

* Rapture and NT Second Coming Passages

* Background

Luke 17:11-19 records that Jesus healed ten lepers, presumably while His group was near Jericho. They were on their way up to Jerusalem for, as Jesus knew, the last time before the crucifixion (Luke 18:31). Nine of the lepers were Jewish. They then had to go into Jerusalem to be cleared for cleanliness through the complex Mosaic procedures which rabbis and priests they had never used before. That was until Jesus came along and began healing Jewish lepers. Something unheard of in the past. Of itself this was an outstanding incident. Not many readers realise that. Jesus performed many amazing miracles. However, this was a specifically Messianic miracle. Possibly performed right before the eyes of a group of pharisees trying to prove Jesus was not Israel's Messiah. Something, perhaps that miracle, prompted a cynical question from them. They asked Jesus "when the Kingdom of God should come" (Luke 17:20, King James Version, KJV, Greek; *erchomai*, Strong 2064). Whatever their real motive, either as unbelievers or, less likely, still hopeful Jesus' mission would succeed, they got an obscure response. Jesus replied, "The Kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:21, KJV, Greek; *entos*, Strong 1787). Ever since, theologians have ignored or misinterpreted this statement as we will consider later [refer Section16) Luke 17:22].

The introduction of the 'Messianic' stage of the Kingdom of God would have come on the first Sunday after the Passover had Israel's leaders accepted Jesus' Messianic claims. Therefore, one could have known down to the very day when that kingdom would have or could have come in AD 30, if Israel were willing. Now we know the 'millennium' arrives when Jesus returns on the last day of *Revelation's* seven-year Apocalypse (Revelation 1:7-8). As we shall see below [Addendum (Aiv)] there will be a seventy-five day interval for some preparations before the Messianic Millennial Kingdom ('MMK' hereafter) officially begins. That day, or "Second Coming", becomes 'known' when Antichrist confirms with Israel a seven-year covenant (perhaps already drawn up by others before him). The very day of the Second Coming can be fixed once the seven-year Apocalypse begins.

However, Jesus' strange reply to those pharisees which was really saying the timing of the MMK was in their hands ("within you") or within their power to decide, was by later generations misinterpreted. Churchmen now say the Kingdom of God those pharisees were speaking about is within each believer now. They ignore Jesus' plea that when pray we should begin our address to the Father with "Thy (*Messianic*) Kingdom come". That prayer demonstrates it is not here now. Nor has it been here over the last two millennia. In fact, Jesus was simply reminding those pharisees the coming of the Messianic Kingdom had been in their hands but they, or their leaders, had lost the opportunity to grasp it. Now Jesus would give the Messianic Kingdom to a future generation of Israel. It is not transferred to the church which instead is fulfilling the interim **Mystery** Stage (Matthew 13:11) of the broader Kingdom Plan. The Universal Kingdom Plan stretches from before the creation of this Universe and beyond into eternity and the next Universe. It has both spiritual and physical aspects. The MMK, its length identified in *Revelation*, now goes to a future generation of Israel that will believe and repent. Then all saints will enjoy it.

Instead, Jesus then went into a private soliloquy with His disciples. It began with an enigmatic statement in Luke 17:22. Jesus spoke about an obscure but special day for Himself that the disciples with Him would not see even though they longed for it. When they asked “where Lord”, Jesus replied with an equally obscure metaphor presumably or apparently or presumably based on Job 39:27-30 about bodies, corpses, eagles and vultures. In a stark contrast with the return of Jesus on a known day, as per His discussion with the pharisees whose leaders did not believe Jesus, He then tells the believing disciples about a day they presumably will be blessed by even though they do not “see it”. As far as the Messianic Kingdom’s coming was concerned, in Acts 1:6-8, its length still not revealed then, Jesus confirmed it would come one day in future. But they were not to know the “times or seasons” (Acts 1:7). There was one obvious reason for that. They would be dead by then as we now know. A few days later, Jesus would give some signs and clues about those ‘times and seasons’. Even then, as we now surmise, they still would not know even after Olivet because no one would be able to comprehend that time according to passages like Daniel 12:4 & 9. Jesus did tell the disciples about the coming of the Holy Spirit upon them (Acts 1:8) to equip them and future church saints for the Mystery Stage of the Kingdom Plan. As we now realise, this is how the Church would proceed with God’s ministry to the world exemplified by the Parable of the Sower and ensuing parables.. The Mystery stage of the Kingdom continues until the Rapture. Soon after that, or even in the latter days of the Church Age, Israel, back in the Holy Land, will be prepared and even pushed into accepting Jesus of Nazareth as her Saviour.

* Introduction

This paper is a compilation of the Bible verses the author is using in his research into two future Biblical Events. They *are* the Rapture of the Church of *the* Christ (the theme, as this paper supposes of Luke 17:22-37) and the Second Coming of Jesus of Nazareth. The Messianic Kingdom, the pharisees’ topic of Luke 17:20, comes soon after Jesus returns to rescue Israel from the Antichrist-666. This paper’s particular interpretation given to Luke 17:20 & 22 more than anything else sets apart this paper from mainstream thinking on these subjects. Although the overall conclusion comes substantially within one of the main streams of thinking on these matters. In part, this paper is about the various different or even unusual routes one takes to get to that same basic conclusion (i.e., Rapture and Second Coming, two different events albeit close in time to each other). The Second Coming (e.g., Revelation 1:7-8) occurs when Israel finally comes to faith. That’s on the last day of the seven-year “Apocalypse” which is an English word derived from the Greek title of the *Book of Revelation* (Αποκαλυψις). The Rapture can come anytime and is not dependent upon man’s faith (c.f., Matthew 24:36, Mark 13:32 and Luke 12:40).

These things, or both events, now appear to be scheduled for what the Bible calls the “Last Days”, the “End Times” or the “Latter Days” etc. Some colloquial terms like “The Tribulation” or “Armageddon” have become misnomers for “The Apocalypse” [refer discussion in Addendum (Biii)]. Nevertheless, this paper will continue to use the term “Tribulation saints” for all those people who come to belief after the Rapture and during the Apocalypse. That will include “All Israel” and many Gentile saints. Any such saints who die during the Apocalypse receive a resurrected body after the Second Coming. Those martyred by Antichrist get special commendation (Revelation 20:4).

The main emphasis in this paper is on the Rapture which is the True Church of the Christ's primary 'Hope' (c.f., Titus 2:13). To some extent this paper is a reminder or even a warning for believers that God's Word on the subject of "The Rapture" in the New Testament is much more extensive than most people think. One could even point to Isaiah 57:1 where in commenting on "The Righteous *who* perish", the verse concludes, "none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil *to come*". Isaiah could not possibly have conceived those words would almost literally describe Paul's points about the Rapture. As far as Isaiah was concerned, the words were a generalization. The KJV translators presumably added the rider 'to come' hence the italics. However, in *inspiring* the Scriptures anyway, did God provide here food for thought for the present day Spirit-filled believer? The Rapture can be seen as a special and unique vehicle whereby Jesus rescues a specific generation of believers (His Church) from the Evil One and before Satan's son can do us much harm (c.f., John 17:15, I John 2:14 and 5:19). The deceased church saints also arise then but Antichrist cannot harm them. Living saints he and the apocalypse can harm. The apocalyptic judgements to come; as the Days of Noah and Lot come to an end [refer Addendum (Aii)]; are for unbelievers, not believers. The last generation of church saints is taken out of harm's way in the Days of Noah and Lot though whether that concludes that particular period is unclear at present.

Most commentators on eschatology focus on the *Book of Revelation* (or *Apocalypse*, see above). In Revelation 1:7-8. "All kindreds shall wail because of Him" when Jesus "comes in the clouds" and "every eye shall see Him" when he arrives on Earth to stay. That's not the case with the Rapture when only believers will be expecting Him and they leave Earth with Him as He takes us into Heaven. Those disbelieving Him or not expecting Him are left behind on Earth (Matthew 24:40-31 and Luke 17:34-6). *Revelation* concludes with the Second Coming and some material about the Messianic Kingdom and the Eternal Order. Therefore, commentators and theologians tend to relegate the Rapture to a complementary event. Some commentators merge Rapture passages with Second Coming passages. Here, one attempts to focus or major on the Rapture by looking at every direct, indirect or oblique reference to an 'appearance' or 'coming' of Christ across the entire New Testament. On balance, if the Rapture will save the Church out of, or from, the Apocalypse, there is less incentive to study those appalling judgements and the conditions leading to the Second Coming. Of course we do consider post-Rapture events in order to properly warn unbelievers of an imminent catastrophe and of the option (salvation in Christ) to escape it if they repent (change their minds). Also, the Bible's chronology of the Apocalypse in *Revelation* was written for those people who come to belief in Jesus after the Rapture. Ironically, the Book of Revelation also will be the document that enables the "kings, great men, rich men, chief captains, mighty men, bond men and even free men" (Revelation 6:15) to finally wake up to the fact that all the disasters befalling them are due to "the Wrath of the Lamb" (Revelation 6:16) and that the wrath will only get worse (Revelation 6:17). Until that point, the world remains convinced there is no God, His Son Jesus of Nazareth did not die on the cross for our sins, therefore did not resurrect either, confirming we are all the product of Evolution.

Matters concerning the Second Coming are discussed, as they must be, **but** by way of contrast with the Rapture or as lawyers might say "*obiter dicta*". For a full analysis of the Second Coming, and events leading towards it, one recommends people read *Footsteps of the Messiah* (Second Edition quoted here, although a third edition is

available) by Dr Arnold Fruchtenbaum. However, this paper adopts some alternative perspectives from him on the “falling away”, the ‘revelation’ of the Antichrist, treatment of Luke 17:22-37 and other issues (refer Key Assumptions and Critical Texts).

The technical term for such studies is Eschatology. Another unique and different perspective from which the author’s research stems suggests the “Rapture” and “The Second Coming” are two distinctly different events. They occur at two different points in History (*His Story*) albeit, almost certainly, within just one “generation”. The two events deliver physical salvation for believers in two quite different locations. This perspective firstly comes from what seems to be the most sensible reading of the Bible. However, in one’s book, *Memphis, Merneptah and Ramesses and the Winged Disk of Judah*, one realised during its writing that “Pithom and Rameses” in Exodus 1:11 were not two ‘capital’ cities built in two different regions of Egypt using bricks manufactured by Israelites in the latter years of the 12th Dynasty of Egypt under Amenemhat II and III. They were two capital cities built in two different eras on the same site. The first was in the 12th Dynasty (“Pithom”). Émigré Judeans reconstructed the ‘latter’ or ‘last’ in the 19th Dynasty (Ramesses) in the 7th Century BC. The dating of those dynasties is partly derived from Dr Immanuel Velikovsky’s re-structured chronology for the ancient Egyptian kingdoms and partly derived from one’s own extension of Velikovsky’s chronology all the way back to the earliest dynasties of ancient Egypt. No one else discussing Eschatology is using that chronological construction for the study of the Bible’s History and Prophecy (*The Aleph-Tav History-Prophecy Continuum*). One’s book also shows that the earlier city used Israelite bricks for the base or platform for all the buildings. Israelites, mainly from Judah and of Jeremiah’s era, were also working on, repairing or even restoring old 12th Dynasty buildings when the 19th Dynasty kings attempted to reconstruct the old city to its former glory but in the 7th Century BC rather than 1500 or 1300 BC.

However, it has been and still is widely accepted that “Pithom and Ramesses” were contemporary cities. They are described as “storage cities” (New American Standard Bible, NASB), “store-cities” (American Standard Version 1901, ASV) or “treasure cities” (KJV) in English translations (“מסכנות” in Hebrew). Unfortunately, theologians’ ignorance of the distinctions between ‘capital’, ‘capitol’, ‘stocks’, ‘stores’, political science, economics, ‘political-economy’ or even ‘*Oeconomy*’ (17th Century English), the history of monarchy versus republicanism and other governance systems, caused them to effectively misunderstand and mistranslate Exodus 1:11. They also fail to note a distinction in the Hebrew grammar (and context) there in contrast with two other places the adjective *miskan* was used. We find “מסכנות” in I Kings 9:19 and “המסכנות” in II Chronicles 8:4. In regard to the definite article “את” used for both “Pithom” and “Ramesses” it would seem to be unnecessary or redundant unless some special qualification was deemed necessary. But the double *samech* (ס) ending in “Ramesses” suggests the Hebrew here is a transliteration of the Greek for *Ramoshe* in Hebrew and ancient Egyptian i.e., ‘Ramesses’. The Book about *Memphis* and *Merneptah* explains the point.

That insight into the whereabouts of “Pithom and Ramesses” generated many other instances. One realised the Bible consists of many such ‘pairs’ of events (‘event’-pairs) divided by a period such as a generation or even a millennium. One now labels this as ‘First-Last’ or *Aleph-Tav* event-pairs in one’s papers. The parting of the Red Sea by Moses then the parting of the Jordan River by Joshua is one such related ‘pair’. Elijah’s

farewell to Elisha at the River Jordan and John the Baptist's introduction of Jesus there also is another such 'pair'. Thus the Rapture and Second Coming come under this general Biblical principle that seems to have emerged from one's research and study. They are two discrete events but **not** in two quite different eras like Pithom and Ramesses but within one generation (e.g., 40 or fewer years). They are both cases of physical salvation. However, for the Rapture, people are already soteriologically saved. For the Second Coming for currently unrepentant Israel, there is no physical rescue until the nation repents and is thereby soteriologically saved. In terms of the all important location which has baffled archaeologists regarding "Pithom and Ramesses", the Second Coming rescues Israel gathered in one place while the Rapture rescues believers scattered all around the globe ["Where the *birds* (i.e., vultures or eagles) are, there the *body* (carcase, corpse?) is *gathered*"]. "Pithom and Ramesses" now lie ruined under modern Cairo not somewhere further north on the delta in two different locations. The book also explains how one derives 'Memphis' from "Pithom". This sort of analysis, or methodology, can be extended to cover many other sets of events, either pairs or trios, reflecting the two forms the word 'sign' appears in the Old Testament (אֶת and אוֹת).

From this survey of the New Testament texts, and as far as Eschatology is concerned, the New Testament is primarily concerned with "The Rapture". This is especially the case in the epistles. Regarding the Gospel accounts, readers need to recognize their authors refer to three different stages in Jesus' Ministry and '*coming*'. Firstly, Jesus offered the Kingdom of God to Israel and He planned to personally bring that news to every town and city in Israel. He sent disciples out ahead of Himself to announce His coming. It was for Israel alone, without any Gentile input, to believe and accept Jesus when He arrived in their location (between AD 27-30) and presented the good news of His offer to install the long awaited Messianic Kingdom of God and deal with the problem of Adam's and Man's sin at the same time. Now, the priestly and regal functions are separated by at least two millennia when they need only have been a couple of days apart. Secondly, when it became clear Israel's leaders on behalf of the people had rejected that offer (c.f., Exodus 4:8 and the Raising of Lazarus), Jesus prophesied His own departure and return to Heaven. He also prophesied looming destruction for Israel's temple and capital city (Jerusalem). That was fulfilled in AD 70. He then went on to describe circumstances concerning His eventual return from Heaven to offer the kingdom to a later generation of Israel. That left a set of unfulfilled Old Testament prophecies and others Jesus gave in the New Testament. They were delivered to prepare the last generation of the Church Age that would be contemporary with a revived nation of Israel in 'The End Times'. The Church picked up the role Israel had for the previous two millennia as custodian and teacher of the Oracles of God. The church will continue in its temporary role until the Rapture. Then Israel resumes or takes up the challenge again via the 144000 witnesses etc.

This paper assumes the Bible tells us that the last generation of 'pre-Messianic Kingdom Fallen Man' would see the termination of both the Church Age and, shortly after, the end of the Age of Fallen Man. God has allowed the nonsense arising from Adam's disobedience regarding the Tree of Knowledge to run for six millennia or six days (II Peter 3:8, Psalm 90:4). These things are part of the Plan, Will or Testament God has for the Universe and the World (Romans 12:2). In His love, God has a Plan for fallen man (the "*enosh*-man" of Psalm 8:4) despite The Fall (John 3:16).

Most of the New Testaments's texts on those '*Last Days*' stress Jesus' warnings to

believers (the Church) to make sure they are ready and waiting and in expectation of a particular situation we call '*The Rapture*'. One suggests those New Testament texts were aimed at the '*Daniel 12:4 & 9*' generation that Jesus seems to have referred to on several occasions [e.g., Matthew 21:43, 24:15 and Luke 21:32 or even Ezekiel 38:21, c.f., Addendum (Av)]. In this paper, the author assumes the texts suggest the Rapture in effect has to occur during the "Days of Noah **and** of Lot". The Rapture may even be the last day of that mini-era thus concluding it. This paper (refer below) also considers the (unlikely) possibility the Rapture has already occurred. Nevertheless, one is working on the hypothesis it hasn't happened yet.

Another obvious difficulty is that the Days of Noah and Lot are also hard to identify, define, establish or ascertain. So this survey of the texts confirms the view that throughout the Church Age, the Rapture has always been "imminent". Only God knows the day and the hour of '*The Rapture*'. But we may discern its 'season' via the Days of Noah and/or Lot. Thus, the Lord's language about that 'one' particularly important day for Him and any information He released about its 'season' ('The Rapture' as we say), had to remain enigmatic until Israel clearly had rejected Him. The Second Coming to rescue Israel on the Last Day of the Seven-year Apocalypse means that the day of the Second Coming can be known **once it is clear** the Treaty that ignites God's wrath in the Apocalypse has formally been "confirmed" (Daniel 9:27 and 12:11-12) by the Antichrist-666. Regarding the Rapture and related matters, the timing is God the Father's decision **alone**. Israel's rescue via the Second Coming is a choice at Israel's discretion **alone**.

Another essential point here is that genuine believers will anyway always be acting in faith and prayer on these matters. Therefore we must always be in a 'Waiting, Watching and Warning-Witnessing' mode (our 'W.W.W'). The Lord did not want believers *missing out* on that day; were that possible. Many earlier generations of the Church reasonably believed, and of course **hoped**, they were living in the days of The Rapture or a day when Jesus would return from Heaven to receive them. Now, the evidence points to our generation actually or even factually being there, i.e., in "The Rapture's" '**season**' [refer Addendum (Aii)]. The churches have gone silent on this because they appear to have "fallen away" (II Thessalonians 2:3, c.f., Revelation 3:15).

The Old Testament foresaw the coming of the "Promised Deliverer" who crushes the serpent's head (Genesis 3:15). Later in its ***His Story*** (historical-prophetic record) the Bible revealed this 'Deliverer' would be a Son of David. It revealed He would be the "Prophet like Moses" (Exodus 33:11, Deuteronomy 5:4, 18:15, 34:10) who would speak with God "mouth to mouth" (Numbers 12:8). Isaiah 9:1-2 and 11:1 implied, then as History confirmed, the Deliverer would be the '*Nazarene*' from the regions of Zebulun surrounding Nazareth, and Naphtali. Today, Nazareth city and its environs actually resembles in its geo-physical layout a wide-based tree stump with gnarled roots at the centre in the form of road routes which stretch out in long straight lines across the plains as they spread out from, so to speak, the central tree-trunk.

However, this paper works on the basis that Exodus 4:8 (refer next section) is actually God's prophecy showing that He alone knew, and always knew, Israel's proud and envious leaders (in a type of Satan) would reject that 'Deliverer' when He did arrive, live and minister in Israel between 7 BC and AD 30. The New Testament Gospels narrate how that extraordinary situation of Israel rejecting Jesus developed. To a significant

extent, that is a major objective or theme of the three synoptic gospel accounts. Mark immediately gets to the main reason for that rejection at the start of his gospel (Mark 3:22). That means, on this assumption, we also must study God's prophecies about Israel's Messiah and the Kingdom of God from the point of view (or 'purview') of Exodus 4:8 where the Bible reveals God foreknew Israel's rejection of Jesus in AD 30.

The prophecies about how God plans to bring sovereignty of the world into the control of Jesus; mostly written, of course, in the Old Testament (Hebrew, *Tanaakh*), not in English or Greek; would thenceforth have to account for two different scenarios over the ensuing world history after *circa* 1500 BC. That is why God's prophecies about the 'End Times' are mixed up across the entire corpus of Scripture. It is a bit like the way our documents on computers are scattered across the memory on the silicon disk. They reside there in scraps. Each one bears a little hook so that the software package being used can pull them back into the coherent document we sent to archive. In this analogy, God's Holy Spirit is effectively the provider of the software package for us to correctly analyse the Biblical texts. With the guidance of God's Spirit, the reader has to **dig** them out and properly sequence them. Until AD 30, which of two scenarios would eventually apply depended on whether Israel would or would not accept Jesus between AD27-30. That's partly why the prophecies in the Bible seem to be so enigmatic. Anyway, God always required Faith to believe Him since Adam's fall. So we must '**dig**' in faith and by faith and by trusting God's indwelling Holy Spirit to override our prejudices and lead us into Truth (אמת) or literally meaning in Hebrew, "*Aleph* with *Tav*" (א - מ - ת) or "From *Aleph* to *Tav*" (מ א - ת).

Which of the two scenarios presaged in Exodus 4:8 (see next section) would emerge always depended on Israel's actual choice or decision over Jesus of Nazareth's candidacy for Israel's Messiah. It was and still is Israel's choice to make. That is why God has again raised up Israel, this time a different generation, to play such a crucial role in world history. God allowed for the possibility Israel's leaders would **accept** Jesus at His First Advent (Exodus 4:8a, '**if**' they believe "The Voice of the First Sign"). However, the Old Testament prophecies dating from between 4000 BC and *circa* 400 BC are also written into the Old Testament in such a way that Israel alternatively would **reject** Jesus' First Coming but would consequently or subsequently **accept** Jesus at the Second Coming (Exodus 4:8b, "The Voice of the Last Sign"). In fact, Jesus' Second Coming now only occurs when Israel does repent in the future. The Rapture is God's decision alone although one might argue God corrals Israel, like sheep enclosed in a pen, into calling on Jesus. Exodus 4:8b confirms Israel's latter or belated acceptance. The Rapture is about rescuing the Church from the judgement of the Apocalypse because it has already repented. But God awaits Israel's *national* repentance.

As individuals, Israelites, and as a nation, Israel, must yet repent. Some individuals apart, Israel won't repent until the end of the Apocalypse, it would seem from prophecy. That is why the nation of Israel is back in the 'Table of Nations' and is hated so much by the rest of the world. If the World is not aware of all this, its current task-master Satan certainly is. Israel will appeal to Jesus to physically save it when the Antichrist enlists the other nations to destroy Israel in the Armageddon Campaign. Repenting over Jesus and what happened to Him (Leviticus 26:40-42, Isaiah 65:7) will be Israel's last act on Earth before the Second Coming and the introduction of the MMK promised to Israel here on a renovated Earth.

The MMK is based in and centred on the “Holy Land” (modern Israel). Thus the Second Coming is about Israel’s repentance and salvation both soteriological and physical. However, and in stark contrast, the True Church of *the* Christ is already soteriologically saved. It only needs **physical** salvation from judgements to come, and from persecutions and tribulations in the present. Future judgement comes in the form of dreadful environmental degradation of the like we have never seen since the extra-terrestrial catastrophes that afflicted Earth between 2500-800 BC. The Apocalypse judgements are delivered by God’s angels. The angels’ plagues add to the degradation we have been responsible for with our pollution. Also there is the Antichrist’s wrath that mankind will suffer, but not the absent Church nor those ‘sealed’ in Revelation 7:4 (144000 Jewish witnesses) and 11:5 (The Two Witnesses). Rescue or salvation from those distressing circumstances is a very important reason for “The Rapture”. Its most important purpose is to take us into Heaven to prepare the Church for the ‘Marriage of the Lamb’ while it is (or we are) **temporarily** in Heaven and the rest of the world is going through *hell on earth*.

There is a null hypothesis to all this. Refer also to the discussion in Revelation 3:11-12 below. Our interpretations and assumptions about the Bible and especially of Exodus 4:8 may be incorrect. Even so, one alternative hypothesis is that the vast array of current world problems will culminate in a collapse of much of the present governing regimes and a gradual return to an equilibrium in society, systems, population levels etc., resembling 16th to 17th Western Europe or China. Or the evolutionists are correct and we are just having teething problems as we progress to evolve into the universe. A more relevant alternative or null hypothesis for this paper is that **the Rapture has already occurred perhaps even 400 years ago**. That of course would prove the Rapture is not somehow ‘*part and parcel*’ with the Second Coming. So we are going to be Tribulation Saints instead. The difficulty with this null hypothesis is determining when the Rapture theoretically may already have occurred. Absence of evidence is not necessarily evidence of absence. One’s discussions in the verses below proceed from the basis one does accept the above assumptions about the continuing imminence of the Rapture based on the methodology and general approach to Scripture outlined in these papers. Most importantly, one believes and assumes the Bible is God’s Inspired Written Word.

Thus, as Dr Fruchtenbaum has understood presumably with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, The *Book of Revelation* sequences the Old Testament’s ‘*Last Days*’ prophecies but of course cannot ‘sequence’ the Rapture which is a day only God Knows and is always ‘imminent’. One can read Fruchtenbaum’s analysis of that sequence in *Footsteps of the Messiah*. His analysis may not be 100% accurate but it is a very good start and far superior to any other analysis of Eschatology one has studied. Of course, no one’s eschatology can be perfect. Jesus added a bit more information, or clarification, to the Old Testament prophecies for Israel between AD 30-70 then for the Eve of the Second Coming and of course He raised the issue of what we label “The Rapture”. The debate centres on when Jesus began preparing us for or warning us about the Rapture. Jesus also summarized and confirmed Old Testament prophecies about Israel in the ‘*Last Days*’ when He and some disciples were on the Mount of Olives (“*Olivet Discourse*”). He did that just before the Crucifixion’.

In *Revelation*, Jesus gave Apostle John much more information elaborating on the *Latter Days*. By the time Israel had officially rejected Jesus He had to announce in

effect not the 'new way' but the alternative scenario of Exodus 4:8, according to one's assumptions, by which the Old Testament prophecies would thenceforth have to be understood and sequenced (*Book of Revelation*). There is a vast collection of theological literature that debates whether Jesus changed Judaism or whether Paul changed Jesus' *New Judaism*. Hence the view that many churches preach a Pauline gospel. There was no 'new way' as such. Although the early followers of Jesus were known as "The Way" (Acts 9:2, 18:25, 26; 19:9, 23; 22:4, 24:14, 22). That term was based on Jesus' own description. "I am The Way, The Truth and The Life". The point is, there was no new way be that of salvation or anything else. There was to be a new vehicle that had to temporarily continue with the ministry concerning God's Plan for the World, preaching about it etc. The Church had some more information about that Plan. The Church received its commission because Israel stumbled at that first hurdle in Exodus 4:8. Israel itself received this commission after the failure of the Conscience regime or era between Adam and Abraham. In the opinion of this author, the New Testament is therefore primarily concerned with **The Rapture** which cannot be sequenced and was never anticipated, like the Church, in Old Testament days. Revelation 2:1 to 3:22 gives us a very brief purview of Church History, or 'Christendom', between AD 30 to the Rapture.

In parallel, Jesus had to talk about the Rapture of the Church of *the* Christ as though it were a "mystery" as Apostle Paul explained in I Corinthians 15:51. This and other "mysteries" (e.g., Ephesians 3:4-6, Colossians 1:26-7) are things in Scripture that could not be revealed then solved, explained and taught until Israel's rejection of Jesus as Messiah and Saviour as confirmed by the events of AD 27-30 (the main point of Exodus 4:8a). Thus, there is absolutely no reference to the Rapture in the Old Testament. Aside from I Corinthians 15:51-4 and I Thessalonians 4:15-18 written by Apostle Paul, this paper takes the view the passages in Luke 17:22-37 then Matthew 24:36-42, together with Paul's points, are the four most extensive, specific or detailed passages on the Rapture.

However, only the Rapture passages in Luke 17: 26-9, 32 and Matthew 24:37-9 refer to "The Days of Noah and Lot". One of the paradigms in this paper is that only Luke describes the day which Matthew 24:36 and Mark 13:32 call the "Day that only the Father knows" as being "One of the Days of the Son of Man" that His disciples "would long for" but that they "would not see". Therefore, this paper also suggests those 'Days of Noah and Lot' actually describe the "season" of the Rapture without giving any clue as to the actual day or hour of the Rapture. Most of our information about Noah and Lot comes from the Old Testament. The Days of Noah in relation to the Flood and its environmental aftermath, ramifications and repercussions receives a lot of support from scientific data we are currently collecting. Peter's epistles give us most of the New Testament's other information on those times. As we proceed, it will become evident that Paul seems to have realised "The Rapture" he wrote about, although not using that exact word of course, was the same as the day of the "**Son of Man**" the disciples would not see and the same as Matthew's statement (and Mark's) about the day **only God knows**, not even the Son Himself in His Humanity at least.

Most commentators overlook the fact that Israel could have accepted Jesus in AD 30 as Exodus 4:8a indicates. It was the same for Adam who could have resisted eating from the Tree of Knowledge. It was the same for Satan and some other angels who could have resisted urges to rebel against God (Ezekiel 28:15). Later, Jesus inspired

Paul to expand on that “mystery”. Paul probably understood that if Israel’s leaders had accepted Jesus there would **not** have been a Church Age. Instead, there would have been in AD 30 the introduction of the MMK instead of a Church Age or Era that began at Pentecost-*Shavuot* AD 30. In the case of Israel’s acceptance of Jesus in AD 30, the ‘MMK’ would have immediately proceeded from Jesus’ Resurrection and overthrow of Rome. Exodus 4:8 [“if they do not believe the Voice of the First Sign” (לקל האת הראשון)], implied Israel could have made the correct decision about Jesus of Nazareth in AD 30.

* Key Assumptions and Critical Texts

In the Introduction, one has canvassed some of the radically different assumptions behind this paper:

(A) The possible identification of the Antichrist-666 [Refer Addendum (N)];

(B) The book *Memphis, Merneptah and Ramesses and the Winged Disk of Judah*, provides the basis for the *Aleph-Tav* Model to complement standard analysis of the Bible’s themes such as;

(i) the *Aleph-Tav* History-Prophecy Continuum;

(ii) The Two-phase plan of **His Story** where the post-Christ **His Story** does not repeat but “rhymes” (Mark Twain) with the pre-Christ **His Story** c.f., Tyre (BC) and Tarshish (AD); and relationship with the ‘will-they won’t-they’ Exodus 4:8 scenarios;

(iii) the existence of more than 130 ‘First-Last’ or *Aleph-Tav* events (refer separate paper on the matter);

(C) The adoption (with some amendments) of Dr Immanuel Velikovsky’s re-structured chronology for the ancient Egyptian kingdoms and how that impacts on our interpretation of World History hence Prophecy as well;

(E) Paul’s understanding that:

(i) One of “The Days of the Son of Man” (so-named by Psalm 8:4) that Jesus’ disciples “would not see” is the same as the “day that only the Father knows” in Matthew 24:36 and Mark 13:32; and

(ii) The Rapture occurs in the ‘**season**’ called the “Days of Noah and Lot” either prior to or on the eve of the Apocalypse which concludes at the Second Coming.

(F) The significance of Israel’s stunning victory against all odds in the 1967 Six Day War lasting exactly six days from early Sunday morning (*Yom Rishon*) and closing on late Friday afternoon on *Erev Shabbat*;

(G) Strong evidence from archaeology that we are at the end of the final 2000-year or Two-Day (*Church*) Age that completes a six millennia History before the MMK that will complete seven millennia in total before the new Universe begins; and

(H) The evidence for simple codes spanning across the Bible’s texts especially when

one considers the possible relationship between Exodus 4:8, Revelation 19:10 (refer next paragraph) and the three statements in *Revelation* that God is the “Alpha and Omega”.

(I) The Plan of Jesus' Ministry hinges around The Great Denunciation possibly mid-way through it (recorded in Matthew 12:22-45, Mark 3:22-29 and Luke 11:14-32). Its timing in relation to the Transfiguration [c.f., Sections (5) & (10) below] and ensuing questions about the roles of John the Baptist and Elijah cannot be adequately or fully understood without reference to the first Critical Biblical text, i.e., Exodus 4:8.

*** The Four Critical Biblical Texts to consider:**

(1) Exodus 4:8;

If the conclusions drawn from this analysis of Exodus 4:8 are false, many of the other conclusions likewise fall. The text in Exodus chapters 3 & 4 describes events so unusual that they can only be a literally true account of a bizarre situation so that even Moses must have thought he was high on LSD or something. That is why the events of the third and fourth chapters of Exodus deserve a much more careful analysis. Furthermore, the Jewish sages Rambam and Rashi realized the Lord was saying something to Moses that went beyond the time of Moses when they tried centuries ago to consider the significance of those events. With good reasoning, Rambam and Rashi thought the two miracles somehow related to the two Phoenician boys brought back to life by Elijah and Elisha respectively. They came close to a correct interpretation. However, they realised they were not close enough because the two miracles by Elijah and Elisha were in the wrong sequence which is restored in the cases of Lazarus (John's Gospel) and the Two Witnesses (in *Revelation*). Elijah and Elisha set precedents nevertheless, including a precedent for the Syro-Phoenician woman to approach Jesus when He visited Lebanon near the city of Tyre. She wanted Jesus to cast a demon out of her daughter and give the young woman's life back to her. In this case the 'event-pair' of Elijah and Elisha sets up a situation for the third element *vis-a-vis* the Syro-Phoenician woman. Later at the Jordan at Elijah's ascent into the 'ether' or perhaps time-space continuum perhaps, the Hebrew text (not translations) reveals a typology for Jesus, John the Baptist and the Holy Spirit of God at the River Jordan.

The main clauses in Exodus 4:8 say, “If ... they do not hearken to the voice of the first sign ... they will believe the voice of the latter sign”. As Moses was tending flocks in the Sinai wilderness of North Arabia, possibly near the modern city of Medina (*Yathrub-Jethro*) he came across a bush or shrub aglow with what looked like fire. However, that glowing bush was not consumed or burnt out as 'fire' normally does. Under instruction from God speaking from this amazing sight of a glowing bush Moses performed two “signs” (תקן). Firstly, God instructed Moses to take his shepherd's crook and turn it into a snake. Then God told Moses to grab it by the tail, normally a stupid thing to do, and return the snake back into a stick. Secondly, Moses placed his hand into his “bosom” so that it turned leprous. He repeated the motion and the hand returned to health. The 'glow' the bush evidently survived was the same phenomenon that led the Maji firstly to Israel from somewhere in the East (Iran perhaps) and then to the very house in Bethlehem where the infant Christ was housed. The Maji had assumed they should go to Jerusalem. Herod's advisers suggested they go to Bethlehem and then the 'glow' of the Shecinah Glory of God reappeared and guided them to the exact house where

Jesus lay. As long as two years earlier it may have been the same house where a *sukka* had been built wherein Mary gave birth to Jesus; those events occurring between *circa* 7-4 BC. Using the two signs of Exodus 4:8 to ostensibly encourage Moses to go and rescue Israel from the slavery of Pharaoh's Egypt, God uttered the enigmatic words quoted above. The essential character of these two miracles, or "signs", was of things going from death to life and to death again (the stick) or *vice versa* i.e., life to death and back to life (the hand). In other words, they signalled or depicted death and 'resurrection' or perhaps 'resuscitation' to life.

In the Hebrew text there are some important clues that explain what these curious statements really mean. The first clue is that the Hebrew word for 'sign' that should be אֹת actually is אֵת. Secondly, there is a "voice" accompanying both signs. In metaphorical language one might say, "the sign **said** keep off the grass" but unless it was some sort of electronic device it could not literally have "spoken". However, nowhere else in Scripture, either, do we find 'signs' also having a 'voice'. Thirdly, God did not speak of "two" signs but of the 'First' (הראשון) and the 'Last' (האחרון). These are significant and important observations from the Hebrew text that make them so enigmatic. Most people have little idea how significant they are. Nor do they realise that most translators of Bibles effectively obscure the point in the way they mis-translate the Hebrew here, the KJV and the ASV being notable exceptions in their accuracy.

The *corrupted* word for sign (אֵת) used in this verse, only written or 'truncated' in this way in Exodus 8:23 and 12:13 as well, is composed of the First (א) and Last (ת) letters of the Hebrew alphabet. That in turn means, in their Greek comparisons, they are the *Alpha* (Α) and the *Omega* (Ω). Of course, only God is the "*Alpha and the Omega*" [Isaiah 48:12 (implied) and Revelation 1:8, 21:6 & 22:13] or the "First and the Last" (Isaiah 48:12). When Moses presented the two miracles to the Jewish leaders they unanimously, enthusiastically and positively responded to Moses. They immediately appointed him as their leader. The Egyptians vehemently and fiercely rejected the implications of the "First" and "Last" "signs". We know Israel plainly rejected Moses' attempts to bring them justice or liberty forty years earlier (*circa* 1525 BC). That explains why he protested to God they would reject him again in *circa* 1485 BC. So God gave him power to do these two "signs". Moses' previous attempt to do God's work was at his own initiative. Forty years later God came to Moses and personally commissioned him.

However, it is the contention here that in reality God in 1485 BC was looking a long way forward, about seven to eight hundred years **after** Elisha (750 BC) to the first of two events recorded in the New Testament. They concerned the raising of Lazarus (John 11:1-45) and, at least another two thousand years later still, of the two Witnesses (Revelation 11:1-13). Overall, that's a stretch of 3500 years since 1485 BC. In both cases, we read about "**a loud voice**" concerning the resurrections of Lazarus (John 11:1-57) and in the future the Two Witnesses (Revelation 11:12). Most people say we cannot know the mind of God on such matters as the enigmatic suffering and death of Lazarus. There is widespread speculation why "Jesus wept" (John 11:35) just before raising Lazarus. On the basis of this interpretation of Exodus 4:8 it's quite obvious why "Jesus wept". He could not get Israel to accept Him even though the first miracle in Exodus 4:8 made it possible Israel could have chosen to "accept the voice of the first sign" when He raised Lazarus back to life and health. After the Antichrist kills the Two Witnesses during the Apocalypse and God raises them back to life, and indeed lifts

them safely to heaven, the Bible says Israel will believe what they had been saying about Jesus and all that had been said about Him by previous generations of believers including many Jewish believers who have been in the Church throughout this age. What will in future shock the people of Jerusalem is a voice from Heaven that calls out to the two witnesses to ascend there (Revelation 11:12). Our ascent at the Rapture will no doubt be like that. Of course, the events of Revelation 11:12 imply the Rapture has already occurred by then. According to the text, the inhabitants of Jerusalem repent after watching the Two Witnesses ascend into Heaven. At the end of the Apocalypse, "All Israel" believes (Romans 11:26). In Exodus 4:8, God is effectively giving us a purview of world history, prophecy (**His Story**) and the dual scenario plan for future world History. As Mr Twain observed, this is rhyming of History rather than repetition of History.

(2) Luke 17:22-37;

Most that needs to be said here is covered in the relevant sections (16-19) below. Also, one refers to these verses in various other sections because of their potentially pervasive significance or importance. In summary, the passage effectively is a soliloquy the Lord gave to the disciples, or the Twelve. This occurred somewhere between Jericho and Jerusalem. It was before the group got to Jerusalem for the final Passover Jesus would share with the disciples. Evidently, it seems to this observer, the Lord had a future audience almost certainly in mind along with those gathered around Him. Jesus told His disciples they would "not see" the "Day of the Son of Man" that He was obviously referring to at the time even though they would "**long to see it**". *Sotto voce*, we may see it. Jesus inferred a future generation of disciples would see it. For example, when God spoke to Moses about the two signs of Exodus 4:8 likewise those words seem to have been directed at some situation very far into the future for audiences then to witness. Thus, with a careful study of Exodus chapters 3 and 4 we learn a principle we can apply to Luke 17:22-37. In both situations, the audiences at the time (Moses in Exodus 4:8 and the disciples in Luke 17:22) were focused on things in the very near term. Indeed, it was just one particular day of the "Son of Man" that Jesus was talking about then. It's worth reinforcing here that is not the "Day of the Lord" but "one of the Days of the Son of Man". There is a distinction. He inferred there were other such days His AD 30 disciples would see or had already seen.

(3) Daniel 12:4 & 9 and Jeremiah 31:37;

These being Old Testament texts, they cannot possibly directly apply to the Rapture. However, the angel's comment here to Daniel obviously applied to events concerning Israel in the last of the "seventy sevens" (Daniel 9:26) of "years" or "Times of the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24). In Addendum (J) we take a deeper look at Jesus' term "Times of the Gentiles" in Luke 21:24. From Matthew 24:15 and Mark 13:14 where Jesus referred to the prophecies given to Daniel we can assume Luke's record infers Jesus called that period "The Times of the Gentiles". In effect, it's the period beginning in *circa* 600 BC until the MMK comes into being. A major premise in this paper is that the last 'seven' of the seventy being cut adrift from the previous sixty-nine of Daniel 9:27 is because of the Exodus 4:8 scenarios. Israel's response to the First Sign of Exodus 4:8 would determine whether the last seven would be cut-off for a mere three days and three nights or for two millennia or longer. There seems to be no exact definition what that 'cut-off' actually is or to what or whom it may apply apart from an obvious link with

Israel's "Messiah" and His self sacrifice for our sin.

Daniel 12:4 & 9 and Jeremiah 31:37 are the two best texts to keep in mind when ascertaining whether we are approaching that last 'seven'. This paper brings the author's understanding of the history of world science and economics in helping him to recognize the significance of Daniel 12:4 & 9 and Jeremiah 31:37. They clearly point to a time of a global economy and science and international travel on a stupendous scale perhaps last seen in the days leading up to the Great Flood. In fact, our experience of this knowledge explosion tells us in some ways what a 'good thing' the Flood was. Although generally rather more vague, there are other texts that warn the reader or Israel to keep hold of certain matters until a future day when all would become clear (Genesis 49:1, Deuteronomy 4:30, Jeremiah 30:24, Daniel 2:28, 10:14, I Peter 1:5, 20). Daniel 2:28 and I Peter 1:20 use "Latter Days" and "these Last Times" to cover the whole era of the Times of the Gentiles up to and including the 'Last Seven' for Israel. This observer's professional working career as an economist has also been in the midst of the computer revolution that effectively began engulfing the entire globe from the 1970's and continues apace today. Now we have come almost full circle back to the computer in the Garden of Eden that Adam disobeyedly ate from with eyes and touch [refer Addendum (G) *Coming Full Circle*].

Regarding Jeremiah 31:37, there is information to show this is now being attempted. While one was working on a project for A.P.E.C., on behalf of the NZ Ministry for Research, Science and Technology (no longer in existence), one came across three statements from three of the A.P.E.C. governments to that effect. One pointed out that the top priority for the world's science and international economy is to map the ocean's depths and the universe. The Bible's point is that if such a programme were to succeed then God would tear up the New Covenant (New Testament) which is the basis for our communion services where we declare that we do show forth the Lord's death until He returns. That would mean what the Lord suffered on our behalf would be all for nothing. That's dramatic enough but for the purposes of this paper on the Rapture, one believes Jeremiah 31:37 helps us to identify our place in **His Story**. We are at the point where, as Daniel's advice also tells us, the "Last Days" of Hebrews 1:2 which refer to the Church Age or Mystery Stage of the Kingdom Plan will themselves come to a close in the latter times of Daniel 12:4 & 9. This 'latter period' also will be in the Days of Noah and Lot. As the stored ice from Noah's flood melts the atmosphere begins to hold much more water vapour which means much heavier rain. Winds are getting stronger. Water is returning to the deep underground caverns it originally erupted from (Genesis 7:11 and 8:2). As the water returns underground it may interfere with lava coming from even deeper recesses in the Earth's crust. That will form explosive pressures that could lead to widespread earthquakes. Even so, the extra heat the Earth's core has been absorbing since the atmosphere became damaged by the catastrophe that acted as the catalyst to set off the rain etc., is generating so much heat that it also will cause more earthquakes and volcanos to activate. We are the best equipped generation to be able to discern such things.

(4) Revelation 19:10;

A man in Heaven told John not to worship him. Instead, he advised John to "worship Jesus" because "His testimony was the Spirit of Prophecy". Here, this observer suggests, John had unwittingly received a key to understanding prophecy. No doubt,

the Holy Spirit helps us to understand prophecy and indeed He is the 'Key Driver' to understanding one might say in contemporary computer language. But working out what that 'testimony' actually is may be a key in itself to unlock the mysteries of prophecy. Bearing in mind some prophecy is only fathomable to one particular generation - The last generation of believers before the Millennium. The Testimony actually must have been "I am the אֵת" but transliterated into Greek it appears as "I am the ΑΩ". Therefore using that 'code', the text takes the reader back to Exodus 4:8, 8:23, 12:13 and Zechariah 12:10. Apostle Peter had the task or ministry of bringing the permanent indwelling Holy Spirit into the life of the believer by opening the "keys of the (*Mystery*) Kingdom". So it seems reasonable to likewise substitute the word 'spirit' with 'key' here in Revelation 19:10. In another but slightly different example, the Holy Spirit inspired Paul to use " עֶרְבוּן " from Genesis 38:17, 18 & 20 for his "αρραβων" (Strong 728) in II Corinthians 1:22, 5:5, and Ephesians 1:14 [used three times only, once in the Old Testament (Genesis) and across two epistles in the New]. So one cautiously suggests one is permitted to make that substitution in **the translation into modern English** of the Greek in Revelation 19:10. In other words, read those words as Hebrew not as Greek.

Using this we see that Exodus 12:13, where the Israelites had to put blood over the lintels and door posts of their house so that God would pass over them and not inflict His wrath on them, actually directly points to the Blood of Jesus on the Cross. By truncating the word 'sign' to *Aleph-Tav*, the text encodes the point that it is Jesus' blood that ultimately saves every believer or unbelievers too if only they would believe. People do see this in other ways, for example in the way the locus of the points on the doorway suggests the shape of a cross on which Jesus was crucified.

Hereby, one has summarized the various assumptions that make this paper about the Rapture, to some extent within the context of the Second Coming, a quite different approach to most conventional methods of analysis. The Daniel 12:4 & 9 situation has made these assumptions a plausible reality.

* The Texts

In the reading of the Gospels, it is not always obvious which verses refer to His own travels around Israel, to the "Second Coming" or to "The Rapture" as Jesus' walked around Israel and southern Lebanon (Tyre) and in His coming and going with His disciples between AD 27-30,. In respect to His prophecies concerning the Second Coming or Rapture and other events concerning Israel between AD 30 and 70, it is also sometimes hard to evaluate what Jesus was referring to without careful and prayerful study. Further on in the New Testament there are difficult examples such as I Thessalonians 3:13 [refer Section (51)] where either the Rapture or the Second Coming could be in view. Also, such passages may simply be generic and were not specifically intended to refer to either event. Perhaps, in passages he wrote, Apostle Paul wanted his readers to consider his words there for both the Rapture and the Second Coming. In that context on perhaps rare occasions a sort of *Double Entendre* (any implied indecency excluded) is intended by whomever composed the document. Other reliable commentators simply appear to ignore I Thessalonians 3:13 in their eschatological discussions because they regard it as a teaching on a piety

In the Gospels, verses on eschatological matters unrelated to the Rapture will refer to

either the Second Coming or to events between AD 28-70, or even in AD 135 to the *Bar Kochba* Uprising. The Olivet Prophecies cover 'AD 28-70' events then the Second Coming apart from Matthew's and Mark's additional comments on the Rapture (see below). If in doubt, one should veer towards presuming unclear verses in the rest of the New Testament refer to The Rapture. *Revelation* sequences all the Old Testament prophecies, and any more material in the New Testament, concerning the Second Coming. Therefore, the Mystery of the Rapture implicitly requires most such eschatological material in the New Testament refers to the Rapture which is not discussed at all in *Revelation*.

Pervading all this, there is a general principle that every generation of believers would have to be '*on their toes*' colloquially speaking and always be ready for the Rapture just as Noah and his family got themselves ready for The Flood of 2500 BC and spent a century actively doing so. At a more practical level, although not easy to foresee *ex ante*, no generation of believers or Bible students was going to be able to understand certain prophecies or other wisdom revealed in the Bible until the specific *Last Days* of Daniel 12:4 & 9. This paper assumes that era is nowadays.

(1) Matthew 8:11 is confirmation Gentiles will be enjoying God's Millennial Messianic Kingdom of God. From the outset, this tells us that although it is entirely Israel's decision to accept or reject Jesus' *Kingdom Offer*, the Kingdom is their's and their's alone; but the Gentiles are very much a full partner in it - Praise God.

(2) Matthew 10:6-7, the command is to "announce the Kingdom of God is at hand". At this stage, however, the disciples are commanded to go only to Israel and not to Gentiles because the latter never have any role in its inception, which Israel does. Although we can, must and do pray for its "coming"(Matthew 6:10, Luke 11:2).

(3) Matthew 10:22-23, The words "To the end" (verse 22) and "the Son of Man be come" (verse 23) in this particular situation almost certainly refer to events between AD 27-30. Opposition to Jesus' message was on the rise as opponents spread misinformation about Him or *clerics* moved to excommunicate Jesus' followers from synagogues. That usually meant losing one's job or business. That persecution continued all the way through to AD 70. Acts 12:1 is an example of the situation Jesus described in Matthew 10:18. "To the end" here probably referred to Jesus' ministry.

Dr Fruchtenbaum in *Yeshua*, volume 2, page 494, affirms the statement 'till the Son of Man be come' applies to the evangelizing the "disciples" will carry out between *circa* AD 27-30. They would not necessarily have been able to complete their coverage of the "cities" of Israel before Jesus would enter Jerusalem fulfilling Zechariah 9:9. Fruchtenbaum does concede one could read this as referring to the Second Coming. Thus, we certainly think none of this applies to the Rapture and probably not to the 'Second (or 'Last') Coming' either but apply in the time of the 'First Coming' as Jesus executed His travel plans for His AD 27-30 ministry. By getting the History, Sequence and Chronology correct, with careful analysis of all scriptures bearing on these matters, one can elicit the most likely or probable interpretation. Looking at the statement, or any other, solely within the context of the verse it is written is quite inadvisable.

Matthew 10:22-23 occurs before the Sanhedrin had made any official declaration about Jesus. There was still time and opportunity for Israel to accept Jesus at this point in

Jesus' Ministry. Based on Exodus 4:8 we certainly consider *AD 30 Israel's* acceptance of Jesus to be a potential reality from a human perspective, and perhaps even from God's. Jesus' words at this point in the Gospel narrative kept open the possibility Israel and its leaders would still accept Jesus. It was only later in the Gospel narrative that it got more and more apparent the leaders would officially reject Jesus.

Whether one chooses to believe Matthew 10:22-23 applies to **only** to *circa* AD 27-30, or even only to AD 27-70, warnings and advice therein will be more than just instructive to those coming to belief after the Rapture and onwards until the last day of Armageddon. They give comfort to everyone or to anyone who "stands up for Jesus", as the old hymn says. For the future, they also will give purpose and hope to those who had been rejecting Jesus right up to the moment of the Rapture. During the Apocalypse believers (*new saints*), i.e., all the non-church saints who have come to belief after the Rapture and before the Second Coming, will be encouraged by these words. Even through that egregious and apocalyptic period the new saints must keep evangelizing. The 144000 Jews, and the two 'witnesses' who **may** not be "Jewish" as such, get special protection of course until the latter are killed. Other new believers will not get any special protection like the 144 000 but they can expect "The Comforter" (John 14:16ff) to re-assure them.

(4) Matthew 10:31-42, is generally about discipleship and the costs thereof [refer Addendum (Aiii)]. The words can be applied to every generation of believers. However, in this passage Jesus mentions His 'coming', presumably in the context of that three-year mission He had as He travelled around Israel. It's worth noting Jesus makes the point that He has come as more of a divider of families than a family conciliator. The full passage on discipleship begins at Matthew 10:5. It finishes with a reference to rewards for service and perhaps faith in verses 41-42. For 'Church Age' believers, rewards are distributed at the Judgement- or Evaluation-Seat of Christ in Heaven which is one reason why there is a Rapture anyway. We get a 'heavenly evaluation' while everyone on *Terra Firma* (Earth) gets hellish judgement delivered by God's angels until Israel appeals to Jesus. [Refer Addendum (P) *Judgement* for more discussion on this].

(5) Matthew 16:27-8; cf., Mark 8:38 - 9:1 and Luke 9:26-27

The events surrounding these three particular passages, each with slightly nuances in the wording, are hard to sequence let alone place chronologically. Thus two very important analytical tools for Biblical study are blunted. The inter-relationship of these three texts is perhaps the most complex for those reasons. We have to deal with that because these texts come from the three 'synoptic' gospels. recording some very important statements by Jesus about His coming in Glory or in His Kingdom but also in the context of the Transfiguration. One difficulty is that the nuances in these texts hint at both the Rapture and the Second Coming. So we have quite a difficult task untangling what's going on. For that reason, a separate discussion for this section and Section (10) has been developed [Addendum (Aiii), Background to the Transfiguration].

Relevant to the Transfiguration is the issue of the 'Great Denunciation'. The synoptic gospels record that in Matthew 12:22-45, Mark 3:22-29 and Luke 11:14-32. It is evident Luke 9:27ff places the Transfiguration **before** the Great Denunciation. Matthew places the Great Denunciation **after** the Transfiguration. Mark indirectly refers to the Great Denunciation at the start of his gospel just after Jesus had selected the Twelve' (Mark

3:22-29). It is generally assumed Mark, Matthew and John wrote more thematically whereas Luke 1:3 tells us he wrote about events “in *sequential* order”. Thus it is hard to establish whether Jesus used the Transfiguration to demonstrate He would complete God’s Plan or Will or whether it was a response to Peter’s grate statement of faith in Jesus so that the disciples would be encouraged and confirmed in their belief. But as Peter wrote, Prophecy is still the more sure word than signs, miracles etc. Prophetic truth is evidence our faith is not in vain. The guarantee or ‘*Erevon-Arrabown*’ of God’s Spirit permanently and fully indwelling in us after Peter opened the Keys of the Kingdom to all humanity which seals us (Ephesians 1:14, II Corinthians 1:22 and 5:5).

That’s briefly the background to the reported words in Matthew of Jesus saying, “ .. some (disciples) standing here .. shall not taste death .. till they see the Son of Man coming in His Kingdom” (Matthew 16:28) and in verse 27, “ .. the Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels”. The verb ‘come’ in both verses is “*erchomai*” (Strong #2064) the most commonly used Greek verb for that action in the gospels. Thus, the Greek is quite neutral and does not enable us establish any nuance of meaning. We have to look at other factors. A nuance in Luke 17:26 about “the Son of Man .. (*coming*) ..in **His own** Glory” hints at The Rapture. But why would Jesus talk about that before it was evident the Church Age or Mystery Kingdom satge of the Plan of God would now have to intervene because of Israel’s rejection per the Great denunciation? These are questions one must ask when analyzing these texts. Here in Matthew we have the nuance of “the Son of Man coming in **His** Kingdom” (Matthew 16:28). But in Matthew that obviously refers to the Transfiguration because as he said, some of His disciples were with Him when His own Glory was revealed up on that mountain. Nevertheless, it was a Millennial Kingdom scene so Peter, James and John did indeed get a taste of that wonderful time and even tried to build a sukka for Jesus at that future Feast of Tabernacles.

The fact of those disciples presence in that scene supports the idea of the MMK being one element of the Messiah’s own special portion in the overall Kingdom Plan? Psalm 8:4 suggests this is the time when Jesus ruling from Jerusalem shows mankind how to govern our world. It will be much the same environment we have now or soon will be having in spite of the damage of the Apocalypse compounding what we have inflicted on the globe. In the final two stages of the Kingdom of God Plan, Israel is the restored wife of Jehovah and the Church is the Bride of Christ. So the first clause, i.e., the “Son of Man coming in **His** Kingdom” or perhaps His portion of it, indirectly refers to all church saints (deceased and living on that day) being transported into Heaven for the Marriage of the Lamb. That is the Rapture. Then we return and rule in the Millennium with our Lord and Saviour. That would mean the Transfiguration happened in order to secure believers in the fact of the Rapture. But we need to turn to Luke to amplify this point [refer Section (10)].

Whereas the clause in Matthew 16:27, “ .. the Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels” can only refer to the Second Coming where God personally comes to watch Satan’s son slain by Jesus (His Son). Simply put, The Rapture then the Second Coming are ‘Days of the Son of Man’ to at least look forward to, for Him and us with our mutual inheritance (Ephesians 1:11 & 18). One of the ‘Days of the Son of man’, though, His disciples then “**would not see**” (Luke 17:22). But presumably they would see the others and three, of course, really did get a taste of Messiah’s Millennial Kingdom (MMK). They certainly saw evidence of Jesus’ Resurrection, His Ascension

and perhaps Pentecost-Shavuot which may also have been 'one of the (*special*) Days of the Son of Man. The Rapture is only one "Day of the Son of Man", as per Jesus' title from Psalm 8:4. However, Jesus' AD 30 disciples would be deceased and in the Rapture though not see it with the eyes of their body (now 'dust'). Most of the saints in the Rapture are probably going to be lying dead in their graves when it occurs especially as Jesus mused that He might not find much faith in Him amongst those alive then (Luke 18:8). Deceased saints' souls are in Heaven but until re-united in a body those souls in heaven are effectively asleep at the moment of the Rapture. Saints alive at the time will see it.

Part of the context of Matthew's version is a general statement about rewards for everyone, presumably either good or bad (*just desserts*). Again, on this issue, there are different nuances across the three synoptic gospels. Mark and Luke put the emphasis on the positive (unashamed by Jesus' Words) and the negative (ashamed by Jesus Words) at this parallel stage of their gospels. Matthew 16:27 has Jesus coming as "The Son of Man" i.e., in one of His special days (Luke 17:22) and as the person of Psalm 8:4 'coming' to Earth to rule Creation but specifically for that role "in the Glory of His Father with His angels" and "then He shall reward every man according to his works". As far as rewarding or otherwise church saints, Jesus clearly does that in Heaven not here on Earth. So Matthew's record here must refer to the scene in Matthew 25:31-46 where Jesus, now wedded to His congregation or church, is back on earth with God's angels. The Father's Angels presumably are involved with bringing surviving Diaspora Jews 'home' to Israel (God's wife) for the Second regathering from every part of the globe as per Isaiah 11:11. Then Jesus rewards people for doing things like feeding His hungry brethren. That will be very early in the Seventy-five Day interval before the Millennium proper starts. Anywhere else in the Scriptures, soteriological salvation is only associated with faith and belief. The people in Matthew 25:31-46 will have been doing their 'good works' because they belatedly (post-Rapture) had put their faith in Jesus (not antichrist-666) and thereby become saved.

(6) Matthew 24:3-35, This passage introducing the *Oliver Discourse* (see also Mark 13:1-31 and Luke 21:5-36) firstly concerns events up to AD 70 then much later to the Apocalypse and other events leading up to the Second Coming with the increasing frequency and intensity implied in Matthew 24:8 and Mark 13:8, 14. The prophesied events of the '*latter times*' culminate with a future generation of the nation of Israel's belated repentance and rescue. Verse 30 mentions: "The Son of Man coming in the clouds of Heaven"; and the "Sign of the Son of Man in Heaven" as the Shecinah Glory of the Lord pierces the gloom of the "fifth Blackout to come" (Fruchtenbaum, *Footsteps*, pages 356-7). Those events are on the last three days of the Armageddon Campaign at the end of the Apocalypse. From Matthew 26:64 and Mark 14:62 it is evident that Caiaphas *et al* will see this from their vantage point in Hell where their souls reside for now. All Church saints will be in those 'clouds'. Pre-Church saints and deceased post-Rapture or "Tribulation saints"; the latter as this paper defines those who come to belief before, or depending on the timing of the Rapture, during the Apocalypse *per se*; are resurrected after the Lord returns. And that apparently takes place in the 'Seventy-five Day Interval' [refer Addendum (Aiv) *The Seventy-five Day Interval*]. We move next to Matthew's Rapture section.

(7) Matthew 24:36-44 is one of several passages (e.g., I Corinthians 7:1, 8:1, 12:1, 16:1, I Thessalonians 5:1) where the text begins with the Greek *Peri de* conjunction (or

disjunction). Paul used the technique several times. It is the considered view in this paper that Matthew and Mark 13:32-37 in their Gospels introduced this section of Jesus' Olivet Discourse when Jesus **re-introduced** the subject of the Rapture from His 'soliloquy' in Luke 17:22-37. Thus chronologically, Matthew 24:36-44 is the second major statement on the Rapture because it comes about a week later than the Luke 17:22-37 soliloquy. Using the Greek *Peri de* technique here Matthew effectively separated or *disjoined* the two different issues Jesus had to deal with in His Prophecies about the last days for the congregations of Israel and the new Church (Matthew 16:18). Matthew 24:36-44 is the disciple's record in either summary form of Jesus' Luke 17:22-37 outline of the conditions surrounding or heralding The Rapture, or it's a record of Jesus' own brief summation of Luke 17:22-37.

With this *Peri de* method, Matthew 24:36-44 separates the Rapture from the previous verses (Matthew 24:4-35) about prophesied events between AD 66-70 then the end of the Apocalypse (*Last Days*). Matthew 24:4-35 relates to **unbelieving** Israel and Gentiles of the Latter Times but not to the Church (composed of **believing** Jews and Gentiles) which is taken out of the world before the Apocalypse. It would be better to read the clause in verse 36 as 'Now concerning the day that only the Father knows'.

In the view of these Rapture papers Matthew 24:36-44 is Jesus' summary of what He had earlier said in a fuller dissertation given in Luke 17:22-37. It is one's contention Luke 17:22-37 was all about 'The Rapture' - and only about The Rapture. Arising from Luke 17:22, "The Rapture" is a day the AD 30 disciples, as distinct from AD 2020 or later disciples, "would **not see**" but be **within** (or participate in) and be involved with nevertheless. Certainly, they could look forward to it. They could have Hope in it. They could be comforted by the fact it would one day come. They just will not literally "see" it, because, as it has turned out; their carnal eyes will have long since turned back to dust (elements) in their graves. The disciples' souls, like all church saints who have since died, are residing in Heaven rather than in Abraham's Bosom in Hell. The Second Coming has them returning as resurrected (Jewish) Church Saints when Jesus returns to rescue Israel from Antichrist. They will see that with the eyes of a resurrection body.

The Matthew 24:36-44 account refers to the "Days of Noah" (or *Noe*, KJV) in verses 38-9. However, Luke used that term, along with "Days of Lot", **but only** in his account of the things Jesus said to the disciples several days earlier while they were still outside Jerusalem and on the way into the city for the Passover. Furthermore, Matthew records Jesus referring to the "Days of Noe" only **after** his *peri de* disjunction on the slopes of the Mount of Olives. Reiterating, Matthew does **not refer** to the 'Days of Lot' as Jesus did according to Luke 17:26-29. Thus, Luke's record indicates the Rapture takes place while both the Days of Noah and Days of Lot are running together. The Second Coming, **on this basis**, would appear to come during or very near the end of the days of Noah and Lot as the world is about to enter the Apocalypse [refer Addendum (Aii), *Days of Noah, Lot and Apocalypse*]. The 'stormy', 'sordid' and 'seamy' conditions of the days of "Noah" and "Lot" will be almost normal compared with the terrible Apocalypse which is a whole new level of chaos inflicted upon mankind by God and Antichrist. It is tempting to suggest the Days of Noah and Lot conclude with the Rapture. But it's a moot point.

Satan has always been using immoral or perverted sexual activity, symbolized by the 'Days of Lot', in order to undermine mankind as his fallen angels did before the Flood. However, once in power, Antichrist-666 may even order all sexual perversion to be

outlawed. He knows how bad it is and needs to stop it for his plans to succeed. That would or could in theory signal the end of the 'Days of Lot'. The Day's of Noah which include the after-effects of the warming globe and melting ice caps formed during the Flood presumably continue on into the Apocalypse although they too may end with The Rapture. Again it's a moot point. However, the extreme storms, floods, droughts and hurricanes associated with the globe's warming (and melting ice caps), which we currently seem to be going through, will continue and even exacerbate as the patterns of the world's atmospheric and oceanic convection currents depart from the climate equilibrium of previous millennia. But those newsworthy effects which are certainly taking us a bit by surprise at the moment, are about as violent as a butterfly flapping its wings in comparison with the disasters coming in the Apocalypse. They will be delivered by angelic or *extra-terrestrial* (Velikovsky *passim*) agents. The combination of Antichrist's wrath against his opponents with the apocalyptic conditions rendered by God's angels will be like nothing else the world has ever seen. Albeit under God's control, they are likely to be worse than catastrophes the world experienced between 2500-800 BC that Dr Velikovsky wrote about in the 1940's and 1950's. Such things are discussed elsewhere in our papers. Matthew 24:42-44 describes how Jesus 'uplifts' believers in the Rapture providing them with an assured escape from the disasters to come.

Overall, there is not a lot said about the Rapture in the New Testament when compared with or in contrast to the extensive information we have from the whole Bible about the Last Days, Apocalypse (Day of Jehovah, Day of Jacob's Trouble etc.), the Second Coming and events related to that. But, within the New Testament where both get mentioned, it is crucially important to avoid confusing the Rapture, not mentioned in the Old Testament at all of course, with the Second Coming.

A Note on the verb 'come in Sections (6) & (7):

In Addendum (Ai) the reader can find all the various examples of the way the New Testament scribes used Greek words for 'come', 'appear' or 'reveal' etc. Here we take two examples from Sections (6) and (7).

(6) Matthew 24:3-35, " .. (verse 3) .. "What shall be the sign of thy coming [#3952] .. (verse 14) .. shall the end come [#2240] .. (verse 27) .. lightening comes [#1831] ... so also shall the coming [#3952] of the Son of Man be .. (verse 30) .. then shall appear the Sign of the Son of Man in Heaven ... and they shall see Son of Man coming [#2064] in the clouds of Heaven with power and great glory"; and

(7) Matthew 24:36-44, " .. (verse 37) .. as the days of Noah *were*, so shall also the coming [#3952] of the Son of Man be .. (verse 39) .. the Flood came [#2064] ... so also the coming [#3952] of the Son of Man .. (verse 42) .. what hour your Lord doth come [#2064] .. (verse 43) .. The thief would come [#2064] .. (verse 44) .. be ready for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh [#2064] "

Considering both Sections i.e., Matthew 24:3-44, forty-one verses in all, the 'Levite' turned 'Publican' used the Greek *parousia* (Strong 3952) four times to describe the "Son of Man coming". The first was in the disciples' original question (verse 3), Matthew recording their choice of words not Jesus'. The second comes three-quarters of the way through the 'Israel' section of the Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24:27). The other two are in the Rapture section after the *peri de* conjunction (24:37 & 39). However, Matthew also used the Greek *erchomai* (Strong 2064) on three occasions in those sections to describe

the “Son of Man” (24:30 and 24:44) or “The Lord coming” (24:42). Thus in the longer of these two sections concerning Israel and the Second Coming, *parousia* is used by both the disciples and Jesus but the Lord also used *erchomai* once. In the shorter Rapture section, Jesus used *parousia* twice and *erchomai* once for His “coming”. However, Jesus he also used *erchomai* for the coming of the “Flood” (Matthew 24:39) and the “Thief” (Matthew 24:43).

For the coming of “The End”, Matthew 24:14 Jesus used *heko* (Strong 2240). For the lightening coming in verse 27, Matthew used *exerchomai* (Strong 1831). However, in the longer section (32 verses) of the Olivet Discourse which this paper considers to be referring to the Second Coming, there are only two references to Jesus’ return. Whereas in the shorter section (8 verses) between verses 36 and 44, there are four references to Jesus’ coming. Making the distinctions that we are between the Rapture and Second Coming sections, there would seem to be an interchangeability between *parousia* and *erchomai* to describe the “Lord’s” or the “Son of Man’s” coming. In Section (59) discussing II Thessalonians 2:8, we note *parousia* is used of Jesus and of Satan’s son in verse 9. At this early stage in proceedings, there would seem to be at first sight no reason to focus on *parousia* to either distinguish between The Rapture followed by the Second Coming or to suggest there anyway is no distinction for there are not two separate events so that presumably the end of all things comes when Jesus comes, or alternatively all saints are taken to Heaven and this universe and all the unsaved finish their history whenever that is. The next time *parousia* is used is in I Corinthians 15:23-4.

Therefore, one’s early conclusion is that there is little to be gained from analysis of the Greek verbs for ‘coming’, ‘appearing’, to correctly analyse all these eschatological passages. If any conclusions can be made, *parousia* refers to an appearance, arrival or revelation of a number of things even of the Antichrist-666 as described in II Thessalonians 2:9; “whose coming [#3952] is after the working of **Satan** with all power and signs and **lying** wonders”. In regard to both the Rapture and The Second Coming they instead are “after the working of **God** with all power and signs and **truthful** wonders” to paraphrase I Thessalonians 2:9 from God’s perspective.

To elaborate on the point one is making here, consider the last part of Genesis 1:5. The English is a simple sentence, “And the evening and the morning were the first day”. The Hebrew reads, “ברעייהו רקבייהו מוי דחא”. The evening and the morning are clearly distinguished and evident, and indeed separate, yet they also are one as in a day. The day cannot be expressed without either the evening or the morning, it must have or be both. In Hebrew thinking, usually originating from the Biblical perspective, the beginning of the day is the evening whereas we tend to think of the morning as the beginning of the day. In Exodus 1:11, the Israelites appear to be building two capital cities for Pharaoh on two different sites during their sojourn in Egypt before Moses led them to freedom. Our research into the archaeology shows that they built the first city (Pithom) while in Egypt and returned as refugees from Nebuchadnezzar’s Babylonian Chaldeans about eight centuries later to rebuild or at least extensively re-develop the old city that had declined to ruins over that long interim. So with the Rapture, it physically saves a people already born again. The Second Coming occurs on the day Israel is born again. Or, more specifically or accurately, at the end of a three-day process of realisation, remorse and repentance. The Beginning and the End, the First and the Last, are separate and distinct yet are the one as well whether it is the “Day” in Genesis or the one site where “Pithom and Ramesses” are located. One and the same, yet also different. The Rapture and the Second Coming are about saving God’s people from physical destruction. But

those 'people' are spiritually dead Israel, until those last three days, and church saints who are spiritually alive from the moment they are 'born again'. Analysing Greek words will not help us. We have to analyse a wide variety of texts and correctly ascertain their context in History, Prophecy, within God's overall Plan, carefully distinguishing between the literal meaning and any metaphoric or allegorical application because such plays on words are occasionally used. People are fond of seeing 'types' in Scripture and some of them are clearly evident from Scripture. For example, Isaac's preparedness to be Abraham's sacrifice and Jesus' example while both men were aged 37.

(8) Matthew 25:31-46 is about the judgement of sheep and goats at the Second Coming and commences very soon after Jesus' arrival. This judgement determines who amongst the Apocalypse survivors will enter, populate and procreate in the MMK. All Israel enters the Millennial Kingdom but only some Gentiles. They will be those with newly found (post-Rapture) belief in Christ. During the post Rapture period, they repented and assisted persecuted Jews through those times of trouble wherein Antichrist was specifically attempting to exterminate Israel. This passage is not about judging Church saints. Nor is it about judging those who die during the Millennium and join all other unbelievers who have lived throughout the era of Man. That final judgement comes on the eve of the destruction of this Universe as the Millennial Messianic Kingdom comes to its conclusion. Then all unbelievers are judged before the New Heaven, Earth (and Hell) are created for Eternity. This is an important passage alerting us to the clear distinction between different judgements (or evaluations) of different groups on three different occasions. However, much confusion has developed over two millennia about the true meaning of this particular judgement procedure outlined in Matthew's Gospel. Note that it comes at the conclusion of the portion of Matthew's Olivet account describing events to the end of the Apocalypse (Israel's last 'seven years' of Daniel 9:27). It is the longest of the three Synoptic Gospel records of that discourse. Further comments are found in Addendum (P) *Judgement*.

(9) Matthew 26:64 and Mark 14:62 are texts where we read about Jesus talking to Caiaphas and saying, "You shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of Heaven" (when the Second Coming eventuates). As noted in Matthew 24:3-35 this situation Caiaphas is going to experience will be unique to his soul and to those of fellow inmates in Hell's prison for the unrepentant. Church saints asleep with their souls residing in Heaven but bodies in the ground will simply find themselves suddenly 'awake'. They will be in the resurrected body which Apostle Paul described in I Corinthians 15:35-44. Readers should not mix up this jibe at Caiaphas with the more general pattern of events concerning resurrection, glorified bodies or who is where at either the Rapture or Second Coming. Considering the career of Caiaphas and his 'bazaars' where he made huge sums of money out of his fellow Jews, here Jesus the Truly Great High Priest, under the Order of Melchizedek instead of Aaron, had a special bit of bad news for the corrupt former High Priest. Caiaphas will not get his resurrected body until the end of the Millennium. He remains *squirming* in Hell until then. He goes after that to a possibly worse destination at the third judgement described in the Bible [refer Section (8) above and Addendum (P)] above and item above (Matthew 25:31-32ff).

(10) Mark 8:38 - 9:1 and Luke 9:26-27, c.f., Matthew 16:27-28:

In his discussion about the Great Denunciation, Mark quotes Jesus criticizing his peers as "this adulterous and sinful generation" (Mark 8:38). Several passages in the Gospels reflect the statement noting in some that they wanted a "sign" yet none seemed to suffice.

(c.f., Matthew 12:39, 45, 16:4; Mark 8:12; Luke 7:31, 11:29 and 50). As shown in 'Four Critical Biblical Texts' (Exodus 4:8) the Bible's internal *secret* or *code* about 'signs' is in the very Hebrew Word for 'Sign' and how it points to the conjunction between Revelation 19:10, the *Alpha-Omega* testimony in *Revelation* with Exodus 4:8. That in turn leads to one's particular (*unique*) understanding of the Bible's Prophecy-History Continuum. Perhaps the Laodicean church's parallel situation will occur in *The Apostasia* of II Thessalonians 2:3 except that the problem now is our generation's failure to read the signs in the world situation [Refer Addendum (Q) *Apostasia*] and that Antichrist-666 is imminent. Some may already know his identity.

Very early in his Gospel, Mark had stressed (*ex ante*) that Israel was anyway going to accuse God's Holy Spirit of trickery in the miracle of the exorcism on the devil-possessed deaf and dumb man (Mark 3:22). Matthew and Luke leave that issue for the middle of their reports suggesting the big change in circumstances such as Jesus' switch to teaching only in parables. The reason why Mark's and Luke's records are compared here is that they both begin with Jesus' with almost identical statements by Jesus (Mark 8:38 and Luke 9:26). The opening line is "For whomsoever shall be ashamed of Me and My words ..". Mark here refers to "this adulterous and sinful generation" because he has already referred to Israel's rejection of Jesus at the start of his gospel. So he is really interpolating that incident at this point just before the Transfiguration. Both gospels then say likewise Jesus would be ashamed of those people. In both cases this is in the context of a return of Jesus but Mark writes, " .. When He cometh in the Glory of His Father with the Holy Angels". Luke at this point writes, " .. When He cometh in **His Own Glory**, and the Glory of the Father, and of the Holy Angels". Matthew 16:27, like Mark writes "For the Son of Man shall come in the Glory of His Father with His Angels", makes no reference to Jesus 'Own Glory' and then adds, "and then shall render every man according to his deeds". At the Great White Throne at the end of the MMK, the unbelievers of all time including in the Millennium itself will be judged according to their works. The only other time something like that occurs is when the Sheep and Goat Gentiles are judged partly according to their support for Jewish people maltreated by Antichrist. So both Mark and Matthew seem to intimate the Second Coming only here.

Whereas the focus in Luke 9:26 in the words, "when he shall come in his own glory" refers to the Rapture when He comes without the Father in tow as any Jewish son fetching his bride would do. Does, therefore, 'Jesus coming in His own Glory' echo Matthew 16:28, "Son of Man coming in **His Kingdom**" because the MMK is where Jesus having come as the Son of Man is "crowned with Glory and Honour" (Psalm 8:5) to give Jesus "Dominion over the works of God's hands (Psalm 8:6)? So, at the Transfiguration, Peter, James and John are given a glimpse of all that to prepare them for the early Church and the teaching they gave us. The post Ascension works of those three disciples is demonstrated in the epistles (Peter and John). Little is known from 'official' history about James' works but his bones are reputedly buried in Spain where Paul hoped to witness. However, in the names San Diego and Santiago, James, or *Yaakov* really in Hebrew is that '*iego*' or '*iago*'. Along with Mary Magdalene whose name was used for the main river of Columbia (Magdalena), James was so highly motivated that like Paul he traversed vast tracts of the globe going west to Spain then the Americas.

Luke's words 'Jesus coming in His own Glory' hints at one important aspect of the Tri-Unity. Although everything seen, written or spoken is in absolute unity of purpose, we should not forget it was the Spirit of God who hovered over the face of the deep in Genesis 1:2 and the Son of God who hung on the Cross. There is a necessity for some

distinctions in role in the overall plan. Luke knew Paul very well and worked with him for a long time. Thus of all the gospel authors, only he might have had a clear distinction in his one mind between Christ physically saving the Church from one drama (Days of Noah and Lot) then Israel at another (Apocalypse). Luke knew what Paul wrote about the Rapture in I Corinthians 15:59 and I Thessalonians 4:17. That's partly why in this paper we suggest Luke then clearly separated Jesus' Rapture Soliloquy from the Olivet Prophecies. We may also see how Luke's understanding from Paul of the distinction between the two (Rapture and Second Coming) is reflected in that clause: '**Jesus coming in His own Glory**'. To some extent this remains a subjective assessment. The wording in English may reflect nuances that are not really, only apparent, because of the difficulty on translating from one language (Hebrew to Greek to English).

(11) Mark 13:3-31, is Mark's record of the Olivet discussion concerning events leading to AD 66-70 then to the Second Coming and the rather long pause in world events in the meantime (AD 70 to nowadays). Strictly speaking, the narrative concludes with the announcement in Mark 13:27 that Jesus' angels will gather the elect from the "four winds" and from the "uttermost part of the Earth" which suggests bringing into Israel for the MMK all the rest of the world's Israelites (Jews) who were not at Petra or still in Israel, Babylon and elsewhere when Jesus returns (Isaiah 11:11). However, Mark 13:27 also refers to "to the uttermost part of heaven". That might apply to Church saints who, of course post-Rapture, return with Jesus in already translated or resurrected bodies. The last phrase of Mark 13:27 may also refer to Old Testament saints' whose souls currently rest with God in Heaven but whose resurrection for life on Earth does not occur until the Seventy-five Day interval between the Second Coming and the beginning of the MMK. The words certainly reflect Jesus' references to coming with angels as discussed in Sections (5) and (10) but refer to the Second Coming here, not the Rapture.

In verse 28, Jesus re-introduced a parable about a fig tree. He might have started a new parable. He might have been referring to the incident in Mark 11:13-14, 20-21 (also recorded in Matthew 21:19-21) or to many Old Testament references to fig trees (e.g., Proverbs 27:18, Song of Solomon 2:13, Hosea 9:10, Joel 1:7, 12 and 2:22). Whatever, fig trees yield an early fruit nodule as its leaves shoot out in Spring. Unusually, there were no early nodules on the fig tree in Matthew 21:19-21 and Mark 11:13-14, 20-21. The main point here seems to be about discerning general signs or signals the 'End of the Age' was near. These signs will be a process like fig trees initially yield early edible nodules then later fully formed fruit.

Many interpretations could emanate from this parable. Perhaps the early nodules represent the beginning of a season of signs or there could be two harvests of saints. In Addendum (H) and Addendum (L) we look at the resurrection of saints. Anyway, in verse 29, Jesus therefore warns His audience to get ready for the end is "nigh". In verse 30, the short period of a few months between those early nodules and the full fruit of the fig tree might equate to a single generation witnessing all these signs. That could be as much as a century or as little as twenty years. However, for those who do go through the Apocalypse, these signs include markers to alert the new believers when to count the days down to the end (Daniel 12:11-12). In verse 31, He said that even Heaven and Earth would have to disappear if His words were not to be fulfilled. Those words prepared the way for His *Peri De* conjunction (or disjunction) in Mark 13:32-7.

(12) Mark 13:32-37, Delivered at Olivet, this seems to be Mark's version of the Lord's summary apparently repeating information from Jesus' earlier Rapture comments in Luke

17:22ff. Like Matthew 24:36-44, Mark resorted to using the *Peri de* disjunction to reveal a change of subject. However, in his description, Mark seems to use the *Peri de* disjunction to tack on some words of warning linked to the fig tree parable. Mark did not refer to the Days of Noah and the description of the people working in the fields or asleep in bed at the time of their uplifting (Rapture). Mark just concentrated on Jesus's words of warning to get believers to always be ready for the master to return even if that is a long way off. It would come on a normal day as they are busy working. Here it would seem Jesus might be saying that the fig tree looking to be lifeless through the winter, as many trees do look like, will one day certainly sprout some leaves, then some edible nodules and finally fruit ripe for harvesting and consumption. The sequence of leaves, fruit nodules then the actual fruit suggests we know the 'season' of the Rapture but the actual day or hour comes like a thief in the night. Although that could apply either to the Rapture or to the Second Coming because both can come like thieves in the night, or day for the men in the fields and the women grinding wheat of Luke 17:35-6 and Matthew 24:40-1, depending on how one spins that metaphor [refer Addendum (Eiii)]. This might be another case of the *Double Entendre* principle we have mentioned and intended to be absorbed by both Church saints awaiting the Rapture then for Sheep Gentiles and Israel awaiting and counting down the days from the second half of the Apocalypse to the Second Coming.

However, from the perspective of this paper the author believes the Rapture for the Church is of primary interest in the eschatology relating to Christ returning to Earth. Therefore, the Rapture is the principle concern of the New Testament; then Mark 13:28-31 is targeted at those awaiting the Second Coming (Israel and Sheep Gentiles). Mark 13:32-37 relates to the quite different subject of The Rapture even though it comes within the lifetime of the same generation that experiences the Second Coming. Thus, Mark 13:32-37 might indicate that Jesus had used the fig tree to warn or signal both Rapture and Second Coming saints in both His earlier Rapture words then again when He answered the disciples three questions which triggered Jesus' Olivet prophecies.

However, as we have been and are discussing in this paper, just because one reads about Jesus using metaphors involving 'lightening', 'housetops', 'eagles-bodies' or 'thieves in the night', that does not mean Jesus spoke about one 'coming' to Earth. The metaphors do not necessarily indicate the one and same event are spoken of in such a way. Jesus also could have used those metaphors to describe two separate events, spinning them slightly to render them open to different interpretations or applications but solely for that purpose i.e., composing a metaphor that works for both the Rapture and Second Coming. For example, one application could describe His coming to the upper atmosphere or our skies in order to swoop down and take to heaven one group of saints (both deceased and the living, or "the quick" in KJV 17th Century English). The other could describe Jesus coming literally right down to *Terra Firma* in order to stay for good. Once He has pierced all the gloom which probably disguised whether it was day or night, destroyed Antichrist-666 and his army, Jesus divides the sheep Gentiles from the goat Gentiles and sends His angels across the globe to bring in all remaining Jews still scattered across the globe for a second re-gathering back to the land [Isaiah 11:11 and Ezekiel 28:25-6 (implied by "sanctified in the sight of the heathen")].

(13) Luke 1:71, 74, At the birth of John the Baptist in *circa* 8 BC, his father Zacharias', now able to speak again, and prophesied that Jesus should save Israel from her enemies. Then in verse 76, addressing his own son's birth, Zacharias said John would "go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways" (refer Malachi 3:1). This is physical

salvation being talked about here. However, of equal if not more importance is our salvation from the effects of our sin nature. We need salvation from Adam's sin imputed to us and inherited by us. We are now in a position to understand that God via a re-set of the RNA switches in the DNA systems of every species became the means by which we either passed on this sin nature or received it. Whatever method God used or permitted to set things up this way He has also set things up so that if we accept that we too would have made that fatal decision that Adam made, and that we also would have erred as he did, we could by God's Grace and Mercy also inherit Jesus' righteousness in fully obeying God on our behalf. Sadly, whereas many Jews and Gentiles have received in faith God's Grace and Mercy, Israel's national soteriological and physical salvation now awaits the Second Coming which actually comes out of Israel's positive response in newly found faith in the Messiah-Christ (Jesus). The offer for Israel to receive that full physical and soteriological salvation was genuine and theoretically could exactly have become the case in AD 30 (c.f., Exodus 4:8 etc). The Church Age was not envisioned at this admittedly very early stage in Christ's ministry. Israel's leaders had not at that stage, at the time of the Nativity or First Advent (or *epiphany*, II Timothy 1:10), formally or officially rejected Jesus. Nevertheless God foreknew Israel would reject Jesus. Nevertheless, Zechariah's prophecy has always remained true.

Thus, as Exodus 4:8 implied, the surely unbelievable possibility that Israel would reject Jesus, especially under the cruel Romans and corrupt priests and rabbis, actually came to pass. That meant 'salvation from her enemies would or could no longer subsequently take place or occur in the 1st Century AD. Israel's salvation from her enemies must now occur sometime after the 20th Century. Therefore, Israel now can only be saved from her enemies at the Second or Last Coming (or Advent) and Israel must repent in order to be able to appeal to Jesus to come and save the nation (*Hosannah*). Israel's soteriological and physical salvation is now encompassed by the last days of the Apocalypse so aptly described in Hosea 5:15-6:3 and Zechariah 12:10-14 [especially the "אֵלֵי אֵת" (verse 10)].

But the Rapture has a totally different purpose. It physically saves, from the Apocalypse, the already soteriologically saved Church saints, alive at its time, whenever that turns out to be. Those who are alive at The Rapture join with the dead church saints in order to be present at the Marriage of the Lamb in Heaven and for the preparations thereto. In stark but nevertheless wonderful contrast, the Church is saved from her enemies, from this wicked world and from the Antichrist-666 by the sudden and '*out-of-the-blue*' Rapture [c.f., Matthew 6:13, 13:19, 38 (re the "Wicked One", i.e., reference to Satan), Luke 11:4 ("Lord's Prayer"), John 17:15 ("the Evil" with 'one' implied perhaps), Galatians 1:4 ("evil world"), II Thessalonians 3:2-3, I John 2:14, 18, 22, 4:3, 5:19, II John 7].

(14) Luke 2:32, This passage is part of Simeon's prophecy about Jesus eight days after the birth of our Lord. In the previous section we discussed the prophecies about both Jesus and John the Baptist by Zacharias or John's father. Here, Simeon revealed Jesus is the "light to Gentiles" and Glory of Israel" the prophets wrote about (Isaiah 42:6). Both men were already soteriologically saved from their sins because they were believers in the promise to Adam and Eve in Genesis 3:15 about the 'Promised Deliverer', the future 'Son of David and the 'Prophet' that Moses spoke of "like unto Him" but much greater than Moses as *Hebrews* reminds us. So, their main interest now was in the promise of Jesus' Messianic Kingdom and the physical salvation of release from the effects of sin and oppression by foreigners (like Romans). The passage also reminds us that much of God's Plan for the World, especially in prophecy, centres on Israel. Nevertheless, the Rapture and The Second Coming are issues for Gentiles and Jews (Israel). This

prophecy also underlines a major point made by those who put a primary emphasis on literal interpretations of the Bible. That is to clearly identify distinctions not only between Israel and the Church but distinctions between 'Israel'- or 'Church'- saints and saints who were believers during the Age of Conscience that existed before Abraham. Thus we can also be quite comfortable with even more distinctions such as Tribulation- and Millennial-saints which readers of the Scriptures need to be aware of when addressing texts. For example, just because there appear to be saints living during the Apocalypse that does mean they have to be 'church' saints. They should be referred to as 'tribulation saints' or some other appropriate term like 'seventieth-week saints'. Pre-church saints like Zacharias and Simeon should be called 'Old Testament saints' or some other appropriate term. While all saints are saved by God's Grace and Mercy because they express faith in God and His plan, they are not all 'church saints'.

Despite Israel's apostasy, many Jews have been or are now saved and members of the church. Exodus 8:23; the second passage out of only three where we see the word for 'sign' truncated from אֹת to אַת or to ΑΩ in Greek, in the words, "Tomorrow this shall sign shall be", implies that both Egyptian and other non-Jews joined the Jews ("Israel") in 1485 BC in believing God's warnings and prophecies then. In 'Later Times', as the Bible itself indicates, both Gentile and Jew **are on God's side** ("Tomorrow shall this sign be"). There were many Gentile saints long before the Cross. Many Gentiles since Abraham have joined Israel. They are known as "proselytes" because they went an extra step from fellow Gentile believers and converted to Judaism. 'Conversion' meant freely and without pressure imposing upon themselves the responsibilities of the Mosaic Law, and necessarily also bringing themselves to come under the earlier Abrahamic Covenant and be circumcised - even as adult men! Of course, that also meant they could benefit from the incumbent blessings also available under Moses until their death and to the Abrahamic blessings in the MMK. Other Gentiles either had no opportunity to become proselytes or they simply chose to remain believers in Jehovah, trust in the 'Promised Deliverer' but remain outside the Commonwealth of Israel and live under their own communities' laws, customs or culture.

In contrast, entry into Jesus' Church becomes automatic and everlasting when the person believes in Jesus and what He did for us and does not need physical circumcision or any other incumbrance such as to refrain from eating pork or oysters if they enjoy doing that. As with all saints previously, entry into Jesus' Church is by "circumcision of the heart" (c.f., Deuteronomy 4:29, 10:16, 30:6, Psalm 7:10, Jeremiah 4:4, Romans 2:29, II Corinthians 3:3, Philippians 3:3, and Colossians 2:11). All of its blessings come automatically. Mosaic blessings did not come automatically to Gentiles until as a first step they were circumcised but that only applied to men. Women like Rahab, Ruth and Sheba-Hatshepsut only needed circumcision of the heart as with all believers.

Thus, the Rapture specifically is about the end of this Church Age. In many ways it has nothing to do with the Second Coming. Both Jew and Gentile are involved in God's work just as Gentiles left Egypt with Moses' Israelites (Jews). Even the words of the Gentiles Job and King Lemuel found their way into the Bible. Before Abraham there was neither Jew nor Gentile. The Tower of Babel ended the Age of Conscience. That was where, for the purpose of representing and witnessing for God in the world, God began moving specifically through Abraham and eventually his descendants the people of Israel. Pentecost ended the Age of Israel for witnessing until the time will come when the Final Seven-years ("The Seventieth Week") of the Apocalypse begin. Then Israel recommences her witness for one last seven-year stint. On more time, for about seven

years, Israel once again becomes the focus of world attention in the absence of the raptured Church. In the current or 'Third' of the three two-millennia eras, the Church's direct role in world evangelism is ended at the Rapture. Our evangelical role, along with Israel's, recommences in the Millennium.

After the Rapture the 144 000 Jewish evangelists, and others, join the Holy Spirit and take up the Church's work of evangelism for the Lord Jesus *the* Christ of Nazareth. Then, Israel takes up, or re-takes, the reins of world-wide evangelism especially as part of its role during that Last Seven of the Seventy-Sevens of years of Daniel 9:24-7. For now, only Jewish Church Members are doing what Israel should have been doing. The Jews in the Church are the "Israel of God" (Galatians 6:16). Understanding that helps the student also get a better understanding of the Rapture, its purposes, effects, consequences, timing etc.

(15) Luke 12:40-41 probably is the first or earliest occasion where Jesus began preparing the Church to be always in readiness for the Rapture. We can work this out because, for the most part and as far as we know, Luke's Gospel strictly follows a chronological sequence of events. In effect, '*be ready ... I come when you think not*' really is a warning to the '*Last Days*' generation to be '*on its toes*' awaiting The Rapture. In these papers, we cautiously suggest that although we cannot know the "day or the hour" we can know the "season" of the Rapture. Our analysis (see next section) of Luke 17:22-37 suggests that 'season' is most aptly characterized by "The Days of Noah and Lot". This paper's approach to Luke 17:22-37 is perhaps the most distinctive difference from most other commentaries that we adopted especially over this vital matter of timing. The Second Coming is predicated on Israel spending three whole days repenting and confessing (Hosea 6:2). Firstly, that will be an act of stupendous faith when one thinks deeply about it and considers Israel's attitude to the Words of Christ over the last nineteen hundred years. It will be a great re-think (repentance). That great event only happens on the last three days of the Seven-year Apocalypse. After the covenant between Israel and Antichrist is signed the repentance and Second Coming automatically become a '**known date**'. Furthermore, Daniel 12:11-12 shows that from the mid-point of the Apocalypse one can literally countdown the days to the *Final Countdown* as the song goes. The 'mid-point' of the Apocalypse is when Antichrist's wrath suddenly turns against Israel. He desecrates the new temple he had authorised the Jews to build. It is comforting to the Tribulation saints, both Jewish and Gentile, they can begin counting the days to salvation from the horrors of Apocalypse and antichrist from then on [c.f., Addendum (Aiv) *The Seventy-five Day Interval*].

Under these circumstances, the words "at an hour which ye think not" cannot possibly apply to the Second Coming on the sequential framework laid down in these pages! Those who take the alternative view do so by using allegory and typology to ridiculous extremes especially now in this Laodicean Church mini-era. This is elementary and obvious. Allegory is mainly why so many people write-off prophecy and ignore a literal interpretation of these points. Church saints must always be on the ready for a sudden exit via The Rapture. Tribulation saints, only death relieving them, are exhorted to countdown to the last day of the Apocalypse and the Second Coming [Addendum (Aiv)]. Surely one cannot begrudge some words of comfort for those poor post-Rapture saints going through such turmoil. Praise God they too have been given some Hope.

How gracious God proves Himself to be. While this observer will abide by Daniel 12:13 should the Rapture not occur in one's lifetime, the words in Daniel 12:12 will be part of

the tribulation or seventieth-year saints' comfort just as we are currently encouraged and comforted by God's indwelling and in-filling Holy Spirit who guarantees that at any time we may be taken out of this chaos (unless Daniel 12:13 should apply to any individual beforehand). The Spirit of God provides in us a guarantee-pledge-*erevon* that God's Plan, especially in regard to The Rapture, will be completed. As Jesus implied in His words; "every yod and tittle" (Matthew 5:18); God will complete His Plan (and sub-plans) to the word, letter, space between the lines and kerning between the letters. The contrasting soteriological circumstances surrounding the Church's physical salvation in the Rapture then Israel's at the Second Coming are stark and clear (see below). They can only be discerned by properly analyzing the Scriptures'. All or every Biblical Scripture is worthy of consideration. Every Biblical text must be considered in the context of every other one.

As noted above, Luke wrote his Gospel account in strict historical sequence. He did this on the basis of information derived from witnesses he visited in Israel although neither he nor his witnesses could **guarantee an absolute strictness** in that chronology or sequence. In the context of that timing sequence, and assuming he correctly and exactly timed the Great Denunciation, and repudiation of Jesus involving the Beelzebul accusation in his Gospel account, then he has also placed the words of Luke 12:40-41 **after** the nation's 'official' rejection of Jesus when it became obvious in Luke 11:14-32 (c.f., Matthew 12:25-45). Thus, sequentially speaking, it was not until this passage in Luke 12:40 that we get the first hint about the Rapture and we can be highly confident of that timing. Furthermore, it is not until Luke 11:14ff, in the author's sequence, that we find the Jewish leaders beginning to **officially** reject Jesus. Also, we learn they did so with the ridiculous claim that The Lord was casting devils from the deaf and dumb people in Israel by or with assistance from the senior demon Beelzebul. Mark 3:22, in contrast, narrates this point very early on in His Gospel account. Both Mark and Luke, like Matthew and John, already knew the outcomes by the time they composed their Gospels. But Mark, *ex post*, wanted to point out very early in His message that Israel would reject Jesus with the nonsense about Beelzebul. Mark's point was that Israel began rejecting Jesus over this false 'Beelzebul' claim when "scribes from Jerusalem" began promulgating it. However, in a stark contrast with Mark, and more like Matthew who follows Luke more closely on this point, in Luke 12:40 the good doctor made the point that Jesus only began talking in terms of some sort of return on a comparatively normal day even if that day as we now seem to understand comes during the turbulence of the Days of Noah when there are great winds, storms etc caused by the global warming and rapid ice-melt of the polar and glacial regions.

Unfortunately, we cannot absolutely know at which stage of Jesus' Ministry between *circa* AD 27-30 the scribes' scuttlebutt actually began. No doubt as we find even today conspirators firstly plant a suggestion in the minds of people with poor analytical skills and hope to seed and grow an idea or movement from that point. Make the lie big enough and important enough and make it frequently and you can make it stick but that takes time. Elsewhere, we suggest Israel had already begun to reject Jesus when Herod tried to kill all the babies in Bethlehem. But the half-Edomite Herod was not an especially good barometer of 'Israel' - certainly not like David was! Israel's religious leaders and academics appear to have ignored Jesus twelve years later when he turned up at "His Father's Temple-House" (John 2:16). Some, perhaps like Nicodemus, may well have taken note of that.

The passage is also curious because in Luke 12:41, Peter then asked a rather obscure

question. He asked, “speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all”? This seems to be something that alerts us to the possibility that the “Son of Man’s Coming” of Luke 12:40 and, *ipso facto*, information about that, would be given in the New Testament for **a future generation to deal with**. It would not be something for Peter’s generation of the Church to deal with. It’s also hard to pinpoint whom else Peter had in mind with that question. But the Lord was ensuring that Peter and his generation; as it lay down the rules for church life (‘binding on earth’); would also record enigmatic statements like these in Luke 12:40-41 for the ‘Last Generation’ of disciples to deal with. Jesus often spoke about a future generation of Israel but that implies of course a ‘Last Generation of His Disciples’. It is in this sense one suggests we may have to consider the possibility Jesus was deliberately encoding messages to a future generation of disciples if not to every believer at some point in the future. As it has turned out, The Rapture was not for the First Generation of the Church to deal with even though each generation had to be ready for it. Sadly, this Last Generation hardly ever teaches it.

(16) Luke 17:22 takes us forward another five chapters in Luke’s gospel to a point very near the crucifixion and near the end of His Ministry. As one noted in the opening paragraph of the Background, this is where Jesus suddenly turned away from His brief dismissal of the Pharisees’ apparent scepticism about the Kingdom of God (Luke 17:20-21) and immediately began addressing His disciples on what seems to be a completely different topic. But it was a topic they almost certainly did not, nor could not, then understand. Whether they did much later in their miniseries is also a moot point. Paul certainly understood the “mystery” when “we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed” (I Corinthians 15:51). Here, Jesus abruptly changed the subject from “the Kingdom of God” to “One of the Days of the Son of Man” which the disciples “would not see”. Whatever prompted the pharisees’ question about the Kingdom of God, the disciples would certainly see that and indeed be in the MMK!

We should not overlook the stark contrasts here. Also, why bother telling His closest disciples they would not see one of these ‘Days of the Son of Man’? Jesus’ statement here sounds almost as cynical as the Pharisees’ question. It is like telling some people “I am going to a big party but I am not telling you anything about it”. Thus we have here a strong incentive to look much more intensively at the ensuing verses in Luke 17:23-37. Apart from the contrast in subject, there is the enigma of some apparently special day “they would not see” even though they were believers **and would be looking for it**. Somehow or another, they apparently would be blessed by that particular day. Furthermore, it is only **one** of several such “Days of the Son of Man” [refer Addendum (F)]. The other, if not all the other ‘Days of the Son of Man’, apparently, they **will** see! Most readers of this passage will also fail to connect the term “Son of Man” with Psalm 8:4 and Hebrews 2:7 but we see that connection as all important. This is the main reason Jesus used that term because in Psalm 8:4, as confirmed in *Hebrews*, the juxtaposition of the words ‘frail man’ (*enosh*) and ‘Son of Man’ (*ben adam*) effectively defines the term ‘Son of Man’ to Jesus’ role as Lord of Creation. The juxtaposition is subtly different in Psalm 144:3 where we read ‘*ben enosh*’ and ‘*adam*’ in a passage focusing entirely on man’s frailty, brevity and insignificance in the overall scheme of things. Thus the specific wording of Psalm 8:4 again needs very close and intensive examination which sadly has long gone in ‘*Laodicean Christendom*’ today.

Thus, anywhere in the Gospels we see Jesus using the term “Son of Man” we need to

carefully scrutinize that gospel passage from the vantage or perspective of this term as used in the Psalm 8:4 and Hebrews 2:7. In that role, Jesus will come to return control or *dominion* back to frail mankind under His reign in the Messianic Kingdom after He destroys Antichrist-666 who will attempt to usurp that role.

So there is a complete 180 degree turn from one audience (sceptics and pharisees) to another (The Twelve Disciples); one subject (coming of the Kingdom of God) to another (The Rapture of the Church?). In this paper, the significant diversion from traditional teaching on these verses; what little there is anywhere anyway; is perhaps the central thesis in this paper apart from, perhaps, one's particular and unconventional reading or interpretations of Exodus 4:8, Revelation 19:10 and Daniel 12:4 & 9. Most observers overlook that curious nature of this section of gospel text and the stark differences between the two audiences being addressed at this point and the two different circumstances being discussed (the Rapture, presumably, and timing of the Messianic Kingdom).

At the time these disciples had no idea what Jesus was talking about in this *soliloquy*. However, since in Luke's gospel we are now well past the Great Denunciation (Luke 11:29-54) although not specifically defined as such, the Rapture would now have to become an important issue. It almost becomes the '*elephant in the room*', since Israel's leaders had rejected the Kingdom Offer, and indeed were trying to find some way of arresting Him (Luke 11:54). Some more time, at least two millennia so far, would have to pass before another generation of Israel (Matthew 21:43) would return to that offer and accept it. In Jesus' curt response to the pharisees (Luke 17:21), He reminded them and others it was for those leaders to decide the timing but that they had failed to do the right thing. "Do you want it now?" ("The Kingdom is within you" - or "in *your place to accept*"). Jesus in effect challenged them. Colloquially he was saying, "OK, follow me and believe me". If they had said "Yes", Jesus would have begun the process of establishing the Kingdom beginning with His necessary self sacrifice and subsequent resurrection to free the world from sin. They would not and did not believe so nor would Jesus bring in the kingdom to that "wicked and adulterous generation" (Matthew 16:4). Jesus was not telling those wicked unbelieving pharisees that 'God's kingdom was in their hearts' as churchmen today believe. The choice to accept the coming of the Kingdom of God was within their power to accept ("within you"). So the kingdom from then on came to be the subject of a new offer to another generation of Israel and not to the Church nor anyone else such as the Vatican or Arab Muslims, as the churches and many cults now seem to think. For then (AD 30) and for at least two millennia to come, the MMK offer effectively would fall into abeyance to allow for the Church Age, the 'Third' after Conscience (1st) and Israel (2nd); each getting two millennia to play out; to complete 'Thre term' as it were aggregating to 6000 years (or 'Six Days', II Peter 3:8, Psalm 90:4). Today, we are witnessing the early stages of God's Plan to bring Israel back to the land for that 'later generation' to reconsider that offer. That is angering all today's *pharisees*, Muslim nations, S.H.E.M-ites etc., who likewise hate God's Plan [refer Addendum (Avi)].

Expanding on this peculiar or sole "Day of the Son of Man" that Jesus' disciples would long for" but "**not see**", the obvious conclusion is that they will be dead. However, if they yearned for it, they presumably or nevertheless would somehow experience and *de facto* participate in it. Obviously, that would have to be as **deceased** saints. Paul's comments on the Rapture clearly indicate deceased saints will not only be in the Rapture they technically get uplifted **first** (I Thessalonians 4:16, "... the dead in Christ shall rise first"). Whereas we "who are alive" (I Corinthians 15:52, I Thessalonians 4:17) will see it (and

go up next)! That will initially be with our un-resurrected eyes. As we are lifted upwards we will be “translated” and glorified all in one instant. So that with a resurrected body (or “glorified” as in Philippians 3:21) we literally can enter God’s (*Third ?*) Heaven without dying in the conventional sense unless our ‘translation’ also counts as a ‘death’ albeit in an instantaneous experience of it. Not that any of us knows and this can only be speculation, perhaps that is exactly how we do experience ‘death’. The next moment, like awaking from a long sleep, it seems like no time has passed at all!

(17) Luke 17:23-37 after the introduction above in Section 16) this is perhaps the most critical passage for our papers on the subject of The Rapture. In effect, this is the first major statement on the Rapture. It is also the most detailed. Prior to arriving in Jerusalem for the Last-Passover and -Supper, perhaps on the Jericho Road, Jesus’ delivered this classic soliloquy [refer Addendum (Ei) *The Rapture Soliloquy*]. It really is the main New Testament narrative concerning the clues, or perhaps signals instructing us on The Rapture and what happens at the Rapture. Matthew’s and Mark’s *peri de* sections probably are Jesus’ own summaries of this passage originally in fuller form delivered, as recorded here in Luke, in the Lord’s soliloquy near Jericho. Matthew’s and Mark’s *peri de* sections introducing the “Day that the Father alone knows” (and not the “Son of Man”) reiterated and summarized the Luke 17:22-37 soliloquy a couple of days before Passover on Olivet (Mark 14:1). We do not know if Matthew 24:36-42 and Mark 13:32-37 are records of Jesus’ own summary of what he said in Luke 17:22-37 or whether they instead tacked-on a summary of the earlier soliloquy into their records of the Olivet discussion. It does not really matter because we get the full set of comments in this passage in Luke. Placing a summary of the Luke 17 Soliloquy at the end of their Olivet accounts would seem quite sensible to Matthew and Mark from a thematic perspective. And since Luke does not do that at the end of his Olivet account, Matthew’s and Mark’s accounts are probably reflecting that ‘thematic’ option. The alternative is that Jesus Himself may have done that by reiterating some of His earlier ‘Rapture’ comments in a shorter or more succinct form as recorded in Matthew’s and Mark’s gospels but for Luke it became unnecessary to do that.

Finally, on that point, the Olivet passage was not an unsolicited soliloquy but Jesus’ response to three of the disciples’ own eschatological questions on the Mount of Olives. They asked those questions in response to Jesus’ negative aspersions on Herod’s ‘Edomite’ masonry in the Temple Compound.

There may be an implied message for us too in this. Jesus reminds us now, via the disciples, that it is the Rapture that is our more or most immediate concern. His Olivet prophecy was for Israel in future. That is yet another reason why we must keep the two congregations (*kohelim*), Israel and the Church, distinct and separate though at one in the issue of soteriological salvation. Therefore, Israel and the Church, are separate and distinct in terms of physical salvation. Certainly we have to advise and warn people, and Israel, of what must now come to pass since we have a very clear idea of what must now take place in these ‘Last Days’. We can encourage people to turn to Jesus before it is too late to avoid these things. Sadly, Jesus’ picture of life being like the days of Noah and Lot remind us only three people survived Sodom and only eight survived the Flood. No one else was listening. Indeed, people often criticize one for being too obtuse with one’s teaching. We point out they are too dulled in their minds and hearing to listen. They go to church and sing songs, often with corrupted lyrics, but not with their “hearts” which in the Jewish and Biblical context meant “minds” as well.

(18) Luke 17:28-29 is the only text which refers to both the “Days of Noah” and the “Days of Lot”. This is an important observation that other commentators on the subject overlook. Matthew 24:37-38 also refers to the Days of Noah and is the only other Gospel passage to do so. Peter alluded to these comments about Noah in his epistle. Matthew’s reference to the Days of Noah comes immediately on the introduction of the *peri de* disjunction. As one keeps reiterating, the Greek *Peri de* textual technique indicates a change to a different albeit related topic. In Matthew 24:37-38, the new subject or topic is the Rapture but in contradistinction to the ‘Israel issues’ (AD 30 to end of the Apocalypse) which is the main subject of Matthew 24:1-35.

Apart from the specific meanings for the word ‘day’ in these texts, most commentators get confused by the use of four metaphors that we find sprinkled through both the Rapture and Second Coming dissertations Jesus gave in His Eschatology. In Addenda (Ei) and (Eiii), we summarize the possible differentiations in these signs or metaphors. However, in the one common fact we glean from Luke 17:34-6 and the related passage in Matthew 24:40-41, the Believers are suddenly and unexpectedly removed from some sort of *Noah-like* or *Lot-like* situation. That’s clearly on a single day. And a comparatively normal day at that, not during some sort of chaotic, apocalyptic or catastrophic period. Others, whom we assume to be unbelievers, remain’ on Earth ‘on that day’ surprised only by the sudden disappearance of their colleagues. Some people, very much a minority, think all tis goes the other way around. They say the damned are removed to make way for a perfect world for the saints left behind. I Thessalonians 4:16 makes it abundantly clear that Jesus’ followers (the Church) get lifted up into the clouds to travel heavenwards. At the Second Coming unbelievers are removed but to which location is unstated apart from being told they go into “everlasting punishment” (Matthew 25:46). That seems to be during a period known as the “Seventy-five day Interval”. The Rapture is clearly an instantaneous event at some point in a single day.

The many Biblical verses about Israel in the Last Days and troublous times leading up to the Second Coming speak of spans of time from an hour to seven years or to an indefinite period: e.g.,

The Time of Trouble, Daniel 12:1, Zephaniah 1:15;

The Day of Wrath, Zephaniah 1:15 or "of the Lord's Wrath" verse 18;

The Day of Distress, Zephaniah 1:15;

The Day of Darkness, Zephaniah 1:15, Amos 5:18, 20; Joel 2:2; or

The Hour of Trial, Revelation 3:10.

Or an indefinite period: e.g.,

The Indignation, Isaiah 26:20 and Daniel 11:36; or

The Overflowing Scourge, Isaiah 28:15, 18.

However, in these verses from Luke 17:22ff., we note the following pattern:

Verse 22, “The days will come” and “one of the days of the Son of Man”;

Verse 24, “So shall also the Son of Man be in His Day”;

Verse 26, “Days of Noah” and “Days of the Son of Man”;

Verse 27, “Day that Noah entered the ark .. The flood came ... destroyed them all;

Verse 28, “the Days of Lot”;

Verse 29, “the day that Lot went out of Sodom”;

Verse 30, “the day when the Son of Man is revealed”;

Verse 31, “on that day (he in the housetop)”;

Verse 34, “in that night”. In this verse, two men in a bed are mentioned then in verses 35 and 36 two more examples are given of what happens on that ‘night’ or ‘day’ presumably on the other side of the globe at the time. For further discussion on the Day or Days of the Son of Man [refer Addendum (F) *Days of the Son of Man*].

Whatever the meaning the authors expected us to derive from their Greek translations, we need to bear in mind they were thinking in terms of a Hebrew construction and a Hebrew lexicon for their texts. Presumably they were also thinking in terms of Old Testament terms for the Last or ‘Latter’ Days. So in regard to this and the word for ‘day’ we need to carefully scrutinize each occasion where it is used in each verse. Sometimes it clearly refers to a single day. At other times it would appear to refer to a longer period of time greater than twenty-four hours: e.g., in verse 22 the text refers to the “days will come”. That at least refers to a period of time still in the future. Verse 24 talks about the “The Son of Man in His Day”. but as there are several such days taking verses 22 and 26 literally, then verse 24 may refer or presumably refers to a period spanning at least two and possibly more events on two different days - Rapture firstly then the Second Coming. “The Son of Man in His Day” could refer to the wedding day or to the beginning of His reign in the MMK for a thousand years. When verse 27 refers to the “day” Noah entered his ark, again that brings us right back to the instantaneous moment of the Rapture. We know from *Genesis* that Noah’s entry into the ark was one particular twenty-four hour day. Indeed, the “Lord shut him in” (Genesis 7:16).

Then Luke has Jesus referring to the “days of Lot” in verse 28. That’s interesting because when Lot first went to Sodom and lived there he was a “*sheb*” or administrator at the city gate. That was a position akin to an old European term ‘City Burgher’. That was an official position Lot held from the days when Sodom was a respectable city. It took many years for the city along with Gomorrah to descend into wickedness. Thus, “Days of Lot” clearly refers to a longer period of time. In verse 29, Lot and his daughters clearly were rudely dragged out of the house and city by the angels in an hour let alone a day though the text obviously applies to a single twenty-four hour day.

In verse 30, still referring to the ‘Days of Lot’, Jesus announced the day “when the Son of Man is revealed” and in verse 31, “on that day (he in the housetop)” should in effect ‘just leave’! Two important points arise here. One is the contrasting way in which the ‘housetop metaphor is dealt with in the corresponding Rapture and Olivet-Second Coming passages. That issue is discussed in Addendum (Ei) about *The Rapture Soliloquy* and Addendum (Eiii) about the *Thief in the Night* metaphor. Suffice to note here in Luke 17:31 it’s about an instantaneous event but in Matthew 24:17 it relates to an imminent siege and that can give the escapee a little more time to get away but he must not linger and get on with escaping.

The other issue is the meaning in context of “revealed”. Above and through this document one puts great stress on the fact of some ‘revelation’ in the Bible as being a process rather than one discrete event. Many people over a 37-year period came to realize who Jesus really was as he lived here on Earth. One argues that over many years some people, then more and more, will come to realize who the Antichrist-666 is. The latter’s revelation may culminate with something or event that finally makes it abundantly clear to everyone who he is, except for the most obstinate or stupid. Thus ‘revelation’ can be a process. In the case of Luke 17:30, the ‘process of revelation’ could be two discrete points. They are the Rapture then later the actual and specific day of the Second Coming (the “third day” of Hosea 6:2). But then one must consider what the person on the “housetop” is told to do. That is go immediately. In Luke 17:31 if the Rapture is in view, as one now believes, then the point is to just look upward for Jesus is calling us up with the sound of the “Great Trump”. The believer is looking upwards for Jesus not toward the horizon looking out for Rome’s legions.

Finally in this section, another very important point is that the actual day when Jesus comes to Earth to destroy Antichrist, on the last day of the Apocalypse, is not necessarily just ‘a’ or ‘the’ “Day of the Lord” which of course is the most frequent Biblical term for that final day of that last or seventieth seven-year period from Daniel’s “seventy sevens” of Israelite history to be played out. It just as easily could be one of the several “Days of the Son of Man” that Jesus spoke about when He talked about more than one “Day of the Son of Man” in Luke 17:22 and 26. Having noticed that, one then had to ask how many days there were or will be of “The Son of Man” [refer Addendum (F)]. The use of this term from Psalm 8:4 is of course uniquely from the perspective of the Son of God, Jesus of Nazareth, while from the perspective of the Father the last day of the Apocalypse is, along with the rest of the Apocalypse, “The Day of the Lord” etc. Dr Fruchtenbaum on page 174 of the *Footsteps of the Messiah* has produced a long list of such terms for that seven-year period. Thus the last day of the Apocalypse although entitled “The Day of the Lord” it can also be sub-titled as one of the ‘Days of the Son of Man’. Since the Second Coming, Jesus coming as it were as the Father’s agent, is uniquely the Father’s day of reconciliation with his former wife Israel. It is important to keep both ‘title’ and ‘sub-title’ in a clear and distinct relationship.

(19) Luke 17:37 here in the record we note the disciples only ask one question. They do not ask ‘when’ or ‘what’ as they did in Matthew 24:3, Mark 13:4 and Luke 21:7. Instead, they asked, “Where, Lord?” In some respects this was the first question at least a few days before they asked the other three recorded in the Olivet Passage. This in itself is yet another curious or even enigmatic observation we can make from these related passages. Perhaps it is only in these ‘*Last Days*’ of Daniel 12:4 & 9 (another of our critically significant ‘texts’) are we able or permitted to understand this situation.

Thus, in Luke 17:37, the primary or only question the disciples have is ‘**where**’? It is important to reiterate here that in the Olivet Discourse, Jesus expounded on some eschatological matters in response to questions from the disciples. Here Jesus tells the disciples a lot of things they never asked about and only after Jesus lands all this stuff upon them do they pose a question. It is an enigmatic response at that. In the later Olivet discussions, the process is reversed. The disciples ask the questions first, albeit in response to a curt or off-the-cuff comment from Jesus. Again, these are distinct and important contrasts we should carefully observe and note. Up on the Mount of Olives, Jesus responded to their boasting about Herod’s building programme for the old 6th Century BC temple that Ezra and Nehemiah had built with Zerubbabel etc (Ezra 4:2). In

Luke 17:22-36, turning away from pharisees' cynicism and scepticism, Jesus delivered this soliloquy before they arrived in Jerusalem in AD 30 and only then did the disciples pose the 'where' question. The disciples never asked Jesus for the unsolicited information He gave them in Luke 17:22-35. Nor did they ask 'when' the things Jesus said would happen. They asked "where". All this is quite enigmatic especially when contrasted with the pattern of questions and answers in the Olivet Discourse. Only by exploring these Rapture-Second Coming eschatological issues in depth and detail can we even begin to unravel the enigma. We have to cast the net far and wide covering nearly ninety texts in the New Testament and many in the 'Old' for contrasts with the Second Coming.

Anyway, after asking the Lord, "Where", He replied with a strange metaphor about a body being encircled by eagles and this 'body' somehow being gathered together. The reply is so enigmatic that Bible translators around the world have had great difficulty finding the best words in non-Hebrew languages to describe what Jesus actually said. In our view in this summary paper and in the others written on the subject, the context of this metaphor about the 'birds and bodies' relates to The Rapture [refer Addendum (Ei) *The Rapture Soliloquy*] when Jesus delivered it in the Luke 17:22-37. In Matthew 24:28, where the metaphor appears for the second and only other time, it is clearly in reference to the Second Coming. Translators, bereft of any understanding of the Prophecy-History continuum in the Bible, therefore have always experienced much difficulty knowing exactly how to translate or interpret the metaphor in either passage. That's a major factor into pushing them into allegorical devices to explain Scripture. However, one takes the view here that Jesus deliberately put this enigma in place to make theologians, in particular, but many others too, to stumble. Hence, we get all sorts of variations around the words in English for vultures, eagles, bodies, carcasses or corpses in Luke 22:37 and in Matthew 24:28 where, alternatively, the birds-bodies metaphor came **before** the *per se* disjunction. For Matthew's account on this matter, the position of the metaphor indicates it applies to the Second Coming but we assume it indicates the Rapture in Luke.

That does not, in our view, mean the Rapture and Second Coming are the one and the same event; an easy way out for the allegorists; as confusion on such matters as the strange application of this metaphor generates. Sameness, or similarity, between "Rapture" and "Second Coming", especially in the context of 'timing', is now the assumption of most people who ever read these passages. We say these bird-body metaphors refer to two quite different events. The metaphors refer for two different congregations both soteriologically saved on the same basis but physically saved from enemies and destruction in two different ways at two different times or occasions because their soteriological salvation occurs in two different periods or situations. Whatever the metaphor means in either variation, they (or it) only appear(s) in these two passages (Matthew 24:28 and Luke 17:37). Equally, the verses about one person being left behind while the one next to them is taken away only appear in the same pair of the four Gospels, i.e., Matthew 24:40-41 and Luke 17:34-36.

In Luke 17:37 this 'birds-bodies' metaphor is inextricably tied-in with the people suddenly disappearing from Earth while others remain here. In Matthew 24:28, the 'birds-bodies' metaphor is given to people experiencing the Second Coming and **before** the "sign of the Son of Man in Heaven". That "sign" in Matthew 24:30 is followed by the words, "they (people on the ground) shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory". In Luke, the metaphor applies to people going away from Earth. In Matthew it applies to people on Earth watching Jesus come back. Furthermore, in

Matthew, Jesus comes in great glory and power into a world in very dire circumstances. In Luke, the people disappearing and those left behind are living on an otherwise typical day; i.e., as far as normal can mean in the Days of Noah and Lot. For example, we are getting in various places, winds, storms, hurricanes, tornados and local floods with much greater intensity, frequency and diversity than even fifty years ago. In Luke, the metaphor applies to a day just like the last day before the Flood and the last day for Sodom which got destroyed as suddenly as Hiroshima or Pompeii although the Roman city had earlier warnings but people misread or discounted them.

Jesus' use of this curious and enigmatic eagle-vulture or body-carcase metaphor is only recorded by these two Gospel writers. However, therein, it applies to two different events - **it would seem from our analysis**. Luke 17:37 has the Lord using it for the Rapture in a direct response to the disciples' **'where'** question. However, Matthew 24:28 has the Lord using it, or variation thereof, for the Second Coming. For that, in Matthew, Jesus delivered the metaphor but not **in any direct response to any question**.

The theologians overlook these things. They combine and allegorize the passages we are discussing into one overall eschatological statement. They mostly fail to understand they need to separate the Rapture account from the AD 70 and Second Coming events. Matthew's eagle-vulture and body-carcase metaphor is clearly in a Second Coming context. But Luke's, in our view, is just as clearly in a Rapture context. Both are in the Last Days. Hence the subtle nuances we find in those two records in the way that metaphor is expressed. Three other metaphors have to be looked at closely for nuances or subtle distinctions (refer the main papers and Addenda (Ei) and (Eiii)).

(20) Luke 18:8 is an intriguing, enigmatic and unique rhetorical question from Jesus. He *wondered out loud* if there will be any faith on Earth when He returns ("When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the Earth")? Coming hard on the heels of His Rapture Soliloquy, in fact only a short parable intervening, one really needs to think carefully about why Jesus even said this and why He gave no explanation for His musing here. The question stands isolated, almost like a lighthouse. In short, it's rhetorical. These days no one is keen to explain what those words mean. However, as Dr Fruchtenbaum has shown in his *Footsteps of the Messiah*, one easily can work out from the Bible that Israel and many 'sheep' Gentiles will at long last come to faith. Moreover, they come to faith during the most torrid circumstances the world has seen since the 'catastrophes' such as The Flood that Dr Velikovsky's research and the Bible tell us about. They come to faith right up to that final climax of the Apocalypse. Only late in the Apocalypse does it seem people will no longer be able to repent because they take the mark of the beast (Revelation 14:9-10).

Surely Jesus knew that too! Jesus often talked about the faithless generation that AD 30 Israel had become since the return from Babylon and Assyria in the mid-6th Century BC (Matthew 17:17, Mark 9:19, Luke 9:41). By the time Mary gave birth to Jesus, His contemporary "faithless" and spiritually dead generation of Israel was quickly losing the chance to receive the Kingdom of God, apart that is from many godly Israelites living then. During the years Jesus grew up in Israel most of the nation's leaders gave up believing the Bible. As noted earlier, we can reasonably infer some comments about the Lord coming to some place refers to the next few weeks while he was travelling around Israel and sending out His representatives to prepare the way for Him as He arrived in town. That idea or hypothesis does not work here. The statement refers to faith anywhere **on Earth** not just **in Israel**. In a putative original Hebrew document written

around the time it is possible that the word Jesus used for 'Earth' was the Hebrew *Eretz* which is used for 'Israel' and 'Earth'. In respect to the Greek, we therefore assume Jesus was talking about the whole world population. Jesus appears to be musing that the whole world would be lacking in faith except in all probability a small percentage of the population reflecting the small number of people to survive the Flood or the destruction of Sodom ("Days of Noah and Lot").

This definitely seems to be the prevailing circumstance today as this believer has witnessed during his lifetime involvement in local churches. However, Jesus also made it clear a future faithful generation of Israel **would** receive the Messianic Kingdom. Although secular, humanist, evolutionist and materialist ('S.H.E.M-ite') Israel right now, like every other nation today, is likewise "faithless", apart from our Messianic brothers and sisters, it will not always be like that. After the Rapture many Gentiles, many Jews then the entire Jewish nation will come to express faith in Jesus and repent (change minds about Him) etc. Jesus will then be on the way ready to enter the Earth's upper atmosphere, come down through the clouds of darkness enveloping the Earth on the last days of the Apocalypse (the 'blackout' of Matthew 24:29 and Joel 3:15), pierce the gloom like lightning and land on *Terra Firma* to save Israel from Antichrist-666 and his vultur-armies surrounding Israel at Bozrah-Petra. Believing 'sheep' Gentiles will also be physically saved by the Lord's Second Coming. But Israel is His primary objective because only Israel can appeal to Jesus to come.

Indeed, Jesus' Second Coming occurs **because of Israel's faith** (I Peter 1:5, see also John 20:27, Romans 9:30 and 10:17) expressed by the nation at the end of the Apocalypse. Israel's future faith in effect, is what brings Jesus back for the Second Coming. There isn't any scarcity of faith then. Indeed, there is plenty. All Israel (Romans 11:26) and the many '*sheep*' Gentiles who also have repented by then certainly are not lacking in faith at the Second Coming. Faith leads to repentance. Israel's repentance leads to Jesus' return so logically plenty of faith abounded to lead to that repentance. By the end of the Apocalypse, neither Israel nor the believing Gentiles, after The Rapture, will be ashamed of Jesus' Words or be ashamed of Him as a person. As the Apocalypse takes its Seven-year course and toll on everyone, many believers are actually martyred even "beheaded" for their faith right up until the end. Those people persevere because of their faith which in turn leads them to reliance on the Scriptures.

Thus, the only possible situation where Jesus' rhetorical question in Luke 18:8 can **literally** apply; and not simply be 'rhetorical'; would be for this day we refer to as "The Rapture". Obviously, when the Rapture occurs there must be some people expressing Bible-based faith as noted above when we examined the situation where one person is taken away and the other person beside him or her is left behind. What Jesus' question either rhetorical or in the subjunctive does indicate is that the suddenness and lack of daily or minute-by-minute expectation of the Rapture suggests there is widespread lack of real Bible-based faith when that special day occurs. Perhaps this is an allusion to the greater or deeper faith too many people even in churches put in 'education', 'science', 'technology' and other things such as their businesses, families, gardens, sports, arts, music, vacations, birthdays, anniversaries etc. instead of, or ahead of faith in God.

Luke 18:8 is a picture of our time now as we seem to be in the Days of Noah and Lot. There is a small, dedicated and active body of genuine believers seriously taking heed of the Bible's prophecies. It is also a picture of the days before Noah entered the ark that saved eight souls from the Great Flood. It's also a picture of the day in Sodom when only

four souls evacuated the place. Even then, Lot's wife could not truly take herself away from the life she enjoyed in Sodom. She hankered to return to the city, vacillated, and became encased in salt. Nobody really wanted to talk about God in those days. Today, no one wants to talk about the Scriptures. All over the place these days we hear people screaming out "Oh my God" or even "OMG". But they don't believe in God. Those of us who do study Scripture closely are ridiculed for being too difficult to understand and that we need training in the art of public speaking. This mockery deflects us from stating the obvious, the truth etc. This is why Jesus wanted us to know that when we have worked out what those days before the Flood were really like then we would see we have come back to them '*full circle*'. [Refer Addendum (G), *Full Circle*].

Backing up this question of just how much 'faith' there will be on Earth at the time of the Rapture is the text in Revelation 3:14-22. Especially in verse 16 which tells us what the final stage of the church era would look like ("lukewarm"). Although there obviously is no specific text that says the Rapture ends the Laodicean Church Age, that certainly is a possible conclusion to adopt. The specific sign of that era is a "lukewarm" church. Those of us who persevere with the Truth in this stage of Church History are in for a special reward (Revelation 3:21). But we are in times characterized by the likes of one leading theologian *cum* evangelist who told the writer he doubted Jesus ever said the things narrated in Luke 10:18 and John 8:57-58.

(21) Luke 21:5-28 is Luke's version of the main Olivet Discourse concerning Israel on the eve of AD 66-70 then as the Apocalypse comes. But there is nothing here about The Rapture and no *peri de* disjunction introducing a summary version of Jesus' soliloquy in Luke 17:22-37 that we do read about in Matthew's and Mark's gospels. Luke's account concludes with a statement, "then they shall see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory" (verse 27). Then verse 28 encourages people to "look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draws nigh". That cannot refer to the Rapture for which there was never any sign like this. The Days of Noah and Lot clearly suggest a '**season**' for the Rapture but Luke 21:28 says that a whole series of events described in the previous 23 verses must take place before this "redemption" merely "draws nigh".

There is no room in this section of verses from Luke for the so-called 'Doctrine of Imminence' that some writers correctly require for the Rapture. That "imminence" concerning the Rapture is implied in the words "a day that only the Father knows". As Addendum (Eiii) notes, the words "like a thief in the night" might suggest imminence of the Rapture but also to other matters. Really the Doctrine of Imminence of the Rapture stems out of the warning first given in Luke 12:40 (Section 15). These events, signs and warnings in Luke 21:5-28 have not applied to anything we have known in the last nineteen hundred years. Furthermore, in future, Daniel 12:11-12 tells the survivors of those days to count down the days to the 1335th following the mid-point of the Apocalypse. That is when the redemption does not just "draw nigh" but actually arrives with a very public demonstration in the clouds of gloom of that time. Thus between Luke 21:5 to verse 28 there simply is no allusion whatsoever to anything that has always been "imminent" like the Rapture. Furthermore, on closer examination the statement about this 'redemption drawing nigh' is much more indicative of a slow gradual piercing of the gloom at the end of the Apocalypse as Israel, having just finished repenting, is very soon to be brought back from the brink of destruction and bought back from the curse of sin and redeemed. The Rapture comes in comparatively ordinary circumstances; Days of Noah floods and tempests notwithstanding. It comes suddenly. As soon as it happens; it's over - finished, done. Verses 27-8 represent a very clear statement that Jesus was

talking about the *Last Days* by verse 28 and no longer to events leading to AD 70.

(22) Luke 21:29-36, At the point where Matthew and Mark then introduced a *peri de* disjunction, Luke here has the Lord telling a “parable” about “**the** fig tree and all the trees” [refer Addendum (Eii)]. Comparing the structure of this account with Matthew and Mark one wonders if this section applied to the Rapture. However, the parable is not introduced by a *peri de* disjunction. It looks more like a parable to prepare Israel for the Second Coming by using the analogy of trees coming back to bloom in the Spring. It was about a time when Israel’s fig tree would be back in the family of nations (the world’s fig trees) after what turned out to be an eighteen hundred year hiatus in diaspora. The Days of Noah and Lot would appear to be indicators of the Season of the Rapture so this passage probably applies to the Second Coming. As we note, most people think they are the same thing but that only confuses matters even more. Verse 29 reminds us of Psalm 72:2, “I will open my mouth in parables: I will utter dark sayings of old”. From Matthew 13:10 we learn how the disciples could not understand why Jesus used parables, perhaps with Psalm 72:2 in mind. Thus, we can be sure the following verses (Luke 21:30-36) would be difficult to interpret. As Daniel 12:4 & 9 and the Lord’s warnings about the Days of Noah and Lot suggest, verses 30-36 would continue to be hard to understand until those times arrived. Thus it’s unsurprising there’s confusion as to whether any part of Luke 21:5-28 or 21:29-36 applies to the Rapture or to the Second Coming or both especially if they are the same event.

In the introductory parable it is important to note Jesus used a fig tree and **all the other trees** and how changes in climate are revealed by the way they sprout leaves and fruit etc. In Spring the leaves come out. In Summer the fruit develops and in Autumn the fruit is harvested. Fig trees provide an early nodule, presumably in Spring, which can be consumed like an early fruit. That might be a clue to watch that particular tree for certain special characteristics but as time goes on the fig tree will behave like nearly every other tree and as Jesus showed one fig tree he encountered did not even behave like normal fig trees. So, we probably need to be familiar with all Scripture’s references to fig trees in order to ascertain what we may need to know concerning herm. That is also true for Israel. Other nations get cameos in Scripture but Israel is the lead actor.

In these days of “climate change” we wonder if the Days of Noah are now with us as we begin to experience delayed or long-term implications for the climate: a consequence of the Flood. Crops are affected by climate change in particular via changes to wind movements, convection currents in sea and air, moisture levels in the ground and atmosphere etc. The point about the ‘Days of Noah’ is that in his account in *Genesis* “great winds” dried the flood waters. We now know from scientific investigation that process mainly involved the formation of great ice caps at the poles and in glaciers on the newly formed mountains (2500 BC). Now, as all the ice begins melting very quickly, the world’s convection currents in the air and in the oceans are once again rapidly changing behaviour, patterns, intensity etc. Winds that blow over high mountain ranges may no longer be cooled by ice because it has melted (c.f., the Rockies).

Earlier, Jesus had cursed a fig tree which had plenty of fig leaves like the ones Adam and Eve used to hide their embarrassment but it had no early fruit this unique fruit-tree species was supposed to bear. Today, the policies of the world’s wise men and women routinely fail to deliver. They issue plenty of flowery statements full of waffle but with little or no real fruit (or meat). With the world’s many great troubles, all the king’s horses and all the king’s men are unable to put Humpty Dumpty back together again. Rome may

have been comparatively successful but Israel's Academy and legal system was in tatters when Jesus' came into the world he had created.

So we suggest the following points. Firstly, eschatological events will begin to take place when one particular tree i.e., "the Fig Tree" of Israel and all the other trees, i.e., nations generally are in relationship just like in Biblical times. Only since 1948 has such a situation been with us. Between 586 BC and 1948, there has not been an independent nation of Israel alongside other nations (seventy of them according to some interpretations from Scripture). Had Israel accepted Jesus at the First Advent and disproved the possibility in Exodus 4:8(a) that Israel would reject the "Voice of the First Sign (or *Alpha-Omega* or *Aleph-Tav*") the remaining unfulfilled Biblical prophecies would have been activated from Jesus' birth (early fruit). They would have matured in His last years of Ministry (about 3.5 out of 37 in total before Resurrection). Prophecies implicit within the seven major festivals would have come to fruition in the proper order over the 37 years of Jesus' lifetime (some at His birth and others at the end of His Ministry then resurrection). Whereas they now come in a reversed and disjointed order where, for example, the Passover sacrifice was still completed for the salvation of man from Adam and each individual's sins. However, the introduction of the MMK and harvesting of souls to enter it would as a consequence of the rejection be rescheduled for another two millennia at least. The fig tree representing Israel being barren of early fruit that Jesus cursed so that it died within a few days symbolized Israel and its leaders in AD 30 and its death meant there would be no end of season fruit either (i.e., the millennium). Now a modern generation of Israel is to be brought into the "wilderness of the peoples" (Ezekiel 20:35) i.e, back with the 'other trees' which Antichrist will gather to destroy Israel as the Campaign of *Har Megiddo* or Armageddon begins in the latter days of the Apocalypse.

Another point here is that **Firstly** the Rapture (gathering, or suddenly removing to Heaven, the early fruit of Church believers - Jewish and Gentile) and **Lastly** the Second Coming respectively also can be representative of the two types of fig tree fruit (the early fruit and the latter fruit). The latter is the gathering of newly repentant Israel and the Sheep Gentiles. In this analogy, they will be what the mature fruit symbolizes. The latter fruit, in this sense, is that which matured very quickly in the dark days post Rapture. They will come to fruition (soteriological salvation) either during the Apocalypse or in the days between the Rapture and the Apocalypse should the Rapture occur days, weeks, months or even years before Apocalypse (Israel's 'Seventieth week) begins. Despite the Rapture and Second Coming being two very different events, nevertheless they probably will occur in one very distinctive and obvious era or season unlike anything the world has seen since Adam's Fall. Luke 21:29-36 helps us to isolate that period from other times in History or **His Story** because it clearly is a prophetic parable. In verse 30, the shooting forth of its leaves show us that "summer is now nigh at hand". Likewise the "Kingdom of God" in verse 31 because it is the Second Coming that makes that true not the Rapture because more water (viz., the Apocalypse) has to pass under the bridge. Overall, to narrow down the meaning of a "season", we are looking for a period of just one generation in verse 32. Whether it is the Rapture or Second Coming in view, in this single "generation", one needs to be quite sober and alert as called for in verse 34. "Praying to be worthy to escape" in verse 36, while following on from a special sequence of events one is supposed to be on the watch for does not seem appropriate to the Rapture which is imminent and independent of any such **sequence** of events nevertheless is sound advice anyway for potential Rapture saints. Over the last nineteen centuries no one has ever been able *ex ante* to pinpoint the Rapture. Let alone within

the same general era of either the Days of Noah and Lot nor when some believers may already have been able to identify the antichrist-666 in advance of many others or when it has become obvious God has brought Israel (the fig tree) back into the centre of world events (concerning all the other nations). However, once the world has arrived in the days of Noah and Lot etc., these verses in Luke 21:29-36 go a long way to assuring us both the Rapture and the Second Coming do in fact come at this stage in History but they have two distinctly different purposes, targets and timings.

That's why we also must recognise that the Rapture saves a soteriologically repented church from the chaos by physical removal from Earth taking us all into Heaven. Whereas the Second Coming only occurs when Israel comes to soteriological salvation and repentance and then appeals to Jesus to save the nation from *Armageddon*. Current problems, even if they get more intense, are mild compared with the disasters to come in the Apocalypse. Then God's angels magnify the world's troubles in order to get recalcitrant and unrepentant Israel and Gentiles to repent. Such judgement is unnecessary for church saints. So the church (early season nodules of fig trees) is taken away well before the last stages of these disastrous times begin.

It is probably fair to say the warnings in this passage are generic and could apply to either the Rapture or to the Second Coming (be ready, sober, watchful, etc). That does not mean this is a Rapture passage, it's a Second Coming passage (or parable). "The Kingdom of God is nigh at hand" (verse 31) is true for both Rapture and Second Coming. Except that it's even closer at the Second Coming. For the Rapture it may be more than seven years away but in terms of millennia that's insignificant even if technically accurate. Luke's Gospel clearly seems to have dealt with the Rapture in chapter 17 so Luke 21:29-36 almost certainly is a warning to Israel and Sheep Gentiles despite the advice in any case being good for Church saints alive in that era. However, the reader needs to have a sound grasp of many other scriptures in the Bible for example the History and the Prophecy etc., when applying them to either event. For example consider in verse 34, "lest at any time that day come upon you unawares; or verse 35, "for as a snare it shall come on them that dwell on the face of the whole earth"; and verse 36, "watch ... to be counted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass". But the words "your redemption draws near" (verse 28) cannot apply to the Church which is already redeemed. "The Kingdom of God is nigh at hand" (verse 31) can only be true when Israel repents. That again rules out any application for the church. This is all part of the Universal Kingdom Plan of God but there are distinct stages or sub-plans within that broader context. The Church cannot bring in the MMK in the way Israel was charged with doing in AD 30, but failed to, and will be charged with doing so in a future generation of Israel - when it repents. Clearly from verse 32, and almost certainly referring to two different generations of "Israel", "This (*future*) generation shall not pass away, till (*until*) all be fulfilled" indicates there is a role for one generation that another generation of Israel either did not have or did not fulfill. As far as the Church is concerned, its role and mission has been unchanging for many different generations and everyone in every generation who is in the Church of *the* Christ is saved and indeed cannot be in this 'Church' unless saved and redeemed (bought back from the price of sin). Only Israel can point to something one generation failed to do but another did or would do (Leviticus 26:40-42 and Isaiah 65:7).

People are apt to forget at any time any one of us may die for whatever reason. Are we ready for that day irrespective of what we might believe about the Rapture and the Second coming? Luke 21:29-36 is a warning to Israel and Gentiles who are on Earth

after the Rapture has taken place. If the Rapture occurred in the past, e.g., in the 17th Century, then that means all of us. This means believers today are in effect 'Tribulation saints'. This is the null hypothesis for this paper (c.f., discussion in Revelation 3:11-12). Assuming the Rapture has not yet happened, genuine believers are anyway already reflecting on what should happen if we die right now and we are already on the lookout with ears and eyes for the Last Trump of I Corinthians 15:52 and I Thessalonians 4:16. However, that is not the case currently for Israel (Messianic Jews excepted) and unrepentant Gentiles on Planet Earth right now.

(23) John 6:39-40, Here Jesus is talking about the Father's Will for Jesus' congregation, the Church, i.e., The Body of Christ. He "will raise us up (i.e., resurrect us) on The Last Day". If 'resurrection' is involved or meant here, the next stage to come after Jesus' own 'First' Stage or 'First Fruit' is the Rapture of the Church wherein the dead church saints are resurrected and the living church saints are "translated" or "changed in an instant" (I Corinthians 15:52 and I Thessalonians 4:16). The next (or third and fourth) stages of resurrection involve all Old Testament then Tribulation saints. The latter are those post-Rapture believers who will die or get martyred before Jesus arrives at the end of the Apocalypse to destroy Antichrist. Tribulation saints are those who die because of apocalyptic circumstances, or Antichrist kills them but they will have come to belief in Jesus. They are not 'Church' saints in the same way that Old Testament saints are not 'Church Saints' (Jews and non-Jews).

John 6:39-40 in this context probably means the 'Last Day of the Church Age'. Our Age, or this present Age in our model, is the third in a series of three. When John wrote down Jesus' words here he would have been under the proper Jewish idea at the time that the 'Last Day' referred to the last one before the Messianic Kingdom. Modern readers might think it refers to the End of the World. Dr Fruchtenbaum in *Yeshua*, Volume 2, page 531, suggests Jesus was simply contrasting the Way of Life He offered Israel (with The Truth too of course) compared to that offered by the rabbis and religious leaders of that day. All they could offer was a nice life in their time in this world but even then in too many cases the people of Israel strained and suffered under the rules of the rabbis and Rome. In this passage Jesus is offering Israel a future blessed resurrected life with God the Father in just a few months if Israel's leaders would accept Him. Thus the last clauses in John 6:39 & 40 probably are not particularly relevant to this study of the Rapture and the Second Coming apart from the Hope [refer Addendum (H), *Rapture, Resurrection and Hope*] that they give us in Resurrection. For some, that may in effect be at The Rapture when this body is "translated" in one glorious instant. How blessed it will be for some believers knowing they will be exempt from death; either *long* and *slow* or *short* and *sweet*. It's impossible to predict what this 'translation' will be like. Although momentary, in effect the 'sensation' may be similar to the experience of those who sleep in Christ, or even of Old Testament saints. They fall asleep in a decaying and dying body. Not long after the Rapture, they too awaken into a resurrected body. As far as we can tell that will seem just like a moment even though one may have been 'sleeping' for centuries or millennia in many or most cases.

(24) John 14:3 here Jesus is talking about the Church. He was by then preparing the disciples to bring up the new congregation that would **temporarily** replace Israel in God's work of witness to the world. God is still abiding with all His promises to Israel via Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and David. In this verse Jesus says He will return to bring us to a place He has prepared for us **with Him** ("where I am, *there* ye may be also"). But where is Jesus going to be after the Rapture? We need to recognise that after taking

us away for a while in the Rapture Jesus then returns to run the world in His MMK. So we will be back here with Him until the Millennium ends. Then we will be with Him on the New Earth in the New Universe described at the end of the *Book of Revelation*. A full and proper understanding of every Scriptural text is required to completely understand this verse. Again, the Rapture seems to be in view because that is how Jesus will “come again and receive you unto myself”.

(25) John 17:15 is where Jesus prays on our behalf to have us delivered from “... the evil *one*”. The translators usually and wrongly express the English as “the evil” instead of “the evil one”. We are clearly not delivered from evil because some of us do experience evil things happening. Fortunately, in I John 2:14 and 5:18-19 they do translate what John wrote as “the wicked one”. In an eschatological sense and unless they are purely allegorical, these appeals can only make logical sense if they refer to a rescue of the church from the Antichrist-666. Obviously, *Mr “666”* is the prime candidate for John’s “Evil One”. The rescue is via The Rapture and **before the Apocalypse** gets properly underway. In this document one traverses the differing views about the real meaning or understanding behind the “revelation” of the Antichrist. Here one simply notes that at the time we are delivered from his clutches by the Rapture we may still be unaware of his identity, then again we may know, or some of us may know whom he is.

(26) John 21:20-23; Since the Rapture technically has always been 'imminent', Peter and John may have hoped they should live to see it. In Luke 17:22 Jesus had ruled that out as we can now prove, *ex post*, but at the time they were none the wiser so that still made the Rapture “imminent” for them. Hence Peter’s question. In verse 23, John even had to correct what had later become a false impression based on that conversation that John would still be alive at the Rapture (“till I come”). More significantly, we notice in this passage that Jesus carefully and deliberately avoided a direct answer to Peter’s questions. This may be an alert for our generation to see the point that it will be a later generation of the church (us?) that witnesses the Rapture, not John’s and Peter’s. The emphasis, nevertheless, is on the Three ‘W_s’: Watch, Wait and Warn-Witness.

(27) Acts 1:11 and 2:17-20, Are the first passages where we have to analyse the texts in the context of the beginning of the Church Age. Probably, no one in that early church had any conception of both a Rapture of the Church then the rescue of newly repented Israel. Nor that the latter’s appeal to Jesus to return and save the nation from the Antichrist-666 would occur some or a little time after the Rapture. Possibly, they did at that stage conceive of a period as much as seven or more years that might in future exist between the two events based on Daniel 9:27 because it might have dawned on them the first 69 ‘sevens of years’ had been fulfilled by the Lord’s Advent. As things stood, immediately in the wake of the Ascension, Jesus had come (*‘advented’* or II in Timothy 1:10, “epiphany”, Greek *epiphaneia*, Strong 2015), grown up in Israel, ministered to Israel but the nation (individuals apart or excepted) rejected Him. Thus, Jesus went away to finally return to Earth at the Second or Last ‘Advent’. At the Rapture, the Lord only ventures as far as the Upper Atmosphere though probably a little further down towards Terra Firma than the current UA ‘space station’ resides. In this paper’s analysis, from here on, or onwards from the next section [(27) Romans 5:9] for another sixty texts, we are dealing either with the Rapture or with the Second Coming [c.f., Addendum (M) Acts 1:1-11]. We are concentrating on Rapture passages. It is still not always easy to figure out which is which from the text. Certainly, we are no longer dealing with passages that might refer to Jesus coming to some other part of Israel as part of His Ministry which involved sending disciples ahead of Him to prepare a city or region to hear Jesus’

message.

“The Day of the Lord” in Acts 2:20 applies to events after the Rapture i.e., to the Apocalypse. The Rapture can only be a “Day of the Son of Man” according to Luke 17:22 or “The Day that only the Father knows” (Matthew 24:36 and Mark 13:32). That’s the view in this paper. As one discussed in the last paragraph in Section (18), from Jesus’ perspective when He comes to rescue Israel from Antichrist, “The Day of the Lord” is also one of His “Days of the Son of Man” and it is on one particular day. However, it is also and primarily a ‘Day of the Lord’ in the sense of numerous Old Testament terms such as “The Day of Vengeance (Isaiah 34:8, 35:4 or 61:2) or “The Day of Darkness” (Joel 2:2). And that means, in some but not all contexts, it also is a much longer period such as seven years (Daniel’s Seventieth Week).

In Acts 2:20, Peter has coined the term “Day of the Lord” to describe the entire period of the Apocalypse rather than any particular day. So many different things take place in this period ranging from young men and women prophesying or old men dreaming (Luke 2:17); wonders in heaven, signs in the Earth (Luke 2:19); Sun going dark and Moon turning bloody; all that **“before** that great and notable day of the Lord **comes**. Likewise, the terms used by Isaiah or Joel quoted here also can apply to a period longer than a single day and as much as a period of seven years. Deuteronomy 32:35 and Obadiah verses 12-14 refer to this ‘Day’ as “The Day of Israel’s Calamity”. The fact that Jesus is so intrinsic to its operation obviously causes Him to *‘own it’* or adopt it as one of His personal “Days of the Son of Man” along with others He has [refer Addendum (F)]. The Rapture is solely ‘One of the Days of the Son of Man’. It cannot be described as a Day of the Lord God except inasmuch as God is the one who decides when the Son can fetch His Bride. But the Second Coming is primarily a ‘Day of the Lord’; First and Foremost. Furthermore, as we note in other sections, Jesus comes to Earth at the Second Coming with the Glory of the Father and His presence with us. At the Rapture, based on the Jewish marriage system, God will stay in His Holy House (or universe) as He sends the Son to fetch His fiancé, the Church, the Bride of Christ. So by realising from Luke 17:22 that there are indeed several days of the “Son of Man” we also can see how the last day of the seven years of the “Day of the Lord” is also a “Day of the Son of Man” but still primarily a (or ‘the’) “Day of the Lord”. The Rapture, however, is not a ‘Day of the Lord’ or of any other similar terms as that term is used throughout Scripture and certainly in its Old Testament. The Rapture cannot have been a “Day of the Lord” much prophesied in the Old Testament (*Tanaakh*) because there was not even a hint of the Church Age to come in the Old Testament until of course, as the New Testament reveals, Israel **did** stumble over that First ‘Vocalized’ Sign of Exodus 4:8. Generically speaking we can call the Rapture a ‘Day of the Lord’ because Jesus is indeed our Lord. In that sense, it might be preferable to say “a Lordly Day” but we normally do not use that adverb of the noun ‘Lord’. But that’s not exactly how the Old Testament in particular treats the term “Day of the Lord”. The Second Coming is therefore one of the Days of the Son of Man, in the sense of a sub-title, but it concerns Jesus’ dealings with Israel (God’s former wife to be re-instated) and not with the church (Jesus’ fiancé *cum* bride) though we return to watch Jesus personally defeat Antichrist’s armies.

Also in this passage, Peter is primarily speaking in his capacity as Apostle to Israel and not like Paul as an Apostle to the Gentiles. The focus here from Peter’s application of Joel’s prophecy was that God was still working primarily through Jewish witnesses to the world. Jews would always be involved in God’s witness to the world but between Pentecost AD 30 and the Rapture that would be within the Church i.e., through its

believing Jews within and among the Church's membership. After the Rapture, Israel, e.g., its 144,000 male virgins, will resume its role again in its Seventieth Week of Daniel 9:27. Elijah will have returned by then but the identity and ethnicity of the two special witnesses who are slain by Antichrist remains. In all probability, the Church will have been removed (Raptured) by the time Joel's prophecy is fulfilled. At the moment, unsaved Israel does not get any spiritual blessing from God apart from protection from complete destruction in accordance with God's commitment to fulfill all of His promises to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and David. As with the New Covenant, with the "houses of both Judah and Israel", God is bound by His promises to Abraham *et al*, to protect Israel from absolute destruction. At present, Israel rejects Jesus. The unbelieving people of Israel cannot and do not experience the truth of "Christ in you the Hope of Glory" (Colossians 1:27) or the *erevon*-pledge of the Holy Spirit as in Ephesians 1:14, II Corinthians 1:22 and 5:5. After the Rapture, during the Apocalypse, newly-saved Gentile Tribulation Saints will also be working for the Lord with those Israelite-Jewish folk who likewise come to belief before the last three days of the Apocalypse. However, it may primarily be through Jewish folk ("your sons and daughters", Joel 2:28) through whom the Spirit works after The Rapture. The "Second-Last" Coming concludes those events.

(28) Romans 5:9 tells us in verse 8 that "while we are yet sinners", God saves the Church from "wrath" in verse 9. Most people do not think about this but all pre-Church saints were also saved from wrath by Jesus' sacrifice on The Cross. They had to believe what God had revealed to them about the 'Promised Deliverer'. I Corinthians 15:1-4 summarizes how that 'Promised Deliverer' actually **delivered** to win soteriological salvation for us. To demonstrate their belief, before the Cross, and to be witnesses for God on Earth, the Old Testament saints (Jewish, Proselytes and Gentiles) obeyed the sacrificial responsibilities they needed to follow using animals etc. Now that Jesus has paid the supreme sacrificial price we are no longer required to meet those pre-Church sacrificial obligations. Instead, we remember the Lord's Death, Burial and Resurrection at communion services. God's Holy Spirit enabled and convicted pre-Cross saints to believe (c.f., Ezekiel 2:2) but with the Church saints He permanently and fully fills us with His Spirit as we come to salvation. The age-old obligation to "Fear God and keep His commandments" as Solomon put it in Ecclesiastes 12:13 still applies to us. However, the content of faith now also involves accepting it was Jesus of Nazareth who fulfilled all the requirements Man needs for eternal salvation and glorification and soteriological redemption. Earlier in Romans 5:3, Paul noted we already experience man's wrathful persecution and ostracism ("tribulations") because the world hates Jesus, therefore us too. In verse 9, is the statement: "we **shall** be saved from wrath through Him". This obviously refers to any future wrath [refer Addendum (C)]. Since we are anyway saved from God's wrath when we regenerated, this statement thus refers to all the 'wrath' in 'The Apocalypse' because it has yet to arrive. The Lord's Rapture takes us away before then or before the wrath of the Seventieth Week of Daniel 9:27 gets severe. Whenever that is remains in the hands of God alone when He determines the time has come for the Son to fetch His Bride into God's home (household) in Heaven.

(29) Romans 13:11-12 has Paul writing, "For now is our salvation **nearer than when we believed**". **Soteriological** salvation is immediate upon belief. Here, the emphasis would seem to be on the imminence of **physical** salvation from this world's terrible problems. Actually, when one considers what soteriological 'salvation' really is, Paul definitely is writing of our future physical salvation. Furthermore, Paul had explained in chapters nine to eleven the role God had planned for Israel post-Ascension. So he probably also had

in mind Israel's salvation (Romans 11:26). But that is all in the future and still so even for our time. As one repeats in this paper quite deliberately, Israel's future salvation is just that - future for both its soteriological and physical salvation. So Paul's letter here to the Roman-Western system is to make sure it clearly understands Go's Plan for Israel is by no means ended but in many ways is only just beginning! Whatever Paul is talking about it is in the **future**. Any member of the Church, or indeed all the Old Testament saints, is covered by the blood of Christ whether living or deceased. Most saints are probably deceased. All that remains for them is resurrection. They are not concerned by any "future wrath". The main appeal here is surely to believers who are already soteriologically saved. Therefore, the appeal is to already soteriologically saved people, i.e., The Church, to be ready for its physical salvation on the Lord's coming in the Rapture.

Neither the Rapture nor the Second Coming are inferred but the Rapture must be one of the two events that is at least **implied** in order for one or other of them to be "**nearer**". If Paul wrote this in about AD 50 then how could the believers he wrote to, i.e., people who had come to belief since AD 30, twenty years later, be "nearer" salvation? If they are already saved they cannot possibly be "**nearer**". Actually, they are **further away** from the moment that they were saved. That is logical. So this 'salvation' **yet** to come has to be a release from tribulations, persecutions, Satan's wrath or God's apocalyptic wrath. We are always getting closer to such **physical salvation**. But for the nation of Israel that means it's physical and soteriological salvation is coming closer. Already-saved Messianic Jews are excepted of course because they also will participate in the Rapture like Jesus' disciples who heard the enigmatic words of Luke 17:22! We are always getting "nearer" to the Apocalypse and the Evil One i.e., the Antichrist-666. Although one also could see death as being nearer and in that sense a 'nearer salvation from tribulation'. But that point is so obvious that we say "sine qua non" or writing for that matter. Paul wrote in that vein in II Corinthians 5:6-8; 'to die means to be in the presence of our precious Lord and Saviour'. In that sense, death too is a wonderful **physical release!** However, Paul left that point unsaid here. Our soteriological salvation is a particular moment that gets further back in our personal history as time goes on. It is not getting any "nearer". For the nation of Israel, or unbelievers, it still is!

Of course Paul could have written this a few years before Rome sacked Jerusalem in AD 66-70. Had this statement been written in the *Book of Hebrews* one might concede it was to remind believing Jews, or Proselytes and Gentiles for that matter, not to get re-involved in the temple sacrifices that were able to continue until AD 70. Those believers contemplating that would come under the judgement on Israel of the Unforgivable Sin because of the Beelzebub incident recorded in the gospels (Matthew 10:25,12:24, 27; Mark 3:22 and Luke 11:15, 18,19).

But there is no evidence to suggest Paul was writing to believers in Rome about that issue nor would it make any sense for him to do that. His letter to the Romans anyway spans a vast range of time from ancient eras to our time. The *Hebrews* scenario was a regional matter for Jews living near Jerusalem in the dark days preceding AD 66-70. That's why a specific epistle, i.e., *Hebrews*, had to be composed to address those issues to that audience. Of course *Hebrews* tells us a lot of things we need to know but *Romans* is a general epistle to the 'West'. And it likewise teaches Hebrews (Jews, Israelites) "a lot of things".

The Second Coming comes at the very end of the Apocalypse. People at that time are

actually told to count down the days to the Second Coming (Daniel 12:11-12). Thus the only practical conclusion that one can come to is that Paul's statement here can must refer to The Rapture. That's because it could then, but clearly now can, occur at any time, on any day especially a normal day, and solely at God's discretion and timing. Here we are simply making sensible and logical deductions after spanning some issues. The emphases on being awake, coming out of sloth or keeping away from revelling etc., (refer verse 13) makes sense writing to Roman believers in the midst of the sodomy and other corruption and when times are rather ordinary and normal by any conventional reckoning. Paul was reminding, exhorting or warning them (and us), that the Rapture could occur at any time in History from AD 30 onwards. That is not so with the Second Coming which Paul may then have realised was another 'Two Days' or 2000 years away (II Peter 3:8). He may be referring to something else but on the basis of logic what else can he be implying if not The Rapture and the Church's physical salvation?

(30) I Corinthians 1:6-8, "Even as the Testimony of Christ was confirmed in you .. (verse 7) .. so that ye come behind in no gift, waiting for the **coming of our Lord Jesus the Christ** .. (verse 8) .. who shall also confirm you unto the end; *that ye may be blameless* in the **Day of our Lord Jesus the Christ**". Also, there is a term "Day of Christ" found in Philippians 1:6, 10, 2:16 and in II Thessalonians 2:2. Here it is "our Lord Jesus *the* Christ" or "Messiah". We will look at the simpler term "Day of Christ" in more detail in the relevant sections (#42, #43 and #57). This paper assumes Jesus' "coming" in verse 7 or the "revelation", as the Interlinear perhaps more accurately translates the Greek "*apokalupsis*", is that particular "Day of the Son of Man" of Luke 17:22 that the disciples of AD 30 "would not see". Also, that neatly ties in with the exhortation to every disciple of the Church era to work at "being blameless" on "the Day of our Lord Jesus the Christ".

"*Apokalupsis*" is the title to the Book of Revelation which is primarily about two things. Firstly, the prophesied course of Church History. Secondly, or perhaps 'Lastly' under one's *Aleph-Tav* principle working through Scripture, it's the detailed sequencing of prophecies from the Old Testament about the *Latter Days* concerning Israel and the nations. This sequencing leads some observers to consider the progress or regress of the seven churches, none of which have survived to modern times, reflect a chronological history of local congregations around the world throughout this 'Christian Era'. However, after *Revelation's* brief survey of Church history and prophecy (c.f., one's 'Prophecy-History' continuum) the Church is no more to be found in *Revelation* until the discussion towards the end of that book about the presence of Church saints in Heaven at the stage of the Marriage of the Lamb.

Looked at in this way, that's yet another reason why a system of theology must have space for The Rapture as a distinctly different event from the actual Second Coming and arrival of Jesus on *Terra Firma*. Instead, the Greek word "*apokalupsis*" in this passage is more about Jesus' disclosure, manifestation, revelation or, as the root for this Greek word appears to mean; 'the lid being lifted off to reveal something in the pot on the stove'. Unsealing things enclosed and pouring things from vials (vessels for pouting out liquid medications, Oxford Dictionary), aptly describes God prescription of awful nasty medicines to cure people of their rebellions. Thus, *Revelation's* disasters mostaptly describe events scheduled for the Seventieth Week for Israel and the other unbelieving nations. Alternatively, it can also be something like a window blind being pulled away to reveal Jesus in the air, his angels and, or, 'myriads of Himself' per *The Passion Translation*, blasting out a trumpet. Then raising the dead and living Church saints to are remove them from Earth, Jesus receiving them in the air and taking us into Heaven to

escape the looming judgements down here. It seems like a far cry from the last day of the Apocalypse of *Revelation*. Nevertheless, that is the way most people in Christendom interpret these verses mainly because they don't see any need for a distinction between the Church and Israel therefore between the Rapture and the Second Coming.

The principal exhortation in these verses is about being "blameless" at either "His Coming" (verse 7) or at the *Day of 'Our Lord Jesus Christ'* [in contradistinction to 'God'? (verse 8)]. Israel is anything but blameless until those last three days of Hosea 5:15 to 6:3. Here, generations of believers are being exhorted to be blameless for nearly two millennia. They are two completely different situations and should be treated as such in every text one considers. These words echo the complex passages in I Thessalonians 2:19, 3:13 where the coming of Jesus is "with all His saints" or with "His mighty angels (II Thessalonians 1:7) which, at first sight, appear to refer to the Second Coming although we will have more to say on that below. We also need to look to the Old Testament for background to the concept of "The Day of the Lord" [Addendum (C)]. ###

For example, in the Old Testament, in 'Day of the Lord' passages we have statements such as Zechariah 12:8-11 ("In that Day" perhaps better translated 'there is a day when' etc.,) and in the text of Hosea 5:15 to 6:3 in the words, "I will go and return to my place, until they acknowledge their offence" (5:15). Obviously these 'Old Testament' statements refer to Israel and not to the Church and its Rapture. Of course the covenant theologians think Israel is and was 'The Church' so their conclusion is that Zechariah and Hosea are talking to us albeit in very oblique, metaphorical or allegorical terms. Zechariah and Hosea, as examples only, clearly are Second Coming verses and that is all about Israel - if read literally. In Hosea, that "day" runs over a 2-3 day period i.e., more than 24 hours long. It ends when Israel acknowledges its 'offence' against Jesus Who must surely be the person speaking in verse 5:15. Only Jesus could claim to have left Heaven, come to Earth and gone back. Israel will say, "He shall come unto us" (Hosea 6:3).

In Corinth, for many years, people had been coming to faith or living in faith in Christ. The advice here to the Corinthians cannot surely be about the Second Coming for Israel. Instead, the "Day of our Lord Jesus *the* Christ" in verse 8 is better understood as being one of the "Days of the Son of Man" of Luke 17:22. "The Day of the Lord" where that term refers to the actual last day of all the apocalypse and tribulation spoken of in *Revelation* and the Old Testament Prophets is clearly yet to come. It is a particular day in a period of seven years (the seventieth week) and it is the Father's Day when He is reconciled to his divorced wife (Israel). Even so, in a sense, it can be sub-titled a Day of the Son of Man too ('Lord Jesus *the* Christ or Messiah of Israel) and what a wonderful thing it is for the Son to play a major role in the Father's reunion with His wife. One of the three faces of God is reconciled with the Second face of God with the blessing of the third face of God - all this where there is just one eye and one mouth in that face. So whether this "Day of our Lord Jesus *the* Christ" in verse 8 is about The Rapture or The Second Coming still needs a thorough and systematic evaluation of a vast corpus of text before we can come close to certainty or even be dogmatic about the matter.

There is more discussion on the Tri-unity in the Introduction discussion on Numbers 12:8 and the mouth of God. Refer also to Sections (10) on Luke 9:26 (Jesus in His own Glory); Section (53) on I Thessalonians 5:2; Section (56) on II Thessalonians 1:7 & 12; and Section (66) on Titus 2:13. Refer also the paragraph discussing II Peter 3:12 ("Day of God").

The Second Coming, according to the passages about it in the main sections in the gospels on the Olivet Discourse, comes after a long period of many quite specific and identifiable signs. Here, in the churches, we get a warning not to stumble at any time irrespective of any signs because there will not be any 'signs'. At best, for the Rapture, there is only a 'season' that may herald it. That season may well be the Days of Lot and Noah. Therefore we live for the Rapture not expecting any particular sign of the imminence of the Rapture. The "Days of Lot and Noah" could suggest the 'season' for the Rapture has arrived and that the same 'season' is also an indicator applying to, or harbinger of, the days of the Apocalypse and Second Coming. However, the return of the Jewish nation-state, the First Gog-Magog invasion of Israel, the rise of the Antichrist and his identification are signs to watch out for. But they cannot apply to The Rapture itself. They will apply to the imminence of the Apocalypse and the Second Coming. Those signs primarily concern Israel. They only concern the Church's responsibility to exhort and warn unbelievers. Covenant theology assumes the Church is Israel which is why observers using that model apply the signs of the Last Days to the Churches too.

However, for every generation of the Church, perhaps about 50-60 that have lived so far, comes the warning that at the very moment of stumbling, one never knows, the Rapture Trumpet will sound and call us up. So make sure one is not 'stumbling'! It is not like the situation in Hosea where desperate conditions and imminent destruction by an enemy army besieging all the believers give us three days to mull over the issue. Israel will do more than simply "mull" then but that's another history. Thus, while awaiting the Rapture we are working and using our spiritual gifts or talents such as teaching the Word of God. These verses in I Corinthians can only speak of people who are already saved (soteriologically) or who have been saved for a long time. Normally, "The Day of the Lord" in context with "The Second Coming" is to rescue Israel in a quite different situation to the one the Church of *the* Christ encounters day by day. The Day of the Lord" as one of the days of the Apocalypse, specifically its last day, is one where the people of Israel are unsaved right up to perhaps the last few hours of the 'Three Days' as in *Hosea* or *Zechariah*. Raptured saints will be blameless and already saved from sin. Thus, there is no need to chasten or discipline us in or by the Apocalypse. We will be deemed worthy to escape Earth via the Rapture.

Overall, we have to conclude the "**coming of our Lord Jesus**" and the "**Day of our Lord Jesus the Christ**" in these verses both refer to The Rapture apart from the possibility "The Day of Christ" as 'The Day of the Messiah (Christ)' is for Israel because Jesus as 'Messiah' should apply to Israel because there is no Biblical text that says Jesus was 'anointed' when He uttered the words of Psalm 40:7-8 duly noted in and Hebrews 10:7. The conclusion here is especially strong if the latter refers to Jesus' own description of that 'all-important' and 'particular' "day of the Son of Man" that His disciples in those days "would not see" but that a later generation might see as Paul may have understood. Although he realised this information was part of a "mystery" spiritually delivered to him from the Lord Himself. This perhaps is where Luke 17:22 and all that we have written about Luke 17:22-37 is how one can swing the argument so forcefully in favour of defining I Corinthians 1:6-8 as a 'Rapture' passage and nothing to do with the Second Coming at all. Of course, that is assuming our conclusions in Luke are correct. Indeed, about anything we believe from the Bible is accurate.

Furthermore, this reinforces the view that the Rapture and Second Coming are two different events for two different bodies at two different stages of their soteriological salvation; **albeit on the same basis in faith and content of faith**; in two different

events; **both in timing and situation**. We are specifically talking about the physical salvation of two different bodies but both events occurring quite close together nevertheless (in the same 'season'). The Church seems to have specific responsibilities in warning Israel as close as possible to the time of its soteriological and physical salvation - yet to come - and to encourage individual 'Israelites' (Jews) to contract out now in *Yeshua* (Jesus). If the Church were to be raptured many centuries before Israel's salvation (physical and soteriological) we would not be here to witness to Israel, or to anyone else, which is probably why the Rapture could not possibly have occurred further back in Church history. From God's perspective it makes much sense to delay His Son's '*fetching-of-the-Bride*' to the last practical minute without putting us '*through-the-mill-grinder*' too! The Rapture therefore probably did not take place a long time ago as our null hypothesis posits (refer discussions in the Introduction, Luke 21:29-36, I Timothy 4:1 and Revelation 3:11-12). Actually, unless the Rapture does occur very close in time to the Second Coming (e.g., seven years or so) Israel would be bereft of Christian love and concern, therefore our witnessing too for ever so much longer.

Even though the Second Coming and the Rapture appear to be timed to coincide in the same 'season', the Church is excused or exempted from God's wrath in the Apocalypse which one could suggest is the **main event** in Israel's Seventieth Week (Daniel 9:27) not necessarily consuming every single day of that seven years. Therefore, the Church could still be here in the Seventieth Week **but miss the main events!** The Rapture is "imminent" no matter which theological way one looks at it. At present, the world continues to inexorably slide into that last phase of the chaos brought on by Adam's Fall. These two events occur at a time when the world arrives at the 6000-year point in History plus; according to the modular time-line one is positing; another 37 to account for a time-stop while the Lord lived on Earth after God renovated it for Adam after the effects of His judgements on Satan's "Eden" (Ezekiel 28:13) probably some 4.5 billion years ago. The timing also coincides with the logical consequence of mankind's lust for the tree of knowledge backfiring into its final and catastrophic conclusions an issue that become apparent from analysis of the history, philosophy and economics of the Innovation Process (R&D, science, technology, invention etc).

(31) I Corinthians 3:11-15, c.f., II Corinthians 5:10, are about the Heavenly judgement seat for believers temporarily absent from Earth. This will be an evaluation of our works on Earth during our lifetime as a believer. We are not judged on the basis of what we did before coming to salvation. It is a preliminary to the Marriage of the Lamb to the Church. Logically, that demands the necessity for the Rapture to get us there in the first place. *Ipsa facto*, it supports the logic of us returning to Earth in gloriously resurrected bodies to join in the Messiah's Government and life in the Millennial Kingdom. Furthermore, there is something quaintly parallel about believers taken away to a place of praise, glory and tranquillity for evaluation while Earth's poor souls go through the hellish judgements of the Apocalypse. **It's quite a contrast**. It's a contrast that we might well be advised to seriously take note of. It is the very contrasting nature of the two different groups of humanity, one on Earth and the other in Heaven, that further reinforces the view that The Rapture must come some time **before** the Second Coming and of course that there has to be "The Rapture" to give effect to all this. The Rapture will occur well before the Apocalypse comes to its climax and conclusion which is at the Second Coming. Thus, the Rapture becomes the vehicle of physical salvation for the Church and the Second Coming for Israel. In effect, I Corinthians 3:11-15, c.f., II Corinthians 5:10 become Rapture passages.

(32) I Corinthians 4:5 The context here is that we are not supposed to be judging or evaluating other people's ministries. Paul mentioned Apollos' ministry in verse 6. Elsewhere (I Corinthians 3:11-15, II Corinthians 5:10), Paul reminded us of the Lord's evaluation or judgement seat of believers ("He that judges me is the Lord" verse 4) for which the Rapture is a device to bring us into Heaven so this procedure can be undertaken. The 'coming' ("before the time, until the Lord come", verse 5) seems to be another reference to the Rapture. This advice has little relevance to the situation Israel faces in the last days of the Apocalypse and the Second Coming on the very last day.

(33) I Corinthians 5:5, "To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the **Day of the Lord Jesus the Christ**". This is a good example where we need to carefully think about the use of the word 'day'. In Genesis 2:17, God warned Adam that in the 'day' he ate of the tree of knowledge he would surely die. Well, some 930 years after Adam did eat of it then he died. That 'day' lasted 930 years. Clearly the word has a descriptive or metaphorical aspect to it in some circumstances (c.f., discussion in John 6:39 - 40 above). The six days of re-formatting of the damaged Earth definitely were twenty-four hour days. Our knowledge now from genetics and science also demands that view be taken. But that's a different issue. The "day" of Genesis 2:17 needs some elaboration. The first time Adam ate from the tree of knowledge would have been on a particular day. However, it is evident Adam and Eve then began regularly absorbing information (food for the mind) from that tree perhaps over many days because they must have learned about their sexuality by practising behind the bushes or in the school bike-shed as was the want for most young people until recent times where the Internet and porn magazines online imitate Adam's and Eve's approach. About 335 000 days later Adam finally passed away. 'Day' can have subtly different meanings in English or Hebrew.

Alternatively, one could ask if Paul was writing about the Corinthian congregation's need to pray for the unidentified man under church discipline. Perhaps Paul wanted him to be ready or prepared for the Rapture. Or perhaps Paul was making a reference to the man's salvation even though he had fallen into grievous sin. Though he had to be disciplined until he was better behaved he had not lost, and could not lose, his salvation. We do not know how that disciplinary matter was eventually resolved. That man is long since deceased as are all his peers. If he died a saved believer, he will still receive his resurrected body at the Rapture. But he may end up with no awards at Jesus' judgement seat nor rewards in the MMK because he did lose his life at Satan's discretion because of his own indiscretions. It may be the situation he did no further good works that would award him to a more significant role (job) in the Messianic Kingdom.

The words here are primarily about church discipline. Nevertheless, there may be an indirect reference to the Lord's coming for His Church. Again we have to interpret this within the structure of the entire Biblical text. That includes passages like Daniel 12:4&9 and Exodus 4:8. However, it is only because of the conditions of the Daniel passage that, at long last, we are able to understand the full implication of Exodus 4:8. New things once hidden or "sealed" have become apparent in our time. Our reading of Luke 17:22-37 or Revelation 19:10 are also examples of this assuming our basic premises in interpretation are indeed correct. Therefore, the analysis here is that the "Day of the Lord Jesus the Christ" in this passage actually is the 'Day of the Son of Man' in Luke 17:22 that the disciples "would not see". Therefore, Paul may have realised that "Day's" arrival had to await the deaths of all the disciples who were with Jesus in Luke 17:22 and indeed Paul's own death as well since he is the "Last" and "Least" of the Apostles (I Corinthians

15:8, 9). I Corinthians 5:5 is not a reference to the Second Coming when there is the judgement of the sheep and goats or to the end of the Millennium when all unbelievers of all the time of man are judged. It's a reference to Christ's evaluation seat for us after the Rapture. Furthermore, we suggest that one of the "Days of the Son of Man" of Luke 17:22 is when Jesus hands out rewards to His followers [refer Addendum (F)]. They will be the ones who did produce fruit in the furtherance of the Mystery Stage of the Kingdom so that they will have an enhanced role in that work during the Millennium Stage of the Kingdom. If the Millennium itself counts as another of the 'days' of the Son of Man then it too, like Adam's 930-year 'day' is one Jesus' AD 30 disciples will see and we will see it with them.

(34) I Corinthians 11:26 refers to the taking of communion until the Messianic Kingdom comes. Then Jesus will once again meet with believers around a cup of wine. That will be during the services that all through the Millennium will commemorate His death and shed blood that made possible the remission of our sin. Everyone born during the MiMK will have to confess Jesus as we do and from time to time observe the 'communion days' in that era as we do now. Those who fall into unbelief in the MMK presumably will not attend or if they do not with the correct heart, soul, mind and strength unless they repent before they reach 100 years of age and get regenerated (Isaiah 65:20). In the Millennium, Israel can commemorate that great blessing as we have been doing in the church ever since its inception (AD 30).

If we had all lived in Eden for a millennium because Adam had passed the test at the Tree of Knowledge none of these ceremonies would have been necessary since the Son of God would not have had to die for our sin. Furthermore, the Communion Service in itself is another bit of evidence that for many different reasons we have to maintain clear distinctions between different groups of saints and entities such as Israel and the Church. In effect, the 'coming' we are acknowledging here is The Rapture. In the Covid19 lockdown, churches were not permitted to gather for communion. While the Church is still here on Earth, until the Apocalypse from which it is rescued, this still generally is a time when we can continue the observance. One presumes that after the Rapture there will be no more communion services here on Earth especially when Antichrist insists everyone worship him. Already we are seeing churches either phasing out communion or trivializing it as they have done with believers' baptism. That's yet another good indication the 'Falling Away' is upon us. The believers are not falling away. Like the synagogues in AD 30 on the eve of the First 'Advent' (epiphany, II Timothy 1:10), the Laodicean churches are falling away on the eve of the Second or Last 'Advent'.

(35) I Corinthians 15:23-8: These verses are inextricably linked with the First-Last Adam section of the fifteenth chapter of Corinthians (refer *Gospel* endnote 84). Here, Paul was describing aspects of Jesus' role as the "Last Adam" (verse 22). Thereby, Jesus brings resurrection to Glory (rather than resurrection to damnation, see below in this section) for all those that repent, believe and trust in Him (verse 23). The full programme begins with Christ's resurrection, the church saints then the Old Testament saints and deceased Tribulation saints two millennia later assuming we are at the end of the Last Days. But Paul is only concerned here; in this great fifteenth chapter outlining what Christianity actually is; with the Church's involvement with the full programme and the part of it mainly concerned here with events in the latter days of Hebrews 1:1 up to Daniel's last days on the eve of the Apocalypse etc. All unbelievers are resurrected at the end of the Millennium when they learn of their eternal fate in the other place (of "darkness, weeping and gnashing of teeth" Matthew 22:13, 25:30 and Luke 13:28). However, after He has

separated the newly believing sheep-Gentile saints (who evidently will not be resurrected because there will be no need to as we now realise with our very recent information about the way God will manipulate the Dark Genome inbuilt into humans) from the unbelieving 'goats' [refer section (8) on Matthew 25:31-46 and Addendum (P)], Jesus takes on another aspect in His role as the "Son of Man" of Psalm 8::6-8 (verse 24). He becomes the world's ruler by removing all other "rule .. authority .. and power" (verse 24). Although Jesus "is the resurrection" of "the Just" or "righteous" implied (Isaiah 26:19, Daniel 12:2 or Matthew 13:49) as He told Martha (John 11:25), Jesus Himself is the "First-fruit" of that resurrection (verse 23) which He accomplished in AD 30. Then later, "at His Coming" (*parousia*) in verse 23 we Church saints alive and our deceased church forbears are 'raptured' as modern parlance goes or as Paul writes "translated" which is an English word we sometimes use for what happens in I Corinthians 15:52 ("changed") and I Thessalonians 4:17 ("caught up").

However, in verse 24, we read about "The End" of that process "cometh". The word for 'come' here also is '*parousia*' but in this verse **inferred** because of the way Paul from his Jewish background wrote in Greek whereby the word '*parousia*' is not in the Greek manuscripts but is rendered necessary by translators into English (or Greek, normally). The basic meaning of '*parousia*' is to 'lift the lid off something'. It might be a lid covering a pot of boiling or simmering liquids. It might also be like the magician pulling first a rabbit, then a ball, then a brush, and other objects, successively, as part of an amusing trick. In between revealing each object, the magician may tell a few jokes or irrelevant stories to distract attention. One is focusing in this paper on the words for come, appear, arrive, return etc. However, for verses 23 and 24 we need to also consider the other things coming out of our allegorical magician's hat, that also are governed by the Greek '*parousia*' inferred.

I Corinthians 15:52 and I Thessalonians 4:17 are the two most explicit texts explaining some church saints will not experience conventional death which has been the normal case for everyone over the last 6000 years (Enoch perhaps and Elijah being the exceptions). Therefore, this 'coming' in verse 23 the Apostle describes also would seem to refer or apply to 'The Rapture' although only the deceased saints are mentioned here because the living saints at the time are covered by verses 51-2 and verse 54 which makes the point death no longer has any sting for church saints from the moment of the Rapture but it will have for others especially for people born during the millennium who do not repent.

One can understand why there is so much confusion and poor understanding about the Rapture in part because of Paul's use in verses 23 and 24 (inferred) of '*parousia*' for the word to 'come' [refer discussion in Addendum (Bi)]. It seems that is one reason why the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (Tenth Edition) says "The Rapture refers to the transporting of believers to heaven **at the second coming of Christ**". Even Strong follows that line. As an introductory note, *Oxford* also suggests the source for this is "North American" and is "according to some millenarian teaching". We of course vehemently dispute this. The "Second Coming of Christ" and "The Rapture" are **not** the same event nor is that thinking the preserve of North American cults. The Rapture is only for the church saints or the 'redeemed', both deceased or alive at that 'Moment of the Rapture'. Arguably, that means that *Oxford's* "second coming" has to be a separate and different event and the publishers need to correct themselves.

People can debate other interpretations. Nevertheless, after whatever occurs in verse

23 which presumably is The Rapture. Then Jesus appears in the sky, it could be day or night depending on one's location on Earth at the time. Instead of coming down to the ground Jesus takes believers away into Heaven; some believers virtually out of their beds probably awoken by the sound of the Last Trump. Most people seem to assume the end comes (presumably inferred from the word '*parousia*') immediately after that or presumably on the same day anyway. However, it is more sensible in the context of verses 25-28 to show that "the end" opening verse 24 is a process covering quite a long period rather than a one-off almost instantaneous event like the Rapture or the destruction of Sennacherib's army with an angelic blast in 700 BC. Of necessity, to make any real sense, there must be some sort of gap in time here because verse 24 opens with the statement, "He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power". The sense here is that He will take some time doing that even if only a few days or weeks such as the Seventy-five Day Interval. But verse 25 says He will "reign" until He "puts all enemies under His feet" but that too, evidently, takes some time to accomplish. The "enemies" here will have to include the people who are born during the MMK but who never acknowledge Jesus. Not that they can cause any trouble in the Millennium anyway until Satan is released for the Last Gog-Magog invasion of Israel referred to in Revelation 20:7-9. So that presumably means a further thousand years must pass after the Rapture at the very least. But the end is still not yet because death has to be totally destroyed, its sting long before removed for church saints, in verse 26 and that only occurs after the Great White Throne Judgement and the destruction of the evil angelic realm, to make way for the Next Universe and the Eternal Order at long last. Thus aggregating the information in verses 24-6, there could be as many as seven or eight years between the Rapture and Second Coming, then the Seventy-five day interval and thirdly the Millennium itself. That could be as much as 1007 years and ten weeks between verse 23 and verses 24-26. Verses 27 and 28 therefore summarize all that has happened in the history of a Universe. Firstly, it was corrupted by Satan and some angels who joined him. Then, corrupted as a result of the First Adam's disobedience. In AD 30, the Last Adam (Jesus) saved it and will eventually return all to God. Evildoers are cast out into another universe of darkness, weeping and gnashing of teeth. In total, some three millennia have to pass between "Christ the firstfruits" in verse 23 and "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death" in verse 26.

One question that could be asked is why Paul did not refer to the Second Coming for Israel at this point in his fifteenth chapter of Corinthians. However, Paul did address the situation for Israel in these times in Romans chapters 9-11. This particular chapter in Corinthians is solely directed at the Church. That underlines the deep significance of the separation of the the two bodies, i.e., Israel and the Church, because their salvations, both soteriological and physical, come at different times in world history, the physical aspect being in two different locations. For the church, saints are saved progressively throughout the two millennial age of the "Mystery Kingdom" (Fruchtenbaum) or Church age (Pentecost-Shavuot to Rapture). Of course, that includes Jewish people who while **remaining** under the Abrahamic Covenant bring themselves from the Mosaic part of that Covenant into or under the New Covenant of Jeremiah 31:31 instead of the old Mosaic as they live throughout the Church Age. After all, the New Covenant is negotiated between God and a united Israel in order for God to fulfill the so far unfulfilled promises He gave to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Israel the nation is firstly soteriologically saved over the last three days of Daniel's Seventieth week (Apocalypse) then physically saved (rescued from Antichrist-666) on the last day of those three days (*passim* Hosea and Zechariah).

As noted, at the end of the MMK, resurrection comes to unbelievers but to *damnation*. The reason why resurrection for the damned only comes at the end of the Millennium is that it has to include people born during the MMK who do not repent and who therefore die when they are 100 old (Isaiah 65:20). Then we see how many people who fail to repent during the Millennium will be joining all the unbelievers who lived and died before the Millennium from *circa* 4000 BC to sometime after AD 2000. Elsewhere in various passages of the Bible the full picture of the entire resurrection process can be ascertained [refer Addendum (H), *Rapture, Resurrection and Hope*].

For information about the Resurrection, its “first fruits” then other stages or orders, refer to Addenda (H) & (L) where we consider Dr Fruchtenbaum’s explanation thereof. In conclusion, I Corinthians 15:23-6 appears to begin at The Rapture and conclude with the eve of the Eternal Order after the last day of the seventh millennium (“The Millennium” of ‘Rest’). The verses do not cover events on one single day. Other scriptures are there to fill in the details of other intervening matters but we get the briefest of descriptions of all that in this passage listing the sequence of events from the Rapture to the New Order. Furthermore, the word ‘*parousia*’ must be interpreted within this context to show that it can infer a long process of a number of things or events in the course of time.

(36) I Corinthians 15:52, This clearly is not a Second Coming passage. There is no reference to Jesus’ arrival. Nevertheless, this verse is the first to describe what happens when Jesus comes for the Rapture of the Church and is Paul’s first of two direct references to the “Last Trump” (see also I Thessalonians 4:16, “Trump of God”). After Jesus’ own statements with some detail about the Rapture as recorded in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. Mark only referred to the need for readiness. Thus, it is the third major statement on the Rapture in the New Testament and it comes from Paul’s pen. It is the first to tell us about the “Last Trump” which announces the coming of the Lord to take us to Heaven. As is noted in the *Introduction*, this is also the passage where Paul describes the Rapture as a “Mystery”.

The Rapture is the fifth of five points Paul raises in this chapter (*ibid Gospel*, endnote 84) which enunciates what one believes. Firstly and primarily, one must believe the details of the Death, Burial and Resurrection of Jesus as witnessed by His disciples (Apostles) in order to be saved (verses 1-11). Moving on from there, after one is saved, in the process of maturity and spiritual growth, one secondly comes to gain a deeper appreciation of *The Resurrection* and that Jesus is the *Firstfruits* thereof (verses 12-19). Thirdly, one comes to fully understand and believe the First- Last-Adam principle (verses 20-34). This is where the maturing believer understands God has righteously imputed Adam’s sin of disobedience to each one of us; on top of our own sin; so that we all have the choice now whether to accept or reject the terms of God’s Redemption Plan. Fourthly, one loses any concerns about the nature of the resurrected body by agreeing with Paul’s analogy of the seed. He also writes about other aspects of the created order. All of that in verses 35-49 is written to illustrate the wonderful nature of the resurrected body (“glorified”, Philippians 3:21) that we saints afflicted by the curse of death (operating for church saints from Adam to the Rapture) stand to **inherit**. The fourth point leads into the need for a carnal body to be therefore instantly translated (or ‘raptured’, the fifth point) into a resurrected body in order for our resurrected Lord to rescue, or snatch like an eagle, the last group of living (“quick” verse 45) believers any time before the Apocalypse begins in earnest. The actual day of the Rapture cannot be discerned although the season almost certainly can (*Rosh Hashanah, First Fruits*). Thus we cannot rule out the possibility the Rapture occurs sometime during the Apocalypse or Seventieth Week.

(37) I Corinthians 16:22, “Maranatha” or ‘Our Lord Come. This is in contradistinction to those who are “anathema”, i.e., those who do not love the Lord. It’s an appeal that could equally apply to either the Second Coming or to the Rapture. However, the ‘*atha*’ is the Greek word for air that corresponds with our word ‘ether’. The Internet originally was to be called the Ethernet and it still uses “ethernet” cables to connect modems and computers with the *ether* to transmit data, sounds, images etc. [For more on all this, refer to Addendum (G) Coming Full Circle]. The “ether” is a term used by scientists to describe the properties of the air and the way it can transmit light, radio waves, sound waves and even Internet data. It tends to include the space beyond the atmosphere because particles such as gamma rays and solar wind travel through outer space then pierce our atmosphere. In this sense, the ‘Ether’ combines our atmosphere with the emptiness of outer space with God’s heaven or even other universes as some particle physicists now believe is the origin of some bosons, leptons or even quarks which make up our atoms and molecules.

The main point about the Second Coming is that Jesus lands on Earth and stays here and rules, or “reigns” (I Corinthians 15:25) on Earth. The Rapture is an event which takes believers away from Earth only for them to be returned later with Jesus at the Second Coming. To collect us, Jesus must come through what we would say is the “Ether” between Heaven and Earth. In this sense, the Rapture is in view in the words “Maranatha” or ‘Our Lord Come’ and not the Second Coming. Here ‘*atha-ether*’ is a code-word to indicate Jesus is only coming close to Earth for the Rapture, remaining in the Ether in the upper atmosphere, to draw us unto Him and take us away at the Rapture. That’s a quite different situation for the Church to the Second Coming for Israel.

(38) II Corinthians 1:10, says, in the King James Version, “who delivered us from so great a death, and does deliver; **in whom we trust** that he will yet deliver us”. Here we get the perspectives of ‘deliverance’ in the past, present and future. The 1901 American Standard Version (ASV) varies the KJV by suggesting, “**on whom we have set our hope**”. The NASB says, “who has delivered us from so great a *peril of death*, and will deliver us, He on whom we have set our hope. And he will yet deliver us”. This version which supposedly updates the ASV removes the concept of deliverance in the present and places everything on the past and future perspectives alone. The ‘so great a death’ of the KJV and ASV becomes ‘so great **a peril of death**’ in the NASB. The italics indicate ‘peril’ is implied or inferred.

In this passage, Paul had been writing about wrath, persecution, tribulations incurred by believers in Jesus. We might even be martyred or threatened with death and quite a cruel nasty one too. We are of course untroubled by death due to persecutions. Also we are untroubled by death which will come to everyone except for living Rapture saints. So any future death, or peril of it, must surely refer to the apocalyptic conditions of the end of the last days. Other passages in the New Testament refer to a future “wrath” that comes from God include Matthew 3:7, Luke 3:7, 21:23, I Thessalonians 1:10, 5:9, Revelation 3:10, 6:17, 11:18, 15:1, 16:1, 19:15). Although we can expect to face persecution today and tomorrow, we can also expect deliverance from God’s wrath in the Apocalypse as for example in Revelation 6:17, “For the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?” But the people on Earth saying that are going through the Apocalypse and they now realize the error of their ways and that the Bible and God’s witnesses to them were not kidding. It also appears that those earth-dwellers at that time have gone past the point where they can be saved. The Church almost certainly appears to be in Heaven during the outpouring of that particular wrath.

Thus I Corinthians 1:10 reassures us that God's wrath at Adam's sin, our's by imputation, has been propitiated by Christ on the Cross. We no longer face any peril from it or fear of it, even if we do die, because we are to be resurrected in Glory. However, as it seems from I Corinthians 15:52, I Thessalonians 1:10, 4:16 and 5:9 as well as Revelation 3:10, we will yet be delivered from something as bad as, if not worse, i.e., the coming 'apocalyptic' wrath or death. Thus Paul has covered the past, present and future as we should all be considering, not just living in the past or present or fantasizing over the future as so many do regarding the things "science" will do for us.

Presumably the "great death" or "great *peril* of death" referred to in this verse still is in the future and can be equated with God's future wrath due to the rise of Satan's son in the Last Days and Israel's disobedience by going into covenant with Antichrist. Thus, it is from that future 'apocalyptic wrath' we are yet to be delivered from. After all, Daniel's Seventieth Week really has nothing to do with redeemed church saints and deceased saints. It belongs to Israel. This is a "promise of God" as per II Corinthians 1:20 and not just confirmed but guaranteed by the 'erevon' or "earnest of the Spirit" of II Corinthians 1:22. Also, Believers are apt to forget or overlook the many and bounteous spiritual blessings God gives each one of us even now. That does not sound like a God Who has not forgiven our multitudinous sins and remains wrathful toward us. Immediately one has turned to Jesus and repented, one is forgiven. Unbelievers clearly do not experience these blessed things unless or until they also repent. They are seeking the world whereas we "seek first the Kingdom of God" (Deuteronomy 4:29, Proverbs 28:5, Luke 11:9-10, 12:31). Thus we ask if the "great death" of II Corinthians 1:10 is the equivalent of the 'wrath to come' of I Thessalonians 1:10. If so, that again supports the view the Rapture comes before the Second Coming, and is specifically designed to excuse us from that wrath, and before most if not all of the seven-year wrath-full Apocalypse occurs or at least before the Apocalypse gets properly underway.

(39) II Corinthians 1:14, " ... we are your rejoicing, even as ye also are ours in the **day of the Lord Jesus**". This "day of the Lord Jesus" follows from the previous verses where Paul was writing about all the sufferings they are jointly experiencing and acknowledging "to the end" (verse 13). If that is the 'Day of the Lord Jesus', surely that applies to The Rapture. Nevertheless, our present *tribulations* or *persecutions* are a far easier cross to bear than the Apocalypse from which we are to be rescued via The Rapture. Again we can consider the 'Day of the Lord Jesus' here in verse 14 is one of the "days" of the "Son of Man" Jesus referred to in Luke 17:22. Furthermore, as we postulated above, Paul may have worked this out too whereas other believers of his time may not have done so. Neither the AD 30-70 Apostles nor other believers would "see" that particular day the Lord said His disciples would not see in Luke 17:22 but 'disciples' and 'believers' today may see it unless a generation in between saw it or one after our's sees it.

(40) II Corinthians 5:10, is a reminder for believers about his or her appearance at Christ's Judgement Seat. That seat is in Heaven which means believers have to get there somehow and that is via The Rapture and the necessary translation for the believers alive at the time *in lieu* of a resurrection as such. Everyone sings songs about being in heaven or "up there" when we die. The reality is that our current carnal bodies cannot exist in Heaven so deceased church saints receive a resurrected body and those who are alive at the time are 'translated' in an instant. We will only be in Heaven, and very briefly, for two main reasons. Firstly to be evaluated and fitted with our garments for the Marriage of the Lamb and our crowns (if we have earned any) for the Millennium. Believers' judgement or evaluation is not on Earth where Sheep and Goats are judged

at the end of the Apocalypse in the Seventy-five Day Interval. The 'sheep' who are people who come to belief after the Rapture will enter the '**terrestrial**' Millennial kingdom which means they have no need to go to Heaven for their judgement and can literally stay here on Earth and in their 'carnal' bodies. But Church saints do have to get into Heaven for their judgement and ensuing participation in the Marriage of the Lamb. So there has to be a mechanism to facilitate these differing circumstances. In I Corinthians 3:11-15, Apostle Paul gave details of the process for all church believers at the Judgement (or 'evaluation') Seat of Christ.

(41) Galatians 1:4, says "we will be delivered from this evil world". Evil will be defeated one day but before that the church is delivered from 'The Evil One' hence, presumably, the evils that will accelerate before then. That means this world's evil will continue for a little while longer after the Rapture. If our deliverance from this world's evils was to be the end of those evils then the text would have said so. Instead, after we are delivered, those evils continue to plague the Earth especially when it comes under the domination of Antichrist-666 ("The Evil One" or the "Abominable Branch" of Isaiah 14:19) and probably a lot more righteous judgements delivered by God's angels will add to the pent-up consequences of the evil that ensued from Adam's folly. Viruses and plastics polluting the world today are just one measure of the extent of the aggregated evil this world is suffering because Adam did not heed God's warning in Eden. Jesus gave Himself up for us partly in order to 'deliver us' from evil, from chaos and especially from "The Evil One" (Matthew 6:13, 13:19, 38, Mark 4:15, Luke 11:2, John 17:15, II Thessalonians 3:2-3, I John 2:13, 14, 18, I John 5:19, II John 7). Our question is when or whence this presumably physical deliverance? Once a person is saved, redeemed and in Christ, deliverance from evil events has to be physical not soteriological. That is an important reason why we say there logically have to be two 'rescue' events: one for the Church; already soteriologically saved: the other for Israel (not yet saved soteriologically). The former is the Rapture. The latter is the Second Coming on Israel's repentance.

The wording implies some believers will be delivered before we die and before this evil age (era) has had its last day. Deliverance from evil for Noah *et al* and Lot and his two daughters did not result in the end of all evil in the world (re Noah) or in other places after God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah (re Lot). Everything on Earth in Noah's time, or in the two cities in Lot's, time was destroyed. But people started all over again. Within 500 years of the Flood, Noah's descendants with at least Shem still alive, had incited God's concern in their attempts to build the Tower of Babel and develop technology for evil ends. So these events point to the reason why Jesus may have obliquely indicated that the Rapture will be in the "Days of Noah and Lot". They are about good or justified people being removed from the evil the world has descended into. However, at the time of the Rapture it does seem evil continues and even increases after the Church leaves. The Rapture does not see to the end of evil on Earth. The Second Coming does for the mostpart although not everyone will accept Christ and in that sense be His enemies and of course there is the Last Gog-Magog' to play out at the end of the MMK. Jesus' use of the phrase "Days of Noah and Lot" for the Rapture is a key indicator of the 'season' of the Rapture but unlike the Flood, the Rapture does not see to an end of evil on Earth. It saves us out of even worse evil.

(42) Philippians 1:6 & 10, concerns the "Day of Jesus Christ" in verse 6 and the "Day of Christ" in verse 10. These verses are in association with the continuation of believers' good work in the Church Age or in the normal times leading up to the dreadful chaos of the **Last Days**. We are required, just like every previous generation of the Church, to be

"sincere and without offence" (verse 10). That has more to do with being ready and doing the Lord's work implicitly right up until the day of the Rapture. If we assume the 'Day of Jesus Christ' in verse 6 and the 'Day of Christ' in verse 10 is the same as the one in Luke 17:22 that His disciples "would not see" then both clearly refer to the Rapture. In these verses it must be the day when the Rapture comes suddenly almost out of the blue and on an otherwise normal sort of day (Matthew 24:37-41, Mark 13:35 and Luke 17:26-36). Thus, perhaps even in order to ensure one does not miss-out on the Rapture, one must be ever on the alert and doing the *right thing* though, of course, **our works never save us**. We are saved by our faith in Jesus. As a kind of moot point, one could suppose there will even be some believers who are not especially alert to the occurrence of the Rapture on any particular day and will find themselves being swept up and taken into Heaven. Again, we need to stress that events leading to the Second Coming in the middle of a full blown set of tribulations, catastrophes and Apocalypse; together with the information that one can count the days to the end (Daniel 12:11-12); and with the awful Antichrist-666 controlling world events; are all indicative of a very different situation from the day when the sudden Rapture or 'Day of Christ' occurs *out of the blue*.

(43) Philippians 2:15-16, "That ye may be **blameless** and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world .. (verse 16) .. holding forth the Word of Life, that I may rejoice in the **Day of Christ**, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain". Here there is another reference to the "Day of Christ". Again, unless he had in mind the words 'Day of the Son of Man' in Luke 17:22, there are no direct clues from this text to elicit a precise definition of Paul's words, "Day of Christ". The majority of the churches in Christendom believes the Second Coming and the Rapture are the same thing or event, or worse, there is no Rapture. Whatever or whichever day it is, one gets the sense of the importance for believers to be blameless, showing light in the world while we are still on Earth and while the world is still in the grip of sinfulness in general - in other words while days are still '*comparatively normal*' despite wars and rumours of wars etc., when contrasted with the terrors and chaos of the Apocalypse.

If the 'Day of Christ' were to refer to the millennium for which a much better term would be 'His Kingdom' wherein He will reign until "He hath put all enemies under His feet" (I Corinthians 15:25) then the Rapture obviously is not meant in the three passages we have considered in *Philippians*. On this supposition, Philippians 1:6 would imply God will cease 'performing good works in us. Philippians 1:10 would imply we become 'insincere and offensive'. In this passage Paul exhorts us to "do all things without murmur and dispute" in this Church Age. Thus 'Day' in these passages almost certainly refers to a single day and a very short part of it at that. The question ancient Jewish scribes had regarding how much of each single day of Genesis chapter one God actually spent 'forming' life from the dust and detritus of this damaged globe might just as easily be asked of the 'day of the Rapture' or 'of Christ'. We won't debate that here!

Anyway the critical passages of Matthew 24:37-41, Luke 17:34-36, I Corinthians 15:51-54, I Thessalonians 4:15-17 and even perhaps Titus 2:13 are guides to suggest or imply "the Day of Christ" here in *Philippians* again refers to the Rapture. "In a moment" or in a "twinkling of the eye" (I Corinthians 15:52) our work, witness and example we should be setting in this fallen world will suddenly be **discontinued**. Whether anyone notices either the 'example we set' or sudden uplifting into heaven is another matter. Evidently people in Jerusalem will notice the resurrection and uplifting of the Two Witnesses of Revelation 11:11-13. Right now, as far as this observer can assess, no one seems to

notice the good examples we set. If people do they simply tend to ignore, *cold shoulder* or ostracize us. It is hard to compare or contrast one “crooked and perverse nation” (verse 15), assuming the Roman Empire of *circa* AD 50 is in view here, with any other era. A “crooked and perverse nation” could be typical of the whole world or more specifically towards the end of the Age of Fallen Man begun at Adam’s ‘Fall’. Sodom in 2000 BC and Pompeii in AD 79 show us that perversity was at the extreme then. Is the current stage of the Fourth Empire of Daniel’s prophecies the first time since AD 79 that the world, or any particular nation or city in it, has been this bad? Now we are at the end of the sixth millennium of this nonsense brought on by Adam and ourselves, it may well be the time from God’s perspective to cut everything short to leave space for the denouement of the Seven-year Apocalypse (Daniel’s Seventieth week) for God’s angels to deliver His judgements primarily aimed at bringing Israel to repentance. That’s one reason why the Apocalypse is known as the The Day of Israel's Calamity (Deuteronomy 32:35) or The Time of Jacob's Trouble (Jeremiah 30:7). The “crooked and perverse nation” (verse 15) is the world now and soon we will be removed from it. Meanwhile, be blameless.

(44) Philippians 3:20-21, “ .. Heaven .. whence we look for the Saviour .. (verse 21) .. Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His Glorious Body ..”. Here Paul encourages us to think in Heaven’s terms and not from the hedonistic point of view of the typical earth-dweller today. Of course in *Corinthians* and *Thessalonians*, Paul explains that for living saints that translation from this vile body occurs at The Rapture. But that is the only connection here and is only an indirect reference to the Rapture via an encouragement similar to the call to “seek first the Kingdom of God” (as Luke 12:31 exhorts), and to “present ourselves a living sacrifice” (Romans 12:1).

(45) Philippians 4:5, "The Lord is at hand", is perhaps an exhortation although it also supports the view that at any time during the Church Age the Rapture has been imminent. None of the signs that warned believers of the proximity of the Second Coming were observable in the world at the time this was written. Effectively, the reminder "The Lord is at hand" emphasizes for believers the importance of continuously working, holding fast to the faith and being in readiness for a sudden event like the Rapture. We should be doing this independently of any particular sign other than the ‘season’ of the Days of Noah and Lot. Presumably there is a ‘season’ in which the Rapture is more likely to occur. Normally, we do not expect snow blizzards at the height of summer. Abnormally, in some rare places of the world (e.g., Wellington, NZ) all four seasons can occur on any given day. Normally, with good weather records, one knows when the seasons begin, reach their zeniths (summer) or nadirs (Winter) then fade away.

The Jewish Feast of Trumpets is the only one of the seven mandated for Israel under the Mosaic Covenant that occurred on the first day of the month (the “seventh”, Leviticus 23:23-25). The point here is that new moons were hard to ascertain in ancient times so on both days around that new moon the ancient Jews observed the blowing of trumpets. Probably, that’s why Paul realised the Feast of Trumpets (a.k.a., as *Rosh Hashanah*) symbolized the Rapture in the sense that we will know or be able to perceive when the **season** or approximate time of the Rapture will be - but never the actual day. The believers of that time or “season” will become aware of the ‘signs’ of that ‘season’ of the Rapture but not the actual hour or day of it.

The exhortation clearly applies as much to the Philippian believers as to any other believers. Although, as is easy to understand **ex post**, they were not living in the Days

of Lot nor in the Days of Noah even if then there was a lot of sexual impropriety in the Roman Empire and probably in other parts of the world too. Just like a good meteorologist studying climate, it's vital to have a good handle on world history (and **His Story**) in order to sensibly discern seasons.

(46) Colossians 3:2-4, "Set your affection on things above, not on things of the Earth .. (verse 3) .. for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God .. (verse 4) .. when Christ, who is our life, **shall appear**, then ye shall also **appear with Him in Glory**. The obvious point here is that 'shall appear' is one situation-event followed by another *later* one i.e., to 'appear with Him in Glory'. The word 'also' implies there is another thing or event after the one just mentioned. Jesus will "appear" then after that we will appear with Jesus "in Glory". First one thing then another. When Jesus appears (the first event) we apparently are not in "glory". Obviously, when Jesus appears we are carnal. When we later "appear with Him", perhaps when Jesus presents us in Heaven before God as we get ready for the marriage of the lamb or, more likely from Earth's perspective, at the Second Coming, we are in Glory. To be 'in glory' is to be resurrected, or, in the terms of I Corinthians 15:53, "this corruptible *body* must put on incorruption".

By way of contrast, in I Thessalonians 4:17, we meet with Him "in the air" not on the ground. At the end of the Apocalypse when Jesus returns, everyone who "meets" him will be **on the ground**. Having therefore left Earth via a trip through "the air" we later must be coming back to Earth with Jesus in His *Shecinah* Glory; i.e., as Jesus is piercing the gloom across the World on that Last Day of the Apocalypse. So the second occurrence of "appear" in this verse from Colossians see,s more sensibly to refer to the Second Coming. Obviously the Rapture is the vehicle that would take us to Heaven, i.e., take us away, so that we can return to Earth with Jesus. His "Glory" initially pertains to our being with Him in Heaven. That relatively brief sojourn in Heaven is our temporary refuge, or *holding camp*, while the Apocalypse rages **down** on Earth. But we do not stay in Heaven forever when we are taken there, by whatever means but presumably via the Rapture. Most people seem to believe that once the believer is in Heaven he stays there forever. That is incorrect. We must be brought back to Earth to enjoy the next Millennium, the last one in the series of seven, which is the 'MMK'. Even at the end of that Messianic Millennium we next go to the New Earth not to a new Heaven.

(47) I Thessalonians 1:10, "And to **wait for His Son from Heaven** whom He raised from the dead, *even* Jesus, **who delivered us from the wrath to come**". Firstly, some introductory comments. One's comments on Paul's two letters to the Thessalonians occupy the next fifteen Sections (47-61). In this verse (1:10), Paul wrote that we "wait for His Son from Heaven". We should not overlook the importance and significance of that statement and to whom it is directed. Nor should it be overlooked that all believers at this time were eagerly anticipating the Lord's return in their lifetime, not just the Thessalonians although these descendants from 7th Century Sidonian refugees may have had a keener interest than most in the prospect perhaps because of extreme persecution. This fact becomes especially prominent, or perhaps alive, in these two epistles Paul wrote to the Thessalonians. They were believers in northern Greece towards the region known as Macedonia where many were descendants of Sidonians who had fled Lebanon from 700-600 BC onwards. That comes from our revised history based on the restored Egyptian and Middle Eastern chronology but readers will not find that information in any other book or paper written about these epistles.

It may be that concerns they had about missing out on the Rapture; or Second Coming;

or any mix of ideas about these events; stemmed from embarrassment about their ancestors' maltreatment of Jews after the fall of the two kingdoms to the Assyrians and Chaldeans (Kurds or Galatians in Roman times). But the Sidonians and other Levantine Phoenicians from Tyre and Gebal-Byblos were themselves forced to spread westwards, for example to Thyatira, and across the Mediterranean as their former Levantine city states fell to the invaders from the North or East of the Eurasian continent. Anyway, they need not worry, Paul told them, because there were several things that had to occur before Jesus returned or the Church was taken into Heaven for the Marriage of the Lamb. Nevertheless those events, most people believed, could yet happen in their lifetimes and we know many believers in the Roman Empire believed Caesar Nero (or Caesar Neron to make his name add to 666 transliterated into Hebrew) could be or indeed was, in their minds, the Antichrist-666, the *nazar ta-av* or abominable branch of Isaiah 14:19. They of course awaited the return of the *Good Branch* of Isaiah 11:1. Such was the prevailing feeling or expectation and is not dissimilar to our's today. So these Thessalonian epistles take on a very special place in our Bible studies on eschatology.

This is also a letter to all believers in the Church of *the* Christ. Also, Paul, like the other scribes and Apostles of the New Testament, had to deliver teaching for the forthcoming generations of believers, or the next one at the very least. Paul's words are not directed at unbelievers. If they remain in unbelief, they will one day have to face the Apocalypse and Second Coming. In effect, as we shall see in the next few sections, Paul moved by the Holy Spirit and in keeping with the special mysteries given to him in his apostolic duties, was writing to every church believer so that we can warn the world of what is to come in the *Last Days*. Essentially, our response is to realise that in these letters Paul is instructing us how to give unbelievers the option given to believers. That is to get off the gravy train, seek **first** the kingdom of God and get ready to board the Rapture train that will one day take us away from the forthcoming Apocalypse whenever it occurs. Salvation in Jesus is one's ticket for the Rapture Train. The Bible in general gives us plenty of information to discern the '*Latter Days*' That is via the Days of Noah, the Days of Lot, '*nation fighting nation*' in the traditional Jewish context of that metaphore, and the decline or indeed removal of law and governance. As we see these things we know the Apocalypse is about to descend upon the world.

As we shall see, over the next four chapters of the first epistle he also wrote: "called you unto .. glory" (2:12); "at His coming" (2:19); "at the coming" (3:13); "the coming of the Lord" (4:15); "descend from heaven (4:16); "meet the Lord in the air" (4:17); "Day of the Lord coming as a thief in the night" (5:2); "that *rapture* day should overtake you as a thief" (5:4); and "the coming" (5:23). In two comparatively short epistles compared with *Romans*, *I Corinthians* and *Hebrews*, this is a lot of information about the future when Jesus *comes back* for the Church (or for Israel in the case of I Thessalonians 5:2).

As a general principle outlined earlier, we have to assume in the first or primary place both letters to the Thessalonians mostly concern the Rapture, not the Second Coming. However as part of his overall teaching, c.f., Romans 9:1 to 11:36, Paul helps us to contrast the two events but until these two epistles Second Coming and Rapture passages are reasonably easy to distinguish. It gets a bit harder now because of Paul's attempt to contrast the Rapture with the Second Coming.

In I Thessalonians 1:10, the information that Jesus is going "deliver us from the wrath to come" implies He is coming to take us away from something in the future that has not been with us in the past or present. This wrath to come is not the same as the wrath

incurred on everyone ever since Adam disobeyed. It would be pointless for Paul to suggest God's wrath at all sin is only something to be experienced by some future generation, or generations. Apparently that 'something' is God's final set of judgements reserved for unbelieving Israel and for an unbelieving world of atheistic or agnostic sceptics. When one looks at the details in the *Book of Revelation* about the Apocalypse (or Daniel's Seventieth week), it is very difficult to see how Jesus does that without removing us from Earth because we are not sceptics regarding Him, nor atheists nor agnostics nor, dare one say, evolutionists either! Indeed the English word 'deliver; implies 'complete removal' implicitly from Earth in this context. Whether that is the intent of the Greek word may be debatable. In general, that would be the only practical solution to achieve that goal. Furthermore, in the Apocalypse, according to the Bible (Revelation 7:4 and 11:5), certain special non-church witnesses are miraculously preserved to do their work for God. The texts, or even context, show that they are not Church saints. So where is the Church then? The only sensible answer can be that its members are resident in "Heaven" for a temporary sojourn while they are kept away from the wrath being poured out on Earth. Indeed, to escape that wrath is not just a goal but a promise God has given Jesus' congregation or Church. It is a promise God will keep just as He is keeping all His promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob-Israel which of course is why today's nation of Israel is becoming the object of so much world-wide hatred and vitriol perhaps incited a little by the behaviour of a few injudicious politicians, settlers or even soldiers but that's not confined to Israel but to all the other fig tree nations too. The world hates God's Plan. Well, He is going to have a few 'final words' to say to the unbelieving world, being euphemistic here, and we won't have to face that *musack*.

This very important passage clearly states believers will be saved from what is obviously an apocalyptic period because we are already saved from the sin (i.e., soteriologically) through which everyone has incurred God's wrath against all Past, Present and Future sin. The "wrath to come" obviously is another aspect of God's Wrath which must come on top of or because of the sin we have already incurred but from which, from God's perspective, believers have already received the benefit of God's "propitiation" and so we are excused the wrath to come which in a sense culminates the sin of Adam. Jesus' sacrifice, which believers trust in, appeased God's wrath at Adam's sin. Or, putting it another way, we are exempt from this future wrath having already been exempted from God's general wrath. The "wrath to come" is aimed at and is about those who continuously refuse to seek God's Grace, Mercy and Love in the very last days and continue to refuse to accept His Plan for their salvation from that wrath at the sin of Adam. Even so, in this "wrath to come", God is still trying almost as it were in one last gasp to rescue delinquents such as ardent evolutionists from their wicked ways -in the early years of the Apocalypse at least.

The destruction of Antichrist's army and supporters; attempting at the end of the Apocalypse to destroy Israel; appeases God's wrath when Jesus comes back to slay them all. That is partly why Jesus views that particular or special "Day of the Lord", and in this sense it is one twenty-four hour day, as also being "One of the Days of the Son of Man" of Luke 17:22. His resurrected disciples, along with us, will be viewing the spectacle. Jesus' disciples will see that one with resurrected eyes! As Jesus slays Antichrist, Satan looking on no doubt, all are reminded of God the Father propitiating His wrath on the Son on the cross where Satan "bruised his Heel" (Genesis 3:15) at the same occasion. Soon, Satan must watch the Son of Man defeat and strike down his son (or why Moses was supposed to speak to the rock to get water for thirsty Israel in Numbers 20:8-11). Jesus will send the wicked survivors to the place of darkness and allows those

who repented **after the Rapture**; but without throwing their allegiance into the hands of Antichrist; to enter the Messianic Kingdom with all other believers from previous ages. The newly repented nation of Israel and the Sheep Gentiles enter the Millennial Age with deceased and mostly resurrected saints (Rapture folk '*translated*') from the previous 6000 years. Interestingly, they therefore enter the MMK in carnal bodies.

(48) I Thessalonians 2:12, is not explicitly a 'Rapture' verse but it echoes the 'Last Trump' and the Rapture in the sense we are 'called up' into Heaven for a period. But the primary application is an exhortation to walk worthily to be in His "kingdom and glory". However, when specifically referring to Jesus the Nazarene who will sit on David's throne or as the Son of Man regaining control of the Biosphere as per Psalm 8:4, "His Kingdom", i.e., Christ the Messiah-king of Israel surely means the Messianic Millennial Kingdom or MMK as one has been abbreviating it. So that may be the first principle we have to bear in mind in these Thessalonian passages and that is to clearly distinguish between days that are the Father's and those which are the Son's. That does not take us into some sort of Arianism but it does recognise the Tri-Unity of three faces or persons (Genesis 18:2, Isaiah 48:12, 16) all holding the one eye (*passim* Numbers 14:14) and one mouth (*passim* Numbers 12:8) thus seeing and saying everything in Absolute Unison'. That is an absolute contrast with the Hindu trinity where the three chief gods even go to war with each other from time to time. *Ditto* with the pantheons of the Greeks, Romans, Maori, Pagans and many other nations that parallel the Hindu concept.

In contrast to "His Kingdom" where we are "in glory", at the moment we live (carnally) in the 'Mystery Stage' of God the Father's full Kingdom Programme. In particular, Colossians 1:27 gives us one aspect of this in the "Mystery" of "Christ in you the hope of glory". Yes, we have the indwelling Spirit of God, Christ in You, with the *erevon*-guarantee. In this church age or dispensation, the Son and the Father will come to even to "sup" with us (KJV, John 14:16, 17, 23, 26 and Revelation 3:20). But we only have the **future** hope of glory, currently our inheritance. The two are inextricably linked but not yet contemporaneous. We do not have that second aspect of the Colossians passage right now but we will one day. That may be why too many believers focus just on the 'Christ in you'. For example, at a recent church service one heard this verse partially quoted as "Christ in You". There was no reference to 'The Hope of Glory'. That preacher presumably would quote I Thessalonians 2:12 as "walk worthily to be in His Kingdom" and omit the words "and Glory". At that same service at the communion stage there was not any reference to showing forth the Lord's death "**till He comes**". There was a complete focus at that service on the here and now or the past. This is because these churches do not understand the Bible is primarily Doxological or about God's Glory. Therefore they almost completely subordinate the future aspects of His Plan (and Satan's too). We cannot be part of that glory until after the Rapture or Resurrection. However, that should not justify dropping that last phrase altogether.

A text taken out of a context becomes a pretext and that is dangerous because it takes people into other agendas. Removing such things from their proper context may be due to people's insistence the Bible is primarily soteriological. So they mainly focus on Man's perspective and His need for Salvation. That is good but it should not be at the exclusion or expense of the rest of the Word of God especially about the Glory of God and our future glory. But people today usually omit Biblical references to the Future and Glory of God. Mostly, these days, people think mainly of the 'here and now' on Earth and prospects for career and family etc., on Earth. One hears little in churches these days about seeking God's Kingdom (Matthew 6:31- 33, Luke 12:29-31) let alone discussion

about what that entails. Prophecy and History are set aside in favour of matters concerning the present and '*this-worldly affairs*'.

Readers also get confused by passages like I Thessalonians 2:12 because they do not have a clear understanding of the "Kingdom of God". The covenant theologians and replacement theology adherents add to the confusion. Most of them believe we are in the kingdom **now** rather than just being in one particular aspect of it. They misinterpret Luke 17:21, and that verse virtually alone, to justify that. In effect, we thus become like pioneers waiting for the rest of the world to join in. That's why we see so many churches walking hand in hand with the world exhorting everyone to seize the new science and technology and make the world a better place for mankind by being 'in Christ'. These theologians' problem lies in their failure to make the distinctions between the Church and Israel, the Rapture and Second Coming, soteriological versus physical salvation etc. Those three distinctions could be considered paradigms of the model here.

Furthermore, there is a general failure to understand crucial aspects of the Parables of the Sower and how they describe a special interim stage of God's Kingdom for now. In those parables, Jesus described how this "interim stage" or 'Mystery' stage of God's complete or overall Kingdom Plan would operate. It was "interim" and unforeseen in Old Testament prophecies because the world would have to await the decision presaged in Exodus 4:8 and tge "Voice of the First Sign". But this Mystery stage operates only until Jesus returns to take the Church off the Earth. Then the Apocalypse and Armageddon oblige Israel to repent at long last and appeal to God to re-offer the nation the full Messianic Kingdom Stage.

The 'Kingdom of God' goes through several stages. Dr Fruchtenbaum in *Footsteps of the Messiah* fully outlines this concept. One aspect is the Theocratic Kingdom of Israel stage between 1000 and 600 BC. However, the Church is in a stage characterized by all the Parables of the Sower. This paper adopts the view that Israel and the Church are separate dispensations while the Conscience era was the first dispensation - making three in total so far. Had Israel accepted Jesus in AD 30, the Parable of the Sower stage of the Kingdom presumably would not have come into operation unless it was to be somehow applied to the Messianic Kingdom stage and one can envisage cogent arguments to support that thesis but not here. As the gospels themselves explain, Jesus only began speaking in parables after the Israelite leaders fully adopted a plan to reject Jesus in AD 29-30 and effectively passed a point of no return as seems also to be the case at some late stage in the Apocalypse for die-hard unbelievers. According to Fruchtenbaum, the Parable of the Net in Matthew 13:47-50 actually refers to the separation of the "Just" (sheep) from the "Wicked" (goats) when Jesus returns at the Second Coming. That 'separation' occurs in the Seventy-five Day interval before the MMK actually begins. The Parable of the Net sweeping up all sorts of good and bad sea life ["The Sea" always representing the Gentile nations and never Israel ("The Land", *Eretz*, ארץ)] shows this type of in-gathering cannot possibly apply to the Rapture which is the rescue of the "Good" alone, i.e., church saints both Jewish and Gentile.

By integrating the parable of the Net with Eschatology, it makes even more sense to realise I Thessalonians 2:12 is a reference to being ready for the Rapture and that it is a call to the church saints not to unbelievers unless they too repent and join in with us. It seems very unlikely that as the Apocalypse rages any believer then is going to walk unworthily under those terrible and dire circumstances. Actually, what would be the point in doing so anyway? Presumably, every man will be out for himself under those

circumstances. Those days will be all about the struggle to merely survive. It is more likely Paul is addressing a believer living on the eve of The Rapture, and they thought they were, who may have slipped into some sort of less-than-worthy behaviour pattern in comparatively **normal** times. It's true for any believer, whenever that day suddenly should occur. Thus it is an exhortation to every generation of the Church to be ready for The Rapture hence to avoid the Apocalypse. It may even be a sort of warning to someone who in effect is one of those 'foolish virgins' without oil in the lamp (or without 'spirit'). One should not be dogmatic on such points but ensure they are incorporated in one's theology on the matter of the Rapture and indeed on what a church saint really is.

(49) I Thessalonians 2:19; In this passage, we know from the previous verse that Satan was hindering Paul from making another trip to northern Greece to meet with this congregation he had been helping. Nevertheless, Paul can commiserate by saying "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus *the* Christ at His coming?" Thus despite troubles, Paul can rejoice in this hope about something good in the future described as Jesus' "coming" (*parousia*, Strong 3952). Meanwhile, the very fact of these Thessalonian believers *prospering* in their faith and the outworking of it is Paul's joy and hope etc. Paul did not qualify this 'coming' (*parousia*) as he did in I Thessalonians 3:13 when he wrote that the "coming" is "with all His saints" (or 'myriads of Himself', or "mighty angels" c.f., paragraphs 51 and 56 respectively). The reference to "hope and joy" is also generic. It could apply to the Rapture, Second Coming or even to life today.

However, the additional reference to a "crown" suggests Paul is reminding us to be ready for The Rapture and ready to enter Heaven to receive one's awards and crowns which he discussed elsewhere in his epistles. This 'crown' apparently is for 'evangelism (*Footsteps of the Messiah*, page 158) according to Dr Fruchtenbaum". He says this refers to the "Crown of Rejoicing" some believers will receive at Jesus' evaluation-judgement seat when we are in His presence in Heaven and before we come back to Earth to rule with Jesus in the MMK. Actually, that is all Dr Fruchtenbaum says about this passage in connection with eschatological issues. From these perspectives, the "coming" can only refer to the Rapture. Implicitly, the passage reminds us that one of The Rapture's key purposes is to award us with our crowns while *hell* troubles people down here on Earth and we return to be rewarded, based on our awards and crowns, with important roles in the MMK. However, some believers, even disciples, will not receive any awards hence no rewards in the MMK either. Nevertheless, life then will be most rewarding.

The clause, "in the **presence** of our Lord Jesus *the* Christ at His Coming" contrasts 'presence' with 'coming'. This is the KJV translation but the Interlinear uses 'before' and Strong #1715, *emprosthen* suggests 'in sight of'. Readers might think this means at the Rapture or the Second Coming or for some that would be the same thing anyway and there is no 'either-or'. If this means we are "in His Presence" at the **Second** Coming that is only possible if the Church is earlier raptured into Heaven and off Earth so that we can then be with Jesus as He comes back to rescue Israel. In that case, there has got to be a Rapture to facilitate that. Of course we would also need a resurrected body to go into Heaven then come back to Earth. Such points are usually overlooked mainly because, as one suspects, most people do not really believe these texts or like Mr Tolkein they think they are merely allegorical.

Thus, in that sense if this **is** a reference to the "Second Coming", that's only because the

earlier Rapture is implied. In both events, we are in His presence. When having another go at re-writing this section, the problem of the use of *parousia* again surfaced. Here we have both *emprosthen* and *parousia* in one clause. Elsewhere in this paper, the suggestion is put that the English 'appear' is a better word to use to understand *parousia*. To suggest *parousia* is used exclusively of Jesus coming at the Rapture, which Thessalonians does seem to imply, breaks down when we see that Matthew used it for both the Second Coming and Rapture sections of his Olivet account. Furthermore, Mark and Luke did not use *parousia* at all in their parallel segments of the same things Matthew wrote about as one can see in any parallel reading of the three synoptic gospels. It is also used of the Antichrist in II Thessalonians 2:9. In Philippians 1:26, Paul used *parousia* to tell his readers he was coming to see them. In II Corinthians 7:6 & 7 Paul used *parousia* twice in two sentences referring to Titus coming to see them. Even Stephanos, Fortunatus and Achaicus coming (*parousia*) with supplies others had neglected to get to Paul in I Corinthians 16:17. It would seem here that Paul was waiting for someone else to bring him 'supplies' but this trio turned up unexpectedly. Generally, the New Testament scribes seem to use *parousia* in the sense of unexpected appearances. One way to square the circle here is to stand back and think about something that appears, for example on an horizon. Two things can then happen. Either the viewer moves toward the '*aparition*' (or what has actually appeared some distance away) or the '*apparition* moves toward the viewer. Thus, at the Rapture, Jesus appears in the heavens above us (the "sky"). At the Second Coming, amidst the gloom and darkness appears the Shecinah Glory of the Lord but instead of the observers going up to meet Him, He comes to ground to 'meet' them and then the blood begins to flow, even staining the Lord's garments (Isaiah 63:2-3). One can see why, then, Matthew applied *parousia* to both the Second Coming then to the Rapture. Mark and Luke avoided any confusion by resorting to other grammatical devices (probably from their Hebrew background) and by using the Greek *erchomai* instead (Refer Sections (6 & 7).

Paul's point here cannot mean we are in some way "with the Lord" yet at the same time be 'separated' from Him while being somehow miraculously cocooned from the Apocalypse while remaining here on Earth. The Rapture and Second Coming are both about physical salvation from wrath of any sort be it from God or Antichrist-666. Colossians' statement that 'Christ is in us' (or even "within" from Luke 17:21 wrongly applied), and 'the hope of Glory', is about a soteriological and spiritual or immaterial union and in that sense a "presence". We are not **yet** in that promised physical state of salvation - in glory.

It's far more sensible to suggest we **Firstly** must be taken into Heaven for the evaluation-judgement of Church saints. That's where many, if not all, will receive this specific "crown of rejoicing" and, or, others on offer then. Then the Church enters into the Marriage of (or with) the Lamb. This in order **Lastly** to be with Jesus as He returns to Earth to rescue Israel. Our evaluation and wedding in Heaven are inexorably linked together so we cannot be 'down here'. We must be 'up there' with God or in God's own Universe. If the scientists at C.E.R.N are correct about part of their Quantum Theory of alternative universes, or at the very least one, then there's little mystery about that.

After the functions relating to the Rapture are fully completed in Heaven, then we are returned to Earth with the Lord (obviously still "**in His presence**") as He comes to save Israel from Antichrist-666. Some might then link this passage with I Thessalonians 3:13 about Jesus coming "with all His saints". However, we also note that 'saints' there may be better translated "myriads" as we discuss in Section (51) or even "mighty angels" as

Paul also wrote in II Thessalonians 1:7 [Section (56)]. Here in I Thessalonians 2:19, Paul is writing about the great hope we have at the prospect of the Lord's Rapture-Coming in "the air" as he is about to say in I Thessalonians 4:13-17. The 'coming in the air' is to take us away and save us from the 'Evil One' and the 'Apocalypse'. Just as those Thessalonians were expectantly awaiting the Rapture, quite possibly because of the dire circumstances they were in at the time, likewise us. For now, we can put up with all the persecution or even frightening prospects for this fallen world because we are soon going to be in a far better place. Praise God.

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(50) I Thessalonians 3:3-4, There is no direct reference here to Jesus returning or taking away the Church but the passage does give us an insight into why confusion arises with the use of the word 'tribulation' (*thlibo*, Strong 2346). In the KJV, "*thlibo*" is used in verse 3 for "afflictions" that we currently suffer. But "*thlibo*" is next translated by the KJV in verse 4 as "tribulation" for afflictions to be suffered in future. As the *Passion Translation* puts it, "We forewarned you suffering and persecutions is coming". The real point is that by becoming believers in Jesus these Thessalonians, or anyone else, are going to find others persecute them. This is common sense and what exactly happens.

Many people think Paul's reference in verse 4 is about the forthcoming Apocalypse possibly because of this unfortunate use of "tribulation" in verse 4 of the King James Version of the Bible. As far as anyone knows, John's *Apocalypse-Revelation* had neither been witnessed by John nor written down and communicated to Paul by the time he was composing this epistle. As already stated, this paper has been using the term "Apocalypse" for the seven years of what some people say is 'The Tribulation' for the world and Israel in the last seven of the seventy-years of Daniel 9:27 ('Daniel's Seventieth week'). Others use terms like "Armageddon". However, Dr Fruchtenbaum shows in *Footsteps of the Messiah* that "Armageddon" is actually a military campaign in which serious planning and preparation begins approximately mid-way through the Seven-year Apocalypse. The "Campaign of Armageddon" (*ibid*, Fruchtenbaum) begins as Antichrist's army gathers on the plains of Israel in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali opposite the Hill and 'mountain' pass of Megiddo. That's where a small gorge or pass (through what people in the Himalayas would describe as 'hills') allows for the smooth transportation of armies to 'pass-' or travel-through to Jerusalem further south. The army gathered on the plains around Nazareth begins moving towards Jerusalem presumably only in the last months of the *Apocalypse*.

As noted in the *Introduction* for this paper, in Addendum (Biii) we review some of the reasons for confusion about 'Apocalypse', 'Tribulation', 'Armageddon' or even 'persecution' and 'tribulations'.

(51) I Thessalonians 3:13, is the perplexing passage we referred to in the discussions in the introductory comments on "The Texts", in I Corinthians 1:6-8 and in I Thessalonians 2:19. In full, I Thessalonians 3:13 says, "To the end He may stablish your hearts **unblameable** in holiness before God, even our Father, at **the coming (*parousia*) of our Lord Jesus the Christ** with all His saints" (KJV). Or, in *The Passion Translation*, by Dr Brian Simmons, the second part reads, "at the coming of the Lord of us, Jesus *the Christ*, with all the holy myriads **of Himself**". The two big issues here are the use of "*parousia*" which many believe identifies the Rapture, and the identity of these 'saints' or myriads'. However, as is discussed elsewhere in this paper, "*parousia*" does not

exclusively apply to either the Rapture or the Second Coming. Matthew's gospel uses "*parousia*" in both the Second Coming then Rapture sections of his account of the Olivet Discourse. Mark and Luke do not use "*parousia*" at all in their eschatological passages (Mark 13:1-37, Luke 17:22-37 and 21:5-36).

The focus therefore should centre on the term "with all his saints". From God's perspective, all saints from Adam to the last Millennial saint are saved by their faith in the atonement. Between AD 30 and the Rapture, saints are also part of Jesus' *kohel* or 'church' (Matthew 16:18) which is exclusive of all the other saints before AD 30 or after the Rapture according to the analysis in this paper (or model). For any translation to use 'saint' here is misleading because it implies Church saints being with Him at this point which is a coming or appearance (i.e., *parousia*) of some sort or other to meet church saints whom the Lord (verse 12) is "establishing hearts unblameable in holiness before God". It is a tautology to say in this verse Jesus comes with church saints, or any saints for that matter, somehow in Heaven to meet church saints on Earth. Nevertheless, we are dealing here with an 'appearance' or someone or something becoming apparent, probably a word deriving from the Greek '*parousia*' in the English language. Church saints do return to Earth at the Second Coming with Jesus as He rescues Israel from Antichrist. We escape most if not all of the Apocalypse-Tribulation by being taken to Heaven beforehand.

Dr Simmons claims to have carefully reviewed the Greek and Aramaic texts handed down to us before arriving at this 'myriads' version of the text [refer (I) A Note on Methodology]. When one looks at the relevant Greek words, "*meta pas hagios*" (or 3326, 3956 and 40 in Strong's Concordance), one might even read "with (or in) all His purity (sacredness)". It may be that sort of idea led Dr Simmons toward reading this as something about Jesus of Himself (*myriads*) rather than being a reference to others such as resurrected non-carnal Church saints newly wedded to the Saviour. Thus Simmons seems to be arguing the genitive ('of') rather than the ablative ('with') is intended. That might suggest from context that Paul is exhorting us to "abound in love one toward another" (verse 12) "to the end that he may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God"; just as Jesus will be pure or sacred as He always is but especially as He returns to bring us back to His Father's home for marriage. (Refer comment in Key verses on this verse). Or any sacred beings residing with Him in Heaven may accompany Jesus at the Rapture.

As noted in the summary section of these passages referring to the Lord's coming or appearance [refer Addendum (Ai), Lexicon (Abridged)] we note in the Interlinear Bible and in its "Literal Translation of the Bible in the narrow column on the side" it reads "coming". Then in what the Interlinear describes as its "straightforward translation that makes it easy to see the proper word order in English", the reading is, "in the presence of the (*Lord*)". So if Paul is effectively writing to saints both then and now how can we make sense of, "To the end He may establish your hearts unblameable in Holiness before God .. in the presence of the Lord Jesus *the* Christ with all His saints", what does "with all His saints" then mean? We anyway are His saints. Is the verse saying that when we are in His presence we are with other saints as well? If so, who are they? Or which saints are they? Of course no one can ever become a saint unless one believed God and what He did to save us by Grace and with Mercy and Love etc.

The Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches have a very peculiar theology of saints and what or who they are. Many Protestant Churches echo some of those older catholic and orthodox traditions. So that muddies the waters a lot when we come to consider what

saints are. A saint is a believer in God and not some special person like a deceased pope or kaiser. So perhaps that's why Dr Simmons preferred to use ""holy myriads of himself" to in effect contrast Jesus' absolute blamelessness before God with our blamelessness **inherited or imputed** in Jesus as the Lord comes to take us away with Him and away from the Apocalypse. In the Rapture, living saints, perhaps the few still on Earth, are united with all the deceased Church saints as well. As we uplift Heavenwards to meet Himself in all His myriads or with other sacred heavenly beings we will be united, or re-united as the case may be, with the resurrected deceased saints from AD 30 onwards as Apostle Paul noted in I Corinthians 15:52 and I Thessalonians 4:16.

The exhortations in I Thessalonians 3:13ff, 2:19 and I Corinthians 1:6-8 imply being ready and blameless and may suggest we should be preparing for The Rapture *no matter what*. At a casual glance it is easy to see how one might understand the reference in I Thessalonians 3:13 "with all his saints" implies our return to Earth at The Second Coming. However, Paul's two epistles to the Thessalonians concentrate on the Rapture with a brief foray into issues relating to the "Day of the Lord" in I Thessalonians 5:1-3. Although Paul merely notes that; in the context of the Rapture; one needs not bother much with the times, signs, seasons etc., of the Second Coming already well traversed by the Lord in His Olivet Discourse. Those details were already circulating in copies of the gospels or perhaps in Matthew's and Mark's at least. Furthermore, the Old Testament has plenty to say on "The Day of the Lord". *Thessalonians* is all about the Rapture and why and how we should be preparing for it.

Assuming Dr Simmons' "holy myriads of Himself" is a better reading, or something like that, and the passage refers to something other than glorified saints returning with Jesus in that phrase then the Rapture is in view because it is a device to bring church saints to Heaven rather than to bring one group of saints in Heaven to meet another group of church saints on Earth. That certainly simplifies things a lot if we adopt that view. A good principle is to do just that, keep it simple. If Dr Simmons translation is actually better, one can suggest the verse is all about Jesus coming in all His Blessed Glory but not to rescue Israel from Antichrist at this time and come here to stay and rule Earth. He does this to fetch us temporarily into Heaven. So His 'glory' and any beings or 'myriads' accompanying Him may refer to angels or other *heavenly* beings. When we consider what the Rapture actually involves, and it is a massive operation, it would not be at all surprising if all sorts of heavenly beings will come with Jesus to assist in the collection of living and dead (or deceased) saints in the Rapture.

In the Rapture, we will be uplifted to see Him and be with Him in Glory temporarily in Heaven until we return with Him to Earth for the MMK. In a very stark and dark contrast, the Second Coming means having to return to deal with vengeance on the wicked forces attempting to destroy Israel. The world by then, some newly repented individuals excepted ('Tribulation saints'), will be far away from 'increasing and abounding in love toward one another' (I Thessalonians 3:12). Thus, it is hard to see how this coming in I Thessalonians 3:13 could in any way refer to the Second Coming from that sort of perspective. This is not about Church saints returning with Jesus to Earth at the Second Coming but about readiness and blamelessness of Church saints at the Rapture whenever it does occur unless, of course, via our 'Null Hypothesis' (putting on one's scientific cap) it has already taken place which *ipso facto* means we must be Tribulation not 'church' saints. That would make little sense if the Laodicean church of *Revelation* has to be fulfilled.

Even if one were to assume “parousia” here refers to the Second Coming with “church saints” in tow then the Rapture must have previously occurred anyway. Otherwise, how could any saints be with Him unless they had somehow come to be with Jesus by the time He returns to Earth to rule in the Millennium. That again supports the concept of a Rapture **of Church saints** before the Second Coming - the point made in Section (49) about I Thessalonians 2:19 (fourth paragraph) concerning us always being in His presence at the Rapture onwards and forever. Either way, there must be a “Rapture” as described here. If we can be certain the “coming” in I Thessalonians 3:13 is ‘with His saints’ as the verse is most commonly translated, and it is not better translated ‘myriads of Himself’ rather than “saints”, then at best it can only make sense if it points to the text being a Second Coming passage.

Surely we must let the principle stand that letters to the Church are primarily to prepare us for the Rapture and not to endure the Apocalypse at the end of the Age. The Greek text here must surely be translated in accordance with a Rapture perspective rather than a Second Coming perspective at a time of catastrophe and cataclysm. But if one’s overall personal system of theology is faulty or not systematic enough then one might conceive this to be a Second Coming passage and that the Rapture is more or less the same thing with little real distinction between them. A failure to systematically explain scriptures with reference to pre-Israel generations, the world in the time of Israel and then the Church Age - our three dispensations - leads to an equation that the Church has become Israel. From that perspective, there need not be any distinction at all between the Rapture and the Second Coming. That is indeed the position many people adopt.

Nevertheless, this particular debate or discussion concerning I Thessalonians 3:13 reminds us to address what “**all** His saints” actually means. It cannot mean all saints of all times. Many of the saints *of all time*, for example all the Old Testament saints, are not resurrected **until** the Second Coming brings Jesus to Earth. Who then are Jesus’ “saints”? The emphasis here therefore must focus on the word “His”. Obviously, therefore, they are Jesus’ *own personal church saints*. They are the specific “Bride of Christ” in contrast with Israel who was the Wife of God albeit currently divorced but soon to be forgiven and reunited in marriage. Thus, Dr Fruchtenbaum and others say the Old Testament Saints, Tribulation Saints and indeed newly saved Israel are ‘wedding guests’ and ‘friends of the Bride and Bridegroom’ at the feast that follows the wedding in Heaven. However, the wedding feast; which may also celebrate God’s remarriage with Israel; takes place on Earth in the presumably newly restored *Terra Firma*. For ‘Church’ saints are the only saints that specifically and peculiarly belong to Jesus. Every saint of all time is saved by Jesus as Jesus or as the “Promised Deliverer of Genesis 3:15 and that is Jesus of Nazareth as the disciples were commissioned to tell the world which they did!

As Ephesians 1:18 and I Thessalonians 1:12 imply we are His inheritance and even part of His Glory much like Israel is God’s. Thus Church saints are the only ones in the Bible who spend an albeit brief sojourn in Heaven for the already stated purposes. Nevertheless, every other non-Church saint is essentially “**His**” (i.e., Jesus’) by virtue that only through Jesus’ self-sacrifice is any saint saved. But only ‘Church’ saints will be His ‘Bride’, not a status other saints will share. Jewish saints are the “Wife of Jehovah”. Only Church saints can return to Earth from Heaven with Jesus. *A Priore*, they must somehow be transported there in order to return. And those are the people; in the future from *Revelation’s* perspective; that John talks to when in *Revelation* he has that discussion with a resurrected saint in Revelation 19:9-10.

We belong to Jesus while Israel not only belongs to God the Father but was in fact 'married' to God (c.f., Hosea 2:2, 7, 16, 19, 20 and Jeremiah 3:8). Currently, Israel is formerly married but now temporarily divorced from God whereas the Church currently and temporarily is engaged or betrothed (with the *erevon-arrabown* engagement ring of Ephesians 1:14, II Corinthians 1:22 and 5:5) and is getting ready to be married to Christ. The final wedding preparations will be conducted in Heaven. That is one of the main reasons for The Rapture in order to have the Marriage of the Lamb in Heaven before returning to Earth for the wedding feast (or *breakfast* where Jesus breaks His fast as expressed in Luke 22:18). That 'feast-breakfast' ushers in the MMK. One should add here that *Strong* links the Greek *hagios* to the Hebrew "חג" or *chag* which usually refers to the Seven Feasts (or fasts, *Yom Kippur*, 'Day of Atonement'). Since the late sixth or early fifth century BC (*Purim*, Book of Esther) and the Second Century BC (*Channukah*), two more have been added. But the original seven are all about what there is to look forward to when God's Kingdom finally and fully arrives on Earth. Many activities therein are symbolic of the purity and sacredness of God's *residence* (in Heaven, or 'Third Heaven' (II Corinthians 12:2-4)). Really, to understand the Greek *hagios* one needs to look at the true history behind Israel not the fairy tale produced by the intellectual institutions (universities *et al*) which form Man's wisdom which is foolishness to God.

Summarizing this passage, if I Thessalonians 3:13 applies to Jesus' coming with his saints it has to be about the Second Coming; The Rapture having previously occurred by implication. If the passage refers to "Jesus' myriads"; and if they are 'angels' or some other heavenly beings or phenomenon; then this passage can only refer to the Rapture as Jesus approaches Earth aided by His heavenly non-human host. Thirdly, if the passage is read "with (or in) all His purity (sacredness)" and is not about Him coming or returning "with His saints", once again it refers to the Rapture. The translators' use of "saints" for the English is quite misleading or at best a narrow interpretation of the Greek *hagios*. In ancient Israel: apart from those attending for the ride, the food and the socialising; the Jewish festivals (*chag*) were for saints looking forward to glorification. Elements of those feasts represented Heavenly activities. They also had deep prophetic implications. *Hagios* coming from the Hebrew *chag* has a much wider range of interpretations than 'saint' although that is one quite acceptable translation. In this passage, however, it almost certainly refers to **sacred** heavenly beings.

(52) I Thessalonians 4:13-17. If the previous passage (I Thessalonians 3:13) is hard to analyse or interpret, this unambiguous text comes just twelve verses later and confirms the "*parousia*" of I Thessalonians 3:13 is an **appearance** rather than a **coming** of the Holy Son of God with an holy and sacred entourage to retrieve church saints from Earth to bring them to Heaven. It is the fourth major or significant statement on the Rapture in the New Testament after Luke 17:22-37, Matthew 24:36-42 and I Corinthians 15:51-4. In this chapter, Paul continued his theme of living a sober life and loving one another (verse 9) in a world where we are being vilified, persecuted and ostracized (refer also to Titus 2:11-15). Suddenly, Paul turned in verses 13-17 to the Resurrection of Jesus and the manner of His *return*. One writes 'return' in italics to point out that these verses presumably apply to the Rapture and not the Second Coming. These verses are so specific one cannot even suggest the word 'return' is generic or is some sort of *Double Entendre* to apply to both the Rapture and the Second Coming. Quite simply, this is a passage about the Rapture. Even on a radio programme one listened to (15 May 2021), this passage was quoted by a well known radio interviewer who is a very widely read individual with a prodigious appetite for information. The interviewer was talking to a

“former” ‘evangelical’ who had renounced his beliefs.

The clear implication is that Jesus is returning to gather up all the dead saints and those of us alive. He will remove us from *terra firma* by taking us on a trip through the air (the first heaven) then into Space (the second heaven) and into the ‘Third Heaven’ (II Corinthians 12:2-4). This is Paul’s second unequivocal description of the Rapture with its “Last Trump”. In his description in I Corinthians 15:51, Paul revealed what he knew here is a special “Mystery” which it was his responsibility from the Lord to pass on to us. Here Paul added some extra detail to the points Jesus Himself originally raised. Jesus had to prepare His disciples for the Church Age which they would manage through its first few decades. As Apostles, they in turn left instructions for later Church generations on rules for daily living and other matters of behaviour. Jesus knew that Israel and the Church would have to be physically ‘rescued’ from the terrible events of the ‘**Last Days**’ in two separate and different events on two different ‘days’ due to the contrasting soteriological state of the two congregations (*kohelim*) - Israel and the Church of *the* Christ. This harks back to the paradigm explained in "Key Assumptions and Critical Texts" above in item (B).

Matthew 24:36-41 and Mark 13:32-37 record Jesus specifically differentiating the day that “only the Father knows” from the last seven year period still determined on Israel from Daniel 9:27 and other prophecies which is “The Day of the Lord”, the “Day of Jacob’s Trouble”, the “Day of Wrath” etc. It’s a period of seven years effectively ended by another “Day of the Son of Man” (Luke 17:22) but the one His disciples will see not the one they will not see (also Luke 17:22). As already stated, where this paper differs from the mainstream, is by considering Luke 17:22-37 to be Jesus’ first detailed reference to The Rapture and those verses are only about the Rapture. The metaphors peppering the various gospel eschatological texts can be spun in one of two directions or interpreted for the two different events as one explains elsewhere in this paper. Again repeating, that if this unique interpretation is **incorrect** then many other points raised in this paper are also undermined. But this paper’s perspective on Luke 17:22-37 also has to be read in the context of two other enigmatic passages in Luke’s Gospel. Paul’s details about the Rapture help make further sense of Jesus’ enigmatic statements in Luke 12:40 “(the Son of Man cometh at an hour ye think not)” and Luke 18:8 written in the subjunctive (“When the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the Earth?”). The points in Luke 12:40 and 18:8 definitely point to a sudden and unexpected event like the Rapture which apparently from Luke 17:22 is “One of the Days of the Son of Man” that His disciples “would not see” implying that all the other such days they ‘**would see**’ [refer Addendum (F)]. We might be the generation that does see this ‘Son of Man Day’ that Peter, James, John *et al* would not see but being asleep in Christ will be an intrinsic participant therein. It is more than likely Paul understood these things better than anyone else in his generation of the Church because of the ‘mystery’ spiritually revealed to him. That is not a matter of purely intellectually understanding although his ‘mind’ was in it.

(53) I Thessalonians 5:1-3 We now arrive at “ the brief foray into issues relating to the “Day of the Lord” mentioned in Section (51). The immediate context for these three verses is I Thessalonians 4:3-12 where Paul explains to these new believers how the sanctified person should behave until the event of I Thessalonians 4:13-17 about the Rapture and that we should comfort (verse 18) one another with the Hope (Titus 2:13) of the Rapture. Most of the Thessalonian readers would have been Gentiles, many of them Macedonians or descendants of Sidonians who had migrated to North Greece or the Southern Balkans in the 8th to 6th centuries BC as part of the so-called ‘Ionian-Dorian’

invasions wrongly calibrated to the 13th Century BC by the false chronology for Near-East and Middle-East studies. By Paul's time, most of them would have been unfamiliar with God's ways (I Thessalonians 4:4-5) but they would have some understanding of their history especially as it related to ancient Israel's very considerable dealings with Sidon, especially with Tyre, and Gebal-Byblos.

In I Corinthians 15:51-4, and now in this letter in the last few verses of chapter 4 Paul wrote about the Rapture. Due to its imminence, even in those days, the Thessalonian believers needed to behave in the way outlined in I Thessalonians 4: 3-12 and 5:4-28 and everything outlined in other epistles as well. That advice was especially important because in I Thessalonians 4:13-18 Paul supplemented information given in the first Corinthian letter about that 'Rapture' as we now label such statements.

However, here in the fifth chapter, in verses 1-3, Paul effectively and briefly deviated from this predominant theme of the Rapture in this first epistle to the Thessalonians, and how to live for it, comforting one another with its hope. Briefly, in the first three verses of chapter five, Paul introduced this deviation to distinguish between the Rapture and the Second Coming and to make it clear that we are not to be worried about the latter's "times and seasons". Anyway, there is plenty of information about all of that elsewhere in the Bible. In this epistle, perhaps more than any other, the Rapture is the main focus. Even so, many of us are called to be familiar with the Second Coming's times and seasons. That is so we can warn others and perhaps even prepare some people who will come to repentance and belief after we are gone in the Rapture. The Second Coming characterised by the term 'Day of the Lord' primarily concerns Israel, secondarily Tribulation saints, but not the Church which is earlier raptured though how much earlier we cannot know until after the event. In contrast, from Luke 17:22-37, the "Rapture" is a "Day of the Son of Man", not a '*Day of the Lord*' in its proper Old Testament context. Certainly, Jesus is the lead actor or God's agent in the last day of 'The Day of the Lord' when He rescues Israel from Antichrist at Bozrah. The Old Testament had long provided information about the terrible 'Day of the Lord'. So really that is part of God's 'Day' or *Jehovah-Yahweh's* Day. Furthermore, the Old Testament shows that 'Day' can mean a single day, a longer period of time like an era or even both. That makes it important to interpret "The Day of the Lord" on the basis of context in the Old Testament and the suggested methodology in this paper's approach rather than primarily relying on Greek or literary, etymological and philological considerations.

Although we will look in the next two sections (54 & 55) at the chapter's remaining verses in more detail, Paul returned to the Rapture *theme* in the fifth chapter beginning at verse 4 ("it should not overtake you as a thief"). In verse 6, Paul said we should "watch" for it. In verse 8, those of us who are "of that *Rapture* day" should be sober, faithful, loving and hopeful. - hoping for that 'Rapture Day'. Paul also contrasts us against those who "sleep in the night" (I Thessalonians 5:7) i.e., the drunken unbelievers perhaps inebriated with evolutionism. Then comes the great promise of verse 9, "For God hath not appointed us to wrath" (of the Apocalypse implied). The good news of this Rapture is "comforting" to us (verse 11). We should actively comfort one another with this knowledge when it becomes clear we are in the Rapture's 'season' (i.e., "Days of Noah" and "Days of Lot"). Even though we are unable to know the day or the hour of the Rapture we can still comfort one another with its promise as all previous generations of the Church of *the* Christ have been able to. 'Knowing the day' of the Second Coming will eventually become possible for those awaiting it when they witness Israel and Antichrist-666 sign their 'covenant'. The Tribulation Saints, and Israel, after reading the Book of Daniel, and

knowing that 'covenant of death' has been confirmed, can even count the days down until Jesus arrives in the 'clouds' with 'crowds' (including the Church) to destroy Antichrist etc.

But the first three verses of the fifth chapter can only be a statement about the Second Coming ("The Day of the Lord"). Remember, this paper takes the view that Jesus' comments about the Rapture are described in two ways. Either as "One of the Days of the Son of Man" but one His disciples "would **not** see". Or, as in Matthew's and Mark's gospels, it is the "Day that only the Father Knows". Obviously, these are quite different days to those of the "Day of the Lord" and the Second Coming. When Paul referred to "that day" in I Thessalonians 5:4, he meant the day when the events of I Thessalonians 4:15-17 would occur. It is easy and natural to see how confusion occurs. Especially for non-Jews unfamiliar with Jewish narrative construction with respect to antecedents and idioms etc. Our schools fail to properly teach grammar etc., especially in respect to words like 'this' and 'that'. Thus trying to explain such things in their Biblical Hebrew context can be challenging. Thus readers tend to link "that day" of verse 4 with the "Day of the Lord". One does agree 'that' day (verse 2) nevertheless is another one of the "Days of the Son of Man" that Jesus presumably referred to in Luke 17:22 ("days" plural of the "Son of Man"). All of Jesus' disciples will see that one because we will all be with Him as resurrected saints in the cloud or crowd of onlookers that will watch Jesus defeat and destroy Antichrist's army besieging Israel at Bozrah-Petra. However, Jesus' own AD 30 disciples were not to "see" the Rapture because they would be dead and who would be among "them which are asleep" in I Thessalonians 4:13. But they would be **in it** and experience it or be involved in it without **physically** observing it with their carnal eyes. The physics of this is a matter beyond our ability to describe. The AD 30 disciples listening to that presumably will only hear that Last Trump although that will be quite an experience in itself.

The Second Coming, I Thessalonians 5:1-3, is a day everyone knows for it is the Last Day of the Apocalypse which in itself is a known seven-year period beginning with the treaty or covenant (signed or confirmed) with the Antichrist-666. The Second Coming is a day utterly incompatible with the points Jesus made in Luke 12:40 and 18:40. This paper is essentially exploring all the verses that refer to some sort of 'coming' or 'appearance' of the Lord in the New Testament although we have ignored those relating to the First Advent or 'Epiphany' (e.g., II Timothy 1:10). It is also concerned with important verses like I Thessalonians 5:9 on the subject of the 'wrath' and from that which we are 'delivered'. Everyone attempting to systematically analyse texts such as: "the Day of the Lord coming" in verse 2; the 'wrath of verse 9; and the "coming of our Lord Jesus" in verse 23; which we will cover in this section and in sections (54) and (55), seems to get tripped up on various matters. One hopes the model here does solve for all the variables in these complicated simultaneous equations if the reader can forgive me for using some jargon from his secondary education mathematics and first year maths at University.

To many readers, the words "Day of the Lord" (verse 2) appear to refer to the Second Coming. Contextually with the Old Testament, it is far more likely they refer to the seven-year Apocalypse or Daniel's Seventieth week' (Daniel 9:27). Fair enough, it has a first day and a last day but there is a lot going on in between. The first day of the Apocalypse might be one of 'celebration' as Antichrist resolves the age-old "Jewish Question" of landlessness and diaspora. Who knows, but that day may end with a sudden and unexpected intervention from one of God's angels in *Revelation*. Anyway, in most languages the word 'day' can mean twenty-four hours or under special circumstances it

can mean an age, era or any period longer than twenty-four hours. Furthermore from *Revelation*, the Apocalypse in its description as 'Day of the Lord' or 'Time of Jacob's Trouble' as in Jeremiah 30:7 covers a much longer period than a single day. It is something so terrible that no one will be able to "escape" (verse 3) which again suggests a period lasting longer than one twenty-four hour day. Indeed, verses 1-3 starkly contrast with the previous verses about something else ('The Rapture') also happening as if like a 'thief in the night' or even in a nano-second. The 'thief' metaphor or motif is **not** stated in I Thessalonians 4:3-18. However, it is implied in a Rapture context elsewhere (e.g., Matthew 24:43, Mark 13:36, Luke 12:40). In I Thessalonians 4:3-18, Paul had been answering questions about being 'asleep' in Christ and what would happen to believers still alive when the Church is reunited with Jesus. Apparently the Thessalonians hoped it would be quite soon. Paul's message was comforting. They had no need to panic over things. We cannot know for certain but many people may have become aware of the rising tensions between Rome and Israel and could see the writing on the wall for Jerusalem (AD 66-70). They knew about Jesus' prophecy about the temple's destruction. Even the Roman Government knew about that which is why it ordered there be no destruction to countermand or declare invalid Jesus' prophecy. That may explain why they were worried about last days prophecies, the judgement on Jerusalem, and whether they may have already been left behind by the Rapture.

The critical Greek words Paul used to "punctuate" these verses are the "*peri de*" in verse 1 [c.f., Matthew 24:36 (also "*de*" in verse 37) and Mark 13:32]. However, there is only the more basic conjunction "*de*" in I Thessalonians 5:4. On the Mount of Olives, in Matthew's and Mark's gospels, and after Jesus had finished what he had to say about events concerning Israel's future (AD 30 onwards) and the Second Coming, the "*peri de*" conjunction (probably or technically a disjunction) is where Jesus must have re-stated comments about the Rapture originally given in Luke 17:22-37 but in more summary fashion. That's according to the assumptions in this paper which are quite different to most others because they generally give less notice to the detail there. Thus, according to the assumptions herein, Luke 17:22-37 in effect gives us the most information about the Rapture found in the New Testament. If we want to learn more about those latter sections in the Lord's Olivet prophecies (Matthew 24:36ff and Mark 13:32ff) we need to turn to Luke 17:22-37.

This is an important point to stress. The "*peri de*" conjunction here in Thessalonians: like those in Matthew and Mark; or like the other times Paul's uses this 'disjunction' in other epistles (e.g., I Corinthians 7:1, 8:1, 12:1 or 16:1); requires us to very carefully analyse whatever follows as being something **different** to the thing or things preceding. There usually is a change in subject or a strong contrast between two different things when this grammatical technique is used. Really, it is more properly called a disjunction because it dis-joins two things since they are different in many respects although they may occur within a similar background situation. When Paul changes tack back to the comfort and instruction to the saints in verse 4 he simply uses *de* but leaves the *peri* inferred just as we have to infer English words into either Hebrew or Greek grammar to render proper sense in English. Clearly, in verse 4, Paul is again changing the subject in verses 1-3 of the fifth chapter then tacking back to his teaching in the first four chapters and continued through the latter part of the fifth chapter where there is a useful list of bullet points for the student to read on the way of the Christian life. Or, to put it another way, the first three verse of the fifth chapter are a parentheses ["() "].

Debates sometimes ensue when people are divided over the exact contrast being made.

For example, there may be a contrast between the Second Coming arriving on a known day whereas the Rapture is on an unknown day. Or there could be a view that in spite of the stark contrast between the Rapture and the Second Coming the metaphor 'thief in the night' could equally apply to both events [Refer Addendum (Eiii)]. Alternatively, the metaphor also could apply to the first of many apocalyptic catastrophes or to their sudden and unexpected occurrence. If chapter four and the rest of chapter five are exhortations to live the Christian life and giving us comfort by the hope that the Rapture keeps us out of God's future "wrath" *at the world* (I Thessalonians 5:9), then I Thessalonians 5:1-3 clearly refers to those **not** leading the Christian life which follows the Lord's dictum, "I am the Way, The Truth (אמת, or *Aleph* with *Tav* or *Alpha* with *Omega*) and the Life. Not just a way of life but one with Truth at its heart.

However, the first thing to consider in I Thessalonians 5:1-3 is exactly and precisely what is meant in verse 2 by the full phrase "that the Day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night". There are two elements. They are, firstly, 'The Day of the Lord' and secondly 'a thief in the night'. Almost certainly (c.f., Fruchtenbaum, *Footsteps of the Messiah*, page 174), the 'Day of the Lord' is a reference to the many passages in the Old Testament that refer to parallel days such as we read of in Deuteronomy 4:30, 32:35, Isaiah 34:8, 35:4, 61:2, the three days of Joel 2:2 (of darkness and gloominess, clouds and thick darkness), Amos 5:18, 20 and Obadiah verses 12-14. Or, Paul might be referring to particular 'days' that we read of in Zechariah 12:8 ("in that Day shall the Lord .."), Zechariah 12:9 ("it shall come to pass in that day") and Zechariah 12:11 ("in that Day shall there be great mourning in Jerusalem") or even one of those three days of Hosea 6:2, c.f., "After two days will he revive us: on the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight". Again we see how the word 'day' in many languages has a range of meanings for 'time' always depending on context.

Regarding 'the day of the Lord' in I Thessalonians 5:2, Paul also tells us it "comes as a thief in the night" [refer Addendum (Eiii)]. We note in this paper that metaphor could either apply to the Rapture such as the scenes depicted in Luke 17:34-6 and Matthew 24:40-2 or apply to the sudden appearance of the Shecinah Glory piercing with intense light the thick and dark clouds of gloominess enveloping the globe in the last days of the Apocalypse as the Campaign of Armageddon of Antichrist-666 comes to its denouement. So that does not bring us very much closer to a conclusion whether these words are about the Rapture or Second Coming. That particular 'thief' may even be the sudden confirmation or signing of a treaty that finally solves all the interminable Israel-Palestine crises we go through every now and again. It may refer to what hits Earth as the applause dies down when Antichrist completes the 'Treaty Ceremony'.

So, why use The "*peri de*" conjunction in I Thessalonians 5:1 to partition verses 1-3 from the previous chapter and the remainder of chapter five? Paul wanted to make a distinction about something very important or significant. He even suggests there is no need to write about the "times and the seasons" of this other thing, event or series of events which apparently do not refer to the previous words about the Rapture. In the *Introduction* one noted that the Book of Revelation is mostly written for those left behind after the Rapture. Nevertheless we still study it if only to warn unbelievers. One hears on TV and radio unbelievers talking about Apocalypse and Armageddon. In the churches, people never even use those terms. Likewise, Paul felt little or no need to write in this Thessalonian epistle about "the times and seasons" of the next item i.e., the "Day of the Lord" (verse 2) and that might explain the silence on these topics in churches today. Not that Paul would have anticipated that nor recommended we ignore or remain

silent on eschatological issues! Obviously Paul felt no need to reiterate the words of the Olivet Discourse and the Old Testament regarding 'The Day of the Lord' apart from contrasting it with the all important even for Church saints, i.e., The Rapture.

In this, one agrees with Dr Fruchtenbaum's view that Paul was indicating via the *peri de* conjunction that church believers will not need to worry about the Second Coming because (or "but" in verse 4) we are "of the light" (verse 5). We will not be much involved, if at all, in the Apocalypse let alone still be here on its last day which is of course a **known date**. That '*last day*' is at the last time the sun will rise at the end of Israel's last or 'seventh' year of the 'seven' remaining of the seventy-sevens of years of Daniel 9:24-27 (a.k.a., The Apocalypse). Furthermore, from this paper's reading of Luke 17:22-37, the Lord had already, especially for the Church's last generation, graciously said quite a lot about the '*season*' (Days of Noah and Lot) of the Rapture there. That passage in Luke is more than sufficient for our needs so Paul did not need to reiterate that either. Admittedly, Jesus remained enigmatic in metaphorical depictions of those literally true and historical "Days of Noah and Lot" and could afford to because the Spirit of God will guide believers on a *need to know basis*. Like most other commentators, Dr Fruchtenbaum does not consider this paper's plausible re-reading of Luke 17:22-37 though one firmly supports his view I Thessalonians 5:1-3 is a brief bit of advice to the readers that they should not be overly concerned about circumstances concerning the Second Coming.

Instead we should use information from texts elsewhere in the Bible about the Second Coming for Israel and use that to warn non-believers about the world's current hostility toward Israel especially among the media. We should exhort them to repent and thereby escape the Apocalypse. Since Israel's recent re-establishment in the *league of nations* (as a new fig tree) and since its stunning defeats of its enemies in 1948, 1967 and 1973, or even since Jerusalem has become such a terrible "cup of reeling" (Zechariah 12:2) to the other 'nations' (fig trees) in the world's 'league', believers cannot remain silent about Biblical prophecies of the Last Days. Instead people should be concerned about being eligible to be in God's Kingdom i.e., in its current Mystery Stage then for the Millennium and beyond.

As noted above, it was at Olivet, in answers to the disciples' questions, that the Lord anyway had already given very specific signs and seasons concerning the Second Coming. Paul did not need to repeat them here. But that does not mean we should not even be thinking about them as the churches effectively teach! In particular, we should remember Jesus' comment on the Mount of Olives about the "Abomination of Desolation" which is the sudden about-turn in Antichrist's treatment of Israel and its new temple midway through the Apocalypse. Again, that can be said to come like a *thief in the night*. Antichrist's about-turn will indeed come very suddenly although new post-Church Age believers studying their Bibles will be waiting for it. But Jesus' use of one of His 'thief-metaphors' in verse 2 clearly only applies in this instance to Israel during the Apocalypse. Obviously, for these Thessalonian members of the Church of Christ some of whom may have been Jews as well, Paul therefore had little or no need to further comment upon what had already been recorded in New Testament letters, texts and Gospels then in circulation and indeed in the entire Old Testament. The main point seems to be The Church will not be on Earth through the Apocalypse, or most of it, and Antichrist's about-turn against Israel has no impact on the Church. No need to worry about any of that.

As for the Rapture, it will be much like any other day or night when we go up. Again, it will happen just like a thief coming suddenly to steal in the night. Admittedly we shall be in the *Days of Noah and Lot* which will have their own peculiar 'abnormality' but those days, although bearing many problems such as the effects of global warming etc., will be relatively quiet and humdrum compared with each day or most days in the Apocalypse.

Verse 3 introduces that classic line, "When they shall say 'peace and safety' [refer Addendum (Avi)]; then sudden destruction comes upon them". But this will primarily concern people who are unbelievers at the time of the Rapture which is why they are left behind on Earth. Then the verse stresses, "they shall not escape" (I Thessalonians 5:3). The Church may witness the very beginning of this 'destruction' but be just as quickly evacuated once our task of explaining what had just happened is completed. But that's speculative for we have no idea which day the Rapture takes place. Those who remain on Earth are unable to 'escape' the Apocalypse, certainly not in the way the Church does, because the judgements the angels deliver during the Apocalypse will be world-wide, pervasive and invasive. Thus although "The Day of the Lord" (verse 2) refers to the many other descriptions such as The "Day of Jehovah's Wrath" and the "Time of Jacob's Trouble", unless one is ready and properly understanding the Bible's instruction about the Rapture one **will not escape** (verse 3). Those who do subsequently repent will have to struggle through to the Second Coming. The best way of escape is through the Rapture which appears, depending on its actual day or nano-second, to take us (Jesus' followers) away before any of these world-wide calamities begin. God's special witnesses (144 002) mentioned in *Revelation* are specially sealed but that is not the same as 'escape'

"The Day of the Lord" in verse 2 is quite different to the "day that only the Father knows" (or the Rapture Day) which is explicitly stated only in Matthew 24:36 and Mark 13:32. The Rapture, which we stress from Luke 17:22 is intrinsically also a "**Day of the Son of Man**" is when God sends Jesus to fetch His bride. The Father stays at home for that day of the 'Son of Man' who happens to also be the Son of God. Jesus never explicitly stated He is the Son of God, leaving that to others, although obliquely or enigmatically He did acknowledge that on a few occasions (c.f., Matthew 26:63-4, Luke 22:70, John 9:35-7, 10:36). Nevertheless, Jesus kept on talking about the Second Coming from His perspective implying it is one of the other 'Day(s) of the Son of Man', because there are several according to Luke 17:22. Matthew 16:27, Mark 8:38 and other texts suggest that on the occasion of the Second Coming, that instead of staying at home as He does at the Rapture, God somehow accompanies His Son to watch Him slay Antichrist with the Glory and myriads of Heaven also there on the Last Day of the Apocalypse. Within the Tri-Unity concept, we can discern the Son of Man at the Rapture coming with His own personal 'myriads' (Simmons *passim*), alone, but at the Second the 'myriads' of the full Tri-Unity are present and observing.

We must always be careful to read the Scriptures recognising there are Three Persons in the Tri-unity. The main point is that there is absolute unity in sight, speech and plan or objective. That's quite unlike the fake Hindu trinity where the three gods act and think independently of each other and sometimes fight one another along with all the lesser gods. A passage like this one in *Thessalonians*, needs careful and contextual reading with all other Biblical Scriptures thus taking care to see from whose perspective each statement is made. Thus, from God's perspective and from that of the Holy Spirit, the Apocalypse is a seven-year time of trouble for the descendants of Jacob, and the rest of the world. It's last day becomes the Great High Day of the period or season of 'The Great Day of the Lord' just as the various Mosaic feasts ("חג", *hag*), especially Passover and

Tabernacles-Sukkoth, that ran for several days always had just one High Day. In the Jewish wedding system, only the father knows the time when the son is sent to fetch his bride. In that sense the single 'Day of the Son of Man'; that the disciples would not see in Luke 17:22, one of several others they would see by implication; is when Jesus fetches His bride. It certainly is not a 'Day of the Lord (Jehovah)'. The Rapture is a 'Day of the Son of Man' and a 'Day that only the Father knows' specifically because God is acting as 'Father of the Groom' when that 'Trumpet' blasts out its call to initiate the Rapture. The day when God the Father sends His son to fetch His bride is quite different to the one where God is the Judge of wickedness on Earth in the "The Day of the Lord". It is the Father's (seven-year) 'Day' though it ends with a Glorious reunion and remarriage with Israel engineered via Israel's belated acceptance of God's only begotten son (John 3:16). The Rapture is Jesus' day. Only the Father currently knows when it comes or occurs; no one else. God the Father sends Jesus the Son out on His own to fetch the bride.

Thus Matthew 24:36, Mark 13:32 and Luke 17:22 are all references to the Rapture as being a day that only God knows. Everyone knows when the Day of the Lord comes. The quite different Seven-year 'Day of the Lord' ends when Christ slays Antichrist on the Last day of the Apocalypse. Jesus may well consider that last day of the Apocalypse is also one of the "Days of the Son of Man" in Luke 17:22 because He personally is God's agent in destroying Antichrist's armies. Unfortunately Jesus is never recorded listing all His "Days of the Son of Man". Perhaps it is left to us to work that out now that we are at last in the Last of the Last Days of Daniel 12:4&9, and do it by careful reading and study of the Scriptures! That 'Last Day' of the Apocalypse bringing the Second Coming is not the Rapture day but it is one the disciples will "see".

We reiterate there seems to several "Days of the Son of Man" [refer Addendum (F)]. The apparently several "Days of the Son of Man" of Luke 17:22 come at different times, or have already occurred e.g., at the Ascension perhaps. They are of varying length and occur at various times and places (e.g., Resurrection, Ascension, 'Rapture', 'Judgement Seat of Christ' or 'Marriage of the Lamb'). They are distinctly different to "The Day of the Lord" which is a period of seven years culminating with the very last day that is the "Second Coming". Thus, "The Day of the Lord" here in I Thessalonians 5:2 cannot apply under any circumstances to the Rapture or one of the "Days of the Son of Man". Nevertheless, one of the Days of the Son of Man may well be the rescue of Israel at the end of the Apocalypse, but only that day. Combined with the *peri de* conjunction it is clear that these three verses are placed here to contrast and compare with church saints ready, waiting, watching and witnessing, living in the light, not living in darkness. We are instead 'people of the day' who will not have to face the darkness of the Apocalypse. Whereas unbelievers or 'people of the night' will have to endure it.

Those dreadful 'days' of darkness of verse 3 refer to the Seven-year Apocalypse. It will be a time when sudden destruction will come out of the blue. Raptured saints will escape that also, as it were, 'out of the blue'. Perhaps seven years after the armies of Gog are destroyed, on the time-line we currently see emerging, Antichrist's (and Satan's) plan to bring peace and safety to the nations is rudely and suddenly interrupted like "**a thief coming in the night**" [verse 2, c.f., Addendum (Eiii)]. We should also note; especially when few people genuinely believe there will be an Antichrist-666; that Satan's son also could arrive on the world stage, or even be 'revealed', "like a thief in the night" whereas someone who is able to track him can monitor his movements until he strikes.

Looking at I Thessalonians 5:1-3 in the context with other eschatological texts in the Bible

we can infer from the first clause of verse 3 that people will be deceived into believing Antichrist has finally resolved all the world's problems including, probably, the dispute between Israel and all its neighbouring countries. For Israel's problems with its enemies, Antichrist perhaps dusts-off previously signed accords between Israel and some of her neighbours and 'confirms' them with his seal of approval and woe betide anyone who goes against him. Antichrist may dress up earlier attempts (*Oslo*) at establishing peace in the region in an unimpeachable Seven-year Covenant. That's quite typical of modern political arrangements. Antichrist's proposals for Israel ostensibly will be a transition to a full and complete peace treaty but he will attempt to destroy Israel anyway. That 'covenant' or treaty will be worth less than the piece of paper Ribbentrop the Nazi German signed with Molotov the Russian communist (in WWII). Suddenly, God will let loose His angels as the Apocalypse truly gets underway. A batch of possibly *extra-terrestrial* disasters transmitted via God's angels will suddenly strike like a thief in the night to '*officially*', from God's perspective, begin what the Bible seems to say is a seven-year Apocalypse (Daniel's Seventieth week). Thus the Lord striking like a thief in the night might also refer to the start of the Apocalypse.

The 'Day of the Lord' of verse 2 will conclude with the destruction of Antichrist's forces and the physical rescue of Israel which has at long last truly and soteriologically repented by then. Then Jesus comes back to ground zero on Earth in response to Israel's plea and to fulfill the angels' statement in Acts 1:11 but at a different location to His departure at the Ascension. The manner of Jesus' return to rescue Israel (not the Church already removed) with His own glorious light (*Shecinah*) amidst the terribly gloomy and dark circumstances enveloping the world will also seem to be one of Jesus coming like a "thief in the night". Of course, other things can come in that manner as well but one must go through the Bible and determine exactly what it will be that comes in such a manner. In or with His wonderful Shecinah-Glory, on the last day of the 'Day of the Lord', Jesus suddenly pierces the gloom of that great darkness spanning the entire globe, not one half of it as on a normal twenty-four hour night-day cycle. That glorious Light will suddenly alert the world that He is actually at that moment really coming back when nobody any longer expected it apart from the newly-faithful sheep Gentiles, or Jews who had come to belief earlier during the Apocalypse. The 'thief' in that event is Jesus Himself, the Shecinah Glory. The returning Shecinah Glory of the Lord will be as wondrous as the glowing house in Bethlehem in 7 BC or the Burning Bush incident Moses came across in Sinai that led to God's intriguing and enigmatic statements in Exodus 4:8. Today, the world pokes fun at those events but we take them literally and seriously.

(54) I Thessalonians 5:4-11, has Paul returning to or continuing with his discussion about the Rapture in I Thessalonians 4:13-18 by writing in I Thessalonians 5:4, "But (Greek, *de*) ye, brethren, are not in darkness". Instead of using the more emphatic *vav-disjunctive* (*peri de*) in verse 4, as is done to begin verses 1-3, the word 'but' here is more of simple 'conjunction' (*de*). Read as 'but', nevertheless it still disjoins, perhaps less emphatically than the *peri de* in verse 1, the point in verses 1-3 about the "times and seasons" for the Second Coming. For the Rapture, Jesus had already adequately dealt with its 'times and seasons' in Matthew 24:36-44 and Luke 17:22-37 but Mark 13:32-37 only records Jesus' simile of Himself as a man going away on a long journey then returning and that believers (implied) should always be ready for that return. For the Second Coming, its 'times and seasons' were detailed in the Olivet Discourses recorded in Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21 whereas the plethora of Old Testament prophecies about God re-exerting His kingdom on Earth gave no indication of 'times and seasons' leading up to that terrible era of wrath. The New Testament effectively gives sequence,

chronology and timing in History (**His Story**) to that 'terrible era'. The actual day of the Second Coming is known once it is clear who the Antichrist is, that he was the one to have confirmed the "covenant of death" as Isaiah put it and "that terrible era of wrath" has begun. The actual day of the Rapture cannot be known in any way at all.

If that 'de' is read as 'and', it could be like the Hebrew method of construction that we find in Genesis 23:1. There the author wrote, "and Sarah was an hundred and twenty years old". Indirectly, as it were, or implicitly, as we shall explain, that tells us Sarah died when Abraham returned from the sacrifice Abraham and Isaac made on mount Moriah recorded in Genesis 22:1-19. However, five intervening verses in Genesis 22:20-24 are about an entirely different subject [about Abraham's relatives in northern Syria (or Aram)]. That information bears no relationship with the matters in Genesis 22:1-19 and Genesis 23:1. In that way, an obvious subject change there told the ancient reader to connect the *vav* conjunctive in Genesis 23:1 with the event in Genesis 22:20-24.

An interesting point here is that we can therefore calculate Isaac was 37 years old then, the same age Jesus was at the sacrifice on the Cross suggesting Antichrist meets his fate at the same age (AD 2038?). *Ex post*, the age of Jesus at His sacrifice being 37, the same as Isaac, confirms we also can see how the disjunction works out.

Thus, in these verses in Thessalonians, written in Greek not Hebrew but constructed within an Hebrew mind-set, we can suggest Paul was again returning to yet another ancient Hebrew literary technique [referred to in the fourth paragraph in the Section (53) above] and this is the issue of the '**nearest antecedent**'. What the reader has to do, combining the conjunction 'de' with the antecedent 'that', is not to look not at the 'Day' of I Thessalonians 5:2 ('Day of the Lord') but the single 'day' or 'moment'; of I Thessalonians 4:13-17 in Section (52) above, i.e., The Rapture; and lasting perhaps a few seconds let alone a whole day. Thus, Paul introduced verses 1-3 of chapter 5 as a sort of interlude introduced by "*peri de*" between two sections of the letter, i.e., from I Thessalonians 4:13 through to I Thessalonians 5:23. Or, to put this another way, I Thessalonians 4:13 to I Thessalonians 5:23 is one long piece about the Rapture (and how we should behave in the meantime) interrupted, because of various earlier discussions Paul had with these Thessalonians, with a brief point that the 'signs of the times' of the Apocalypse and of the Second Coming are written elsewhere in the Bible and need not be discussed at that point of his letter. Nor should they need to unduly worry the Thessalonians because those days of distress are a long way further down the time-track than the AD 70 destruction of Jerusalem, the second time that had happened, the first being when Nebuchadnezzar levelled the region.

However, he is also implying that signs and times of the Apocalypse are primarily given to advise those people going through the Apocalypse so they can learn to understanding what's happening to them. Clearly, Church saints need not be bothered by that.

Although we are not **worried** about such things we do have a responsibility as the last generation to be the one that clearly has the mandate and understanding to **warn** the rest of the world about the implications of God's six thousand year plan for the Fall of Adam to do its work. We have to do this in **faith** because we cannot do this with **absolute certainty**. Nevertheless, we are not permitted to hide what we suspect to be true from the rest of the world. We must explain that God claims each one of us is responsible for the Fall and all the world's chaos. The impact of the Fall is only ended when Jesus comes to rule the Earth in the seventh millennium (or Day of Rest). That era will see

mankind under Christ's rule enjoy this earth much as Adam might have, had Adam obeyed. But everyone wanting to be in that glorious kingdom has to accept he or she is the Adam that Jesus had to die for on the Cross to win salvation for them from God's wrath be that His wrath against all sin or His Apocalyptic wrath outlined in the Old Testament and in the *Book of Revelation*. Having believed and repented, we don't walk on this earth like others in darkness. We live by seeking the Kingdom of God. We are not looking for material blessings but only what we need for daily life and work. Instead, God mostly gives us spiritual blessings. Whereas Old Testament Jewish saints under the Code of Moses received primarily physical blessings like abundant crops, their own properties for livelihood, and protection from enemies.

Jesus of necessity, as we have discussed elsewhere, described that 'season' of the Rapture somewhat enigmatically, or even in code, especially in the main passage on it in Luke 17:22-37. And the reason for that temporary darkness over certain Biblical texts, as Paul probably realised, is that the Church would and could not break the code and fully understand certain prophetic or eschatological passages until the Days of Daniel 12:4 & 9. Of course the enigma kept every church generation on its toes in a sort of kindly disciplinary measure. Things covered in that '*coding*' are: firstly about the Rapture (for the Church); secondly, about the Second Coming primarily for Israel but for 'sheep Gentiles' too; and thirdly, for many other matters, for example, perspectives taken in this paper of passages like Exodus 4:8, Daniel 12:4 & 9, Luke 17:22 or Revelation 19:10. Even more specifically, not until the "Days of Noah and Lot" would certain prophetic passages become more clearly understood. Although the Rapture will happen, no one is to know exactly the '**Day**' of its occurrence. Its 'season' probably would not be discernable until closer to its time during the Days of Noah and Lot.

Elsewhere in this paper we suggest the season of "The Days of Noah and Lot" are now discernable. Now that we do appear to be able to recognise them, this may be the very special circumstance alluded to above that exempts our particular generation from the restriction of **not being able to know** the "season". We can now understand those passages hitherto covered by the '*coding*' one refers to here. But only "God the Father" will know the **day** of the Rapture. It is that particular 'Day of the Son of Man' Jesus referred to only once in Luke 17:22, which also is the one day His disciples in AD 30 "would not see" and implying a later generation of disciples would indeed see it as living saints. Even though we may see it we will never know the Day of the Rapture (or the "Day of the Son of Man" Jesus' own personal disciples in AD 30 "would not see"). After the main record of the Olivet Discourse in Matthew 24 and Mark 13, Jesus called that 'Day of the Son of Man' that the disciples would not see "The Day that only the Father knows." **That equation might not be agreeable to many other commentators on these matters. Nevertheless, that is the position this paper takes.**

Edit to 19/1/23

This "conjunction" (*de*) in verse 4, points out that the Church of *the* Christ is separately excluded from the situation in verses 2-3 so the antecedent of 'that day' in I Thessalonians 5:4 is the Day of the Rapture in I Thessalonians 4:13-17. The Church has always known through Prophecy ("The More Sure Word", II Peter 1:19) this situation would arise. It is that situation when the world will have been deceived into believing that Antichrist (and probably his 'scientists') is the only one capable of solving world problems. It is the view of this commentator from his perspective on world history (***His Story***) that ever since Adam informed his descendants of the knowledge that was available to

creative humans, there has been an often acrimonious contest of ideas between those who ardently want to pursue that knowledge and those who would prefer to wait for and seek God's Kingdom. Hebrews 11:10 expresses that point in the words about "Abraham" who looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God". Jesus told us to "Seek first the Kingdom of God" (Matthew 6:31-33, Luke 12:29-31).

Unfortunately, too many people are going about seeking God in the wrong way which adds to the confusion. Indeed, when God seeks out mankind, many reject Him for other seemingly more apparent delights or delve instead into various religions or philosophies. Although Antichrist will have special powers of deception, the *intelligentCIA* has always held out this deceit that mankind can achieve anything he wants to do. It tries to convince mankind there is no God, therefore, it claims, there is no such 'kingdom plan' that we write of. Nevertheless, true and mature believers, ensuring the lambs or babes in Christ are properly fed and protected, will not be fooled by all the nonsense leading up to the full unveiling of the Antichrist-666. He probably will be quite well known to many close associates in advance of that unveiling. However, there may also be believers whom the Lord Himself notifies via His Holy Spirit, who also will know the identity of the Antichrist at a much earlier stage than most other people. Everyone will know who he is one day in the near future.

"But, ye brethren, are not in darkness" (verse 5). Instead, as in verse 6, we are "watching" and alert for the Rapture which comes during an apparently normal day that is no more nor less stressful than any other day (Matthew 24:38-41, Luke 17:26-28 and 34-36). The unbelievers in verse 7 are "inebriated, in darkness and asleep". The "but" (or 'and') in verse 4 means we are not in that sub-group. In verse 8, we have "the hope of *physical* salvation" from the apocalyptic nonsense of the "Day of the Lord" in verse 2.

According I Thessalonians 5:9, "**we are not appointed to the** *apocalyptic* **wrath**" of **I Thessalonians 5:2-3** because of our salvation in Jesus according to verse 9b. This refers to physical salvation because it is made clear throughout the rest of the New Testament we are soteriologically saved from the moment we believe. God's wrath against us for our imputed role in Adam's disobedience was propitiated at the Cross. Wrath at Man's sin incurred the day Adam disobeyed and its incurrence has remained every day ever since. In the context of I Thessalonians 5:2-3, Paul cannot be writing about soteriological wrath here because he is referring to catastrophic events suddenly descending on man **in future**. The only people who were aware this could occur knew about it from reading Biblical prophecies about it. If that included people who had missed out on the Rapture perhaps they begin a revival but after the Rapture, not before it!

Moreover, it seems from other verses, God may even be using the Apocalypse to avenge us for all the persecution and ostracism we have faced since we became followers of Jesus (as a five-year old in this observer's case). Whether we are alive and awake or in Christ and passed away (sleeping) according to verse 10 we will be with Jesus anyway. Thus, according to verse 11, reiterating or repeating the sentiment in I Thessalonians 4:18, we are again called on to comfort and edify one another in that I Thessalonians 5:1-3 has no relevance to us but only to Israel and Gentile unbelievers when Antichrist confirms a Covenant with Israel. Everyone else; if we happen to still be on Earth on the day the treaty is finally "confirmed"; will believe Antichrist can bring the world to peace and safety [refer Addendum (Avi)]. Of course, the arrangement or covenant between Israel and the Antichrist will instead bring on the seven-year Apocalypse. The subject changes tack again in verse 12ff to talk about general matters for the church and

concludes with a summary of things we should do in the meantime [see Section (55)].

(55) I Thessalonians 5:23, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and *I pray God* your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto **the coming of our Lord Jesus the Christ**". This is a call to be blameless until the coming of Jesus. Again, this cannot refer to the Second Coming. This is addressed to the true Church. With the exception of Jesus-believing 'Messianic Jews', like the rest of the disbelieving world, Israel is not in a position to be "blameless". Israel will not be "blameless" until the nation repents and Jesus arrives to save it from the armies of Antichrist. A call to be blameless on the day of the Rapture is an appeal or lesson for believers to meditate upon. It is sharply contrasted with the recklessness, drunkenness, darkness and insobriety that dominates the lives of unbelievers who are going to face the "wrath to come" (I Thessalonians 1:10) in God's final bid to drive them to repentance.

The more significant point is that only a day like the Rapture in the context and *timing* we have been describing so far can be implied by Jesus "coming" (*Parousia*) in this verse. Furthermore, within the context of the second epistle to the Thessalonians, the Rapture occurs before the so-called "Day of the Lord" which this paper suggests must be interpreted within the context of other apocalyptic terms such as "The Day of Jehovah's Wrath" and the "Time of Jacob's Trouble" etc. The Rapture then the Second Coming are two quite different occasions in two often but not always different background circumstances.

(56) II Thessalonians 1:5-12: In this second epistle, in the second chapter, it seems the Apostle had to reset or perhaps even back-track a little because of some confusion other people had fomented arising from his earlier comments on eschatology in the first or earlier epistles he had written to them. Before clarifying some distinctions between the Rapture and the Second Coming, so important for us now in the *Last Days* of Daniel 12:4&9, Paul began with some general comments about God's "righteous judgement" (verse 5) in the face of the "persecutions and tribulations" that we endure (Verse 4). In verse 6, Paul said God will "recompense" or "repay tribulation (*thlibo*, Strong 2346) to them that trouble you" or toward all unbelievers who "are afflicting" God's followers, believers or saints. People defying God are continuously or "systematically" persecuting us as the modern jargon goes [see Addendum (P)]. The passage also considers Jesus "glory" in verses 9, 10 and 12 or indirectly His Glory via "His mighty angels" in verse 7. Doxology (re God's Glory) is the main theme in the Bible and that is clearly reflected in these verses. For Jesus, part of His Glory is the Church herself (verse 12).

In the context of God delivering judgement to the world, recompensing the persecuted and delivering the full Kingdom Plan, we have in this passage two significant references to Christ's appearance. One is to Jesus' revelation "from Heaven with His mighty angels" in verse 7 and the other to His coming "to be glorified in His saints" in verse 10. Many readers might understand these phrases to be more like 'Second Coming' rather than 'Rapture' texts. Alternatively, perhaps it's better to understand these two references to His coming as generic observations points rather than being a specific aspect regarding either the Rapture or the Second Coming. In either case, the reader is likely to gloss over the points and concentrate on the Christ-like way of life they should follow. Paul does consider the eschatological aspects in the next chapter before continuing and concluding in the third chapter with advice on how believers should live and behave in the meantime.

The general context for II Thessalonians 1:5-12 appears to be about physical deliverance

from persecution and how to stoically continue a good witness in the face of all that. Deliverance will be achieved by the coming of Jesus to rescue saints from their persecution (Church) or from the Antichrist (Israel repentant in future). Even considering the generality of these verses, there is every reason why Jesus should desire to rescue the Church from current troubles **before** the final intervention at the Second Coming to deliver Israel from its apocalyptic persecution when the nation finally repents; but not beforehand. The 'generality' comes about because of qualifying clauses such as: in verse 7, "with His mighty angels"; in verse 10, "*punishing* in the Glory of His power" (Armageddon?); and in verse 12, "our Lord Jesus *the* Christ be glorified in you". So far, we have covered several other verses (Matthew 16:27, 25:31, 26:64, Mark 8:38, 13:26, Luke 9:26 and 21:27) where the coming of the Lord seems to be with saints, angels or even, as we shall discuss, "myriads" (I Thessalonians 3:13 per *The Passion Translation*), "brightness" (II Thessalonians 2:8), "kingdom" (II Timothy 4:1) and "with ten thousands of His saints" (Jude 14).

So, are these Rapture or Second Coming verses or perhaps both? One could argue that Jesus' arrival with 'mighty angels' in verse 7; which might be the same as the '*myriads*' of I Thessalonians 3:13; might apply to the Rapture because angels (or *myriads*) assist Him in taking us away or because they come with Him but stay behind to begin inflicting punishment on an unbelieving world to commence the Apocalypse in earnest. Perhaps they are even involved with both 'putative' tasks. Angels apparently will be needed to fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah 11:11 when Jews are returned to Israel "the second time" at the Second Coming, so again Jesus coming "with angels" points to that situation at the Second Coming. Thus, there is no apparent reason why verse 7 could not apply to the Second Coming as the context with His arrival "glorified in **His** saints" implies in verse 10. Obviously, for His Church saints to be with Him at the Second Coming, Jesus must have **earlier** rescued His Church saints. Jesus took His Betrothed and 'fetched' her into Heaven with Him for 'marriage'. That confirms the occurrence of the Rapture before the Second Coming even if these verses refer to the latter.

A significant point about the Second Coming is that Jesus returns with us in tow, instead of leaving Earth with us as the Rapture requires. At the Second Coming, Jesus permanently returns to Earth no doubt with angel-myriads but certainly with the Church although we effectively will only be bystanders or onlookers essentially until He sets us to work in the Millennial Kingdom He will establish. Jesus stays on Earth for the duration of the MMK after the Second Coming which brings Him here to rule and He has to reign until (some time later) "until He hath put all enemies under His feet" (I Corinthians 15:25) and that certainly cannot happen until the end of the MMK. At the conclusion of the MMK i.e., a thousand years after the Second Coming, the Universe is closed up or destroyed. Anyway, what all this primarily demonstrates is the Glory of God and the magnificence of His Great Plan for us.

Behind all of this is, or the 'elephant in the room' as many like to say these days, is the very important distinction between Israel as a body or congregation and the 'Church of *the* Christ as a distinct body. That comes from our understanding of marriage, the marriages of God the Father with Israel and of the Church with Christ. Obviously marriage in these cases emphasises the spiritual aspect of such a relationship. That point will be broached when discussing "The Falling Away" in II Thessalonians 2:3 in Section (58) where divorce involves both a spiritual and a physical departure from, or separation of marriage as an *institution*. At the Second Coming, Jesus rescues Israel from Satan's son the Antichrist who deceived then turned against God's former wife (Israel) whom

Jehovah married at Sinai with Moses' contract in Deuteronomy. As the English translators write, "He is a jealous God".

Having brought His bride from Earth into Heaven in the Rapture, for marriage (our gathering together unto Him" in verse 1) Jesus will return to Earth with us to re-unite God and Israel. That will be a 'Day of the Christ or Messiah' (II Thessalonians 2:2) certainly from Israel's perspective because He is Israel's conquering Messiah, the Son of David, not the Church's, though we rejoice with Israel in her Messiah but for us He primarily is The Son of Man. Even so, as Israel's Messiah that day is another Day of the Son of Man of Luke 17:22 and one that His Disciples in AD 30 as well as ourselves will see. This is all part of the Glorious Plan of God for both Israel and the Church in one grand unifying act. However, we have to keep these two particular bodies of saints, like pre-Abrahamic saints, as distinctly separate groups or congregations. It is ironic that theologians faced with a litany of different churches and denominations seem unable to keep Israel and the Church distinct. The Church is Jesus own personal inheritance (Ephesians 1:18 and II Thessalonians 1:12) but Jesus still has an obviously very deep relationship to Israel and indeed to all pre-Abrahamic saints or even Millennial saints. Israelites are His "Brethren" as He said to Mary Magdalene (John 20:17). There are implications for the Tri-Unity in this as well.

Probably the over-arching principle behind the Rapture is to bring the betrothed Church into Heaven for the Marriage of the Lamb, escaping the Apocalypse; or most of it or the worst of it; an added bonus. Thus, in part, Jesus' "Glorification in His saints" is reflected in his new bride accompanying Him, as the Son of God working with God as the Father reconciles with His former bride i.e., Israel. It will be one vast family reconciliation and reunion. That's to be followed seventy-five days later by a fabulous 'Feast'. That will be the great breakfast or the 'break in the fast' that Jesus indirectly referred to in Matthew 26:29 and Mark 14:25 ("fruit of the vine" only), Luke 22:16 (the bread) and 18 (the "fruit of the vine"). It's Jesus and His Bride who are technically '*breaking their fast*' while all other saints join in as Jesus ushers in the MMK.

One should point out here for those who are unaware of this, that *Deuteronomy* is the 'second' reading of the Law of Moses and it is written in the form of an ancient marriage contract, according to Dr Fruchtenbaum. Having rejected Jesus in AD 30, and as part of Israel's repentance, it seems appropriate Israel must firstly 'apologise' to the Son before reunion with her former Husband. That process of repentance is a major part, or one of two major objectives, of the rationale for the Apocalypse. Obviously there is no need for the Church to be here on Earth because the "Day of the Lord" is essentially a matter between God and Israel (the fruitless fig tree) not Jesus and the Church, and between God and unbelieving Gentiles (the nations, i.e., all the other fig trees). That also supports the view that the Rapture of the Church occurs before the Apocalypse even if this passage is only referring to the Second Coming. Assuming there is validity to that perspective, it certainly shows us that a very specific period of time runs on Earth between the Rapture and the Second Coming. The most likely set of events that would take place within such an interval can only be the seven-year Apocalypse.

Appreciating points such as this does help the reader's understanding of the Bible. This gives us a chance to see that in effect the Bible is dealing with two marriage contracts. One is God's with Israel via Moses. The other is Jesus' with the Church via the New Covenant of Jeremiah 31:31ff to be followed later by Israel's repentance that brings it also under the New Covenant. God gave the New Covenant to Israel or established it

with Israel, but the nation temporarily lost an opportunity to come under it whereas the Church is already under it. This covenant is 'new' in contradistinction to the Mosaic, also with Israel of course and officially the Mosaic is still followed by Israel. The "Israel of God" of Galatians 6:16 is the Jewish section of Christ's Church that no longer follows Moses as the rule for or way of life. Thus we do have to consider how these two different marriage contracts work out. They are **not** two different methods of salvation as many try to say. They are special relationships involving two particular bodies of saints with two Persons of the Tri-Unity where all the believers in the two bodies are soteriologically saved on exactly the same basis. The manner of the two bodies' physical salvation is quite different and is timed differently for each body which explains a number of puzzling but apparent dichotomies in eschatological texts on these two matters.

However, there are many other saints who lived and died before Israel. There are future non-Israelite or non-Church saints i.e., those who repent after the Rapture but before the Second Coming ('Tribulation saints'). They also will live in the future MMK, where even more people becomes saints as they are procreated throughout the Millennium. Pre-Israelite saints, church saints and all these 'future' saints are saved on the same basis as everyone else. However, two groups, Israel and the Church, are actually saints married to God the Father and to God the Son. At this stage, there is no Biblical evidence of marriage contracts concerning all other saints. Nor is there any such contract specifically involving the Holy Spirit who has always been the 'person' to in effect convict the individual from Adam to the last Millennial saint into becoming a saint.

Yet these distinctions which are clearly Biblical are rarely discussed by churches and theologians even though Christendom is divided into a litany of different 'congregations'. Partly this is because teaching about the Tri-Unity is so inadequate these days. Most churches tend to focus on one of the three persons of the Tri-Unity rather than having a balanced relationship with or understanding of all three Persons. Charismatic churches are perhaps the most glaring example of this. A soteriological emphasis in churches such as the Brethren, Baptists, Anglicans etc., at the expense of a pneumatological perspective is another example of this imbalance. All these things then lead to an inability to distinguish between the Rapture and the Second Coming and the distinctions between the two different bodies in the sense of 'physical salvation'. Soteriological salvation is on the same basis for everyone of all time. Physical salvation comes via different methods for the two brides (Israel and the Church).

Looking at these verses in more detail, verse 6 tells us God is one day going to "recompense tribulation to them that trouble you". Indirectly, that also implies God will one day suddenly remove any believer still alive before the arrival of the Apocalypse which probably is part of that recompense. This is important. If the Apocalypse is part of the recompense then logically the Church cannot be in it. Israel gets delivered from the recompense (Apocalypse) but only when it repents. The Church has already repented. That's precisely what the Church of *the Christ-Messiah* is: a body, congregation or group of repentant believers in Jesus of Nazareth; Who He is and in what He did for our salvation. It is because we have done that we in turn get persecution from those who have not, or at least not yet.

In verse 7, we "rest" (or 'relax', Greek, Strong 425, *anesis*) with our current troubles such as persecution and ostracism until "the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with His mighty angels (Greek *aggelos*)". In other words, we are relaxed about persecution precisely because we fully understand why it happens to us. Any angel returning to Earth

with Jesus and His Church at the Second Coming may be due to the situation we read of in Matthew 24:31 and Mark 13:27. Then angels help Jesus to bring all the rest of Israel of Isaiah 11:11-13 and Romans 11:26 back to *Eretz Israel* to dwell there in the MMK. Those saints of Israel are 'saved' on the last three days of the Apocalypse (Hosea 6:1-2 and "all Israel", Romans 11:26). Paul could have been implying either the Rapture or the Second Coming here, or both because in a sense persecution of believers is generic for all saints of all time, saints in the MMK presumably exempt.

Overall, again the promise seems to be that Jesus is coming to save us from the nonsense and chaos that is about to begin or is already descending upon us. Ideally, we really need to be busy explaining to the world that its leaders, scientists, etc., are '*talking*' (metaphorically) everyone down dead-end streets. The brainwashing now seems so complete or entrenched that we are no longer able to effectively counter the nonsense in the face of all their propaganda. There is no real debate about anything any longer and no one wants to hear what God has to say about things as revealed in the Bible. The world's deaf ears seem like another good reason to take us away. Those who do not "obey the Gospel of Our Lord Jesus *the* Christ" (verse 8) are warned about the punishment about to descend upon them (verse 9) and that eventually they will be sent elsewhere (Matthew 22:13, 25:30, Luke 13:28, 16:22ff).

In verse 10, the words "to be glorified in His saints" remind us Jesus is God therefore Glorious. We do not yet physically see God's Glory. In Jesus' lifetime, for example at His Baptism, then at the Mount of Transfiguration, also the voice from Heaven in John 12:28-30, quite a lot of people did see (or hear) Jesus in His Divine Glory. Even the Maji in that so-called "star" that behaved in rather *mercurial* ways and the shepherds in Bethlehem's fields (the angels above them) indirectly saw Jesus' Glory. What the Maji saw was similar if not identical to the phenomenon Moses saw at the burning bush somewhere in the deserts of the Hejaz of Arabia or perhaps in southern Sinai. The shepherds too would have seen this phenomenon covering the *sukka -manger* where Jesus lay hours after His birth. This verse talks about future believers seeing that same Glory. As Jesus said to Thomas (John 20:26-9), future believers would be additionally blessed because they believe Jesus without ever physically seeing His Glory, or not until their own glorification. So if Jesus has to come so that we see His Glory; or before we can see it; that also has to be at a time when we **alone** admire Him (verse 10). That can only be when the Rapture occurs because only the raptured believers will be admiring Jesus at the point of the Rapture itself.

At the Second Coming, 'All Israel' by the last day of the Apocalypse; Jews such as the 144 000 who already admire him before then; and of course the sheep Gentiles who have survived to the end of the Apocalypse because of their faith and repentance certainly also will "admire" Jesus at His return but that does not make the Rapture and the Second Coming a virtually identical single event. Many others who hate Jesus are terrified at that time and certainly are not full of admiration whether that be at the Rapture or Second Coming. Again, admiration is generic. Moreover, when Israel does at long last appeal to Jesus as the Messiah and Saviour they will be acting in faith. When they actually see Him and His Glory, their emotions are more likely to be tending toward relief, thankfulness and praise. Also, when Jesus comes in the Rapture the Church saints are glorified; i.e., those alive, while travelling through the air on the way to Heaven, are instantaneously glorified or translated from their carnal body into their glorified body. Sheep Gentiles and Israel enter the MMK in carnal bodies.

Overall, the meaning in these verses in respect to either the Rapture or Second Coming is perhaps ambiguous because certain facets are generic. They may be unclear because of the general nature of Paul's comments in those verses concentrating on persecution and recompense. Or perhaps a *'Double Entendre'* may be implicit. The situation is clarified in the next chapter.

As we highlight, II Thessalonians 1:10 notes that while Jesus is "glorified in His saints", He is to be "admired" by "them that believe .. in that day". In parallel, Ephesians 1:11 ("in whom we have received an inheritance") and 1:18 ("His inheritance in the saints") refer to our inheritance in Him then His inheritance in us respectively. Note the 'parallel' with II Thessalonians 1:10. However, whereas in Ephesians both the Lord and the saints are mutually "**inherited**" in each other, here in II Thessalonians 1:10, Jesus is "**glorified**" while we "**admire**" Him and implicitly our bodies are also 'glorified' by resurrection for the deceased church saints or translation for any saints alive at the time of the Rapture. All this happens "because our testimony among you was believed" on "that day" when "He shall come to be glorified in His saints". The parallel passage in Ephesians may add a clue that here too in I Thessalonians 1:10, Jesus will be glorified in us and we in Him. Anyway, that debate is resolved in II Thessalonians 1:12 which confirms we are glorified in Him as He is in us just like the parallel situation with 'inheritance' in Ephesians. Unless one uses the entire corpus of Scripture it is easy to misunderstand some passages. Thus in distinguishing between the Rapture and the Second Coming it is easy to see why there is widespread confusion.

In summary, our glorification in Christ and His in us can only refer to the Church and that occurs at the Rapture. Whereas Jesus coming with angels (verse 7) or "in flaming fire" (verse 8) seems more like a reference to the Second Coming. The best way to resolve this conundrum is to accept that Paul at times was writing in general terms up to this point.

(57) II Thessalonians 2:1-2, 13-17: In this second chapter of Paul's second letter to the Thessalonians; assuming he only wrote two; He is clearly writing about the Rapture in verse 1 because *'parousia'* in the sense of 'appear' in all likelihood is combined with our "gathering together unto him" (ASV) which has to be up in the clouds where we meet Him (I Thessalonians 4:17). However, he then appears to look at circumstances leading to the Apocalypse or Daniel's Seventieth-week concerning Israel and the rest of the world of course. So after verse 1 we enter Second Coming territory. We also get some insight into the relationship between the Rapture and circumstances leading to the Second Coming. It's sometimes hard separating the Rapture and the Second Coming in the Scripture into two discrete situations as a mathematician might say. One has made similar points before.

Some of the texts in both epistles to the Thessalonians like this illustrate how hard it is sometimes to talk about one, e.g., the Rapture, without the other (Second Coming). That also explains why it was so hard for the Gospel authors and epistle composers to cover either or both issues without making perhaps generic, if not over-simplified, statements writing as they were in Hebrew and then translating that into Greek. This was no easy task. Indeed trying to do so is like dividing the calm of untroubled waters into two highly explosive gases (Hydrogen and Oxygen) bearing in mind that one can drown in two inches of H₂O. With God all things are possible. Aside from Daniel 12:4 & 9, Jeremiah 31:37 refers to a challenge from God which, as it happens, currently is the top priority for world science and economics. That is according to international and official government

statements one possesses. If we take I Corinthians 2:9-10 seriously and literally, the Spirit of God gives us a better understanding of these things and in a way the Apostles could not.

Both epistles to the Thessalonians contain a significant amount of eschatological material. II Thessalonians 2:1-2 appears to calm down fears that the Lord had already come and, presumably, gone back to Heaven again perhaps even leaving saints behind for some mysterious reason that was, or is, never explained. Some observers think that was a concern initiated by teachers either deliberately, or through ignorance, stirring up such fears. When Paul was writing this, politics between Israel and Rome were rapidly deteriorating as they are today between Israel and all the other countries. The great crisis of AD 66-70 was on the horizon with the events of AD 135 much further away. That tension could have been troubling these quite recent or new believers in Thessalonika and Macedonia, especially any Jewish members of this congregation. A second destruction of Jerusalem was drawing nigh 670 years after Nebuchadnezzar and his Chaldeans (Kurds) did the same thing. The armies of Vespasian and Titus were getting ready for a crisis. Thus rumours that Jesus had already come and gone again may well have been circulating.

Also around this time, some people were framing Caesar Nero as being the Antichrist. Early manuscripts were sometimes altered to suggest Antichrist's name added to 616 in Hebrew rather than "666" in order to fit for "Caesar Nero" transliterated from the Latin. Paul may have been trying to reassure them that was not so. It is easy for us to see, *ex post*, that there was still a very long time to pass before the eve of the 'Last Days' which Paul briefly described in verses 3-12 [refer Sections (58) and (59) below].

Perhaps one should link II Thessalonians 2:1 with the Rapture of I Thessalonians 4:17 and the issue about our glorified bodies in II Thessalonians 1:10-12. II Thessalonians 2:1 then explains that it is at "our gathering unto Him" that deceased and living saints are glorified. However, II Thessalonians 2:2 almost seamlessly merges with warning signs of the Apocalypse in particular by referring to "The Day of Christ" (KJV and Interlinear) or "The Day of the Lord" (ASV and *Passion Translation*). Thus, Paul's general theme about Christian behaviour and coping with persecution in the first chapter is not picked up until verses 13-17. It would have been better for our scribes if they had put the second chapter heading at verse 2 or better verse 3. Otherwise, the way the chapters are devised here between the first and second of this second epistle tends to decouple verse 1 about the Rapture and confuse it with the 'Day of Christ' or 'Day of the Lord' depending on whose translation one prefers,

II Thessalonians 2:2 is then talking about "The Day of Christ" as the "Day of the Lord" which does not really concern the Church because that day is for the unbelievers. Thus, in between are ten critical verses (3-12) referring to what else will occur after the Rapture until the Second Coming. Hence the main reason why this paper separates Sections (57-9) in this manner. Also, we get an implicit clue to realizing the Rapture and the Second Coming are close together in one particular and very significant 'season' which essentially is that period of the days of Noah and Lot followed by Israel's Seventieth-week which concludes at the Second Coming.

II Thessalonians 2:1 in the KJV begins with "Now we beseech you, brethren, by (*hyper*, Strong 5228) the coming (*parousia*) of our Lord Jesus *the* Christ, **and** (*kai*) by our gathering together unto Him ...". The ASV uses 'touching' for the KJV's 'by' and footnotes

that the Greek is *huper* meaning “in behalf of” in the ASV footnote although Strong lists many “applications” for this word ranging from the way we use it in for example hyper-sensitive or hyper-active to meanings like ‘regarding’ or concerning. It’s a case where context is usually needed to give a definitive meaning for ‘*huper*’ in this passage. The ‘coming’ here is “*parousia*” again in order to give the impression of a sudden and brief appearance rather than a permanent return for example to rule the Earth for a millennium. It’s a temporary and short-lived cameo. “*Kai* here is explaining that there is one particular appearance of Jesus that will involve a massive escape act of believers leaving Earth with Jesus as Paul suggests most explicitly in I Corinthians 15:52 amplified with the lifting up in I Thessalonians 4:17 (“caught up ... in the air”). This contrasts with the ‘*kaí*’ in Section (66) re Titus 2:13. Here ‘*kaí*’ is used to connect a sudden return of Jesus to coincide with an uplifting of all church saints (deceased and alive at that sudden moment). Whereas in Titus it does seem to refer to the Rapture (“hope”) on one hand and the Second Coming (“glorious appearing”) on the other. Paul’s letter to Titus did not refer to ‘*parousia*’.

Thus, we will assume the “coming” of the Lord in II Thessalonians 2:1 and the “gathering unto Him” in the same verse almost certainly refer to the Rapture when Jesus physically ‘approaches’ Earth and gathers us upwards into Heaven. That is in spite of this paper’s contention where the parallel situation in Titus 2:13 does seem to refer to the Rapture then the Second Coming. Also in Section (66) this paper supports the view Galatians 6:15-16 likewise uses “*kaí*” to identify two different groups albeit both soteriologically saved on the same basis. Admittedly, one cannot be dogmatic about these things. One simply suggests the overall methodology here supports those stances. Thus II Thessalonians 2:1, especially in the context of what had been said earlier in the epistles to the Thessalonians, and especially in II Thessalonians 1:10-12, is about the Rapture expressed as “touching the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto Him” (ASV) or “*by* the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and *by* our gathering together unto Him” (KJV). Jesus comes and gathers us up at the same time. It might even be possible to translate the ‘*kaí*’ with ‘that is’ to say or render; “... the coming of our Lord Jesus *the* Christ, **that is** by our gathering together unto Him”. The verse is referring to the coming of Jesus which also (“and”) gathers us up unto Him. We go up to meet Him. He does not come to Earth but only as far as the atmosphere. At another time, Jesus comes to rescue Israel (“The Second Coming”) and He comes right down to ‘ground zero’ to stay for a thousand years. Then people are not gathered up unto Him but are brought out from every corner of the world wherein Israelites are scattered and quite possibly hiding at the end of the Apocalypse.

Whichever way one interprets this, Paul was certainly assuring everyone that neither event; or the one event if readers assume them to be the same; had occurred by the time he had written this letter. He went on to show that either the Second Coming or the Rapture, or both, were still in the future for him and his contemporaries. In the intervening verses [II Thessalonians 2:2-12, see Sections (58) and (59) below] Paul was advising readers, however, that for the Second Coming, quite unlike the Rapture, there would be various or even specific significant things to happen as he went on to explain (see below). Furthermore, on the basis the Rapture can come at any time whatsoever but some of the things he listed in verses 2-12 could take place while church saints are still on Earth. Only the Second Coming has a known date, therefore known events that can be sequenced by *Revelation* (Book of-) and other texts will precede it. In effect, that date will be confirmed when the Antichrist has shown his hand. If not beforehand for some people, that will come at the confirmation of a specific seven-year ‘peace treaty-

arrangement' with Israel. Midway through that treaty period the Abomination of Desolation will be the signal to Israel that things will get really when it suddenly discovers, *again like a thief in the night*, Antichrist-666 is actually trying to destroy the nation of Israel, the 'people of God'. Those who may know who Antichrist is beforehand figure that out by the "number of his name" (Revelation 13:18). And if they do figure that out 'beforehand', even now, and they know how old he is, they may even realise that he too will be slain in his thirty-seventh year (like Jesus who was crucified and buried or Isaac who was spared) and that certainly will indicate which day will be the last one of the Apocalypse. So the duration of the Apocalypse and some markers of which stage the world is in or how much further it will continue, will become apparent.

The Rapture cannot be preceded by anything other than, perhaps, the "Days of Noah and Lot" which is a "season" (I Thessalonians 5:1) or even as much as an 'era' whatever that is. But those days are very hard to identify. That is why believers have always needed to be alert and ready for the Rapture even if they suspect they are **not** living in the Days of Noah and Lot. No one but the Father knows the day of the Rapture. It comes like a *thief in the night*. Luke 18:8 suggests very few people still alive will be expecting the Rapture when it does arrive; i.e., faith will be scarce then.

For us, Paul's advice here indicates that we are not to be worried by the looming arrival of the Apocalypse. Indeed Paul assures us that suddenly on a day that only God knows, Jesus will come toward us. He implicitly gathers us upwards towards Him (verse 1, last clause). Then Jesus next or immediately translates us (living believers) and takes us, with all the dead saints in Christ, into Heaven (I Thessalonians 4:17). Of course, this paper assumes Jesus firstly told us about this rapturous event in Luke 17:34-36. He also gave a summary of what He had said in Luke and reiterated it in Matthew 24:36-42 and stressed the need to be ready in Mark 13:32-37 as indicated by the *peri de* of the Greek in Matthew 26:36 and Mark 13:32. Later, Paul gave specific information about 'The Rapture' in I Thessalonians 4:13-18, I Corinthians 15:52 and possibly in Titus 2:13.

Thus in verses 3-12 [Sections (58) and (59)], Paul then began an intermediate section referring to what happens to the unbelieving world as the Antichrist moves in to take total control of the world. Those are the events that we do not have to worry about even though we might still be here when some of them take place. However, as they do begin to become apparent that is when we really learn to recognise that at long last we have indeed arrived in the "Days of Noah" and "of Lot" [refer Addendum (Aii)] that Jesus referred to and that they are part of the Daniel 12:4 & 9 situation. Most commentators and theologians barely address the Days of Noah and Lot in their assessments which is another very significant difference from mainstream and traditional thinking on the Rapture and Second Coming reflected in this paper. Daniel 12:4 & 9 of course explains why that "mainstream and traditional thinking" had to be kept ignorant of such matters until 'The Last Days'. The process described in II Thessalonians 2:3-12 looks as though it is in its very early stages with the "falling away" of II Thessalonians 2:3 and has been since AD 2001 or even earlier. Thus II Thessalonians 2:3-12 is basically all about the situation that develops regarding the Second Coming, the rise of Antichrist etc in **The Last Days**. The Rapture occurs anytime before or during these things Paul described in II Thessalonians 2:3-12.

In Section (58) we will consider verses 3-12 in more detail. For now, in Section (57), we move on to verses 13-17. In verse 13, the Greek 'but' is the conjunction "*hemeis de*" rather than a '*peri de*' conjunction or simple '*de*'. However, from a Hebrew writing

technique; as we discussed in Section (54) I Thessalonians 5:4-11 concerning the connection between Genesis 23:1 and Genesis 22:1-19; the Apostle here is returning to the point he started in verses 1-2. That confirms verses 3-12 are a parenthesis discussing the run-up to the Second Coming, about which there is nothing to worry about because we will be saved, excused or taken away from it; “chosen you to *physical* salvation” in verse 13. Thus, via the Rapture, there must be ‘physical’ salvation because our soteriological salvation has already come with “**sanctification of the spirit**” at the very moment when we first believed. Thus, Paul effectively told us we are exempted from those disasters. The stress here of course is on us as believers or brethren (“We”). II Thessalonians 2:13-17 reconfirms our hope in physical salvation from Apocalypse because of our soteriological salvation via “sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the Truth” (verse 13, last phrase). As we reiterate elsewhere concerning II Corinthians 1:22, 5:5, and Ephesians 1:14, the Holy Spirit is also a **guarantee** (*erevon-arrabown*) of these assurances in II Thessalonians 2:1 and 13-17. That ‘sanctification’ obviously does not apply to those who have consistently rejected Jesus up to The Rapture and who “do not believe in the Truth” (John 14:6 and 16-17) which (or Who) is Jesus, of course, as He stood in front of Pilate who asked, “What is Truth? (John 18:38)”.

Hence the **unbelievers** are the people who will have to endure Daniel’s ‘Seventieth-week’ i.e., the Apocalypse (or “Tribulation” in the terminology of some). People then will be under terrible forces of mesmerism and deception (II Thessalonians 2:9-10) from Satan and Antichrist. Worse still, they are “afflicted” by catastrophes and plagues from God. Those who belatedly repent during the Apocalypse or even before it officially or actually begins: should the Rapture precede the Apocalypse by days, weeks, months, years etc; nevertheless will be able to look forward to a glorious future. Among other trials they will have to refuse the demands of Antichrist in Revelation 13:14-17. The new post-Rapture “saints” of that time (Revelation 13:7ff) will have much fear and many hardships to endure or even death via plague or martyrdom. It is a terribly sad fate for those who are left here on Earth and who have to endure the Apocalypse because they came to belief too late to be in the Rapture. Even so, they too can look forward to a glorious ‘future’ albeit at greater personal cost and suffering. Having missed out on the Rapture, those who later repent must potentially suffer much more than we do now. Many who belatedly come to belief will not make it through the Apocalypse alive although they are even so exhorted to struggle though it. Those who become believers after the Rapture but who die before the Second Coming are resurrected as Tribulation Saints during the Seventy-five Day Interval [c.f., (48) I Thessalonians 2:12 and (Bi) A Note on the Parousia].

Finally, II Thessalonians 2:17 there is a word of comfort based on the sentiments of the previous four verses. There is another reminder of our Glory in Christ in verse 14. We are to hold fast to the traditions we have received through the Bible texts not through the organisations and institutions of man (verse 15). In verse 16, we have “an everlasting consolation and good hope through *God’s Grace*” (*and mercy*).

(58) II Thessalonians 2:3-7 and 9-12: II Thessalonians 2:3-12 (we treat verse 8 in the next section) runs through those pre-Second Coming events such as the “falling away” of churches [verse 3, Addendum (Q) *Apostasia* and the sub-section on an Historical perspective] that implies true church saints may still be around even at that late stage, the revelation of the Antichrist (verse 6), the removal of government or governance (verse 7), obviously satanic signs and wonders performed by the Antichrist (verse 9) and a great delusion blinding people who have rejected God probably also preventing them from having any further opportunity to repent (verse 11). Discussion on the *Apostasia* is left

to the Addenda [Addendum (Q) with an historical perspective on the “Falling away”]. The next section specifically concerns verse 8 so here we take a closer look at some of the things we will be missing out on according to Paul in II Thessalonians 2:1-2.

Verse 3 begins with a *new voice* saying, "Let no man deceive **you** (believers of course implied). Verse 3 should be where the new chapter should start since we now use such things in writing and printing. Two things are mentioned. Firstly is the “Falling Away” (*Apostasia*). Secondly, the Son of Perdition (Antichrist) is revealed. In verse 4, Paul explains that the Antichrist will exalt himself above God and indeed all gods (which are fake anyway). Verse 5 tells us that Paul had earlier spoken about these things presumably in greater detail which we do not seem to be privy to. Hopefully, what Paul had earlier said is reflected in the other passages we are studying. In verses 6 and 7 Paul points out that something is currently restraining iniquity and wickedness although obviously imperfectly. Nevertheless, that restraining influence is quickly or suddenly removed to pave the way for the lawless and iniquitous Antichrist to take control of the world.

In verses 3-12, Paul effectively is making a general statement about events leading to the *Last Days* of what is effectively the *Era of Fallen Man* and concluding with the Apocalypse. In the view of this analyst, some of these things may occur while the ‘Days of Noah and Lot’ are in operation. Probably, there is an indefinite or indeterminate period of those days that overlap to some extent the seven-year Apocalypse. A parallel issue arises in the treatment of the ‘seven-year’ clean up of the First Gog-Magog invasion of Israel (Ezekiel 39:9) and whether it also overlaps with the Apocalypse. At the moment, one suggests those two seven-year events run consecutively like the fourteen years when Joseph took Egypt through the years of plenty and years of famine. Likewise with Jacob and the fourteen years he had to work for Laban. It may even be that the days of Noah and Lot also finish at the Rapture because very soon afterwards the Apocalypse descends upon the world. Depending on the actual timing of the Rapture and the start of the seven-year Apocalypse, this text in II Thessalonians 2:3-12 is about what happens after those days referred to by Jesus in Luke 17:26-9 and Matthew 24:37-39 are completed.

Nevertheless, and so far, it seems impossible to determine from the Scriptures where the boundaries lie for what Jesus labelled the *Days of Noah and Lot* during which; or at the end of which; the Rapture occurs. Nor do we know to what extent, if at all, either the ‘Days of Noah’ or the ‘Days of Lot’, or both, continue or extend beyond the Rapture, whenever it occurs. We do not know if they continue into the times Paul is now writing about in these verses. In II Thessalonians 2:3-7 and 9-12, and verse 8, we read a little about the plan for the rise of Antichrist and the subsequent Apocalypse [refer Addendum (J)]. Satan’s plan for man is a counterfeit of God’s plan. If the man we assume to be the Antichrist is indeed that *persona*, Satan’s counterfeit plan for a son of his to execute the final stages of his long-term plan began on 1/1/01. Long-term, Satan’s plan began when he successfully tempted Adam in Eden.

Since 1/1/01, assuming we are correct to say the Antichrist now lives among us (even though most of us ‘know him not’), we have been in the early stages of Satan’s ‘millennial plan initiated with the siring of his son as Genesis 3:15 prophesied. The Apocalypse, which to a significant extent is God’s judgement on Satan’s counterfeit plan, actually begins when Antichrist confirms a (seven-year) peace treaty, or some sort of political accommodation, with Israel. It is ‘divorced’ Israel’s apostasy or perhaps *adultery* with

another son of one who considers himself as a god, that incites God's wrath at that "covenant with Death" (Isaiah 28:14-22, Daniel 9:27). That treaty or 'political and perhaps economic accommodation somehow prepares the way for the construction of a Jewish temple on Temple Mount (verse 4) that Antichrist will then use to declare himself as God. The deceit involved and subsequent revelation/confirmation of the Antichrist is described concluding with the "strong delusion" (verse 11) that unbelievers will be saddled with.

By the time the 'delusion' of verse 11 begins in earnest the world will be forced to accept that indeed everything is very black and white or binary. Everyone will have to support one side (God's) or the other (Satan's). Actually with the polarization we are already witnessing around the world as we **plausibly** enter the third decade of this counterfeit Satanic millennium we already are getting a taste of that near-future situation. There will not be any shades of grey in those days as there seems to be less and less these days. At present, prior to the Rapture, there are many who are not truly in one camp or the other. We cannot say at present how much of all the 'nonsense' of these verses church saints will witness. We may still be around to see some of the very early stages of the pre-Apocalyptic 'nonsense' or even some early apocalyptic events. Exactly or approximately how much time obviously is unknown to everyone as the words "Day that only the Father knows" imply. God will be concerned to see us stay around for as long as is practical to exhort any unbelievers to repent in spite of the great delusion. All in all, not much in verses 3 to 12 is of much relevance to us except the "Falling Away" we read of in verse 3 and this is quite important.

(59) II Thessalonians 2:8, This verse reads, "Then shall that Wicked (*One*) be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His Coming (*Parousia*)". In effect, this statement corresponds with Genesis 3:15. There we read the enigmatic and coded prophecy how a "seed" of one woman would have "enmity" with a "seed" of Satan through another woman. The former (Jesus) would one day "destroy" Satan's seed or son. The first woman giving birth was of course Mary after four millennia had gone by. *Genesis* uses the image of a man sing his heel to strike a snake on the head while being bruised on the heel in the process of killing the reptile. The bruised heel corresponds with Jesus suffering satanic abuse from man and fallen angel on the Cross. I Peter 3:19-21 records that while Jesus was in the Hebrew '*Sheol*' (Hell) He addressed the fallen angels in a special prison reserved for them. They were there because they had mated with the women ("daughters of men", Genesis 6:2) before Noah's Flood. Jesus told them their leader's plan to frustrate God's plan to save man via the Incarnation and Cross had abysmally failed. However, Satan himself was not constrained so that he would play his part in fulfilling the role set out for him in Genesis 3:15. It is all part of God's far reaching and gloriously thought out grand plan for the Universe and Earth and all its inhabitants (angels included). *Thessalonians* refers to the destruction of Antichrist by Jesus using the "spirit of his mouth" and by "brightness at His coming". In a manner of speaking, the combination of the heel and the mouth might lead the observer to sarcastically describe Antichrist's fall as a bad case of Foot and Mouth Disease which is a modern scourge for livestock farmers.

Before attending to the 'revelation' of Antichrist, we need to note that '*parousia*' is also used in verse 9 where the revelation of the Antichrist in this verse is also described as '*parousia*' when it says of Antichrist "that his coming is after the working of Satan". Whether the 'working of Satan' included his impregnation of the Roman woman one now suspects is the other woman of Genesis 3:15, and gave birth to the child in September 2001, is perhaps a moot point. But that is how Antichrist enters world affairs beginning

with his birth indicating he does indeed need to be one particular individual just as Jesus is in His humanity. There are 25 uses of *parousia* in the New Testament including for the arrival of Titus to help Paul in II Corinthians 7:6 & 7, another for Stephanus and Fortunatus in I Corinthians 16:17 and of Paul himself in Philippians 1:26. Matthew uses *parousia* to describe Jesus' coming in both his Second Coming part of the Olivet Discourse and in the *peri de* section where he records what Jesus said about the Rapture. Mark and Luke do not use '*parousia*' in the parts of their Olivet accounts that parallel Matthew's. However, this paper's distinction between those two sections in Matthew is disputed by others. That is partly why other commentators proceed to assume the Rapture and the Second Coming are either the same event or, in another subtle variation, two particular aspects of the one event. Roman Catholicism does not even believe there will be a return of Christ as a man.

The main focus here is on the Antichrist's "revelation". There is a debate about this and it is a very important one. Some people think the treaty's confirmation finally reveals or signifies the true identity of the Antichrist. Others think the mid seven-year treaty's "Abomination of Desolation" really identifies the Antichrist ("he as God sitteth in the Temple of God, shewing himself that he is God", II Thessalonians 2:4). Those two views assume a sudden and unexpected one-off event. That could be true of the 'Abomination' although the students of prophecy emerging post-Rapture will be expecting that. Unfortunately some of us even now may know who Antichrist is because we have always believed such a person must arrive, appear or even '*parousia*' at some point in **His Story**. We have always taken prophecy seriously especially the warning about the "number of his name" (Revelation 13:17) and that it is "666" (Revelation 13:18). So Antichrist-666 must take the world stage as its leader. Ever on the ready we are more likely to *espy* him sooner than most others. The debate is sufficiently significant that it seems worthwhile to set aside this verse from the complete section (II Thessalonians 2:3-12) and take a deeper look into it and into some surrounding issues.

II Thessalonians 2:8 is one of the few explicit statements about the Second Coming found in the epistles. In many ways, it could be regarded as being more specific than any prophecy about the coming of Messiah to introduce the special aspect of the Kingdom of God implied by Psalm 8:4. In effect, it explains that Jesus will rescue Israel at the crucial moment the nation repents soteriologically and is physically saved from Antichrist as Jesus "bruises" or crushes the head of Satan's son typified as per the *allegory* or 'code' in Genesis 3:15. Jesus' return to crush Antichrist is not about physically saving the soteriologically saved Church. It is about Israel repenting at a very late hour and then needing sudden emergency physical salvation from Antichrist. The Church will be excused when the Apocalyptic Wrath of God (Jacob's Trouble etc.,) arrives in all its worst manifestations. It's all that part of God's great plan to reunite Himself to His former 'wife' as the Son brings His new Bride to watch what is perhaps the last of the 'Days of the Son of Man' the Lord referred to in Luke 17:22 (unless opening the first feast for the Millennium is another and defeat of the Last Gog-Magog invasion of Israel are others). So the Church returns to Earth with Jesus as Israel's physical salvation is effected as a consequence of Israel's soteriological repentance over the two previous days of that particular process. By implication from Matthew 16:27, Mark 8:38 and Luke 9:26, it seems God the Father and presumably the Spirit personally come to watch Jesus 'bruise', i.e., slay, Satan's son *in return for AD 30*.

Again, that implies the Church therefore must have earlier been taken away at the Rapture. Clearly the Church is not being saved by this "Brightness of His Coming" to

“destroy the Wicked”. At the Rapture, and no doubt in the process, we will be aware of the brightness of Jesus’ Shecinah Glory as we go upwards to meet Him when He comes before the Apocalypse to remove us away from all this looming ‘wickedness’. More specifically, at the earlier Rapture, Jesus will be taking us away from the ‘Wicked One’ of Genesis 3:15, Matthew 6:13, 13:19, 38, Luke 11:4, John 17:15, I John 2:13-14, I John 5:18 and especially II John 7 which notes the powers of deception the Antichrist has (II Thessalonians 9-11). Hence, in the ‘*Lord’s Prayer*’ (Matthew 6:13 and Luke 11:4), we ask to be delivered from any such temptation **into** believing Antichrist’s deceptions and chicanery and not simply **from** them, and only secondarily from temptations to steal and the like. It is unrepentant Israel, and of course unrepentant Gentiles, who must endure the looming wickedness, evil, chaos and disasters of the last days. ‘During that post-Rapture mini-era of perhaps as little as seven years or so, the Elect’ primarily will be Israel although perhaps encompassing newly-believing Gentiles. They also need protection from those deceptive powers (Matthew 24:22, Mark 13:20, II Timothy 2:10).

We note II Thessalonians 2:8 translated into English is about “revealing” the “Wicked One’. Many translations omit the word ‘one’ here but this observer disagrees with that policy albeit understanding why they do because of some technical opinions about syntax etc. However, both the treaty Antichrist arranges with Israel (to be “confirmed”, Daniel 9:27) and the identification of the Antichrist are much more likely to be **processes** possibly spanning as many as three to four decades when one considers Antichrist may well meet his denouement at the age of 37 as Isaac and Jesus were at the times of their sacrifices (Isaac being spared of course). In the opinion of this observer with some experience in domestic and international policy and governance, such things in History, Economics and Politics are not, therefore never can be, one-off sudden events like an explosion or more like an earthquake although they sometimes involve many pre- and after-tremors. Only the Rapture, in stark contrast, will come with the suddenness of an earthquake. Any revelation of the Antichrist will almost certainly be a **process**. However, as with any major construction, a special unveiling ceremony, or even coronation could occur with Antichrist’s ‘unveiling’ but of course the object to be disclosed, perhaps a cornerstone with someone’s name on it, is an event of one brief moment.

This paper suggests that it is only over time do more and more people begin to perceive or learn new things, try new ways of doing things, adopt new products, take up or reject various philosophies of life, follow new fads or ideas, or even follow a dictator like Adolph Hitler. He began his programme with a tiny band of idiosyncratic and half-mad supporters like Julius Streicher. It took well over a decade to get almost an entire nation and many people abroad to follow his ideas some of which in economics were actually quite forward looking. These are issues to consider concerning Antichrist’s rise to power.

Anyway, the Bible itself points out, especially considering the process by which Jesus came to the *fore*, that it must surely be a process by which the “Antichrist is revealed”. We are considering things now theologians’ narrow perspectives tend to overlook even within the very scripture they are studying especially if they only move between the standard models of ‘systematic theology’ and biblical-book contextual analysis models **alone**. Even life experience can sometimes trump the ivory towers of academia. The revelation of the Antichrist concerns the whole world. By the ‘world’, one here refers to people across the globe but most modern historians and theologians overlook that fact. The Maji in Persia, Babylon, India or even in China and the Americas (“The East”) showed that God had arranged for the news of the Promised Deliverer’s arrival to go global as early as 5 BC and at other times between 7 BC and AD 30. In his record of

Jesus' "Great Commission" of AD30 (Matthew 28:19-20), Jesus' disciples, including a wider group than those not present at the Luke 17:22-37 Soliloquy, went out and obeyed Him both in person and by writing and delivered the world the news of the Promised Deliverer of Genesis 3:15. That was a scripture widely known despite theologians' assertion it was not but they said He had arrived, had been named and identified, and they explained how Jesus of Nazareth (His proper earthly legal-name) had achieved true and full salvation for all who "believe" (John 3:16).

That was in spite of 'Pharaoh' Merneptah (Mer-en-Ptah) Ba-en-Ra Meri-Amun Hotephmaat's bombastic claim in 586 BC also widely known throughout the ancient era between 600 BC and AD 30. That is found on the so-called "Israel Stele" (or replica thereof) displayed in today's Cairo Museum. His words recorded for posterity maintained that God's Plan for the Seed of the Woman prophecy of Genesis 3:15 would no longer take place ["Israel's seed is destroyed (or castrated); the Land razed (shaved) to the ground"]. The bombastic Merneptah looking on from what he thought was the safe distance of Egypt, made the claim because Nebuchadnezzar the Kurdo-Chaldean (or Hittite) had destroyed Jerusalem's temple. This is the true History (refer author's *Memphis* book). The purpose of the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19-20 was to tell the World that Jesus had successfully completed His mission, in spite of Merneptah's bombast, and to tell the world how Jesus did that and what were the circumstances under which He achieved that supreme part of God's overall Plan for the "**World**" (John 3:16). The First Generation of the Church (The α or *Aleph-Alpha*) completed Jesus' instructions. Our generation's job is to attest to that work and warn that the Church has entered its 'Last Generation' (The ω or *Tav-Omega*). So we have to focus on why the 'end' is coming, i.e., the 'end' of the era of fallen man's control of governance here and explain what people need to do about that to save themselves.

Thus, in spite of Egyptian Pharaoh Merneptah's bombast, Jesus did appear in a second temple built for the prophecy. That process of revealing or revelation of the True Christ developed bit-by-bit between 7 BC and AD 27. Jesus came to be made known, as the Gospel accounts show, to an ever-widening group of people **both supporters and enemies**. The whole world may not know who the Antichrist is at any one time but there may also be many (both supporters and opponents) who do [c.f., Addendum (O)]. Also, there are plenty of signs around the world, from the Bible's prophecies, about this man - The Antichrist. They begin from Genesis 3:15, are elaborated on in Isaiah 14:16ff (especially the "abominable branch in verse 19), Isaiah 28:14-15 (e.g., "covenant with scoffers in Jerusalem"), Jeremiah 50:43, 50:46, Daniel 8:23-25, 9:26-27, 11:38 and now we begin to see many passages in the New Testament about him in the process of fulfillment even at a speed or frequency and indeed acceleration paralleling the latter birth pangs of a woman in birth-labour. Like the Black Holes in 'Outer Space', we can see around them but not directly see the objects themselves. The cosmologists are claiming Black Holes are now revealed. They may be at the centre of each galaxy sucking everything back into nothing to the delight of the many neo-Buddhists amongst them these days. **In a tidbit of speculation**, perhaps they are even now undertaking the process by which this universe finishes its course as the end of *Revelation* indicates and that may only be a little more than 1007 years away. In a parallel with cosmology, the depths of chaos the world is plunging into might also indicate Antichrist is now with us.

A grand ceremony where and when Antichrist's treaty with Israel will be signed or "confirmed" will doubtlessly be a very 'public' and comparatively sudden event depending upon whomever is '*in the know*'. In AD 2020, the US President, Head of State of the

biggest country in “Tarshish”; ironically named Mr Trump; arranged for an Abrahamic Accord to be signed between Israel and some Arab nations. They are collectively known as ‘Sheba and Dedan’ in the Bible (Ezekiel 38:13). News clips broadcast all over the electronic media showed all the signatories prominently held the treaty documents wide open for the public to see. Incidentally, this practice of prominently and publically displaying a treaty document for the media present, and seen on TV news programmes a lot these days, is a relatively new, recent and rather ostentatious even narcissistic phenomenon. Thus, one professionally suggests it will be much the same for Antichrist’s forthcoming ‘accommodation’ with Israel. Also, obviously, there needs to be an existing nation of Israel to do all this just as the prophecies predicted for the Last Days. Events during or in the wake of the First Gog-Magog invasion of Israel or Antichrist’s activities as the World Government phase of world history and the resulting ten kingdoms emerge may also be events or actions that indicate who the Antichrist is. Of course, only astute observers may even then understand who he is. In Addendum (O), we reproduce what Dr Fruchtenbaum believes constitutes the ‘revelation’ of the Antichrist.

In reading II Thessalonians 2:8 we need to recognise from many other Biblical Scriptures that Israel will be a modern nation at the end of the Last Days. The re-emergence of Israel is in itself a sign that the Antichrist is not all that far away as commentator Nicholas Byfield foresaw in AD 1626 (in *Rule of Faith*) at the height of Reformist nonsense about ‘The Last Days’. Or perhaps one might suggest the *Six Day War* in 1967 was the critical point when the world needed to realise Antichrist’s emergence was not far away. Even much more recently, Israel’s agreements with several emirates on the Arabian Peninsula under the Abrahamic Accords is surely yet another sign Antichrist’s rise to power is imminent. Also, it may well signify that “Gog” is around too if that entity of Ezekiel 38:1ff is an individual. All those things might be part of the process of the revelation of the Antichrist. Perhaps only a tiny number of astute observers (of either side, i.e., those for or against him) may have become aware of the Antichrist by now on the basis of the points just discussed.

II Thessalonians 2:4 (refer above) gives the one blatantly obvious sign by which to identify the Antichrist, i.e., his sudden abrogation of his treaty with Israel after three and a half years i.e., the “Abomination of Desolation”. His confirmation of either earlier attempts at or establishment of a new and different treaty with Israel as noted may have been a prior but less obvious revelation of himself. Thirdly, at anytime, or at many times in the past, various individuals at some stage having worked out the number of his name adding to 666 in the Hebrew language might come to understand who Antichrist is. Antichrist’s actions at the “Abomination of Desolation” surely and finally confirm the ‘revelation’ of the Antichrist (which is Dr Fruchtenbaum’s main point). But there is every reason now why someone should be able, equipped or even inspired by God’s Spirit to work out who the Antichrist is by examining the name and calculating its number in Hebrew. That would require a certain set of skills but only through the Holy Spirit is any believer going to be able to discern that. Unbelievers, or those in ‘*active service*’ for Satan may well already know who he is for obvious reasons such as their involvement with him or by nefarious means such delving into the occult.

The last phrase of verse 8 has this all coming to a head in the last three days of the Apocalypse at which point Christ returns at Israel’s request and “destroys” Antichrist “at the brightness of His Coming”. Here Paul resorted to a metaphor to describe the Lord’s Second Coming. It will be such an amazing event that human language will only be able to use metaphors at present to even barely attempt to describe it. This is just like the

problem John had when he delivered *Revelation* to us or even what Ezekiel had tried to describe in his time on Earth. Other verses in the Old Testament and Revelation, also of necessity, somewhat metaphorically attempt to describe how Jesus destroys the armies of Antichrist. In spite of the obvious metaphoric limitations, other Old Testament verses describe how Jesus will finally walk up to Jerusalem and declare Himself to be King of the World (c.f., Fruchtenbaum's outline of events in *Footsteps of the Messiah*).

However, and most importantly, all this is in stark contrast with the True Church's justification which has been an ongoing almost daily situation as believers individually and personally have come to belief over the last two millennia. The Church of Christ is likened to a body but it is essentially composed of individuals who should be cooperating with each other as if they formed various organs of the body. That process of salvation of individuals in the 'Church'; in contradistinction to salvation of pre-Church or Old Testament saints; began from Pentecost AD 30. This Church Age only concludes at the Rapture. Even so, even after the Rapture, more people will continue to receive soteriological salvation via the Holy Spirit convicting them as He has always done since Adam. However, for the modern and currently apostate, agnostic or atheistic 'nation of Israel', that justification and soteriological salvation will occur over three days at the end of the Apocalypse. At that point, then and only then, Jesus comes to physically save Israel (with the Church saints and perhaps angels or even 'myriads' in tow). For Jesus' Church, or congregation (Hebrew קהל, *kohel*), her physical salvation and glorification suddenly come, completely and utterly *out of the blue*, so to speak, to her saints both dead and alive, at the Rapture.

In Addendum (O), one has reproduced Dr Fruchtenbaum's explanation of this point about the Antichrist's revelation in II Thessalonians 2:8.

(60) II Thessalonians 3:2-3, "The Lord is faithful .. to keep you from evil" can only be a reference to the Rapture especially if "evil one" is the better translation here. Obviously, we live in an evil world; and we are of course imputed with being the cause of that evil because of Eden; thus evil unsurprisingly has abounded even in the lifetime of this observer. Like many others, this observer has experienced evil directed at oneself. Thus, equally obviously, this verse must surely refer to our being kept away from "The Evil One" who is the Antichrist [refer Section (63) below]. The problem is that ever since the outrageous accusations about the identity of the Antichrist in the 16th and 17th centuries in Europe culminating in the nonsense of the Thirty Years War, there has been a concerted attempt to replace "the Evil One" with the more general word 'evil'. Unfortunately, keeping us from "evil" really makes no sense in the realities of today's world, the world of the previous century let alone the world even further back in History. Unless of course the Rapture has already occurred which is the null hypothesis of this paper. In which case we are all heading for the Apocalypse out of which only some of us will survive and those of us who pass away as sanctified believers will be resurrected as Tribulation Saints instead.

In fact, *The Passion Translation*, page 954, by Dr Brian Simmons, clearly prefers "evil one" because he gives an alternative reading of "guard you from evil" in a footnote, with the additional point that 'the evil' refers to "the unproductive and sinful ways of the past". In other sections of Scripture some expressions in this genre can be taken as a general reference to God's care for and protection of believers. However, here in Thessalonians in the context of the rest of the two epistles, likewise in John's writings and the gospels the prayer means to keep us from Antichrist (including the temptation to be sucked into

his deceptions). Thus it is better to see in the phrase “keep you from evil” an oblique reference to the Rapture or God’s way of rescuing us from ‘The Antichrist’ and other associated evils or evil people supporting and manipulating the world’s institutions to foment the chaos erupting these days in many different fields. Also, as the next verse tells us.....

(61) ... II Thessalonians 3:5, " ... the patient waiting for Christ" presumably via the Rapture. Paul was encouraging believers suffering many indignities for their belief and discipleship in Jesus. He must also have been aware that a long time, perhaps 2000 years; the same length of time between Abraham and Jesus who could have brought us to the city Abraham was looking for according to Hebrews 11:8 & 10; had to pass before Jesus would return to finally and at long last establish the kingdom they were all looking forward to. He also realized such a '*parousia*' could occur in the lifetime of himself and fellows being persecuted. After all if it had been four millennia between the Fall of Adam and the First Advent of Jesus the Saviour ("The Last Adam"). Eve mistakenly believed her first son would be the Saviour - more in hope perhaps than in any real expectation. After the Fall of Adam, two millennia passed before God called Israel's and Paul's great patriarch Abraham for the special mission God had for him, his son Isaac and Isaac's son Jacob. One of Jacob's sons, Benjamin, was the *great great grandfather* of Paul or the patriarch of the clan Paul was born into. Therefore Paul realised, one could be looking for a period of patient waiting of another two or more thousand years. No doubt that was another reason Jesus battled inside Himself in His Humanity to get Israel to accept Him in AD 30. However, the Church now awaits the Rapture assuming our null hypothesis is false and Israel must repent to bring about the Second Coming.

(62) I Timothy 4:1 gives us a general indication of what the "latter times" will look like as the Rapture approaches. The verse mainly applies to churches “departing from the Faith” and “giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils”. On one occasion as a visitor at a local church service, the author noted a song with the words “we are resurrected”. Following that, the preacher referred to Colossians 1:27 that “Christ is in you” (correctly) but without the second part “The Hope of Glory”. In a later reference to the ‘communion service’ that congregation conducted, the procedure failed on several accounts to follow the pattern for it laid down in the New Testament. For example, the preacher said it was a “remembrance” quite correctly. However he failed to make any reference to Jesus’ news then that He no longer would be able to drink of the fruit of the vine until He returns in the forthcoming kingdom when the Church would one day be in the Saviour’s physical presence as He rules Earth from Jerusalem. There was no reference to the fact that in participating we are “showing the Lord’s Death until he returns”. There was no reference either to the resurrection. In that last sense, the service looked more like a Roman Catholic Mass because the Vatican does not celebrate the Resurrection, Rapture and Second Coming either.

As noted in the Introduction, and in the discussion in Luke 21:27-36 and Revelation 3:11-12 the most sensible null hypothesis to all this is that the Rapture has already occurred. That might explain why one could witness such nonsense as noted here. However, having forty years previously attended that congregation, those things certainly would not have been said then. Thus, alternatively, what one witnessed that Sunday, forty years later, is exactly about what God had inspired the Apostle to tell Timothy his student. The people attending were clearly apathetic toward Scripture. And so Paul’s Holy Spirit inspired prophecy came to be written and handed down for 1900 years for those of us now living in the ‘Days of Noah and Lot’, and in the falling away of the churches, all of

which are mostly about the ***Season of the Rapture***.

(63) I Timothy 6:14-15, Here Paul encouraged Timothy to hold fast to the advice or commandment (I Timothy 6:11) he had given the young man "until the appearing (*epiphaneia*) of the Lord Jesus *the* Christ". The Greek word has idea of a memorable, conspicuous or notable appearance. With the Greek in mind, and in the overall context of the many verses discussed in this paper, it seems that "appearance" must refer to The Rapture. Obviously, if an appearance of Christ effectively completes or finishes the church's mission, the Second Coming in effect finishes the last seven years of Israel's ministry. In this chapter in Timothy, Paul is warning the church about the dangers of consumerism and wealth. For example, he cites, "The Love of money is the root of all evil" (verse 10). Instead of loving money he suggests we "be content with food and raiment" (verse 8). As already suggested, it would seem Paul and the other apostles were by this time even more aware the world was in for another 'Age' or 'Era' of many church generations [refer discussion in Sections (13) and (61)]. That is why Paul was preparing Timothy to be an elder for the next generation and to instruct him to then prepare younger believers for the generation to come after that. As we know, by the time the generation following Timothy's had died out Roman Catholic and other 'Establishment' Apostates (*Babylon*) began to take control of the churches.

The reference to Jesus being "King of kings and Lord of lords" (verse 15), the only true "potentate", and Who is from other scriptures the one and only "Son of Man crowned with Glory" (Psalm 8:4 and Hebrews 2:6-7) is also relevant here. The one whom this observer believes could be the Antichrist-666 has a name that literally means 'Majesty and King of kings'. That is when the syllables of the modern name are referred back to their meaning in the ancient languages they came from. In the context of these verses in the first epistle to Timothy and the falling away of churches and the way they are eliminating any references to the Second Coming, Rapture etc., any information that the Antichrist is now among us means that the Rapture must be any day now. The degree of urgent imminency is therefore dependent upon the extent to which Antichrist is already exerting his power, or his father is for him and on his behalf. The 'Christians' who believe the Scriptures teach we are already in the Millennium and are responsible for bringing about God's Kingdom (*Post-millennials*) therefore attempt to discredit or stamp out any such eschatological discussions or teaching.

(64) II Timothy 4:1, refers to Christ judging humanity "at His appearing and (*kai*) His Kingdom". The Greek conjunction (*kai*) initially suggests 'His appearing' and 'His kingdom' are two different things. The 'judgement' is of deceased and living people. This may mean that a judgement either occurs at an appearance of Him (Rapture or Second Coming) or secondly or lastly "in His Kingdom". But there are no other passages that suggest any sort of judgement occurs during the MMK. We do know from Scripture in the New Testament that in the Rapture Jesus takes church saints, both the living and dead (or deceased), into Heaven for judgement or evaluation there. At that 'evaluation', at His seat of judgement, we will learn how worthwhile our labours were on Earth and will be rewarded accordingly, if at all. If nothing we have done in this life was worthy we are nevertheless saved (I Corinthians 3:15) and preserved for the MMK and the Eternal Earth in the next universe. Therefore, this judgement of the quick and the dead in "His Hingdom" could refer to the 'evaluation' procedure in Heaven which obviously always is part of His Kingdom perhaps strictly in the Father's Kingdom or House but that nevertheless is where the Son will present His Bride to the Father. So all in all we clearly seem to have a Rapture passage here too.

Other options could also be canvassed. For example, Paul may be packing several things into one pithy statement. When it is opened up with analysis it reveals a progression of several things. Just like the revelation of the Antichrist there is a '**process**' to study here. During the Millennium, anyone who does not come to belief by the time he or she has reached their century; to borrow a term from cricket; he or she will die. In that sense, people could be said to have been "judged". However, it will not be until the Great White Throne, when the MMK ends, that person, resurrected, is judged with unbelievers of all time. There, the unbeliever finds out what is his or her state or status in the place of darkness, weeping and gnashing of teeth. Thus people will be judged in the sense that they die because they never acknowledge Christ throughout the century they live in during the MMK. The Millennial Kingdom, certainly in its very title of the 'Messianic Kingdom' is Christ's personal kingdom on Earth just as Satan enjoyed that privilege for billions of years before the Satanic rebellion.

The Interlinear Bible puts this as follows: "His being about to judge the living and dead (or deceased) according to His appearance and His Kingdom". Jesus' 'appearance' at the Rapture does not bring in His kingdom which is a bit later so the verse from this perspective seems more likely to be about the Second Coming. *The Passion Translation*, suggests, " .. The One who is destined to judge both the living and dead (or deceased) by the revelation of His Kingdom". These two versions, with the words "about to" and "destined to", render this passage a generic comment about future judgement in general. That brings us back to the point that the whole matter of 'judgement' is a long run process with various identifiable stages between the Rapture and the Great White Throne; a period, in all probability, of at least 1007 years. But the two translations also seem to be a bit laboured suggesting the translators, a team in one case and an individual in the other, had mixed or confused views about millennial, eschatological and prophetic statements in the Bible. This highlights the importance of reading Luke 17:22-37 as being Jesus' main Rapture statement. They therefore do not have clear distinctions in their minds between Israel and the Church, or an overall clarity about God's Long-term Programme (Plan or Will), or a clear distinction between Rapture and Second Coming.

Another perspective might be to consider Paul's use of the word "*epiphaneia*" (Strong 2015). This noun according to Strong refers to a "conspicuous, memorable or notable (implied) manifestation" and refers to "the brightness of the Christ". That might refer to the passage in Matthew 24:29 of the Shecinah Glory piercing the gloomy and dark clouds enveloping the globe in the fifth blackout as Dr Fruchtenbaum has listed them in *Footsteps of the Messiah* (2nd Edition, pp 356-7). But if we are considering the text in Timothy refers to both deceased and living people lining up at a judgement seat it could not apply to the sheep- and goat-Gentiles who are all alive at that judgement and separation into two different destinies. The Apocalypse-surviving sheep Gentiles are divided from the Apocalypse-surviving goat Gentiles but they are alive at that time. No dead people are judged at the Second Coming.

In the Seventy-five day interval that appears to separate the Second Coming from the first day of the MMK, only dead believers are resurrected to glory. That will consist of deceased Old Testament saints, both Jewish and Gentile (4000 BC to AD 30) joined by post-Rapture sheep-Gentiles who survived the Apocalypse and the Nation of Israel that survived to the last day of the Apocalypse. Over that seventy-five day period all those groups will be gathered together. That is both living and deceased believers. At the Rapture, all the deceased and living saints are swept up in one immediate action. They are dressed in new garments, appear before Christ's evaluation seat and find out what

awards they are to get. This other option is a drawn-out process covering two and a half months. That may be the case. However, Paul's letter to Timothy is after all an encouragement to Christians to persevere through all troubles, hold on fast to what they believe and that the Rapture is their reward leading to an award ceremony for labours here on Earth and finally a privileged position in Christ's Millennial Kingdom but only then.

Anyway, if we move on a few verses to verse 8, we read

(65) ... II Timothy 4:8, " there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness *and* ... to all those that love His Appearing **and His Kingdom**". Even if one concludes the reference in II Timothy 4:1 refers to the Second Coming with the phrase, "in His Kingdom"; presumably referring to the MMK; unless this is a general term for anything Godly or Good, which the 'Kingdom of God certainly is'; II Timothy 4:8 swings us back to the Rapture in regard to Christ's 'appearance'. However, one should note, Ephesians 5:5 refers to "the Kingdom of Christ and of God" where no idolaters, nor whoremongers will dwell. II Timothy 4:8 refers to an 'appearance' that comes with a "crown of righteousness" given to the recipient by a "righteous judge" but only to people that "love" and presumably await and expect His appearing". That's quite unlike Christ's appearance at the Second Coming where only sheep Gentiles and Israel will be pleased to see Him coming. The rest of the world will be shocked and aghast at His Coming.

Everyone involved with the Rapture will rejoice in His "appearing". This particular distribution of rewards and crowns of righteousness only occurs at the Judgement Seat of Christ which judges or evaluates Church members. They are not given to any unsaved people nor to sheep Gentiles saved at the end of the Apocalypse; nor to Israel. We can only receive those rewards in Heaven and very soon after The Rapture. That 'award ceremony' is in fact one reason for having the Rapture in the first place. It is part of the overall Plan Jesus has for His Church, *Kohel*, Congregation, Body or Bride. God despatches Jesus to fetch His bride, alone without the Father's presence, and once in the Father's presence the Son showers many or most us with pre-wedding gifts (awards) in Heaven. Meanwhile, the World is being showered with an array of terrible judgements and catastrophes until Jesus returns this time with God watching, instead of *staying at home* while Christ slays Antichrist (Matthew 16:27, Titus 2:13 and II Peter 3:12).

Thus the texts in Sections (64) and (65) really should be regarded as cardinal or critical passages ("unequivocally identifying the Rapture") on the Rapture along with the texts we use next to introduce the discussion in Section (66).

(66) Titus 2:13 together with Luke 17:22-37, Matthew 24:36-42, I Corinthians 15:52 and I Thessalonians 4:13-18, Titus 2:13 makes up the last in a group of five texts in the New Testament that this paper suggests are those unequivocally identifying the Rapture as an event and how it is separate and distinct from the Second Coming. Here the Rapture, almost certainly, is "The Blessed Hope" that Paul refers to. It is clearly distinguished here from the 'Second Coming' or "The Glorious Appearing" as Paul seems to say. Most people are apt to understand "The Glorious Appearing" and (Greek, *'kai'*) the "Blessed Hope" to be the same thing. As noted in Section (57) concerning II Thessalonians 2:1 we say here the Greek conjunction indicates two different things whereas in Thessalonians the conjunction is better interpreted to mean the 'coming of Jesus' and the 'gathering unto Him' are the same thing (event) although from the twin perspectives of Jesus coming from one place (Heaven) while we are coming into Heaven from our place (Earth) can also be regarded as two actions even if our uplifting is due to a heavenly

power or force. One's reasons for that interpretation are explained there. As our explanations of many other verses show, Titus 2:13 is referring to a pair of events. Therefore, probably, or on 'first principles' the "Blessed Hope" is not the same as the "Glorious Appearing".

The reader may think the author is trying to back two different horses with the same grammatical construction. But this just shows how carefully we have to read our Scripture and think about what we read and to consider them with as many other texts as practical or possible leaving out none which may be relevant. As Ephesians 1:17-18, Colossians 1:9, I Timothy 1:7, II Timothy 2:7 and I John 5:20 show us, the Spirit of God within us because we have believed Jesus in the first place is the most vital ingredient in the recipe for understanding Scripture. Methodology, understanding Hebrew, proper historical perspective etc., is also important. Aside from one's unique or contrasting interpretation of texts such as Exodus 4:8 or Luke 17:22-37, this paper diverts from usual approaches to interpretation by focusing on every verse where there is some sort of reference to God directly intervening in the affairs of man by the return or coming of Jesus of Nazareth which we argue is not two aspects of one thing but two different events with quite different purposes, rationales and objects to be **physically** saved while still being **soteriologically** save on the one and only same basis - Rapture and Second Coming. So we have been looking at any verse hinting or alluding to Jesus coming or appearing etc., as well as the more obvious or explicit texts. One has even considered a few others relating to the main reason for God's intervention via Christ's return. In support of the points here refer Psalm 78:1-7, Matthew 21:42, 22:29, Mark 12:24, Luke 24:27, 32 and 45, John 5:39, 7:52, Acts 15:21 and 17:11.

Another example where people routinely join two things together where they should not is Galatians 6:15-16. Having said that "in Christ there is neither circumcision nor uncircumcision" in verse 15, Paul in verse 16 blessed those who "walk according to this rule" and (Greek, 'kai') "The Israel of God" for whom, i.e., saved Jews still needing to be obedient to the Abrahamic Covenant, God still requires them to circumcise their eight-day-old baby boys in order to be eligible to receive the many remaining blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant now set aside for the Messianic Age. Here, there are two sub-groups within the Church just like men and women, slaves or masters, Barbarians (uncivilized and uncultured) and Greeks (civilized and cultured); the sorts of distinctions polite conversation does not mention these days; and, *horror of horrors*, Jewish and Gentile believers in the Church where the Jews are the "Israel of God" because they are that part of Israel that already is soteriologically saved on the basis of accepting Jesus of Nazareth is Messiah and Saviour. Thus the "Israel of God" consists of Jews physically circumcised under the Covenant with Abraham and metaphorically circumcised on the heart because they are begotten again in Christ like the rest of us in the Church of *the* Christ.

To the Galatians (or Chaldeans ancestors of today's Kurds in the area) Paul had to explain the New Covenant does not require any physical circumcision. The New Covenant requires only circumcision of the heart. But that was always necessary for any saved person including all those under the Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants (Genesis 17:11-12, Deuteronomy 10:16, 30:6, Psalm 40:8, Isaiah 51:7, Jeremiah 4:4, Ezekiel 44:7, Romans 2:29, II Corinthians 3:3 and Colossians 2:11). The only people who eventually enter the New Universe at the end of the Millennium are those who are 'circumcised on the heart'. The sheep Gentiles will enter the Messianic Kingdom because during the brief post-Rapture period prior to the Second Coming they also become "circumcised on the

heart” by giving a proper response to God’s Spirit convicting them of His salvation plans through Jesus’ sacrifice on the Cross.

Thus, the overall context of all other Biblical verses make far better sense to clearly distinguish here in Titus 2:13 between “the Blessed Hope” and the “Glorious Appearing (*epiphaneia*”, Strong 2015) of the Great God **and** Jesus Christ our Saviour”. In II Thessalonians 2:1, in contradistinction, Jesus appears and gathers us up in the same action. In the first place there is our hope in the Rapture where Jesus’ appearance seemingly is alone (or perhaps with “*myriads*” or angels). In the second, latter or last place is the Second Coming it seems everyone, even God Himself, comes to watch that event apart from deceased Old Testament and Tribulation saints or deceased unbelievers of the last six millennia.

Furthermore, Titus 2:13 suggests something else that is very interesting. One may even discern from the words “the glorious appearance of the Great God and (Greek, *kaī*) our Saviour Jesus *the* Christ” the presence of both “God” and the “Saviour Jesus *the* Christ” in that “Glorious Appearing”. In those two terms we see the presence of the First, Second and Third Persons of the Triune God. That means the ‘Father’ watches on as the ‘Son’ on that *Last Day* of the Apocalypse, effectively faces off against Satan’s son the Antichrist-666. Whether any of that can be read into this verse is subjective or even controversial but close inspection of this nature may partly explain why passages such as Daniel 12:4 & 9 are beginning to become extraordinarily relevant now.

Hints like this may well be telling us that God will be present somehow at the Second Coming whereas Jesus alone, within the Tri-Unity and in His Divinity, approaches Earth at the Rapture where He in effect leaves the Father, resident in Heaven, to fetch His bride resident on Earth. Thus in context with other Scriptures, this passage reassures us the Rapture is specifically about God sending His Son to fetch the Son’s Bride while the Father ‘*remains*’ in His House. At the Second Coming both the Father; currently estranged and divorced from Israel (Jeremiah 3:8, Hosea 2:2, 7, 19 and 20); and the Son; both ‘leave *home*’, the Son’s Bride in tow, to come and wreak destruction on Satan and the Antichrist. That’s because both God and the Church of the Christ are incensed that Satan and Antichrist are about to destroy Jesus’ Jewish “Brethren” **and** the Father’s former wife whom God has declared will be returned to Him not as his “*Baali*-husband” but as His “*Ishi*-husband” (Hosea 2:16). Of course, the ever-present Spirit of God convicts Israel in those last days as is the case with every believer.

To separate these things into two different events albeit during a relatively short period of perhaps no more than a decade can be contrasted with the two prophecies Isaiah gave to king Ahaz in Isaiah 7:14. They were fulfilled seven centuries apart. The prophecies to Ahaz in Isaiah 7:14 have to be singled out and distinguished from each other. To somehow merge them into one event, as most people attempt to do, is impossible especially from a grammatical perspective and due to the fact that two quite different audiences are addressed: Ahaz and Isaiah’s wee boy attending versus the entire “House of David”. In respect to the Rapture and the Second Coming it may well be that a mere seven years separate the two events rather than the seven centuries in Isaiah. One can see how Isaiah chapter 7 gives us an insight into how to interpret Titus 2:13.

In regard to the Greek text here, Strong’s Concordance (#1680) shows ‘hope’ as *elpis* (English, ‘*help*’?) but in #2015 and #2016 Strong says ‘appearing’ is *epiphaneia*. Strong also says “*epiphaneia*” contains the elements of “brightness” and that it is a “memorable,

notable and conspicuous” event. By implication, the Rapture is as secretive and comparatively invisible as well as a quick and sudden event. Perhaps its ephemeral nature is precisely because Jesus suggested there would be very little faith around when the Church is raptured (Luke 18:8). When Joshua was preparing to attack Jericho another ‘*Yeshua*’ appeared to Joshua saying He was “captain of the Lord’s army” (Joshua 5:13-15). That may well have been the Second Person of the Tri-Unity speaking. Or it may have been an angel. For the Old Testament, a “Theophany” is the term we use to describe when God literally comes to ground, to *terra firma*. Not as a ‘Theophany’ but in His resurrected body, Jesus will *come to ground* at the Second Coming but not at the Rapture. Indeed, at the Second Coming Jesus then destroys Antichrist’s army at the end of the Armageddon Campaign. After that, Jesus ascends the City of Jerusalem’s heights and announces the institution of His Kingdom of God which Israel rejected in AD 30. At the Rapture, Jesus only comes as far as the Upper Atmosphere. Perhaps He gets a little closer to Earth than the ‘Space Station’ currently up there at the moment. From ‘*up there*’, Jesus draws us towards Heaven for a short *space* of time (e.g., duration of the Apocalypse). Unbelievers are *left behind* to face apocalyptic judgement and the Antichrist-666 but with a hope for salvation both soteriological and physical if they repent as they definitely will be able to do.

In conclusion on this often overlooked verse, it may well be that it explicitly requires us to understand both the Father and Son are present at the destruction of Antichrist at the Second Coming. That’s because of what was happening on the Cross in those last three hours of darkness at the crucifixion. The light of the world *went out* while Satan had his pound of flesh at the Triune’s God’s expense when Satan ‘bruised the heel’ of our Lord. Man also was having his pound of flesh of unjustifiable complaint in the first three hours. Whether this modern world of sceptics likes it or not, God will have His pound of flesh at that moment Jesus slays Antichrist-666 in front of all of us gathered there.

We may also realise here that at the Crucifixion God removed His light (although presumably neither ‘energy’ nor ‘mass’) from the Universe as He had done after Satan’s rebellion. ‘*Light*’ probably did not return to the Universe, long after Satan’s rebellion (4.5 billion years?), until God’s Holy Spirit returned to this Universe in order to begin the seven-day process to re-format the devastated Earth. Then God prepared Earth for the Man, animals, plants and environment we see today albeit again damaged by catastrophes later in its intervening History including during the last 4.5 millennia since 2500 BC due to the need to arrest man’s pursuit of knowledge that would inevitably lead him into destroying himself and the biosphere because of his sinful imperfections in doing that. Thus the Flood, the Tower of Babel, the progress Egypt was making incurred massive catastrophic destructions, although not on the scale of that which destroyed Satan’s habitation on Earth. Instead God has a six thousand year programme to allow man to explore the consequences of eating from the Tree of Good Knowledge God placed in Eden. A programme designed to allow man to develop knowledge from the seeds he inherited from Adam and Eve and explore it from the perspective that without God, man will inevitably invent many evil devices like weapons of mass destruction, genetic catastrophes, environmental pollution etc. Through many discrete or unique emanations across many different communities, nations or empires across the globe showing that God has predicted everything and controlled everything so that at least some of us agree with Him and to His condition for salvation from this mess. The Rapture is only about Jesus being sent to Earth a little bit before the denouement of that six thousand-year programme to pick up His fiancé and bride to be. We have Hope, the unbelievers are hope-less.

(67) Hebrews 9:28 is primarily addressed to Jewish believers who were considering a return to temple worship because of the persecution Jewish 'Christians' were getting from unbelieving Jews. In that context, as Dr Fruchtenbaum looks at this verse in his "Commentary" on *The Messianic Jewish Epistles* (page 129), the 'appearance' here refers to the Second Coming and the installation of the Messianic Kingdom and the "full salvation" including glorification of all believers. He certainly believes the Rapture occurs before that. The reason for his stance is that one of the themes of *Hebrews* was to contrast the roles of the two 'Comings'. The First paid for sin and the Second Coming brings physical salvation and the fulfillment of the promise to bring in the Kingdom of God. We say that Exodus 4:8 shows all of that could have happened at the First Coming after the Resurrection. However, it is also acknowledged no one could have foreseen, even having read Exodus 4:8, which way Israel would *vote* in AD 30 until **after** the 'vote'. Nevertheless, it is true that in AD 30 there could have been salvation from sin **and** fulfillment of all the Kingdom Promises inherent to the Covenant with Abraham. Indeed, the whole world would have been liberated from its enslavement to Satan.

This clear reference to a "second" appearance therefore refers to the Second Coming or 'Advent' in contradistinction to the Incarnation, the Epiphany of II Timothy 1:10 or 'First Advent' in 7-6 BC. Just as the First (Hebrew, *Rishon*) was to Israel the second or Last (Hebrew, *Acheron*) in our 3-D *Aleph-Tav* Bible Study Method, is also to Israel - **but a later generation thereof**. However, that's only after the nation of Israel repents, the Church of *the Christ* (saved 'Messianic' Israelites or Jews and Gentiles) already being in a state of repentance and raptured from Earth into Heaven beforehand.

Thus, from the overall perspective of *Hebrews* these words do not represent a distinction between the Rapture and the Second Coming but between the "Incarnation" and the Second Coming. The words "unto them that look for Him" nevertheless can describe either the state of true church believers looking for the Rapture or sheep Gentiles and Israel looking for Jesus after the Rapture. The words "shall He appear the '**Second Time**' without sin" clearly are about physical salvation not soteriological salvation. Only those who come to soteriological salvation after the Rapture; on the last three days of the Apocalypse for Israel as a nation; will look to Jesus for physical salvation as we in the Church do now. "All Israel's" physical salvation implied in Romans 11:26 cannot be about the Church composed of believing Jews and Gentiles in the Rapture. Paul then was writing about unbelieving Israel which is still the case as it was when *Romans* was composed. That's why we can point to some sense in the Lord's musing 'Would he find faith on Earth when He comes' (Luke 18:8). It could make sense of world conditions at the Rapture but not for the Second Coming when there is at long last universal faith amongst Israel and quite a lot of faith found amongst (*sheep-*) Gentiles. There's no **guarantee** of faith being present at the Rapture, certainly not in the sense of Romans 11:26, whereas there is plenty of faith being exercised by the very *Last Day*.

We can still use this passage to reiterate the contrast between the two different roles of the Rapture then the Second (or Last) Coming. Unbelieving Israel gets left on Earth at the Rapture and comes to universal faith after it. The Second Coming for Israel combines both a soteriological salvation which must come first **then** a physical salvation within a Three Day period (Hosea 5:15 - 6:2) at the end of the Apocalypse. The Church of *the Christ* is composed only of already soteriologically saved saints both deceased and alive at any time. At the end of the Church's era, living believers are physically saved by the Rapture rather than *by* death. At any time, there always has been a future need for physical salvation of living believers. Our gracious God is going to deliver exactly that

perhaps shortly before or as the Apocalypse gets underway.

The "Second Coming" is really the Last Coming (the *Omega-Tav*) after The Incarnation (The First or *Alpha-Aleph*). For forty days after Jesus' Resurrection He made several appearances to the believers. That means on several occasions, at least, the resurrected Christ traversed Heaven and Earth. His next appearance to Israel is really the "Last", not 'Second' of several if not many 'appearances' between His Advent in 7 BC and on several occasions in AD 30. The Church has long been *without sin* (AD 30 to the Present). However, "Israel" remains in sin and rebellion. Israel remains in that situation until the third-last, second-last and last-days of the Apocalypse.

(68) Hebrews 10:25, "As ye see the day approaching" again most likely refers to the coming judgement on Jerusalem in AD 70. So the verse is not about either the Rapture or the Second Coming. The perspective in this paper is that most references to Jesus' comings or appearances after the Gospels refer to the Rapture. However, here in Hebrews, historical context again is critically important otherwise people get the wrong idea about this 'approaching day'.

This reminds us of some early references in the gospels by Jesus talking about "when the Son of Man comes". Then, He was simply referring to His later arrival in various towns and cities having sent disciples out before Him probably as early as AD 27. Jesus obviously anticipated visiting most of Israel's towns and villages before He completed His mission. Jesus' mission was to get Israel to truly repent in order to allow Him to bring all suffering to an end in the MK (Messianic Kingdom) that we now know to be the MMK or **Millennial** Messianic Kingdom. In effect, this was to begin the process Paul wrote about in I Corinthians 15:21-28. Of course I Corinthians 15:21 and 22 gives a concise explanation for the world in the first place falling from the "Very Goodness" of Genesis 1:31 (בְּטוֹב דָּאֵמַן , *tov me'od*). Then, in I Corinthians 15:23-8, beginning "at Christ's Coming (*parousia*) "comes" (also *parousia* by inference) the process leading to the "end" in the last clause of verse 28 [refer Section (35)]. Outside the major cities (e.g., Jerusalem and Nazareth) there would have been many places scattered around Israel and surrounding districts where there were significant numbers of Jews living. Also, Jesus would have had to back-track three times each year as He would have to return to Jerusalem for various feasts and Temple services or at least the three major ones (*Pesach*, *Shavuot* and *Sukkoth*). Most observers miss this point. God only gave Israel a small amount of territory so that the Son would be able to walk through it to give His message to the people. The instructions to the 'advance guard' of disciples were to prepare the ground for Jesus to speak of for Himself and God's Plan and to get the local populations ready to meet Him and listen to what He would have to say. Nor were those early references in the Gospels relevant to either the Rapture or Second Coming. But for these Hebrew recipients of this epistle it will be the coming of the armies of Vespasian and Titus that were to concern them because they were living reasonably near Jerusalem if not in the city itself. There is a certain irony about Vespasian. He began the construction of the Coliseum when Jerusalem's Temple collapsed to the ground, not one stone left unturned.

The warnings to the "Hebrews" of Judea might also be a clue for us in the Church today. We have only two passages referring to the Days of Noah or Lot (Matthew 24:37-38 and Luke 17:28-29) but they likewise may be a warning the Rapture Day is 'approaching'. [For more on this, refer to Addendum (Aii)]. The Days of Noah and Lot turned did not turn out to be a warning to Jesus' disciples. Although they would "long for one of the days of the Son of Man", one this paper holds is the Rapture, it would be one they "would not

see". Thus it was for a later generation to "see". The warning or expectation applies to our current situation as we see our 'Rapture Day' approaching rather than being concerned about Titus' armies. Actually, we are facing Antichrist's *orchestras* to restrict freedom of movement, speech etc. Through the use of 'Double Entendre' in passages like Hebrews 10:25 we plausibly can treat that "Day Approaching" as The Rapture or the rise of Antichrist-666 instead of Titus' armies.

Through the indwelling Holy Spirit, we receive God's *Erevo*n-Pledge or guarantee that He will complete all His Plans but we need to move onto the meat of Scripture (Hebrews 5:12 to 6:1) to properly understand what really is happening now. Instead of fearing Titus' armies back then (or Antichrist's henchmen today), or that we have missed out on "The Rapture", we should be heeding to the details in the Bible's words, "the more sure word(s) of prophecy" (II Peter 1:19).

(69) Hebrews 10:37 Again, having looked at Sections (67) and (68), it is tempting to think this verse refers to Jesus. Some Bible references show a link between this verse and Luke 18:8 which this paper suggests is an important verse to show that The Rapture could occur at a time when true faith is scarce. In verse 38 the writer says "the just shall live by faith", hence perhaps the idea that the verse could be linked with Luke 18:8. But the reference to faith there is in contradistinction to "drawing back" from faith solely for apparently short-term gains or mitigating losses. Then *Hebrews* goes into the famous 'Faith Chapter'. There, in Hebrews 11:5 of the Faith Chapter is the reference to Enoch "who by faith .. was translated that he should not see death". That of course sets a principle or precedent for the Rapture's 'Translation' of living saints when Jesus comes for His Bride, the Church. Perhaps what one can best say here is that Luke 18:8, just like many other verses, should drive the reader to the eleventh chapter of *Hebrews*.

However, continuing with the direction Dr Fruchtenbaum has given us, "He that will come shall come, and will not tarry" more likely refers either to Caesar Vespasian or Titus who finally sacked Jerusalem after Vespasian initiated the onslaught. What the writer, probably Paul (Hebrews 10:34) may be saying is that Jesus' prophecy about the sacking of Jerusalem and the complete destruction of the Herod-extended temple of Ezra, Zerubbabel, Nehemiah *et al*, was imminent by the time these *Hebrews* received this letter. Moreover, the letter is even suggesting, as Jesus had warned, these believers get ready to flee Jerusalem and the surrounding regions to escape the ravage that would inevitably arrive. The Greek words for 'come' used here are *erchomai* and *heko*. The writer here did not use *parousia* which seems in general to refer to the Second Coming and, or, The Rapture. Though there is some debate about that because *parousia* while often used in those eschatological senses, *parousia* is also used in some everyday uses. II Thessalonians 2:9 even refers to the Antichrist's appearance or revelation ("*parousia*").

Overall, it is better to stick to the view Hebrews 10:37 refers to Jesus' prophecy about the stones of Herod's temple (Matthew 24:2, Mark 13:2 and Luke 21:6). Instead, these Hebrew believers in Jesus of Nazareth as Messiah and Saviour were thinking of returning to temple services that refused to recognise Jesus' sacrifice in order to get onside with unbelieving Jews who controlled the local economy. Jesus had said every building block of the temple would be completely over-turned in the destruction of AD 70. These Hebrew Christians were living in a politically and socially invidious situation just like us now. But the writer reminded these Hebrew Christians that their situation paralleled those of previous generations of Israel. In Hebrews 10:32, they are called to "remembrance of former days". They were when "illuminated" believers like Jeremiah whom the *Jewish*

government had thrown down a well and left to die, or even Joseph who ended up as a slave in Egypt due to his brothers' jealousy of him, were greatly afflicted for their fear of and faith in God. Ebed-Melech an Ethiopian believer rescued Jeremiah. After enduring much suffering, Joseph ended up serving Egypt as Prime Minister to four pharaohs of the 11th Dynasty (Montuhotep I and three successors named after Joseph (Inyotef I, II and III). That history has nothing to do with the Church, barely 35 years old by this time.

These Hebrew Christian believers should be remembering the Jeremiah's and Joseph's of the previous 2000 years as they awaited Rome's armies coming to destroy much of Jerusalem and the temple despite Caesar's instruction not to destroy it. Just like Jeremiah and Joseph they needed to trust in God. Apparently they did and went on to survive and, relatively speaking, prospered. Modern historians do not know this but the Caesars (e.g., Claudius) almost certainly knew about the very first observation Jesus made in His Olivet Prophecies concerning the temple. The Caesars had spies and contacts in Jerusalem. The Caesars wanted to frustrate that prophecy so Titus and Vespasian specifically ordered the temple to be spared and protected perhaps as a heritage site and, of course, to discredit Jesus as world governments today (including the Vatican) are still doing. Satan also needed to frustrate Jesus' prophecy and currently uses governments and the airwaves (Ephesians 2:2) to achieve that objective. Embarrassingly, Rome's governor, Pontius Pilate, had executed an innocent man, in fact "the Son of God" as the centurion at the Cross recognised. A short time before the Crucifixion of Jesus, the Caesar at the time (Tiberius) was doing what many Roman Catholic priests have been found guilty of in recent times. Likewise today for us, Jesus will not tarry and we'll soon be out of here in The Rapture.

But the "He that will come shall come", and would not tarry, probably also indicates the writer of Hebrews was aware that Daniel 9:26 had warned Israel about "the people of the prince that shall come" who would destroy Jerusalem very soon after the Messiah was "cut off" after "sixty-two" 'weeks of years' (or sixty-nine with the previous seven included). So *Hebrews* author(s) was linking Matthew 24:2, Mark 13:2 and Luke 21:6 with the flood or army of Daniel 9:26. What they certainly could not have known then was that the future Roman prince; seemingly associated with this 'flood' to modern readers; who would sign a seven-year covenant with Israel (Daniel 9:27) would come another two millennia even further into the distant future. In this twenty-first century, we still cannot be sure if this Daniel 9:27 aspect is very close to fruition. Nevertheless, many signs are present that we are indeed now near that time; the time of the Antichrist-666.

The perspective from one's special or unique interpretation of the Exodus 4:8 situation fortifies Dr Fruchtenbaum's apparent split in the timing (by two millennia) of the two aspects of this situation of a 'people' of a 'prince that shall come'. A parallel situation occurs in Isaiah 7:14 where one child is Isaiah's son, a toddler, in 700 BC, but another child is mentioned, i.e., "Immanuel" or God's Son in *circa* 7 BC. That "people" turned out to be the Romans in AD 70 but that "Prince that shall come"; who would also by necessity therefore have to be Roman; would now have to come even or much later because Israel rejected the "Voice of the First Sign" of Exodus 4:8. What might seem to be one event, that could have been the case if Israel had accepted the "Voice of the First Sign" (raising of Lazarus, a.k.a., Simon the Leper and Pharisee), would now concern **two different events**, the second long after the first. As with one's *theorem* from the discovery of the identity of the cities the ancient Israelites built for the Pharaoh being on the one site but built hundreds of years apart; the destruction of Jerusalem by a Roman army would be in AD 70 but the coming of the prince who also comes up against Jerusalem, having

signed a 'treaty' with the government there, takes place on the eve of the Second Coming and still in our future nearly two millennia later.

In Daniel 9:27, the "he" in the first clause thus refers to this future prince but his career is described further back in chapters 7 & 8 of Daniel. This is a specific construction Dr Fruchtenbaum uses in his *Footsteps of the Messiah* (Second Edition) page 2 193-5. Therein, Fruchtenbaum explains how the Hebrew antecedent ('he', "the article of previous reference") requires the reader to go back to passages such as Daniel 7:8, 20-25 and 8:23-25 where an 'eleventh horn' appears to take control of ten others and even eliminates ("uproots") three. That same person will even attempt to "stand up against the prince of princes" (Daniel 8:25). As one has stated, the candidate currently suspected to be the Antichrist-666 has a first name meaning 'majesty' and a surname meaning 'king of kings'. Transliterated from Latin into Hebrew, the name adds to 666. In the meantime, we will have to wait and see.

The stance in this paper is that we need not worry much about this forthcoming prince. The Rapture removes us from his grasp. At the moment, our candidate is a young adult presumably under tutoring for his future task. We pray for deliverance from this 'Evil One'. That's a prayer that will be positively answered. What we need to do now is warn people so they too can escape this forthcoming 'prince', our one and only task in this matter, and make sure those who do have to face him have access to Bibles so they can work out what is happening to them, or will happen to them after the Rapture they have presumably missed out on. Our work now may even be something that helps those who experience the Apocalypse to find their way to salvation if we have not been able to warn them beforehand or been unable to convince them before we leave.

(70) James 5:7-10, In these verses there is a subtle emphasis on imminence therefore the Rapture. In verses 7 & 8, James referred to the "Coming of the Lord". He used the Greek '*Parousia*' (Strong, # 3952) for 'coming'. That word appears about 17 times in our survey of verses including the inferred case of I Corinthians 15:24. Here "*parousia*" suggests the Rapture and not the Second Coming because of the affinity that Greek word has with our word 'appear' and perhaps a brief one even then! In many ways, the Rapture is more of an 'appearance' than a 'coming' as with a Jewish groom briefly and suddenly turning up but just to take his bride to his father's place. A thief does his job then leaves as quickly as he came instead of staying as 'coming' can imply. The Second Coming is a 'once-and-for-all' event such that when it does happen there is no hint of any going-away or 'departure' ever again and in the 'thief' metaphor Jesus comes to steal away the world's kingdoms from Satan (*passim*, Luke 4:5-7). At the Second Coming, Jesus clearly comes to stay! The exhortations remind us of the eventuality of us being with the Lord but either the Second Coming or The Rapture ultimately meets that condition. James' epistle is within the Hebrew group of letters in the New Testament, so James may have had in mind the Second Coming in thinking about his Jewish audience. 'Being with the Lord' can even include the state of being we have now as members of the Body of Christ with the permanent and indwelling Holy Spirit of God (The Comforter). 'Being with the Lord' is also a term sometimes used to refer to a deceased saint. James, like all the authors in the New Testament is writing to the Church so one would think the default group being referred to "being with Him" would normally mean the Church, not Israel, Old Testament Saints, Tribulation Saints etc. They are with Him later.

In verse 10, James referred to the suffering of the prophets but today it is God's Bible-Historians who are ridiculed and ostracized. Today's 'Laodicean churches' resent being

told they are like the synagogues of Jesus' day even though Revelation 3:14-22 prophesied this and it is like the nation of Israel was a few generations after the return from Babylon in the sixth century BC. Israel's synagogues gradually slipped back into a different type of unbelief from the previous generations of idol worshippers of Israel. The synagogues and their 5th Century BC fore-runners never returned to idol worship but by 300 BC or so they had already lost interest in what the Bible had to say. Some Jews and a few Gentiles still took notice of the Bible. However, when Jesus did arrive, most had become rather apathetic to the Bible's prophecies, thought little about its History, and devoted themselves to carving out a good life under whichever imperial power controlled the Land (Times of the Gentiles). To be sure there was a small group of keen observers of the Scriptures' messages. They were the ones like Anna and Simeon who very quickly recognised whom Jesus was when Joseph and Mary first brought Him into the temple.

(71) I Peter 1:3-13, Verse 3 commences with the "hope" we have "by the resurrection of Jesus *the* Christ from the dead", and refers to "an incorruptible inheritance reserved in Heaven ...". In "Heaven" our inheritance is registered for us, so to speak. In the security of God's Heaven our *entitlement deeds* are stored. Our names are written in the *Book of Life* there. However, this 'inheritance' is experienced through Eternity firstly in the Millennial Kingdom here on Earth then on the New Earth in the next Universe. Nowhere does Scripture tell us we will be in Heaven forever and only after each believer dies. It is true that since the Cross every saint's soul from the death of Adam's generation to those who died before the Cross are now resident in Heaven. The soul of every deceased saint of the Church Age also resides in Heaven. But our bodies are not yet in Heaven, glorified or resurrected. The Rapture takes us into Heaven for the purpose of *picking up those entitlement deeds* to extend any metaphorical aspect a little further. For our future tasks or work in the Millennium, we also will receive **in Heaven** our commissions or *job descriptions* at the Judgement Seat of Christ.

In verse 5, all this is to be "revealed in the Last Time" (c.f., Daniel 12:4 & 9 and Hebrews 1:2) probably because for the meantime (*circa* AD 50 to the 1990's or even 1/1/01) we only could see "through a glass, darkly" (I Corinthians 13:12). Also in the meantime, verse 7, our faith is put under trial by fire until "the appearing of Jesus *the* Christ". Three times, Peter uses the word '*apokalupto*' (Strong 601) which means to "take off the cover, disclose or reveal". Thrice, Peter uses '*apokalupto*' in verse 5 (KJV, "revealed"), verse 7 (KJV, "appearing") and in verse 13 (KJV, "revelation"). However, James, as noted in the previous section, used "parousia" twice. It is interesting these two early leaders in the Church, both Apostles commissioned by Jesus, when encouraging us to be patient in our trials until He comes back, used two different Greek words for the 'coming' or 'revelation' of Jesus who will relieve us from trials. They are '*apokalupto*', often associated with "apocalypse" and "parousia". Therefore, it is easy to see why readers understand that relief to come at the Second Coming. Hopefully, one's analysis taking a much broader sweep of the matter leads one to conclude the very sudden and unexpected Rapture, which could happen at any time, is the real subject they are discussing. They used both Greek words in the sense of 'lifting the lid' (opening the sky to reveal-) or 'appearing', the latter being the closest English word to '*ap-parousia*'. The Rapture is not some distance away as is the world's assault through Antichrist's leadership on Israel. The son of Satan is not yet in position to command the world's armies or the kings that control them, although his 'father' does. Peter concludes these thoughts in verse 13 with an exhortation to "*train* our minds, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of the Lord Jesus *the* Christ" in order to be ready at that

'Last Time'.

But what is that "Last Time" in I Peter 1:5? As a general principle, we deduce from the analysis in these papers that the Old Testament prophecies are all about, and only about, the Second Coming and its purpose to fulfill, for the most part, the promises in the Abrahamic Covenant. Some of those promises, as we can now understand *ex post*, cannot be fulfilled until the Millennium which will largely be about the Glory of God in achieving them. Peter and James would have been looking forward to that so they encouraged fellow Jewish believers with such hopes. We also note that until Israel's actual rejection of Jesus, originally implied by Exodus 4:8, all Old Testament prophecies; apart from those about the actual Millennium itself such as the Temple of those days described in the last chapters of Ezekiel; could have been fulfilled at that First Coming. The "Millennium" would then have been completed in AD 1030. By then, in Europe, many in Christendom believed they were on the threshold of Doomsday. Thus, it follows most New Testament passages must refer primarily to The Rapture unless we can specifically and definitely show they are Second Coming passages. The main New Testament prophecies about the Second Coming are in Matthew 24:3-35, Mark 13:3-31 and Luke 21:5-33. They are about "Last Time" events concerning unrepentant Israel (and Gentiles) or concerning the situation to befall Israel *circa* AD 66-70. The Old Testament believer, in spite of the wording of Exodus 4:8, could never anticipate the AD 30 rejection of Jesus hence no one could ever envisage the Rapture nor the Church Age nor its special saints who would be physically rescued by it. Likewise, where the Apostles speak in the epistles etc., there was little need for them to refer to the Second Coming except; as this paper does; to compare and contrast certain things. Although as Jewish believers, Peter and James were clearly interested in Israel's future in the Millennium. The "Second Coming", or God rescuing Israel from physical destruction by Antichrist, in effect had been adequately outlined in the Old Testament. The New Testament nevertheless did clarify many prophecies in the Old Testament especially in regard to the sequence of those events explained in *Revelation*. The Apostles effectively looked forward to the Rapture but probably unaware Luke 17:22 meant they would not "**see**" but be '**in**' it.

In respect to God's perspective on the "Last Time", throughout the ages, while the Bible has been composed by a succession of generations of scribes, part of God's 6000-year Plan has been to obfuscate Man's understanding of certain Scriptures until the very Last Days of Daniel of the Last Era of Hebrews 1:2 or of I Peter 1:20. This does not solely apply to prophecies in eschatology. Elsewhere, one also has suggested God has been blocking and obfuscating Mankind's plans to solve all his problems with scientific or technological knowledge until the Six Millennia Plan meets its deadline and not before (e.g., in AD 1657 as some then thought or hoped for). This also applies to other matters that our modern scientific, archaeological, linguistic, genetic and historical data can help us explain. For example, issues pertaining to Creation, what happened before the Flood or at the Tower of Babel, explain how God used catastrophes to afflict the Earth as a result of extra-terrestrial factors etc. All that History or ***His Story***, properly understood, brings the Biblical record into a much sharper relief than most might have imagined.

(72) I Peter 4:7, "The end of all things is at hand" is an exhortation to be sober and keep praying. Peter was writing to fellow Jewish believers although his instruction here is useful for every believer, Jewish- or non-Jewish, i.e., Gentile. One question here is what Peter meant by "the end is at hand". As we have noted from Luke 17:22, if by that he meant the 'Rapture', Peter would not be alive to **see** the Rapture but from his grave be **in it**. This is an interesting way of looking at Scripture that arises out of the overall

framework of Biblical interpretation one is developing here. That is because of the unique interpretation adopted here to understand verses like Exodus 4:8, Daniel 12:4 & 9 and Luke 17:22. More is said about this paper's unique perspective about what Jesus said concerning "the End" in the Olivet Discourse in Addendum (Av), *Nation against Nation*. Again, as we considered in the *Hebrews* passages, near the end of his life, Peter might have been considering all the friction growing between Rome and Israel when he wrote, "the end of all things is at hand". He spent some time in Rome before his execution so perhaps he had inside knowledge about Rome's plans for Judea as AD 70 approached.

However, from what we understand about the "imminency" of the Rapture, Peter, quite legitimately, still had to tell the 'lambs' to whom this first epistle is primarily directed to be continuously vigilant and prepared for the Rapture or the "Day" that everyone would "long for" but "would not see" at last as far as Peter and his fellow apostles were concerned presumably because they would be deceased by then. His advice, one believes and assumes, came to us under Holy Inspiration. However, Peter himself may not have clearly understood, and was not meant to (John 21:21ff), matters of timing, sequence and chronology concerning "The End". That's been set for the Last Generation of the Church, not the First though the actual day of the Rapture itself always remains hidden but its season would become apparent (and perhaps is).

"The End", as Peter puts it here, if some may think it refers to the Last Day of the Apocalypse, is not likely to be characterized by carousing and revelries. To be drunk or having parties as the Second Coming draws near; the world encased in a gross and frightening darkness; is probably the last thing on the minds of those suffering the Apocalypse. They will have so many other terrible things to deal with. Antichrist will be dragging everyone at every turn and with exceeding urgency into the effort to destroy Israel. That will mean there is no time for parties and riotous living. Then the world is being corralled into destroying Israel - the parties, presumably, only begin once that task is completed. That will never be the case!

Instead, Peter's advice here is more useful, pertinent or relevant to someone who is living in comparatively *normal* circumstances and likely to be tempted to join a local orgy or at least neglect the spiritual life. During a 'Good Time' is when the Rapture most likely occurs albeit around the time of the Days of Noah and Lot wherein, implicitly in Luke 18:8, few people with true saving faith might still be alive. So in those contexts the "end" could only be a reference to the Rapture and it still could have been "at hand" because Peter could be executed or die like anyone at any moment after AD 30.

(73) I Peter 5:4, says "When the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive the crown of glory that fades not away". Here Peter used '*phaneroo*' (Strong 5319, to render apparent or manifest). Perhaps it is not so much a statement about the Lord's return but a description of things that will happen then. In modern farming systems, the shepherd appears to take some sheep away for some treatment, shearing, lambing to put the ewes into a warm comfortable barn for. He may take the entire flock away to a new paddock. The shepherd does not come to stay in the paddock with the sheep and live among them. So the picture really tells us more about the Rapture. The sheep of His flock are one flock but He has another one at least (Matthew 10:6, John 10:16). Here the use of the 'shepherd' motif supports the view that the Rapture is the matter under discussion. The reference to a crown of "glory" takes us back to the discussion on Ephesians 1:11,18 and II Thessalonians 1:10 where we noted Jesus is our inheritance and the Church is His inheritance. Likewise for His Glory being ours and our's in Him. So Peter seems almost

certainly to again be referring to the Rapture here. Jesus' role as "Chief Shepherd" has many functions and one will be to divide Gentiles into 'sheep' and 'goats' at the Second Coming. Those events have nothing to do with the point Peter is making in this verse. In his epistles, Peter was fulfilling the Lord's instruction to feed and nourish the lambs and the sheep of the Church (John 21:15-17). He is not necessarily addressing any other 'flock' such as Israel enduring the Apocalypse and about to be destroyed by Antichrist.

The Rapture takes us; or the sheep and lambs in His Church (Matthew 16:18); into Heaven to receive our rewards and crowns that do not "fade away". Those who are eligible, receive these crowns of glory at the evaluation-judgement seat of Christ. The Rapture is about Jesus' 're-appearance' in order to take us away into Heaven for those purposes. This is not the return to Earth to rule as king although that comes quite soon afterwards if our analysis of sequence and timing is accurate. Although Jesus is "Chief Shepherd" for Israel, the Church and even for sheep Gentiles saved during the Apocalypse, it is Church members alone that receive crowns not either of the other two groups certainly as far as other New Testament texts suggest. Israel receives all the remaining and outstanding blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant in the Messianic Kingdom. They are never described as "crowns". The Church and sheep Gentiles (and their descendants) share in the benefits of *Abraham*.

(74) II Peter 3:1-4, This chapter is the last in Peter's second epistle. It is written to the 'sheep' or mature believers in the church. Its main *meaty* subject is eschatological and about conditions in the **Last Days**. That period, we believe, will be witness to both the Rapture and the Second Coming. In verse 2, he directs the minds of the 'sheep' (he wrote to the 'lambs' still drinking milk in the first epistle) to "words which were spoken before by the holy prophets". Here he is writing in the vein of II Peter 1:16-19 where he points out what we believe is not cunning fable. Also, even if the records of the past are doubted then the "more sure word of prophecy" will eventually confirm the record of the past. Peter is linking past, present and future into one continuum. This reminds us we are not dealing with just the past or just the present or the future or even any pair of those but systematically and dynamically dealing with all three at all times. Prophecy and eschatology are major themes in the Bible. Together with History, most of the Bible is nevertheless about the past and the future and God's Plan for all that. However, each generation of believers has to understand the Scriptures from the perspective of the unique place on that time-line each generation finds itself on. Above all, it is "the more sure word of Prophecy (II Peter 1:19) that we value the most. As scientists, our hypotheses and methods of gathering data and other factors are very important but it is the model's predictions that make that work worthwhile. More often than not, it is the predictions that will win the research contract and *jobs for the boys and girls*.

In verse 3 Peter refers to scoffers surfacing in a big way in the last days of the church era. The scoffing as we can now see is the result of a long-running programme of disparaging the Scriptures. Chief among those sceptics are modern scientists. Many no longer truly follow the rules of science. Their acolytes talk about the "bedrock" of science when in fact much science today is more like a marshmallow. In particular, today's widespread disparagement of the Bible has been achieved by using a false explanation of how things came into being (evolutionism). Then, especially from *circa* AD 1900, archaeologists have built up a falsified chronology hence history of mankind. More recently, they have achieved this by constructing a false chronology for one of Israel's long-running *partners* in ancient History i.e., Egypt. In verse 4 he writes they will cynically inquire after "the promise of His coming". They have swallowed all the false science and history yet they

still ask that question. These people sound like the pharisees of Luke 17:20. One of the claims of the sceptics is that many before have predicted Jesus is returning yet there has been no sign of Him. Technically, they are of course correct on that charge. However, they also have the intellect to realise that does not rule out the possibility that Jesus will indeed return one day. They should realise that many amateur theologians and even professionals are sometimes bad at their jobs just like many scientists or even doctors and teachers. So they are hypocrites in reality. The world's belief that mankind has been running around the planet for at least a million years means that no one reads *Genesis* any longer. They certainly do not read *Genesis* in the Hebrew language. They have not reviewed the Hebrew, with the benefit of the very latest scientific data of the last twenty-five years, to show how much light it can throw on what the text actually is saying. They preach that man's earliest ancestors on Earth probably go back at least 44 million years when they survived a catastrophe that destroyed dinosaurs. They ignore the prophecy in the Bible because they no longer believe in the Bible's reliability regarding the history of mankind on Earth.

However, the key point here about "His Coming" in verse 4 is that scoffers are uttering those words. They never bother to delve deeply into the Bible to see what it exactly says about Jesus coming again or coming back. They are not concerned about any distinction between the Rapture and the Second Coming. They do not realise that the Second Coming is a known day. It comes at the end of a known seven-year period called, properly named Daniel's Last Seventieth Week but colloquially referred to as "The Apocalypse". By the time everyone knows who the Antichrist is, the Apocalypse begins or is well under way. But the Rapture can come anytime now, tomorrow or later. Nor are they aware the Rapture **removes** a body of soteriologically saved believers plus the "dead in Christ" into Heaven while the Second Coming has Jesus **returning** to Earth to stay and rule with the aforementioned resurrected church **returning** with Jesus from Heaven. So here we have a statement that is about neither Rapture nor Second Coming but a report of the scepticism of unbelievers prior to either or both events.

A similar subtlety of interpretation is needed with some other scriptural statements. For example, when the Bible says Isaac trembled (Genesis 27:33) the normal view taken is that he did so with fear but it could equally have been with excitement and praise because God had ensured His Prophetic Word would prevail. Many other saints have experienced this at one time or another. When ten of the twelve spies Moses sent into Canaan returned saying the "Nephilim" were still in the land (Numbers 13:33), usually translated "giants" in our Bibles, they were of course lying because the Flood that Peter spoke of in II Peter 3:6 had destroyed all offspring of the fallen angels and women. But many people take the ten spies' words at face value and assume nephilim did survive the Flood. Certainly the majority of Israel agreed with the ten spies and doubted the truth put forward by Joshua and Caleb. Every translation of Genesis 4:1 has Eve saying that she gave birth to Cain "with the help of the Lord" or words to that effect. She really said, "I have given birth to a man the Jehovah" clearly thinking she had given birth to God. But it would not be the case until Mary who could truly say such a thing and then even only in reference to the Son of God. That's why the angel told her to name Jesus "*Yeshua*" or Saviour and not Jehovah". But that's just poor translation.

In another vein, one has to be careful to exactly note who is actually saying something and not always assume the speaker is honest. Also, consider whether he or she is an unbeliever. We also noted above how in Revelation 6:17 that only after the opening of the fourth seal, in other words very late into the Apocalypse, do the **unbelieving**

inhabitants on Earth finally admit that God's great day (or seven years) of wrath that believers had been warning them about really had come to pass. Many people wrongly conclude that the Church is still there on Earth at that time and crying out that the Day of Jacob's Trouble etc., had arrived. No, it is steadfastly unrepentant unbelievers saying this. In fact, the Church will no longer be on Earth then as should already be clear now from I Thessalonians 1:10. Some people by the time of the fourth seal will have repented, the Rapture having already occurred much earlier or even before the Seventieth Week began. But in Revelation 6:16 & 17 it is unbelievers saying that about the Lamb's Wrath (verse 16) and His (God's) wrath (verse 17). In the past, they had not been able to bring themselves to believe what the Bible said. They were so sure any talk about God or what the Bible said was fairy tales and myths. In the situation of Revelation 6:16-17 they finally wake up to what is happening to them. Perhaps, even at that very late stage, some of them will even then repent but the context suggests otherwise.

(75) II Peter 3:5-13, Those who say the Church Age is Christ's millennium (post-millennials) are generally not looking for the Lord's coming any time soon either, because we are a long way off getting Earth to become 'Christian'. Amillennials simply expect world conditions to deteriorate so severely that God is forced to intervene and we cannot have any idea when that will be. This effectively means only pre-millennials consider the subject. Post-millennials are much too focused on science and technology making the world better and the more the people who turn to their version of Jesus the better. Outside the church, most people are anyway sceptics about any claims of a Second Coming because they have heard it all before and things remain much the same likethe point Peter made in verse 4 ("all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of the creation"). Nevertheless, Peter points out how ignorant they are of the past and that assuredly God is going to fulfill all His plans even if from Man's perspective God is taking too much time doing this. II Peter 3:8 makes the point that a millennium is nothing in God's sight. It's a lifetime for men like Adam and Methuselah but for us it's an eon because we only get seventy or eighty years of life here on Earth.

In verses 5 to 7, Peter seems to be referring to both the flood that destroyed the world after Satan's rebellion then the flood that destroyed the post-Edenic but pre-Noahic world as Noah and his family knew it. Earlier, in II Peter 2:5-7, the Apostle referred to the times of "Noah" and of "Lot". We submit they point to the Rapture not to the Second Coming which has its own set of signs etc none of which belong to the Rapture which is devoid of any sign at all barring the 'seasons' of Noah and Lot (ill-defined in Scripture). The point is that God will carry out His Plan to the end. Thus, Peter seems to equate scepticism when Noah built his ark with that of the last days of the Church Age. This is probably what Jesus also had in mind when he gave the "Days of Noah" as a sign of something dramatic about to happen such as the Rapture (Matthew 24:37-9 and Luke 17:26-9). Only eight souls got aboard the Ark. Only three escaped Sodom. Perhaps only a few will get on board the Rapture Train (c.f., Luke 18:8) instead preferring to try and enjoy what they can of the world's (Satan's) Gravy Trains.

At no time since the Church's foundation on Pentecost AD 30 has there been a time like now more closely resembling the days of Noah and Lot as far as we can apply society's mores around 2500 BC and 2000 BC. The suddenness of Noah's and Lot's escape from the Flood waters and Sodom are uniquely relevant to The Rapture. It's their '**escape**' from those things that should be our focus as world conditions further deteriorate. The knowledge, especially about global-warming and melting ice caps, that we now possess about the times before Noah's Flood is a classic 'last-time' generation's

indicator. We are now looking at material only recently having become available thus giving significant meaning to the information the angel gave to Daniel 12:4 & 9 which now provides important signals of something **unique about to happen**.

In verse 7, Peter notes the judgement this time will come via “fire” not water. The judgements in *Revelation* are certainly fiery. They will melt many “elements” of nature but the Earth is not totally destroyed along with the rest of the Universe as happens at the end of the Millennium. Verse 8 is where Peter makes his famous statement about a millennium being a day and *vice versa* from God’s perspective. However, along with Psalm 90:4 and a hint in Acts 17:26 that God has “determined the times before appointed”, Peter may also have deliberately or consciously reflected here Jewish thinking in the Talmud that “The God's Day is equal to a millennium”. The fact that on the seventh day God rested from His labours is a clue that we too will rest from the labours of the curse of sin in the seventh millennium. There are no explicit statements in the Bible telling us when God will finally save the world from its physical ailments. We know when and how we were saved from sin but it does seem reasonable to hope that verses like the ones quoted here do give us some clues as to how long the world’s troubles will continue. In verse 9 there is a hint that God allows suffering to continue for a period in order to optimize or maximize the number of people who might come to repentance. But things cannot continue so that no flesh survives (Matthew 24:22, Mark 13:20). Overall, there does seem to be some limit on human suffering because of Adam’s sin (and ours).

In verse 10 is the great statement that “The Day of the Lord” will come (Strong #2240, *heko*, to arrive, be present, come) “as a thief in the night” and that all this will be accompanied by “heavens passing away”, the “elements melting with fervent heat” and the works on Earth “burned up”. That does not mean total destruction but much of the world’s infrastructure will be destroyed. The “Day of the Lord”, as noted above, is also known as “The Day of Jehovah's Wrath” and “The Time of Jacob's Trouble” in the *Tanaach* (Refer *Key Verses* for a complete list of variations). We use here the terms ‘seven-year Apocalypse’ or “The Seventieth Week” of Daniel 9:27. Although this is not a reference to the destruction of the Universe at the end of the Millennium, that event at the end of the Millennium is likely to be almost instantaneous but it will not come as a thief in the night because it has already been prophesied to be at the end of the MMK and is spoken in the *Book of Revelation*. The ‘Time’ of “Jacob’s trouble” almost certainly refers to seven years (Daniel 9:27). However, when modern English translations are read, words like “the elements shall melt with fervent heat” sound like, from the perspective of cosmology, the end of the Universe or the galaxy plunging deep into a Black Hole. Even though in verse 13 Peter seems to jump beyond the MMK to the New Heavens and the New Earth that does not necessarily mean the ‘elements burning up’ are that event. Anyway, statements such as in Isaiah 58:12, “And they ... shall build the waste places ..”, imply that after the Apocalypse, as described in verse 10, we will still be able to restore ancient places as the archaeologists are now trying to do at places like Beth Sh’ean in Israel. In Addendum (Eiii) there is more discussion on the enigmatic “like a thief in the night”.

Verses 11 and 12 appear to exhort believers to strive for their rewards we have alluded to above and actually look forward to God ‘*bringing it on*’; “hasting unto the coming (Strong #3952, *Parousia*)’ of the day of God”. Here in verse 12, Peter gives the “Day of the Lord” yet another term i.e., the “Day of God”. This might imply along with the suggestion in Section (66) concerning Matthew 16:27, Mark 8:38, Luke 9:26, I Thessalonians 5:1-3, II Thessalonians 2:8 and Titus 2:13, that “The Day of God” points

to God Himself appearing with Jesus at the Second Coming to watch His Son slay Satan's son (666) and fulfill in front of the very eyes of God Himself the words of Genesis 3:15. In contrast, at the Rapture, God stays at home to meet the Bride when she gets to Heaven with His Son. People who wish to either dismiss the entire concept of the Rapture or those who somehow try to merge or effectively merge the Rapture and Second Coming into one event, must find a way to counter this suggestion.

One cannot be dogmatic on the point, but this is the sort of question or suggestion that makes each one of us ask, what does my model of interpretation do about that? It also tests our concept of the Tri-Unity. We must always avoid any hint or concession to any sort of disunity in any aspect of God's work, plan etc. But there are three persons in the "Tri-Unity" and there is no reason why some things might have a different label for the one event, action, situation etc. Thus a "Day of the Son of Man", though always specific to the Person of Jesus alone, nevertheless can coincide as a "Day of God" as in the Second Coming to rescue Israel. Jesus comes as 'Son of Man' to rescue Israel but it is also a 'Day of God'. Israel is God's wife from His perspective but a brother from the Son of Man's perspective (as the True Israelite) even though both persons are Creator. God had said, "Let Us make Man in Our Image", the image Jesus would take on as the Son of Man. There seems little point merging the Rapture and Second Coming, or even denying the first, when by keeping them separate there is so much spiritual wealth to be gained. That is by posing such questions or suggestions such as looking at these events from the perspectives of the 'personalities' of the three persons of the Tri-Unity.

What also is interesting here is that Peter seems to encourage us to actually **look forward** to the Apocalypse. It is what in effect establishes the Kingdom of God or MMK by firstly destroying the assets being used to push Man's plans to among other things reach for the skies in space travel perhaps one of the old Tower of Babel ambitions. That plan according to official government documents this observer has read during his professional career is no pipe dream. It is the earnest intention for not only world economics but world science too.

Much of mankind's work over the last four millennia since the Flood will be burned up. We should be looking forward to that because it means we are going to be doing God's work in the MMK not Satan's. In fact it is the belief of this observer that Satan's real game plan is to deceive mankind into committing to the plans of Babel ('The Babel Project') but in the process to destroy him as technology '*advances*' perhaps with robots and algorithms eventually making us redundant. But our systems are polluting the Earth and destroying many natural habitats supporting all sorts of wild-life. Furthermore, Satan may be planning to kill off humanity with genetics, pollution of the biosphere, inter- and intra-species warfare but hiding all that under the guise of using the "Bedrock of Science" (US President Joe Biden) to improve man's world.

Peter appears to have avoided any direct reference to the Rapture and certainly that's so here. Perhaps that is understandable since the Lord may have said he would not see it! Of course Peter and all the other dead saints are '**in**' the Rapture albeit unconsciously whereas we who are alive at the time will be highly conscious of it as we rocket up into the first and second heavens and through them into the Third Heaven (II Corinthians 12:2) and being suddenly translated into Glory as we travel Heavenwards. This may be due to the fact Peter's epistles are primarily directed at Jewish members of the Church because of their age-old hope in the MMK which is ushered in by the Second Coming. As one noted at the very start regarding Matthew 8:11, the MMK is for Gentiles to enjoy

too. However, Peter knowing that his Jewish 'brethren' were at that time eagerly awaiting the Lord to return to bring in the Kingdom (Acts 1:6-7) their thinking was very much aligned with issues relating to the Second Coming. Elsewhere, Paul is writing about the Rapture and Peter seems to direct his readers to Paul's epistles (II Peter 3:15-16)

In verse 13, Peter then refers to the "New Heavens and New Earth". At first sight, this looks like a reference to the destruction of this universe at the end of the MMK. However, most translators suggest it is some of the earth's atmosphere together with the Earth's 'works' that are burned up. Having seen events like nuclear explosions over Hiroshima and Nagasaki we certainly can understand how that could come to pass and more especially with the "fiery" Trumpet Judgements in Revelation 8-9 (the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 6th) and the "fiery" 4th Bowl Judgement in Revelation 16. Since we say The "Day of the Lord" would normally refer to the Apocalypse that again makes sense. The Apocalypse is the "Last Seven of Years" that Daniel learned would be inflicted on Israel after the Messiah was cut off. That last 'seven' has now been cut off from the previous sixty-nine by nearly two millennia. The Apocalypse sees to the destruction of the regime of fallen man. That includes many, most if not all his 'works' on Earth especially as it has by then been fully taken over by Satan via his son the Antichrist in those last seven years.

Then comes a period "wherein dwells righteousness" (II Peter 3:13) and with the Jewish audience primarily being targeted here this obviously applies to the Messianic Kingdom. By way of *obiter dicta*, the Millennium will indeed be a Utopia compared with what we have now. Newcomers born in the millennium will have no idea what we went through. Nevertheless, they will still have to work and may suffer various inconveniences. Still, that will be Utopia compared to what we faced. Perhaps the even more stunning and glorious New Heaven and new Earth in the next Universe will be the carrot we will be using in those days to convince those born during it to repent by age 100 and look forward to that. There will be sin amongst carnal people born during the Millennium. Nevertheless, overall righteousness still prevails in the Millennium and only individual sin will occur probably with little or no direct effect on anyone or anything else. In the next universe there will absolutely be no sin. However, in the MMK people may still experience growing pains, relationship snubs which are not that much to cry over really unless a particular person is especially narcissistic. We will be able to assure them none of that will be so in the New Heaven and Earth. One assumes there may have to be some sort of incentive for people to repent in the MMK. Although another aspect of that era is that God will further demonstrate the rebelliousness of humanity even within the context of a quasi Utopia, via the Last Gog-Magog Invasion of Israel.

Even if one assumes Peter here is referring to the end of the universe (the heavens, outer space and earth as they now are now) the simile "will come as a thief in the night" really cannot apply anyway. That event at the end of the Millennium is almost universally known anyway to Bible students. All through the Millennium we will be planning for that event. It will not unexpectedly come at all. We are expecting it but at least not for another 1007 years at the very minimum. Or 1014 years away if we have to add the seven-year clean-up after the first Gog-Magog invasion of Israel (Ezekiel 38:1 to 39:16). After the Second Gog-Magog invasion at the end of the Millennium (Revelation 20:8-10) this universe is burned up and the new one created for us unless it already exists parallel to this one (c.f., the C.E.R.N scientists). In most examples of the metaphor, it is either the Apocalypse, the Abomination of Desolation or the Lord's Second Coming that comes like a thief in the night. However, the metaphor still covers the Rapture which precedes the other two but one presumes Peter is not referring to that here.

If Peter was aware of the ministry Apostle John had received in *The Book of Revelation*, then almost certainly these verses can only refer to the Trumpet and Bowl Judgements therein. Otherwise, the Lord inspired him to write as he did perhaps from a survey of Old Testament passages. However, it is always best to compare this passage with all the others in the Bible. There is no great calamity if, as we know from elsewhere in Scripture, the Apostle might have deferred to others, especially Paul (II Peter 3:15) to give more detail. Peter knew his limitations. Paul explicitly says he had to draw both Peter and Barnabas, and even James, from being deceived by the Circumcision Party (Galatians 2:13-14). Scriptural Inspiration is in no way diminished by such circumstances because it seems God has used various devices actually to keep some matters '*hidden*' until an appointed time (e.g., Exodus 4:8, Psalm 78:49, Daniel 12:4 & 9) or because God appointed certain people to carry out specific tasks. Jesus said to Peter it was not his concern whether John might or might not see the Lord coming before dying (John 21:22).

Peter was Jesus' *assistant shepherd* to the *lambs* and *sheep*. His priority was to meet the Lord's injunction to him to feed the lambs and sheep.

In verse 13 Peter writes, "Nevertheless we, according to His Promise, look for New Heavens and a New Earth, wherein dwells righteousness". Whether that refers to the Millennial Kingdom or to the New Universe, or both, does not really matter because other scriptures elucidate on that. After all the chaos brought into the Universe by Satan firstly, then Adam to the Earth and its environment, both the Messianic Kingdom and the New Heavens and Earth will render down all the past horrors to a fleeting and faint dream (or *nightmare*). Memory of this world's six millennia of chaos will drift into obscurity in a far distant past. The chaotic times of 4000 BC to *circa* AD 2000+ will not be absolutely forgotten because that History exists although it need not have happened or occurred had Adam (or any of us by imputation) obeyed in the first place. Nevertheless, this unsavoury History exists and that's good in one way because we will never look fondly on it and we will never desire to repeat it. Those of us in God's kingdom anyway have fully accepted we were individually responsible for that chaos. We never will want to revisit it. But that will not be the fate of those dwelling in the other place of darkness, weeping and gnashing teeth. They will forever regret not having accepted God's most generous and Loving offer of the Kingdom of God while they still could.

(76) I John 2:28, "Abide in Him; that, when he shall appear (*Phaneroo*, Strong 5319), we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming (*Parousia*, Strong 3952)", seems to be about the the Rapture in the first clause but about the Second Coming in the latter clause. Genuine and active believers will not be embarrassed or ashamed at Jesus' "appearance" thus they might stand ashamed at the latter. Better to be involved in Jesus' Rapture of the Church than having to stand ashamed through all that the nation of Israel and the Gentiles will have to face until the Second Coming.

That understanding of the text is enforced because John uses these two different Greek words for 'appear' and 'coming'. There may be another way of looking at these clauses. The first clearly seems to confirm that in abiding in Him we can be confident of being uplifted in the Rapture. "*Phaneroo*" in its senses of rendering oneself apparent or showing oneself certainly seems more appropriate to a brief appearance of Jesus but merely to snatch us upwards to Heaven as the Rapture implies.

However the second clause, especially as *Strong* seems to define "*Parousia*" (refer

Addendum (Bi)] the meaning may suggest that if anyone is not abiding in Him that person will stand ashamed and will subsequently have to await the Second Coming instead. As we have noted already, many people who come into belief in the period between the Rapture and the Second Coming will be people who may not have seriously abided in Christ when they thought they were safe from the Apocalypse. It may be that it turns out some people who thought they were 'safe' were not after all and will therefore have to face the Apocalypse and in that sense look silly and "stand ashamed". Such people presumably aware of the warnings from Scripture turned out to be like the five foolish virgins and thus missed the Rapture. This scenario is rather hard to digest because the concept of abiding in Christ can only infer one does leave in the Rapture. This still shows us that God does not want any to perish thus keeping hopes alive even after the Rapture.

The obvious construction to put on these two clauses in I John 2:28 is that the "appearance" here is merely to remove a particular group of believers while they are still alive. The "Coming" addresses both believers and unbelievers and like wheat from chaff or like sheep from goats, they are divided and separated and sent in two different directions. Some go into the Glorious Messianic Kingdom. Others go to perdition.

(77) I John 3:2, " ... When He shall appear (*phaneros*), we shall be like Him ..'. The Interlinear prefers the English word 'revealed' for "*phaneros*". Here John follows up from verse 28 above and continues with his description of what we will be like after the Rapture. When Jesus arrives, appears or is revealed at the Rapture, all living saints are immediately translated into a resurrected body and the dead receive theirs of course. This is exactly what Paul understands from his writing in I Corinthians 15:52 and I Thessalonians 4:16. We all meet up in Heaven to come for the Judgement Seat and get ready for the Marriage of the Lamb. At the Second Coming after Jesus has both appeared and landed on *Terra Firma* and after He has destroyed all those actively participating in the Armageddon Campaign, Jesus then begins separating Sheep Gentiles from Goat Gentiles, all Israel having come under God's righteousness at the national salvation.

In the Seventy-five Day interval, Jesus begins the process of deciding who does or does not enter the Millennial Kingdom as a Gentile. Clearly this is not the same as immediately "being like Him" as will be the case for all Church Saints at the Rapture: the living ones "translated" in the air and the deceased 'resurrected'. "Being like Him" in this context means to be resurrected. Tribulation saints who survived everything in the Apocalypse who are therefore welcomed into the MMK are not resurrected although their martyred and deceased colleagues are. Again, this must be a Rapture passage.

(78) Jude 14, c.f., II Kings 2:11-15 (re Elijah and Elisha at the former's uplift to Heaven). The Interlinear [refer Addendum (Ai)] uses the past tense "came". One suspects the examples of Elijah and less certainly Enoch is that God took them into the space-time continuum where they currently 'exist' although it will only seem like a second or so for them. Modern cosmologists believe something like this is possible. No other generation before ours was in a position to perceive such a situation might be scientifically plausible. We cannot speculate but theologians need not search for sophisticated allegorical or *spiritual* techniques or interpretations to explain the Apostle's words here. Jude was presumably trying to show that Biblically recorded events concerning Enoch then Elijah are somehow related to the future involving appearance(s) of Jesus.

These words "myriads (Strong 3461) of His saints (Strong 40, *hagios*) concerning the

Lord's coming (Strong 2064) were almost certainly about things to happen in the future. The first 'judgement' to occur after Enoch's apparently sudden demise or removal ("was not") into 'heaven', happened to be Noah's Flood. It did not involve in any way "thousands of saints". In fact only eight saints survived the Flood. Jude's statement about Enoch recognises that one day (e.g., verse 15) God will put all things right after He has resurrected all believers of all time and delivered judgement.

Enoch named his son "Methuselah" presumably thinking God would bring the Messiah-Saviour into the world through the Seed of the Woman on the day, or at about the time, Methuselah died [refer also to Addendum (G)]. The Flood came in the year Methuselah died. The 'saviour' came in the form of Noah. However he only saved people in the physical sense. They immediately offered sacrifices after leaving the ark because they knew they were as yet unredeemed sinners in the sense that Jesus had not yet paid the blood price for their redemption. Jesus would of course come some 2500 years after the Flood. In the meantime they continued sacrificing animals to cover their sin as believers had done so from Adam's Fall.

Noah had to offer a sacrifice after he left the ark because acknowledging himself to be a sinner he could in no way be a **soteriological** Saviour as Jesus is with His personal sacrifice of His sinless Self. The Saviour coming with a crowd of saints cannot be a Rapture passage because we come back with Jesus at the Second Coming. At the Rapture, all the saints (dead or alive) are taken up or away. The Rapture takes us away and into Heaven so that we can come back at the Second Coming. Actually, if anything, Jude's reference to Enoch who appears to have been uplifted into or toward the 'heavens' like Elijah much later clearly implies another event *viz.*, The Rapture in the way Paul described it in I Thessalonians 4:17. The apparent 'uplifting' of Enoch and the certain elevation of Elijah both provide us with evidence of the ability of God to do things like that or like the situation the Rapture evidently effects or provides.

(79) Revelation 1:7-8, At the beginning of the *Book of Revelation* or "Apocalypse" is this very direct statement about the Lord's coming. "Behold, He cometh with clouds". We are told "every eye shall see Him" in verse 7 but "all kindreds of the Earth shall wail because of Him" and that might include the "ashamed" of I John 2:28 (assuming our secondary interpretation there is correct). However, between the "every eye" and "all kindreds" which are nouns to indicate a universal group or groups, we read "and they *also* which pierced Him". We are all guilty of Adam's sin and in that sense we are among those who "pierced Him" although technically it was a cabal in AD 30 directly guilty of that even though the Romans were their agent in doing so. Israel would seem to be in view in the words 'they which pierced Him'. The Romans did all the whipping and piercing and Antichrist is descended from a Roman woman appropriately. It is Zechariah 12:10 which says the House of David and Jerusalem "shall look upon Me whom they pierced" or "look on *My God the Aleph and Tav (or Alpha and Omega)* in a literal interpretation of the Hebrew. Revelation 1:8 refers to this 'Alpha-Omega' so by linking that with Zechariah, almost certainly "every eye" and "all kindreds" in Revelation 1:7 refer to Gentiles while those "which pierced Him" refers to Israel. All that occurs at the Second coming. It is not relevant to the Rapture which on the basis of Luke 18:8 might involve only a small number of still faithful believers who are removed from Earth and taken away like an eagle snatching its prey into Heaven.

(80) Revelation 3:3, has the Lord warning the church at Sardis, "I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee". This was a salutary

reminder to that 'church' of its need to repent of certain problems and be ready at all times. Dr Fruchtenbaum in his *Footsteps of the Messiah* (page 46) and other commentators suggest this prophecy was a picture of the Church between AD 1517 and 1648 and ending with the *Thirty Years War* (1618-48) involving Europe and parts of the Middle East and North Africa. As with Jesus' metaphors concerning the lightning, housetop situation and the eagles or vultures [refer (Ei) The Rapture Soliloquy] the words, "a thief coming in the night" can refer to the Rapture, to the sudden onset of catastrophes that afflict the earth in the Apocalypse or even to Antichrist's sudden about-turn when he reneges on his treaty with Israel because that specifically comes as a shock and abrupt and sudden about-turn to the Jews living at that time. With all these situations there will be the element of surprise and the unexpected.

In the context of the prophetic-historic survey of the Seven Churches in the opening chapters of *Revelation*, this warning to the Church at Sardis is a reminder to one and all that the Rapture could come, **or could have come**, at any point in this Church History. As we have noted already, in many ways the possibility the Rapture occurred during one of the six previous Church stages of the first three chapters of Revelation provides a null hypothesis for our main hypothesis. Even though this is a paper about systematic theology we can still follow well-worn and tried principles of science or the scientific method.

(81) Revelation 3:10, The Rapture saves saints from experiencing the Apocalypse sent to "try them that dwell on Earth". Revelation 3:10 also gives comfort through Jesus saying, "I will keep thee from the hour of temptation". That word 'keep' in Hebrew is "רצנ" or *nazar* as in Jesus the Nazarene. If some people are on Earth to be put on trial in this way it implies others are not and actually are in Heaven. This verse clearly shows that some people will be experiencing these disasters while others will not have to experience them. How can that happen without the Rapture is quite a problem unless some sort of special protection against problems then is given to some like the 144 000 witnesses and the "Two Witnesses". But that is why they are so equipped because we are not around then. Groups like the Jehovah's Witnesses misuse that point claiming they are symbolic numbers secretly applying to members of their cult. In the face of Paul's claims in I Corinthians 15:52, I Thessalonians 4:16 obviously those 144 002 'witnesses' do get that protection but only for a certain time until their execution for the 'Two Witnesses'. But the Church instead is uplifted and raptured before all this 'trial'. By implication, at some point in History some people who believe in God will be safely residing in Heaven while others on Earth are going through *hell* of some sort. This is confirmed by other Biblical passages which show the Apocalypse is specially designed for and targeted at two groups of people. It is sent to try and judge both Israel and the rest of the world's people at the end of the Age. That's because they continuously defy God and His morals (Revelation 9:21). However, more particularly for Israel, the Apocalypse is the vehicle by which God finally and with Love brings Israel to repent of its rejection of its Messiah (Leviticus 26:40-42, Isaiah 65:7). Obviously, the Church of *the Christ* does not need to be on Earth while that occurs.

The Jewish nation suffers the wrath of God for the first and second halves of the Apocalypse. However, Gentiles suffer the wrath of both God and Satan-Antichrist in both halves not just in the first half. When Antichrist does turn against Israel mid-way through, (thus beginning the "Great Tribulation" as some describe in their analyses) he probably will treat the Jews far, far worse than the non-Jews and anyone else; Jewish or Gentile; who comes to belief and salvation in the course of the Apocalypse. This is all part of

God's Plan for the World. Satan's plan is to have Israel destroyed before the nation repents to achieve his objectives. This reveals the Glory and Majesty of God in that He shows He can both foresee these results but fore-ordain them as well in prophecy. Only someone who can create all things can do that. It is foolish to reject Him and the reward God offers to those who believe by enabling our escape from these dreadful things.

(82) Revelation 3:11-12 is an encouragement from Jesus for this sixth or Philadelphian church ("behold I come quickly"). This appears to be a promise to save the church members from the "hour of temptation" (verse 10). That 'temptation' may be to follow antichrist by being deceived into thinking or believing him to be the true Christ. It may refer to something that may have occurred in the past for example to the original congregation in Turkey before *circa* AD 70-80. However, more likely it refers to an event that has not yet happened, so this 'escape' implicit in verse 10 must be about the Rapture especially because of the qualifying clause that He comes quickly or suddenly (verse 11). None of those churches have survived to our day although the ruins of some of the cities they were in have survived.

If verse 11 contains a veiled reference to the Rapture as it almost certainly does in the reference to us "taking thy crown" then verse 12 seems to jump right past the MMK and into the New Heaven and Earth. Perhaps that is why people like amillennials say there will be no such thing as the Millennial Kingdom. Certainly, together these two verses do seem to omit any reference whatsoever to an intermediate stage in God's Kingdom Plan that is the Millennium. This paper is based on the perspective of a Pre-Millennial believer. Others, usually described as "Post-Millennials", think this Church Age itself is the Millennium and has lasted for two millennia so far which at the very least seems logically and literally inconsistent. However, even though one can see how people might read these verses this way, such people fail to consider so many other verses throughout Scripture that clearly do refer to some sort of glorious age here on this Earth **before** the New Heaven and Earth of verse 12 are created and this universe *goes up in flames*.

The primary reference here refers to the Philadelphian saints' reward for "overcoming" persecution when in future they are living in the New Jerusalem in the next universe. Since every believer has suffered persecution throughout the whole Church Age the promise probably applies to every saint thus reflecting, or perhaps even reinforcing, the view that *Revelation's* seven churches, and any issue they faced, can or may be found in all stages or in every stage of the History of the 'Mystery Kingdom-' or 'Church-' Age. Hebrews 11:10 reflects traditional Jewish thinking that Abraham "looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God". Revelation 3:12 confirms that a 'Jerusalem' which has "come down from Heaven" will be our eternal home on a brand-new Earth. But that does not mean that there will not be a millennium wherein Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will walk through the Land of Israel, where it is today, and enjoying it with their (resurrected) descendants as the prophecies to those men said.

Those particular blessings for Israel from the Abrahamic Covenant are also Promises of God and they cannot be abrogated. The Millennium must be the era when those promises are fulfilled. Otherwise amillennials must render vast Old Testament tracts to the dustbin or allegory (as they do). No matter what one's theology is, one cannot avoid those statements in the Abrahamic Covenant unless one is completely allegorical in their interpretation. The so-called 'Faith Chapter' of Hebrews comes after the writer had to turn believers around from their material cares for work and accommodation in the vicinity of AD 66-70 Jerusalem and to be like Abraham and focus on their faith in God who

eventually is going to eternally provide for all believers. Instead of being concerned about the calamitous times, jobs and property prices etc., the believers in and around the city of Jerusalem were encouraged to heed Jesus' prophecy about Jerusalem's temple and by implication the city too and get ready to flee Rome's armies. That is apparently what they did. As the regime of what really was theologically and scientifically corrupted-Christendom collapsed in the *Thirty Years War* and the S.H.E.M-ites took control for the final technological push to get back to Eden's Computer (or Tree) of knowledge; which we may nearly have arrived at; many Christians fled Europe for the Americas as noted [refer Addendum (G) Coming Full Circle].

However, now the issue is about escaping the troubles currently being fomented to prepare the way for Satan's son (Antichrist-666) to rule the world. One part of God's solution to that is to despatch Jesus to come and fetch His Bride for marriage in Heaven. We can no longer escape to the Americas or to the woods and forests as some think they can do. Thus, before we get to our Eternal Home in the next Universe in Revelation 3:12, and after the Marriage of the Lamb in Heaven, we return to Earth for a millennium here to enjoy Earth in a manner akin to what we could have had here if Adam had not eaten from the Tree of Knowledge in Eden. We won't be 'naked' but will be 'clothed in righteousness and working in the last restful 'day' (millennium) of God's Kingdom Programme before the entire Universe is indeed dissolved and a new one created.

No one is absolutely sure how to interpret the history and prophecy of these seven churches. One view maintains that each church had its own specific time on Earth and disappeared after it had finished its course. That view suggests all churches today work on the Laodicean model. A second view is that each one of these seven churches can be found somewhere in the world at any stage throughout the last two millennia of church history. A variant here is that during each of the seven stages (or 'eras') one particular type predominated but examples of the other six could be found somewhere else on Earth at one time or another. Perhaps the third view here is that all seven churches have been equally distributed through the last two millennia and that there is no element of any historical, chronological or sequential development at all. On that last point, many people simply assume issues concerning the seven churches in the opening chapters of *Revelation* pertained to the time that *Revelation* the 'Book' was being composed. All that we can learn from them is that churches today may be facing similar issues and that is as far as it goes. That last view may well be correct. However, this paper is being composed from the perspective that we do have to consider the other alternatives, especially the one that suggests the Rapture is now at last due. That is to say, the Laodicean Church Age or Era is near 'closing time'.

We are now well past the beginning and quite likely are near the end of a two-millennia Church Age, the same length, in time, as the Conscience and Israel eras of approximately two millennia. So we are observers "ex post" or "from" the point of view of people 'post-beginning' i.e., 'ex' or 'from', 'post' or 'after'. In which case it becomes almost certain that the Rapture somehow must end or complete the Laodicean Church Age and that is why Luke 18:8 applies. Once that 'Laodicean Church Age' has completed its course or tasks (or lacked or failed therein), the "Rapture" fully completes and finishes the entire Church Age. The world is then prepared for the Apocalypse and Saints from therein or thereon become Tribulation saints or, in the Millennium Era itself, Millennial Saints. Those latter two groups or perhaps we could name them 'post-church saints' are not, therefore 'Church Saints' just as Adam, Noah, Abraham, David, Daniel or even John the Baptist are not 'Church Saints' either. They are all pre-Church Saints for want of a

better term. The ending of the Church Age also begs the question of the ending of the Mystery Stage of the Kingdom based on the Parables of the Sower. Does it conclude at the Rapture? Perhaps it continues but it also seems plausible the way the Holy Spirit convicts people will revert to His method operating prior to the Church Age.

It is interesting to note that the Philadelphian Church predominated around the time of the Thirty Years War (17th Century AD). Right in the very middle of that war in 1633, in Rome, the Trial of Galileo (actually his second, the first being in 1616) took place. People need to read Arthur Koestler's *Sleepwalkers* to properly and fully understand exactly what was happening then. Unfortunately, most commentators today actually have no idea what really happened at that time nor do they have much idea of the real history behind that trial extending away back to at least 600-500 BC. But that is an aside for now. The point is that the occurrence of The Rapture back then is an appealing although problematic idea. One will not bother expanding on that here. Nevertheless, the ructions of *The Thirty Years War* intriguingly set a scene for some to say the Rapture might have taken place then - if at all of course. For some observers that would be a good reason for suggesting the Rapture occurred then. Anyway, the "*Thirty Years War*" was effectively the death-knell for Christendom in Europe but obviously not for Christ's *True Church*.

An idea that the Rapture took place in the *Thirty Years War* also implies the current Laodicean Church is thus post-Rapture and not Christ's church at all. It is just a vehicle where people thinking they are Christ's disciples attend but so do a whole lot of unbelievers. However, Jesus' Parables of the Sower implied there would always be unbelievers attending churches anyway. As the Rapture, from many other verses, would necessarily seem to end or complete the Church Age which includes the Laodicean seventh church, then we obviously should continue with our hypothesis that The Rapture is still a live possibility for any day now in the future. Besides, surely people would have noticed if the Rapture had already occurred then. We do know that many Christians did start emigrating to the Americas, in particular, around those times. That was an escape of some sorts from persecution from a secular majority emerging in Europe then. Perhaps that "Hour of Temptation" was a period in Europe when in the apparent 'Fall of Christendom' by AD 1648 people were being forced to 'deny Christ'. Even the fear that might happen theoretically could have sparked a mass exodus of believers out of Europe to escape any temptation to 'deny Christ'. One problem also is that many cults such as Mormonism also started up in the 'Americas'. Emigration from just Europe was not The Rapture. Unless going to Heaven is a 'migration' of some sort. From the perspective of those already in Heaven, Rapture saints will be 'immigrants' albeit temporarily until we return to Earth for the Millennium.

From a 'PR' or Publicity perspective, to argue the Rapture took place in the past requires asking how information about that has been forgotten, overlooked or even suppressed by authorities and Media. There is another important point arising from the discussion that the Rapture occurred in the chaos of the *Thirty Years War* in Europe. Following that war, from the beginning of the Newtonian Age (late 17th and early 18th Century) 'religion' came under much more intense attack from sceptics in the new movements of Secular, Humanist, Evolutionist and Materialist people (S.H.E.M.-ites as the author dubs them). These movements now appear to have reached their Zenith to use a word Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo and other pre-S.H.E.M-ite European cosmologists might appreciate. Perhaps the Rapture occurred during the revolt of the American colonies, the French Revolution or during the Napoleonic wars. Perhaps those 'revolutions' really were a decoy to hide the fact that the Rapture had taken place back then. The so-called Spanish

Influenza may have been a cover to hide the disappearance of many people after World War One. Rather than speculate we assume the Rapture is still ahead of us.

(83) Revelation 5:3 The only way to make sense of this situation, “no man in Heaven”, is to realise John had somehow been transported into God’s Home to witness the Marriage of the Lamb but in John’s and our future and after the Rapture has taken men into Heaven. The presence of other “men” there can only be explained by John’s appearance into those scenes was timed so that the Rapture had already taken Church saints into Heaven, i.e., after the Rapture but prior to the Second Coming. For people who cannot make any sense out of this, they should perhaps study *Quantum Mechanics*. Or, they might care to survey fantasies science fiction writers and Hollywood moguls suggest may not be beyond the realms of science, rational thought or reality whatever that truly is. Our physicists have explained why they think this is technically possible. Hollywood makes innumerable films about time travel. God is using science and perhaps even science fiction to steer people toward reconsidering His claims about History (**His Story**) as it is written in the Bible for all to see. Through the Holy Spirit God reassures believers they can believe or accept the Bible’s claims but He also enables us to far more deeply delve into its treasures in these last days of greatly increased knowledge about the Universe around us.

From the Biblical text, the presence of other men in Heaven at this point in Revelation 19:10 is confirmed when another man in Heaven says to John “I am of thy brethren ... do not worship me”. Earlier in his life, in the account recorded in Matthew 17:1-7, John had been with Jesus, Peter, and John’s brother James (*Yaakov*), when they all had a glimpse into a scene in the future (even our’s now). They found themselves in the midst of a scene during the MMK. We can tell it was a *Sukkoth* (Feast of Tabernacles) ceremony taking place then because of Peter’s suggestion they make some “tabernacles” or *sukkoth* (little huts) in Matthew 17:4.

Both events recorded in Scripture are now quite believable, or certainly far more so than in the past when as this observer always did, one fully believed this in faith alone. Still not ‘blind faith’ because of so much else in the Bible but faith alone nevertheless. This is one reason why we can say that in recent times, perhaps since the 1980’s for example, we are able at long last to recognise our place now is in the Daniel 12:4 & 9 days when ‘knowledge’ shall be (‘exponentially’ or ‘greatly’ implied) increased. We are the first generation that can come up with a plausible explanation how such amazing circumstances such as these both involving John in AD 30 and probably *circa* AD 60-70 or a bit later perhaps are not simply fantastic Jewish tales or fables (II Peter 1:16). On this occasion in *Revelation*, John hears that none of the other men apparently with him in this situation in Heaven are able to respond and “open” a “book” (Revelation 5:1) mentioned there.

John’s transportation for the first time into those heavenly scenes requires the reader to make literal sense of the Old Testament prophecies about a glorious age on Earth we are dubbing the ‘MMK’. It’s a time when even the wild animals are at peace with us because the ‘Son of Man crowned with Glory’ (Psalm 8:4, Hebrews 2:7) brings renovation and reformation to the World for the duration of the Millennial Kingdom. No doubt the fantastic DNA structures of the genome of every species is tweaked for existence in a world where death only occurs for humans who fail to repent before their 100th birthday. The Rapture is partly about us being taken to Heaven to receive our commissions for that era. At the moment we have the commission of Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:15-16, Luke

24:47-48 and Acts 1:8. Unfortunately commentators now routinely continue to metaphorically or allegorically interpret this and many other verses. That was necessary until our time when knowledge available to us helps us to understand the Scriptures far more clearly than earlier generations. We do not throw away every typology or allegory, though we may review many to reveal how stupid they were. We just face up to the fact that we are now able to rely on a literal interpretation of Scripture as the norm.

(84) Revelation 14:12-13, Chapter 14 begins with the results of the work of the 144000 Jewish believers called to their mission with special protection from the plagues and Satan's forces. Then we read about saints struggling through the Apocalypse. Most people assume they are church saints but they are not because church saints do not fulfill the sum total of saints. They are only one part of the army of saints of all time. Then from verse 6 we find the Gospel still being preached so some must be responding. In verses 11 and 12 they are being urged to avoid the mark of the beast and keep the commandments of God etc. hence verse 13 says, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord **from henceforth**". Written in *circa* AD 60, this chapter tells of seven vials of wrath which God is pouring out on the Earth via transmission by angels. Between the sixth and seventh vials, there is an interruption when those wonderful words are spoken. They are directed at those people going through this 'hell-on-Earth' just before the troubles get even more acute and disastrous. After the removal of the Church which keeps Christ's Law, these 'saints' are people who "keep the commandments of God, and faith of Jesus" post-Rapture and through the Apocalypse. Notice they have the "faith" of Jesus not His Law but they nevertheless "**keep the commandments of God**". The words echo Solomon in Ecclesiastes 12:13 ("Fear God and keep His commandments"). For Gentiles before the Church Age that meant being obedient to the Laws of Noah and only taking on the Mosaic Law if they wanted to enjoy Israel's spiritual and physical blessings under that temporary covenant.

So Revelation 14:12 suggests that after the Rapture and especially during the appalling Apocalypse period only the Law of Noah remains in mandatory force. The Law of Noah came into force after the Flood and remains operative. The Bible has never rescinded the Law to Noah as clearly was the case with Moses Law by AD 30 after Jesus had fulfilled its provisions for everyone. When Jesus stood in as The Passover Lamb he had to be slaughtered to pay for everyone's sin. So as noted animal sacrifice is no longer necessary either. In effect the main remaining aspect of Noah's Law will be to refrain from murder, obey any government as long as God's Law is not contravened by such 'governments' and love one's neighbour as God would always have us do.

To help readers understand whom this passage is directed at, we should discuss a number of distinctions in role and status of different groups of believers. For example, Church Saints in the Church Age live under significantly different circumstances to saints in other eras both past and future. The injunction to "keep the commandments of God" really should apply to everyone at all times. Not many people ever think about that these days. The Law of Christ effectively and temporarily supercedes the Law of Noah rendering it temporarily redundant, if that's the best word to use here, but not inoperative. Furthermore, Christ fulfilled the Law of Moses for Israel so that it no longer operates, not even for Israel.

Once the Church is removed, however, the Law of Noah remains in operation for all believers to follow and really comes back in force for everyone because the Law of both Moses and Christ have done their courses once the world is past AD 30 (Mosaic Law)

and the Rapture for Christ's Law (e.g., AD 2030). Another way of looking at this is to realise before the Flood only animal sacrifice for covering of sin was mandatory and that Noah's Law was the sole amendment to the pre-Flood regime for 500 years until God called Abraham. As we note elsewhere, Abraham and his descendants ultimately failed to institute Law as per Moses' regime for 500 years after Abraham when Moses did eventually lead Israel. Believers or Saints may try to follow either the Law of Moses or of Christ after the Rapture but implicitly in Revelation 14:12 it will only be the Law of Noah that remains in force and **mandatory**. Obviously, the passage is not addressing Church Saints any more than it addresses Old Testament Saints or Mosaic Saints of Jews and Proselytes.

Furthermore, it is also clear from the work done by Dr Fruchtenbaum studying various Biblical passages (*Footsteps of the Messiah*, 2nd Edition, page 360) that Old Testament Saints and deceased Tribulation Saints will never experience a resurrected body in God's Heaven. Their resurrection occurs while Christ is on Earth during the 'Seventy-five day Interval'. Certainly their souls have been, or will yet be (future deceased Tribulation Saints) resident in Heaven since the Cross or post-Rapture but only inasmuch as that, i.e., only their souls. Those who become Saints during the Millennium, i.e., those who survive the Apocalypse (Sheep Gentiles and Israel) before the Millennium and after the Rapture appear not to get a resurrected body at all therefore they also could not possibly be represented in this scene in Revelation 14:13. Only Church Saints and only for a brief time will enjoy some time as resurrected beings in God's Heaven. Even then, that's only to prepare for the Marriage of the Lamb, to receive rewards and awards, crowns etc., and of course in order to participate as the Bride herself in that "Marriage of the Lamb". What happens in the next Universe where there may be little or no distinction between Earth and Heaven for most practical reasons can only be speculated upon.

The situation (Revelation 14:9-11) in which these Saints will be living is quite unlike anything we have known from History. It is a unique situation, possibly deserving a very special blessing unavailable to any other Saint. Church saints are not described in this way in the New Testament. We become saints when the Holy Spirit comes to permanently and fully dwell in us and *theoretically* enable us to aspire to obedience to the Law of Christ in ways that Old Testament Saints (Jews under Noah and Moses or Gentiles under Noah) could never hope to do. We are privileged in this way because we believe and trust in Jesus and what He has done, and by implication will still do for us, per the **entire** fifteenth chapter of I Corinthians and many other passages (e.g., John 14:1-3). If anything, Church saints are going to be delivered from having to make such awful choices outlined in Revelation 14:9-11 (re the Mark of the Beast etc). Thus, the 'saints' in this passage would appear to be Law of Noah followers. Whereas, Church Saints are Law of Christ followers and readers are expected to understand that distinction so that they do not confuse different groups of saints with each other in regards to calling and obligations. But the Basis of Salvation by Grace through Faith is the one unchanging precept that every single saint must accept from Adam to the end of the Millennium (a seven thousand year era?)

Overall, these people in Revelation 14:12-13 are much more like Old Testament Saints and, for Bible students in their studies, those people should be treated as such rather than trying to equate them with Church Saints or even with Old Testament Mosaic Saints. Those saints will know who Jesus is and what He did or accomplished for them on the Cross and by His Resurrection because they have positively responded to the Gospel of verse 6. But that does not then automatically make them Church Saints. Nor will

Millennial saints who likewise will know what Jesus did for them ever be known as Church saints. The Revelation 14:12-13 saints do not need to be Church saints anyway. Jesus will have received His inheritance in the Church Saints after they will have done their work here on Earth so that by the time the Revelation 14:12-13 saints are fulfilling their obligations on Earth, Church saints will be getting their awards in Heaven. Also, of course, there are the 144000 Jewish male virgins, the Two Witnesses and Elijah all doing God's work in this time. Elijah for one could not possibly be a Church member for obvious reasons. So the saints of Revelation 14:13 again do not need to be Church saints. So why make them so? The answer is poor systems of theology obliging analysts and students to do that. Old Testament Saints could not know what the Tribulation saints or even the future Millennial saints and we do about Jesus. Like us, the believers here in Revelation 14:12-13 will also be moved by God's Spirit to believe and trust in God for their salvation through the Promised Deliverer of the Old Testament prophets and recognise Him as Jesus of Nazareth. But there seems to be little or no evidence they will be 'filled' with the Holy Spirit in the way Church saints are (or are supposed to be). We of course know who that Promised Deliverer was (Jesus of Nazareth), and is, and these new saints from the 'Apocalypse' will have the same information we have. Again, there is no reason to assume that automatically makes them 'Church' saints just as Old Testament saints are not either. On the basis that the Church which follows the Law of Christ and thereby in effect the Law of Noah too, the latter never rescinded under Christ's Law, so too these Tribulation Saints will still have to follow the Law of Noah (God's commandment to all men since the Flood). However, these saints in Revelation 14:12-13 will not be required or mandated to follow the Law of Christ which is essentially to love one's neighbour as Christ loves the Church and gave Himself up for her. World-wide conditions by then will be so ghastly any attempt to meet Christ's Higher standard would be impossible, indeed unfair.

The Law of Moses had the same higher requirement as the Law of Christ as Jesus effectively taught in the *Beatitudes*. Churches and Rabbis never teach that and one is grateful to Dr Fruchtenbaum and other 'Dispensational' writers who have recognised this. A major contrast with Christ's Law is that Moses also permitted believers, adherents or followers a minimum or lower level of obligation i.e., to love one's neighbour as oneself, 'eye for an eye', 'tooth for a tooth' etc. But there's something else we now realise from **True History**.

The Church has been specially enabled to meet the higher calling of the Law of Christ. This is firstly obvious from the events of Pentecost-*Shavuot* and Peter's opening of the "Keys of the Kingdom" to Jews, then Samaritans and finally to Gentiles. The permanently and fully indwelling Spirit of God providing a guarantee (Hebrew, *Erevon*, ערבוּן) no other saint would have means Church saints are not permitted to be satisfied with the lower or minimum obligation because God ensured conditions on Earth for the Church Age would provide the sort of environment pre-Church and post-Church saints did not or would not have. This is where 'True History' is now at long last telling us what happened here on Earth before the Church Age [refer Addendum (J)].

History supports the distinctions argued here. These 'Tribulation Saints' will have to trust in Christ as we do but they will be released from the requirements of the higher or optimum standard mandatory for Church Saints to "Love your neighbour as Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her". Nevertheless, all saints of all time are all saved on the basis of the one redemptive work that is Christ's alone even if, e.g., an Old Testament saint, one could not possibly know who Jesus is until they too are resurrected

and meet their Saviour in Person. In contrast, we do know exactly Who Jesus is and how He redeemed us. Church Saints are the first to understand all this. The Tribulation- and Millennial-saints will also *personally* know who their Saviour is when they come to saving Grace but there seems to be no evidence they will be permanently 'filled' with the indwelling Holy Spirit of God in the unique way the Church of *the* Christ is. All around the world, Old Testament Saints could only know that Saviour was the promised Redeemer of Genesis 3:15. Christ's redemption is always on offer to anyone even in the Apocalypse. God's Holy Spirit is always working to convict people of their need for salvation because God "so loves the world" (John 3:16). Salvation is on offer to anyone trusting in Jesus by repenting.

Other people think this is the point in the Apocalypse where the Church saints are raptured. That means at a time that is well into the Apocalypse and its nasty stuff. In this paper, the author takes the view none of that apocalyptic wrath is experienced by Church saints in the very Last Days before the Millennium. Perhaps we remain for a few early weeks or so when little disastrous stuff happens immediately following Antichrist's treaty or seven-year temporary political or diplomatic arrangement with Israel. In any event, trying to predict the Rapture's day, week or month is hopeless. We do, however, know the **season** by words such as those spoken by Jesus in His references to the Rapture about people being suddenly being snapped up into Heaven (Matthew 24:40-41, Luke 17:34-6, "Days of Noah", "Days of Lot").

(85) Revelation 16:15, "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed *is* he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments ...", suggests a parallel with the five wise virgins therefore referring to the Rapture. However, this is during one of the later judgements of the Apocalypse. The "sixth angel" holding one of God's "vials" or wrath has just unloaded his container of judgement on the Earth. This sixth vial differs from the others. It involves the release of three demons or "unclean spirits" but their main function is to influence the Earth's kings, presumably only ten by this time, and get them to gather armies to come up against Israel ("Armageddon") as stated in verse 16. The world appears to be approaching the climax of the Apocalypse at this point in *Revelation*. The situation will look especially bleak at this point especially from Israel's perspective. Gentile saints will be alarmed at this development. But there's light at the end of the tunnel. This is an encouragement to the persecuted Tribulation saints to keep on the Lord's side and not be seduced by any wiles of the crafty Antichrist to join in on his crusade against Israel. But it also reminds them of earlier references to the Lord coming as a "thief in the night" although here there is no specific reference to 'the night' [refer Addendum (Eiii)].

If the Rapture has indeed occurred in the past for example during either the Sardis or Philadelphia Church ages then Revelation 16:15 would certainly pertain to believers from now on. Under any circumstance, we need to be aware of the wiles of Antichrist. Actually, the "three evil spirits" here may represent the Satanic Trinity of "the Dragon" (Satan), "the Beast" (Antichrist) and the "False Prophet" these three being the counterfeit of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, it is still our responsibility to warn everyone else about these prophecies but if people have no faith that will not happen (Luke 18:8). Revelation 16:15 also supports our contention that the Lord used a metaphor about a 'thief in the night' as a warning for both pre-Rapture and Second Coming saints (the Church re the former; Sheep Gentiles and Israel concerning the latter). At the Second Coming, Jesus with Church saints, possibly accompanied by 'myriads' (Simmons', *The Passion Translation*, "holy myriads of Himself", re I Thessalonians 3:13) and even God the Father (Titus 2:13 b), in all the Glory of the Triune

Godhead pierces the deep gloom of the last three days of the Apocalypse (Matthew 24:29 and Joel 3:15). When all will seem lost for Israel, surrounded by Antichrist's forces, the nation will urgently appeal and pray to Jesus the confession of its own generation and that of AD 30. Then, suddenly like a thief in the night, responding to Israel's last ditch appeal, Jesus comes as He promised. For people everywhere then, having grappled with darkness for three days, to suddenly see a sharp piercing light in the heavens breaking the gloom again is akin to a thief arriving.

The principle point that needs stressing again here is that a single metaphor can describe more than one event. However, if one metaphor actually describes two different events that either look similar or seem to be the same, one should be careful not to automatically conclude both are just the one and the same event. That is a very simple piece of logic or analysis. Two or even more different metaphors can apply to one event and one metaphor can apply to two or more different events. One cannot prove the point. However, it appears to be the case with the house-top, lightening and eagle-vulture metaphors Jesus in Luke 17 22:37 concerning the Rapture. In Matthew 24:27 (lightening), Matthew 24:28 (eagles and carcasses), Matthew 24:43 (a thief coming) and Mark 13:15 (housetop) they concern the Second Coming. All of them used with this one about a thief coming in the middle of the night when everyone is asleep can apply to both the Rapture and the Second Coming.

The concluding point is that when Jesus spoke of suddenness in Luke 17:22-37, the passage we are describing as the "Rapture Soliloquy", there is no reference to a thief at any time. Matthew 24:43 refers to a thief coming into a house at any time around the clock. In Addendum (Eiii) we even note most references to a thief appear to be connected with the Second Coming. That certainly is the case with this verse so late in the *Book of Revelation*. One cannot justify this verse as referring to the Rapture. When we earlier suggested "a thief in the night" could also refer to either a sudden revelation out of the blue that someone is the Antichrist or that he suddenly, again 'out of the blue', reneges on his treaty with Israel, Revelation 16:15 almost certainly rules out those options. This verse effectively confirms this metaphor belongs solely to the Second Coming of the Lord with a host of saints and angels to overthrow Antichrist.

(86) Revelation 19:6-10, is the text that describes the Marriage of the Lamb. As discussed quite extensively above, this implies we must be in Heaven for that. Revelation 19:10 is a critical verse as noted in the Introduction. It indicates that John is present in Heaven at some time in the future when there are human saints present in Heaven with him, or he is with them, it would appear, **at the Marriage of the Lamb**. This is when one man present forbade John, who had just then "fallen at *the man's* feet" to "worship" him and said, "I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the Testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the Testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of (or key to) **Prophecy**" (KJV translation, emphasis added). The word 'brethren here could indicate the other man is a fellow Jewish saint with John. This very important and mostly overlooked statement, which in effect explains why and how the Marriage of the Lamb is even happening, virtually hides two further very crucial and important points.

Firstly, Jesus' Testimony in *Revelation* can only have been, "I am the *Alpha* and *Omega*". That's explicitly stated in three different verses in *Revelation*. In the Gospels, Jesus testifies that He is the "Bread that came down from Heaven" or that He is "The Good Shepherd". However, "I am the *Alpha* and *Omega*" is His only testimony in *Revelation*. In Hebrew, translating back to the language Jesus spoke when in Israel, that should read

“I am the *Aleph* (א) and *Tav* (ת)”. This has much meaning in the Old Testament text in the word ‘*eth*’ (את) normally meaning “the”. It mostly appears as an indirect object definite article (Latin, *accusative case*) where ‘*he*’ (ה) is the definite article used for the subject noun (Latin, *nominative case*). However, it also means ‘sign’ (את) but only in Exodus 4:8, 8:23 and 12:1. Further but indirect evidence that “את” means ‘sign’ is found in the very subtle tiny contrast between the names Belshazzar (Daniel 8:1) and Balteshazzar (e.g., Daniel 1:7). Although the letter “ט” is used for the ‘te’ in Daniel 1:7, we learn in Daniel 2:47-8 and 4:8 that he is believed by the Chaldeans to be a master of signs and secrets. “Belshazzar” means Jupiter’s (or God’s) Shah of shahs (Sharensar). In Daniel’s adopted name it must therefore mean God’s Sharensar of the Sign or something to that effect. In Zechariah 12:10 we find “את” in the description “אלי את” normally translated “on me whom” then the verb variously translated “pierced” or better, colloquially, ‘scragged’ (ripped, shredded as if by a whip). However, “אלי את” also could be transliterated or translated “my God the *Aleph* and *Tav* or *Alpha* and *Omega*”. This translation makes even more sense if set alongside Psalm 22:1, “אלי אלי למה עזבתני” (“My God, My God, why have you forsaken me”). These ‘word-connections’ form part of what we might cautiously suggest is a Bible Code of sorts. Basically, this is part of a careful and diligent search of the text by a spirit-filled believer. The faith and belief came first and that ultimately led to such discoveries decades later. Only much later has one realised how this crucial information only further confirms what we already believe from many other verses which we already or *a priore* accept as being Biblical Truth. We know what Jesus did for us from ‘plain-text meanings’ as one so-called Bible Code analyst put it. (Refer, *The Truth Behind the Bible Code*, Dr Geoffrey Satinover, Sidgwick & Jackson, London 1997, page 252, footnote “actual message-bearing plaintext”. The book is a parody of various complicated attempts at revealing Bible codes based on computerised scans of Biblical texts).

The second crucial point is that the statement is also the key to understanding prophecy. That is what our interpretation of Exodus 4:8 supported by Zechariah 12:10 and amplified by Psalm 22:1 is all about. In Exodus 4:8 we learn about the possibility that God foreknew Israel would reject Jesus and the raising of Lazarus in AD 30. Either way, the Romans anyway would have executed Jesus, for challenging Caesar even if Israel had accepted Him. Zechariah, supporting Leviticus 26:40-42, then confirms that it would be a later generation some time after AD 30 that “would look on Him whom they pierced. Or, giving the translation a new slant, ‘*My God the Aleph and Tav they scragged (with a whip using glass and metal fragments to shred the flesh)*’. In any case, Jesus nevertheless had paid the redemption price for man. He had hung on the Cross and called out the opening lines of Psalm 22. He did that to show He had to be forsaken in order that the Father could pour out His Wrath on His Son. Out of Love, the Son had volunteered to do that from before the beginning of the world (Hebrews 10:7, 9, c.f., Psalm 40:7) and for the only time would have to address God in the singular (אלי instead of אלהים) to face-off the Father’s wrath at Adam’s folly. Reading the Psalm to its end (verses 19-31) reassures everyone that there is nevertheless a good ending to the suffering for those who believe.

To reiterate, we know these things to be true from many other texts in virtually any translation one uses. However, in some special texts read in the original Hebrew language in which they were first written, and from a proper historical background, we get confirmation that could not have been possible without God’s Inspiration of the texts in the first (א) place and one’s own receipt of the Holy Spirit in the second or last (ת) place.

(87) Revelation 22:20, “He which testifies these things saith, surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus”. As stated, the only thing Jesus does actually testify, and thrice at that, is that He is the “*Aleph and Tav*” or “*Alpha and Omega*”. This is really an “affirmation” (according to Dr Fruchtenbaum, *Footsteps*, page 540) not a testimony as most of us would understand the word. The Greek word in Revelation 19:10 and this verse is the same (Strong 3140-1). In this case God affirms Jesus is coming quickly. Jesus is “preparing” a place for us in His Father’s House. Presumably even in Heaven that may take some time and gives cause for God to *wait* before he sends Jesus to fetch the bride. Clearly, the overall emphasis here is on imminence. The New Testament, including the Book of Revelation, is addressed to the Church of *the* Christ and not to Israel. Nevertheless, the Church is a body of Jews firstly, then Gentiles.

The Second Coming is God’s solution to rescuing Israel from Antichrist. If Titus 2:13 can be taken as literally as we suggest, Jesus alone comes to fetch His Bride the Church at the Rapture, the Father staying at Home in Heaven. The Father leaves the Son to go to one *household* to pick up the bride. He does not come supervising the Son. Of course that day or hour comes at a time that no one knows except the Father of the Groom. That’s the essence of the Rapture. It may be, however, to receive His former wife Israel, the estranged or divorced Husband of Israel returns with Jesus and the saints and even ‘myriads’ whatever they are, to watch Jesus slay Antichrist in front of Satan’s very eyes just as Satan watched Jesus give up His life facing the Father to save mankind. In the analysis in some of the previous texts one has come to consider that conviction a bit more seriously. But at the Rapture, Jesus comes alone but “quickly” from God’s perspective and not so quickly from Man’s perspective having waited for nearly two millennia now. Actually, perhaps not even ‘quickly’ from the “Son of Man’s” perspective but “quickly” from the “Son of God’s” perspective.

For the Second Coming, there is much to arrange and there are many prophecies that outline a steady series of events taking place before those last three terrible days of the Apocalypse. A statement like “On the Third Day He will revive us” (Hosea 6:2) indicates a very specific chronology or things to occur. The Rapture Day is not like that at all. The Second Coming is a known day at the end of a seven-year period. There is no such information about the timing of the Rapture. Thus Jesus has a crucial role in both reconciling Man to God and Israel to God. These are truly awesome tasks.

* **Addenda** (See New Document)

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