively to Peter, James, John and Andrew, as He headed to His evening retirement somewhere on the Mount (Luke 21:37).

So with the group of disciples temporarily split into two or more groups tagging along at different paces, that may have been when Jesus went into more detail with some of the Disciple Group which may have included others not part of the Twelve who were *outer-ring* disciples of some sort. That 'outer-ring' may have included Mark perhaps. Or, eight of the disciples were still inside the temple as Jesus with Peter, James, John and Andrew gave some more detail to just those four *in private*. The privacy perhaps was unintended and merely a matter of circumstance, unless Jesus did not want Judas Iscariot to hear. On another occasion, Peter, James and John seem to figure as a select inner group for certain purposes (e.g., the Transfiguration, Matthew 17:1). In that situation, Andrew was absent.

Most generations of New Testament readers and students might not have thought about the following point. But Jesus, of course, knew that it would be disciples in *circa* 2001 that would be able to *decipher* (Daniel 12:4 & 9) actually what He was saying on those *eschatological* matters pertaining to the latter end of the Last Days. Although some of His own disciples would no doubt witness the events of 66-70 AD also prophesied at 'Olivet'. The Lord probably wanted it that way so that each generation of the Church would be at the ready, so to speak and be able to share in 'The Blessed Hope' (Titus 2:13).

So this is not in any way a criticism of any commentator or theologian from the

past at all. It is **The Way** it necessarily has (or had) to be. The passages had to be enigmatic and obscure until this unique set of 'End Time' circumstances ("things", e.g., Mark 13:29) began arising. One way to apply the passages to having particular importance or relevance to one's own era, be that AD 1030, AD 1200 or AD 1657, was to cite Matthew 24:22 and Mark 13:20. One finds this view amongst both Jewish and Gentile Christian commentators. But the meaning of those verses is to point out that the **result** or **long-term impact** of Adam's fatal decision would lead to total destruction if God does not intervene to *shorten* the process (Endnote 12). One must remember, God's opponents must not, either, be able or be allowed to discover they might have 2000 years or even a century to perpetrate untrammelled mischief before God has to intervene (Endnote 13). On that point, as it had been since Noah, Government (II Thessalonians 2:7) was supposed to be the main measure to humanly restrain evil during the Master's (Saviour's) Absence. Psalm 119:99-100, Daniel 8:26b, 12:4 & 9, Mark 4:22, I Corinthians 2:7, Colossians 1:26-7, and Revelation 10:4 & 10, 22:10 are evidence, if not *proof*, that God does sometimes, or in some places, arrange the Scriptures in ways that temporarily or for a *season* obscures the specific time for things to occur or to be understood. One would say here that "Exodus 4:8 is the prime example of that point".

Thus, one can never know how or when God will intervene in Mankind's Affairs or indeed in Mankind's ability to understand certain Scriptures. On the other hand, God also must allow for some time to emerge so that Man's folly can be fully *measured out*. That includes sufficient time to allow the effects of his science, technology, philosophies etc., to be fully revealed for its peculiar and unique: long-run, in the aggregate; or in the net-sum; **negative** consequences. This is a dilemma in in what might one describe as "*management*" but the Ultimate Manager, God, has it all in hand in a Good, Acceptable and Perfect Way (Romans 12:2). As their life in Christ matures, Spirit-filled believers in Christ's true Church begin to understand and marvel at God's Wisdom, Methodology, Judgement and Timing in all this.

#### **(e) Verse 25; The Rejection of Messiah**

##### **"The Son of Man must suffer ... be rejected by this generation"**

To end the section about "Introductory Signs & Warnings in Luke 17:22-24", and before analysing what in these pages we believe to be 'Rapture' detail in Luke 17:26-37; i.e., the main body of text about the Rapture here in this Gospel; we note that Jesus inserted a statement about His "rejection by '**this generation**'" (17:25). There is no Gospel record of Jesus specifically referring to "The Voice of the First Sign" of Exodus 4:8. John 11:35 shows Jesus wept with very deep emotion for some strange reason. John 11:38 notes that He was "deeply moved". John 11:40 has Jesus making a special mention of the "Glory of God" in this very strange situation given all the circumstances.

So in Luke 17:25, Jesus had to explain the implications of the Rejection that he knew about even before the raising of Lazarus. Jesus had said such things

before to one or two audiences, for instance after Peter declared Him to be "Son of God and Messiah of Israel" or when Jesus told the Pharisees the leaders were trying to kill Him (e.g., Matthew 12:14, 16:21, Mark 10:33, Luke 11:54). The 'generation' referred to in this verse must mean that of AD 30 whereas we believe the use of 'generation' in Mark 13:30, and in some other verses (discussed elsewhere), refers to a much later generation of 'Israel' (Endnote 14). Hence an explanation for Jesus' Words in John 18:36 (Endnote 15). However, here again, it is easy to see how most commentators in the past, if not all of them, therefore confused references to 'a generation' with the **'One and Same Event'** instead of distinguishing between two **Different Generations** of **Two Different Bodies** (Church of Christ and Israel) in two **Different Events** (Rapture and Second Coming closely connected in Time) in two distinctly and apparently long-seoarated eras some 2000 years apart.

In any 'generation' in the World in the Church Age (AD 30-2030?), one can identify three sub-groups. Firstly, there are unbelieving Gentiles. Sceondly, there is the Church of Christ consisting of Jesus-believing Jews ("Israel of God", Galations 6:16) and Gentiles. Thirdly, there is the rest of Israel that is currently composed of Jesus-unbelievers who will nevertheless repent and change their mionds about Jesus, certainly so if they survive to the end of the Tribulation (Romans 11:26, Isaiah 53, Hosea 5:14 - 6:3, Zechariah 12:12). At the Rapture, the Church, i.e., its members of that particular and unique generation, departs and leaves unbelieving Jews and Gentiles to the rest of the **His Story!** After the Rapture the remainder of *this* generation's unbelievers and Israel go through the full Seven-Year Tribulation, Israel's 'Last week' of Daniel 9:26 (described there as "after the 'Sixty-Second' following the 'Seven', a sub-total of 'sixty-nine' of Daniel 9:25). At the end of the Tribulation, "All Israel" repents (Romans 11:26). There will be some Gentiles who meanwhile also repent. Those two groups which therefore come to saving belief and are soteriologically saved will then physically enter the Messianic Kingdom. There, during the millennium, they will procreate a new world population of carnal individuals in that probably again re-formatted and Blessed Era. So we need to be specific regarding "generations" and be clear about distinctions between different sub-groups within any "generation".

Also, we have Jesus recorded elsewhere in the Gospels contrasting "this" or one generation to "another" [Matthew 21:43 (to another "nation" in ASV or "people" NASB), Mark 8:12]. But in Luke 17:25, Jesus is clearly and unambiguously pointing to the fact of (and significance of, the rejection of Him by the majority of His Jewish or Israelite peers and contemporaries. He is not referring to Jews, Israelites or anyone else of some other era (John 18:36). In Jesus' understanding, there was going to be a considerable interval between this rejection of AD 27-30 and Disciples' "longing to see **One** of the Days of the Son of Man" (NASB, refer discussion in Luke 17:22). Perhaps Jesus was even expecting some people would then begin to realise that 'considerable interval' would be about 2000 years to make up the final complement of 6000 implicitly shown in the Scriptures to be the time limit for man's post-Adamic chaos. But the time for that understanding would only be at that very end of things. That would

be when sufficient knowledge (Daniel 12:4) would be available to work some things out thus obviating the concerns expressed in Endnote 13.

Actually, verse 25 may be a method or device to remove the ensuing words about the "Days of Noah" from His current era and re-direct the focus toward a far future time. That may not have been clear to the disciples then but is to us. Jesus explained that Israel's leaders had already rejected the offer to bring about God's Kingdom in AD 30. Thus, a new 'Church' (or synagogue) had to be built, and that was going to take some time to *construct*. Jesus had clearly instructed His Disciples to get ready to teach and equip others (future generations) in that 'church-building' exercise for the period up to the Time, "Age", "Era" or "World" Jesus talked about in John 18:36. Initially, the Disciples understood that was for the very near introduction of the Kingdom. Little did they realise they would all die at least nineteen centuries before there would be any real sign of these latter eschatological events occurring e.g., the return of the Jews to Israel from all over the world out of the fires of the Nazi death camps (Ezekiel 22:15-22, 37:1-28).

For the church-building, the Disciples had to be trained to prepare the Church for a long haul of at least 2000 years of ministry and witness although their speedy appointment of a replacement for an apostolic post abandoned by Judas' suicide further indicated they were still hopeful, as they were entitled to be, for an early return of the The Lord Jesus of Nazareth, The Christ or Messiah. They also asked Jesus just before He departed if He would install "The Kingdom" soon (Acts 1:6). But Jesus responded that the timing of the Kingdom's advent would not be something they, or ourselves, would any longer be privy to. Israel had lost that opportunity after the leaders rejected Jesus' advice, or very heavy hint, in Luke 17:21. If Israel's leaders had acted positively then in Luke 17:21, the Kingdom literally would have been just weeks or months away and indeed very soon, or at that very Generation, that very Era or Age. However, Jesus was then obliged or forced to announce to Pilate it would not come in that Age (John 18:36)

As Exodus 4:8 implied, the opportunity for Israel of AD 30 would, regrettably, be lost. So Jesus immediately turned to His Disciples in Luke 17:22, knowing it would be a much later generation of Disciples He was really addressing. He explained that as a preliminary to The Advent of the Kingdom of God, there now would be a Rapture of Church Saints in order to exclude them from the Wrath of God (I Thessalonians 1:10, Revelation 3:10). The Wrath He was talking about was that which would then be directed at the World in order to bring about Soteriological and Physical Salvation for **some** recalcitrant Gentiles' and "All-Israel. Then the Kingdom of God in its fullest Physical and Spiritual Senses would come. It has only been since 1948 that God's Plan for the final and complete restoration for Israel was beginning to take serious shape and form. In God's foreknowledge (Exodus 4:8), Israel's rejection of Jesus in AD 30 would pave the way for a Six Thousand Year Era for Man's mis-rule on Earth to reach its final and inevitable conclusions as discussed elsewhere. Then we look forward to the Seventh Millennium of rest as implied in the *coded prophecy* of

Genesis 2:2 and Hebrews 4:3ff.

## (2) Unravelling and Decoding Luke 17:26-37

There is nothing heretical or Gnostic about this. People with genuine Faith in *the Triune* God, will exercise that faith by trying to untangle the entangled, believing that can be done without resorting to an Alexandrian Sword and simply slicing Gordion's Knot (*The God-ian Knot*) as being a useless waste of time anyway. Nor does the exercise require anything more than an ability to read, analyse or learn another language, which are all things anyone can do these days. Unbelievers, unfilled with God's Spirit, first need to believe the plain statements that abound in Scripture before they too can fathom the meaty things therein (Hebrews 5:13-14).

So why did Luke leave the reference to lightening to the earlier passage in chapter 17 rather than in the later passage in chapter 21? Here again, most commentators, perhaps quite logically, think Luke has simply split one or two discourses into two separate occasions because he received in his inquiries reports of at least two different situations when Jesus seems to have discussed Eschatology. Perhaps there was a third or other such occasions as Luke 12:31, 35-39, 40 (especially), 42-46 suggest or imply. One would then have to ask, did Luke do that for any other discourses? The answer would appear to be "No" at least at first glance. Actually, the ordierliness of Lukes' *Acts* and *Gospel* indicate that the statements of Luke 17:22-37 deal with a **different** event to Luke 21:6-36. Although one would have to do a separate exercise to prove or discover that.

The suggestion here is that with the vast array of 'dual events', or 'event-pairs', we have identified (discussed in other papers) throughout the Scriptures from *Genesis* to *Revelation*, it would seem these two separate eschatological accounts in Luke's Gospel (in chapters 17 and 21) actually confirm our Seven Key Events Hypothesis in respect to distinctions between The Rapture and The Second (Last) Coming. From his interviews, Luke realised there had been at least two different discussions on eschatological matters. However, Luke also knew he had to split the discussion into two parts because he realised from consultation with Paul that there has to be a distinction between the Rapture or Last Trump and the Second Coming. Apparently, Paul, and perhaps only him amongst the New Testament scribes, seems to be first to realise the distinction as he explained in I Corinthians 15:52, I Thessalonians 4:13-18 which are the two most important and explicit texts on The Rapture outside the Gospels (and possibly Titus 2:13 as well).

The relationship between Luke and Paul is a most amazing one when we think deeply about it (c.f., the detail of the shipwreck in Acts 27:14-44). Relatively few commentators seem to make all that much of Paul and Luke's working relationship and so don't even think to ask if Luke sought to keep prophecies about the Rapture and Second Coming as separate and distinct discourses and that it was something that Paul realised was the case. Importantly, in the context of this particular discussion, it would seem that out of the three Synoptic Gospels, it was precisely because of Paul's influence on Luke that the latter deliberately

placed the Days of Noah narrative in a separate place from the Olivet aspect (of Israel's Last *Three Days* of The Tribulation). It is not as much speculation as common sense to suppose wickedness *a la* Days of Noah would still be abounding even many years later in the run-up to the actual Second Coming. But the assumption here is that "The Days of Noah" (or "of Lot and Sodom") primarily relates to The Rapture. If both Paul and Luke had noticed Matthew and Mark had thematically addended or appended the Rapture or Days of Noah passage to the Olivet Discourse on Israel's 'Last Days', then Luke and Paul realised it would be proper for Luke, in accordance with his policy on sequence and chronology, to keep the two discourses separate as the Lord had indeed, or must have, Himself done. Although, as we note elsewhere, Jesus may well have repeated what, perhaps somewhere near Jericho, He had said about the Rapture at the Mount of Olives (Olivet) but only after introducing the Rapture with a separate *Peri Di* conjunction (or Hebrew equivalent). But it also seems very likely that Luke realised from his interviews that under any scenario, Jesus did separate the two in some of His discussions.

We might also have to consider that Matthew and Mark automatically assumed later readers and theologians would see that their use of *Peri Di* was deliberate in order to make it abundantly clear the Days of Noah and its related Rapture were distinct from the AD 66-70 and much later Second Coming situations. That throws the spotlight back on later theologians and commentators who overlooked the significance of the *Peri Di* conjunction rendering an impression that Matthew and Mark were a little bit *confused*. One is thankful to Dr Fruchtenbaum for mentioning it and raising the issue.

Furthermore, after consulting with Paul, Luke may well have realised, perhaps from his notes, that his interviews revealed that Jesus spoke about the Rapture (per *The Days of Noah*) on a separate occasion somewhere near Jericho, or before Jesus met Bartimaeus. Certainly He first spoke in any **'reported' detail** about the Rapture in Luke 17:22-37 because Luke 12:40 suggests an even earlier reference to it. However, Jesus did not give the dissertation on 'Last Days' events specifically pertaining to Israel until He was outside Herod's Temple compound. Even then to mischievously speculate, Jesus may only have raised the subject because He was slightly miffed by the Disciples raving-on about Herod's masons! [Otherwise, Jesus probably would have revealed that information some other time or place anyway.]

One might even turn the point around slightly by suggesting that Paul had noted, or realised, from Luke's interviews, that Jesus opted to privately turn to the Disciples, change the subject from the coming of the Kingdom and to refer another event in "The Days of Noah" concerning the suddenness of His return but at The Rapture; all that in the wake of the Pharisees' rejection of Jesus' Kingdom offer to them there and then (Luke 17:21).

Thus Jesus began talking to His Disciples not about the Comng of the Kingdom but of another Event or Day i.e., the Last Trump Day - The Rapture. Then as Paul further considered the Advents of Jesus in connection with the Jewish

Festivals, Paul realised the Feast of Trumpets' "Last Trump" actually referred to that sudden Coming to rescue the Church. That being the day that would assuage the (Future) Disciples of their Longing for their Saviour. Paul realised that particular day, which we are calling "The Rapture", would be a distinctly separate event from The Second Coming and **then** the introduction of the Kingdom of God. That will come after Jesus rescues Israel at Bozrah. The Church would always have saved Jews amongst its membership and that was why Paul appealed to Gentiles to work hard to bring his fellow Jews into the Church through their witness to Jews (e.g., Romans 10:1, 11:5).

In the Rapture, soteriologically-saved Jews will be separated from their unsaved Jewish Brethren who will subsequently have to become soteriologically saved like anyone else but during the awful Tribulation. Hence the need for The Rapture to be a distinctly different event to the Second Coming. A major purpose of The Rapture is to *rescue* from Tribulation and Antichrist ("deliver us from the evil one, John 17:15, I John 2:14, I John 5:19) both saved Jews and Gentiles. That is to save "from the Evil One" The Church of Christ as per Ephesians 2:12-14 and Galatians 6:16. So it is possible Paul's and Luke's work, in tandem, eventually helped lead Paul (along with The Lord's Help obviously) a better understanding of this crucial distinction between **Rapture** (per I Corinthians 15:52, I Thessalonians 4:13-18, Titus 2:13) and **Second** (or **Last**) **Coming**. But Jesus only began teaching on these subjects in any detail once the Jewish leaders had made it abundantly clear they were not any more going to seriously examine Jesus' claims about the Kingdom of God being something that was so close to being within their grasp. The Kingdom was very closely within their grasp if only they would accept Him and trust in the Three Messianic Miracles, defined on their own terms, that proved His Status. But it was not to be thus! In AD 30, Israel's Leaders rejected the "Voice" of the "First Sign" of Exodus 4:8. When Moses presented the two miracles to the Jewish Leaders of his day (*circa* 1485 BC) they gratefully and joyously accepted them and said "we will follow you". Israel's Leaders in AD 30 would not follow Jesus of Nazareth.

Again, all this highlights the importance of the relationship between The Rapture and Second Coming with regard to Soteriological and Physical Salvation as used in the Bible. One must clearly distinguish between these. On the one hand, there is the physical salvation of the last generation of living believers in the Church of Christ to save it from the Wrath to come (I Thessalonians 1:10, Revelation 3:10). That Church generation, perhaps our's, is a body of already-soteriologically saved people. On the other hand, especially in order to fulfill certain Promises to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, and indeed to The Divine Son of David, there will be a need for the physical salvation of Israel from Antichrist. But that physical salvation still requires repentance. That will occur in an urgent and frantic environment by a desperately seeking Israel holed-up in a trap in Petra-Bozrah. On repentance, and only on repentance of the rejection of Jesus of Nazareth, Israel receives soteriological salvation on the same basis (I Corinthians 15:1ff) by which we all now get **soteriologically-saved**.

Unless one does keep the Rapture and Second Coming separated into two events many other eschatological texts simply get confused, or worse, ignored. That cannot be correct. In any case, Matthew 24:36 and Mark 13:32 use the *Peri Di* conjunction precisely to separate the Days of Noah statements from the other earlier statements there at Olivet. Presumably therefore, the 'earlier' statements prior to Matthew 24:36 and Mark 13:32 were about the destruction of Jerusalem's temple in AD 70 and "Second Coming" statements concerning the far distant future presumably some two millennia down the track of Time or the **Prophecy-His Story Continuum**.

### **Exactly to Whom was Jesus talking?**

Also, when we read that Jesus "talked to His Disciples", we need to remember that under the Exodus 4:8 Hypothesis one has to carefully think (*think twice*) about the actual audience being addressed. In Exodus, God was speaking with Moses about the two special signs He would give Moses to demonstrate in front of the Leaders of Israel and before Pharaoh. Of course every reader's focus is on what Moses was going to achieve in the near future. That reading will usually be in a language like English or Latin or Greek. Few would look at the exact Hebrew used in the passage that we explain (*decode*) elsewhere and summarise as follows.

God's immediate message via the Two Signs of Exodus 4:8 was that He, Jehovah, was going to take Israel out of Egypt in *circa* 1485 BC. God was going to take the Israelites who had been living in Egypt back to Israel-Canaan where they belonged and where God had planned to run His special Mosaic Covenant with Israel. That was a key purpose in giving Israel this specific small strip of land nestled between Mount Hermon's hills, the Jordan River, the deserts of The Sinai and Arabia and of course the Mediterranean Sea. The ancient Israelites in *circa* 1900 BC should have gone back after the Seven Years of Famine that they sat out in Egypt and Canaan as recorded and reported in Genesis 47:13. Instead, the ancient Israelites decided to stay in Egypt for 400 years (*circa* 1900-1500 BC). For most of that time in Egypt the Israelites lived in very comfortable conditions indeed! But they were not living according to the Plan God had for Israel under what is called the Mosaic Covenant. Israel had been defined, as it were, under the permanent and unconditional Abrahamic Covenant for the purpose of abiding in Israel under the temporary and conditional Mosaic Covenant.

But as we note in our discussions on the matter, God was using that incident recorded in Exodus 4:1-8 to also speak about, or speak to, **two future generations of Israel**. One was in AD 30 when it rejected the raising of Lazarus (a dead man, recorded as being resurrected only to die again paralleling Moses' dead staff becoming a snake then dead-wood again). The next will be in AD 2016+ when a later generation of Israel of a later "Age", "Era" or "World" (John 18:36) **will begin to accept** Christ at the raising of the Two Witnesses slaughtered by Antichrist in the streets of Jerusalem. (They are reported in the text as alive then dead then alive again like Moses' hand that turned leprous in

Exodus 4:8).

Likewise, we believe, when Jesus refers to the "Disciples", depending on context of course, He is sometimes referring to His Disciples in these Last Days. That's us, not the Disciples back then! Our thesis here is that Jesus knew some of His Words would be transmitted via the New Testament to the last generation of disciples in His Church (Matthew 16:18). The Disciples in AD 30 could not possibly comprehend the situations and scenarios we now **can** understand and are having to deal with. Jesus' Disciples in AD 30 effectively were in the *same boat* as Moses back there at Exodus 4:8 in 1500 BC. Moses was clearly focused on the next few weeks' events, i.e., his forthcoming encounter not only with Israel's leaders but with Pharaoh and Moses' former palace colleagues if the latter were still alive. Moses' mind was *elsewhere* and he could not envisage the events of Lazarus let alone what would happen to the Two Witnesses. Nor could the Disciples in AD 30 conceive of events as we are able to watch them unfold. Reflecting on Daniel 12:4, we also have a lot more **His-Story** and History to fall back on to interpret today's developments. So we have to be able to judge where Jesus might be talking directly to us, not to the Disciples back then.

**Verse 26;**

**"Days of Noah ..."**

There was nothing like the apostasy and scepticism towards God in AD 30 as there was in *The Days of Noah* in *circa* 2450 BC and now (AD 2016).

After slipping into the very-near future in Luke 17:25, Jesus then moved forward in time but back on subject of The Rapture in *The Last Days* in the very-far-off Days of Noah of Luke 17:26. Jesus seems to be giving us a clue here by effectively comparing His faithless generation of Israel versus a future but intriguingly unspecified 'generation' that would have faith (Endnote 16). However, the future Israel will have to turn around from faithlessness toward God to Faith in God and in His Only Begotten Son, the Saviour and Messiah of Israel. Of course there will be another 'faithful generation' in future and that would be a congregation of Jews and Gentiles in the Church of Christ. But that certainly would not be obvious to audiences in the original context back there in AD 30

Part of the Exodus 4:8 Theorem is that the populace should be blinded to the verse's real meaning or implication in order that the offer of the Kingdom of God in AD 30 would be **genuine** even if God already knew Israel was going to reject it. So this lack of understanding is what the reader should expect. It is part of the Trans-Biblical Plan of Glory (Doxology).

However, or instead, the standard position theologians and modern churches take here, albeit by amalgamating a range of scriptures, is that Jesus is switching His attention to a Church of Gentiles alone, any 'Jews' simply **assimilated** into it, forgetting that in its earliest inception the Church of Christ was entirely Jewish with a Proselyte (Jewish-convert) minority. That view then says in effect that

God is no longer having any dealings with Israel. That presumes that God therefore abandoned His Covenants with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and David, therefore with even "The Son of David", The Divine Christ Himself! Ridiculously, Christendom takes on the Laws of Moses as still 'Live', and applicable to itself, but not the Covenants with Abraham and David. The reverse is the actual situation. The Laws of Moses, i.e., the Mosaic Covenant "written on stone tablets", are finished and fulfilled. Though they are still an illustration of God's Glory of course and part of **His Story**. They simply are not applicable or mandatory to a believer today. The Covenants with Abraham *et al* are still very much alive and explain the entire controversy concerning Israel today!

What most modern theologians now fail to consider is that in the 'future' generation, Jesus was talking about two bodies God is concerned about (Endnote 17). Although here in Luke 17:22-24 and 26-37 Jesus must in effect be specifically addressing the Church alone because the information concerns The Rapture. Thus, Luke will report Jesus' advice to Israel and what that body will face near the 'End of the Age' etc., in his twenty-first chapter when narrating the Olivet Discourse. One 'Body' is the Church which comprises saved Jews and Gentiles. The other 'body' (to be represented as a "carcase" or "corpse") is Israel which is composed of mainly of unsaved Jews because officially "Israel" still includes the saved Jews in the Church who are in effect dual citizens of two bodies - **Church of Christ** and **Israel**. Saved Jews in the Church will of course escape the things of the Tribulation by being members of the Church of Christ. So at The Rapture, saved Jews will in effect leave all unsaved Jews behind to face the music.

There is nothing surprising in this to someone like the writer here who is a British and New Zealand Passport-holder. When one focuses on this distinction, it becomes evident that there is very good sense in recognising the need to have separate strategies for each of the two bodies God is concerned about in the very *Last Days*. There is The Rapture for the Church. There is the Second or Last Coming for Israel. In the papers in this series entitled *The Rapture and The Church* and *Seven Key Event Pairs*, it becomes obvious that the Church and Israel must be separate entities, though saved on the same basis, but with different roles and functions in God's overall Plan of Glory.

In our position as Jesus' Disciples in the Church of *The Christ*, quite possibly or plausibly near the 'End of the Age', whether one is Gentile and now in the Majority or Jewish and now in the Minority, one is in the unique situation of witnessing an apostate (Ezekiel 11:19, 37:8, 22:18, 36:20-27) nation-state of Israel making waves (Good and Bad) in our Age. Therefore, we have the unique responsibility to 'rightly divide the Scriptures' and explain the issues to the World so that it may be aware of God's Plan to bring about:

- Personal Salvation for all who accept and believe;
- Israel's repentance from Apostasy; and

- God's rule (for the Seventh and Last Millennium?) on this very badly mis-ruled 21st Century World.

Although Jesus' demise was "unjust" and much of it was attributed to the disbelieving Jewish leaders' lobbying of Rome, and its Governor, in order to effect the execution of Jesus, Rome did the deed, not Israel. Theologically, of course, even Rome cannot be held to blame any more than anyone else because Jesus came to lay down His Life - for the Whole World's salvation. However, Israel's leaders could have supported Jesus but The Lord would still be sacrificed as Rome moved to eliminate a Challenger to Caesar (c.f., Jesus' comment to Pilate in John 18:36). One stresses here again, the introduction of the Millennium was theoretically or technically possible back then in AD 30! That point is usually overlooked by most observers. Exodus 4:8 never guaranteed Israel would **not** believe the Voice of the First Sign (and actually accept Jesus' raising of Lazarus). It merely **intimated in the Subjunctive** that condition in a masterful piece of script. If Israel had accepted Jesus then His Messianic Kngdom would have been of that Era ("World" John 18:36). If Israel had accepted Jesus, and John before Him, Jesus' "servants would be fighting *against His Arrest*", John 18:36b).

By way of direct contrast, nor was there any guarantee Adam would **disobey** God in the Garden of Eden. Likewise, even before Mankind, there was never a guarantee that Satan would one day **rebel against God**. However, inevitably, just like Satan and Adam, Israel did fail (Endnote 18) at that AD 30 stumbling block concerning Jesus. Israel's particular hurdle was whether to accept or reject Jesus of Nazareth and all His claims (for Christendom's hurdle refer Endnote 18).

In this day and age the World has far more evidence of God's Glory staring it in the face through the scientific data that we have gathered. Also, through other endeavours in the pursuit of knowledge, this world's generation now is more apostate than any other generation of mankind (except probably Noah's). Today, one can observe mass apostasy and scepticism world-wide. At the same time, many are sceptical of Governments, institutions, universities, religions, think tanks, and rightly so. Instead of going to the Bible's Truth they invent their own. So they do not then turn to God and accept the Hope He offers. They also ignore God's Warning of the consequences of Adam's folly and why that will lead to destruction and chaos. God warned Adam a dire world-wide situation is where the world would get to if Adam went ahead and took of the fruit of that Tree of Knowledge (Endnote 19).

In verses 17:24-26, Jesus refers to '**His Day** as the Son of Man' and to "Days of Noah" affecting, in all probability, **us**. Therefore although *necessarily* unclear to the Disciples at the time, those events or situations were to be punctuated or preceded by Israel's temporary, and so far, 2000-year Fall (refer Endnote 18) as a result of its leaders' rejection of Jesus in AD 30. The destruction of the Temple in AD 66-70, and some associated persecution and slaughter, would of course occur while some people in Jesus' Generation were still alive.

The rejection in AD 30 was to some extent also due to the people's failure (or *nerve* perhaps) to overthrow or replace the recalcitrant leaders. The Jewish or Israelite Public went against their perhaps better judgement and mostly followed their false **Leaders**. Even during Jesus' Ministry, it is evident Nicodemus was actually "**The** Leader" of the Sanhedrin in John 3:1 & 10 until, evidently, a coup within the Sanhedrin resulted in the overthrow of Nicodemus and his fellow-supporters of Jesus such as Joseph of Arimathea and Simon the Pharisee (Lazarus). Presumably people like Anna of Asher, Simeon and Zecharias, father of John the Baptist, were dead by then. We doubt, however, there was any direct call from God for the people of Israel to overthrow their leaders. Governance structures being what they are in the wake of the Fall, it was in many ways inevitable Israel would stumble in the way it did in AD 30. This was all to be expected and part of God's foreknowledge. Even though God Himself instituted Governance in His commands to Noah, God foreknew what disaster, on occasions, Government would lead people into. Apostle Peter reminded everyone that it is incumbent on one and all to obey Government rules (I Peter 2:17, "Honour the King") unless there is a clear breach of God's Law or moral standard as in the German Nazi Government's plan to exterminate Jews.

Edit to 16/2/17

It is probably the same for Jesus' Disciples today. We are persecuted by various leaders, including church leaders, who try to shut us up or suppress discussion of important Biblical matters. Government leaders do not want churches telling their flocks about Jesus' Wonderful Government for obvious reasons if one examines the true history of the battles between 'church' and 'state'! Whatever, we are not called on to overthrow our false leaders whomever or wherever they are. The Rapture now obviates the need to do so! It has to be left to God to do make the relevant judgements. Individual Jews and Gentiles have always been able to opt out of the World's way by accepting God and His Good, Acceptable and Perfect Plan in the wake of Satan's, then Adam's then 'Israel's' respective failures in *circa* 4.5 Billion BC, *circa* 4004 BC and AD 30. However, it will only be Enoch, Elijah and Raptured Church Saints who will find themselves literally being lifted out of the chaos of their respective eras. Elijah certainly, and possibly Enoch as well, will be returned to re-continue ministries and even perhaps face death if they turn out to be "The Two Witnesses" of Revelation 11:1-13.

**Verse 27-29;**

**".. Noah .. and days of Lot"**

Luke 17:27-28 quotes Jesus' specific point about the Days of Noah that *Genesis* did not report. That was the **regularity** of societal life even as the moment of disaster approached and in the case of Sodom and Gomorrah it is obvious normal activity continued until the disaster. Especially at the Great Flood, God used some catastrophe to bring about the re-enting of the earth to release the waters from the "fountains of the *Great* Deep" (Genesis 7:11, NASB). Quite

normal activity went on even though terrible sexual corruption involving women and fallen angels was virtually *rampant*. God had to stop that inappropriate intercourse and destroy the offspring of it. The Seed of the Woman Programme was at stake because of that behaviour. Jesus of Nazareth, that fulfillment of the 'Seed of the Woman', has since come of course. Otherwise most things of Noah's Day are very similar to now *viz.*, sexual nonsense, drugs, alcohol, mind-shaping via Internet, computer games, virtual reality etc. These things are distorting humanity in a myriad of ways which God foreknew would happen especially after 6000 years of Man migrating toward his own Tree of Knowledge. Our modern 'Tree' is composed of the network of computers, Internet etc., scheduled to become a 'mind' of its own by AD 2030, the 2000<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Foundation of Christ's Church. Above we referred to the climatic and environmental reversals going on. They also are taking us back to the pre-Noahic Flood situation and in many ways are the most interesting parallel between 2450 BC and today with all the paraphernalia, pomposity and pontification of the climate-change brigades.

After a description of a yet-to-come (as at AD 30) evil era akin to Noah's Days, Jesus in Luke 17:28 referred to the "Days of Lot". Initially, in *Genesis*, Sodom, the town Lot went to live in, perhaps in his retirement, seemed to be a good law-abiding place. Lot had even sat (*sheb*) outside the city's gates assisting in its administration, exit and entry rights, regulation of commerce and overseeing a wide variety of contract registrations. Archaeologists have found those sorts of regulatory functions were a primary service cities provided in *circa* 2000 BC in the region known today as Syria and Iraq. With their walls, cities also provided security from the often-lawless rural regions or *Outback*.

Sodom's descent into iniquity seems to have been quite quick though we have no idea how long Lot had lived in Sodom by the time its destruction arrived. Jesus points out that even after Sodom had descended into the most vile filth, there were still normal things going on in the city. Evidently, Lot's wife seems to have thought about going back to Sodom even though one had to put up with despicable nonsense there. Believers today have the same problem. We cannot easily exit all this. In fact, we are required to keep witnessing even throughout the worst of the immorality and chaos. We witness in order that God may yet save some souls or have us lead some souls into eternal-life-fulfilling choices. One might even say; though of course we cannot in reality because we thereby limit or restrict the Omnipotent Creator; "that without our witness, God cannot say 'Mankind is without excuse'".

The fact that we are also trapped, to some extent, within this nonsense, gives us a deeper sense of Revelation 3:19-20. By continuing to obey the admonition or exhortation to "not forsake meeting together" (Hebrews 10:24-25), it may be that via the witnessing of the last of the true believers, in any particular congregation, that Jesus can 'knock on the door' of any 'local' congregation of "lukewarm" attendees, and 'exhort', 'reprove' or even 'discipline' them. We keep attending and witnessing by example even though we are shunned for what seem to be our

'extreme' (but literal) beliefs. Rarely, if ever, are we asked to speak and teach. Unlike the mosques of Islam, we are not going away to 'ISIS-type' Camps (*Isilating ourselves*) to form our own extremist show and blow up all outsiders, infidels or apostates-of-Christendom. Our detractors are happy for us to be associated with extremist islamist groups. The parallel in Islam leads to an even more insane situation whereby, far and away, fellow-Muslims are the largest proportion of Muslims killed by other more *fanatical* Muslims. Instead, the Bible-believing Begotten or *Born Again* Disciple of Christ continues to work within a local congregation near wherever he or she lives.

Luke 17:28-9 indicates both normality then sudden, terrible and swift destruction descending on just the two cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. "The Day of the Son of Man's 'Revelation'" in verse 30 is **likened** to this. But "likened" to what, exactly? It may be that Jesus was just pointing to one aspect of similarity, i.e., the suddenness of the Rapture. There may not be any accompanying disaster whatsoever, or certainly not immediately or soon after. Sodom and Gomorrah likewise paralleled both the normality and abnormality of activity immediately prior to the Great Flood in verse 27b. Thus The Rapture is at a time of normality and intense abnormality.

An important reason why we suggest Luke 17:22-37 is specifically about the Rapture, not the Second Coming is that both events will nevertheless share some common conditions. The Rapture and Second Coming will be, relatively-speaking, quite near to each other in **Time**. The Church has an important role in the Salvation of Israel or for the preparation of Israel to receive Salvation (Romans chapters 9-11). Furthermore, there is only seven years for the Tribulation to run so why bother putting already God-fearing and saved living-believers through it (I Thessalonians 1:10, Revelation 3:10). Thus, there is probably little need to take the Church of Christ out **too soon** especially if there is work for us in convincing as many as possible to join the Church. A reason for taking the Church into Heaven is for the Marriage of the Lamb so there is no need for too much time on Earth to pass by before that is completed in Heaven.

Immediately following the Rapture, to *rub it in* so to speak, God may nevertheless send, in the manner of Sodom and Gomorrah, some sort of 'rain of destruction' onto the Earth. However, it is also possible to explain the effect of The Rapture on Earth's affairs, of itself, will be a sort of disaster. For example, the World will suddenly lose the last of its Godly, uncorrupted, hard-working and honest working-men and -women. One can speculate on the chaos that will descend on the planet on that day. In the writer's situation, who will then come to the local toilet block to keep the facilities 'Clean, Odourless, Orderly and Tidy (C.O.O.T)? Luke 17:35 indicates the agricultural sector could be disastrously affected especially if the Rapture occurs at the height of the harvest. One may not need asteroids or massive storms and hurricanes to provide an accompanying parallel *Noahic* or *Sodomitic* disaster to complement The Rapture. The disasters that befell the world of Noah and the cities of Lot may have been mentioned by Jesus to emphasise an enormous and significant alteration to the world's affairs and the

way it is run and administered immediately following the Rapture. Alternatively, disasters of the *Noahic* or *Sodomitic* type may befall the World on the Day of The Rapture in order to distract the world's attention from it and to keep it *Private* by leaving people in the disaster's aftermath to conclude the missing believers were killed (*removed*) by the disasters. Since those days may also be a period when the Antichrist-666 has been revealed, which may be **before** the signing of the Seven-Year Treaty of Daniel 9:27, Antichrist may use any accompanying disaster to explain the disappearance of Jesus' disciples, followers and believers. These are practical issues one needs to address in giving a realistic **Apologetic** for the Rapture to unbelievers. No apology is given here for making these points.

### **Verse 30;**

#### **" ... Day ... Son of Man is Revealed"**

When Luke writes this will be the day "The Son of Man is Revealed", it is tempting and easy to think this refers to the highly visible-to-all Second Coming. On reflection, if we consider the First Advent, only a few people were aware Mary was with child by the Holy Spirit. A few more souls may have been present at His Birth. Shepherds arrived at the place Jesus was staying very soon afterwards. Then many people became aware of the putative arrival of the Messiah when the Maji came from Persia and Babylon to visit Jesus. Many may have regarded that as a stunt perhaps. The incident at the Temple when Jesus was twelve or so must have raised more eyebrows. At His Baptism, there was a highly visible and Glorious Revelation of Jesus. As He began His miracles, people could not help be aware of the phenomenon in their midst.

Thus the Rapture may simply be one- or the first-step in a Two Part *Revelation* with the Second (or 'Last') Coming. Likewise, one can speculate that the coming of the Antichrist-666 may be progressively revealed to at least some members of the Church and to acolytes of the Antichrist who will perhaps have been chosen to guide or mentor him in his early years. One could consider an alternative that the Antichrist's 'revelation' is like the Rapture very sudden and obvious. Depending on how one does ultimately and correctly interpret "revelation" in this context, the 'Revelation' of the "Son of Man" in Luke 17:30 need not refer to the Second Coming *per se*. We are reminded from verse 22 that it will be "one of the days of The Son of Man". In the discussion under **Verse 22**, we have already identified three 'Days' that might refer to, i.e: Rapture; Marriage of the Lamb; and Second Coming.

The Rapture and Second Coming are part of a series of steps in the *Revelation* of Jesus. Term 'Second Coming' tends to be a bit simplistic. It overlooks the fact that after the First Advent in 7 BC, in AD 30 after briefly meeting Mary Magdalene, Jesus returned to the Father in John 20:17. In turn, that implied that on each occasion Jesus was with the Disciples in the forty days prior to the "Ascension" he *commuted betwixt* Heaven and Earth. Really, we are looking at a series of events between the First Advent in 7 BC and the Last Advent on the last day of the Tribulation. In that context, The Rapture is little different to an

occasion when Jesus visited the Disciples as the Gospels recorded. The only significant difference is that on this occasion Jesus takes **all** His followers away, as they still live, and all the rest of the 'Dead in Christ' as well.

Luke 17:30, "is revealed", seems very *low-key* or *out-of-the-blue* in contrast to Luke 21:27, Matthew 24:30 and Mark 13:26 where many unusual and wondrous circumstances accompany the 'Revelation' or 'Appearance' of the Lord in those passages. As we note above, this 'revelation' of Luke 17:30 will undoubtedly be sudden but not necessarily accompanied by coinciding, preceding or ensuing disasters. Luke 21:27, Matthew 24:30 and Mark 13:26 note some impressive surrounding circumstances or "signs" these specifically designated quite abnormal events precede **and herald** The Lord's sudden arrival. That is not the case for Luke 17:30 where immoral and Godless stuff is happening **alongside normal activity only** to suddenly be punctuated by a loud Trumpet ("The Last Trump") and Jesus whisking-away, in front of everyone else's eyes, the Body of Christ from the Earth on that day alongside "The Dead in Christ" etc.

### **(3) Verses 31-36; The Husetop Metaphor**

[Luke 17:36 was not found in every early manuscript].

These verses discuss a variety of states-of-readiness, -unreadiness, or, as in the case of Lot's wife, prevarication. One can envisage a similar state at the time of the Rapture. Some will be ready, others unready and some will not be sure what to do having one eye on the Bible and the other on their ambitions in life. In contrast, by the end of the Tribulation, judging by the descriptions in *Revelation*, most people will have clearly made up their minds where they stand. People who have become believers in Jesus during the Tribulation, or since The Rapture, will be battling for survival in the extreme conditions, helping Jews to hide from Antichrist and themselves evading Antichrist's agents. Unbelievers will be lining up with Antichrist to destroy Israel. As noted, people will know how much time is left once the Tribulation has started. It will be possible to count-down the days.

So Luke 17:31-36 points to a different set of circumstances to the end of the Tribulation. At the end of the Tribulation there is a degree of *certainty* they will be without *excusatory* about outcomes unless one chooses to disregard the obvious. In addition to the testimonies of the 144,000 Jewish male virgins, The Two Witnesses and Elijah, The Scriptures will be available for people to read. As The Tribulation proceeds, people will know which side of the fence to sit on. It will be obvious who Antichrist is and what his plans are, certainly from the middle of the tribulation. The expectant believer, prior to The Rapture, in contrast, has absolutely no idea of The Day when the Rapture is coming. He or she cannot count down the days. There may be no sign whatsoever of the emergence of the Antichrist. Although it does seem possible, as this author knows, to work out the "Number of his Name" as Revelation 13:18 explains. So, the "Wise" at least, may know who the antichrist might yet be. Instead of counting down the days, the believer awaiting the rapture is also waiting for a Loud "Trumpet" Peal, a

"shout" or "voice of an archangel" in the heavens if I Thessalonians 4:16 and I Corinthians 15:52 are correctly being interpreted.

**(a) Luke 17:31-35 (Standing on housetops)**

Here, Luke introduces one warning that seems to be very similar, if not the same, to that given in Matthew 24:17&18 and Mark 13:15&16. In Matthew and Mark, this warning comes immediately after the "Abomination of Desolation". Luke 17:31 does not mention that at all. However, Luke 21:20 does say, "when you see Jerusalem is surrounded .... her desolation is near..." then get out of Jerusalem and even get out of Judea. Luke's "desolation of Jerusalem" and Matthew's and Mark's "Abomination of Desolation" are almost universally agreed to be the same thing and we concur with that here though aware that "similarity does not necessarily equate to sameness". But unlike Matthew and Mark, Luke is silent and does not mention 'house-top dwellers' anywhere in his Olivet discourse of chapter 21 and certainly not in the next verse after the one about Jerusalem's desolation as Matthew and Mark do with their "Abomination of Desolation". That is why commentators think Luke for some reason wrote that 'house-top' section of the account earlier in his Gospel. Although why he did so is usually unconvincingly or inadequately explained. Luke puts the house-top situation in his chapter 17 account which is clearly the description of a situation related to a group of people, evidently anywhere in the world, "**longing for One of the Days of the Son of Man**". The house-top dwellers of Luke 17:31 are yearning for "One" particular "Day". This 'yearning' or 'longing' suggests they might also be looking upward! If this is a code to alert the putative Rapture Saints in the general era of the 'Last Days' or 'End of the Age' they will certainly be looking to the skies on a daily basis, being ready, and keeping their ears peeled for a Trumpet Sound. They will not be in hiding which is an important point Dr Fruchtenbaum notes in relation to Jews keeping out of Antichrist's sight after the Mid-Tribulation turnaround in his policy of friendship to the Jews and the beginning of Antichrist's outright hostility against Israel and the Jews. Messianic Jewish believers like believing Gentile Christians will be on the lookout for The Rapture and be '*out there*' witnessing just like Gentile believers in Jesus of Nazareth, The Son of God, The Son of Man.

Another reason for linking this 'House-top' situation in Luke, Matthew and Mark to the **same** occasion is that it refers specifically to house-top dwellers in Jerusalem. In *circa* 2008, the author slept one September evening on the rooftop of a hostel in the Old City run by an Arab businessman. The author even experienced a brief snow flurry during the night. One had to vacate the preferred hostel on the Jaffa Road for that particular evening, *there being no room at the Jaffa Road Inn!* [The afternoon before one had left one's computer battery pack at the Jaffa Road Internet Room and it was still there the next day! Thank you Lord]. However, to get off the roof in the Old City hostel, one had to go back down the stairs into the main building. Then one had to exit the building and walk for several minutes along alley-ways covered with rooves, awnings or verandahs. It took several minutes to get back out to the street jam-packed with

crowds, where one could see the sky. From there it was a bit of a hike just to get to the Old City Wall let alone get out of the rest of the City of Jerusalem. All three Gospel writers at this point record that people are warned not to go down to get anything they own or possess inside to take with them. That point is exactly the same in all three accounts. Two questions arise:

- Are Matthew and Mark commenting on the urgency with which people must flee; and
- Is Luke commenting from the point of view of being ready to be taken up?

For those going Heaven-ward in the Rapture, there is no way anyone will either need to, nor is able to, hang-on to whatever the person has grabbed anyway. Someone in the fireld is unlikely to be taking his or her pitch-fork up into the skies with their person.

Those Jews or Israelis fleeing Antichrist's armies in the last few weeks of the Seven-Year Tribulation will only have their flight delayed and be bogged down if they take baggage or supplies with them.

One would have thought people watching, waiting and witnessing for the Rapture would not be taking a second thought about bringing anything from their earthly existence to that blissful scene at the Marriage of the Lamb.

The warning seems more practical for the Second Coming situation and almost irrelevant for the Rapture. Therefore in the case of the Rapture the warning may be an exhortation to those wavering. They are urged not to hanker after the cares of life symbolised by their desire to go down and settle something or make sure something is in place etc.

For Jews fleeing Antichrist, there will be provisions at Bozrah-Petra, apparently, so Israelis are urged to simply run-for it!

To what extent 'take nothing at all with them' is taken literally might have to be sensibly viewed. For example, should one get a coat to keep one warm or perhaps a bit of food for an infant. The Rapture saint absolutely, or one-hundred-percent, will not take anything with him or her but would that 'absolute' apply to every Jew in Jerusalem and Judea fleeing Antichrist? We see here that the warning or exhortation surely cannot absolutely apply to both Rapture and the final stages of the Tribulation and Antichrist's move to destroy Jerusalem, Judea, Israel and finish things off at Bozrah-Petra.

Therefore, one really does have to consider that 'house-top' warning or exhortation cannot be said to absolutely apply to the same event, neither the Second Coming nor the Rapture. But to some extent it must apply. We are no closer to the precise answer. And it may be so for a deliberate reason. We are not to be able to understand until our Daniel 12:4 & 9 situation occurs.

Again therefore, it could be seen from this 'house-top' injunction or exhortation,

that the Disciples in recording these discourses of Jesus may have themselves identified this need to take nothing with you as applying to the one event.

On the other hand that seems hard to believe because Matthew and Mark include the 'house-top' situation in the main body of the report of what Jesus said in relation to the Three Questions about the End of the Age etc. Matthew and Mark place their report of the Day of Noah and Day of Lot situations, having completed their Olivet discourse account, **after the Peri Di conjunction**. Luke includes the house-top situation in his discussion of the Days of Noah but in a completely different section of his Gospel, four chapters and at least days or weeks earlier. Whichever end of this conundrum we come from we fail to resolve it! Exactly who is being addressed, warned or exhorted, and before what exactly, all seems indistinguishable from the texts. Or, is it that like the 'corpse-carcase-body' and 'vulture-eagle' metaphor (refer below, "Corpses, Carcasses, Bodies? Eagles or Vultures?") this house-top thing is advice or a warning to one group and an exhortation to another group that is distinctly and importantly different?

However, as one spent a few days and weeks analysing the material for this paper, it dawned on one that only if one could clearly show that The Rapture and The Second Coming have to be separate and distinctly different occasions or days or events; and were recorded in the Gospels as such; albeit both events occurring within the same general background situation or wider environment, could one also then be secure in knowing how to 'rightly divide' the relevant passages verse by verse or section by section. That is where the *Seven Key Events* Paper kicks in. By using the Event Pairs in the Bible, and we have only specifically identified about 60 at this stage, we can learn about the different time horizons between each item in the pair (sometimes a few years, other times millennia).

We have also identified a number of Triplets where a third item could be added to the pair. For example, the events where Elijah and Elisha went up to Tyre and Sidon to raise back to life the dead son of a Phoenician woman. Clearly this is a pair of events in its own right but it could be supplemented with a third event whereby Jesus went up to Tyre and Sidon and gave back a normal demon-free life to a Phoenician woman's daughter. We conjoin the three events because, one believes, the daughter turned out to be Mary Magdalene. Mary would be the person chosen to complete another but very important pair-match. That was to off-set the occasion of the First Adam and Eve getting some bad news in the Garden of Eden with Jesus, the last Adam, and Mary Magdalene, the Last Eve, receiving the **Good News** ('Gospel') that the Blood Price for Adam's sin is paid and resurrection to eternal life with God is guaranteed for those that believe.

It is equally easy to see why modern readers; or every other generation of believers since the First Century Church; analysing these texts, should make the same assumptions as the Disciples in writing the Gospels, or as Luke's respondents to his interviews as they crafted answers to his questions. Also, by using metaphors, especially common ones like "as lightning" or "Where the vultures are gathered there is the Body or Carcase", Jesus could be deliberately

vague for justifiable reasons already discussed. That indistinction by the use of metaphors at crucial points could be used to keep believers on their toes or put unbelievers off the hunt. When we give out information on sensitive matters we too are careful to rein-in particularly sensitive facts. For example, when the Police have to report progress on a murder investigation. The Police may even leak out misleading information in order to flush-out information leading to the identification of the murderer. Although that perhaps only happens on television!

So the 'House-top' warning, the 'lightening' metaphor and Matthew's and Luke's 'Vulture-Corpse' metaphor could each be read in or from two quite different perspectives to explain two rather different things or outcomes. We do not include the statements about the Abomination of Desolation and the Desolation of Jerusalem being different. In that example, one needs to add or aggregate the two statements to draw the full meaning or conclusion that the (forthcoming false) Temple, Jerusalem and Judea and by extension even the Galilee and other regions of Israel are to be 'desolated' by Antichrist-666. Thus, Luke, Matthew and Mark distinctly partition their accounts either by placing them in a separate place (Luke, chapter 17) or by using the *Peri Di* conjunction (Matthew and Mark). We also note, Luke did not refer to the "Abomination of Desolation" but to a probably-related event. Mark did not refer at all to either the Vulture-Corpse' nor "lightening" metaphors.

However, if one can accept the contention for a clear distinction between The Rapture, and The Second Coming and Israel's gathering under emergency at Bozrah-Petra, then the injunction to *exit from the house-top* becomes somewhat more understandable. It equally or justifiably has relevance for two quite distinctly **different** situations. For Church Saints, to go down into the house and find one's way through the narrow rabbit warren that even today is the Old City of Jerusalem represents a way of life more involved with the affairs of day-to-day living rather than continuously looking upwards, ears peeled for the Trumpet Sound. For Jews having to get ready to flee Antichrist, it might even be better to run along a series of house-tops and climb down the city wall than to go down and get stuck in the masses shopping, fleeing or whatever in the narrow alleyways below. In practical terms, one might still get out that more conventional way but one should hurry and only do what is absolutely necessary before fleeing the city for the retreat at Petra-Bozrah.

Apostle Paul in I Corinthians 15:52, I Thessalonians 4:13-18 and possibly Titus 2:13 clearly understood there would be a Rapture even if most of his peers in that early Church of Christ did not make the distinction. Paul also saw, in the Rapture, the relevance or significance in the Feast of Trumpets in the cycle of festivals such as Passover (Death, Burial and Resurrection), *Shavuot* (Pentecost) and Tabernacles (coming of the Lord). The High Day of the Feast of Trumpets uniquely occurred on the First Day of the month. But it was often difficult to distinguish between the old Moon and the New Moon. The actual first day of any month was only proven several days after the event.

In Luke's house-top situation (17:31), the exhortation to flee, or be ready to

leave, are two rather different states of preparedness when one thinks carefully about it. But that is all Luke says here in chapter seventeen. This state of preparedness or being ready to *get out!* is not further explained or qualified as it is in Matthew, Mark and in Luke's later record of the Olivet discourse. Most importantly, Matthew 24:15 and Mark 13:14 place the 'house-top' exhortation immediately after, or as an immediate response to, the "Abomination of Desolation". Luke 17:13 says nothing about that. All he says here is, in effect, 'get ready to go'. However, in Luke 21:20-22 he **is** exhorting people to flee, but this time to flee a specific place, i.e., Jerusalem, for a specific reason, "the Days of Vengeance" that will descend upon the city as they will do in the wake of the Abomination of Desolation where Antichrist-666 reneges on his Seven Year Treaty with Israel. So Matthew 24:15-22, Mark 13:14-20 and Luke 21:20-22 clearly place their injunctions or exhortations not to go back into one's house, or go back to the city (Luke 21:21) **after** specific incidents or changes in situation making it untenable for Jews to continue dwelling in Jerusalem and Judea. Furthermore, the people are given directions where to flee, i.e., "to the mountains".

These things are scarcely, if at all, apparent in Luke 17:22-37. As discussed above and reiterated here for effect, according to the introductory verse for this passage, Luke 17:22 is principally about a "longing for **One** of the Days of the Son of Man". That reference may be to **One of Three** particular days. **Firstly**, The Rapture where Jesus gets to fetch-up His Bride. **Secondly**, His Wedding Day. **Thirdly**, at the 'Second Coming', as He rescue His beloved Israel, beloved of the Father Who was formerly *married* to Israel. God and Israel are soon to be reconciled via the Son's agency or intervention. That is to say, at the confirmation of the true identity of Jesus the Son of Joseph, i.e., Jesus of Nazareth, to His brothers i.e., unbelieving Israel today, at the 'Second Coming'. This will be in a similar manner to the way Joseph the *Begotten* (Chosen) Son of Jacob was *revealed* to his brothers in Genesis 45:1-5. That also was at the second meeting between Joseph and his once-estranged brothers looking for more food and grain as they negotiated with Joseph in his *prime ministerial* palace in Egypt.

Luke 17:22-37 seems to have no relevance to Israel's dire circumstances. It seems far more to do with difficult and hard times for the Church of Christ because of persecution. The persecution we face could be quite similar to some of Israel's problems either now or in the future. But that does not mean short-, medium- or long-term outcomes are exactly the same. Persecuted followers of Jesus of Nazareth "long for Him" to fetch us from these problems at some point in **His Story**. For the Church, composed of Jesus-believing and already-repentant, living, Jew and Gentile, there is to be a pre-Last Day physical salvation via The Rapture. For Israel, a satisfactory and Glorious outcome awaits her repentance then the Second Coming. There is a difference!

In Matthew 24:15-22, Mark 13:14-20 and Luke 21:20-22, i.e., in the 'Olivet Discourses' concerning Israel's Last Days in the Tribulation, any 'flight' is given a

specific *geographical* direction, i.e., "head for The Mountains". Judea and/or Jerusalem are specifically mentioned departure points. For The Rapture, the whole world will provide departure points wherever a believer is living, working and of course doing their WWW! There are no specific departure points as far as the Rapture is concerned. To direct people to go to "heaven" is, let's say, rather *pointless* because none of us knows exactly where to go apart from *Upwards*. Nor do we know how to get there! The believer does not get to Heaven under his or her own steam as the participants in the flights of Matthew 24:15-22, Mark 13:14-20 and Luke 21:20-22 will very much have to do. They have to hope the flight is not in Winter because of the flooded wadis all over the place and women will have to hope they are not pregnant! We won't bother speculating on the status of a pregnant woman in The Rapture even though there presumably will be some such women caught up in it.

This must mean that an earlier scenario posited here applies. Thus, one assumes, the Rapture discourse of Luke 17:22-37 took place a few days or weeks **before** the Olivet incident. The latter was sparked off with the Disciples' glorification of Herod's stones. Then came Jesus perhaps slightly *tetchy* initial response. Jesus, in Jerusalem, immediately continued this later discourse in response to a sub-group of the Disciples' Three Questions aimed at clarifying and amplifying Jesus' initial comment about Herod's stones. At that point, the discourse had nothing to do with disciples' of any generation "Longing for **One** of the **Days** of the **Son of Man**".

Those later specific three questions after Jesus' response to the accolades to Herod's Masonery were not just a yearning, so to speak; or 'longing for the Son of Man' as in Luke 17:22. They were about "Your Coming" but in the specific contexts of: an "End of the Age" (Matthew 24:3); "The signs when all these things are going to be fulfilled" (Mark 13:4); and "What will be the sign when these things are about to take place"? (Luke 21:7). In stark contrast to Luke 17:22 where Jesus volunteered some information without any request at all from the Disciples, their questions in Matthew 24:3, Mark 13:4 and Luke 21:7 were a response to a Prophecy from Jesus. They would have been connecting Jesus new Prophecy there at Olivet; about the near future (40 years thence) of the Temple, its then current wonderful plan of construction and future destruction; with words from other Prophets of Israel about the End of the Age. Many of Luke's correspondents may not have been acutely conscious of a distinction between a Rapture and Second Coming, when he interviewed them. They might have become more aware of the distinction after Luke had composed his Gospel and Paul had written his epistles to the Corinthians, Thessalonians and Titus. So the Gospels may reflect some slight fusion of Rapture and Second Coming, or *fate* of the newly established church compared to Israel's *fate*, in the minds of the interviewees, as the Gospels were composed, edited and published.

Matthew and Mark, while they must have known of a distinction by their use of the *Peri Di* conjunction, from memory they were not always able to neatly divide, distinguish and apply each and every factor specifically relating to the

Rapture from each and every factor specifically relating to the Second Coming. Then again, as this discussion has tried to demonstrate, if one does happen to be on a rooftop at **either time**, whether at the **Rapture** or at the sound of **Antichrist's armies**, the injunction to avoid going back down to get any goods can apply to both events but with rather different force or *raison d'etre*.

It seems the most common tendency is to assume that the **same injunction** given to both events means they occur at the **same time** or they are indeed the one and only event. People tend much less often to assume one particular injunction could equally apply in rather different ways or intent to two different, separate events not necessarily all that far away from each other in **Time**. Thus both events will have some very strange and some quite normal activities also going on in the background. As to Place, in one of two events, the injunction warns people in a small region of the world, Samaria and Judea (Israel) to flee to some mountains. But for the other event, The Rapture, which snatches people away from every part of the Globe the injunction still applies but without the flight to the mountains or out of Judea being relevant or applicable.

#### **(b) Luke 17:36 (Two men in bed)**

Write something on the veracity of this verse and relate it to other cases where the editors are not sure if the verse was in the original to give a bit of body to this sub-heading

#### **(4) Verse 37; The Vulture-Body metaphor**

##### **(a) "Where Lord"?**

So we come to this question at the conclusion of this eschatological passage in Luke 17. Presumably, it occurred a few days (or weeks) before the Lord got to the slopes of the Mount of Olives. At that hill-*mountain*, Jesus began His great eschatological discourse. The Disciples sparked it off by showing pride at Herod's masonry and then posing those **Three Questions** in response to Jesus' **outburst** (as we are stressing here for descriptive purposes).

The Three Synoptic Gospels do reveal some interesting divergence and convergence between Matthew and Luke on one hand and Mark on the other. Mark does not refer to the answer Jesus gave about the Eagles or Vultures gathering to feast from the Body or Carcase mentioned in Jesus rather enigmatic reply recorded in Matthew 24:28 and Luke 17:37. Interestingly, we also find just these two particular Gospel authors writing near-identical parallel passages (Matthew 12:22-42 and Luke 11:14-32) dealing with the situation of the Pharisees and others seeking signs from Heaven, or from Jesus ("from You"), just after **The Son of Man** had done what no other man could do and cast out a demon from a man who was deaf and dumb. That supposedly impossible task had been classified as a "Messianic Miracle" by the theologians and Sanhedrin so Jesus' performance of it should have been an adequate sign in and of itself. Instead, the leaders issued a stinging denunciation that Jesus had performed the

miracle with the connivance of a leading demon named Beelzebul. Matthew and Luke both then carry on their account to report Jesus' contrast of that faithless generation of Israelite leaders with the Queen of the South (Hatshepsut-Sheba, *circa* 950 BC not 1450 BC of the Egyptologists) and the Assyrian (North Iraqi) Men of Ninevah (*circa* 800-700 BC). The Queen and the Ninevahites (Assyrians) responded immediately and positively to "One Sign". With a few noteworthy exceptions (Simon-Lazarus, Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea), the Sanhedrin's Rabbis, Pharisees, Sadducees, Scribes, Lawyers and Herodians, were all rejecting sign after sign performed by Jesus (including the other two Messianic Miracles of healed lepers and the man **born** blind receiving sight). Matthew and Luke record this important juncture in Jesus' Ministry in the middle of their accounts at approximately the correct chronology and sequence (order of events). After that, Jesus only taught the crowds in parables and required personal acts of faith from that point on for any miracle to occur. Jesus' change in policy came about because this was the point where the Sanhedrin had effectively rejected Jesus' claims. Matthew and Luke, thus record the incident approximately in its correct chronological setting.

However, Mark refers to the 'Beelzebul' incident early in his Gospel and uses it to explain why Jesus Ministry had, as it were, failed before it had even started. Mark 3:22 used the event for his theme. Matthew and Luke, in contrasting effect, allow the tension to build up and let the events speak for themselves until this strategy-defining incident over the deaf and dumb man's demon being ejected. When the Pharisees sought a sign from Heaven Mark 8:11, the author is probably referring to the Beelzebul incident's aftermath when the Pharisees themselves stung by Jesus' devastating counter-reaction then lamely asked for a "**sign**" from Jesus. That was when Jesus said there would only now be the Sign of Jonah for them but when Jesus did resurrect they still rejected Him and they continued to voice that rejection as far into the future as the Stoning of Stephen in *Acts*.

So we do see some interesting examples of differences in treatment as to chronology, sequence and the way various Gospel incidents are recorded. But there is also **nuance** associated with all that. One statement can have more than one application, shade of meaning, timing of delivery and manner of delivery. It can be influenced or explained in different ways by context of other statements, either in nearby verses or elsewhere in Scripture. Those points might have a special or particular bearing on the aforementioned. And that seems to be precisely the case with Matthew 24:28 and Luke 17:37.

### **(b) Corpses, Carcasses, Bodies? Eagles or Vultures?**

In this section we will look at the way in which the 1960 NASB and the 1901 ASV treat Matthew 24:28 and Luke 17:37. These versions use two different words for the avian creature (**Eagles** or **Vultures**) Jesus used to depict the time and place of the besieged or persecuted people for which the translators use three different terms: **Corpses, Carcasses, Bodies**. The differences partly arise because the Greek words are not as precise in their ranges of meanings. But we also suspect

the background Hebrew idiom used Hebrew words in the original format that could yield different meanings or aspects of the same basic kind or thing. So there is plenty of room for loss or confusion in translation. Nevertheless, that can be rectified by appropriate analysis. That is not a serious problem, nor even a problem at all if treated properly which, sadly, is not all that often!

Our task is to decipher what, more precisely, Jesus was getting at when He said "wherever are the **Corpses, Carcasses, Bodies** there also are the **Eagles** or **Vultures**". So here we assume we have established that Luke 17:37 is part of Jesus' original Rapture Discourse. Further, it might have been broached even earlier at Luke 12:40 immediately or very soon after the Beelzebul incident. We can borrow a useful analytical tool from the *Seven Key Events* paper. It shows we do have to divide many parts of Scripture into two and normally only two separate and distinct events.

Thus, probably as far back as the Beelzebul incident of Matthew 12:24 and Luke 11:15 it has to be that Jesus, by necessity, began making a clear and vital distinction between what would now have to become "The Rapture" (a sort of pre-Second Coming visitation to Earth's Upper Atmosphere) and a 'Second' or more precisely **Last** Coming.

Our task is to work out exactly where Jesus made those distinctions in ensuing prophetic announcements. Also, possibly, our task is to work out where; if anywhere, in the Gospels and Epistles, which the Apostles passed-on (*forwarded*) to us; they themselves were slightly confused by or failed to see or perceive distinctive differences or variations in the use of a metaphor. That would have been quite reasonable and understandable from their perspective and situation. In fact, one might even argue, it would look suspicious if there were not some such indistinctions from place to place in the New Testament Scriptures. It is not a challenge to Divine Inspiration of Scripture to suggest such possibilities for the Divinity is surely able to clarify, in the hearts and minds of true believers, those 'indistinctions'.

Thus, where they did *inadvertently* pass on some apparent nuance that could be interpreted the wrong way we can show how it can be interpreted in the correct context. Furthermore, we could even suggest that in His Divine Method, God has ensured some confusion *gets in the way* in order that certain Scriptures also fulfill the points made in Psalm 119:99, Daniel 8:26b, 12:4 & 9, Mark 4:22b and Revelation 10:4, 22:10. So those are additional tasks for the analyst or student. The practice of them even might assist us in some other areas of Scriptural analysis as Revelation 19:10 suggests translated in today's English as, "The Testimony of Jesus (i.e., 'I am the Aleph and Tav') is the **Key** to understanding Prophecy".

The distinctions between "vultures" and "eagles" and between "bodies", "carcasses" and "corpses"; bearing in mind the Hebrew, Greek, 17<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Century English languages used by various Bibles; is covered in the section of the Rapture and Second Coming in the *Seven Key Events* Paper. Not

specifically covered in that paper are the four words used in the selected translations (1960 NASB and the 1901 ASV) for Matthew 24:28 and Luke 17:37:

- Matthew 24:28, NASB; "Corpse" and "Vultures" (we would say correctly);
- Matthew 24:28, ASV; "Corpse" and "Eagles" (we would say in-correctly);
- Luke 17:37, NASB; "Body" and "Vultures" (we would say in-correctly); and
- Luke 17:37, ASV; "Body" and "Eagles" (we would say correctly).

Note: Some versions use 'carcase' for 'body' or 'corpse'.

From the *Seven Key Events* Paper, we concluded Matthew 24:28 depicts the spiritually dead body (Ezekiel 37:8) of Israel for which a corpse or carcase would be what appears to be on the ground as seen by the vultures or armies of Antichrist surrounding Israel at Bozrah-Petra. To these 'vultures', Israel really does look to be a carcase ready for devouring. For Matthew 24:28, the NASB version is preferable to the ASV from the perspective of this paper because we do not see the sense in referring to the avian creatures as "Eagles" for the reason described below in the Rapture case. Luke 17:37, however, and in stark contrast, refers to a very much alive and vibrant body, both spiritually and physically, consisting of expectant Jewish and Gentile (Exodus 8:23) believers Waiting, Watching and Witnessing (WWW). Thus the ASV is a better translation of Luke 17:37. It is interesting to see that each version (NASB and ASV) seems to get one verse correct and the other incorrect. One finds this across virtually all translations and versions.

In these papers, the point is made that the Church will be snatched up like eagles taking their prey back home; to eat of course; but the Lord was not taking the analogy quite that far. He will snatch us away in His *Talons* to present us to His Father in (*The Third*) Heaven in preparation for the Marriage of the Lamb to His Translated **Body** of Believers. Believers alive at the time of the Rapture ('One' of the Days of the Son of Man) get their 'Translation' into a new resurrected body as they are hoisted through the air. Just as an animal would have its life snuffed-out as an eagle tears through the atmosphere at *100 m.p.h.*, back to his lair, so we too lose the old body and get the new! Thus for the Rapture, it would be far more sensible to adapt the metaphor to *living* bodies and *snatched away* by eagles. For, as in the words "somebody" or "anybody", we use 'body' to describe someone very much alive, not dead. Although admittedly 'body' is also used of someone found dead and 'antibody' describes the deceased detritus found in our bodies after our cells have killed-off an invader. But that is what nuances and metaphors are all about. They can **purposefully** hide real meanings especially until the time; **for which they were designed to be understood**; actually arrives. They also require the reader to do some solid and assiduous work over a lifetime of Bible study.

So in this analysis, we see a carefully structured situation where the metaphor about eagles and vultures is used only twice. Once at the end of Luke's Rapture

discourse, or in a segment of Scripture that is concluded here to be **Luke's Rapture Discourse**, and once by Matthew. The latter, however, places his quotation of the metaphor about a 'corpse' and 'vultures' (NASB) toward the end of the section of his record which Jesus began by referring to the Abomination of Desolation spoken by "Daniel" (i.e., in Matthew 24:15). In the NASB, Matthew 24:15-28 is sub-titled *Perilous Times*. It is in verse 28 that Matthew places the metaphor. Then, immediately following the metaphor, NASB has a heading for Matthew 24:29-31 sub-titled *The Glorious Return*. Dr Arnold Fruchtenbaum has *pioneered*, from sound textual analysis, the concept that Israel is surrounded by Antichrist at Bozrah-Petra at this very last stage of the Tribulation. So that is where Matthew actually places the metaphor. It comes several verses after the "Abomination of Desolation", which is generally agreed to be at the mid-way point of The Tribulation, and immediately before the last segment of Prophecy about Darkness, signs in the heavens then "The Sign" of the "coming of the Son of Man on the clouds" etc.

That clearly places Matthew's use of; or recording of Jesus' use of; the metaphor in a circumstance where still-spiritually-dead Israel ("corpse") is being cornered (by "vultures") for destruction (scavenging and eating). Equally clearly, Matthew places the metaphor in a very different set of circumstances to Luke though there are some circumstances in common even so. But the 'un-commonality' is so stark and gloomy in comparison that most literary analysts would surely agree that two different events are in view by the two different authors using this one particular metaphor. But the *Chief Generator* of the metaphor, perhaps using a commonly understood Hebrew idiom's capacity for a double-barrelled meaning, carefully and perhaps craftily used it. Actually, in some ways paralleling the playful use of *petros* and *petra* in Peter's Great affirmation of Jesus' identity, and Jesus' equally playful use of *Tanah*, *Tanakh*, and *Nathan*, in His Calling of Nathaniel, Jesus of Nazareth applied this metaphor under discussion in two slightly different nuances at two different places in two different discussions. As it happened and was handed down to us, the record of one of the talks, i.e., The Rapture Discourse originally given in Luke 17:22-37, may have been repeated at another place (Olivet) and in that way, as a sort of *addendum* or even *aside* to their main points, recorded in or by Matthew 24:36ff and Mark 13:32ff respectively.

So Matthew very intriguingly placed the metaphor of eagles-vultures and bodies-corpse just before he recorded Jesus' comments about the last few days of the Tribulation when the clouds begin to envelop the Earth and darkness descends as Antichrist's armies surround Israel at Bozrah-Petra. Matthew then introduced (or re-introduced) a parable about a fig tree (or 'the' Parable of the Fig Tree) and how it signalled when certain times might occur. The insertion of the parable signals that the next main item for discussion is going to be about something else further enhancing the view that the *eschatological* material to come (Matthew 24:29-44) is about The Rapture or at least some other *related* event.

The fig-tree parable introduces a couple of *riders* or bits of advice for that

particular generation (Matthew 24:34) that witnesses the things of Matthew 24:7-31. It will be one generation that observes the things in Matthew 24:7-31. Of course, it will also be true that one generation will witness and experience The Rapture for the obvious reason that it happens in just a space of minutes in all probability. The fig-tree analogy would only be necessary to picture a **season** (series) of events. The 'generation' rider may just apply to the second half of the Tribulation after the Abomination of Desolation. Or, it may apply to everything after the "*Nation against Nation and Kingdom against Kingdom*" event. Jesus said that "Heaven and Earth would pass away". Well that is true but only after the Millennium which is a long way off as far as we are concerned (at least 1007 years away). But Jesus used that obvious statement about a *far-off-the-field* event to stress "His Words" will not pass away. There was no intention to implicate, within 'The End' of the 'Age' or 'Era', a fiery and utter end to the world and Cosmos in that comment. So the emphasis is on the hearer or listener to seriously study **His Words** (Hebrew, *Devarim*) especially in these perhaps more complex, solid or meaty (c.f., Hebrews 5:12-14) passages.

Thus, as Luke's record shows, having firstly used a metaphor about eagles encircling - *and snatching away* - a body of living believers, Jesus later tweaked the metaphor to vultures and corpses to conclude his report of all the signs and signals that one day will indicate to Israel how close at hand she is to the fruition and fulfillment of the prophecies of Leviticus 26:40-42, Isaiah 53:1-12, Ezekiel 16:60-63, Hosea 5:14 - 6:3, or Zechariah 12:12. At the moment Israel; of course excluding the Messianic Israel of God (Galatians 6:16) i.e., the modern Jewish believers in *Yeshua B'Nazareth*; refuses to acknowledge the pre-requisite required for those prophecies to be fulfilled in her repentance (and apology?).

There is another way one could express the *Peri Di* conjunction as Matthew's record of Jesus having finished the Olivet Discourse concerning Israel's Day of Repentance, and events leading to it beginning from the Nation against Nation warring. It could be expressed:

"Oh, by the way, concerning (*Peri Di*) that '*Day of Longing for my Coming*' (Rapture) discussion I had with you ... (... *Disciples*; and one might add, "'them or us"?) ... before we met Bartimaues, remember only My Father *in Heaven* knows that actual Day *when we meet* (Matthew 24:36), but it will be like what it was in the Days of Noah (Matthew 24:37) when life was normal (Matthew 24:38) in many ways but for the terrible evil and wickedness involving corrupt and violent men, sexually promiscuous women and possibly even fallen angels in some other-than-sexual capacity (perhaps as demon-possession alone). That Day will come suddenly like the Great Flood (Matthew 24:39). It will be a very special Day for Me (*or one of two or three*) because I come to fetch away my disciples (or church or bride), whomever and wherever the individuals (not 'nation' or 'generation') are, in that Day, be it in the fields *and paddocks* or in the grinding mills *and factories* (Matthew 24:40-41).

## Part Two

### Introduction

We now come to an analysis of the Olivet Discourses and the way Matthew and Mark add their account of Jesus' words on The Rapture as a sort of adjunct to their accounts of Olivet . One thing we will not be doing here is to analyse the Second Coming passages. The main point in this paper is to contrast the Rapture with the Second Coming. The two events have quite different roles in God's Plan for Salvation. Even to the extent that there is both a rapture and a Second Coming God has confused the readers of the Bible in a unique way. Firstly, the confusion keeps us all guessing but we do not lose our faith in God. Secondly, God has made it clear in many passages that mankind must keep reading God's Word but that certain things would only be understood at certain points in the plan of **His Story**. Not every generation would have the same understanding of previous or later generations. The very first generations never doubted the Creation Account (including The Fall of Man) because they knew Adam who was the only person to have received instruction on the matter from God Himself.. The last Generations find it very difficult to believe the Creation Account.

In regard to an explanation of prophecies about the End Times ("Eschatology"), we recommend Dr Arnold Fruchtenbaum's *Footsteps of the Messiah* (Second Edition).

From Part One for:

### Part Two

we move to Part Two where we see how Matthew and Mark deal with the Rapture then how with Luke they all discuss the Second Coming in their reports of the "Olivet Discourse" given in Jerusalem.

Thus we are dealing with **Two Different Events** (Rapture and Second Coming) and, apparently in the Olivet Discourse **Two Different Particular Generations of Israel**. But we will leave those details for Part Two. This hangs around the 'you' in various verses. Matthew 24:2 obviously referred to an event many of them would see in AD 66-70. Matthew 24:5-6 could or would apply to them and to later generations. Matthew 24:7 may or may not apply to them although no doubt they would experience some earthquakes from time to time. perhaps they may not experience 'Great' quakes as some translators seem to imply Luke 21:11 suggests. That may be an issue that depends on how well the text has been translated. If Nation versus nation of Matthew 24:7 refers to WWI or Gog-Magog of Ezekiel 38 then that obviously is something Jesus Disciples would **not** see. Matthew 24:9a could certainly have applied to some or all of the Disciples but the events and circumstances from then on would seem to lie well beyond their time and only now seem to be on the way.

In Mark's account they will certainly see the events of Mark 13:2. But from then on, Jesus seems to start at the nation versus nation situation and that, if we assume it is either WWI or Ezekiel 38:1ff is obviously all well beyond their era. The "Gospel" referred to in Mark 13:10 is usually assumed to be The Gospel such as I Corinthians 15:1 where that 'gospel' referred to the matters in the next 6 verses. Whether Jesus referred to that particular Good News or to that and what he started off with about the Gospel or Good News that the Full physical Kingdom of God reigning on Earth was about to arrive is not clear from the Gospel text alone but is abundantly clear from the Gospels and other texts throughout the entire Bible. There was not much point the Apostles preaching about that full physical kingdom coming if it was at least 2000 years away as it is now turning out to be! Mark 13:14 and Matthew 24:15 mark the point at which antichrist is on the scene so that is clearly well beyond the ken of their era.

Luke 21:6 obviously is the scene the Disciples might see as noted above. Luke 21:8-9 could certainly apply to them and later generations then we come to the nation versus nation situation in Luke 21:10. Here Luke refers to the event we think is WWI or Ezekiel 38:1ff and in verse ii Luke refers to "great quakes". The world had been exposed to quakes for a long time so people were used to them. It does appear from this verse (Luke 21:11) presumably in the context of Luke 21:10 refers to a very distinctive generation in a very unusual situation involving both run-of-the-mill quakes but really very big and nasty ones all around the world.

During the catastrophe era, especially between 1500 and *circa* 800 BC, quite big quakes and fires and meteors and asteroids from the heavens were regular and familiar events as Velikovsky showed. Even after a solar-system induced catastrophe the earth took quite a lot of time settling down and during that period quite big quakes were a feature of the settling down process until another catastrophe hit. Since *circa* 700 BC, the solar system had settled down, as we say elsewhere to allow for the steady development of the Empires of Daniel's prophecies. But all that environment seems bound for more shake-ups on the eve of the rapture, Antichrist era, Tribulation and Second Coming in that order.

However, Luke 21:12 suddenly introduces "But before all these things". So Jesus backtracks in time a bit. The remainder of Luke 21:12 and the matters raised in 21:13-19 obviously could apply to Jesus' Disciples but to every other later disciple as well. In Luke 21:20, the gospel writer really confuses us if we do not take into account other scriptures. For He now says, "When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies its desolation is near". Does that refer to AD 66-70 or AD 2017+? By using the literal approach, one has to argue that this particular desolation of Jerusalem thus refers to the yet future one not to AD 70 because in Luke 21:22 clearly linked to 21:21 and it to 21:20 says "all things which are written will be fulfilled". Since what was "written" in AD 30 was the Tanaach, that meant all the prophecies of that book would be fulfilled and not prophecies that revelation refers to that go right out to the new, second or last Universe. Presumably also when Jesus referred to "all things" in Tanaach He assumed we would realise that references to the Messianic Millennial Kingdom in

the Tanaach were excluded from "all things fulfilled".

Luke 21:23-28 clearly applies to the Last of the Last days and not to their era.

So we see that the two generations "of Israel" that Jesus seems to be referring to are reasonably clearly delineated in the Synoptic Gospels' rendition of the Olivet Discourse but there are some aspects that clearly could apply to both Israelite generations and to every generation of Israelite and gentile believer from Ascension to Rapture or Second Coming for still-apostate Israel.

### **"Nation against Nation" (Matthew 24:7)**

Allongside this obscure probably Hebrew idiom about the bodies being surrounded by vultures, an idiom perhaps common to most cultures, we have this other relatively obscure idiom about 'Nation versus Nation and Kingdom versus Kingdom'. Dr Fruchtenbaum sources this idiom to some Hebrew extra-Biblical commentaries entitled the *Bereshit Rabbah* and "*Zohar Chadash*" based on texts in II Chronicles 15:6, II Chronicles 20:22-3 and Isaiah 19:2.

In Matthew 24:7, Mark 13:8 and Luke 21:10, the 'Nation against Nation' section of the wider eschatological passage is a sort of preamble to the *Last Days*. Dr Fruchtenbaum sees the phrase as the key event that begins the last period when a particular generation will participate in the ensuing prophesied events that will follow one another with increasing frequency (acceleration) like the birth pangs of a pregnant woman. Dr. Fruchtenbaum also thinks WWI was that event. Although the pre-WWI empires hid, suppressed, ameliorated, passified or depoliticised inter- and intra-ethnic tensions, we really have seen far more of this over the last decade or so with the nonsense in South Sudan being perhaps the most glaring example of the basic point in the *Bereshit Rabbah* and *Zohar Chadash*.

Also, alongside the 'nation versus nation' context, Matthew, Mark and Luke each report Jesus referring at this point to "famines and earthquakes" though Luke further adds "terrors and great signs from heaven" (21:11). Of course such disasters, even meteors and asteroids crashing through our atmosphere, could precede both the Rapture and Second Coming. Or the Rapture could take place when various cosmological phenomena are in occurrence. Such phenomena have occurred in the past as Dr Velikovsky shows in *Worlds in Collision* and *Earth in Upheaval*. In order to preserve the sense of imminency, Jesus did not specify whether those wars, famines and earthquakes or cosmological events would precede one event or both. Thus, to preserve a sense of Imminency, there were no specific signs to precede or point to the Rapture. Prior to the Rapture, there would only be a sense of *General Situation*, so to speak. That is implicit in the timing of the Feast of Trumpets in the context of the other Jewish festivals such as Passover, Shavuot and Tabernacles.

For the Second Coming, taking passages from Daniel and elsewhere, there will be some specific, important or even unique *once-for-all* signs preceding it such

as Antichrist's Treaty with Apostate Israel. In particular, in an event that may already (AD 2016) be in its preliminary or formative stages, is the Ezekiel 38:1 to 39:16 Invasion of Israel. It has to begin at least Seven Years before the Tribulation. Most likely, it will have become a **completed** event by the time Antichrist has risen to sufficient influence that he can negotiate a Seven Year Peace Treaty with Israel. This First Gog-Magog invasion requires Seven Years (Ezekiel 39:9) for the burning of rubbish left behind by the invading enemy. Assuming they were familiar with Ezekiel's works, and in regard to Matthew 24:7, Mark 13:8 and Luke 21:10, the Disciples in Jesus' Day may have thought the things mentioned in those Gospel verses also applied to both Rapture and Second Coming on the basis that both were the same event. Of course they probably would have been correct to assume the First Gog-Magog Invasion of Israel and perhaps some aspects in those Gospel texts could have been part of the same general background to both the **Day of Longing for the Son of Man** and the **Second Coming**. Today Jesus' disciples have to realise that we must carefully divide all these eschatological passages we have been considering into **Two Events**, not just **The One Event** and properly and adequately explain them to the world. That should be a leading aspect of our involvement with the current stage of the 'Great Commission' (Matthew 28:19-20).

Thus, we may have to tweak the General Theory of Divine Inspiration of Scripture. In the event that God did not intend they should for certain passages, in AD 30 to years later remember exactly what Jesus included in each of two, probably 'main', eschatological (Last Days) discourses at two different places and occasions, perhaps another option was available. It is also possible for the Holy Spirit indwelling the Believer of Today (2016) to explain a more precise dividing of these Scriptures. John 14:17 describes the Holy Spirit as The Spirit of Truth and in John 14:26 He will teach us all things. Obviously, some parts of these passages were to be important for, or only relevant to, a much later generation. Nor would most parts of the Olivet Discourse be particularly relevant for all the intervening generations (about 38 @ 50 years a piece) since *circa* AD 50. As Jesus heavily implied in Luke 17:25 when His generation (including many Gentiles) rejected Him, it is far more important that obviously one future "Generation" work out exactly what is meant in *Olivet*. One is not denigrating Jesus' disciples nor elevating our generation of disciples. For God is Divinely controlling the Scriptures in how they are composed, translated and interpreted. Primarily, God does this in a manner that declares in yet more ways His Glory through the weakness of Man. The main purpose of, or theme in, the Bible, is Doxology not Soteriology nor Pneumatology, nor even Christology. After 2000 years of gentile mismanagement of a congregation of God, paralleling Jewish mismanagement of God's Theocracy with Israel, it is more crucial, in many ways, God does this now, the Bible now largely ridiculed out of court, at this end of the Church Age than at the Beginning! Just when nearly everyone has written-off the Bible as fiction, its warnings suddenly emerge into reality like Lightning! Of course, one cannot be dogmatic on this point but it is worth thinking about even so.

Also, one would like to re-iterate at this point, 'Two *Different* or *Separate* Events' can have several circumstances preceding, or common to, both of them. There can be general circumstances not only common to both events but to many other events that have occurred during the era of man on this planet. But the two supposed events can also have a number of circumstances specific to either of them or to just one of them, in which case, there will not be anything specific at all about the other event. This is just common sense. After two thousand years, the modern student is addressed by three writers in parallel describing One or Two Events; no one, then or now, seeming quite sure; about something(s) very difficult to comprehend two millennia **aforetime!** It would not be at all surprising if some unintended or apparent condition **seems** to have been applied; or is now being applied; to one or other event when actually it does not apply at all. In our view this does not weaken our belief in the Divine Hand behind Scripture but enhances it because we have to remember the Fall of Man means that Man makes mistakes but God Does not. Furthermore where Man has made a mistake, God can see to its correction. Even then, as we have shown with "Nebuchadrezzar" or "Pharaoh Hophra King of Egypt" (written in Hebrew as *Chophra*), the mistake actually firstly attracts us to, then reveals, much more truth and more keys to unlock historical and prophetic enigmas. From that perspective, even mistakes are a "Good Thing" (*1066 And All That*, Sellar and Yeatman) and part of the Divine Plan. Our bodies, since the Fall, have become riddled with genetic mistakes yet they still work very well especially in some of our top athletes.

### **Matthew 24:27 Why use the Lightning metaphor here?**

This problem arose in an earlier discussion on the lightning metaphor as Luke used it in his Rapture narrative. When composing the thought in Endnote 8, the point occurred to the writer. Matthew seems to be using it to warn people off chasing after false messiahs. Matthew, assuming he was one of the 'Twelve' was almost certainly present at both discourses, one on the way to Jerusalem and the other in the city itself. In verse 30, Matthew writes, "and then the sign of the Son of man will appear in the sky. In between is the reference to the metaphor about vultures and corpses (Matthew 24:28). Matthew 24:29 advises the whole Earth will be shrouded in darkness. The advancing Shecinah Glory of the Lord Jesus of Nazareth the Messiah of Israel will be piercing the gloom in contradistinction to a bunch of nutters running around the endarkened world, almost like a *Monty Python* skit, claiming to be The Messiah. The most sensible option to accept is that Jesus Himself did indeed refer to Lightning in two different discussions about two different events commonly known to most people as "The Rapture" and "The Second Coming".

In the discussion about the "Day that only the Father knows" (Matthew 24:36ff) which Luke 17:22-37 refers to, neither Matthew nor Mark made any reference to Jesus using a 'lightning metaphor'. The three Gospel authors were bound to have varying accounts. None of them would or could record *verbatim* everything Jesus said on a particular subject. Having closely investigated this it appears

that what we have received is not confusion as it seems on the surface of things but proof through literary analysis that Jesus deliberately used the metaphor for the reasons we have stated. We go back to the base problem. Without a record of the discussions in Hebrew our analysis is forced to conclude. Were there any original Hebrew Gospels? If so, where are they now? Or have they been destroyed? Luke certainly, Matthew possibly but John and Mark unlikely: could have composed their accounts directly into Greek. Sometimes one can see that in the way the Greek is written, the author nevertheless thinking in a Hebrew-Language framework when writing in Greek. Unless Hebrew originals turn up somewhere or sometime we are blocked from further analysis.

### **Matthew 24:34: This of That? These or Those?**

When we write we are often dareless in our use of 'this' and 'that' or their respective plurals (Endnote \*). Did the translators get it wrong here in Matthew 24:34? Matthew has gone on by this stage before discussing the Rapture after the *Peri Di* clause to introduce a parable about the fig tree Jesus had cursed. Like all trees in a season it goes through various stages sprouting leaves, blossom, fruit then shedding leaves for winter. A whole lot of events are going to occur in a season rather than over a long era, i.e., over a short number of years versus two millennia or more.

Rome's sacking of the Herodian temple occurred over the period AD 66-70. Before that tensions had been building up. Indeed even before Jesus' birth between 50-7 BC there had been tension between Rome and Israel's leaders who allied with Rome versus the independent-minded Zealots etc. One might argue the events of AD 66-70 traced back to 50 BC. More practically, the events of AD 66-70 were of a period of a decade. Whatever, people alive when Jesus was speaking would witness the destruction of Jerusalem and the complete and utter demolition of its temple despite Caesar's instruction to protect it. Vespasian and Titus did not want Jesus' prophecy to be fulfilled. But they could not stop that! The question arises again, "What is a generation"? What is a season or what is an era?

However, the sacking of Jerusalem in AD 66-70 is one thing but events of the Day of God's Wrath, Revelation's Apocalyptic events, an "Abomination of Desolation" in a Jewish temple and other problems such as nations fighting nations and amongst themselves seemed to be of another era, generation or season. So is Jesus in Matthew 24:34 talking about the generation He is speaking to or a much later generation? If a later generation, should not translators have written in English "**That** generation will not pass until **those** things take place"? Or, we might have to consider Jesus was saying, "This generation will not pass until all these things take place and that *later* generation will not pass until all those things take place"?

Jesus' generation of Israel had committed The One and Only Unforgivable Sin (Matthew 12:30-32) when the leaders denounced the exorcism of the deaf and dumb man in Matthew 12:22ff. So in the destruction that generation of Jesus'

Day there would be no escaping the punishment although individuals could repent of that sin as many did and be physically saved too because they believed Jesus' Prophecy and departed Jerusalem during a break in the four-year siege. The future generation of Israel will suffer many things but will dramatically and penultimately come to repentance and be physically saved as a result of its soteriological salvation.

## Conclusion

Fashionable doctrines of the 'Divine Inspiration of Scripture', and it is obvious the Bible is "Inspired", unfortunately obscure and obfuscate some very important lessons we can derive from Scripture. The doctrines we have today are usually weakened by failure to understand the historicity of the Bible and failure to look at the Hebrew Original properly. These shortcomings lead to poor contextual understanding and thus too much allegorisation, typology and what people may think is hyper-*spiritualization* of various Biblical texts. In particular, the poor understanding of History hence **His Story** meant theologians lost sight of one or more simple codes in the text via the *Alpha-Omega* statements in *Revelation* transliterated into *Aleph-Tav* then applied to Revelation 19:10 and Exodus 4:8. This theological oversight combined with Archaeologists' and Egyptologists' falsification of Historical Chronology in turn has led to a mis-understanding of some crucial events in History, **His-Story**, Prophecy and hence in The History-Prophecy Continuum.

In this paper, it seems another problem has emerged. That is to fail to understand that the Disciples themselves, or those like Mark and Luke, who were not disciples, except in the broader sense of the word, may well have **remembered** many if not "all things". However, they may not have so effectively **differentiated** between various comments Jesus made so that later generations cut off by history could readily understand without any confusion. For example, it might have been that some comments could apply, but perhaps in slightly different ways, to more than one event when in actual fact they apply to just one particular event. If the eschatological discourses we have been studying actually do refer to two different events, it is possible the AD 30 Disciples could only understand them to apply to one event. Or perhaps they understood everything to apply to one complete set of events leading to one particular conclusion (e.g., restoring the Kingdom to Israel). At the same time, it would be difficult for succeeding generations of Disciples to likewise see or identify such nuances. For a good example of the limitations in understanding of believers in Jesus' Day and amongst His Circle, refer Luke 24:7-11. Yes, they "remembered" certain things they had been told but the words still seemed to be "nonsense"; at least for a little while longer

Furthermore, in order to keep each and every generation of the Church of Christ on its toes, ready, waiting, alert, watching, expecting etc., what might seem to thus be a certain degree of obfuscation was therefore quite deliberate (from The Lord's Perspective). Any theory of the Divine Inspiration of Scripture must surely take account of deliberate obfuscation. In the Old Testament, Daniel 8:26b, 12:4

& 9 makes that abundantly clear. One can perceive obfuscation literally in the Gospel texts. Jesus Himself declared that He began teaching in parables to **hide** information from the crowds. Jesus then "privately" explained the meaning of those parables to His 'Disciples'. [Chronologically speaking, that policy began after the Beelzebub Row reported in Matthew 12:22ff and Luke 11:14ff]. Could Jesus and the Holy Spirit, through our Scriptures, be explaining privately certain things to disciples today? Let's hope He is because the dire circumstances the world is plunging into this millennium means that we desperately **Do** need to know "What the hell is Going on".

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Endnotes

(1) It works out either way. If Israel had have accepted the First Coming of Jesus then He would have arrived on the High Day of *Sukkoth*. The Romans would have crucified Him on the High Day of *Pesach*. Fifty Days later, the *Shavuot* Harvest would begin by bringing all Jewish and non-Jewish pre-cross deceased saints into the Kingdom along with those saints (believers) alive in AD 30 entering it. The Kingdom of God on Earth fulfilling the prophecies about God's Wonderful Government would have commenced.

During the Messianic Kingdom, for however long it continued, more saints would be added to the Family of God. *Sukkoth*-Tabernacles would be celebrated every year of the Kingdom and in doing so each year it would attest to the Glorification of Millennial or Messianic Kingdom-of-God saints. People who did not repent during that Kingdom era would be adjudged sinners at 100 years and being accursed would die (Isaiah 65:20). They would be resurrected at the end of the Messianic Kingdom and sent to *Damnation*. So *Sukkoth*-Tabernacles would have been the First of the Three Major Fasts followed by *Pesach* then *Shavuot*. The last *Sukkoth* celebration in the Millennium's thousandth year would have completed the Harvest of souls to make up the Eternal Family or People of God

It could be argued here that by Jesus **not** coming (being born) on the High Day of *Sukkoth*-Tabernacles the leaders had a right to reject Him. Their frameworks of Philosophy, Theology and Thought far removed them being able to. Nevertheless it is a fair question. Again, it is only from the *ex post* view that one can clearly see or perceive the two options the Biblical text appeared to put forward. *Ex ante*, anyone noting that *Pesach* came at the 'Beginning of Months' and that Tabernacles came very soon after *Rosh Hashanah*, or the beginning ('Head') of the year; which in turn would justify the view that *Sukkoth* was the **First** of all the festivals; was and would have been confusing to any reader of the texts. That confusion now seems to have been deliberate and, if our model

of Exodus 4:8 is correct, only to be clarified in the Last of the Last Days when Daniel 8:26, 12:4 & 9 would or could come into play.

Of course, even when Jesus was born, very few people knew which Day or the precise hour He had arrived. The shepherds saw a very new-born baby. They would not know if He was already a few days old by the time they got to the *Sukka* erected adjoining a house in Bethlehem, the "house" that the Magi may well have found Jesus inside. Only since the Gospels came to be written did anyone really know that He had **not** been born on the High Day. None of the texts give any direct reference to *Sukkoth* being the festive season at the time of Jesus' birth. There are only indirect hints as explained elsewhere. And since He did arrive around the time of *Sukkoth*, the point about whether he arrived on the High Day or not would have been lost to most memories by AD 27-30. Only then might the question have arisen as an integral aspect of the debate as to whether Jesus of Nazareth was indeed The Messiah of Israel. As it is, the Jewish question seems only to have arisen **since** the Gospels and Epistles came to be written down and circulated. Even then, the question was raised to counteract the Christian message not, as we do here, use it to enhance comprehension and understanding of God's Master Plan. So the question, whichever way one looks at it only arose *ex post*. As far as records indicate, it never was a question *ex ante*. Though some people might have speculated one of the reasons for celebrating *Sukkoth* each year was that one year it **would mark** the arrival of the Messiah and Saviour of the World. There just don't seem to be any records of anyone musing on that.

If some Old Testament believers had pondered whether the Seed of the Woman, "The Promised Deliverer" of Genesis 3:15, would arrive at *Sukkoth*-Tabernacles and specifically on its High Day (or First Official Day), would they then have surmised that He would Sacrifice Himself on the High Day of Pesach. Would they then have surmised that the purpose of *Shavuot* was to **begin** a harvest of Saints fifty days (or 49) after the resurrection concluding with the Last Harvest at *Sukkoth*? 2000 years later, very few people would even begin to walk this track of asking such questions. And for anyone who does, that would be *ex post* not *ex ante*. Jesus and John the Baptist's offer of the Kingdom of God to AD 30 Israel was 100% genuine even though it was going to be rejected. Jesus tried everything He could in His Humanity to convince Israel and save her, and others, from 2000 years or more of hell on earth.

(2) As a brief aside, it was especially ironic because '*Bozrah*' (Petra) is Hebrew for "Place of *the* Rock", "The Place of Rock" or even, but less likely, "Place of God's (or Holy) Rock". Herod's manicured stones of marble perhaps (*petros*) were not at all Holy. Nevertheless, Jesus attended temple services. Eventually, probably with the Ionian invasion of Greece (*circa* 700 BC not 1200 BC), '*botzrah*' became the word '*Petra*' in Greek. In Classical Greek, *Petra* (a feminine noun) means 'huge Rock' or 'Mountain' and *Petros* (a masculine noun) means a 'little pebble' or stone. So as the Disciples were amazed at the huge stones and skills of the Edomite stone-smiths (masons) Jesus chose that moment to explain some

of the circumstances that would lead to Israel becoming hostage at the ancient Edomite Capital of Bozrah-Petra.

(3) There we note that between verses 14 and 15 Isaiah firstly addresses "The House of David" in 7 BC then Ahaz's immediate problem (*circa* 710 BC) in verses 15-16. Isaiah had taken his own son along to the meeting and said to Ahaz that before his son was able to eat curds and whey the alliance ranged against Judea would be defeated. Most commentators try to apply that statement to Jesus 700 years later.

(4) One especially interesting Event-Pair is found in the Books of the Kings where both Elijah and Elisha go north to the region of Tyre and Sidon. There they resurrect or resuscitate the dead sons of two Phoenician women. They pre-figure Jesus at the Garden of the Tomb standing before Mary Magdalene a daughter of Tyre who had been returned back to a normal life after her demon (or seven according to Mark 16:9) was exorcised. Just as the single, persecuted witnesses Elijah (or God The Jehovah) and Elisha (or God The Yeshua) went up to Tyre to resurrect dead women's sons, the Son of God appeared in resurrected form to the daughter of a Phoenician woman. Elisha referred to Elijah as his 'Father' though they were not related.

Jesus and Mary Magdalene in the 'Last' Garden' stand as a pair to match Adam and Eve at the 'First Garden'. But Jesus' action in deliberately stepping outside Israel's borders for this one brief encounter can be seen as a third event to go with the pair in *Kings*. This we would label a 'Triplet'. The Word 'Sign' is usually *Aleph, Vav, Tav*. In Exodus 4:8, 8:23 and 12:13, 'Sign' is just *Aleph, Tav*, which are the First and Last letters in the Hebrew alphabet. Primarily we look for pairs but some may have a third partner. These event-sets parallel the way the word 'sign' is used in the Old Testament Hebrew. The signs we look for are more to do with the 'word' itself rather than the amazing miracles we may or may not see.

(5) We also tend too discount the unbelievers' perspective in these discussions. They are 100% sceptical of the things we talk about here. They won't be longing or yearning for them for obvious reasons. But they will indeed see the Rapture occur, assuming it is not entirely 'secret'. The texts suggest it will be highly visible especially in the fields (Luke 17:25-6) and may well start realising the Second Coming is on the way. So disbelievers and unbelievers will come to a rude awakening. From this perspective, unless they repent, there will be a day that one group (those who come to belief) yearns for and sees while another group dreads it ever coming i.e., The Second Coming. That contrasts with the Rapture because it is not a day to dread at all and certainly not in the manner of the Second Coming (Isaiah 63:1ff). Viewed from that set of perspectives of disbelievers and unbelievers, the passage in Luke 17:22-37 surely cannot be about the Second Coming at all!

(6) That may be the reason why very little literature from earlier believers (*circa* AD 100 to 1850) seems to talk much about the Rapture until the mid-19th

Century when it became apparent that the Ottoman Empire's grasp on the land of Israel would feasibly come under 'Western' hands sooner or later.

(7) In Isaiah 7:6 there is a referenece to the "Son of Tabeel". That's in a discussion about a conspiracy to overthrow King David's throne in the days of King Ahaz. As Dr Fruchtenbaum points out, one can change the meaning by subtly varying one of the vowel sounds. One can therefore hear a meaning "God is Good" or "Good for nothing" depending on whether one expresses the aleph a little more strongly or with a little more *depth* perhaps to sound more like an *ayin*. With '*aleph*' the name means "God is good". With *ayin* it reads "Good for nothing".

(8) If, as the theologians generally suppose, Matthew read Mark's account of the Olivet Discourse and added the point about lightening, why did he do that? The metaphor comes just before the section beginning with the Sun being "darkened" etc. Matthew used it apparently to warn people from chasing after "false christs" as Mark 13:22 puts it. If he had borrowed it from Luke 17:24 that would seem to be inappropriate because Luke is trying to use the concept of lightening to express suddenness, immediacy and completion of an event as if in a flash of lightening. That seems strange in the context of false claimants to messiahship. Projects like that are developed over a long period with the false candidate building up a following over decades. Overall (refer discussion in Part Two) it seems safer to assume Jesus used this metaphor in two subtle ways for two different events quite different in nature. The theologians' theories about the composition of the Gospels need reviewing one would suggest!

(9) Thus, the original Hebrew distinction was lost in translation. For example, from the Hebrew *Bozrah* the Greeks derived both *Petros* and *Petra*. Furthermore, the Greeks divided one basic Hebrew word into one masculine-Greek and one feminine-Greek word'. So this problem of losing things in translation could be happening here too except in this case only one Greek word was available for two different Hebrew words. The problem is oivercome by sound analysis.

(10) Although, one cannot resist saying here, it certainly was not an asteroid that hovered over the house wherein baby Jesus lay in Bethlehem in *circa* 7 BC. Nor was an asteroid responsible for leading the Maji to baby Jesus' home. That was The Shecinah Glory Who will also come on the last Day of the Tribulation. We do not need to use 'stars' in deep outer space to explain Matthew's statements. The Greek word for a 'star', in any event, can mean any sort of light-bearing object be it a star, comet, asteroid or planet - or indeed **The Shecinah Glory of God!**

(11) In the Appendix discussion on Edersheim *et al*, in his *The Life and Times of Jesus The Messiah*, we will see how he too assumed something along that possibility. Actually, as it seems from the New Testament Epistles, Jesus had to commission Apostle Paul, and whomever (-else) composed *Hebrews*, to explain or elucidate some complications that could be seen to have been raised

by the Gospels in Soteriology, the Levitical System, the purpose behind animal sacrifice and other aspects of Systematic Theology. The *Book of Hebrews*, which someone other than Apostle Paul may have written, co-written or contributed to, also appears to have had the task of correcting some common misconceptions that arose between AD30-70. Perhaps, some misconceptions may even have held by Disciples or even by Apostles. Implicitly, *Hebrews* criticises those who concentrated discussion and debate almost exclusively on soteriological issues. *Hebrews* initially-targeted readers who kept looking back to their Salvation rather than forward-look to certain Prophecies Jesus had given concerning Jerusalem's temple that were very close to fulfillment even as *Hebrews* was being composed. Of course, we even find the Book of Acts revealing Apostle Paul had to steer Apostle Peter back on track regarding the Circumcision Party's theology on church membership, circumcision etc. II Peter 3:15 observed, or implied, that Paul's writings ("the wisdom given him") were *meaty* or rather hard to *digest*. Furthermore, Jesus had to send Peter a vision to exhort him to preach the Good News of the Death, Burial and Resurrection to some Roman Gentiles. That was in order for God to open the "Keys of the Kingdom" and bestow permanence of the indwelling Holy Spirit to believing Gentiles as Peter had earlier commissioned to Jews and Samaritans.

(12) In the later stages of editing this document, the writer came across the view common now amongst Jewish Hasidic rabbis that the days could be "shortened". That seems to be the view of many Jewish rabbis and was commonly agreed to be the case amongst the 'Protestant Reformers'. They used a date of 4100 BC for Adam's Fall whereas we would use 4000 BC. Thus in AD 1657, a popular date for the *Mundi Conflagratio* (or "*MVnDI ConfLagratlo*", MDCLVII, 1657), the conclusion was that the End of the Age, which they mistakenly thought to be the End of the World in a great fire, would be shortened by approximately 243 years. That sort of nonsense emanated from Jewish and Gentile Christian 'sages' and 'numerologists' (Hebrew *Gematria*) getting together to play these games for a brief period of *rapprochement* in the late 16th Century. These games only plunged Biblical Analysis, Theology and Prophecy into disrepute. Gentile Christians ran a mile away from any study of the Bible in Hebrew. The system never recovered from that and is now so damaged that nearly everyone in Christendom steers away from any discussion of these things whatsoever. Muslims and Hasidic Jews, however, are into 'The End Times' - 'Big Time'!

(13) A modern Jewish Hasidic rabbinical view on this is that the sages did not know the date of the Last Days but they could not tell anyone for two reasons. If they had said the Messiah comes in 2000 years time, everyone would give up and say everything is hopeless. On the other, people might say, "oh well let's have as much debauchery as we like and repent on the Last Day". As it is, of course, our calendars are in too much of a mess to be very definite about much in regard to chronology and dating. It is interesting from a survey of archaeological papers that our oldest records seem to be about 4000 years old ("2000 BC"). It took about 500 years for mankind to recover from the Great Flood which the Bible seems to suggest ended an era lasting about 1500 years following the Fall of

Adam. That brings us to around 6000 years now but who really knows?

(14) Of course as we also note, there will be a future generation of Disciples to whom Jesus addressed comments about the Rapture. When the Rapture is in view, only Jewish and Gentile believers in Jesus can be in view. They comprise the Church of Christ which excludes the unrepentant Israel apart from Jews who from time to time do become members of the Church of Christ. At the end of the Tribulation all the unbelieving Gentiles come up against unbelieving Israel. The latter repents at the last moment (*Last Three Days* of the Tribulation). This is the Generation of Israel that Jesus says will be more worthy than His even though up to its repentance there would seem to be little difference in the bad behaviour between Jesus' Generation of Israel (in AD 30) and this one at the end of the Tribulation (in 20<sup>\*\*</sup>, 20<sup>37</sup> ?).

(15) Jesus may have had only 500 or 600 followers at that time if I Corinthians 15:6 is any judge of the situation. Many were in awe of Jesus' miracles. But would they turn up for a fight against Israel's Sanhedrin and Rome's Legions?

(16) Jesus is clearly talking about the faithless generation of Israel here. Although Jesus may also have been disappointed that believing Gentiles did not have sufficient faith to push Israel into accepting her Messiah. As Dr Fruchtenbaum points out, only Israel could make the decision and Jesus spent virtually all His time ministering in Israel apart from a brief venture into the region of Tyre and Sidon. Gentiles too could observe the objective standards of the Three Messianic Miracles, the evidence the Magi of The East had and the incidents where Jesus miraculously healed Gentiles especially Mary Magdalene. So perhaps Jesus was also castigating the whole world here. In regard to the future, one wonders if Jesus is referring to the Church in Luke 17:25 which is of course composed of Jew and Gentile as per Ephesians 2:14. This also brings into play Exodus 8:23 which is one of the three verses where the Hebrew word for 'Sign' is written *Aleph, Tav*. The context there is that two peoples are in God's view back then. They are Jews and Gentiles on His side versus those who are not. Again, it will be in regard to The Rapture that the body rescued from The Evil One will be saved Jews and Gentiles in the Body of Christ. We note that Exodus 8:23 adds "Tomorrow this sign will occur". That condition only appears in one other Scripture (Esther 9:13). So all in all, it is quite possible Jesus is contrasting His generation of Jew and Gentile with ours in The Church of Christ where there is a body of genuine believers, Jewish and Gentile, and He will Rapture us out of this nonsense.

(17) The anti-dispensationalists always try to attack this view by alleging we are saying here there is more than one way to salvation. That is stupid and false. The point is that both bodies, Israel and the Church are saved on the same basis. They both must have faith in Jehovah-God and trust in His Grace and Mercy but the content of faith has altered to the extent that we now know who the Seed of the Woman is and that He died on a Roman cross, was buried and resurrected on the Third Day. Believers must accept they are the Sinner Jesus died for to turn around the sin of Adam. Sinners before the Cross had to believe

in the Promised Redeemer Who is Jesus and is known to us since AD 30. Sinners before the Cross are redeemed by The Cross but they being dead could not know that content (information) for their faith.

(18) We have identified the crucial hurdles where Satan, Adam and Israel *fell* from *Grace*. Concerning that 'Fall from Grace', for Satan, who surpassed all other created beings for wisdom and beauty (Ezekiel 28:12) there was no second chance. For Adam and Israel, according to the Bible, there is a second chance and that is why Israel is still being prepared for repentance and a return to being the 'Wife of God'. Does Christendom face a similar hurdle? One suggests that it might well be its thinking regarding the concept of the Antichrist. Will it accept the Bible's clear injunction that there is a sole individual who fits that description? Will Christendom accept that The Antichrist-666' will arise to do the things foretold of him in the Bible? Currently, the churches seem hell-bent on ignoring this issue just at a time when it really does seem the emergence of Antichrist-666 and the preceding Lawlessness (II Thessalonians 2:7) is becoming a very live issue. In that sense we see very stark parallels between Christendom today and Israel of the Synagogues in Jesus' day.

However, regarding Israel's failure or 'Fall from Grace' over the Nazarene issue, as Paul explained in Romans chapters 9-11, that failure to accept Jesus of Nazareth actually opened up the (2000 year?) Church or Christendomite Age. This is why Jesus made the points in John 18:36 that His Kingdom would not (in effect *no longer*) be of that Era (AD 30) but of a later Era ("World" NASB or "Age" in other translations). In consequence, one saw the birth then *re-birth* of a vast number of Church of Christ Saints, both Jewish and Gentile but especially of the latter. Israel's Fall was everyone's *potential* gain and some of us have grabbed that 'potential' and believed. Paul continued, how much more blessing for us when Israel eventually agrees to come back to that Place of Blessing - Metaphorically, *The Olive Tree* - so, we say or sing, "Come On, Come In, Israel".

(19) In these papers we believe the Hebrew text reveals that a touch-tronic computer embedded in a tree trunk in the Garden of Eden was the 'Tree' Adam should have left alone and "not even touched" as Eve noted. Adam had to transmit that warning to every generation using some language that could be understood through time if at least only in partial terms until mankind re-invented the 'touch-tronic' computer. The computer would facilitate the growth of Mankind's 'Tree of Knowledge' for everyone's use (*consumption*). Such people still insist science and technology will see us through our troubles!

(\*) 'This' or 'the is' and 'that' or 'the at', 'these' or 'the ese' and 'those' or 'the ose' were derived by combining the Hebrew definite article '*eth*' or '*aleph, tav*' with the Anglo-Saxon '*ese*' or '*ose*'. Likewise 'here' and 'there' are derived by taking the two Hebrew definite articles '*he*' and '*eth*' and combining them with the Anglo-Saxon '*ere*'. Presumably these words developed as people attempted to translate the Hebrew Old Testament into 'English' between *circa* AD 1200-1611. There was no 'English' language as such in AD 1200. Even by AD 1611 and the publication of the King James Bible there were still differing rules around the

country on reading and writing English. It is perhaps not until Johnson's Dictionary a century or more later that English eventually got uniformity. So English spent a few centuries *developing itself* by borrowing technical, etymological methods from Hebrew and some of its lexicon.

When we say, "the at" ('that') we actually take the Hebrew Definite 'accusative' article twice. In Hebrew, there are two definite articles which are '*he*' the simple or basic definite article used for the subject noun and '*eth*' which is used in the 'accusative' for indirect or object nouns. The regular Hebrew definite article is simply the Hebrew letter 'he' or 'h'. It is simply written as the first letter of the noun one is using. It is part of the noun and is not separate. However, when '*eth*' is used it is always separate from the noun and sits as a *stand-alone* word for the definite article as in English or French ('*le*' or '*la*' which are derived from another Hebrew letter used to indicate an indirect object, i.e., *lamed*, 'l'). But when '*eth*' is used as a definite article in Hebrew it is used as the accusative definite article to distinguish an object noun from a subject noun. When '*he*' is used in Hebrew it is always on the subject noun which is why, one assumes, '*he*' is the first letter of the word and is not *stand-alone* as '*eth*' always is. The very first sentence of the Bible uses both definite articles in the sentence "*Beroshit bara Elohim eth h'shamyim v'eth h'erec*". Note the 'vav' is the first letter of the second '*eth*'. Thus 'that' is 'the at' or '*aleph, tav - aleph, tav*'. The English 'that' is a double Hebrew '*eth*' or 'The the *over there*'. It is the one that is over there in contradistinction to the one here (*h'ere*). Or, to put it another way, 'this' is near while 'that' is further away. In English, we also took the Hebrew definite article '*he*' and made it our indefinite article 'a'.

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