

# THE END TIMES

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# 1 Introduction

It has always been a desire of mine to write a systematic scripturally-based summary of my understanding of end-time events. I started to write it a few years or so ago. At various times, I just about gave up, deleting most of what I had written - starting all over again from scratch. A few times I even lost my document somewhere in cyberspace. Nevertheless, it eventually got finished. Every once in a while I will touch it up here or there. This endeavour has proven to be a real challenge. At times it was exhilarating. At times it was exhausting. I knew that many readers would probably reject my conclusions from the start; as soon as they realized that they do not agree with popular dispensation-based eschatology. Nevertheless, I am hopeful that whoever reads this material will find that it has an easy flow to it and that it will at least provoke the reader to reexamine their understanding of end-time events.

It is highly possible, my friend, that we now live in the times that were foretold by the prophets long ago. Biblical prophecies that were once ridiculed by many as impossible, like the Mark of the Beast and cashless transactions, are now strong possibilities. As this summary is being written, an unprecedented global pandemic, brought on by the COVID 19 - AKA China/Wuhan Virus - is rampant in the whole world. As a result of much hype about it, tremendous changes have occurred in a very short period of time - draconian changes. I am sure that even more extreme changes to our traditional way of life are pending; things that we never thought possible a short while ago. Did you ever think that there would be a time when it would be frowned upon to go to church to fellowship with like believers and to worship God corporately in song? (See Hebrews 10: 24-25)? or to greet friends with a hearty hand-shake? or to eat with friends in a restaurant? Did you ever think that there would be a time when cash would be frowned upon as an acceptable means of payment for goods and services? (This change is particularly foreboding). There has even been talk lately about the possibility of issuing special identity cards or bracelets to everyone. This device conceivably could contain a record of everyone's personal information, especially a record of vaccinations. It is not inconceivable that this card could eventually morph into an implant of some kind under the skin. The technology for this has already been in place for a while. It is also not inconceivable that the purchase of goods and vital services, even application for employment, even to fly, could soon be refused without it.

Bill Gates, a well known multi-billionaire is one of the instigators of these [proposed changes \(HL\)](#). It is well known that he is motivated, at least in part, by his desire to drastically reduce and to cull the earth's population. His family were prominent [eugenicists \(HL\)](#). Things that were considered totally impossible even a few months ago are now becoming a reality. In addition to this global pandemic, there is the ongoing social chaos in most major American cities instigated by vile leftist groups whose desire is to change the world to lawless anarchy. Deep political unrest is now dividing American (and Canadian) society. The recent election has split America down the middle. Civil war is now a real possibility. All of these things are causing men's hearts to fail them for fear of what is coming upon the earth - men, that is, who have not placed their faith for the future in Jesus Christ. These things have actually made me very excited, as I see end-time prophesy seemingly starting to unfold. Regardless, this is a good time to spread the gospel. People are ready for someone/something to give them a firm hope for the future.

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Before going any further, allow me to mention the links that I have built into the text. They are in a [blue font](#), and [underlined](#). By clicking on them, you should be brought to web sites that reenforce the claims that are made in this article. These links may not work if you are reading this summary on a non-Apple device, or if you have downloaded it from a PDF file. Give them a try.

It is tempting, as a result of recent worldwide events, to speculate that we are about to enter the end-times period called The Tribulation. Even though the beginning of this troublesome time is not clearly defined in Scripture, it is reasonable to conclude that it is well on the way. (Obviously, I do not believe that it starts after the Rapture. I fully realize that the word rapture is not found in the KJV Bible. It was taken from the Latin Bible. If you object to this, then replace it with the second coming or the gathering of the saints.) We may only know that it has arrived after we have been in it for a while. It is my firm conviction that we, believers in Jesus Christ, will not be spared from the coming trials. One for sure sign of their arrival will be an unmistakable event called [the Abomination of Desolation](#) (AOD). According to the Book of Daniel, an agreement will first have to be established by some future global authority, allowing the Jews to rebuild their temple and to resume animal sacrifices therein. When this happens, there will be no doubt about where we are on the last days time-line. See [2 Thessalonians 2: 1-4 \(HL\)](#). Then it will be time for believers to look up.

In this study we will be examining the Scriptures for details concerning those things that will surely happen "at the end of the days." (Daniel 12: 13), and how they will affect believers.

At the very start of this summary, I have included an overview or framework of what I firmly believe that the Bible tells us concerning the sequence of events that have to occur prior to the setting up of Christ's millennial kingdom on earth. I pray that my conclusions will be solidly anchored to the Word of God. As I have already said, they will not necessarily line up with current widely accepted end-times eschatology (HL). It is for sure they will not have been arrived at by studying commentaries, and/or by listening to prominent end-time teachers on this subject, or by reading their books.

## A A Brief Overview

Since this article is rather long, I have decided to include a brief overview of what the Bible tells us concerning the unprecedented times that we appear to be entering. As this summary is being written, I am well aware of the fact that many believers, even those who lived at the time of the Apostle Paul, have had similar thoughts about the nearness of the end; believing that Jesus could come back during their lifetimes. Most recently, believers in the tumultuous 20th Century thought that the end prophesied by Jesus was imminent when they faced unprecedented global events such as two world wars, major plagues and other earth shattering catastrophes.

It is possible that the Coming of Christ for the saints may still be decades, maybe even a century or so, into the future. However, the speed at which recent events in our present world have transpired, and their universality, is a strong indicator for me that we may be on the threshold of the intense trials and tribulations for believers foretold by Jesus in Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21. However, it is not what I think that matters. It is what the Scriptures clearly say that is most important. The following is a bird's eye view of the end-times scenario that I will endeavour to justify from the Scriptures.

As I write this summary, the world appears to be on the threshold of the distinct period of chaos and violence mentioned by Jesus in end-times prophecy. This time is referred to as "The Tribulation". Satan will be particularly hard at work behind the scenes trying to achieve his nefarious goals. It will start with an acute and unprecedented assault on Christian beliefs by false prophets and false teachers. Consequently many of our once-solid churches will succumb to the pressure and fall away from believing what is clearly taught in the Scriptures. During this time of trouble, a very charismatic and persuasive leader will arise on the world scene, eventually declaring himself to be God. This specific climactic event will take place in a rebuilt temple in Jerusalem. Prior to that time, animal sacrifices will have been resumed by the Jews. The Bible calls this climactic event the Abomination of Desolation. From then onwards, "great tribulation" will be unleashed on the saints in particular. Consequently it will also be an unprecedented assault on Bible-believing churches. Somewhere in all of this chaos the Bible appears to indicate that there will also be major international conflict (not the Gog-Magog war). Just prior to the end of this time, when Christ returns at the Rapture, there will be cataclysmic changes in the sky: the sun will be darkened, the moon will no longer give her light, the stars will fall from the heavens, and the powers of heaven will be shaken. I will give my reasons for believing that this period of tribulation will last for only 3 1/2 years - not for seven years - as is commonly taught in popular eschatology.

Following Christ's return for the saints, there will be another distinct 3 1/2 year period characterized by the outpouring of God's wrath on rebellious mankind. During that time, those who remain on earth will suffer tremendous punishment directly from God for their rebellion. These events will be supernatural - not unlike what happened in Egypt as the children of Israel were being released from bondage. This time will be significantly more severe than the preceding 3 1/2 period of tribulation. The saints will be rejoicing in heaven during all of this.

Contrary to what is commonly taught on this subject, I do not believe that there will be a seven year long tribulation period set aside during which God deals exclusively with the Jews - a time when they will be intensely persecuted until they eventually accept Christ as their Messiah. To the contrary, the first half of this seven years will be a time of tremendous persecution of believers, who will still be

around until they are raptured to heaven. It is highly possible that the Jews will be at the forefront of this persecution; as persecutors.

At the very end of the entire seven years, Jesus Christ will then return again; this time with the saints to settle accounts with His enemies and to set up His millennial kingdom on earth.

## B More Comments concerning the times that we live in

This study, which goes counter to what many in biblical churches believe, will be primarily based upon Jesus' Olivet Discourse; given in Matthew 24, and corroborated in Mark 13 and Luke 21. The events described by our Lord in the chapters will be further expanded upon with numerous other Scriptures from both the Old and the New Testaments. Most importantly, this work will be based on the assumption that Matthew 24 was written to all believers, not just to a select group of end-time Jews. A separate section at the end of this study, starting around page 38, or thereabouts, has been written to justify this particular belief. You may want to go and read this now. It is crucial to this study.

The Apostle Paul gave us a very clear sign that will permeate many churches during the end-times. It is highly possible that this particular prophecy may have already begun. We are told in 2 Thessalonians 2: 3 (HL) that there will be a distinct falling away just before the coming of our Lord. In 2 Timothy 3: 1 (HL), we are also warned of perilous times in the last days. It is my belief that one sign in particular of Paul's prophecy is the rejection of the very fundamentals of our precious Christian faith. Recent surveys back this up (HL). The evidence for this is easy to find around us. Ask the average believer today to use the Bible alone to justify any of their most basic beliefs - from the deity of Christ to the doctrine of salvation - and you may only get a blank stare, or they may refer you to a book (not to The Book) or to a slick teacher on the internet (HL). The Bible (the KJV) however, should be our ultimate anchor and guide when it comes to doctrine. It clearly tells us that there will be many deceptive teachers in the last days who will have gathered large audiences with itching ears (2 Timothy 4: 3 (HL)). Today, even the very words doctrine and fundamentals have become repulsive to many

believers. The average churchgoer is more interested in feel-good experiences than in depth Bible-based doctrine. This brings to mind [Hosea 4: 6 \(HL\)](#).

Every local church, without exception, has a dynamic cycle to it. They are born in fervour - build up to a peak - flourish and become fruitful for a while, hopefully for a long while - and then decline. Without an infusion of new life and Holy Spirit vitality, even once on-fire soul-winning churches eventually fade away. Our landscape is littered with their carcasses. Sadly, "Their candles have been extinguished long ago." Once thriving churches gradually become more concerned with entertaining and with maintaining the status quo than with teaching solid doctrine, and with carrying out the Great Commission. Traditions become embedded on the same level as doctrines. Clever gimmicks are used to attract and to hold on to people. Consequently many believers have gotten to the point where they never study the Bible for themselves. They acquire their doctrines "by osmosis" from a variety of sources - some questionable - but not directly from the Bible itself. New modern Bible versions have expedited this putrefaction process. Church growth has become almost exclusively by transferals from other churches, rather than from new believers. Strange doctrines are thereby introduced into once biblically sound assemblies. As a direct result, basic teachings are then neglected or watered down out of fear of offending and therefore losing those new folk. Sadly, in these perilous days, there seems to be more fear about spreading a virus than of the spreading of strange unscriptural doctrines. One only has a temporal effect, while the other can have devastating eternal consequences.

Where are the seven churches in Revelation 2 and 3 - Ephesus? Smyrna? Pergamos? Thyatira? Sardis? Philadelphia? Laodicea? They are nowhere to be found. Where are the churches of the New Testament epistles - Rome? Corinth? Galatia? Ephesus? Philippi? Colossi? Thessalonica? They also no longer exist. Every congregation today is somewhere on that same continuum. Vigilance requires that individual believers, today especially, constantly reaffirm their personal beliefs upon the Word of God, or they also will be on a similar down-slope, and lose their first love ([Revelations 2: 4 \(HL\)](#)).

The church however, as Christ's institution, will never die. While on this earth, it will always be at war, and it will triumph in the end. If anything, it will be refined. We have Jesus' promise that it will prevail against the gates of hell

([Matthew 16: 18 \(HL\)](#)). Living thriving churches will always exist on earth right up until He returns. If they are alive, and if their candle is still lit, they will always be aggressively involved in a struggle, as should all individual believers. The Bible makes it clear who wins this war. WE WIN!!! We will be victorious! Maranatha! Praise God!

## C The 1800s and strange doctrines

Admit it or not, many false doctrines have been with us for a while - some are recent additions that have crept in by stealth. [The 1800's were a particular watershed of weird man-made teachings \(HL\)](#). Numerous unbiblical cults were founded during that time. Prominent examples of these are the Jehovah's (False) Witnesses, the Seventh Day Adventists and the Mormons. Some questionable doctrines held by Baptists and Evangelicals were also started by men from that same era. Mature believers should be ready and able to examine any and all such questionable teachings in the light of the Scriptures, and to separate truth from error.

With this in mind, one of those fundamental doctrines that requires a closer examination is the doctrine of "[The Imminency of a secret Rapture](#)". This teaching is a subset of dispensationalism. Many evangelistic messages given in our churches today are capped off with the following exhortation: "[You had better make your decision for Christ now, because He may come back before the end of this sermon.](#)" By saying this, I am well aware of the fact that I may have just stepped on more than a few Baptist toes. Regardless, what does the Bible clearly tell us about this long anticipated earth-changing happening? Could the Lord really come back secretly to the earth for believers at any time without any clear advanced warning? Does a woman have travail before or after the birth of her child ([1 Thessalonians 5: 3 \(HL\)](#))? Surely the child does not come into the world without some clear advanced warning to the mother? Doesn't everyone start "hopping" when the expectant mother experiences her first birth pains; especially as they get closer together. I sure did when our first child was born. I was a "basket case". Nevertheless, this poignant analogy is often used in Scripture as a sign of impending judgement. There are always clear signs before God "lowers the boom". Likewise His Coming will not happen without ample advanced warnings.

1 Thessalonians 5: 3: For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

Please excuse me if I jump ahead a little bit in this topic. Many pre-trib believers so are quick to quote Matthew 24: 36 and 1 Thessalonians 5: 2 as prime evidence for a secret imminent rapture of Christians; while at the same time ignoring verses like 1 Thessalonians 5: 4 and all of the previous verses in Matthew 24; saying that they describe a time of extreme trouble; written exclusively for the extant Jews. This view was especially embedded into evangelicals' minds by the popular 60's "Left Behind" series movie called; "LIKE A THIEF IN THE NIGHT". Ironically, Matthew 24:30 and 31, we are also told by this same group, is the second coming of Christ for the Jews; and not the same Rapture described in 1 Thessalonians 4: 15-17. This is doctrinal chaos. There is an old saying that is so appropriate at this point. It says:

"O what a tangled web we weave, when we first set out to deceive."

Matthew 24: 36: But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

1 Thessalonians 5: 2: For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

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

What if the majority of Bible-believing Christians today are wrong concerning the issue of imminency? How many sincere believers are just "holding their breaths" until He returns? ... Hoping that they will not have to suffer for their faith. Instead of having this attitude about the future, shouldn't we all be preparing spiritually for the events described in Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21? Why else would Jesus have given us all of this information? If we are raptured before these events happen, and if I am wrong on this issue, then praise God! It is my firm belief however, that severe persecution will happen to all Bible-believing churches as the gospel is being preached to all nations (Matthew 24: 14

(HL)). One can see it coming. Persecution has always been a church motivator. It will either energize us to abandon all fear as never before, and enter into the battle, or it will wrongly motivate some of us to "keep our heads down", and not to draw any attention to ourselves. Is this not what many churches are now doing in relation to the never ending Covid restrictions, even though these dictates are clearly against Hebrews 10:25-26. Is there any limit to how high the local church will jump when told to do so by the government? It would not surprise me if they will bow to all of the dictates of the government, even to the extent of requiring all believers to wear HAZMAT suits forever. If we fold now, what will happen when the tribulation really comes? Nevertheless, I am sure that all of the events that have transpired recently in this world have at least prompted many to examine the imminency doctrine more closely. I am firmly convinced that more severe trials are on the horizon for believers before our Lord returns for us. If we are persuaded that end-time events will unfold this way, then is it not our duty to warn other believers - To be "watchman on the wall". That is a prime reason why I have spent many hours writing and rewriting this summary. Maybe someone will listen. It is for sure that we should be ready to give a clear scriptural answer to any and all sincere questions on this issue and any other issue.

In 1 Peter 3: 15, we are exhorted:

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: ...

## D Questions - Questions - and more Questions

What did Jesus clearly teach concerning the end-times in His Olivet Discourse? Does what He taught in the Gospels, especially Matthew 24, apply to us, or does it just apply to the Jews who will live during the end times? That is what we are told. (The answer to this question is pivotal.) What did the Apostle Paul and the other inspired writers of Scripture (Old and New Testaments) teach us concerning this same subject? Was anything specific written in Scripture about the times and the seasons just before Jesus comes back for the saints of all ages? After all, He did tell us to watch (Matthew 24: 42 (HL)), so He must have given us

something to watch for. Are there any unmistakable major signpost events (birth pangs) that we should be looking for before He returns, or have all of the precursor prophecies been fulfilled already, as we are often told? Is His Second Coming imminent? Is the Second Coming the same event as the Rapture? If so, where do we directly find this in Scripture? When it happens, is it going to happen in secret, or will it be seen by all? Is there going to be more than one rapture? Was the establishment of the modern nation of Israel in 1948 THE major sign of His soon coming? Can a person's [eschatology \(HL\)](#) possibly be influenced by a doctrine called [dispensationalism \(HL\)](#)? ... If so, then how? Is the Tribulation a continuous 7 year period or is this culminating time divided up into two distinct 3 1/2 year long periods, with the Rapture being in the middle? Daniel 9: 27 sure appears to say so. If this is true, then how are these two periods of time different from one another? What differentiates them?

I will endeavour to answer most of the above questions as concisely as possible within this study by using the Scriptures alone. I have tried to break my sometimes long answers up with subheadings. By comparing scripture with scripture, and by assuming that Matthew 24, as well as Mark 13 and Luke 21, were written to all believers, it can easily be shown how the major prophetic end-times events do all fit together.

If you don't yet have a Bible to follow along, then use this [KJV Key \(HL\)](#).

## 2. The Second Coming Of Christ For The Saints

### A The Major Supporting Scriptures for the Rapture

i) Matthew 24: 29-31: 29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: 29 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory) 31 And he shall send his angels with a

great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

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- \* I have read in dispensational literature and in a Scofield Study Bible that the event described in verse 31 is the physical "regathering of Israel" from all of the nations of the earth back to Israel. I have also heard this in numerous sermons. Is this really so?
  - \* There is also the use of the word elect (chosen) in verse 31 of Matthew 24. Contrary to the claims of dispensationalism, that term includes the saved believers of all time. It is frequently used that way in the epistles (See Romans 8: 33 and 1 Peter 2: 9-10) as clear examples.
  - \* This verse clearly tells us that this event will be seen by all. It is not a "secret rapture".

ii) Mark 13: 26-27: 26 And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. 27 And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.

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- \* This verse tells us that His angels shall do the reaping. This verse is used by pre-tribbers to say that it therefore cannot be the Rapture. It does not however, negate the other Rapture verses. Elsewhere it is described as a catching up and a gathering. This verse simply gives us more details. Jesus uses the angels to do the reaping or the gathering. Is that fact hard to accept? Just as numerous complimentary views are required by an architect to adequately describe a complex structure, so has our God in His infinite wisdom used various complimentary views to completely describe His glorious return to earth for the saints ([Acts 1: 11 \(HL\)](#)).

iii) Luke 21: 27: And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

iv) John 14: 1-3: 1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. 2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

v) Revelation 1: 7-8: Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen. 8 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

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- \* Note that Matthew 24: 30 mentions all kindreds of earth shall mourn because of him, This verse does not tell us that

this will be a Jewish centred event. Every eye shall see Him, including the extant Jews.

\* Verse 7 above calls this event a coming " ... he cometh .... " The word coming is also used in Matthew 24: 30, Mark 13: 26, Luke 21: 27, John 14: 3 and elsewhere. The Rapture is the Second Coming. All but one of the following verses also use the word coming to describe the Rapture. 2 Thessalonians 2: 1, which is clearly about the Rapture, also describes this event as a coming. The first Coming is when He came in the manger in Bethlehem. Contrary to what dispensationalists claim, the common event described here is The Second Coming, even though His feet actually do not touch the earth at that time. One could say that His Third Coming is when He comes back with the saints at Armageddon - when His feet do touch the Mount of Olives. What a glorious time that will be!!!! We will be with Him.

vi) 1 Corinthians 15: 50-57: 50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. 55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? 56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

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\* Paul was answering the question posed in verse 35 of Chapter 15 of 1 Corinthians about the resurrection. He was just explaining one aspect of the Rapture - How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? In the process, he was also shedding additional light on 1 Thessalonians 4: 15-16., and all of the other Rapture verses.

\* Note that this verse mentions the "last trump". Matthew 24: 31 also mentions the sound of a great trumpet. They are one and the same. The next verse also corroborates the presence of the trump of God at His Second Coming.

vii) 1 Thessalonians 4: 13-18: 13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. 16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 18. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

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- \* verse 18 of this portion of Scripture says: "wherefore comfort one another with these words." The comfort mentioned here is not because they will be taken up in the rapture and escape tribulation. It is because they will get to see their loved ones once again. They feared never seeing them. They are told not to sorrow as those in the world do when a loved one of theirs dies, They (the lost) will never see their loved ones again. They/we were not comforted because they/we would be raptured before all hell breaks lose.
- \* It is also to be noted that verse 15 refers to this event as "the coming of the Lord". It is also legitimately called The Second Coming.

viii) 2nd Thessalonians 2: 1: Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, ...

\* Is there any doubt that this event referred to here is the Rapture? It is a coming and a gathering together unto Him; is it not? In this verse it is made abundantly clear that the Rapture and His Coming are one and the same event. I fully realize that the term Rapture is not in the KJV Bible. It is a term that was obtained from the Latin Bible. The words coming or gathering could also have been used. The term Rapture however, kind of identifies a specific coming or a specific gathering.

ix) Acts 1: 11: Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

## B Comments

Are any more verses required? We have here the words of Jesus, through Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Then we have the testimonies of Paul and of the angels. These words are all inspired by the Holy Spirit. They reveal that Jesus is coming back soon for all of the saints, dead or alive, saved (former) Jews and saved Gentiles, Old Testament and New Testament believers. Dispensationalists claim that there will be a separate resurrection for Old Testaments saints. Do you see that in any of the preceding verses? Nevertheless, everyone will see Him at that time. I will finally get to see my Saviour! What an awesome thought!

These individual verses do not all contain the same facts, but they do not contradict one another. They are straight forward. They are complimentary. They describe one Rapture. Each one gives more details. These are the clearest and most undeniable Scriptures that can be found anywhere in the Bible regarding the return of Christ for the believers from all ages. Anyone who claims to be a Bible believer has got to accept these undeniably clear verses. There is nothing in these

verses that would lead a new believer to think that there are two raptures: one for the Gentiles and a separate one for the Old Testament saints. In addition to these verses, there are also many other shorter corroborating references to His Second Coming in the Old and in the New Testaments.

You will also note that Matthew 24: 30, Mark 13: 26 and Luke 21: 27, and Revelation 1: 7 all tells us that every eye shall see him. So much for a secret rapture. This aspect of His Coming was not mentioned in 1 Corinthians 15: 51-54 and 1 Thessalonians 4: 15-18. However, a single verse or passage cannot include all of the aspects of the rapture. As with many other events, they collectively describe this same event. Nevertheless, these verses are misinterpreted by dispensationalists, who claim that they describe separate group raptures: a rapture of the saints - a rapture of the saved Jews after the tribulation - a rapture of the "tribulation saints" - etc., etc. There is no denying however, that there have been, and will be, evacuations to heaven of individuals and small groups at various times. However, there is only going to be one Rapture in combination with the Resurrection of the saints of all time, and with Second Coming of Christ.

### C) When will Christ return for the saints?

#### i) Some Preliminary Thoughts

The essence of this summary deals the timing of the Rapture. As I study this topic, I am well aware of Matthew 24: 36, where Jesus told us: "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, ..." At that time, even He did not know when He would return. This matter is in the Father's hands. Nevertheless, Paul wrote that we would know the times and the seasons (1 Thess 5: 1-4 (HL)) related to His this future event. Note verse 4. That epistle was also written to us. It is for sure that no one can predict the day nor the hour - not even the most clever biblical scholars by analyzing the details of Daniel's and other prophets' prophecies. Our Lord also told us to "look up" when certain things begin to come to pass (Luke 21: 28 (HL)). If He told us to look up, there have got to be some things to look up for. Jesus also told us that we would know when this event was very near, even at the door. All we have to do is to observe what was mentioned in Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21. It is not possible to find just one single portion of Scripture however, which

contains all of the details concerning this event, although Matthew 24 comes close. The complete picture however, must be arrived at by piecing together clearly related verses from various locations in the Bible. The individual parts must then compliment, not contradict, one another. The overall picture is like a gigantic puzzle. Nevertheless, we are encouraged (Rev 1: 3) to study the Scriptures to see where the pieces fit. There is a blessing given to those who do this. What dispensationalists have done however, is to teach that there is a variety of puzzles. Dispensationalism is then required as a guide to determine what pieces fit into what puzzle. They have thusly made the study of end-times events extremely complex. No sincere believer could have arrived at their complicated conclusions by merely reading the Bible. Dispensationalism forces its followers to hammer pieces of the puzzle into locations where they just do not fit.

Many may disagree with my conclusions, although most have never studied this topic on their own. I recommend that a plain stripped-down King James Bible, without footnotes and marginal comments, be used as you examine all that I write. Let the Holy Spirit be your teacher; not C.I. Schofield, not John Darby, not Clarence Larkin, not Dwight Pentecost, not Matthew-Henry, and for sure, not David Cameron, nor anyone else. Set aside your commentaries and just read the Bible text. Reconcile everything that I write with the Scriptures. Make sure that it all lines up. Compare scripture with scripture. Ensure that no liberties are being taken with the text. I repeat; Be a Berean (Acts 17: 11). If it doesn't fit, or if it is not compatible with other Scriptures, then reject it.

Keep in mind again, that this summary is based on the assumption that the Gospel of Matthew 24, along with the entire Bible, was written for all believers; for those in these last days especially (2 Timothy 3: 16 (HL)). It definitely was not written exclusively for the Jews, otherwise most of the Bible would be irrelevant to us. Doesn't 2 Timothy 3: 16-17 tell us that "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works"? The Gospel of Matthew was written, including the chapters on eschatology, to prepare us for the tough times which lie ahead.

Also see John 16: 33: *These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.*

and 1 Thessalonians 3: 4: *For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know.*

## ii) Beware of Dispensationalism.

I keep making derogatory references to this doctrine inside of my summary. In so doing, I have probably offended many believers, because this doctrine is ubiquitous. Why have I done this? It is mainly because it gives one a different perspective on what is written concerning end times - to say the least. It provides its followers with a predetermined complex framework into which all eschatological (end times) passages are forced - like trying to force large square pegs into small round holes. It just does not work. On the surface, this doctrine appears to be very esoteric - very scholarly - only fully understood by "deep thinking" Christians. Four years of Bible College, and then some, are required to fully understand it, and even then it is too complicated to explain to "ordinary" believers like you and I. Let me reemphasize; the Word of God does not require a Ph.D. to comprehend. The Holy Spirit is our incomparable teacher.

Those who follow this doctrine claim that "*rightly dividing the word of truth.*" found in 2 Timothy 2: 15 means that Scripture can only be correctly understood in the context of dispensations. That is not true. That was not the intent of this verse. The word dispensations only used four times the Bible, and only in the New Testament. Most of the times it is referring to a giving out or a pouring out of the gospel or the grace of God.

For details concerning this doctrine, check out [dispensationalism \(HL\)](#). To question this prominent teaching is considered by many to be akin to heresy. The Bible clearly shows us that there is but one dispensation, and it is the dispensation of grace through faith. Men have always been saved this way from the very beginning. Adam's son Abel, was saved by faith (Hebrews 11: 4), and innumerable anonymous and well known saint from that time until the present (See Genesis 4: 26). Faith, not works, nor any combination thereof, has always been the only way to please God (Hebrews 11: 6). God's nature never changes. Long ago men

placed their faith in a future promised Saviour who would come. As time unfolded, more light was shed on this future Messiah until He actually came. He revealed Himself as such to the lowly woman at the well of Samaria (John 4: 25-26). We now place our faith in a Saviour who came, as He promised that He would. We have the written Word to describe Him. Nevertheless, it could not be clearer that salvation is not faith plus works, nor faith plus conscience, nor faith plus law, nor faith plus anything. The gospel of Christ has always been the same. Hebrews 13: 8 tells us: **"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever."** I repeat: Salvation has always been by grace through faith. Jesus is the only dispenser of that saving grace. He is the only source and object of that saving faith.

Dispensationalism and erroneous Eschatology go hand-in-hand. The principal source of information for modern Christians about the Pre-Tribulation Rapture Hypothesis is the "revered" Scofield Reference/Study Bible. If you perchance do not believe me, consult one of these Bibles. You will quickly notice that there is more commentary than biblical text on most of its pages. That alone should make believers suspect of it. However, doesn't it look much more sophisticated than a plain ordinary stripped down KJV Bible? It for sure will impress people around you in church. It is much thicker and more sophisticated looking than a lowly stripped down KJV. My NIV New Scofield (no longer used) Study Bible even starts to cast doubt on the meaning of God's Word in Genesis 1: 1, suggesting the possibility of long ages. It continues to introduce uncertainty into God's Word with its marginal comments all the way through it, right up until Revelation 22. Comments of this nature should immediately raise **a red flag** in hearts of serious believers. How much spiritual poison is lethal? To mess with the Word of God, by making changes to it earns an automatic eternal death sentence. That is serious business.

Of course, my old NIV Scofield Study Bible provides a different slant on Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21; placing the extant "Jews" in a prominent end-times role; hinting that these chapters were intended exclusively for them. It clearly says in the footnotes that Luke 21, and by implication Matthew 24 and Mark 13 are "not about His return to translate the church". (See footnotes on Page 1084 in 1984 NIV).

It is very dangerous to allow one man, like Cyrus Scofield, (and thereby his revered predecessors: John Darby and Clarence Larkin) to have so much influence on the doctrines of modern-day Christians. It has been through the influence of their extra-biblical commentary in particular that the occupants of the modern nation of Israel have been placed on such an elevated pedestal by Christians - especially by Evangelical Christians. This belief is called Christian Zionism. The Scofield Bible has in particular led many believers to accept the Pre-Tribulation Rapture doctrine, and to reject clear statements in the Gospels to the contrary. In my old (no longer used) NIV Scofield Study Bible, verses 29-31 of Matthew 24 are falsely referred to as the "the regathering of Israel" (HL) (See page 1009 lower footnote). The Jews, we are told, will be regathered from everywhere on earth by the angels during another Rapture (HL) and brought back to Israel after The Tribulation. The preceding link is from Thomas Ice (HL), a well known, and very polished dispensationalist. In his rather pompous messages, he gives the impression that ten Ph.D.'s are required to rightly understand eschatology. This man talks as if he has just come down from "the mount". Apparently the Holy Spirit and the Bible alone are not enough for lowly believers such as us. We must be illuminated by men like him. Sorry if I am "stepping on more toes" by saying this, but my allegiance is to the Lord through the KJV Bible. It is not to men, no matter how scholarly and sophisticated they may appear to be. I am glad that someone "stepped on my toes" on this issue years ago.

### iii) Matthew 24: The Post-Tribulation Rapture Foundational Scriptures:

In this study, my principal framework text will be Matthew 24, corroborated by Mark 13 and Luke 21. At the end of this summary, on Page 39, I have included a separate section which explains the reasons why I believe that this text, as well as all of the Gospels, were written to all believers, not to the extant Jews. You may want to read it before proceeding.

Matthew 24: 3-31: 3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? 4 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. 5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. 6 And ye shall hear of wars

and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. 7 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. 8 All these are the beginning of sorrows. 9 Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. 10 And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. 11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. 12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. 13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. 14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. 15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) 16 Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: 17 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: 18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. 19 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! 20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: 21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. 22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. 23 Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. 24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. 25 Behold, I have told you before. 26 Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. 27 For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. 28 For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together. 29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: 30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end

of heaven to the other. 33 So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.

In their lifetimes, Jesus' immediate disciples did not experience all of the troubles mentioned by Jesus in this end-times teaching session. This message was obviously intended for a much wider audience down through time. There is much New Testament Scripture to support the fact that the elect mentioned numerous times here are believers, not end-time Jews. The audience that He was addressing here encompassed all of the saints from then until the present - Believers from all nations of the world.

#### iv) The Tribulation Period - The first 3 1/2 years of Daniel 9: 27

It is to be noted that Matthew 24, and also Mark 13 and Luke 21, contain a message which was simultaneously given to two groups of believers. One message was intended for those believers in His immediate audience 2,000 years ago - those who were saved out of Judaism. Those who would still be in and around Jerusalem at the time of the Roman its invasion by Titus AD 67-74 (HL) and the destruction of the temple (Matthew 24: 2) . Why else would Jesus have included specific warnings like: "Then let them which be in Judea flee unto the mountains?" (Matthew 24: 16) and "But pray ye that your flight be not in winter, neither on the sabbath day:" (Matthew 24: 20). A lot of good that warning would be for anyone today who would be attempting to flee from 21st Century weapons of war. Mountains or snow or Sabbath days, or even the city of Petra, would not make much of a difference in these modern times. Let me repeat: this warning was specifically directed to Christian believers of Jewish origin who would still be in or around Jerusalem at the time of the Jewish/Roman wars. The other part of the message was intended for a much wider audience composed of multiplied millions of believers worldwide thousands of years later who will be on earth just prior to His return.

\* Where did the term "The Tribulation" come from? Jesus warned us of a time of "great tribulation" (Matthew 24: 21) after the abomination of desolation. This prophesy would be fulfilled twice. It came to pass in AD 60, and it will come to pass again one last time at the end of days. Satan will pour out his extreme hate against Christians and Jews soon after the next Abomination of Desolation. This

last time however, will have worldwide ramifications, and it will then involve the anti-christ, global government, spectacular deceptions, the mark of the beast, etc.

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

Also see Matthew 24: 29: "Immediately after the tribulation of those days ..."

By these statements, Jesus thereby characterized the events described in verses 4 to 14 as a time of tribulation, and verses 15 to 28 as a time of great tribulation. Consequently modern scholars have given this whole period of time the name - The Tribulation.

The same Tribulation is also mentioned in Revelation 7: 13-14. This quote was given to John the Revelator in response to a rhetorical question asked by one of the elders.

13 And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? 14 And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Those referred to as being arrayed in white robes were those who were described earlier in Revelation 7: 8. They had just been raptured out of The Tribulation. How else would they have gotten to heaven? They were raptured saints, not raptured end-time Jews. I am not implying by this statement that former religious Jews cannot become saints. Of course they can be saved. However, they must come to Christ the same way as everyone else. They are on the same footing as everyone else who comes to Christ by faith. They do not have a "special pass" to heaven. Verse 14 above is additional evidence that the saints are raptured after the tribulation.

8 After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

\* Dispensationalists inevitably resort to 1 Thessalonians 5: 9 to justify their belief that Christians will not go through tribulation; especially not "The" Tribulation.

For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

This verse however, refers to wrath, not to tribulation. There is a significant difference between these two. The wrath of God will be poured out on rebellious mankind after the saints have been evacuated from the earth. It will far exceed any other punishments poured out by God in past history. This term is mentioned at least a dozen times in the Book of Revelation. Of course God will not subject believers, the saints, to His extreme wrath! Why would He do such a thing? Jesus suffered the wrath of God for us on the cross, and in hell for three days (Matthew 12: 40 (HL)). Nevertheless, the events during that future time will be supernatural; similar to, but much more pervasive and severe than the trials brought upon the Egyptians by God through Moses. They will include: large bodies of water turning to blood - all green grass being burned up - fire and hail from heaven - scorpion-like creatures with stings in their tails coming out of the pit - large heavenly mountain-like toxic masses being cast into the sea, etc.. There is just no way that God will subject believers to these horrific things. Psalms 88: 6-7 (HL) says that God poured out His wrath, which should have been for us, upon His Son in hell. The extent of this sacrifice on His part for undeserving sinners such as us is unfathomable - What love! This verse was not written about the psalm writer David. Nevertheless, the saints will no longer be around at that horrific time. There is just no way that God will subject His saints to such horrendous trials.

John 16: 33 however, still tells us that the saints will undergo tribulation:

These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

Tribulation has always been the lot of believers. Consult the Foxe's Book Of Martyrs (HL) to see what may have happened to our fellow believers a few centuries ago. Take some of this information with a few grains of salt.

\* Jacob's Trouble: Many modern believers erroneously call the above-mentioned Tribulation Period (Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21), the time of Jacob's trouble (Jeremiah 30: 7 (HL)). They are wrong. This verse is an obscure one which is taken out of context. It refers to the troubles undergone by Israel at the time of their dispersion by foreign powers. The Tribulation will be a time of extreme testing for believers, not for the extant Jews. Christians are the ones who have been hated - presently are hated - and will be hated (Matthew 24: 9) by the world, during that time in particular. There is no way that this verse is referring to end-times Jews. How could these Scriptures possibly be written for their benefit in the future? They hate Christ. God will not instantly convert this extreme Jewish hate into love when "... they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, ..."; when they supposedly see Him coming in the skies for them (Zechariah 12: 10). This is another Scripture that has been taken out of context. For a long time, I fervently believed that it was about the Jews in the last days. No longer do I believe this. This event already took place 2,000 years ago on Calvary. At that time, those in attendance were from Judah, Benjamin and Levi (Zechariah 12: 12-14 (HL)). They looked directly upon the one whom they had pierced. This verse is not referencing some future regathering of the twelve tribes on Israel.

The Jews have not been given a faithless plan of salvation; different from everyone else. Many Jews who saw Him in Person on earth accepted Him and His teachings. Many did not. They even saw Him raise Lazarus from the dead. Unbelievably, they even wanted to kill Him and Lazarus for this miracle (John 12: 10). Their ungodly motive was political. They did not want to lose their special status with Rome. Romans 10: 17 tells us: "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Faith does not come by miracles nor by sight. With this in mind, why then do certain men believe that God will instantly convert the extant Jews when they see Him coming in the sky? Thomas was chastised for having this attitude (John 20: 25) - "The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the LORD. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe." Look at Jesus' response to Thomas in John 20: 29: "Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." Those who got saved back then, and those who get saved today believed/believe in His words. Faith is not sight (Hebrews 11: 1 and 6). We, who exist long after He walked on earth,

have not seen Him, and yet we still believe His words. This faithless kind of instant Jewish conversion en masse that we are told is going to happen smells like Calvinism (HL) to me - a salvation that bypasses the human will. Why should they get saved a different way than everyone else? There is but one way.

Getting back to the subject of The Tribulation, Revelation 6: 1- 16 corroborates Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21. It includes six of the seven seals, including the four horsemen. As these verses are examined, one will see that the events during this time are basically the same as those in Matthew 24: 4-24. You will specifically note that verses 12 and 13 of Revelation 6 mention the exact same unmistakable pre-Rapture events as Matthew 24: 29: the darkening of the sun and the moon, and the stars of heaven falling. This is not a coincidence. Thus Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21 and Revelation 6 are linked together.

\* When Jesus said, "Immediately after the tribulation of those days, ...", He implied that the period of tribulation was over at this point. Matthew 24: 29 describes an unmistakable series of unprecedented events that will happen at the end of the period of tribulation. There will be cataclysmic changes in the sun, moon and the stars. It is as if the stage is being set for the event that believers have been looking forward to for ages - His glorious coming for them. What a time that will be! What anticipation! Our lamps will be lit, and we will be ready to go up to the banquet! Hallelujah! Maranatha! My heart is pounding.

The things that occur on earth after the Rapture (Matthew 24: 30-31) are entirely different from what happens before this event. We have to go again to the Book of Revelation to get details concerning this latter period of time. It will no longer be characterized solely by tribulation, or trouble, or man-on-man violence. It will be the time of the pouring out of God's extreme wrath on unrepentant mankind. Revelation 6: 16-17 clearly describes the turning point.

16 And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: 17 For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

The punishment which is dispensed on rebellious men during that time will be very severe. It will be unprecedented God-on-man violence - supernatural - no

longer the man-on-man violence that characterized the previous 3 1/2 years. You will note that the early part of chapter 6 of Revelation (the four horsemen) is parallel with the tribulation described in Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21. The saints will be in heaven after this time. You will also note that the word wrath appears mostly in the latter chapters of Revelation: 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 18 and 19, denoting a clear division between tribulation and wrath. The judgements are much more severe. The seven years will then end at the coming of Christ with the saints (Rev 19: 11) for to set up His millennial reign.

\* Nowhere in the gospels is there any indication that the Christ will return for the saints before Matthew 24: 30-31. All of the scriptural evidence indicates that this long-hoped-for event is going to happen at the end of this extremely trying period of time. It could not be more clear that the Rapture will not occur at the beginning of this time. It will happen at the end of this period of tribulation. Any first-time reader of Matthew 24 would naturally interpret these passages this way, unless of course, that they read Scofield, where they will be told that Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21 were not intended for them, but for the end-time Jews. Our teacher is the Holy Spirit, not Cyrus Ingerson Scofield.

#### v) verses used by dispensationalists to justify a pre-trib rapture

Pre-Trib believers resort to 2 Thessalonians 2: 3 and Revelation 4: 1 for their prime scriptural justification of a pre-tribulation Rapture. They also refer to 1 Thess 5: 2-3, 9, 2 Thess 1: 9-10, Luke 21: 36 and Rev 3: 10 as proof that the saints will not go through (the) tribulation prior to His return. They do not differentiate between a period of time characterized by extreme man generated tribulation for believers, and a separate and distinct time characterized by the outpouring of the wrath of God upon unrepentant mankind. These are two drastically different prolonged events. You will find this in their literature (HL). They also do not accept Matthew 24: 30-31, Mark 13: 26 and Luke 21: 27 as being the same Rapture as 1 Thessalonians 4: 15-17. As a matter of fact, as I have already written, they claim that Matthew 24 was written exclusively for extant Jews.

The Flood is also used by dispensationalists to symbolize the fact that God will not allow the saints to go through (the) tribulation. They do not see that Noah and his family went through much tribulation before the arc was shut. Those on the ark did not however, go through the deadly outpouring of God's wrath which followed. Using biblical symbolism can also be used by those who have a pre-trib agenda - used in ways that it was not intended for.

Let us now have a closer look at these verses in Thessalonians and in Revelation. Are they legitimate proof of a Pre-Trib Rapture? You will quickly see that they are the most obscure verses that could possibly have been used to justify this conclusion. Nevertheless, I have not heard any other "better" verses to support their case. If you know of one or more additional clear verses to these, then please use my e-mail address at the end of this report to inform me. Somehow I do not think that you will find any. Surely one who accepts the above mentioned verses in 2 Thessalonians 2 and Revelation 4 as evidence for a Pre-Trib Rapture could easily be convinced about the flat earth hypothesis, or of geocentricity.

Here are their prime proof verses:

2 Thessalonians 2: 2: "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;"

They actually use a verse which undoubtably proves a post-trib post Abomination of Desolation rapture to prove the opposite. A "falling away", they tell us, is "a type of Rapture"??? Down is up? A falling is a rising! How is this conclusion arrived at? What kind of logic is this? Well, here it is: "In the Greek", perdition, we are told, comes from the original word "apostasía", which apparently really means departure, not a falling away. Thus this comment implies that there was a mistranslation in the KJV. Thus the Rapture really happens first, before the Abomination of Desolation is revealed - before the Gathering of the saints.

It is ironic that IFB pastors accept this kind of modern versions reasoning which involves resorting to the Greek, while yet still claiming to be King James Only. Another clear example of resorting to the Greek and to the modern versions is the way that they have changed the meaning of 2 Thessalonians 2: 2. The KJV

clearly says "..., as that day of Christ is at hand." This is clearly telling us that Jesus' 2nd coming is not imminent until certain major events happen. i.e. the Abomination of Desolation. Here is what my (no longer used) NIV says for that same verse: "..., the day of the Lord has already come." These are not the same! Which one is correct? The NIV quote is the one that most Bible-preaching pastors (including IFB pastors) resort to in order to twist the meaning of this verse and justify an imminent rapture.

Here is another "proof text" that is often used to justify a pre-trib rapture:

Revelation 4: 1: "After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter."

John going up to heaven alone in the spirit is a type of Rapture??? No Jesus in the clouds! No saints! No trumpet! ... Only a voice sounding loud like a trumpet. No angels! No Resurrection! The fact that there are elders present in heaven after this event is used to show that the church (represented by elders) has been raptured to heaven at this time. No further comments are required.

A good example in support of a tribulation before the Rapture however, is given in 1 Thessalonians 5: 3:

For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

Travail comes upon a woman before the birth of her child - does it not? - not after the birth of her child. It is obvious that this means that the Tribulation comes before the Rapture; not after.

vi) Where does the concept of a 7 year long tribulation/wrath period come from?

In Matthew 24: 15, Jesus made a very clear connection with the Old Testa-

ment prophesies of the prophet Daniel, given in Daniel 9: 27: He is the author of all of the Bible, including Daniel.

15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

Keep in mind that that Jesus was addressing the saints of all time in this verse; not just those in His immediate audience. It is only by reading extra biblical writings that a first time reader of this narrative can be led to believe that this warning was written exclusively to the end-time Jews. This verse does makes it clear that Christians who are on earth at that time will see the Abomination of Desolation. We are included in the "When ye therefore shall see ..." In making this prophesy, Jesus was thereby placing Daniel Chapter 9, and verse 27 in particular, into an end-time context. (Paul also corroborated this also in 2 Thessalonians 2: 3-4). Here is the specific verse that describes a 7 year period of tribulation/wrath.

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

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\* One week is used here to describe 7 years.

3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; 4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

Jesus thereby placed the verses in Matthew 24 that surround verse 15 (AOD) into an end times context:

Let us now look at the entire portion of Scripture in Daniel 9 which contains verse 27.

Daniel prophesied about a seventy week period of time after the Jewish captivity in Babylon. It outlines their history, with obvious gaps, from the time of

their return from Babylon until the consummation.

Daniel 9: 24-25 -27: 24 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. 25 Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. 26 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. 27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

This period of seventy weeks, or 490 years, started at the commandment by King Cyrus of Persia, which gave the Jews permission and the funds to rebuild the house of the Lord in Jerusalem (Ezra 1: 1-2). It end with the consummation. I will shed more light on this event further into the study.

\* As I have already written, the last week of Daniel's seventy weeks prophesy (verse 27 of Daniel 9) is the origin of the concept of a seven year long tribulation/ wrath period. This week (of years) was placed into a present day context when Jesus referred to the Abomination of Desolation (AOD) in His Olivet discourse (Matthew 24: 15). Matthew 24 applies to all believers.

15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

Some writers have said that this event was once and for all fulfilled when Titus destroyed the temple in AD 70. Some even say that this event was fulfilled by Antiochus Epiphanes in 160 BC. The first claim can be ruled out however, by the fact that John referred to the same future happening in the Book of Revelation,

Chapter 13: 4-6, which was written around 90 AD or thereabouts. The second claim can be ruled out by the fact that Jesus mentioned Matthew 24: 15 long after that second event took place.

4 And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? 5 And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. 6 And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.

Historians generally agree that the Book of Revelation was written somewhere near AD 90; twenty years after the Romans invaded Jerusalem and Judea. Therefore AD 70 was not the final fulfillment of the Abomination of Desolation. Why make a prophesy about an event that has already taken place?

By placing AOD in the midst of Matthew 24, it therefore stands to reason that the accompanying events described in this chapter, before and after verse 15, take place during that seven year period, or at least during part of it. The word tribulation was used twice by Jesus in this portion of Scripture. These same happenings are corroborated in Mark 13 and Luke 21. Thus this future period of time has become known as The Tribulation.

vii) The seven years of Daniel 9 is 3 1/2 years of tribulation followed by 3 1/2 years of the outpouring of God's wrath? It is not a continuous seven years long period?

\* Let us look at the first half of the seven years- The Tribulation.

The idea of 3 1/2 years of tribulation comes from Daniel 9: 27. It is clearly stated in this verse that the sacrifice and the oblation shall cease and the Abomination of Desolation (OAD) will occur in the midst of that last week. Half of seven years is 3 1/2 years.

27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the

overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

There is also the mention of the Abomination of Desolation in Daniel 8: 11-14:

11 Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of the sanctuary was cast down. 12 And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practised, and prospered. 13 Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot? 14 And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.

Note that 2,300 days equals 6.3 years. There is reason to believe that this period of time begins somewhere after the confirming of the covenant with many (Daniel 9: 27) during that last week, and ends at Armageddon.

This particular first time period (3 1/2 years) is mentioned elsewhere in Scripture. In Revelation 11: 2 and 13: 5, John mentions the fact that the antichrist will be in power for 36 months, or 3 1/2 years. Daniel concludes his book in chapter 12 with the fact that approximately 3 1/2 years (1, 335 days) will pass until the AOD is set up, and then roughly another 3 1/2 years (1,290 days) after this event. This is the same AOD as is mentioned by Jesus in Matthew 24: 15. In this same discourse the word tribulation is used twice (verse 21 and verse 29). Thus Daniel 9: 27 connects with Matthew 24. It is then reasonable to conclude that verses 4 to 14 of Matthew 24 describe, at least in part, the first 3 1/2 years of that 7 year tribulation period. Daniel 9: 27 also alludes to the consummation as being end of that seven year period. Remember that according to Matthew 24, the first half of that seven years is a time of tribulation. It is buttressed in the middle by AOD, the cataclysmic signs in the skies, and by the Rapture. Verses 16 to 26 give us additional details concerning the tribulations of that time. Jesus used that term to describe it.

\* Let us now look at the second 3 1/2 years of Daniel's 70th week. It is of a totally different nature than the first 3 1/2 years. This part of the culminating seven years is characterized by the outpouring of God's pent up wrath on mankind. It is reserved for His adversaries (Nahum 1: 2). Daniel describes its length as 1,260 days (Daniel 12: 11). John also mentions this time period in Revelation 11: 2-3 as 42 months. It ends with an event called the consummation (Daniel 9 : 27).

Now let's look at the meaning of the word consummation from Daniel 9: 27. Rather than using a dictionary, we will let the Bible explain itself.

2 Thessalonians 2: 8, using the word consume, tells us:

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

This is the exact same consummation as is mentioned in Daniel 9: 27 as happening at the end of Daniel's seventieth week. "That wicked" in this verse is obviously the anti-christ.

There are numerous verses in both the Old and the New Testaments of the Bible which allude to God coming down to consume kingdoms (Daniel 2: 44), individuals (2 Thessalonians 2: 8), all that forsake the Lord (Isaiah 1: 28) and those who lived in Israel at the time of Jeremiah (Jeremiah 16: 4). Hebrews 12: 29 tells us that "... our God is a consuming fire." It stands to reason therefore that the end of the seven years of Daniel 9: 27 will be with a judgement by fire. This fire may be figurative or literal or both. In Revelation 19: 15 we are told that when He returns again, He will smite the nations with the sword of His mouth. Nevertheless, it will be an outstanding culminating event. There will be no mistaking when it happens. Believers will actually take part in it as soldiers in God's army. This will be the long-prophesied Battle of Armageddon". The period characterized by the outpouring of God's wrath will be over and we will witness all of this. Wow!!! Even so, Lord Jesus come.

There are two different comings clearly referred to in the New Testament - a coming for the saints, and a coming with the saints. There will be no coming for

the extant Jews. (By extant, I mean the Jews who will exist on earth at the time of His coming). One will happen at the end of the seven year period when Christ returns with the saints (Revelation 19: 11-16) to destroy the anti-christ and his minions, who have just finished their final 3 1/2 rule of terror. This is not the same coming as Matthew 24: 30-31. One is a return to gather His elect; while the other one is a return on a white horse, with a vesture dipped in blood, with the title KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS, leading the armies of heaven to smite the nations. I am in tears as I visualize this awesome event! I repeat, the elect mentioned here are the saints of all ethnic backgrounds, including saved Jews. One coming is at the midpoint of the seven years of Daniel; the other coming is at the end of that period of time.

It is my conviction that the midpoint of that 7 year period is defined by the cataclysmic changes in the sun, moon and stars (verse 29), just before His glorious return for the saints (verses 30 and 31 of Matthew 24). It is at this point at which men call for the rocks and mountains to fall on them and to hide them from God's wrath (Revelation 6: 15-17). At this point, they will be aware that judgement is "coming down the pike". Their hearts will fail them for fear of what is going to happen to them (Luke 21: 26).

Is there more Scriptural evidence that there will be another 3 1/2 year period of time after the Rapture when God deals differently with those who still remain on earth? There are numerous Scriptures found throughout the Bible that refer to the division of Daniel's 70th week into two distinct parts of approximately 3 1/2 years: **42 months** (3 1/2 years) - Daniel 7: 25, Revelation 13: 5. **1,335 days** (3.66 yrs) - Daniel 12: 12. **1,260 days** (3.45 years) - Revelation 11: 3. **1,290 days** (3.53 Years) - Daniel 12: 11. **2,300 days** (6.30 years) - Daniel 8: 13-14. The numbers change slightly if the lunar calendar of 360 days is used.

There is more evidence of a final 3 1/2 years of the outpouring of God's wrath in the Book of Revelation 6: 15-17. These verses mark the beginning of a time when God's wrath is poured out on rebellious mankind. This time is obviously distinct from The Tribulation. Immediately after this announcement, John saw a great multitude in heaven (Rev'n 7: 9, 13-14). Where else could such a large number of people have come from but from the Rapture. Even though we are not directly told that this enormous gathering is a result of the Rapture, it is automat-

ically inferred in the context of the surrounding verses. Immediately after it, God begins to pour out His wrath on rebellious mankind (Revelation 8, 9, 15, 16, 17 and 18). The events that happen before it are the tribulation period. I repeat; one is characterized by God-on-man violence (wrath), whereas the other is man-on-man violence, with some satanic empowered evil thrown in.

Rev'n 6: 16 And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: 17 For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

Rev'n 7: 9, 13-14: 9 After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

13 And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? 14 And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Revelation 14: 13-16 is another description of The Rapture.

13 And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them. 14 And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. 15 And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. 16 And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.

The fact that the angels do the reaping does not negate the fact that both of these harvests occur separately for the saints and for the damned. They may also be at different times. Why couldn't the "caught up" of 1 Thessalonians 4: 17 be done by angels?

You will also notice that verses 19 and 20 from that same narrative refer to the winepress of the wrath of God:

18 And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. 19 And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. 20 And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.

From this time after in the Book of Revelation, the words wrath of God are frequently used: Revelation 14: 10, 14: 19, 15: 1, 15: 7, 16: 1 and 19: 15. This time makes up the final 3 1/2 years of Daniel's vision in Daniel 9: 27.

#### D Will the Jews suffer during the tribulation?

If you haven't consulted a C.I. Scofield reference Bible to tell you otherwise, then you have to believe that all of the intense trials in Matthew 24: 4-14, 16-26, as well as those described in Mark 13 and Luke 21, will happen to all believers; both to the saved Jews and to the saved Gentiles world wide. These trials will continue on until Christ's return. Matthew 24: 29 makes this fact clear. I will admit that some of these verses in Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21; the ones that refer to Judea, sabbath, synagogues and Jerusalem, appear to also be directed in particular towards believers who were/are occupants of the nation of Israel during the destruction of Jerusalem around 70 AD. Many prophecies made in Scripture have numerous applications. Dispensationalists use these verses to say that the Jews in particular will go through the Tribulation. Christians, they say, will have been evacuated from the earth by that time. We are then told that these intense trials will motivate the Jews who exist in that area to turn to their Messiah.

In Luke 21: 12-35, you will notice a distinct contrast in this narrative between the use of the personal pronouns you, your, ye and yourselves, with the verses that use the impersonal pronouns them and they. Could it be that Jesus was personally addressing two different groups of people here - one group He addressed

personally while the other group He addressed objectively? Could it be that He was addressing His beloved followers when using the personal pronouns, while He was addressing the "Jews" when using the impersonal objective pronouns?

I placed the word Jews in the previous sentence in quotes, because I firmly believe that the present occupants of the nation of Israel are, for the most part, not the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Their tribal identities especially were lost many thousands of years ago. DNA studies may be able to detect slight traces of Jewishness, or of Middle Eastern descent in some of them. A very large number of those today who call themselves Jews however, are proselytes. At some point in their history, they converted from other religious groups. The present day Palestinians may actually have more Jew in them than those in that area of the world who claim to be pure descendants of twelve sons of Jacob/Israel. Religious Jews they may be, but the occupants of the modern nation of Israel, for the most part, are definitely not pure Jews, nor even close to it. No one in this modern world is pure anything. The DNA of most people today has been so homogenized over the years that no one can say that they are pure anything. Who knows; you or I may have a small trace of Jewish blood in us.

Matthew 24: 9 tells us about those who will be persecuted, afflicted and hated by all nations. The hate will be for my name's sake (Christ' Name). Believers in Christ will therefore be the recipients of this extreme hate. This has happened for centuries and it will increase in intensity as the end approaches. This verse in Matthew's Gospel for sure could not possibly be in reference to religious Jews. The "Jews " on earth today have been hated for many millennia, but not for the Name of Christ. They are the ones who vehemently hate the Name of Christ. Verse 9 is for believers, as is the whole chapter.

Eventually the exiled Jews, from the Southern nation of Judah, were absorbed by the populations that they were exiled to. This dispersion happened due to the Roman General Titus around AD 70. The conquerors dispersed them everywhere. Just like the ten northern tribes of Israel who were exiled by the Assyrians hundreds of years earlier. For the most part, they also lost their identities as they were dispersed. Add to this the fact that they were constantly being re-exiled from the countries that they lived in after the AD 70 dispersion. Those who call themselves Jews in the last millennium have brought hate upon themselves in

most of the countries that they have lived in, due, at least in part, to their predatory financial practices. They were not hated for any spiritual reason. Their new religion, Talmudic Judaism, is nothing short of idolatry. I don't think that God placed a mark on them as He did on Cain. Would any nation love a people who considered their hosts, "goyim" - no better than cattle? That is what their Talmud teaches them. Jerusalem and the extant "Jews" will for sure be in the end-times mix, but not in a good way. There is nothing in the end-time narrative to place extant Jews into any prominent role in the world, other than to be terrorized during the last Abomination of Desolation. The Bible however, has a prominent place for the Israeli saints and patriarchs of old, of which there are many. They are mentioned in prophesy. [Ezekiel 37: 21-28 \(HL\)](#) is an example of such a Scripture. Surely they will then inherit the unconditional promises made to them when they are resurrected, along with everyone else who died as believers. See [Galatians 3: 7, 28-29 \(HL\)](#). God still has plans for them.

I hope that this summary was a blessing to you. Don't forget to check everything out against Scripture.

Pass it on .....

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## Was the Gospel of Matthew written exclusively for the Jews?

Who was the intended audience of Matthew 24's Olivet Discourse? The answer to this question is key to understanding Post Tribulation Pre-Wrath Eschatology. Pre-Trib Rapture teachers claim that it was written with a Jewish, non-Christian, audience in mind. According to them, it describes the trials and tribulations to be undergone by the extant Jews; those who will be alive in the modern land called Israel at that time. They believe that the trials described therein will cause them to convert en masse to Christ. It is the key to their doctrine.

The answer to this question is rather long, but it is essential. If Matthew 24 is all about the Jews, then the Pre-Seven-Year Tribulation Rapture that is accepted by most Baptists today becomes more plausible. If not, then this popular doctrine falls apart.

All of the Gospels, including the Olivet Discourse chapters, are an integral part of the "all Scripture" mentioned in 2 Timothy 3: 16. They were written for all (Mark 13: 37), and not just to an exclusive Jewish audience. If the following answers are reasonable and scriptural, then end-times teaching become much much simpler. Everything then falls into place.

**37 And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.**

The following are my reasons for believing that all of the Gospels, including Matthew were intended for all believers. Undoubtedly there are even more reasons to believe as I do.

A An all inclusive common salvation message is given in all four Gospels. There is only one Gospel (good news) - not one for Jews and another one for Gentiles.

Verses like Matthew 11: 28-30 (HL) for example, were addressed to all people, including to saved (former) Jews. Most believers especially accept Matthew 28:

18-20 (HL), The Great Commission, as being intended for all believers. I for sure do. It is our marching orders. Why would this message be placed at the end of a book that is supposedly intended exclusively for the Jews? The specific message that we are told to "teach to all nations" is a message of salvation by grace through faith. It is a message to all men. Only born again believers in Jesus Christ can possess and dispense that message of good news. The Jewish message, if they even have one to give, is not good news. As with all other false gospels, it is a Christless message of salvation through works. The Bible is very clear that men do not get saved that way (Ephesians 2: 8-9 (HL)). This Book therefore was written to all believers in Christ.

Hyper dispensationalism (HL), along with many of their other strange beliefs, makes the claim that all four Gospels, especially Matthew, Matthew 24 (HL) in particular, were intended only for the Jews. That would mean that John 3: 16 has been misapplied by Christians. I don't think so! Was it not written to all sinners, regardless of ethnic pedigree? It is the clearest gospel verse in all of Scripture. It is the most well known verse in all of the Bible. It was addressed to "the world"; not just to the unsaved Jews. Most dispensationalists however, are not this extreme.

Dispensationalists in general however, do teach that that Matthew 24 gives an exclusive Jewish message? Why, they say, would Jesus especially have included the verses about fleeing on the sabbath (verse 20), and about those in Judea fleeing to the mountains (verse 16), etc.? Is this not an indicator that everything in this chapter was for the Jews who would live in Jerusalem and in Judea at the time of these trials? It is my firm belief that these verses were given by Jesus in order to warn believing (former) Jews in Jerusalem who had come out of Judaism - those would still be in Judea around 70 AD, when Titus destroyed the Temple. Later Rome finished the job by invading and levelling Jerusalem and Judea (120 AD), as Jesus said would happen. Believers of Jewish origin had been given a commission to go and to spread the gospel to the world, which they did not yet do. Unfortunately, the persecution in Jerusalem and in Judea motivated them to quit gazing up at the sky and move on to the task at hand.

In chapter 21 of Luke, the same types of warnings are given. However, as I have previously written, you will note that the impersonal objective pronouns them

and they are used from Luke 21: 21-27. These are not words that someone would normally use for persons who were the objects of God's affection. These verses more than likely are intended for the non-believing Jews who would be in the area near the temple during the time of the first Abomination of Desolation (AD 70).

Compare these verses with verses 8 to 18 in the same chapter. Did you notice the contrast in the pronouns used? In verses 8-18, the personal pronouns ye, you and your are used. The nature of the events described indicate that these pronouns apply to His beloved followers. Contrast these verses with verse 23: "for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people." For the most part, these chapters were written to Jewish (former) believers, not to the religious Jews - those who followed Judaism. Generally they hate Him and consider Him irrelevant. Why would He warn them about things to come?

**B** Mark 13 is a chapter that deals exclusively with end-times events. At the end of this chapter, Jesus said:

37 And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch

What could Jesus have possibly meant by this statement? Is it not clear that all that He said, and what was written in this chapter, was intended for all believers who would read this message. It would be a real stretch to say that the preceding verses in Mark 13, which compliments Matthew 24 and Luke 21, were intended just for the Jews. Jesus knew that His words would be read and believed by Christians everywhere for thousands of years to come. They are especially being read in these unprecedented days when the end appears to be very close.

**C** Why would Jesus have given a special exclusive message in these chapters to those who were adherents to a religion that had run its course?

The Jewish religion never was, nor ever will be a means of salvation.

Galatians 3: 24 tells us: Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

The old system of animal sacrifices, religious observances, a temple and an altar, that singled out Jews as Jews, was soon to be made redundant by our Lord. Hebrews 10: 4 tells us:

For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

Jesus fulfilled all of the Old Testament types:

His sacrificial death fulfilled all of the types represented by the Jewish rituals. He was "the Passover lamb" (Genesis 12: 3-6). His was "the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." (Leviticus 17: 11 and Hebrews 9: 22), He was "the ram caught in the thicket" (Genesis 22: 13). He was the brass serpent that was raised on a pole (Genesis 21: 9). He was/is "... the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1: 29). He was/is "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Revelation 13: 8). What need is there for a temple when "... ye are the temple of the living God" (2 Corinthians 6: 16)? There is no more need for a physical altar. "We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle." (Hebrews 13: 10). With all of this in mind, what need is there any more for animal sacrifices? He was the ultimate sacrifice. What need is there any more for two separate peoples - Jews and saved Gentiles? "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us." (Ephesians 2: 14 and Acts 15:7-9).

I repeat, why would God have written an exclusive warning to the Jews in the Gospels about end-times events when they are no longer an exclusive people? Their religious rituals are now meaningless. It is even debatable if extant Jews are even the genuine descendants of Abraham. Regardless, their special status was removed from them after they rejected their Messiah. I repeat, why would God have therefore directed special exclusive instructions to them in Matthew 24?

All saved men, including saved Jews and Gentiles, are now the new holy nation and the peculiar people (1 Peter 2: 9-10).

1 Peter 2: 9-10: 9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath

called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; 10 which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

The kingdom of God is no longer in the possession of the Jews. However, they have not been excluded from it. They also can become a part of it if they also accept Christ. In various Scriptures, it is made clear that there is now no difference between them and any other believers who come to Christ (Romans 3: 20-23). Whatever advantage that they did have is gone.

Matthew 21: 33-35: 33 Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country: 34 And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. 35 And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and stoned another. 36 Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. 37 But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. 38. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, this is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize upon his inheritance. 39 And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him. 40 When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?

Let's now jump ahead to verse 43: 43 Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

If you have the time, look up the following Scriptures. They were directed specifically to the Jews. Then you can decide for yourself if they are still special. In the light of the following verses, would God give them an exclusive end-time message in Matthew 24?

Matthew 8: 10-12, Mark 11: 12-14, Mark 12: 1-9 Luke 13: 23-29, Luke 13: 34-35, Luke 14: 16-24, Acts 15: 6-9 (note verse 9), Romans 2: 28-29, Romans 3: 19-23, Romans 9: 6-8, Romans 9: 25, Romans 10: 12-13, Galatians 3:7, \*\*

Galatians 3: 28-29, Ephesians 2: 11-2, Ephesians 3: 5-6, Colossians 3: 10-11  
1 Timothy 1: 4 Titus 3:

▷ If the extant Jews are so prominent during the end-times, as we are so often told, then why does the Book of Revelation, a Book that is almost exclusively written about eschatology, only mention them twice - and only in a very derogatory way?

If they had a special role to play in the last days, surely the last Book of the Bible (Revelation) would have something significant and positive to say about them, would it not? If they were still the "chosen people", then surely Jesus would have revealed this to John the revelator? Let us now examine how many verses in the Book of Revelation make mention of the Jews.

Revelation 2: 8-9: 8 And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive; 9 I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.

Revelation 3: 7-9: And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; 8 I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. 9 Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.

That's it! There are no more mentions of the word Jew or Jews in the Book of Revelation. I repeat, If God had plans for the extant Jews during the last days, would He not have made it obvious in the last book of the Bible?

I hear the voices of those who say, "What about the 144,000 from the twelve tribes of Israel?" These men were Jewish saints from past history. God resurrects

them (Ezekiel 37) at some time during the 3 1/2 year tribulation period to carry out one last evangelistic effort before Christ returns at the Rapture. There is just no way, for a variety of reasons, that I can be made to believe that this vast number of virgin males can come from extant Israel. God will not save a large number of Jews at that time in a predetermined Calvinistic fashion. And what's more; the Jews in Israel today don't have a clue what tribe they even come from. If they are in fact even ethnic Jews, their tribal identity has been lost millennia ago. I repeat - It is for sure that they do not know their tribal origin. For all I know, I may even have enough Jewish DNA in me to qualify as a citizen of Israel.

Dispensationalists are quick to mention the absence of the word "church" beyond chapter 3 of Revelation as evidence that this Book of the Bible is not intended for the church. However, the same argument can be made about the absence of the word Jew beyond Revelation 3 of this same book. There actually is ample evidence of the presence of the church beyond chapter 3. The word saints is mentioned 13 times in this last Book of the Bible.

✉ Jesus' audience for His Olivet discourse, his close disciples, was Jewish. Is this not proof that the specific message in Matthew 24, and the whole Chapter for that matter, was written to His "chosen people"?

There is no denying that Jesus' immediate listeners at that time were, for the most part, ethnic Jews. Simon however, was an exception. As far as we can tell, he was a Canaanite (Matthew 10: 4 and Mark 3: 18). Our Lord was not teaching His disciples some exclusive new Jewish doctrine. Although they were mostly Jews, it is for sure that they were all primarily saved believers in The Lord at that time. They had heard the Gospel firsthand from Him (Luke 10: 20). Their primary identity was as followers of Jesus Christ, not any more as religious Jews. They paid the price for this choice. It did take them a while to realize that they did not hold any particular status as such. There is much evidence that they were saved before the Day of Pentecost. Therefore Jesus' Olivet Discourse was directed to all believers, then and now.

F Are the Jews the elect in Matthew 24: 22? If so, then that chapter for sure, as well as the whole book of Matthew, was written exclusively for them.

The term elect/elect's is used in Matthew 24: 22, 24 and 31. Consequently dispensationalist scholars claim that this whole chapter in particular was written exclusively to the Jews. The Jews, we are told, are the elect - the chosen - are they not?

The terms elect, election and elect's, are used numerous times (27) in the Bible; more often in the New Testament (23). All of their uses are specifically in relation to believers (Jewish and Gentile Christians). Only three times in the Old Testament is the term elect used in relation to the Jews (Isa 45: 4, 65: 9 and 65: 22). Once it was used in relationship to the Messiah - Christ (Isa 42: 1). There is no denying that the Jews were God's elect or chosen people at one time. Christian Zionists like to claim that the use of this term in particular in Matthew 24 is prime evidence that the message of this chapter is specifically addressed to the Jews - those who existed back then and those who will exist in Israel during the end-times. The New Testament however, makes it abundantly clear that these words are used to describe all Christians - all believers (Romans 8: 33-39 (HL)). We, all the saints, are God's elect or chosen. Whereas the children of Israel once were God's chosen people, 1 Peter 2: 9 makes it very clear that all believers, irregardless of ethnicity, are now God's elect. Note: "which were in time past not a people, ...", and that "... ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; ...". Romans 11: 7 even draws a contrast between the nation of Israel and the election. If they were exclusively elected or chosen by God because of their ethnicity, there would be no contrast to be made. They would be one and the same. 7 What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded. Romans 11: 5 makes it very clear that grace, not "race" qualifies one as the elect. 5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. The only way that Jews can qualify as the elect is by grace through faith - the same way as all Gentile believers.

Six of the seven uses of the word elect in the Epistles refer to believers. The use of this word in the Gospels (Matthew and Mark) is in the context of an exhortation to believers about the intense degree of persecution and the deception that will occur to them in the last days. We are told by Jesus that "... if it were possible, they shall

*deceive the very elect.*" This could not possibly be referring to the Jews at the time that Jesus gave this message, nor to the Jews of today. They have/had already been deceived. There is now no distinction between different kinds of believers - a "future Jewish elect" and a Christian elect. There is only one body. We are all one elect in Christ (Galatians 3: 28).

*28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.*

Those who believe that Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21 were written exclusively for the Jews would have to accept that the Jews, not Christians, will be the ones who will be *"hated of all nations ..."*. Note however, the ending of this verse in Matthew 24: 9 . It clearly says: *"... for my name's sake."* Does this warning then apply to the Jews? I don't think so. They are the ones that have vehemently hated Christians from the time of Jesus until they were scattered from Israel by Titus soon after the writing of Matthew 24.

You will notice that this grace through faith plan has not changed, even from the time of Enos. See Genesis 4: 26:

*26 And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos: then began men to call upon the name of the LORD.*

Why would Jesus give a warning to those who vehemently reject and hate Him? In 1 John 2: 22-23 we are told:

*22 Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. 23 Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.*

Finally, look again at what Jesus said in regard to His listeners in the parallel end-times text in Mark 13: 37 . He clearly stressed the universality of His message, and thereby also the same parallel messages given in the other Gospels. The common message that they convey is intended for all people, regardless of ethnic pedigree.

"And what I say unto you I say unto all. Watch."

G The word CHURCH(ES) is not used in the Book of Revelation from Chapter 3 :14 until Chapter 22: 16.

The argument that the word church(es) are no longer used in the Book of Revelation between Chapters 3 and Chapter 22: 15 is used as proof that the church has been raptured before the events described herein; and by association also the events mentioned in Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21. This claim is not true.

The universal word for all believers, **saints**, is used numerous times (13 times) throughout this Book. By contrast, the word Jew(s) is only used twice in this last Book of the Bible - and only in a derogatory way :

Revelation 2: 9 and 3:9. 2:9 **I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.**

3:9 **Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.**

One would think that the word Jew would be mentioned, especially in this very important eschatological Book that is supposedly all about them. If they play such an important role in end-times events, as popular dispensational eschatology tells us, then why are they only referred to twice in Revelation; and then in a very derogatory way?

Keep in mind that the Bible should be our primary source of knowledge in all areas of doctrine, including eschatology. For many years Christians have relied primarily on the works of the scholars to resolve these end-time issues - men with D.D.'s or Ph.D.'s attached to their names. These superficial accoutrements oftentimes intimidate believers into accepting their conclusions without first being like the Bereans, and examining these things for themselves from the Scriptures. The

Bible should be our ultimate reference document, and the Holy Spirit should be our ultimate teacher. For that reason, I encourage all readers of this summary to check all of the biblical references that I give in this study, and to believe them, not me, or any other commentator.

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