

THE ACTUALITY OF GOD'S WORD

PART 1

AN EVALUATION OF THE PRESENT TIME
A LOOK AHEAD AT THE END TIME

Hendrik Schipper



You can discern the face of the sky and of the earth, but how is it you do not discern this time?

(Luke 12:56)

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Table of contents

PREFACE	5
CHAPTER 1	7
CHAPTER 2 On The Present Time, Before The Rapture of the Believers	18
CHAPTER 3 Two Kinds of Death and Two Resurrections	22
CHAPTER 4 The Book of Life	31
CHAPTER 5 The Rapture of The Believers into Heaven	39
CHAPTER 6 THE SEVEN YEARS OF THE GREAT TRIBULATION	44
CHAPTER 7 Satan's Detained for 1,000 years	83
CHAPTER 8 The Future of the State of Israel	85
CHAPTER 9 The Conversion of The Jewish People	101
CHAPTER 10 The Battle Preceding The Thousand-Year Reign	108
CHAPTER 11 The Thousand-Year Messianic Reign	114
CHAPTER 12 Christ will judge Satan, Satan and the beast will be thrown into hell	135
CHAPTER 13 God's Last Judgment on All People	137
CHAPTER 14 The New Heaven and The New Earth	151
CHAPTER 15 New Jerusalem	156

PREFACE

When, all of a sudden, your social and economic life comes to an almost complete standstill, you wonder what is wrong. There is a pandemic alright, but that answer does not satisfy me.

A pandemic like this does not happen very often, and certainly not on such a global scale. As a Christian, I know that major events on earth are revealed by God to His servants the prophets. (See Amos 3:7: *Surely the Lord GOD does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.*)

Could it be that way now? In the New Testament, Matthew lets us know that the Lord Jesus prophesied that at the end of the age there will be tough times, and that these will happen in phases. First there will be labor pains, followed by the delivery. So, initially, there will be relatively light disasters – God’s way of warning mankind to repent.

If people don’t repent, there will be a time of great tribulation. You can read about it in this book. But I will start off by giving you an evaluation of the present time.

As I am writing these words, it is the Saturday before Easter. Yesterday I was reminded of the suffering of the Lord Jesus Christ in our stead; He died for my sins and for those of the whole world. Tomorrow it will be Easter, the day that our Lord conquered death and Satan.

He who believes in Jesus Christ as his or her Savior, will not die, but have everlast-

ing life with Him in Paradise.

I thank the Lord for giving me, in my weakness, the strength to compose this book.
And I thank my wife Kenna for being my prop and stay in everything.

Hendrik Schipper

Veenendaal, April 11, 2020

CHAPTER 1

Analysis and Diagnosis of the Present Time

The corona crisis

What kind of time are we living in? When, all of a sudden, your social and economic life comes to an almost complete standstill, you wonder what's going on. The answer you get will be: the COVID-19 pandemic. However, that does not fully answer my question, because there is another reason. I am a believer of the Bible, and as such, I know there is a God Who is involved in everything that is happening on earth. Though we cannot stand in God's counsel, things do not happen by chance. In my view, there is more going on than we think.

Once upon a time...

Once there was a time when we could fraternize with each other; we were allowed to meet each other, shake hands, hug, visit each other and lead a pleasant life together. Now, suddenly, this is not allowed anymore. Now, we must steer clear of each other, keep our distance, not touch each other, and not stand in (small) groups. It's called social distancing – though it is not social at all! Unless we realize the reason for it. A life-threatening virus struck mankind and now paralyzes our normal contacts, with all the social and economic consequences that go with it. It hits mankind hard. All the technical and scientific stops have to be pulled out to avert a disaster. But in the meantime, we see a disaster occurring in this world, with many victims. How do we explain that?

Where do we come from?

Once upon a time...

There once was a time when people believed that everything was created by one Creator who brought everything into existence. That Creator had His standards, He had given His ordinations to mankind. Man was a part of that creation and conformed to the structure that the Creator impressed on him. Man's thinking and acting were determined by the structure that God had given to life; this structure gave certainty and sense to human life.

The Bible, or at least its interpretation, was the canon for human life in all its facets. A country's authority, its laws and standards were based on what people learned from the Bible. Those were the bounds within which society operated. Perfect? No, far from it! For it was man's handiwork, with all its shortcomings and self-interests. But the basic principle was, and remained, the God of the Bible on Whom one depended.

In the Netherlands, life based on the Bible started with the arrival of the first missionaries: Willibrord and Boniface. Before that, people served all kinds of idols.

Leaving the Bible-based life

There once was a time when people thought they knew better than all those who lived up to the structure God had given to man. They exalted human reason as their highest good. They could only acquire knowledge insofar as it was perceptible. Everything outside human perception was null and void. It boiled down to there no longer being a creation, and man was set free from the divine structure.

The meaning of life was derived from obtaining human knowledge and fulfilling

one's needs. Since reason alone gave insufficient meaning to life, a movement developed which embarked upon the deeper questions man had about himself. The insatiable, modern, and unsatisfied man went on an endless search for knowledge and his true self.

Man crowned himself

This led to creation no longer being a creation, but something that had originated by way of a chance occurrence within a period of millions of years. No higher authority above us, but liberty, equality and fraternity became the lie – with desire and pride being the underlying motives. *Cogito, ergo sum* became the cradle of modern philosophy. According to Descartes, 'I think; therefore I am' was a phrase to show that unquestionable knowledge from tradition or habit does not exist. Our own intelligence is in this point of knowledge and research; man placed himself above the higher metaphysical knowledge, and crowned himself as a god who is above everything.

Where do we stand now?

We now live in the secular times, the days of a life without God, a new sort of reality.

A horse is no longer a horse. A man is no longer a man. A woman is no longer a woman.

We now live in a time when we are, once more, confronted with a very old problem, i.e. the problem of whether general concepts really exist and what they are. Or saying it in a distinguished way: realism versus nominalism. Within realism, there is a sort of reality with which the qualities of a sort are determined. A simple

presentation of things is that within realism, a horse is a horse, and a tree is a tree. There is a determined order in which reality is mutually arranged.

Man himself determines the order and value of things

A man is no longer a man; it depends on the way he is labelled.

Nominalists will say ‘no’: a horse or a tree is how it is labelled, and it does not give man a grip on reality, as the latter (i.e. reality) may act differently. What matters is the experience we people get from reality, and those experiences spread further and further. In other words: we can label things an ever-increasing number of ways, depending on our experience. Things are not ordered, fixed data, going beyond the individual, but the individual person himself determines the order of things in response to the experience he gains. Therefore, there is no ‘being’, but only ‘becoming.’

Man denies the order determined by the Creator

Man himself determines the order of things and in this he is not bound to anything. Consequently, nowadays a man is no longer a man, and a woman no longer a woman. Those are just outward marks that do not say anything about the actual difference between a man and a woman. We switch over to the neutral ‘it’ and experience teaches us what ‘it’ is. Hence gender neutrality – which is in essence the denial of the order given to creation.

Mankind has increasingly drifted away from God

It may be clear from the above, and from man’s growing knowledge and prosperity, that man has drifted further and further away from God and thinks he does not need God.

We now live in a time when unbelievers in politics and journalism determine what happens and what is made public.

More prosperity – more life without God

After the Second World War, prosperity in the West increased dramatically, as did secularization. Half the Dutch population no longer believes in the God of the Bible. Secular mankind thinks himself supreme and tries by way of technology and science to solve all hindrances that stand in the way of ‘belief in progress’. We have to constantly be more and do more; ‘growth’ is the buzzword: because that is increasingly how we can make the world we humans imagine become a reality.

Our idols: economy and money

Economy determines what we can do, and in this Mammon is our main god; he is made sacred. The god of money must be served in order to grow financially. The consequence is that man, who has crowned himself king of creation, has become a slave of production. Only a double-income couple can scrape a living; we see an abundance of hurry, stress and burnout.

A life in luxury, no lack of anything

But there are scores of health care providers and social workers.

We are very well off in the Netherlands; our country has become one of the most thriving countries in the world. Everything is widely available – education, health care, food, and so on. Something to be thankful for. We have become a generation that enjoys luxury in a way no preceding generation ever has. Therefore, it is strange to notice that never before have we had so many social workers in our country. Doesn’t this indicate that there is something fundamentally wrong with our society?

Growth of occult and demonic powers

Mindfulness, yoga, Buddhism

Scientific findings proclaimed as hard facts

Never before has there been such a great need to giving meaning to life. This need has resulted in a substantial growth of activities dealing with occult and demonic powers, mainly from Eastern religions.

In addition, people started worshipping Mother Earth with her nature and beauty, and this has led to pursuing all kinds of activities for the advance and conservation of the creation in which we live. Our environment is the new idol, with the climate crisis as its latest hype. Arrogant mankind thinks he can even have control over this topic, and devises all kinds of technologically expensive solutions that should transform society; in this, so-called scientific findings are proclaimed as hard facts.

Man has been created in the image of God

Man has lost God's image

In order to worship God, man bears God's image, but now that man has lost God's image, he has also lost his own image and is looking for worship for or of himself.

By nature, man is a religious being

What people forget, is that man is a religious being by nature. Therefore, man has an innate need to worship and give meaning to life. This desire asks for fulfilment and finds its purpose in all kinds of semireligious activities. We see this in all nations on this earth, but also with the individual being in Western society. The devil responds to this need with all kinds of deceptions. Semireligious activities are thus be-

ing developed under false pretenses. A false god is preferred to the true God Who created heaven, earth and sea.

God must be removed from society

The unbelieving world wants to remove everything from society that reminds of God. Including His standards that are based on His commandments and laws.

As a result, the secular, unbelieving world is busy getting rid of everything that reminds them of their Jewish Christian background. God and His commandments are no concern of these people; laws and regulations must be renewed or changed. Man himself determines what is good and wrong, for the sake of his convenience. Never before have so many anti-Christian changes been introduced in our society than after the Second World War.

- **General sexual freedom, instead of sex reserved for marriage.**
- **Right to divorce, instead of staying faithful.**
- **Emancipation of women denies the difference between men and women.**
- **Abortion is killing unborn life.**
- **Euthanasia is a form of suicide.**
- **Legalization of homosexuality is an abomination in God's eyes.**
- **24/7 economy is an abolition of the day of rest.**
- **Gender neutrality is a denial of being a man or a woman.**

And undoubtedly, many more changes can be pointed out. It is a fact that by introducing these alterations society is made increasingly godless, and there is no virtue in this. Especially through our Jewish Christian history, the West has been richly blessed, materially speaking. But if this background is being removed from society, it will be at the expense of order and prosperity. Moral deterioration and denial of authority have always been the beginning of a degenerating society. Many

a civilization has been overturned as a result of it.

Man crowned as head of creation

Now de-crowned by Covid-19, the coronavirus

Arrogant man has crowned himself head of creation and no longer wants to be accountable to his Creator, the Giver of all life. Now he's suddenly being de-crowned by a virus with a crown: the coronavirus, or COVID-19. This virus originated through the wrong and sinful behavior of people, and now it is all over the globe, devastating as a scourge. As yet, it is beyond remedy, and hospitals are filling up with patients. Uncertainty, unbearable suffering and deep concern fill up countries, fill up the world.

'Belief in progress' completely falls to pieces

What man thought to build in his pride, suddenly becomes irrational. Economy suffers heavy losses, and daily life is completely disrupted. It is crisis everywhere: unemployment, loss of income, bankruptcies, and financial losses are forthcoming. Public health is in danger; medical care – nurses and doctors – do their utmost to turn the tide. And we are thankful to God for living in this country. It is necessary to pull out all the stops, and it will stay that way for a while.

Hearing the voice of God

Let me quote a Bible verse that says everything, Galatians 6:7: 'Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.' It is as if God says, 'Now it's been enough without Me! Come to your senses, unbelievers! Call upon Me and I will save you.'

Many people fall ill and die of this pandemic. The 'Memento mori' (Be prepared for death) is coming scarily close for many. How important it is at such a time to

know yourself to be eternally safe in the arms of the Lord Jesus Christ. In Him, God Himself came to this world to atone for your sins, and mine.

The Bible tells us that the wages of sin is death, and that after death there is judgment. This holds for every single person. However, believers are not sentenced, only judged, because the Lord Jesus has atoned for their sins. So, what will it be: death or passing? Will you die an eternal death or will you pass by earthly suffering and be taken to the eternal glory?

Be reconciled to God

Why will you fare like Adam and Eve? By eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they would reach full self-fulfillment and become equal to God. By listening to Satan's lie, man had to leave his throne as God's supreme creation. This resulted in a broken creation, in which sin separated God and man. A creation where suffering and death would reign. A creation in which reconciliation had to be made between God and man. And this reconciliation was brought about by our Lord Jesus Christ on Calvary's cross. So be reconciled to God!

Repent!

The apostle Paul says, 'Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men' (2 Corinthians 5:11). Will it be life eternal or death eternal – with weeping and gnashing of teeth? Therefore, 'Repent, you unbeliever. Leave your wrong tracks and learn the Truth, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Outside of Him, there is no truth, just lies.'

This is only the beginning of the disasters to come.

The Bible teaches us that there will come a time when it is much worse than what we are experiencing now. Currently, we are not just facing the corona crisis. In

Africa, entire crops are being eaten by locusts; thus a large famine is threatening there. We have seen gigantically large forest fires in Australia; earthquakes and volcanic eruptions everywhere, devastating hurricanes, wars and rumors of war.

In Matthew 24, all this is foresaid by the Lord Jesus, but He adds, ‘... but the end is not yet.’ The woes that will spread over the earth will become increasingly large, before the Lord Jesus returns. This world will face a time of even larger disasters; the Bible calls it ‘the great tribulation’. In that period, more than half the world population will die. That notion is even present in Hollywood; just look at the many science fiction disaster movies. Compared to that, what we are experiencing right now is only child’s play.

Revelation 6:15 tells us, *And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, 16 and said to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!”*

Pray for God’s mercy

It will be a time of unprecedented calamities. Why are they necessary? Because in himself, man is God’s enemy; he will always try to escape God’s dominion. Mercy is needed before a man learns to bow before God’s power.

Jesus Christ will return

He will restore justice and clear the earth of injustice.

But the Creator of this world will not give His honor to another being, since this world is His rightful property. At the moment, the devil is still ruling in this world,

through mankind; from the beginning he was a murderer of men, and he is the father of lies. We see this in man's behavior.

But God's Son, Jesus Christ, will restore justice and clean the earth of all its injustice. Because of the pride of man, this will not be done voluntarily, for the unconverted person would rather rebel against God than subject himself to the Creator of the world in which he lives. Therefore, he will be lost forever, while daily enjoying God's loving kindness.

Make the right choice, before it's too late

When God abandons man because man abandons God, mankind is threatened. Then it's often either God or the Jew who is blamed for what went wrong, but it is man himself who calls down misfortune upon himself. Therefore, convert to God and accept the Lord Jesus' sacrifice, and you will be saved for all eternity. Or would you prefer entering the place desolated by God – a place where it's too late, where any mercy is missing, and where eternal remorse will weigh on your conscience?

(I based the above, among other things, on a review – by a worker of the magazine *Cultuur onder vuur*, *Culture under Attack* – of the book *De onzichtbare maat*, *The Invisible Measure*, by Prof. Dr. A. Kinneging. It was edited by Dirk de Jong and the author.)

CHAPTER 2

On The Present Time, Before The Rapture of the Believers

In verses 3 through 14 of Matthew 24, the Lord Jesus speaks with His disciples about the time before the great tribulation, which will spread over the entire world.

The following events will take place:

- Many believers will be deceived.
- False christs and prophets/teachers will rise.
- Many wars.
- Much discord among nations.
- Famines.
- Infectious diseases.
- Earthquakes in various places.
- The love of many will grow cold.
- Lawlessness will abound.
- Believers will be oppressed, hated and killed.

The Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached all over the world.

All these things are just the beginning of sorrows and disasters that will spread over the earth for seven years during the great tribulation.

Matthew 24:3 *Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, 'Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?' 4 And Jesus answered and said to them: 'Take heed that no*

one deceives you. 5 For many will come in My name, saying, “I am the Christ,” and will deceive many. 6 And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. 7 For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. 8 All these are the beginning of sorrows.’

Matthew 24:9 ‘Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name’s sake. 10 And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. 11 Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. 12 And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. 13 But he who endures to the end shall be saved. 14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.’

The end of this world will come once the Gospel has been preached all over the world. But in the end time, the Gospel will still be proclaimed – also during the great tribulation and the Thousand-Year Reign. And then there will be an end to this world, and a new heaven and a new earth will appear.

The lesson of the budding fig tree in the spring

The Lord Jesus said the following about the coming events to His disciples:

Matthew 24:32 ‘Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. 33 So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near – at the doors! 34 Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place. 35 Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.’

Exhortation to be observant

The Lord said that as believers we should be observant and pay attention to these signs, and not occupy ourselves too much with earthly things.

For, just like in Noah's time, everything seems to be quite normal. Unbelievers did not read the signs of the time. At the time, people were also busy eating, drinking and getting married. However, as believers we should pay attention to the signs and not occupy ourselves too much with earthly things, for the Lord will return very unexpectedly to gather His believers. If deemed 'worthy', they will not experience the terrible plagues. What does the Savior mean by that?

Born-again believers will not experience the great tribulation.

Who is worthy of not experiencing the great tribulation? Those who are born again by the Word of God and the Holy Spirit. Those who have died with Christ and have received eternal life.

They are the ones who, in themselves, are not worthy to escape the plagues, but through their relationship with the Lord Jesus, they are worthy to be saved in Him.

Luke 21:34 *'But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. 35 For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. 36 Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.'*

Matthew 24:36 *'But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only. 37 But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 38 For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, 39 and did not know un-*

til the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

Matthew 24:40 *Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. 41 Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. 42 Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. 43 But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. 44 Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.'*

CHAPTER 3

Two Kinds of Death and Two Resurrections

Texts about the resurrection in the Old Testament

First of all, I will pass on to you several texts from the Old Testament that deal with the resurrection of the dead. The prophet Isaiah speaks about the first resurrection to eternal life. Daniel speaks about both resurrections. The second resurrection is for the dead, to eternal judgment and eternal contempt.

The dead will live

Isaiah 26:19 *Your dead shall live; Together with my dead body they shall arise. Awake and sing, you who dwell in dust; For your dew is like the dew of herbs, And the earth shall cast out the dead.*

About the great tribulation; about a resurrection unto life and a resurrection unto death

Daniel 12:1 *'At that time Michael shall stand up, The great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; And there shall be a time of trouble, Such as never was since there was a nation, Even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, Everyone who is found written in the book. 2 And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, Some to shame and everlasting contempt.*

Psalm 49 is about the resurrection of the Lord Jesus

Psalm 49:15 *But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave, For He shall receive me. Selah*

Does that sound strange to your ears? Two kinds of death and two resurrections? Never heard of it? Well, that could very well be, for I think many Christians do not know about it. Yet the Bible tells us so. In Revelation 20, the Lord Jesus makes it clear to us that there are two kinds of death and resurrection. The first death will take place when a person dies; after that, the believer's soul will temporarily go to Paradise.

The unbeliever's sou/spirit will temporarily go to the realm of the dead – the place for unbelievers. In the first resurrection, the believer will rise from the grave, he will get a new eternal body, and this new body will be united with his spirit. This will happen during the rapture of the believers. They will then forever be united with their Lord and Savior. For these blessed people, there is no second death.

Texts on the resurrection in the New Testament

After their death, God's children will go to Paradise where the Lord Jesus is.

Luke 23:42 *Then he said to Jesus, 'Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.'*
43 *And Jesus said to him, 'Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.'*

He who believes in Jesus has eternal life; he will rise from the dead and will be with Him in eternity.

John 6:39 *'This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. 40 And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.'* (...) **44** *'No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.'*

The Lord Jesus has prepared a place in heaven, in His Father's house. Jesus Himself will be there too. It's a place for all God's children.

John 14:2 *'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 to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.'*

Occasional resurrections

We can read in the Bible about more occasional kinds of resurrection. As far as we know, these resurrected people have not received an eternal new body, so they died again afterwards. After the death of the Lord Jesus, many believing people have been resurrected and appeared to many. The Bible does not tell us about a new glorified body of these risen people (Matthew 27:50-52).

The apostolic confession of faith recognizes one resurrection.

In many churches, the Apostolic Creed is read every Sunday. So, many people in the congregation hear that there will be a resurrection from the dead. When will it happen? Probably at the moment that the Lord Jesus returns to judge the living and the dead. For the dead will first have to rise to be judged.

God's Word recognizes two resurrections

God's Word, however, speaks about two resurrections. The Bible mentions specifically the first resurrection; the second is not mentioned as such, but it is also the last resurrection. In Revelation 20:5, we read about the first resurrection. However, it is the end of the first resurrection.

The first resurrection

This first resurrection deals with people who have died, then rise, and are taken up

into heaven with a new body.

The three stages of the first resurrection

You could also say: three harvests: Easter (the first-fruits), Pentecost (large harvest), Sukkoth or Feast of Tabernacles (late harvest).

The first resurrection – first stage

The first stage is the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. He is the Firstling; followed by those who are Christ's.

Matthew 28:5 *But the angel answered and said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. 6 He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.”*

1 Corinthians 15:20 *But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep. (...) 23 But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming.*

So the people who have risen at the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus are not part of it. Some people argue that the Old Testament believers were risen simultaneously with Christ, but I cannot find evidence of that in the Bible.

The first resurrection – second stage

The second stage of the first resurrection is stated in 1 Thessalonians 4:16, which deals with the rapture of the believers:

1 Thessalonians 4:13 *But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. 14 For if we believe*

that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 4:15 *For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.*

The first resurrection – third stage

The third and final stage of the first resurrection can be found in Revelation 20:5; this is the late harvest.

Revelation 20:4 *And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. 5 But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.*

The second resurrection

The (second) resurrection of the unbelievers will take place after the Thousand-Year Reign, after the final battle with Satan and shortly before the final judgment. In the last judgment, these unbelievers will be condemned to hell, a place of eternal remorse. This is called the second death. Actually, it is not just death, it is much worse than death. It is an eternal separation from God, an eternal being in sorrow

and misery. That's also why the Lord Jesus says, 'Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection' (Revelation 20:6). All the more reason to take His warning to heart.

The judgment during the rapture of the believers

During the Lord Jesus' time on earth, He also spoke about the coming judgment. This final judgment does not take place at His coming on the Mount of Olives, as mentioned in the Apostolic Confession of Faith, but at the end of the Thousand-Year Reign and before the coming of a new heaven and a new earth. This also appears from the text in Matthew¹³. At the end of the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus, the unbelievers and evil people will be gathered and thrown into hell. This may sound harsh, but that's how God thinks about people who reject Him. Then the remaining righteous people will go to the Kingdom of the Father, in the new heaven and the new earth.

Matthew 13:40 *"Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. 41 The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, 42 and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. 43 Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"*

Matthew 13:47 *"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of every kind, 48 which, when it was full, they drew to shore; and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but threw the bad away. 49 So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, 50 and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth." 51 Jesus said to them, "Have you understood all these things?" They said to Him,*

“Yes, Lord.”

However, it is the craving of God, the Father, that nobody need to be cast in hell.

Hebrews 7:25 *Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.*

2 Thessalonians 1:7 *and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, 8 in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, 10 when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.*

Revelation 20:11 *Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. 13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. 14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.*

The believers (saints) will receive the Kingdom.

The unbelievers will stay in the realm of the dead for some time.

The final destination for the followers of the Lord Jesus is heaven. For those who do not want to follow the Lord Jesus, their final destination is hell. The followers of the Lord will reign with Him as King in eternity. What a difference with those who do not want to follow Him. As humans, it is hard for us to imagine what it will be like to reign with the Lord Jesus. But what is most important for His followers is that they will be in the same place as He is. Then it will be wonderful and glorious, forever and ever.

However, it will be equally hard for us to imagine what it is like to live forever and ever in ruin with Satan. It will be horrible, and last for all eternity. Now we can already see the terrible things Satan performs here on earth through people who allow themselves to be led by him. People who do not belong to the Lord Jesus are guided by Satan, sometimes consciously but usually unconsciously.

Daniel on the Kingdom of Peace – Kingdom of the Messiah

Daniel 7:13 *“I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. 14 Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed.*

Daniel 7:15 *“I, Daniel, was grieved in my spirit within my body, and the visions of my head troubled me. 16 I came near to one of those who stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of these things: 17 ‘Those great beasts, which are four, are four kings which arise out of the earth. 18 But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever.’”*

The believers will reign with the Lord Jesus

Revelation 20:4 *And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.*

The believers, the saints, will be equal to Him and reign with Him.

Colossians 3:4 *When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.*

In the Kingdom of Peace, believers will receive power over the nations of this world, as part of their reign with the Lord Jesus.

Revelation 2:26 *And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations.*

CHAPTER 4

The Book of Life

What is the Book of Life?

The Book of Life is a book that God has made. It is the book of life of the Lamb. That book states the names of all the people who will live with God for all eternity. After dying, these people will go to paradise (and not to hell – Satan’s place, the place for unbelievers). They are born again through the Holy Spirit and have become the property of the Lord Jesus. They are members of the Body of Christ, of which He is the Head. Their sins have been reconciled through the blood of the Lamb, the Lord Jesus.

How does your name end up in the Book of Life?

Your name can end up in the Book of Life when you believe in the Lord Jesus, God’s Son. He became man for the sins of mankind, died on a cross at Calvary, and rose from the dead after three days. Good Friday and Easter remind us of these events.

Believing – that seems like an easy thing to do, but apparently a lot of people find it very difficult. Why is that?

It is because believing in the Lord Jesus implies that He is in control of your life. You start realizing that you have lived wrongly because you always had it your own way. Now, your own true self has to come second, and in many cases has to die. That seems like a bad thing, but the Lord gives a lot in return: a new life with Him, an eternal life. That new life is also called rebirth, or regeneration. And when you are

born again, your name will be written in the Book of Life.

Can your name also be removed from the Book of Life? Or will it always remain in it? People who proclaim that apostasy of believers is possible, go back to the Old Covenant, to the Law of Moses, which stated that apostasy was indeed possible. Then it becomes a matter of being saved 'unless.'

A person who is in Christ, receives eternal life from Him. Eternal life cannot be changed into temporary eternal life. 'Nobody is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand,' Jesus said (John 10:29). It is possible that people appear to be in Christ, but those persons will be known by their fruits. Unfortunately, there are a lot of feigned believers.

From Revelation 3:5, one may conclude that a person's name could be removed from the Book of Life. However, that is not what it says. This is simply an extra assurance by the Lord Jesus that, if a person overcomes, he will receive white clothes, and his name will definitely not be removed from the Book of Life.

The following texts deal, among other things, with people whose names are written in the Book of Life.

Philippians 4:3 *And I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the Book of Life.*

Who are the ones that overcomes? The ones who are born again by the Holy Spirit and have received new life, eternal life.

Revelation 3:5 *“He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.”*

Those who have been born again, will not be overcome by Satan. They will not worship Satan. Their names are written in the Book of Life.

The fact that the Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world means that, from the first day of creation, God the Father had a plan: to sacrifice His Son for the reconciliation of the people who would sin. Did God know they would sin? Yes, He is omniscient. Couldn't He have prevented the fall? Yes, He could have, but He wanted people to choose for themselves.

Revelation 13:7 *It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. 8 All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*

The names of the people who will be saved are written in the Book of Life since the moment of creation. How is that possible? At that time, God already knew who would believe in Jesus, and who wouldn't. After all, He is omniscient. But man can never put the blame on God if he is lost, because God wants everybody to be saved. He did everything to accomplish this. He even gave His Son, the Lord Jesus (John 3:16). When a person is lost, it is his/her own choice. The Lord Jesus is continuously standing there with open arms calling, 'Come unto Me!' But the decision of man is often, 'I don't want to!'

1 Peter 1:2 *(To the pilgrims...) elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father,*

in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied.

Revelation 17:8 *“The beast that you saw was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition. And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.”*

At the final judgment that takes place before the beginning of the new heaven and the new earth, God will open His books. The doings of every person are written down in these books – both good and evil. The people whose names are stated in the Book of Life are saved and receive eternal life with God. Those not mentioned in that book go to hell, Satan’s abode.

Revelation 20:12 *And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. 13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. 14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.*

Revelation 21:27 *(...) there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.*

Revelation 22:19 *and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.*

God wants all people to be saved.

It is terrible if people are lost forever, end up in hell forever, in the company of Satan and his demons. God does not want that; He wants all people to be saved – but... according to His conditions.

For man has wronged God badly. Man has sinned by listening more to Satan than obeying and loving God. In Paradise, man chose for Satan and did not take God at His Word. Thus, everybody shares original sin. A righteous and holy God must punish the sinner, but that's exactly why the Lord Jesus came – to take upon Himself God's punishment, wrath and judgment over sin.

People who believe that the Son of God has died for their sins, will receive eternal life from God and will not end up in hell.

Isaiah 49:6 *Indeed He says, "It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob, And to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth."*

Ezekiel 18:23 *"Do I have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?" says the Lord GOD, "and not that he should turn from his ways and live?" (...) 32 "For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies," says the Lord GOD. "Therefore turn and live!"*

Ezekiel 33:11 *"Say to them: 'As I live,' says the Lord GOD, 'I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways! For why should you die, O house of Israel?'"*

Luke 14:23 *"Then the master said to the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges,*

and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. 24 For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.’ ”

Luke 15:7 “I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.”

John 3:14 “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. 16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. 17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.”

1 Timothy 2:3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, 4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. 5 For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

What is the most important thing in life?

There are a lot of people who to this question reply that health is the most important thing. And certainly, in this time of COVID-19, that is understandable.

Yet, after this life there will be eternal life, and questions pop up like: Where does man then go to? Will he receive eternal life with God and the Lord Jesus, or eternal life in hell with Satan? The most important thing in man’s life is whether he has a

personal relationship with the Lord Jesus – whether he knows that Jesus has also atoned for his sins on the cross. The Lord Jesus gives a clear answer to this question. The most important thing in a person's life is to find the Kingdom of God. A person should be in pursuit of this Kingdom. What exactly does that mean?

In John 6:27, the Lord Jesus explains this further. It deals with the food that is of eternal value, and that is the Lord Jesus Himself. He is the living Bread from heaven. The living Bread is His Body that He gave on the cross to atone for the sins of all those who believe in Him.

Mary sat at His feet to learn from Him. That's why He said that Mary had made a better choice than her sister, Martha, who was busy with all kinds of activities – useful activities alright, but still...

Various other texts in the Bible point man to the only thing necessary. The only thing we need is to love God above everything and know Jesus Christ His Son as Reconciler of our sins. That is the most important thing. All other things stem from it.

Luke 12:29 *“And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind. 30 For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things. 31 But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you. 32 Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”*

John 5:24 *“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.”*

John 10:27 “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. 28 And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father’s hand.”

1 John 5:12 He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.

CHAPTER 5

The Rapture of The Believers into Heaven

The rapture of those who believe in Christ

The Lord Jesus does not speak about His return, but about His revelation – clearly something different. On the day of His revelation, He will appear on the clouds to collect His Church. He gives a serious warning to mankind to see to it that they belong to the ones who will be taken up.

The apostle Paul gives more information about the rapture of the Church. Not only will the people who are alive at the time be taken up, but also the ones who rest in Christ will rise from the dead and meet the Lord in the air, with a new body. The people who are still living will also receive a new body – a body like the one the Lord Jesus received at His resurrection.

“Therefore, be ready,” says the Lord Jesus. You too, be prepared, for the Son of man will come at an hour you do not expect.

Luke 12:35 “Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning; 36 and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will return from the wedding, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately. 37 Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them.

Luke 12:38 *And if he should come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. 39 But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. 40 Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”*

John 14:2 *“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 to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.”*

The apostle Paul lets us know clearly how the rapture will happen and who will arise.

1 Thessalonians 4:13 *But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.*

1 Thessalonians 4:15 *For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.*

1 Corinthians 15:51 *Behold, I tell 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 trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. (See also Revelation 20:5)*

The rapture is a mystery, as was the Church of Jesus Christ in the Old Testament, and it still is for many people today. The rapture of the believers will not be preceded by signs, and it will not be a public event – similar to the rapture of Enoch, Elijah and the Lord Jesus. However, there will be signs to precede the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus on the Mount of Olives. I will go into more detail about this later.

Enoch was taken up before the Flood hit the earth and drowned everybody, except for Noah's family.

In the same way, believers will be taken up into heaven before the Great Tribulation. Unbelievers will stay behind on earth, both Jews and non-Jews. Sometimes it is said that people who believe in the rapture are anti-Semitic, since they believe Christians will escape the Great Tribulation, and not Jews.

That is a misrepresentation of this event. The distinction at the time of the rapture is a distinction between believers and unbelievers, and not between Jews and Christians. Jews who believe in the Messiah will also be taken up, as they belong to the Church, the body of Christ. In John 17:15, Jesus says that He does not pray to the Father to take the believers out of the world. Yes, this deals with the time before the Great Tribulation, however, as soon as the number of the believers is completed, they are indeed taken up, along with those who have died.

When will the rapture happen?

The rapture will take place when the Lord Jesus comes to reveal Himself to His believers. We do not know the exact time, but He has given us information as to when to expect Him.

1 John 3:2 *Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.*

Salvation from the coming wrath of the Lamb

Why are the believers taken up? The texts below explain this clearly. During the seven-year Great Tribulation, there will be many judgments and plagues in this world. The Bible calls it the wrath of the Lamb (Revelation 6:16).

In Revelation chapters 6 to 17, you can read more about the wrath of God and the Lamb on unbelievers. Through the rapture, believers are protected from this coming wrath.

Romans 5:9 *Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.*

1 Thessalonians 1:10 *and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.*

1 Thessalonians 5:9 *For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.*

Revelation 3:10 *“Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.”*

Is there no alternative outcome for unbelievers at the time of the Great Tribulation?

Yes, there is. During that time, 144,000 Jewish believers will still preach the Gospel. And the people who start believing through their preaching will escape eternal damnation. However, it is very probable that because of their faith they will be killed but will then be taken up to sing before God's throne. On the other hand, despite all the plagues and judgements, a large number of people will not want to convert to God and to the Lord Jesus.

CHAPTER 6

THE SEVEN YEARS OF THE GREAT TRIBULATION

The Great Tribulation

Information on the Great Tribulation and the coming of the antichrist is to be found in the Bible books of Daniel, Matthew, Mark, Luke, 1 John 2 en Revelation.

When will the Great Tribulation take place? We don't know anything about the exact time, but it will certainly be after the rapture of the believers – the time when the antichrist will appear.

Neither do we know when the rapture of the believers will take place. Fortunately, the above-mentioned Bible books tell us a lot about it. Per Bible book, I will look at each of these books and give a short overview of what they say is going to happen.

The prophet Daniel on the Great Tribulation

Important points in Daniel's prophecies

- **The antichrist will raise himself above God.**
- **The antichrist will speak insolently.**
- **The saints (Christians) will be ruined by him.**
- **For 3.5 years, he will change times and law.**
- **He will worship idols.**
- **There will probably be a third temple, near to the mountain of the holy jewel**

(Zion).

- **If the third temple is built, it will not be the temple described in Ezekiel chapters 40-48.**
- **There will be no more sacrifices in this temple, and a big idol will be set up.**
- **After 3.5 years, the antichrist will be destroyed.**
- **He will perish in the battle against Gog and Magog.**

Daniel 7:25 *'He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, Shall persecute the saints of the Most High, And shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand For a time and times and half a time. 26 But the court shall be seated, And they shall take away his dominion, To consume and destroy it forever.'*

- ● **For 2,300 days, the sanctuary and the army will be handed over to be trampled.**
- ● **After 2,300 days, the sanctuary will be restored.**
- ● **The antichrist will ruin many people, including the holy nation.**
- ● **The antichrist will fight against the Messiah (Prince) and lose.**

Daniel 8:13 *Then I heard a holy one speaking; and another holy one said to that certain one who was speaking, "How long will the vision be, concerning the daily sacrifices and the transgression of desolation, the giving of both the sanctuary and the host to be trampled underfoot?" 14 And he said to me, "For two thousand three hundred days; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed."*

Daniel 8:23 *"And in the latter time of their kingdom, When the transgressors have reached their fullness, A king shall arise, Having fierce features, Who understands sinister schemes. 24 His power shall be mighty, but not by his own power; He shall destroy fearfully, And shall prosper and thrive; He shall destroy the mighty, and also the holy people. 25 Through his cunning He shall cause deceit to prosper under his rule; And he shall exalt himself in his heart. He shall destroy many in their prosperity. He shall even rise against*

the Prince of princes; But he shall be broken without human means.”

Daniel 9:27 *Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate.”*

- **The antichrist will march against the South.**
- **The antichrist will recoil on account of ships of the Chittim, the western coastlands, Cyprus.**
- **The antichrist will make a covenant with secular Israel.**
- **People who respect God’s law will offer resistance and teach many.**
- **The antichrist will break the holy covenant, fulminate against it, and do as he pleases.**
- **The sanctuary will be defiled and he will put an end to offerings.**
- **The devastating abomination will be established.**

Daniel 11:29 *“At the appointed time he shall return and go toward the south; but it shall not be like the former or the latter. 30 For ships from Cyprus shall come against him; therefore he shall be grieved, and return in rage against the holy covenant, and do damage. So he shall return and show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant. 31 And forces shall be mustered by him, and they shall defile the sanctuary fortress; then they shall take away the daily sacrifices, and place there the abomination of desolation.*

Daniel 11:32 *Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall corrupt with flattery; but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits. 33 And those of the people who understand shall instruct many; yet for many days they shall fall by sword and flame, by captivity and plundering. 34 Now when they fall, they shall be aided with a little help; but many shall join with them by intrigue. 35 And some of those*

of understanding shall fall, to refine them, purify them, and make them white, until the time of the end; because it is still for the appointed time.”

Daniel 12:9 *And he said, “Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. 10 Many shall be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand. 11 And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days. 12 Blessed is he who waits, and comes to the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days.”*

In some explanations, we read that the ‘abomination of desolation’ refers to the year in which the Muslims came to Jerusalem to build the mosque at the place of the temple, in the year 691-692 AD. Others think of Antiochus (167 BC) who abolished worship services and placed an image of Zeus Olympus in the temple. But the context of Daniel’s prophecy points more to the end time, the seven years of the antichrist, the time of the Great Tribulation.

What are the new believers up against during the Great Tribulation?

- **Hatred by all nations for the sake of His Name.**
- **Many will stumble, hand each other over to the enemy, and hate each other.**
- **There will be many false prophets and teachers.**
- **Many people will be misled.**
- **Lawlessness will increase.**
- **However, he who perseveres to the end will be saved.**

Matthew on the Great Tribulation

The Lord Jesus on the Great Tribulation

Verses 15 to 28 of Matthew 24 deal with the Great Tribulation that will affect the entire world. The believers will then be taken up into heaven. The disasters and plagues that are going to happen on earth, are mentioned in Revelation, chapters 4 to 16.

The Lord Jesus showed us something of these events. During the Great Tribulation, people will also start believing in the Lord Jesus, as a result of the preaching of the Gospel by the 144,000 Jewish evangelists. However, most of these new believers will be killed because of their faith.

- **This Great Tribulation is unique and will only happen once.**
- **Those days will be shortened for the sake of the elect.**
- **There will be many false christs and teachers.**
- **Those false teachers / prophets will do signs and miracles.**
- **They will try to mislead the chosen believers.**

Matthew 24:15 *“Therefore when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place” (whoever reads, let him understand), 16 then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. 17 Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. 18 And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. 19 But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! 20 And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. 21 For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. 22 And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened.”*

Warning against wrong spiritual leaders, during or right before the Great Tribulation. However, the elect will stand firm.

Matthew 24:23 *“Then if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Christ!’ or ‘There!’ do not believe it. 24 For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. 25 See, I have told you beforehand. 26 Therefore if they say to you, ‘Look, He is in the desert!’ do not go out; or ‘Look, He is in the inner rooms!’ do not believe it. 27 For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 28 For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together.”*

Mark on the Great Tribulation

Mark describes the same as what can be read in Matthew 24:23-25.

Mark 13:21 *“Then if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Christ!’ or, ‘Look, He is there!’ do not believe it. 22 For false christs and false prophets will rise and show signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. 23 But take heed; see, I have told you all things beforehand.”*

1 John 2 on the antichrist

The apostle John says the antichrist’s characteristic is that he denies the Father and the Son. He also denies that the Son of God has come in the flesh as the Son of Man. There are a lot of people who deny the Father and the Son, so there are also many antichrists.

This will also be the characteristic of the antichrist who will act as a false Christ during the Great Tribulation.

1 John 2:18 *Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour. 19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us. 20 But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things. 21 I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and that no lie is of the truth. 22 Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. 23 Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also.*

The Book of Revelation to John on the Great Tribulation

In Revelation 3 to 6 we read about the judgement from heaven on the earth, suggested by:

- **The opening of the seven seals**
- **The blowing of the seven trumpets**
- **The pouring out of the seven bowls**

These judgements take place during the seven years of the Great Tribulation. As well as the judgements, other things are meant to happen during these seven years.

Revelation 3

Chapter 3 of Revelation tells us something about the Great Tribulation and about holding out during great temptations and ordeals. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown.

Revelation 3:10 *“Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. 11 Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. 12 He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. And I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name.”*

Revelation 4

John receives an image of heavenly glory and of the glorified Christ. First, John says that he sees someone sitting on the throne, but later it turns out that the One is God the Father. In Revelation 5, the Lamb (the Lord Jesus) takes a scroll from the hand of the One who sits on the throne.

Then there are the 24 elders. Who are they? Bible teachers believe 12 to be representatives of the Messianic Jewish believers, and 12 representatives of the Gentile believers. This is possible. God’s Word gives no further explanation of this.

Revelation 4:1 *After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, “Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this.” 2 Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne. 3 And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald. 4 Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads. (...) 11 “You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created.”*

Revelation 5

The scroll with the seven seals in God's hand

The Lamb takes the scroll from the right hand of the one seated on the throne. Is that important? Yes, because in the scroll is written what will happen in the future. It is not about the past at the time of this prophecy, nor is it about the past at this time. Of what the Lord Jesus is going to reveal to John, nothing has been fulfilled at this time. All those plagues and sorrows that will be mentioned have not yet taken place. I say this so explicitly because there are pastors who claim that everything in the book of Revelation has already passed.

Revelation 5:1 *And I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals.*

The Lamb is worthy of opening the scroll

In this chapter we don't read about the contents of the scroll – that comes in Chapter 6.

It is also striking that the elders have bowls with incense in their hands. These bowls are filled with the prayers of the children of God. This shows that the prayers of God's children are brought before God. It is further confirmed that the 24 elders will reign with the Lord Jesus as Priests and Kings in the thousand-year Kingdom of Peace of the Lord Jesus.

Revelation 5:2 *Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?"* ³ *And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it.* ⁴ *So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it.* ⁵ *But one of the elders*

said to me, “Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals.”

The Lamb, the Lord Jesus, takes the scroll from the right hand of God, the Father. The scroll that contains all the plagues that will com upon mankind if they do not repent.

Revelation 5:6 *And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth. 7 Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. 8 Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.*

This ceremony ends with praise and glorification of the Lamb by the 24 elders, who will reign as kings with the Lord Jesus over the Messianic Peace Kingdom.

Revelation 5:9 *And they sang a new song, saying: “You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, 10 And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth.”*

Revelation 6

Opening of the first six seals

In this chapter we read the beginning of the contents of the scroll that the Lord Jesus has opened. The plagues seem to be a summary of the types of plagues that are coming. Those are the first four seals.

Also, in the fifth seal we get to see where God's children will go to when they are killed in the Great Tribulation.

It is not entirely clear to me whether the sixth seal points to the day of the second coming of the Lord Jesus, or to the day of judgment at the end of the Messianic Kingdom of Peace. I think this prophecy refers to the day of the second coming of the Lord Jesus. On this day, all kinds of things also happen in creation, so that the earth is renewed. That is not yet a new earth. These events are not mentioned during the final judgment.

Revelation 6:1 *Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, "Come and see."*

The judgments of the six seals:

- **1st seal: a white horse: conqueror with a bow (deceit and false peace)**
- **2nd seal: a fiery red horse: world war**
- **3rd seal: a black horse: hunger**
- **4th seal: a pale horse: massive slaughtering and death**
- **5th seal: killed souls resting under the altar as the number of killed was not yet completed**

- **6th seal: a great earthquake, celestial bodies in turmoil (the sun black, the moon like blood, stars falling to the earth, receding sky), people hiding themselves from God, the great day of God's wrath has come.**

As an interlude, we get another look into heaven, where the redeemed children of God ask Him how long it will be before their blood is avenged. God answers by saying that more brothers will come and be killed on earth. The question these martyrs asked was not in accordance with what the Lord Jesus had taught them. Very understandable that God does not answer that.

Revelation 6:9 *When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. ¹⁰ And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" ¹¹ Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.*

On the process of the renewal of the earth at the coming of the Lord Jesus on the Mount of Olives. And on the nations that will be judged. The nations that have come up to Jerusalem, to Israel, to take possession of that land and to expel and / or destroy the Jews.

Revelation 6:12 *I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. ¹³ And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. ¹⁴ Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place.*

15 And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, 16 and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him Who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! 17 For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"

Revelation 7

The sealed from the twelve tribes of Israel and Judah-Benjamin

Before the plagues begin, 144,000 servants of God must have a seal put on their foreheads. God does this to prevent them from being harmed or killed during the Great Tribulation.

Why does God do this? These 144,000 servants of God, chosen from the twelve tribes of Israel, will preach the Gospel during the time of the Great Tribulation. And many will still come to faith through their preaching and the working of the Holy Spirit.

Revelation 7:1 *After these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree. 2 Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, 3 saying, "Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads." 4 And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed.*

The glory of the oppressed

In a vision, the Lord Jesus shows John the people who will stand before the throne of God in the future: a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, races, peoples and tongues. There is no distinction between white, brown or black. They stand before the throne of God and the Lamb (Jesus Christ) – all clothed in white robes, washed in the blood of the Lamb, with palm branches in their hands, a sign of victory. They praise God and the Lamb.

Then one of the elders standing near the throne asks, “Where do all these people come from?” And the answer given to John is that they come out of the Great Tribulation. They are people who have died as martyrs in the seventh year of the Great Tribulation that will strike mankind. Before the Great Tribulation, there is also oppression and many Christians will also be killed. It is possible that they will also be before the throne.

Revelation 7:9 *After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, 10 and crying out with a loud voice, saying, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” 11 All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12 saying: “Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom, Thanksgiving and honor and power and might, Be to our God forever and ever. Amen.”*

Revelation 7:13 *Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, “Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?” 14 And I said to him, “Sir, you know.” So he said to me, “These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 15 Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple. And He who sits on the*

throne will dwell among them.”

Revelation 8

Opening the seventh seal

Silence in heaven. Seven angels are given seven trumpets. Strength is given to the prayers of the saints. Fire from the altar is thrown to the earth.

Revelation 8:1 *When He opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. 2 And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and to them were given seven trumpets. 3 Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. 4 And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel's hand. 5 Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and threw it to the earth. And there were noises, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake. 6 So the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.*

The seven angels with seven trumpets

The judgments of the seven trumpets.

The first four trumpets concern plagues that affect people's living environment. The other three trumpets and their plagues are described in Chapter 9.

1st trumpet: hail, fire, blood: a third of the earth burnt, and all green grass.

2nd trumpet: burning mountain in the sea: a third of the sea turned to blood, a third of the living creatures in the sea died, a third of the ships perished.

3rd trumpet: great star falling on a third of the rivers and the springs. Consequence: a third of the waters turns bitter, and many people died from the bitter water.

4th trumpet: a third of the celestial bodies was struck resulting in these being darkened. Consequence: less light, both night and day.

Revelation 9

Announcement of two plagues by the angels with the fifth and sixth trumpet. The plague of the seventh trumpet is described in Chapter 11. So there appears to be a pause.

Remarkably, a demon is involved in the sixth plague. This one is called the king of the bottomless pit – Satan himself.

5th trumpet is the first woe. Heavenly star (angel of the pit, 9:11) falls to the earth, and opens the bottomless pit. Smoke out of the pit darkens the sun and the air. Locusts from the pit, headed by the angel of the pit, torment the people for five months. Those sealed by God are spared.

Revelation 9:1 *Then the fifth angel sounded: And I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth. To him was given the key to the bottomless pit. 2. And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. So the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit. 3 Then out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth. And to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. 4 They were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. 5 And they were not given authority to kill them, but to torment them for five months. Their tor-*

ment was like the torment of a scorpion when it strikes a man.

Revelation 9:6 *In those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them. 7 The shape of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle. On their heads were crowns of something like gold, and their faces were like the faces of men. 8 They had hair like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth. 9 And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots with many horses running into battle. 10 They had tails like scorpions, and there were stings in their tails. Their power was to hurt men five months. 11 And they had as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon.*

6th trumpet is the second woe. Four released angels kill a third of mankind, with an army of horsemen, numbering two hundred million. They cause three plagues: fire, smoke and brimstone. It turns out that surviving people will not repent.

Revelation 9:12 *One woe is past. Behold, still two more woes are coming after these things. 13 Then the sixth angel sounded: And I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, 14 saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates." 15 So the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released to kill a third of mankind. 16 Now the number of the army of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them.*

Revelation 9:17 *And thus I saw the horses in the vision: those who sat on them had breastplates of fiery red, hyacinth blue, and sulfur yellow; and the heads of the horses were like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths came fire, smoke, and brimstone. 18 By these three plagues a third of mankind was killed—by the fire and the smoke and the*

brimstone which came out of their mouths. 19 For their power is in their mouth and in their tails; for their tails are like serpents, having heads; and with which they do harm.

Even after these plagues, people do not repent.

Revelation 9:20 *But the rest of mankind who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the work of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk. 21 And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.*

Revelation 10

Once more, there are prophecies for many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings. The angel standing on the sea and on the land. I think this angel is the Lord Jesus. He calls and the seven thunders speak. John takes the little book out of the angel's hand and eats it; once again, bitter words must be prophesied.

Revelation 10:1 *I saw still another mighty angel coming down from heaven, clothed with a cloud. And a rainbow was on his head, his face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire. 2 He had a little book open in his hand. And he set his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land, 3 and cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roars. When he cried out, seven thunders uttered their voices. 4 Now when the seven thunders ^[a]uttered their voices, I was about to write; but I heard a voice from heaven saying ^[b]to me, "Seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered, and do not write them."*

Revelation 10:5 *The angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised up his ^[c]hand to heaven 6 and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things that are in it, the earth and the things that are in it, and the sea and the things that are in it, that there should be delay no longer, 7 but in the days of the*

sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets.

What is the mystery of God that must be fulfilled? It is the proclamation of the Gospel to all nations. Paul writes about this in:

Ephesians 3:1 *For this reason, I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles—2 if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, 3 how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, 4 by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), 5 which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets; 6 that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel, 7 of which I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power.*

Ephesians 3:8 *To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, 9 and to make all see that is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ;*

John must eat a book. It was sweet in his mouth, but bitter in his stomach. John must continue to preach and prophesy to many nations, in many languages, and to many world leaders.

Revelation 10:8 *Then the voice which I heard from heaven spoke to me again and said, “Go, take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel who stands on the sea and on the earth.” 9 So I went to the angel and said to him, “Give me the little book.”*

And he said to me, "Take and eat it; and it will make your stomach bitter, but it will be as sweet as honey in your mouth." 10 Then I took the little book out of the angel's hand and ate it, and it was as sweet as honey in my mouth. But when I had eaten it, my stomach became bitter. 11 And he said to me, "You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings."

Revelation 11

And they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months.

What does Revelation 11 deal with?

- **There will be a temple again in Jerusalem.**
- **The gentiles / unbelievers will possess the city for 3 ½ years, and destroy it.**
- **Two witnesses of God will prophesy in Jerusalem for 3 ½ years.**
- **The two witnesses of God will have much power.**
- **The two witnesses will be killed by the beast (Satan).**
- **The two witnesses will stand on their feet and ascend to heaven.**
- **There will be a great earthquake.**
- **A tenth of the city will be destroyed.**
- **7,000 people will be killed by the earthquake.**
- **The earthquake will take place in the second half of the Great Tribulation.**

The two witnesses in Revelation 11

While the 144, 000 Jewish witnesses proclaim the Gospel to the entire populated world, the two witnesses preach in the city of Jerusalem. Their ministry will be an international, global ministry, although apparently they never leave the city itself. This is possible because in the present time television cameras could make their

preaching visible until the farthest ends of the earth. They must preach, while the unbelievers probably have the power over Jerusalem and the outer forecourt of the temple.

It is generally assumed that the two witnesses are Moses and Elijah—Moses as a representative of the law, and Elijah as a representative of the prophets. Both are now in heaven. During Jesus' walk on earth, these two men appeared during the Transfiguration on the mountain, and spoke with Jesus about His coming suffering and death. Elijah had ascended to heaven; that is not said about Moses, but the book of Jude mentions that the angel Michael argued with Satan about Moses' body.

From this we may derive that either Moses resurrected and ascended into heaven, or was directly taken up in heaven because his grave was never found. But the latter would be in contradiction to God's Word that says that God buried Moses.

In these verses, we discover the miracle that Moses had to perform in Egypt: change water into blood, and Elijah's prayer after which God closed the heavens, so that it did not rain for three years and six months; when Elijah prayed again, it started raining.

The two olive trees – Moses and Elijah – represent the law and the prophets.

Revelation 11:1 *Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, "Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there. 2 But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months.*

The Two Witnesses prophesying

John was ordered to measure the temple, the altar and the worshipers. The nations will tread Jerusalem for 42 months. Two mighty prophets (probably Moses and Elijah) will prophesy for 1,260 days, and torture them who live on the earth. But the Beast from the bottomless pit will kill them. After 3,5 days, however, they rise and are taken up. Jerusalem is hit by an earthquake causing the destruction of a tenth of the city and the killing of 7,000 people.

The death of these saints by the hand of the wicked (“Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of His saints,” Psalm 116:15). Though tragic in itself, this will be changed by the LORD in one of the greatest testimonies for the Messiah the world has ever seen. This event will literally turn the hearts of the Jewish people, and they will honor God, as we can read in:

Revelation 11:13 *In the same hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell. In the earthquake seven thousand people were killed, and the rest were afraid, and gave glory to the God of heaven.*

The 7th trumpet is the 3rd woe

Christ, King of Israel, has dominion over all the nations of the earth.

Revelation 11:15 *Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!”*

That is why the 24 elders worship God. God’s wrath has come, as has the time to judge and to give judgment and give the wages. And the time to judge and to give

the wages of God's servants, the prophets and the saints has come. And to destroy those who destroyed the earth. Those who destroyed the earth will be punished for it. Destroyed by what? Through greed, laziness, indifference, poison, plastic and gases, etc. The Temple of God in heaven opens, and the ark of the covenant becomes visible. This is followed by lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake and great hail.

Revelation 11:18 *“The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, And the time of the dead, that they should be judged, And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, And those who fear Your name, small and great, And should destroy those who destroy the earth.”* 19 *Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple. And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail.*

Revelation 12

Looking back and looking to the future

In heaven, a woman painfully giving birth (Israel) is seen. Before her stands a great dragon (Satan) who wants to devour her male baby (Jesus). The child is snatched away to God and His throne.

War in heaven between angels. Satan and his angels thrown to the ground. Joy in heaven, woe betide the earth and the sea.

The dragon that is thrown down pursues the woman. She flees to the desert where she is fed for three and a half times (3.5 years or 1,260 days). The dragon then starts pursuing the other saints.

Revelation 13

The antichrist

The Lord Jesus gives an extensive revelation of the antichrist to His servant John.

Summary of what the Lord Jesus says about the antichrist:

- The antichrist is symbolically represented as a beast.
- Satan has given power to the antichrist.
- The antichrist is worshiped by the entire earth.
- The antichrist starts blaspheming.
- The antichrist starts persecuting the believers (saints).
- The antichrist is not worshiped by the believers whose names are written in the Book of Life of the Lamb.
- This happens in the second part of the Great Tribulation.

Revelation 13:13 *He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. 14 And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived. 15 He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed.*

Unbelievers will receive a mark from Satan, the beast.

Revelation 13:16 *He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, 17 and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. 18 Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man. His number is 666.*

What is the antichrist's dominion like?

How is it possible that nations allow themselves to be governed by a godless man like the antichrist? This is possible when the majority of the nation (or nations) live without God. Then there is already an anti-Christian mentality and an enemy of God, like the antichrist, is readily accepted, maybe even elected democratically.

Paul describes the antichrist's character. He calls him 'the man of sin'. Another name for the antichrist is the 'son of perdition'. He is wicked, bringing about perdition on earth. Mankind that has said goodbye to the living God is open to an idol. He is also the opponent of God, the Lord Jesus, and the Holy Spirit.

The antichrist will appear with lots of power, signs and lying wonders, writes the apostle Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2:9. God will send a spirit of delusion so that people start believing the lies of the antichrist. During that time, because humanity does not want to believe God, God will harden their hearts. When God does so, there is only a very small possibility of conversion. The world is slowly being prepared for the coming of the antichrist.

What does the apostle Paul say in the Name of Jesus?

Who is going to sit in God's temple?

The first question I ask myself when I hear Paul's prophecy, is: what temple is Paul referring to? Is he referring to the fact that there will be another temple in Jerusalem, the so-called third temple, that orthodox Judaism is thinking of building? Would that be the temple in which God wants to live? Or must we think of a symbolic/spiritual temple?

2 Thessalonians 2:3 *Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come*

unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, 4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

5 Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? 6 And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. 7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way. 8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. 9 The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, 10 and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11 And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, 12 that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

Summary of what Paul says about the antichrist:

- **The Holy Spirit restrains the antichrist.**
- **After the rapture of the church, the Restrainer is gone.**
- **The lawless one will then be revealed.**
- **The Lord Jesus, at His coming/when He comes, will consume the antichrist.**
- **The unbelievers, who have believed the antichrist, will be condemned and perish.**
- **The unbelievers will perish because they have not believed or accepted the truth that they might be saved.**

What is meant with the ‘great apostasy’? Who will become unfaithful? In order to prevent misunderstanding, it helps to know that ‘apostasy’ is not the apostasy of the believer, the born-again Christian. A believer cannot become unfaithful.

What about the church during the Great Tribulation?

Some people say that there will no longer be a church during the Great Tribulation, because the church will be taken up before the Great Tribulation. However, that is not the case. The Bible does not say that the ‘church’ will be taken up at the Lord’s coming. God’s children will be taken up, and that is different to ‘the church’. The ‘church’ may still be there during the Great Tribulation, but it will be a church with pseudo believers.

Currently, there is no temple in Jerusalem; so it would have to be built by Jews in the first years of tribulation, or earlier. The expression ‘temple of God’ refers to the temple of Israel. It does not mean that it is a temple authorized by God. On the contrary, for there is mention of the temple desired by God in Ezekiel, chapters 40-48, and it will not appear in Jerusalem until the Thousand-Year Reign.

And the question that no one has been able to answer for two thousand years is: ‘Who is the antichrist who will sit next in the temple?’

Revelation 14

The Lamb on Mount Zion, and with Him 144,000 firstfruits

In Revelation 14, John is given various images in a vision. The vision begins with an image from the Messianic Kingdom of Peace. It is about the Messiah who stands on Mount Zion in Jerusalem with the 144,000 who preached the gospel during the Great Tribulation.

Revelation 14:1 *Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father’s name written on their foreheads.*

Then we get to see an image from heaven. We see what happened to the one hundred and forty-four thousand. They are called firstfruits. They are an example to all of God's children, who will also stand before God's throne one day, just like them, and bring Him eternal praise and honor. This is also evident from the continuation of this vision. See verses 12 and 13.

Revelation 14:2 *And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps. 3 They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn the song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth. 4 These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb. 5 And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God.*

The next vision indicates that before the judgment by the Lord Jesus begins, at the end of His signifying year Kingdom of Peace, there is another call from God to the people on the earth to repent. How this will work exactly is not known. It could be that Gospel ministers go around the earth one more time with the call to repentance. Because in the millennial Kingdom of Peace not every person is converted and born again. That is evident when Satan is released. Then he will have many followers.

Revelation 14:6 *Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people—7 saying with a loud voice, “Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him Who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.”*

Then we see in a vision that the city of Babylon has fallen. That's a picture from the Great Tribulation. At the end of that, the Messiah Jesus returns to liberate His people Israel and to establish the Kingdom of Peace. But also in the time of the Great Tribulation, God comes with warnings to people on earth not to worship the antichrist. Because otherwise you will be lost forever.

Revelation 14:8 *And another angel followed and said, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."*

Eternal punishment for those who worship the antichrist

Revelation 14:9 *Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, 10 he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. 11 And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."*

Encouragement for the persecuted saints

At the end of these visions we get another picture of God's children. If they persevere, they, just like the one hundred and forty-four thousand firstfruits eternally before God's throne, will be allowed to bring Him the honor and the praise.

Revelation 14:12 *Here is the patience for the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. 13 Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Write: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.'" "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them."*

Revelation 15

Introduction to the seven last plagues

First, another look into heaven, where God's children, the overcomers of the beast, bring glory and praise to God. They sing the song of Moses and of The Lamb. What strikes me is that the Lord Jesus is also called here King of the saints. Not the King of Israel? He will be, soon, during the thousand-year Kingdom of Peace.

Revelation 15:1 *Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is complete. 2 And I saw something like a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who have the victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God. 3 They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying: "Great and marvelous are Your works, Lord God Almighty! Just and true are Your ways, O King of the saints!"*

The seven angels receive the seven bowls, filled with the wrath of God and the last seven plagues.

Revelation 15:6 *And out of the temple came the seven angels having the seven plagues, clothed in pure bright linen, and having their chests girded with golden bands. 7 Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God Who lives forever and ever. 8 The temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power, and no one was able to enter the temple till the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed.*

Revelation 16

The judgments of the seven bowls of God's wrath – containing 'the seven last plagues'.

In heaven: seven angels with seven plagues that complete God's wrath. Song of the saints who have conquered the beast and his image. The seven angels leave the temple.

1st bowl, poured out upon the earth – sores broke out on the worshippers of the beast.

2nd bowl, poured out on the sea – the sea becomes blood, and all living creatures in the sea die.

3rd bowl, poured on the rivers and springs of water – the water turns to blood. Life in them dies. Heaven agrees with the judgment: the blood of the saints that is shed is repaid with blood.

4th bowl, poured out on the sun – men are scorched with great heat, they blaspheme God and do not repent.

5th bowl, poured out on the throne of the beast. His kingdom becomes dark; pains, sores. No repentance.

6th bowl, poured out on the Euphrates, its water dries up, so as to prepare the way of the kings from the east, where the sun rises. Out of the mouths of the unclean trinity come spirits of demons performing signs; the kings of the entire earth gather to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

Word for the saints (16:15): *“Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame.”*

7th bowl, poured out into the air. God says, “It is done!” God’s wrath is completed. The biggest earthquake of all times. Cities fall. The great city (Jerusalem, Rome?) is divided into three parts. Islands flee away, mountains are not found. Plague of many large hailstones. Consequence: men blaspheme God.

At the time of the seventh bowl, Babylon is judged with death, sorrow, hunger and fire.

Revelation 17

The woman and the beast

Revelation 17 deals with the great harlot who sits on many waters.

Revelation 17:1 *Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, “Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters.”*

‘Many waters’ means many nations. Who is the great harlot? In my view, the great harlot is a going together of the idol Mammon, a root of all evil, according to 1 Timothy 6:10, i.e. the power of money – and many other things. Furthermore, it is apparently a religious, but in essence anti-Christian, power.

In this respect, many people think of the Roman Catholic Church. And, as a third power, the governments of the nations. The latter because the harlot was drunk with the blood of the saints and the witnesses of Jesus. The great harlot would then be a combination of the false religion of the Roman church, the power of money, and politics. I have not been able to find better explanations. In this respect I would refer you to the book *The Endtime Money Snare: How to Live Free* by Wilfred J. Hahn.

Revelation 17:2 *“with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.”* 3 *So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.* 4 *The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication.* 5 *And on her forehead a name was written:*

mystery, babylon the great, the mother of harlots and of the abominations of the earth.

Revelation 17:6 *I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement.* 7 *But the angel said to me, “Why did you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns.* 8 *The beast that you saw was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition. And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.*

Revelation 17:9 *Here is the mind which has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits.* 10 *There are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short time.* 11 *And the beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition.*

Revelation 17:12 *The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast.* 13 *These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast.* 14 *These will make*

war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful.”

Revelation 17:15 *Then he said to me, “The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues. 16 And the ten horns which you saw on the beast, these will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire. 17 For God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled. 18 And the woman whom you saw is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth.”*

Summary

- This chapter deals with the great harlot who sits on many waters. Waters are nations.
- The harlot is the big city that has royal command of the kings of the earth.
- The kings of the earth have fornicated with her.
- The inhabitants of the earth have become drunk with her whoring.
- Her name was: ‘Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and of the abominations of the earth.’
- The woman was drunk with the blood of the saints and that of the martyrs of Jesus.
- The beast that ascended out of the abyss will go to perdition.
- The seven heads are seven mountains.
- The seven heads are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is present, and one is yet to come. The beast is the eighth king; he will go to perdition.
- The ten horns are ten kings who do not rule yet, but will receive authority, together with the beast, for one hour. They will make war with the Lamb.
- The Lamb will overcome them, for He is King of kings and Lord of lords.
- The ten kings will hate the harlot, leave her behind desolate, eat her flesh and

burn her with fire.

Questions

Who rules over the kings, the leaders of the earth? Who makes the inhabitants of the earth drunk?

This cannot refer to a geographical city – not Rome, not Jerusalem, nor New York. In *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Bunyan talks about the 'City of Destruction'. In this city, Satan wields his pernicious power. The godless world is controlled by him by way of money (Mammon), power, sex, economy, science, technology, false religion, globalization.

What kind of fornication did the kings commit?

They used authority and money to oppress the nations.

Who killed many believers?

Many leaders in many countries have oppressed many saints/believers, persecuted them and had them killed. See the list by Open Doors. In the past, it also included governments in combination with the Roman Catholic Church.

From which fornication did the inhabitants of the earth get drunk?

From the craving for money, possessions, authority, sex.

Who are going to make war against the Lamb?

The leaders of ten countries. Which ones these are, is still unknown.

When will this war take place?

Most likely at the return of the Lord Jesus – the day of Christ. He will then rescue

Israel from the nations that make war against Israel.

The fall of Babylon

Revelation 18:1 *After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory. 2 And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, “Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird! 3 For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury.”*

The punishment for Babylon

Revelation 18:4 *And I heard another voice from heaven saying, “Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues. 5 For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities. 6 Render to her just as she rendered to you, and repay her double according to her works; in the cup which she has mixed, mix double for her. 7 In the measure that she glorified herself and lived luxuriously, in the same measure give her torment and sorrow; for she says in her heart, ‘I sit as queen, and am no widow, and will not see sorrow.’ 8 Therefore her plagues will come in one day—death and mourning and famine. And she will be utterly burned with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judges her.”*

Who will mourn the fall of Babylon?

Revelation 18:9 *“The kings of the earth who committed fornication and lived luxuriously with her will weep and lament for her, when they see the smoke of her burning, 10 standing at a distance for fear of her torment, saying, ‘Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour your judgment has come.’*

Revelation 18:11 *And the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, for no one buys their merchandise anymore: 12 merchandise of gold and silver, precious stones and pearls, fine linen and purple, silk and scarlet, every kind of citron wood, every kind of object of ivory, every kind of object of most precious wood, bronze, iron, and marble; 13 and cinnamon and incense, fragrant oil and frankincense, wine and oil, fine flour and wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots, and bodies and souls of men. 14 The fruit that your soul longed for has gone from you, and all the things which are rich and splendid have gone from you, and you shall find them no more at all."*

Merchants mourning their loss

Revelation 18:15 *"The merchants of these things, who became rich by her, will stand at a distance for fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, 16 and saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city that was clothed in fine linen, purple, and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls!'"*

Ship crews mourning their loss

Revelation 18:17 *"For in one hour such great riches came to nothing.' Every shipmaster, all who travel by ship, sailors, and as many as trade on the sea, stood at a distance 18 and cried out when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, 'What is like this great city?'"*

19 They threw dust on their heads and cried out, weeping and wailing, and saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city, in which all who had ships on the sea became rich by her wealth! For in one hour she is made desolate.'"

Babylon will never be rebuilt

Revelation 18:20 *"Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you holy apostles and prophets, for God has avenged you on her!" 21 Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great mill-*

stone and threw it into the sea, saying, “Thus with violence the great city Babylon shall be thrown down, and shall not be found anymore. 22 The sound of harpists, musicians, flutists, and trumpeters shall not be heard in you anymore. No craftsman of any craft shall be found in you anymore, and the sound of a millstone shall not be heard in you anymore. 23 The light of a lamp shall not shine in you anymore, and the voice of bridegroom and bride shall not be heard in you anymore. For your merchants were the great men of the earth, for by your sorcery all the nations were deceived. 24 And in her was found the blood of prophets and saints, and of all who were slain on the earth.”

Summary

- An angel will come from heaven who lights up the entire earth.
- Babylon has fallen and has become a residence of demons.
- Babylon is identical to the great harlot.
- All nations have drunk from her wine. Kings of the earth have fornicated with her. Merchants of the earth have become rich because of her leading a wild life.
- God’s nation (the Jewish nation) is told to leave it, so that the nation would have no part in its sins and plagues.
- One day, its plagues will come, as well as death, sorrow and hunger. The city will be burnt with fire.
- The kings and merchants of the earth will be in mourning over her, as will ship owners and seamen – because the big city was destroyed in one hour.
- Babylon will never be rebuilt. Through its charm, all nations were misled. The blood of the prophets and the saints has been found in this city.

Questions

When will Babylon be punished?

The punishment will probably come at the end of the Great Tribulation, at the Lord Jesus' return, when He will destroy His enemies.

Which town/country must the Jewish people leave?

It will presumably from all countries, aside from Israel. Those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ have already been gathered before the Great Tribulation.

If nobody can buy anymore, does this mean there is no more money?

Yes, I think this should be our conclusion. Imagine it as a gigantic banking crisis. There is no longer cash money. One can only use a debit card or smartphone to buy things.

CHAPTER 7

Satan's Detained for 1,000 years

In Isaiah 14, we get a prophetic image of Satan's downfall. At one point, Satan is thrown out of heaven. He does his destructive work on earth until he is locked up in the bottomless pit for a thousand years. The angel of God binds Satan up and seals him in the bottomless pit for a thousand years. During this period, Satan cannot lead the nations astray anymore. These thousand years coincide with the thousand years of the Millennium.

When Augustine and many others argue that the binding of Satan already started at the resurrection of the Lord Jesus from the dead, they are actually saying that the thousand-year reign under Christ has also started and that Christ has returned and Israel converted.

When you do not believe all these prophesies, you have a very small Bible, for in the Psalms and the Prophets the Messianic Reign is often mentioned. After that, Satan will be released for a little while. After a brief battle with the King of Israel, Satan will be defeated once and for all, and cast into hell for all eternity, together with his angels.

Satan was banned from God's vicinity and cast on earth, where he enticed many people to bad acts. But—and there are prophesies about this—there will come an end to his stay on earth: he will be permanently cast into the lake of fire, to the relief of God's children.

Revelation 20:1 *Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. 2 He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; 3 and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.*

CHAPTER 8

The Future of the State of Israel

The Jewish nation returns to the promised land

In 2018, the state of Israel celebrated its 70th anniversary. Before 1940, only few people thought that this would happen, but God fulfils His promises. As yet, not all the Jews have returned to the promised land, but it will surely happen. Many Jews are still too well off in this world and think they would be worse off in Israel than in their present place of residence. But the LORD says in His Word that they all have to return and will return.

The time of the Great Tribulation is still to come. The Lord Jesus speaks about that time in Matthew 24. Should the Jewish nation experience this once more? This nation has been oppressed and repressed for centuries, hasn't it? No, it won't be the entire nation that undergoes this. For the plagues of the Great Tribulation will only affect unbelievers—both Jews and non-Jews.

Revelation 11:13 states that there will be an earthquake during the Great Tribulation that will destroy a tenth of Jerusalem and kill 7,000 people. At the end of the Great Tribulation, when Gog and the nations attack Jerusalem, the inhabitants of Jerusalem will have a hard time. However, nowhere have I read that even one person of the Jewish nation will be killed. When it threatens to become very distressing, the Messiah Jesus will return, with all the saints, to free His people and destroy their enemies.

The entire world will be able to see this and glorify the God of Israel. At that time, the Jewish nation, in its entirety, will be converted – those who live in Israel, and those who don't yet live in Israel. That will also be the moment when the Messiah sends forth His angels into the whole world to bring back all the Jews to Israel. At that time, they will be happy to come – remorsefully, ruthfully, but also joyfully! For they are going to live in the promised land where the Son of David will be their King, and where He will reign in their midst in the temple on Mount Zion.

The following verses will offer more details on this subject. 1) I have limited my selection to the following:

In two of my other books (*The Messiah Revealed in the Holy Scriptures* and *Israel, The Apple of God's Eye*), I discuss the promises for Israel in more detail. The books are published by Boaz Multi Media and are now distributed for free by Boaz World Word Project. You can read en download these books on the websites:

www.boazworldwordproject.com

www.themessiahrevealed.com

www.israeltheappleofgodseye.com

www.religions-christianity-judaism.com

God's ordinances and commandments are still violated, both within and outside of Israel. The majority of the Jewish nation is secular or orthodox, to varying degrees and as part of different groups. Confession of sins and repentance are hardly heard of. Nevertheless, the Lord God remains loyal to His covenant with Abraham, and He does not take away His lovingkindness. What a miracle of grace! God brings His people back to the promised land, with fury poured out, says the prophet Ezekiel:

Ezekiel 20:34 “I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered, with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out.”

Deuteronomy 30:4 “If any of you are driven out to the farthest parts under heaven, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you. 5 Then the LORD your God will bring you to the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it. He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers. 6 And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.”

Isaiah 27:12 And it shall come to pass in that day From the channel of the River to the Brook of Egypt; And you will be gathered one by one, O you children of Israel. 13 So it shall be in that day: The great trumpet will be blown; They will come, who are about to perish in the land of Assyria, And they who are outcasts in the land of Egypt, And shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem.

Isaiah 49:22 Thus says the Lord GOD: “Behold, I will lift My hand in an oath to the nations, And set up My standard for the peoples; They shall bring your sons in their arms, And your daughters shall be carried on their shoulders; 23 Kings shall be your foster fathers, And their queens your nursing mothers; They shall bow down to you with their faces to the earth, And lick up the dust of your feet. Then you will know that I am the LORD, For they shall not be ashamed who wait for Me.”

Isaiah 60:8 “Who are these who fly like a cloud, And like doves to their roosts? 9 Surely the coastlands shall wait for Me; And the ships of Tarshish will come first, To bring your sons from afar, Their silver and their gold with them, To the name of the LORD your God, And to the Holy One of Israel, Because He has glorified you.”

In Israel, ways have to be prepared for the people who are already there, and those who will come in the future. The Lord will see to a good infrastructure in Israel.

Brief summary

- **The Israelites will return from every country to which God has driven them.**
- **The nations will be called to prepare the way for their return.**
- **The Israelites will be fruitful again and become numerous.**
- **There will come another day of distress for Israel, but the LORD will deliver the Israelites.**
- **They will serve the LORD God and their King Messiah, the Son of David, and also the Son of Abraham. They will live in peace and without worries.**
- **Many nations will be destroyed, but not Israel.**
- **The LORD will punish the surrounding enemies.**
- **The Jews will no longer be insulted and be despised by the nations.**
- **God's Name, which has been profaned throughout the world by Israel, will now be sanctified by Israel in front of all the nations.**

Jeremiah 23:3 *“But I will gather the remnant of My flock out of all countries where I have driven them, and bring them back to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase. 4 I will set up shepherds over them who will feed them; and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, nor shall they be lacking,” says the LORD. (...) 8 but, ‘As the LORD lives who brought up and led the descendants of the house of Israel from the north country and from all the countries where I had driven them.’ And they shall dwell in their own land.”*

Jeremiah 31:8 *“Behold, I will bring them from the north country, And gather them from the ends of the earth, Among them the blind and the lame, The woman with child And the one who labors with child, together; A great throng shall return there. 9 They shall*

come with weeping, And with supplications I will lead them. I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters, In a straight way in which they shall not stumble; For I am a Father to Israel, And Ephraim is My firstborn.”

Ezekiel 34:11 *‘For thus says the Lord GOD: “Indeed I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out. 12 As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day he is among his scattered sheep, so will I seek out My sheep and deliver them from all the places where they were scattered on a cloudy and dark day. 13 And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land; I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, in the valleys and in all the inhabited places of the country. (...) 24 And I, the LORD, will be their God, and My servant David a prince among them; I, the LORD, have spoken. (...) 28 And they shall no longer be a prey for the nations, nor shall beasts of the land devour them; but they shall dwell safely, and no one shall make them afraid. 29 I will raise up for them a garden of renown, and they shall no longer be consumed with hunger in the land, nor bear the shame of the Gentiles anymore.”’*

Enmity against Israel

What does God say about that?

The prophet Amos is ordered by the LORD to pronounce judgment on the nations that have treated Israel badly, have murdered it, driven it away, or have wronged His people in other ways. That was the case in those days, but the judgments still hold today for the nations that are not well-disposed towards Israel, treat it unjustly, attack it with rockets, and boycott it.

Isaiah 51:22 *Thus says your Lord, The LORD and your God, Who pleads the cause of His people: “See, I have taken out of your hand The cup of trembling, The dregs of the cup of My fury; You shall no longer drink it.*

23 But I will put it into the hand of those who afflict you, Who have said to you, 'Lie down, that we may walk over you.' And you have laid your body like the ground, And as the street, for those who walk over."

Is Israel an occupying power?

Many countries in this world, including the United Nations, accuse Israel of occupying the land of the Palestinians. The Lord God, however, has allocated the land of Gaza to the Jewish nation, to Israel. We read that in Zephaniah 2 verses 6 and 7. For the sake of clarity, God adds that this will happen when Israel's people return from all the countries they were taken to as prisoners, in the beginning. According to the Bible, the Palestinians have no right whatsoever to the land of Gaza and surroundings.

Zephaniah 2:4 *For Gaza shall be forsaken, And Ashkelon desolate; They shall drive out Ashdod at noonday, And Ekron shall be uprooted. 5 Woe to the inhabitants of the sea-coast, The nation of the Cherethites! The word of the LORD is against you, O Canaan, land of the Philistines: "I will destroy you; So there shall be no inhabitant." 6 The sea-coast shall be pastures, With shelters for shepherds and folds for flocks. 7 The coast shall be for the remnant of the house of Judah; They shall feed their flocks there; In the houses of Ashkelon they shall lie down at evening. For the LORD their God will intervene for them, And return their captives."*

To whom does the land of Israel belong? God says it is His country.

It seems that there aren't any countries in the world that factor in that the land of Israel is the land of the Lord God Himself. Does Israel itself factor it in? The majority of the inhabitants do not, since they are secular. Yet the Lord lets us know at

various instances in Scripture that the land He has given to Israel is His land. Israel has it on loan.

Joshua 21:43 *So the LORD gave to Israel all the land of which He had sworn to give to their fathers, and they took possession of it and dwelt in it.*

Joel 3:1 *“For behold, in those days and at that time, When I bring back the captives of Judah and Jerusalem, 2 I will also gather all nations, And bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; And I will enter into judgment with them there On account of My people, My heritage Israel, Whom they have scattered among the nations; They have also divided up My land 3 They have cast lots for My people, Have given a boy as payment for a harlot, And sold a girl for wine, that they may drink. 4 Indeed, what have you to do with Me, O Tyre and Sidon, and all the coasts of Philistia? Will you retaliate against Me? But if you retaliate against Me, Swiftly and speedily I will return your retaliation upon your own head; 5 Because you have taken My silver and My gold, And have carried into your temples My prized possessions.”*

The Lord has clearly indicated the borders of the land of Israel. He did so twice in the Bible: in Numbers and in Ezekiel. In Numbers, it deals with the capture of the promised land. In Ezekiel, in the name of the Lord, the prophet indicates the future borders of the country during the Thousand-Year Reign.

Is there room for non-Jews in Israel?

There is room for non-Jews in the country. They may also have possessions. The Israel of today conforms to God’s precepts. Currently, there are also Arabs living in the country who have possessions; they are even co-administrators. We read about this in:

Ezekiel 47:22 *“It shall be that you will divide it by lot as an inheritance for yourselves, and for the strangers who dwell among you and who bear children among you. They shall be to you as native-born among the children of Israel; they shall have an inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel. 23 And it shall be that in whatever tribe the stranger dwells, there you shall give him his inheritance,” says the Lord GOD.*

However, this does not imply that so many foreigners are admitted that Israel could no longer be a Jewish country.

The remnant of Israel will be a large and powerful nation.

The Messiah will tend to the Israelites. The country will live in safety, and the Messiah will rule unto the ends of the earth. The remnant of Israel will be a blessing to many nations. Israel will take a leading, strong position among the nations. Israel's enemies will be extirpated.

Micah 2:12 *“I will surely assemble all of you, O Jacob, I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together like sheep of the fold, Like a flock in the midst of their pasture;*

They shall make a loud noise because of so many people. 13 The one who breaks open will come up before them; They will break out, Pass through the gate, And go out by it; Their king will pass before them, With the LORD at their head.”

Micah 5:3 *Therefore He shall give them up, Until the time that she who is in labor has given birth; Then the remnant of His brethren Shall return to the children of Israel. (...)*

Micah 5:6 *They shall waste with the sword the land of Assyria, And the land of Nimrod*

at its entrances; Thus He shall deliver us from the Assyrian, When he comes into our land And when he treads within our borders. 7 Then the remnant of Jacob Shall be in the midst of many peoples, Like dew from the LORD, Like showers on the grass, That tarry for no man Nor wait for the sons of men. 8 And the remnant of Jacob Shall be among the Gentiles, In the midst of many peoples, Like a lion among the beasts of the forest, Like a young lion among flocks of sheep, Who, if he passes through, Both treads down and tears in pieces, And none can deliver. 9 Your hand shall be lifted against your adversaries, And all your enemies shall be cut off.

Psalm 69:35 For God will save Zion And build the cities of Judah, That they may dwell there and possess it. 36 Also, the descendants of His servants shall inherit it, And those who love His name shall dwell in it.

Micah 2:12 “I will surely assemble all of you, O Jacob, I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together like sheep of the fold, Like a flock in the midst of their pasture; They shall make a loud noise because of so many people. 13 The one who breaks open will come up before them; They will break out, Pass through the gate, And go out by it; Their king will pass before them, With the LORD at their head.”

Ezekiel 37:21 “Then say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD: “Surely I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, wherever they have gone, and will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; 22 and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king over them all; they shall no longer be two nations, nor shall they ever be divided into two kingdoms again.”

The Jewish people will remain in the promised land forever, says the LORD, their God. Their enemies – the Palestinians, Iran and probably other Arabic nations – would like nothing better than to chase the Jews into the sea. But Israel has a strong

and mighty God. The Jewish nation may stand on the promise in Amos 9.

Amos 9:14 *I will bring back the captives of My people Israel; They shall build the waste cities and inhabit them; They shall plant vineyards and drink wine from them; They shall also make gardens and eat fruit from them. 15 I will plant them in their land, And no longer shall they be pulled up From the land I have given them,” Says the LORD your God.*

Joel 2:32 *And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, As the LORD has said, Among the remnant whom the LORD calls.*

Zechariah 8:7 *“Thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘Behold, I will save My people from the land of the east And from the land of the west; 8 I will bring them back, And they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. They shall be My people And I will be their God, In truth and righteousness.’”*

Zechariah 13:8 *“And it shall come to pass in all the land,” Says the LORD, “That two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die, But one-third shall be left in it: 9 I will bring the one-third through the fire, Will refine them as silver is refined, And test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, And I will answer them. I will say, ‘This is My people’; And each one will say, ‘The LORD is my God.’”*

Luke 21:24 *“And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.”*

More texts on Israel’s future

Deuteronomy 30:3-5; Psalm 14:7; Psalm 53:6; Psalm 106:47; Psalm 107:2-3; Psalm

147:2; Isaiah 10:20-22; Isaiah 11:11-16; Isaiah 27:12,13; Isaiah 35:8-10; Isaiah 43:5,6; Isaiah 49:6,12,22; Isaiah 51:11; Isaiah 52:8-10; Isaiah 54:7; Isaiah 56:8; Isaiah 60:3-11; Isaiah 66:20-21; Jeremiah 3:18,19; Jeremiah 12:15; Jeremiah 15:19-21; Jeremiah 16:14,15; Jeremiah 23:3,7,8; Jeremiah 30:3,10,11,17; Jeremiah 31:8-14,17; Jeremiah 32:37; Jeremiah 46:27-28; Jeremiah 50:19; Ezekiel 11:17-20; Ezekiel 20:34-44; Ezekiel 28:24-26; Ezekiel 34:11-14; Ezekiel 36:24-27; Ezekiel 37:21; Ezekiel 39:25-29; Hosea 1:11; Hosea 14:7-8; Micah 2:12-13; Micah 4:6; Zephaniah 3:18-20; Zechariah 1:17; Zechariah 8:7-8; Zechariah 10:7-10; John 11:52; Ephesians 1:10.

Is the current Israeli state God's work?

In Ezekiel 36 verse 8, the Lord says that the land of Israel will shoot forth branches and yield fruit. Why? Because the nation of Israel and Judah will return. At that point, there should be enough food and room for everyone to live. It is wonderful to see how the Lord started with that in 1948. Israel's progress is still continuing so that the land can receive many more Jews.

The Lord is going to fulfil His promises. On the basis of the Scriptures it cannot be said that this is not God's work. Yet there are Jews who venture to claim something else. Not only Jews, but also Christians claim it is man's handiwork, although carried out with God's permission. There are even Christians, including the Dutch theologian and author Steven Paas Sr., who dare to go even further and say that Israel—the Jews—are no longer God's people. Regrettably, many 'Christians' do not literally believe in what God's Word says. Could that be one of the reasons why people abandon the church?

The prophet Ezekiel prophesies that Israel will return to the promised land, albeit under the wrath of God. Why under the wrath of God? Well, the larger part of Israel as a people has not yet converted to God. Many people are secular, and most

do not believe in their Messiah Jesus. Nevertheless, they may return and the Lord even entices them. God's wrath is not only on the unconverted Jews, but on every human being who does not believe in the Lord Jesus. In my opinion, many people who do not believe this do not realize this. The return is a process, but the Lord has started it off.

Ezekiel 20:34 *“I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered, with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out. 35 And I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I will plead My case with you face to face. 36 Just as I pleaded My case with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will plead My case with you,” says the Lord GOD. 37 “I will make you pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant; 38 I will purge the rebels from among you, and those who transgress against Me; I will bring them out of the country where they dwell, but they shall not enter the land of Israel. Then you will know that I am the LORD.”*

The land of Israel is being prepared for many people

The prophet Ezekiel prophesies on behalf of God that the trees on the mountains of Israel will bear fruit again. Why does the Lord say so? Well, because the return of His people is coming. This process started a while ago and is still continuing. More and more Jews are returning to the promised land. The Lord also makes the infrastructure ready for use.

Ezekiel 36:8 *“But you, O mountains of Israel, you shall shoot forth your branches and yield your fruit to My people Israel, for they are about to come. 9 For indeed I am for you, and I will turn to you, and you shall be tilled and sown. 10 I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, all of it; and the cities shall be inhabited and the ruins rebuilt.”*

They will return, even though the Jews have not yet been converted, says the prophet Isaiah:

Isaiah 43:6 *“I will say to the north, ‘Give them up!’ And to the south, ‘Do not keep them back!’*

Bring My sons from afar, And My daughters from the ends of the earth— 7 Everyone who is called by My name, Whom I have created for My glory; I have formed him, yes, I have made him.” 8 Bring out the blind people who have eyes, And the deaf who have ears.

So they must return to the promised land, even if they are not yet converted, are still deaf and blind, and there is still a veil on a great many Jews. The prophet Ezekiel says in Ezekiel 39:28 that no persons will be left in the countries that they were scattered to.

Ezekiel 36:22 *“Therefore say to the house of Israel, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD: “I do not do this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for My holy name’s sake, which you have profaned among the nations wherever you went. 23 And I will sanctify My great name, which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst; and the nations shall know that I am the LORD,” says the Lord GOD, “when I am hallowed in you before their eyes. 24 For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land.””*

See also: Ezekiel 39:28; Jeremiah 23:20.

The prophet Hosea also speaks about this process of returning to the promised land. The Lord will entice His people to return to the promised land – now partly still a desert, but the vineyards are growing, also in the desert, for example in the Negev. In the Valley of Achor, the wrath of the Lord on Israel stopped (Joshua 7:26). Hope arose for Israel again. The same happens now. The Valley of Achor was also

a pasture for sheep and cows. In this way, the Lord also takes care of the animals. The mountains of Israel are found in the Golan Heights, in Samaria and in a part of Judea – areas with many Palestinians which are internationally considered to be ‘occupied’ territories. See also Amos 9:14.

Hosea 2:14 *“Therefore, behold, I will allure her, Will bring her into the wilderness, And speak comfort to her. 15 I will give her vineyards from there, And the Valley of Achor as a door of hope; She shall sing there, As in the days of her youth, As in the day when she came up from the land of Egypt. 16 And it shall be, in that day,” Says the LORD, “That you will call Me ‘My Husband,’ And no longer call Me ‘My Master.’”*

Through the Lord, the apostle Paul has gained an understanding of how it will be in the fullness of the time – that is to say, when the fulness of the Gentiles has come in. When the Gospel has been proclaimed over all the earth. The Lord has said that He will then return in Jerusalem, on the Mount of Olives. Many things will then happen, including the conversion of the Jewish people to the God of their fathers; the Jews will believe in the Son of God. At that point, they will also be brought from the entire world (by angels) to Israel.

But who else will be there? According to Paul, the saints from heaven will also be there, since they have come along with the Messiah. In this way, what is in heaven will be brought together with what is on the earth.

Ephesians 1:9 *having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, 10 that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him.*

Romans 9:15 *For He says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion.”* 16 *So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy.*

I would like to conclude this pericope with a prayer by Asaph for the restoration of Israel. It is found in Psalm 80. This prayer is very appropriate for what Israel experienced in 2019. At the time, the country was threatened by fires. Wouldn't it be great if all Israelites would pray this prayer of Asaph?

Psalm 80:1 *O Shepherd of Israel who leads Israel like a flock; O God enthroned above the Guardian Angels, bend down your ear and listen as I plead. Display your power and radiant glory. 2 Let Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh see you rouse yourself and use your mighty power to rescue us. 3 Turn us again to yourself, O God. Look down on us in joy and love; only then shall we be saved. 4 O Jehovah, God of heaven's armies, how long will you be angry and reject our prayers?*

Psalm 80:5 *You have fed us with sorrow and tears 6 and have made us the scorn of the neighboring nations. They laugh among themselves.*

Psalm 80:7 *Turn us again to yourself, O God of Hosts. Look down on us in joy and love; only then shall we be saved. 8 You brought us from Egypt as though we were a tender vine and drove away the heathen from your land and planted us. 9 You cleared the ground and tilled the soil, and we took root and filled the land.*

Psalm 80:10 *The mountains were covered with our shadow; we were like the mighty cedar trees, 11 covering the entire land from the Mediterranean Sea to the Euphrates River. 12 But now you have broken down our walls, leaving us without protection. 13 The boar from the forest roots around us, and the wild animals feed on us.*

Psalm 80:14 *Come back, we beg of you, O God of the armies of heaven, and bless us. Look down from heaven and see our plight and care for this your vine! 15 Protect what you yourself have planted, this son you have raised for yourself. 16 For we are chopped and burned by our enemies. May they perish at your frown. 17 Strengthen the man you love,^[d] the son of your choice, 18 and we will never forsake you again. Revive us to trust in you. 19 Turn us again to yourself, O God of the armies of heaven. Look down on us, your face aglow with joy and love—only then shall we be saved. (TLB, The Living Bible)*

CHAPTER 9

The Conversion of The Jewish People

Israel, the Jewish people, will be converted in one day.

After the coming of the Messiah Jesus on the Mount of Olives, another important event will take place. Not only is Jesus going to come and save Israel from its enemies (which are also His), but the whole of Israel will be converted in one day, and will recognize the Messiah Jesus as their Messiah, remorsefully and ashamedly. At that moment, what many prophets have spoken about in the Name of God will happen. The LORD will be merciful and take pity on Israel.

- **Wait on the LORD, then He will have mercy on you.**
- **The people will live on Mount Zion in Jerusalem.**
- **You need not weep anymore.**
- **When you call upon the Lord, He will answer you.**

Isaiah 30:18 Therefore the LORD will wait, that He may be gracious to you; And therefore He will be exalted, that He may have mercy on you. For the LORD is a God of justice; Blessed are all those who wait for Him. 19 For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem; You shall weep no more. He will be very gracious to you at the sound of your cry; When He hears it, He will answer you.

The day when Israel converts will be a very special day. It will go hand in hand with special powers and events in nature. This is the day when the Messiah of Israel will return to save Israel from its enemies. Elsewhere in the Bible we read that there will

be earthquakes and that the Mount of Olives will split in two.

Isaiah 30:26 *Moreover the light of the moon will be as the light of the sun, And the light of the sun will be sevenfold, As the light of seven days, In the day that the LORD binds up the bruise of His people And heals the stroke of their wound.*

Summary

- **The moon will shine as the sun.**
- **The sun will shine seven times stronger than usually.**
- **Israel will be God's servant. God will not forget Israel.**
- **God will blot out Israel's sins like a cloud.**
- **God will deliver Israel.**
- **God will glorify Himself in and through Israel.**

Isaiah 44:21 *“Remember these, O Jacob, And Israel, for you are My servant; I have formed you, you are My servant; O Israel, you will not be forgotten by Me! 22 I have blotted out, like a thick cloud, your transgressions, And like a cloud, your sins. Return to Me, for I have redeemed you.” 23 Sing, O heavens, for the LORD has done it! Shout, you lower parts of the earth; Break forth into singing, you mountains, O forest, and every tree in it! For the LORD has redeemed Jacob, And glorified Himself in Israel. 24 Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, And He who formed you from the womb: “I am the LORD, who makes all things, Who stretches out the heavens all alone, Who spreads abroad the earth by Myself.”*

Israel broke their side of the covenant God made with Israel on Mount Sinai, but God did not break His side, because He swore by Himself. God also made a new everlasting covenant: the covenant in the blood of the Messiah which was also shed on Calvary for the sins of Israel—to make atonement—and for the sins of many people from the nations.

Ezekiel 16:60 “Nevertheless I will remember My covenant with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish an everlasting covenant with you. 61 Then you will remember your ways and be ashamed, when you receive your older and your younger sisters; for I will give them to you for daughters, but not because of My covenant with you. 62 And I will establish My covenant with you. Then you shall know that I am the LORD, 63 that you may remember and be ashamed, and never open your mouth anymore because of your shame, when I provide you an atonement for all you have done,” says the Lord GOD.

Summary

- **God will cleanse Israel of all uncleanness.**
- **God will give the people of Israel a new heart with a new Spirit.**
- **God will see to it that Israel keeps His commandments.**
- **Israel will once again live in the land God has given to their fathers.**
- **Israel will be God’s people again.**
- **God will be their God again.**
- **Israel will not experience famine again.**
- **Israel will be disgusted by itself on account of the iniquities and atrocities committed by its people.**

Ezekiel 36:25 “Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. 26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them. 28 Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God.

Ezekiel 36:29 I will deliver you from all your uncleannesses. I will call for the grain and multiply it, and bring no famine upon you. 30 And I will multiply the fruit of your trees

and the increase of your fields, so that you need never again bear the reproach of famine among the nations. 31 Then you will remember your evil ways and your deeds that were not good; and you will loathe yourselves in your own sight, for your iniquities and your abominations. 32 Not for your sake do I do this,” says the Lord GOD, “let it be known to you. Be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel!”

Summary

- **God will bring Israel back from the peoples, out of their enemies’ countries.**
- **The peoples will recognize that God has done this.**
- **Nobody will be left behind in another country.**
- **After Israel’s conversion and after the nation has received the Spirit of God, God will not hide Himself from them anymore.**

Ezekiel 39:27 “When I have brought them back from the peoples and gathered them out of their enemies’ lands, and I am hallowed in them in the sight of many nations, 28 then they shall know that I am the LORD their God, Who sent them into captivity among the nations, but also brought them back to their land, and left none of them captive any longer. 29 And I will not hide My face from them anymore; for I shall have poured out My Spirit on the house of Israel,’ says the Lord GOD.”

The Lord will remove the unbelievers – those who rejoice in Israel’s sins – from Israel. By that time, Israel will have converted and will no longer be arrogant, no longer be proud of its temple where idolatry was practiced. No more gay parades and no more abortion.

On behalf of God, the prophet Hosea says that Israel will again be God’s bride, an everlasting bride. What love does God the Father show for Israel, the apple of His eye.

Hosea 2:18 *“In that day I will make a covenant for them With the beasts of the field, With the birds of the air, And with the creeping things of the ground. Bow and sword of battle I will shatter from the earth, To make them lie down safely. 19 I will betroth you to Me forever; Yes, I will betroth you to Me In righteousness and justice, In lovingkindness and mercy.”*

Zephaniah 3:11 *“In that day you shall not be shamed for any of your deeds In which you transgress against Me; For then I will take away from your midst Those who rejoice in your pride, And you shall no longer be haughty In My holy mountain.”*

The remnant of Israel that has converted will be in mourning over the Messiah they have rejected. They have recognized their sins and confessed them, and the Lord has forgiven them. He has cast all their sins behind His back.

Yet Israel still feels miserable and terrible about the evil done. But since their hearts are broken under God’s silent love, they can be filled with the Holy Spirit. That is why they can sing and be cheerful. It is a joy that is brought about by the Lord.

Zephaniah 3:12 *“I will leave in your midst A meek and humble people, And they shall trust in the name of the LORD. 13 The remnant of Israel shall do no unrighteousness And speak no lies, Nor shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth; For they shall feed their flocks and lie down, And no one shall make them afraid.” 14 Sing, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O Israel! Be glad and rejoice with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem! 15 The LORD has taken away your judgments, He has cast out your enemy. The King of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; You shall see disaster no more. 16 In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: “Do not fear; Zion, let not your hands be weak.”*

The Messiah pleased with Israel's conversion

The Lord, the Messiah, has now returned and lives in the midst of Israel. Israel is pleased with that, but the Messiah Jesus is even more pleased. Zephaniah says that the Lord Jesus will rejoice over Israel with jubilation! In His love for Israel, the Messiah will keep silent about what they have done to Him as, in His love, He has also kept silent during the crucifixion process.

Zephaniah 3:17 *“The LORD your God in your midst, The Mighty One, will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will quiet you with His love, He will rejoice over you with singing. 18 I will gather those who sorrow over the appointed assembly, Who are among you, To whom its reproach is a burden. 19 Behold, at that time I will deal with all who afflict you; I will save the lame, And gather those who were driven out; I will appoint them for praise and fame In every land where they were put to shame. 20 At that time I will bring you back, Even at the time I gather you; For I will give you fame and praise Among all the peoples of the earth, When I return your captives before your eyes,” Says the LORD.*

Zechariah 12:9 *“It shall be in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. 10 And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn. 11 In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning at Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo.”*

Many texts in the Old Testament deal with the future conversion of Israel. So, it is hard to understand that there are still Christians, maybe even theologians, who do not believe this. Here are just a few that refer to this subject:

Leviticus 26:40-45; Deuteronomy 4:29-31; Deuteronomy 30:1-10; Deuteronomy 33:28-29; Psalm 47:4; Psalm 69:35-36; Psalm 85:8-13; Psalm 102:13,16,17,21; Psalm 106:5; Psalm 121; Psalm 126; Psalm 130:7-8; Isaiah 4:2-6; Isaiah 12:1-6; Isaiah 14:1-3; Isaiah 26:1-4; Isaiah 27:6; Isaiah 29:18-24; Isaiah 30:18-26; Isaiah 40:1-2; Isaiah 41:8-20; Isaiah 44:1-8,21-24,26; Isaiah 45:17-18,22-25; Isaiah 46:13; Isaiah 49:6-26; Isaiah 51; Isaiah 54:1-14,17; Isaiah 55:1-3; Isaiah 59:16-21; Isaiah 60:10,15,18,21,22; Isaiah 61:1-11; Isaiah 62; Isaiah 65:8-10; Jeremiah 3:14-16, 18-19; Jeremiah 23:4-6; Jeremiah 30:18-24; Jeremiah 31:1-7,16-40; Jeremiah 32:38-44; Jeremiah 33:6-22,26; Jeremiah 50:4-7,20; Ezekiel 16:60-63; Ezekiel 34:20-31; Ezekiel 36:8-15,26-38; Ezekiel 37:1-28; Hosea 1:7,11; Hosea 2:14-23; Hosea 3:5; Hosea 14:5-6; Amos 9:11-15; Micah 4:7; Micah 5:2-15; Micah 7:14-20; Zephaniah 3:11-19; Zechariah 1:12-17; Zechariah 2:1-5,10,12,13; Zechariah 3:10; Zechariah 8:3-7,9-19; Zechariah 9:10-17; Zechariah 10:3-7; Zechariah 12:1-14; Zechariah 13:1-2,8,9; Zechariah 14:1-21; Malachi 3:1-6,11-12,16-18.

CHAPTER 10

The Battle Preceding The Thousand-Year Reign

At the end of the seven-year Great Tribulation, the nations will march against Israel and against Jerusalem. Jerusalem is a stumbling block for all the nations.

Today, that doesn't sound strange to us; Israel and Jerusalem have been the center of attention for years—for Europe and the United Nations. Anti-Semitism is globally increasing, especially in Europe. There is much criticism of Israel's policy. Hamas' lies are much more readily believed than Israel's rebuttals. God's Word prophesies that this will ultimately lead to an attack on Israel. After a period of Great Tribulation by anti-Christian powers, there will be a military attack on Israel by many nations.

This attack will be started by the prince of Meshech and Tubal.

Meshech and Tubal... What countries are these? Opinions are divided on this issue, but many people think of countries north of Israel, like Turkey and Russia. Eventually, many other nations will be involved in this battle. Considering the current developments in Turkey, the United Nations, Europa and NATO, such a scenario is very well possible. And remember: what is prophesied in the Bible, will always come true.

The Bible contains many verses about the future of the nations during the end time – the time when the Messiah Jesus will return and His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives. He will then destroy the enemies of His people, Israel, when they march against Jerusalem. The nations that remain will submit to Him. This will bring an

end to the hostile countries that surround Israel to this day. The Lord mentions specifically the countries north of Israel, such as Syria and Iraq (Nineveh).

Most Bible commentators agree that the attack by God and the nations will probably take place at the end of the Seventy Weeks of Daniel, at the end of the Great Tribulation which will last for seven years, after the fall of the antichrist.

On behalf of the Lord, the prophet Zechariah gives the most comprehensive information about the battle of the nations against Jerusalem. The Lord gives the victory over the nations to Israel / Judah.

Zechariah 12:1 *The burden of the word of the LORD against Israel. Thus says the LORD, Who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him: 2 “Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples, when they lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem.”*

When the nations attack Jerusalem, the Lord will give power to the (military?) leaders to destroy the attacking armies. Jerusalem will remain where it is; the city will not be destroyed.

Zechariah 12:3 *“And it shall happen in that day that I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples; all who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces, though all nations of the earth are gathered against it. 4 In that day,” says the LORD, “I will strike every horse with confusion, and its rider with madness; I will open My eyes on the house of Judah, and will strike every horse of the peoples with blindness. 5 And the governors of Judah shall say in their heart, ‘The inhabitants of Jerusalem are my strength in the LORD of hosts, their God.’*

Zechariah 12:6 *In that day I will make the governors of Judah like a firepan in the wood-pile, and like a fiery torch in the sheaves; they shall devour all the surrounding peoples on the right hand and on the left, but Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place – Jerusalem. 7 The LORD will save the tents of Judah first, so that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem shall not become greater than that of Judah.”*

In this prophecy, Zechariah tells us that the inhabitants of Jerusalem will be protected. This seems to be contradictory to the next prophecy, which states that women will be raped. However, no inhabitants will be killed.

Zechariah 12:8 *“In that day the LORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; the one who is feeble among them in that day shall be like David, and the house of David shall be like God, like the Angel of the LORD before them. 9 It shall be in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.”*

All the nations will gather for the battle against Jerusalem. The city will be captured, there will be looting and raping of women. Half the inhabitants will flee to a safe place. The other half will stay in the city and will not be killed. At that point, the Messiah Jesus will come to free His people. All opponents will be destroyed.

Zechariah 14:1 *Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, And your spoil will be divided in your midst. 2 For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; The city shall be taken, The houses rifled, And the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, But the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city. 3 Then the LORD will go forth And fight against those nations, As He fights in the day of battle.*

On the day that the Lord Jesus returns, His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives,

from where He ascended. The Mount of Olives will be split in two, causing a big valley to arise in the middle. It is through this valley that half the inhabitants of Jerusalem will flee to a safe place.

Zechariah 14:4 *And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, Which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, From east to west, Making a very large valley; Half of the mountain shall move toward the north And half of it toward the south. 5 Then you shall flee through My mountain valley, For the mountain valley shall reach to Azal. Yes, you shall flee As you fled from the earthquake In the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Thus the LORD my God will come, And all the saints with You.*

On the day that the Lord Jesus will return, there will be no day or night. The Lord Himself will spread light all day long, for He is the Creator. Nothing is too hard for Him.

Zechariah 14:6 *It shall come to pass in that day That there will be no light; The lights will diminish. 7 It shall be one day Which is known to the LORD – Neither day nor night. But at evening time it shall happen That it will be light.*

The Lord Jesus will become King over the entire earth. In Israel, where water is usually lacking, water will flow to the Mediterranean Sea and to the river Jordan in the East, and from there to the Dead Sea.

Zechariah 14:8 *And in that day it shall be That living waters shall flow from Jerusalem, Half of them toward the eastern sea And half of them toward the western sea; In both summer and winter it shall occur. 9 And the LORD shall be King over all the earth. In that day it shall be – “The LORD is one,” And His name one.*

At the coming of the Messiah Jesus, He will destroy the nations that fight against Israel. This will happen in a very special way. It will not involve any soldiers. It looks like there is some disease that will consume the Messiah's opponents.

Zechariah 14:11 (...) *But Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited.*

12 And this shall be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the people who fought against Jerusalem: Their flesh shall dissolve while they stand on their feet, Their eyes shall dissolve in their sockets, And their tongues shall dissolve in their mouths.

Judah will gather the riches of the nations that have attacked Israel.

Zechariah 14:13 *It shall come to pass in that day That a great panic from the LORD will be among them. Everyone will seize the hand of his neighbor, And raise his hand against his neighbor's hand; 14 Judah also will fight at Jerusalem. And the wealth of all the surrounding nations Shall be gathered together: Gold, silver, and apparel in great abundance.*

The prophet Zechariah renders an almost complete picture of what will happen during the battle against Gog and the nations, and during the return of the Messiah Jesus.

Zechariah says:

- **The loot stolen from Israel will be returned.**
- **All nations will gather against Jerusalem.**
- **The city will be captured.**
- **Houses will be looted.**

- **Women will be raped.**
- **Half the inhabitants will flee the city.**
- **The other half will remain in the city and will not be killed.**
- **Nobody will be killed in Israel and Jerusalem!**
- **The Messiah Jesus will return on the Mount of Olives.**
- **The Mount of Olives will be split in two by an earthquake, creating a big valley.**
- **The Messiah will wage war against the nations.**
- **Together with the Messiah, the saints will come down from heaven.**
- **On that day, there will be no day and no night; the Lord is Light.**
- **The coming of the Messiah will be accompanied by various natural phenomena.**
- **Water will flow from the temple continually, towards the Dead Sea and the Mediterranean.**
- **A temple will be built on Mount Zion in Jerusalem, in which the Messiah will reign.**
- **The Lord Messiah will become King and rule over the entire earth.**
- **Confusion and panic will arise among those that battle against Jerusalem.**
- **All the nations/people that fight against Jerusalem will waste away by some kind of pest.**
- **Israel will gather all the possessions of the warriors, including gold, silver and clothing.**

Zechariah 2:4 (...) *‘Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls, because of the multitude of men and livestock in it. 5 For I,’ says the LORD, ‘will be a wall of fire all around her, and I will be the glory in her midst.’”*

Here Zechariah gives us additional information about Jerusalem. The LORD will be as a wall of fire around the city. There will be many people and animals present in Jerusalem. The LORD will live in the midst of the city, in the Temple on Mount Zio

CHAPTER 11

The Thousand-Year Messianic Reign

11.1 The Psalms and the Prophets speak about the coming dominion of the Messiah Jesus

The Psalms and the Prophets speak about the coming dominion of the Messiah Jesus. On His return, the Lord Jesus will not judge the living and the dead first of all. No, His first purpose is to establish His Kingdom on earth—which will be accompanied by judging the living, and not the dead.

The first judgment of the dead has already taken place during the first resurrection. At that moment, all deceased believers were raised and taken up into heaven. A great many Psalms speak about the coming Kingdom of the Holy One of Israel, of the Messiah Jesus.

In my book *The Messiah Revealed in the Holy Scriptures*, I have given many examples of this. In this reign, the peacemaking prince Jesus Christ will rule as King over His people Israel. His enemies, which are Israel's enemies as well, will be subjected to Him. He will also rule as King over this world. What will happen to the nations on this earth?

Summary

- **All nations will bow before the Lord.**
- **All ends of the earth will convert to the Lord.**
- **The Lord will rule as King over the nations.**

- All rulers, presidents and kings on earth will bow before the Lord.
- Israel's offspring will serve Him and proclaim His doctrine.
- The Lord will make an end to wars.
- All nations will praise the Lord.
- There will be peace until the Kingdom of the Son passes into the Kingdom of the Father.
- The Lord will judge the nations fairly and assist the poor and the miserable.
- May His Name endure forever; may His Name produce descendants as long as the sun shines.
- The entire earth will be filled with His glory.
- God will make Israel's deserts as the Garden of Eden.
- He will receive treasures of gold.
- Jerusalem will be an open city to bring in the riches of the nations and to worship the Lord.
- The nations that are not willing to serve Israel will be destroyed.
- The Palestinians and other nations will recognize Jerusalem as the city of the Lord, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel, the Messiah Jesus.
- Instead of being hated, Israel will become an eternal glory.
- There will be no more disasters in Israel.
- People branded by God will go out to the nations and proclaim God's glory.

Many Christians do not believe what the Word of God says about the Millennium, or do not take it literally.

The Bible speaks very clearly about various aspects of the Thousand-Year Reign. Regrettably, the Church through the ages has ignored or denied the promise of the Jesus' Thousand-Year Reign. The Early Church, up to Augustine, almost universally believed in an earthly rule by king Jesus upon His return. Tyconius (370-390)

was the first person to proclaim another view, in his commentary on the book of Revelation, i.e. the amillennialism.

Augustine, the Roman Catholic Church and most Reformed theologians took over this view. Adherents believe that there will be no Thousand-Year Reign. Or they say this reign has already begun with Jesus' resurrection. The number 1,000 would be symbolic. But how can there be a kingdom of peace without Jesus as the Prince of Peace?

In the Old Testament, we find many texts that refer to the time when Jesus Christ will personally rule the nations of the earth. Many theologians – both Catholic and Reformed – do not believe in a Thousand-Year Reign. In their view, the texts below should not be taken literally or be considered to relate to the Church. Replacement theology is still alive, even though they say it is not.

Following is a short list of passages relating to the Kingdom of the Messiah.

The Psalms and the Prophets say a lot about the future Kingdom of the Messiah Jesus – the Messianic Kingdom, in preparation for the Kingdom of His Father. There are many more. See also my book *The Messiah Revealed in the Holy Scriptures*.

Genesis 49:10; Numbers 24:17-19; 1 Samuel 2:10; 2 Samuel 7:12-16; Psalm 2:6-12; Psalm 8:2-3; Psalm 21:5; Psalm 45; Psalm 46:6-12; Psalm 47:3,4,8-10; Psalm 48:2-4, 9-15; Psalm 50:2-6; Psalm 61:7-8; Psalm 66:1-5; Psalm 67:2-8; Psalm 68:2-5; Psalm 72:6-20; Psalm 85:2-4,10-14; Psalm 86:9; Psalm 89:2-6, 23-30, 36-38; Psalm 93:1; Psalm 95:3-7; Psalm 96:11; Psalm 97:1, 6; Psalm 98:1-9; Psalm 99:1-4; Psalm 110:1-6; Psalm 130:7-8; Psalm 132:11-14; Psalm 138:4-5; Psalm 145:10-13; Psalm 149:1-9; Isaiah 2:10-22; Isaiah 9:5-6; Isaiah 11:2-10; Isaiah 16:5; Isaiah 24:19-23; Isaiah 26:1-4; Isaiah

32:1-5,13-20; Isaiah 33:17-24; Isaiah 35:1-10; Isaiah 40:5, 9-11; Isaiah 41:18-20; Isaiah 42:4, 13, 16; Isaiah 49:7; Isaiah 52:1-3, 10, 13; Isaiah 63:1-6; Isaiah 65:13-25; Isaiah 66:10-17,22-24; Jeremiah 23:5; Ezekiel 40-48; Daniel 2:35, 44; Daniel 4:3; Daniel 7:13-14, 18, 27; Daniel 12:1-3; Joel 2; Joel 3; Obadiah 1:17-21; Micah 4:13; Habakkuk 2:14; Zephaniah 2:11; Zechariah 6:12-13; Zechariah 9:9-12; Zechariah 10:11-12; Zechariah 14:9; Malachi 4:1-6.

11.2 The Nations Will Worship the God of Israel

We can learn from Isaiah 2 that the prophet speaks on behalf of God about the Messiah's Reign. There will be no more war. What else does Isaiah say about this Kingdom of Peace and about the nations?

- **This reign will occur during the latter days.**
- **Mount Zion, with the temple, will be the highest mountain.**
- **All nations will flee to this mountain, to the House of the God of Israel.**
- **The Messiah will teach the nations.**
- **The Messiah will judge over and between nations.**
- **During His reign, there will be no more war.**

Isaiah 2:1 *The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. 2 Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the LORD's house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow to it. 3 Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. 4 He shall judge between the nations, And rebuke many people; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into pruning hooks;*

Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore.

Isaiah 24:23 *Then the moon will be disgraced And the sun ashamed; For the LORD of hosts will reign On Mount Zion and in Jerusalem And before His elders, gloriously.*

11.3 The nations will start serving Israel

The nations will not only go to Israel/Jerusalem to worship the Messiah, the King of Israel, and be taught by Him. The nations will also bring their treasures to Israel, and their riches. When returning to Israel, the Jews will also bring their riches.

Summary

- **Foreigners will participate in rebuilding Israel.**
- **Nations that are unwilling to serve Israel will be destroyed.**
- **All kinds of beautiful trees will be planted in the area surrounding the temple.**
- **The children of Israel's former enemies will come and recognize Jerusalem as the City of the LORD, the Zion of the Messiah, the Holy One of Israel.**

Isaiah 60:8 *“Who are these who fly like a cloud, And like doves to their roosts? 9 Surely the coastlands shall wait for Me; And the ships of Tarshish will come first,*

To bring your sons from afar, Their silver and their gold with them, To the name of the LORD your God, And to the Holy One of Israel, Because He has glorified you. 10 The sons of foreigners shall build up your walls, And their kings shall minister to you; For in My wrath I struck you, But in My favor I have had mercy on you. 11 Therefore your gates shall be open continually; They shall not be shut day or night, That men may bring to you the wealth of the Gentiles, And their kings in procession. 12 For the nation and kingdom which will not serve you shall perish, And those nations shall be utterly ruined. 13 The

glory of Lebanon shall come to you, The cypress, the pine, and the box tree together, To beautify the place of My sanctuary; And I will make the place of My feet glorious. 14 Also the sons of those who afflicted you Shall come bowing to you, And all those who despised you shall fall prostrate at the soles of your feet; And they shall call you The City of the LORD, Zion of the Holy One of Israel.

Summary:

- **Israel will no longer be hated.**
- **Israel will become an eternal jewel.**
- **Everlasting joy will crown their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness (Isaiah 35:10).**
- **There will be peace and justice.**
- **There will be no more disasters and destructions.**
- **Israel will be a priestly nation, servants of God.**
- **Israel will eat from the wealth of the nations.**

11.4 Israel will serve the nations, bless them, and be a blessing to the world

The prophets Isaiah and Micah draw us a picture of Israel in the Messianic Reign when Israel will blossom and flourish, and will produce much fruit. Then Israel will be no longer be boycotted – a boycott initiated by the World Council of Churches. All of Israel's enemies will be extirpated. Israel will be like dew on the grass among the nations.

Isaiah 27:6 *Those who come He shall cause to take root in Jacob; Israel shall blossom and bud, And fill the face of the world with fruit.*

Micah 5:7 *Then the remnant of Jacob Shall be in the midst of many peoples, Like dew from the LORD, Like showers on the grass, That tarry for no man Nor wait for the sons of men. 8 And the remnant of Jacob Shall be among the Gentiles, In the midst of many peoples, Like a lion among the beasts of the forest, Like a young lion among flocks of sheep, Who, if he passes through, Both treads down and tears in pieces, And none can deliver. 9 Your hand shall be lifted against your adversaries, And all your enemies shall be cut off.*

11.5 Many people will come to believe in the Messiah

Also during the Thousand-Year Reign, Jews will proclaim the Gospel among the nations (Isaiah 66:19). What a change! First, they were abhorrent of the message, and now, by the power of the Holy Spirit, they believe and have become messengers of God's grace. First, persecutors of the disciples of the Lord Jesus, now servants of Jesus, the King of Israel.

What else is going to happen?

- **All nations will come and see God's glory.**
- **God's glory will be proclaimed among the nations.**
- **The nations that come to the House of the Lord will be a pleasant incense offering for the Messiah.**
- **Some people from the nations will be allowed to become servants of the Lord.**
- **The nations will come to Jerusalem from sabbath to sabbath in order to worship the Lord.**
- **Jerusalem will be called the Throne of the LORD.**

Isaiah 66:18 *"For I know their works and their thoughts. It shall be that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come and see My glory. 19 I will set a sign among*

them; and those among them who escape I will send to the nations: to Tarshish and Pul and Lud, who draw the bow, and Tubal and Javan, to the coastlands afar off who have not heard My fame nor seen My glory. And they shall declare My glory among the Gentiles. 20 Then they shall bring all your brethren for an offering to the LORD out of all nations, on horses and in chariots and in litters, on mules and on camels, to My holy mountain Jerusalem,” says the LORD, “as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the LORD 21 And I will also take some of them for priests and Levites,” says the LORD. 22 “For as the new heavens and the new earth Which I will make shall remain before Me,” says the LORD, “So shall your descendants and your name remain. 23 And it shall come to pass That from one New Moon to another, And from one Sabbath to another, All flesh shall come to worship before Me,” says the LORD.

Jeremiah 3:17 “At that time Jerusalem shall be called The Throne of the LORD, and all the nations shall be gathered to it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem. No more shall they follow the dictates of their evil hearts.”

Jeremiah 16:19 O LORD, my strength and my fortress, My refuge in the day of affliction, The Gentiles shall come to You From the ends of the earth and say, “Surely our fathers have inherited lies, Worthlessness and unprofitable things.”

Zephaniah 3:9 “For then I will restore to the peoples a pure language, That they all may call on the name of the LORD, To serve Him with one accord. 10 From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia My worshipers, The daughter of My dispersed ones, Shall bring My offering. 11 In that day you shall not be shamed for any of your deeds In which you transgress against Me; For then I will take away from your midst Those who rejoice in your pride, And you shall no longer be haughty In My holy mountain.”

Zechariah 2:11 “Many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and they shall

become My people. And I will dwell in your midst. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you.”

11.6 The nations of the world will celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles

In Zechariah 14:16-19, we read that the nations visit Jerusalem during the Thousand-Year Reign to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. God considers this very important, for if a nation does not go up, the land will have no rain.

Zechariah 14:16 *And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. 17 And it shall be that whichever of the families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, on them there will be no rain. 18 If the family of Egypt will not come up and enter in, they shall have no rain; they shall receive the plague with which the LORD strikes the nations who do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. 19 This shall be the punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all the nations that do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.*

Already in Deuteronomy, the Israelites are told to go to the place where God lives and to eat there with gladness and be glad about everything with which the Lord has blessed mankind. The prophet Zechariah also speaks about that. However, there is one restriction: godless people may not appear before the Lord’s countenance.

11.7 A feast on Mount Zion for all the nations

God prepares a feast on Mount Zion, Jerusalem, for all the nations.

This prophecy by Isaiah also refers to Revelation 19:9: *'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!'* This meal is also evocative of the feast held on the occasion of the appointment of a king in Israel. From a spiritual point of view, this meal points to the riches and blessings received by believers in Christ. The Holy Spirit works this out in their hearts, and produces great joy and gladness about being allowed to sit at this table.

The veil of the nations will be taken away. Satan has blinded the nations with all kinds of lies, which results in unbelief and enmity against God. Included lies refer to creation/evolution, God's omnipotence, resurrection, miracles and signs, abortion, same-sex marriages, Israel, and many more subjects.

Isaiah 2:2 *Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the LORD's house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow to it. 3 Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.*

Isaiah 25:6 *And in this mountain The LORD of hosts will make for all people A feast of choice pieces, A feast of wines on the lees, Of fat things full of marrow, Of well-refined wines on the lees.*

2 Chronicles 7:4 *Then the king and all the people offered sacrifices before the LORD. 5 King Solomon offered a sacrifice of twenty-two thousand bulls and one hundred and twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all the people dedicated the house of God.*

Daniel 7:14 *Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed.*

Zechariah 8:3 *“Thus says the LORD: ‘I will return to Zion, And dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Jerusalem shall be called the City of Truth, The Mountain of the LORD of hosts, The Holy Mountain.’”*

Matthew 26:29 *“But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father’s kingdom.”*

11.8 A special promise for the nations!

The nations will come to recognize that the gods they and their ancestors served, were not gods, but gods thought up by themselves – gods that were of no benefit and only lies. The nations will come to recognize that only the God of Israel (YHWH) is the God Who really lives and has every power in heaven and on earth. You can read about this in:

Jeremiah 16:19 *‘O LORD, my strength and my fortress, My refuge in the day of affliction, The Gentiles shall come to You From the ends of the earth and say, “Surely our fathers have inherited lies, Worthlessness and unprofitable things.”’²⁰ Will a man make gods for himself, Which are not gods? ²¹ Therefore behold, I will this once cause them to know, I will cause them to know My hand and My might; And they shall know that My name is the LORD.’*

The prophet Zechariah also speaks about this in:

Zechariah 2:11 *“Many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and they shall*

become My people. And I will dwell in your midst. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you. 12 And the LORD will take possession of Judah as His inheritance in the Holy Land, and will again choose Jerusalem.”

11.9 The Lord reigns from His temple in Jerusalem

The Lord reigns. Who will it be: God the Father or God the Son? According to Isaiah 4, it will be God the Son, the Branch of the LORD. The prophet Zechariah also says that the Messiah will sit and rule on His throne (Zechariah 6:13), from His dwelling in Jerusalem. What will that be like? One thing is for sure: it will be perfect – to the glory of Him Who created us. But the prophets tell us much more about it:

- **It will happen in the latter days.**
- **The Lord will rule from Jerusalem.**
- **At His coming, the earth will be lighted by His glory.**
- **The house of the Lord will stand on Mount Zion.**
- **Mount Zion will be the highest of all mountains.**
- **Many nations will go up to the house of the Lord in Jerusalem.**
- **The Lord will teach the nations His commandments.**
- **The people who are left will dwell in Jerusalem, the ones who are written in the Book of Life.**
- **The Israelites will be cleansed by the blood of the Lamb.**
- **During the day, there will be a cloud; during the night, there will be a light of fire. This reminds us of Israel’s exodus from Egypt, through the wilderness.**
- **The house will be filled with the glory of the Lord.**
- **The Lord will live forever among the Israelites.**
- **There will be peace.**

Isaiah 2:2 *Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the LORD's house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow to it. 3 Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.*

11.10 Aliyah strongly advised. Return to the land of Israel.

Jews are advised to make Aliyah. The Lord even speaks about 'fleeing to Zion.'

Zechariah 2:6 *"Up, up! Flee from the land of the north," says the LORD; "for I have spread you abroad like the four winds of heaven," says the LORD. 7 "Up, Zion! Escape, you who dwell with the daughter of Babylon."*

The prophet Ezekiel also speaks about Aliyah in:

Ezekiel 39:27 *"When I have brought them back from the peoples and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and I am hallowed in them in the sight of many nations, 28 then they shall know that I am the LORD their God, who sent them into captivity among the nations, but also brought them back to their land, and left none of them captive any longer. 29 And I will not hide My face from them anymore; for I shall have poured out My Spirit on the house of Israel," says the Lord GOD."*

What strikes here, is that the LORD says that none shall be left behind. God will show to the nations what happens if they attack Israel, the apple of His eye. The prophet Zechariah already prophesied that:

Haggai 2:8 *“The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine,’ says the LORD of hosts. 9 ‘The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former,’ says the LORD of hosts. ‘And in this place I will give peace,’ says the LORD of hosts.”*

These events are also prophesied by Isaiah, Ezekiel and Joel, but generally they only render part of it. Major points that Zechariah does not mention include:

- Wars will no longer take place.
- The Messiah will sit on the throne of David in Jerusalem.
- The Messiah will judge and pass sentence.
- When part of the nation has to flee or wants to flee, the Lord will accompany the people, just like during the exodus in the wilderness.

11.11 Gog wants to plunder. What is there to plunder?

Gog makes evil plans against Israel which has become a rich country, and there’s a lot to rob: gas, oil, precious stones, etc.

Ezekiel 38:10 *Thus says the Lord GOD: “On that day it shall come to pass that thoughts will arise in your mind, and you will make an evil plan: 11 You will say, ‘I will go up against a land of unwalled villages; I will go to a peaceful people, who dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates– 12 to take plunder and to take booty, to stretch out your hand against the waste places that are again inhabited, and against a people gathered from the nations, who have acquired livestock and goods, who dwell in the midst of the land.”*

Isaiah 45:3 *‘I will give you the treasures of darkness And hidden riches of secret places,*

That you may know that I, the LORD, Who call you by your name, Am the God of Israel.'

Large gas fields found

A few years ago, people in Israel laughed at any rumor about finding oil. Nowadays, however, the situation has completely changed. First, a relatively small gas field was discovered near Ashkelon and Ashdod.

In 2009, a large gas field (Tamar) was found some ninety kilometers west of Haifa, in the Mediterranean Sea, large enough to provide for Israel's energy needs for the next thirty years. Geological research has shown that there must be at least another seventeen gas fields, similar in size to the Tamar gas field. A year later, Israel found the enormous Leviathan reservoir, 135 km west of Haifa, at a depth of 5 km. In addition to natural gas, there is also 621 billion m³ of petroleum, about 1.7 billion oil drums.

Within a few years, Israel has become an exporter of natural gas. What a riches and what a blessing for Israel! Did God's Word say anything on that? Yes, in Genesis 49:25 (NIV), the patriarch Jacob prophesied, "(...) because of the Almighty who blesses you with blessings of the skies above, blessings of the deep springs below (...)."

Moses confirmed it in:

Deuteronomy 33:13 *And of Joseph he said: "Blessed of the LORD is his land, With the precious things of heaven, with the dew, And the deep lying beneath (...)."*

Further on in this chapter, Moses spoke:

Deuteronomy 33:19 *"They shall call the peoples to the mountain; There they shall offer*

sacrifices of righteousness; For they shall partake of the abundance of the seas And of treasures hidden in the sand.”

Another oil field was found on the Golan Heights. In the area surrounding Haifa, all kinds of precious stones are found. Enough reasons for other countries to try to get possession of Israel. The Bible tells us that Gog, in collaboration with his allies, will make attempts to this end. But then the great Shepherd of Israel will reveal Himself throughout the world and destroy Israel’s enemies. That will be the beginning of the Thousand-Year Reign.

God will show His might to the nations.

When the great mass of warriors coming from Gog and the nations attack Israel and spread over ‘My people’, says God, then He will show to the nations Who He is, Who has all power – not only in heaven, but also on earth.

Ezekiel 38:14 *“Therefore, son of man, prophesy and say to Gog, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD: “On that day when My people Israel dwell safely, will you not know it? 15 Then you will come from your place out of the far north, you and many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses, a great company and a mighty army. 16 You will come up against My people Israel like a cloud, to cover the land. It will be in the latter days that I will bring you against My land, so that the nations may know Me, when I am hallowed in you, O Gog, before their eyes.””*

11.12 Natural disasters and judgments during the coming of the Messiah

The coming of the Messiah Jesus will be accompanied by natural disasters – an earthquake in Israel that will be so heavy that the shocks will be felt all over the world. The Mount of Olives will split in two. Mountains will be flattened. Mount Zion, however, will tower above everything, and will become the dwelling place of the Messiah, the King of the entire world. He will receive this earth from the hands of His Father, and not from the hands of Satan who offered it to Him during His stay on earth (the temptation in the wilderness, Matthew 4.)

The Messiah Jesus will judge and destroy all enemies.

Ezekiel 38:17 *Thus says the Lord GOD: “Are you he of whom I have spoken in former days by My servants the prophets of Israel, who prophesied for years in those days that I would bring you against them? 18 And it will come to pass at the same time, when Gog comes against the land of Israel,” says the Lord GOD, “that My fury will show in My face. 19 For in My jealousy and in the fire of My wrath I have spoken: ‘Surely in that day there shall be a great earthquake in the land of Israel, 20 so that the fish of the sea, the birds of the heavens, the beasts of the field, all creeping things that creep on the earth, and all men who are on the face of the earth shall shake at My presence. The mountains shall be thrown down, the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground.’ 21 I will call for a sword against Gog throughout all My mountains,” says the Lord GOD. “Every man’s sword will be against his brother. 22 And I will bring him to judgment with pestilence and bloodshed; I will rain down on him, on his troops, and on the many peoples who are with him, flooding rain, great hailstones, fire, and brimstone.”*

11.13 Judgment on the nations at the coming of the Messiah

At His return, the Messiah Jesus will also judge the nations, but a lot will happen in nature as well at that moment. In the books of Isaiah, Ezekiel and Zechariah, we can read about this. The Lord Jesus repeats what the prophet Isaiah said about it. In Revelation 16, the Lord Jesus gives us more information about this event. All islands have been moved, and mountains can no longer be found, except the mountain on which Jerusalem was built, and the temple of the Lord.

Isaiah 40:4 *“Every valley shall be exalted And every mountain and hill brought low; The crooked places shall be made straight And the rough places smooth; 5 The glory of the LORD shall be revealed, And all flesh shall see it together; For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”*

Zechariah 14:9 *And the LORD shall be King over all the earth. In that day it shall be— “The LORD is one,” And His name one. 10 All the land shall be turned into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem. Jerusalem shall be raised up and inhabited in her place from Benjamin’s Gate to the place of the First Gate and the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the king’s winepresses.*

Ezekiel 39:21 *“I will set My glory among the nations; all the nations shall see My judgment which I have executed, and My hand which I have laid on them.”*

Revelation 16:18 *And there were noises and thunderings and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth. 19 Now the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. And great Babylon was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath. 20 Then every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. 21 And great hail from heaven fell upon men, each hailstone about the weight of a talent. Men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, since that*

plague was exceedingly great.

According to the texts below, at His return to the Mount of Olives, the Lord will combat the nations and judge those who have attacked the Jewish nation. But then all nations on this earth will also be judged by the Lord, before the beginning of the Messianic Reign. The Thousand-Year Reign will not start with people who do not want to subject to the King of Israel.

How this will happen is not yet quite clear, but many godless people will be killed. The Lord will pass judgment in the valley of Jehoshaphat, near Jerusalem. According to Zephaniah 3:9, after the judgments there will also be a turning point for the nations. They will call upon the Lord and start serving Him.

Isaiah 24:21 *It shall come to pass in that day That the LORD will punish on high the host of exalted ones, And on the earth the kings of the earth. 22 They will be gathered together, As prisoners are gathered in the pit, And will be shut up in the prison; After many days they will be punished. 23 Then the moon will be disgraced And the sun ashamed; For the LORD of hosts will reign On Mount Zion and in Jerusalem And before His elders, gloriously.*

There will be salvation for the Jewish nation. Yes, they will recover their former possessions. The land that the LORD has promised to His friend Abraham as an eternal possession. ‘It is My land,’ says the LORD, ‘and Jerusalem is My city.’

2 Thessalonians 2:8 *And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.*

11.14 God will punish Israel’s enemies

The texts below mainly refer to God's punishments for Israel's enemies, in Israel's vicinity. There will decidedly be a time when this will happen. It will certainly happen at the coming of the Messiah Jesus on the Mount of Olives, but could even happen earlier.

Joel 3:1 *“For behold, in those days and at that time, When I bring back the captives of Judah and Jerusalem, 2 I will also gather all nations, And bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; And I will enter into judgment with them there On account of My people, My heritage Israel, Whom they have scattered among the nations; They have also divided up My land. 3 They have cast lots for My people, Have given a boy as payment for a harlot, And sold a girl for wine, that they may drink. 4 Indeed, what have you to do with Me, O Tyre and Sidon, and all the coasts of Philistia? Will you retaliate against Me? But if you retaliate against Me, Swiftly and speedily I will return your retaliation upon your own head; 5 Because you have taken My silver and My gold, And have carried into your temples My prized possessions. 6 Also the people of Judah and the people of Jerusalem You have sold to the Greeks, That you may remove them far from their borders.*

11.15 The Messiah's judgment on the nations surrounding Israel

Revelation 19:11-21 deals with the battle and the judgment on the nations that attack Israel at the end of the Great Tribulation. Also described here is the destruction of the beast and the false prophet.

Revelation 19:11 *Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. (...)*
15 *Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the*

fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

Revelation 19:19 *And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. 20 Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. 21 And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him Who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh.*

The prophet Isaiah foretold that a throne will be placed in Jerusalem, the city of King David. This throne will not disappear and will appear through the goodness of the Lord God. Who will sit on this throne? Isaiah does not mention a name, but from other prophecies we know that it will be the Messiah Jesus. He will judge and pass judgment in a divine way, for the Messiah has been appointed Judge by God the Father.

CHAPTER 12

Christ will judge Satan, Satan and the beast will be thrown into hell

During the Thousand-Year Reign, there will apparently also be many people who pretend submission to King Jesus. This becomes clear when Satan is released for a short while in order to once again tempt the nations to a battle against King Jesus, against Jerusalem, and against His saints.

However, an all-consuming fire will descend from heaven, from God. The devil will be thrown into the pool of fire and sulfur – the same place where also the beast and the false prophet are – and they will remain there for all eternity.

Isaiah 14:15 *“Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, To the lowest depths of the Pit. 16 Those who see you will gaze at you, And consider you, saying: ‘Is this the man who made the earth tremble, Who shook kingdoms, 17 Who made the world as a wilderness And destroyed its cities, Who did not open the house of his prisoners?’”*

Revelation 19:17 *Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, “Come and gather together for the supper of the great God, 18 that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, both small and great.”*

Revelation 19:19 *And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. 20 Then*

the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. 21 And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh.

CHAPTER 13

God's Last Judgment on All People

Judgments and resurrections

See also Chapter 3 on two judgments and two resurrections.

The Messiah Jesus is not only Savior, but also Judge. The Father has handed the judgment of people over to His Son.

John 5:22 *“For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son...”*

The Father has given authority to the Son to pass judgment. All people buried in their graves will hear the voice of God's Son and come forth: those who have done good works, to the resurrection of life; and those who have done evil works, to the resurrection of condemnation. The Messiah Jesus does not say this will be a simultaneous event.

In Revelation, the Lord speaks about a first resurrection, and a second. The apostle Paul informs us that during the first resurrection the believers (the good people) will rise, and the unbelievers (the bad people) in the second resurrection.

John 5:25 *“Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live. 26 For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, 27 and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man. 28 Do not marvel*

at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice 29 and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation. 30 I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.”

In his letter to the Corinthians, the apostle Paul writes about the Judge of all people assessing the works of the believers at the end of time. When exactly this will happen is unknown. But I think it is clear that when believers are taken up, their incomplete works will not go with them to heaven.

1 Corinthians 3:11 *For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each one’s work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one’s work, of what sort it is. 14 If anyone’s work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. 15 If anyone’s work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.*

1 Corinthians 4:5 *Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, Who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one’s praise will come from God.*

Christ was the First to be raised from the dead with a new, immortal body. Later come those who belong to Him; they will arise with new, everlasting bodies. This will happen when He comes in the clouds. The apostle Paul told us so in 1 Thessalonians 4:17. The end will come when Christ, after His Thousand-Year Reign, will surrender His Kingship to God, His Father. That will signal the beginning of a new heaven and a new earth, after the last judgment.

1 Corinthians 15:21 For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. 23 But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming. 24 Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. 25 For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet.

1 Thessalonians 4:15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

Death will be followed immediately by judgement. The believers will go to Paradise, to the Lord Jesus (think of the murderer on the cross). The unbelievers will go to Hades, the underworld, separated from God, the place of remorse, awaiting their final judgment.

Hebrews 9:27 And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, 28 so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.

2 Petrus 3:7 But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

The believers who die in the Lord Jesus Christ will be saved, and the works that are done in the Name of the Lord Jesus through the Holy Spirit will follow them. These

works will be judged by the Lord and not be burned (1 Corinthians 3). On which foundation have you built? On good works which the Lord has prepared beforehand? (Ephesians 2:10)

Revelation 14:13 *Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Write: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.'" "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them."*

The first resurrection, according to the Messiah Jesus, will take place before the Thousand-Year Reign. The saints of the Most High, the Messiah, will rule with Christ in His reign for a thousand years. Daniel also prophesied about it.

Revelation 20:4 *And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. 5 But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.*

Daniel 7:18 *" 'But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever.' (...) 22 'until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom.' (...) 27 'Then the kingdom and dominion, And the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, Shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, And all dominions shall serve and obey Him.' 28 This is the end of the account. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts greatly*

troubled me, and my countenance changed; but I kept the matter in my heart.”

Matthew 19:28 *So Jesus said to them, “Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”*

1 Corinthians 6:2 *Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? 3 Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life?*

In his letter to Timothy, the apostle Paul talks about two judgments – the first at Christ’s appearance, at the first resurrection, and the second at the end of Christ’s Kingdom, at the second resurrection when the unbelievers rise to be judged.

2 Timothy 4:1 *I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, Who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom (...).*

The Lord Jesus speaks in Matthew 13 about the judgment at the end of the Messianic Reign, when the unbelievers will be judged. Apparently, there will still be unbelievers in the Messianic Reign, for when Satan is released after a thousand years, many people still support him. However, in the last judgment, the angels will bring them before Jesus the Judge. Just like the unbelievers who have died and will rise, they too will be judged and then thrown into the furnace of fire. This is also the place where Satan will go to.

Matthew 13:40 *“Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. 41 The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, 42 and will*

cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. 43 Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!” (...)

Matthew 13:49 *“So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, 50 and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”*

At the end of the Messiah’s Kingdom, the Thousand-Year Reign, His Kingdom will pass into the Kingdom of His Father. The twelve apostles will judge the twelve tribes of Israel.

It seems that this judgment is unrelated to the two judgments just discussed. Do the twelve tribes of Israel receive a special treatment? Yes, since Israel is the apple of God’s eye, it could very well be so. But I cannot find any reference in the Bible about a different judgment for those twelve tribes. In the Bible, faith in the Messiah is decisive – both for the Jew and the non-Jew.

Matthew 19:27 *Then Peter answered and said to Him, “See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?” 28 So Jesus said to them, “Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”*

Mark 16:16 *“He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.”*

The Apostles' Creed states,

“(...) whence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.” (Article 7)

In this same creed, which consists of twelve articles and is read in the Sunday services of many Reformed churches, Article 6 says about Jesus, “He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty”, and from there, according to Article 7, “He shall come to judge the living and the dead.”

The Nicene Creed words it somewhat differently, but it boils down to the same. This is a very comprehensive, concise confession, for according to the Bible, many more events are going to take place before the Last Judgment.

The apostle Paul writes to his brother Titus that we are looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearance of Jesus Christ. When will this happen? Well, the apostle is also clear about that. In 1 Thessalonians 4 he says that the Lord Jesus will return to gather His children/believers, both the living and the dead. The dead in Christ will rise and get a new body. That is the first resurrection.

Logically, a judgment will take place, for the dead who have not believed in Christ will not yet rise. They have to wait for the second resurrection, and will then be judged.

The Apostles' Creed does not state other things. For example, that there will be a Thousand-Year Messianic Reign. The devil will be bound for one thousand years. Then, and this is also important, the nation of Israel will convert and be a blessing to the entire world.

After the Thousand-Year Reign, Satan will be unbound for a short while. In the sub-

sequent battle, God will get even with Satan. Then the resurrection and judgment of the wicked will come.

The true believers will look forward to the glorious appearance of their Savior and Lord. To being joined with Him.

How can such a thing be lacking in a Christian creed? It is because these creeds originated in the Roman Catholic Church.

The believers, however, are not looking forward to the coming judgment, for he who has the Son will not be judged.

Prophecies on the day of the lord

The unbelievers, the unjust, are gathered out of the world and thrown into the fiery furnace.

The believers, the righteous, will pass from the Kingdom of the Son (the Thousand-Year Messianic Reign) to the Kingdom of the Father (the new heaven and the new earth).

Psalm 9:8 *He shall judge the world in righteousness, And He shall administer judgment for the peoples in uprightness. 9 The LORD also will be a refuge for the oppressed, A refuge in times of trouble.*

Matthew 12:41 *“The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here. 42 The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this gen-*

eration and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon is here.”

Matthew 13:49 *“So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”*

Matthew 19:27 *Then Peter answered and said to Him, “See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?” 28 So Jesus said to them, “Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”*

The second judgment will take place at the end of the Thousand-Year Reign, after Satan has received his final place in hell, together with all his supporters and all who have rejected the Lord Jesus. Then also the second resurrection of all unbelievers will take place; they will be condemned, with Satan, to a place which the Lord Jesus calls a place of wailing and gnashing of teeth. Completely separated from God.

But the believers will not look forward to the coming judgment, for he who has the Son will not be condemned.

The only expectation of the unbelievers is God’s eternal judgment, unless they convert while still alive. It must be horrible to live with Satan, God’s enemy, for all eternity – eternal remorse and pain because of sins committed. The more so while the Lord Jesus has warned us people so often, since He and His Father don’t want people to be eternally lost.

By nature, every person is God’s enemy, whether he wants to acknowledge it or not.

A person may be religious or not, but he has to submit to God's will. But nobody likes to let God control his life.

Psalm 9:8 *He shall judge the world in righteousness, And He shall administer judgment for the peoples in uprightness. 9 The LORD also will be a refuge for the oppressed, A refuge in times of trouble.*

Psalm 96:13 *For He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth. He shall judge the world with righteousness, And the peoples with His truth.*

Isaiah 2 paints a picture of the situation preceding the Lord's judgment, and also of how the Lord will judge at the time. What awaits the arrogant, proud people? The Lord is very clear about that. Pride was also the sin committed by Adam and Eve: to be like God. On Judgment Day, the proud people will be humiliated.

Isaiah 2:10 *Enter into the rock, and hide in the dust, From the terror of the LORD And the glory of His majesty. 11 The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, The haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, And the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day 12 For the day of the LORD of hosts Shall come upon everything proud and lofty, Upon everything lifted up – And it shall be brought low – (...) 17 The loftiness of man shall be bowed down, And the haughtiness of men shall be brought low; The LORD alone will be exalted in that day, 18 But the idols He shall utterly abolish. 19 They shall go into the holes of the rocks, And into the caves of the earth, From the terror of the LORD And the glory of His majesty, When He arises to shake the earth mightily (...) 22 Sever yourselves from such a man, Whose breath is in his nostrils; For of what account is he?*

Isaiah 13 gives us more information about the day of judgment. I am not sure whether the prophecy in Isaiah 13 deals with the judgment by the Messiah when He

returns on the Mount of Olives – or with the judgment on the nations at the end of the Thousand-Year Reign. Verse 12 could indicate that the prophecy relates to the beginning of this Reign.

The prophet Isaiah on the day of the lord.

The people without God will be punished.

Isaiah 13:6 *Wail, for the day of the LORD is at hand! It will come as destruction from the Almighty. 7 Therefore all hands will be limp, Every man's heart will melt, 8 And they will be afraid. Pangs and sorrows will take hold of them; They will be in pain as a woman in childbirth; They will be amazed at one another; Their faces will be like flames. 9 Behold, the day of the LORD comes, Cruel, with both wrath and fierce anger, To lay the land desolate; And He will destroy its sinners from it.*

Isaiah 13:10 *For the stars of heaven and their constellations Will not give their light; The sun will be darkened in its going forth, And the moon will not cause its light to shine. 11 "I will punish the world for its evil, And the wicked for their iniquity; I will halt the arrogance of the proud, And will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. 12 I will make a mortal more rare than fine gold, A man more than the golden wedge of Ophir.*

A trial against every flesh, using fire and sword.

The godless will be killed by the sword.

Isaiah 66:15 *For behold, the LORD will come with fire And with His chariots, like a whirlwind, To render His anger with fury, And His rebuke with flames of fire. 16 For by fire and by His sword The LORD will judge all flesh; And the slain of the LORD shall be many.*

Matthew 8:11 *"And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. 12 But the sons of the king-*

dom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

When the Lord Jesus says that all people doing injustice will be gathered from His Kingdom, this refers to the end of the Thousand-Year Reign, as far as time is concerned, for the Lord Jesus is then the King of that Reign.

The Lord Jesus on the conclusion of the current world

Matthew 13:40 *“Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. 41 The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, 42 and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. 43 Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear! (...) 49 So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, 50 and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”*

Does the Lord Jesus judge countries/nations or people?

Matthew 25 verse 32 says that nations will be gathered to be judged. Some Bible commentators says that it literally refers to countries/nations here. But if that were true, then the following verses don't refer to that. Which would be very strange.

However, if we consider the original language, the word 'nations' can also be translated as 'a crowd of people' or 'many people'. This is more in keeping with the next verses, for it involves people who have been chosen from the foundation of the earth.

This cannot refer to nations, unless Israel is meant. In verse 40, the Lord Jesus speaks about 'the least of these My brethren'. Are they unbelieving Jews or are they

His disciples, His children? In Matthew 12:49-50 and in John 20:17, the Lord Jesus calls His disciples believers and His brothers. His brothers are the ones who do the will of His Father in heaven. So in Matthew 25 it does not deal with the judgment of the Lord on countries/nations, but about people personally.

The Lord Jesus on the Last Judgment

Matthew 25:31 *“When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. 32 All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. 33 And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. 34 Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; 36 I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’ (...)* **41** *Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: 42 for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; 43 I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.’ 44 Then they also will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?’ 45 Then He will answer them, saying, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.’ 46 And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”*

The last verse – verse 46 – shows that we are dealing here with the Last Judgment.

With brothers, the Lord Jesus means all those who have been given to Him by the Father to be wedding children – all the people to whom He has become precious and beloved through His sacrifice on the cross for their sins. The heavy suffering of

our Savior shows us how big and atrocious our sins are.

Matthew 12:49 *And He stretched out His hand toward His disciples and said, "Here are My mother and My brothers!"*

Mark 16:16 *"He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned."*

Revelation 20:11 *Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. 13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. 14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.*

CHAPTER 14

The New Heaven and The New Earth

Why are a new heaven and a new earth necessary? Yes, we understand the need for a new earth: our present earth is stained and defiled by sin and is being exploited by man. The earth will be renewed during the Thousand-Year Reign, but at its end there will be a completely new earth as well as a new heaven, after the former have perished and burnt.

The Psalmist words it as follows:

Psalm 113:4 *The LORD is high above all nations, His glory above the heavens. 5 Who is like the LORD our God, Who dwells on high.*

It turns out that God lives in a space that exceeds heaven. That is where His glory is. The Lord Jesus showed it to John and to us, and John wrote:

Revelation 20:11 *Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them.*

The earth and the heavens flee from God's holiness. Because of their sinful past, they cannot exist in God's judgment.

The prophet Isaiah speaks also about the new heavens and the new earth in Chapters 51 and 60, where he says, among other things, that the heavens will vanish away like smoke.

Isaiah 51:6 *Lift up your eyes to the heavens, And look on the earth beneath. For the heavens will vanish away like smoke, The earth will grow old like a garment, And those who dwell in it will die in like manner; But My salvation will be forever, And My righteousness will not be abolished.*

Isaiah 60:19 *“The sun shall no longer be your light by day, Nor for brightness shall the moon give light to you; But the LORD will be to you an everlasting light, And your God your glory. 20 Your sun shall no longer go down, Nor shall your moon withdraw itself; For the LORD will be your everlasting light, And the days of your mourning shall be ended. 21 Also your people shall all be righteous; They shall inherit the land forever, The branch of My planting, The work of My hands, That I may be glorified. 22 A little one shall become a thousand, And a small one a strong nation. I, the LORD, will hasten it in its time.”*

In Isaiah 65 verse 17, the prophet starts talking about new heavens and a new earth. But, as we often see, there are two dimensions to these verses, since verse 20 states, by mouth of the prophet, the people of Israel in the Thousand-Year Reign. Which means that new heavens and a new earth will come about after the Thousand-Year Reign. In verse 20, the prophets changes the period – from the eternal period to the millennium. Verses 17 through 19 state that the former will no longer be remembered. The temple service - still present in the Millennium as a remembrance of the former sacrificial service - will no longer be present on the new earth. Everything from the past will no longer be remembered.

I think that every sinner who has been saved by the Lord Jesus will be very glad about that.

Isaiah 65:17 *“For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former shall*

not be remembered or come to mind. 18 But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; For behold, I create Jerusalem as a rejoicing, And her people a joy. 19 I will rejoice in Jerusalem, And joy in My people; The voice of weeping shall no longer be heard in her, Nor the voice of crying.

Who are the saints of the Most High?

Through Daniel, we gain an insight into who are the saints of the Most High, of God and His Messiah. These saints have been sanctified by the Messiah. His holiness is attributed to them by faith. They are made by Him to be kings and priests and may serve Him, rule with Him in His Kingdom.

Daniel 7:18 *'But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever.' (...)*

Daniel 7:21 *"I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, 22 until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom. 23 Thus he said: (...) 27 'Then the kingdom and dominion, And the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, Shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, And all dominions shall serve and obey Him.'"*

Transition from the Kingdom of the Son to the Kingdom of the Father

The Kingdom of the Son differs from the Kingdom of the Father. In the Thousand-Year Reign, we see that people still have a sinful nature, and can still die. In the

Kingdom of the Father, there are no people with a sinful nature, and they don't die but live eternally in the new heaven and on the new earth. What this will be like exactly, is still hidden from us. But the anointed will be serving and glorifying the Lord perfectly.

Matthew 13:41 *“The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, 42 and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. 43 Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”*

1 Corinthians 2:9 *But as it is written: “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him.”*

Ephesians 1:9 *having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, 10 that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth -- in Him. 11 In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, 12 that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.*

2 Peter 3:7 *But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. 8 But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. 10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with*

fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. 11 Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, 12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? 13 Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

Revelation 21:1 *Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea.*

CHAPTER 15

New Jerusalem

In the new Jerusalem, which will descend from heaven, there will be no more tears, and no sorrow. Distress and groaning will flee. There will be eternal joy. A great prospect for all God's children - for those who have moved over from the Millennium, the Kingdom of the Messiah Jesus, to the eternal Kingdom of God, the Father.

Isaiah 65:18 *But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; For behold, I create Jerusalem as a rejoicing, And her people a joy. 19 I will rejoice in Jerusalem, And joy in My people; The voice of weeping shall no longer be heard in her, Nor the voice of crying.*

Hebrews 11:9 *By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; 10 for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.*

The apostle Paul gives us a detailed description of the inhabitants of the new Jerusalem, and also of the location of the new Jerusalem: it will be built on Mount Zion. However, this mountain will not be able to hold that city, since the latter will be several times larger.

Who will live in that beautiful city? Paul calls it living in a 'festal gathering' (ESV). God and the Lord Jesus will live there – God, the righteous Judge, and Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant in His blood.

The Church of the first born will live there, as will the spirits of the righteous who

have come to perfection. Who are the spirits of the righteous? In my view, these are the believers from the Old Testament, who have not received a new resurrected body.

The church of the first born comprises believers who have been born again and received a new body during the rapture.

Hebrews 12:22 *But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, 23 to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24 to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel..*

Revelation 21:9 *Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, "Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife." 10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, 11 having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.*

Revelation 21:12 *Also she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: 13 three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west. 14 Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. 15 And he who talked with me had a gold reed to measure the city, its gates, and its wall.*

Will entire nations be saved? No, I don't think so. Only the believers from the na-

tions will come to the new Jerusalem. For everybody entering the new Jerusalem will be born again by the Holy Spirit. And only kings who belong to the Lord Jesus will enter the new Jerusalem.

Revelation 21:22 *But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. 23 The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light. 24 And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it.*

Revelation 21:25 *Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there). 26 And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it. 27 But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.*

