

# **Bible Prophecy**

## Articles and Charts

1. Why Study Bible Prophecy?	1
2. Overview of Coming Events in Prophecy	2
3. The Rapture of the Church	4
4. The Judgment Seat of Christ	5
5. The Marriage of Christ and His Church	6
6. One World in the Tribulation	7
7. Escape the Coming Tribulation	8
8. Will the Church Go Through the Tribulation?	9
9. Revival in the Tribulation	10
10. The Full Return of Jesus and Armageddon	11
11. The Millennium of Peace on Earth	12
12. The Great White Throne Judgment and Hell	13
13. The New Heaven	14
14. Definition of Prophecy Terms	15
15. Bible Numbers	16
16. Four Approaches to Revelation	17
17. The Seven Churches in Revelation 2 and 3	18
18. Chart 1: Panoramic View of Last Events	19
19. Chart 2: Enlarged Chart of First Half of End-time Events	19
20. Chart 3: Enlarged Chart of Last Half of End-Time Events	20
21. The Bible Speaks of the Next Israel Wars	21

## **1. Why Study Bible Prophecy?**

Many Christians avoid the book of Revelation. They don't understand it because it was not taught to them nor have they taken time to really study it; but it is God's word. Others avoid it because the return of Christ might cut short their plans. Peter spoke of those in the last days who would doubt the return of Jesus, "that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation." (II Peter 3:3, 4 NKJV). He answers them simply, "...with the Lord one day is as a thousand years ..." vs. 8.

### **Here are some reasons to study prophecy:**

**1. God Promises a Blessing** to All Who Read and Keep the Words of the Book of Revelation!  
"Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near." (Revelation 1:3).

**2. A Large Segment of the Bible Is Prophecy.** Dr. John Wesley White, former associate evangelist to the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, says: (a) One-fourth of the Bible is given to prophecy, (including prophecy already fulfilled). (b) 1845 times in the Bible (Old and New Testaments), God mentions the second coming of Christ, not counting the prophecies of His first coming. (c) 318 of these references to the second coming of Christ are in the New Testament.

(d) Seven of ten chapters in the New Testament, or 70%, refer directly or indirectly to the second coming of Christ; therefore, it makes sense to give it as much attention in our Bible preaching and Bible teaching as the Bible does.” (REENTRY, Zondervan, White, 1970)

**3. Preaching and Teaching the Second Coming Motivates the Lost to be Saved.** Matthew 24:44 says, “Therefore be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh.” You may not have 70 years to think about this. You may not have tomorrow! If you are lost, accept Christ NOW!!! Christ may come today. Are you ready?

**4. The Imminent Return of Jesus Motivates Christian Living.** “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. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.” (I John 3:2, 3).

**5. The Return of Christ Motivates Christians to Witness to the Lost.** We all have loved ones and friends who are lost and need to be saved. How long do we have to win them?

**6. The Return of Christ is a Comfort to True Christians Who Love Jesus!** In I Thessalonians 4:16, 17, Paul tells of the glorious return of Christ. “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: 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.” In verse 18, Paul then says, “Therefore comfort one another with these words.”

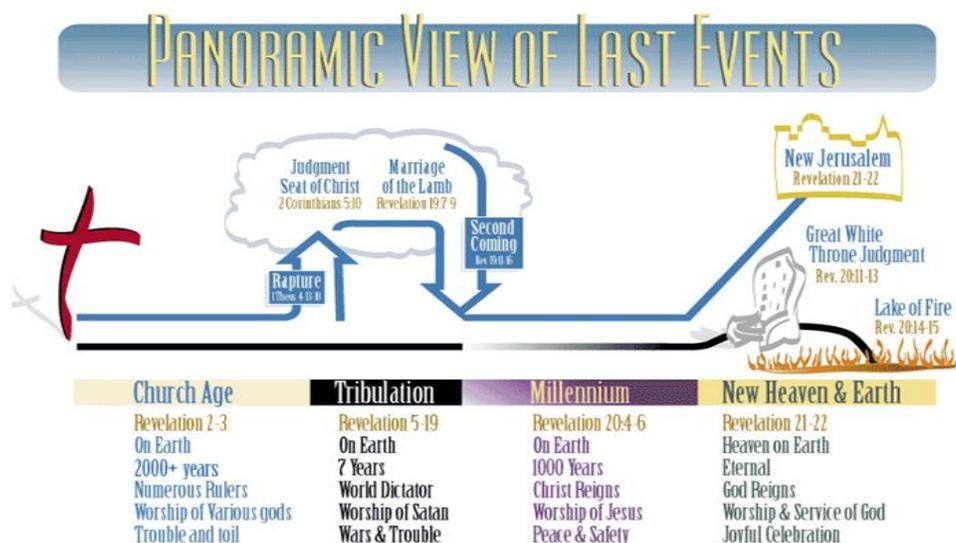
So are you ready if Christ were to come today? Are you sure you are saved? You can be saved and know it. Here’s how: In Romans 10:9 we read, “That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. That means that you must believe that Jesus is the crucified, risen Lord and make Him Lord of your life.

Are you right with God? You may have believed in Jesus but would you be ashamed if Jesus were to come today? He certainly could. What about your family, friends, neighbors or co-workers?

On the positive side, are you missing a blessing? “...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.” (1Cor. 2:9). So set your affections on God’s future plans and you won’t be so discouraged now. Amen

## 2. Overview of Coming Events God’s Prophetic Calendar

Chart1 Panorama. See full size chart 1 on page 19.



**Rapture.** The next event in God’s prophetic calendar is called “The rapture of the church.” The verb form of the word “rapture” means “carried away.” Jesus will come in the clouds as our “bride groom” to literally carry away His “bride,” the church, up into Heaven (1 Thess. 4:13-18). The return of Jesus is in two phases, 1. The Rapture before the tribulation and 2. The full glorious return to earth at the end of the Tribulation. At the Rapture Jesus does not actually touch down on earth. He comes in the clouds, calling His church up to meet Him. The unsaved will be left on earth to face a terrible seven-year time of suffering, called “the tribulation.” Three prophetic events occur during the next seven years: The Tribulation, Judgment Seat of Christ and Marriage of the Lamb during the same time but on two stages.

**Judgment seat of Christ.** Jesus and the church saints will move toward Heaven for the “judgment seat of Christ.” Christians will be evaluated, rewarded and given their future assignments (2 Cor. 5:10; 1 Cor. 3:12-14, Luke 19:17-19, & Rev. 4:4). The Bible is not clear on where this takes place. It could take place on the way, just outside heaven or in heaven. The author leans toward the first or second, since it includes a purging or refining for heaven (Malachi 3:1-3).

**Marriage of the Lamb.** Then comes “the Marriage of the Lamb.” Jesus is the “Lamb” and His bride is the church (Eph. 5:25-27, Rev. 19:1-7). This takes place in heaven with the wedding feast on earth during the Millennium.

**Tribulation** Right after the Rapture, all who were left behind on earth will be suffering “the tribulation.” This will include depression, wars, famines, plagues, destructive storms, earthquakes and a one-world government under a cruel dictator, called the “beast” (Matt. 24:21, Rev. 6 & 13).

Surprisingly, there will be a “revival during the tribulation on earth.” God will send Moses and Elijah to Jerusalem to present Jesus as the true Messiah (Rev. 11:1-14). Multitudes of Jews will accept Christ as their Messiah and Savior. 144,000 Jewish missionaries will go to all nations, resulting in millions of Jewish and Gentile converts to Jesus Christ (Rev. 7:4-14). The world dictator during the tribulation is not called the “beast” because of his appearance, but because of his character. Actually, he will be very attractive and eloquent (Dan. 7:8, 11, Rev. 13:5-6). First, the European Community will accept him as their leader (Rev. 17:12-13, 18). Then he will convince the Jews he is their Messiah. They will sign a treaty with him and other nations for seven years (Dan. 9:24-27). He will appear to be killed and then come back to life. The world will be so impressed, they will make Him leader of a one-world government. He will bring all religions together and set up a cashless world economy (Rev. 13: 3-18). When it appears that he has worldwide control, he will seek to destroy all who might give him trouble, including religious leaders, and especially the Jews (Dan. 9:27). As the seven-year tribulation closes, armies from the whole world will converge on Jerusalem to fight God and destroy His chosen people, the Jews.

**Full Return of Jesus to Earth.** Remember, there are two phases of the return of Jesus, one in the clouds called the Rapture. That is before the tribulation period and is a secret appearing in the clouds to rapture His church to heaven. When it appears it couldn’t get any worse, Jesus makes his full glorious return to earth. He makes His landing on the Mt. of Olives with His saints and mighty angels. On that occasion, every eye will see Him, saved and lost. Jesus does not mention the Rapture in the Olivet Discourse recorded in Matthew 24. There He speaks of the full return at the end of the Tribulation.

**Battle of Armageddon.** He will defeat all the armies of the beast at the Battle of Armageddon (Zech. 14:1-3, Rev. 16:14-16, 19:11-21). All the enemies of God will be destroyed.

**The Millennium.** Jesus will then set up His 1000-year worldwide kingdom called “the millennium.” Satan will be bound during this kingdom age. All Old Testament saints, the church and the martyred tribulation saints in their new resurrection bodies like Jesus, will reign with Him on earth.

The tribulation saints who survived the tribulation will go into the millennium in their natural bodies. They will marry, have children and enjoy a golden age of peace and prosperity on earth (Isa. 65:18-20, Rev. 20:4-6). The children born during the millennium must also believe in Jesus to be saved. It is not clear how long they will live in these natural bodies. It is not clear whether these saints with their natural bodies will live 1000 years in their natural bodies. They may have until age 100 to believe in Jesus, at which time they will either be accursed or, if saved, transferred to be reigning saints with new bodies (Isa 65:20).

**Release of Satan & Final Battle.** Near the end of the millennium, Satan will be released and go out across the world to gather the rebels into his army. This gives a choice to those under 100. A great number will follow Satan, but Jesus will defeat him and his army (Rev.20: 7-9). Satan will be cast into the lake of fire, never to get out again (Rev. 20:10).

**Great White Throne Judgment and Hell.** Next is “the great white throne judgment.” This judgment is only for the lost and determines degrees of punishment (Luke 20:12-14 & 12:47), not destination. That is completely based on whether they have believed in Jesus as Lord and Savior and been born again. All who appear at this judgment are cast into the final hell or lake of fire (Rev. 20:11-15).

**The New Heaven.** Finally the “New Jerusalem will come down out of Heaven” with pearly gates, streets of gold, a river and the tree of life. All the redeemed will live forever with the Lord in this new Heaven (Rev. 21-22). “Even so, come Lord Jesus!” Plan for it and take everyone else you can with you! Amen.

### 3. The Rapture

“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. 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.” (I Thessalonians 4:16-17).

This is one of more than 300 references in the New Testament to the literal return of Jesus Christ. What an exciting time! Christians who have died will be raised and given glorified bodies like Jesus (Philippians 3:20-21). All Christians who are alive at His coming will rise to meet Him in glorified bodies (1 Corinthians 15:51-52).

Many call this “The Rapture of the Church.” The Latin root of “rapture” means “transported or carried away.” Jesus removes His bride from the earth. All non-Christians left on earth face a seven-year period of judgment called “the tribulation.” During this time, Jesus and His church move into Heaven for the judgment of Christians and the marriage of Jesus and His church. At the end of the tribulation, Jesus will come to earth for the battle of Armageddon and to set up His millennial kingdom on earth.

The disciples asked Jesus, “...when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming...?” (Matthew 24:3). Jesus answered, “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but my Father only.” (vs. 36).

**While Jesus gave them no date, He listed signs of His coming:**

**FALSE CHRISTS.** “For many will come in my name, saying, I am the Christ and will deceive many.” (Matthew 24:5 & 24). In the last fifty years, more than 1000 have claimed to be the Christ.

**INCREASED WARS.** “And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars...” (vs. 6) In 1996, former president, Jimmy Carter, said his office was monitoring 26 armed conflicts around the world.

**FAMINES** (vs. 7b). World population more than doubled in the last century. Millions have died of starvation and experts say the worst is ahead. Since 1996 the United States’ wheat reserves have been lower than in many decades.

**DISEASE EPIDEMICS.** “...pestilence...” (vs. 7c). Disease organisms are developing immunity to our medicines. New diseases are appearing. Aids is spreading. It has killed almost as many Americans as the Korean and Vietnam wars combined.

**EARTHQUAKES** (vs. 7d). Seismologists are amazed at the worldwide increase of earthquakes every year.

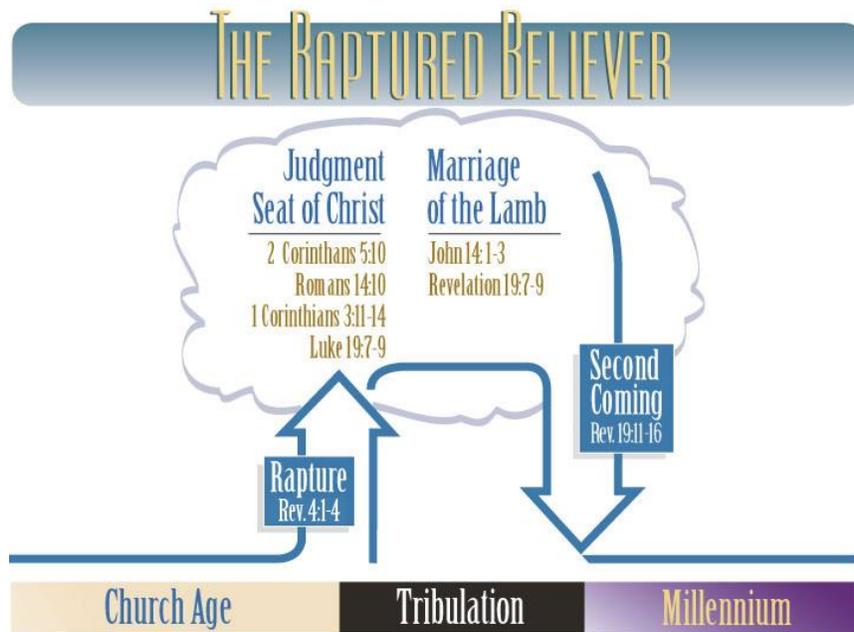
**PERSECUTION OF CHRISTIANS.** “Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name’s sake.” (vs. 9). “Christian bashing” has become fashionable in Hollywood, the news media, and universities and in court.

**JEWS RETURN TO ISRAEL.** The fig tree in Scripture is Israel. Jesus said, “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. So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near – at the doors! Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.”(vss. 32-34). Jesus was predicting the return of the Jews to Israel. In 1948, the flag of David was raised in Israel for the first time in more than 2,000 years. Israel has put forth leaves, suggesting we might be in the last generation. Jesus could come today! Are you ready? Believe in Jesus Christ now, and welcome Him when He comes! Amen.

## 4. The Judgment Seat of Christ

Chart 2 Enlarged first half of End-time Events.  
See page 19 for full size chart 2.



“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.” (2 Cor. 5:10).

There are two major judgments to come. You will be at one of them. They are the judgment seat of Christ (text vs above), and the great white throne judgment (Rev. 20:11-15). The judgment seat of Christ is only for Christians. It comes immediately after the rapture of the church. Christians will give an account of themselves to Christ. The Greek word used for judgment here is “bema,” – the same word used for judgment of athletes in the Olympic Games. It involved rewarding the winners.

The great white throne judgment is the final judgment of the lost. No Christians will be there. It is only for the lost to decide varying degrees of their punishment. That judgment is at the end of the millennium and all who appear at that judgment go to the lake of fire forever. This will be discussed more fully later.

The judgment seat of Christ is primarily for the purpose of rewarding faithfulness and making assignments of how we will serve our Lord hereafter. While Christians will clearly give an account, there is no consideration of condemnation to Hell at this judgment. For Christians, that was decided at Calvary. All sins of every Christian were placed in the body of Christ, and our sins regarding salvation were judged in Jesus Christ on the cross. While Christians may earn rewards earlier in life only to lose them later by sin and failure, (2 John 8), salvation may not be lost.

Paul explained the judgment of Christians in I Corinthians 3:11-15. If we receive Jesus as our Savior, we are on the foundation of Jesus, which guarantees us eternal life (vs. 11). We may build permanent things, i.e., “gold, silver, precious stones” on that foundation, which survive the fire, or we may build temporal things, i.e., “wood, hay, stubble”, which are burned up (vs. 12). When we come to the judgment seat of Christ, Jesus is the refiner’s fire (Mal. 3:2-3). That which is temporal, like the “wood, hay and stubble,” is burned up, and that which is eternal, such as “gold, silver and precious stones,” survives the fire of judgment. Paul explains, “If anyone’s work when he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone’s work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as by fire.” (vss 14-15). Remember that Jesus is the fire. Even if we lose our rewards, we are still saved by Jesus. Salvation is not a reward. It is a gift of God, paid for by Jesus Christ on the cross. The Bible mentions rewards like crowns. This could refer to our assignment or place of service in the Millennium and in the new Heaven.

In the parable of the pounds, Jesus told of a nobleman who gave to each of his ten servants one “pound” (this was money) before departing to a far country. When the nobleman returned, he called the servants to account. One servant had multiplied his one-pound to ten pounds. Jesus said, “...well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.” (Luke 19:17). Another servant had multiplied his one pound to five pounds. Jesus said to him, “...you also be over five cities.” (Luke 19:19). Most Bible interpreters think Jesus was referring to Himself as that nobleman and was explaining how He would reward His servants who were faithful to Him.

In this life, we spend much time in our youth preparing for a career, which may last for thirty or forty years. How much more should we prepare for a career which lasts forever? We prepare by reading our Bibles, prayer and diligent obedience. Rewards are based on our love for God, His calling to us and our faithfulness to His will. Those Jesus can trust will receive great rewards, including significant places of service in reigning with Him in eternity (Matthew 19:28 & 29).

The judgment seat of Christ is also the final preparation for the marriage of Jesus and His Church. It may include our wedding garments (Matt. 22:11). Believe me, you will want to be your best for that wonderful event! Amen.

## **5. A Marriage in Heaven**

Jesus said, “In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to myself, that where I am, there you may be also” (John 14:2-3 NKJV).

Jesus said this to His twelve apostles the night before He went to the cross. It has many wedding overtones when compared to wedding customs in Bible times. Weddings are wonderful! The Bible uses marriage to picture the loving relationship between Jesus and the bride, the church. Paul said, “Husbands, love your wives as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle...” (Ephesians 5:25 & 27).

Marriage customs were much different in Bible times than today. The groom and his father negotiated with the bride and her parents. A purchase price was agreed upon and paid by the groom and his father. A betrothal covenant was signed, and the groom went away to prepare a house for his bride. Meanwhile, the bride added to her dowry and made her wedding dress. When the house was finished, the groom came to claim his bride. The wedding was followed by a wedding feast, which lasted many days.

Jesus has come. He wants you to be part of His bride. Your purchase price was paid on the cross. The bride is “...the church of God, which He purchased with His own blood” (Acts 20:28). Jesus arose the third day, showed Himself alive for 40 days (Acts 1:3), and ascended back to Heaven (Acts 1:9). The gospel is a proposal of spiritual marriage by the Lord Jesus Christ to all who will receive Him. Jesus says to you, “I love you and gave Myself for you on the cross. If you will receive me as your Savior, I will forgive all your sins and receive you as part of my bride.” Accept His proposal, and you are betrothed to Jesus in a new, eternal wedding covenant.

In our beginning text above, Jesus told His apostles in the upper room He was leaving to prepare them a “mansion” in Heaven, and then He would come again to receive them unto Himself. It was just as the groom did in a marriage in Bible times.

One day Jesus will come with a shout and call His bride out of the world. All Christians, including those who have died and those who are still living at His coming, will rise to meet Him (I Thessalonians 4:16-17). They will move into Heaven for the judgment seat of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:10 and Romans 14:10). All Christians will bring their “dowry” to present to Jesus. This includes their eternal investments in worship, money, and service. These do not earn salvation. Salvation is His gift. The judgment seat of Christ is where the bride is rewarded for her faithfulness to Him (Ephesians 4:8 and I Corinthians 3:12-14). Jesus will assign places of service in His millennial kingdom (Luke 19:15-19). “Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb (Jesus) has come, and His wife has made herself ready” (Revelation 19:7).

While this is happening in Heaven, the world is taken over for seven years by an evil dictator called the “Beast” (Revelation 13). Then Jesus and His bride will come back to earth, defeat the beast at the “Battle of Armageddon” (Revelation 16:16 & 19:11-21), and set up His millennial kingdom on earth (Revelation 20:1-5). It will be a 1000-year wedding feast with Jesus!

Are you ready for His coming? Accept Jesus Christ as your Savior and Heavenly Bridegroom. Don’t miss the wedding! Amen.

## 6. One World in Tribulation

“Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name” (Rev. 13:1).

**ONE WORLD GOVERNMENT.** For years, leaders from many countries have privately promoted “One World” through the World Bank, the United Nations, the Trilateral Commission and the New Age Movement. The “beast” John saw rising out of the sea (Rev. 13:1) is a man who will rule the whole world. “And 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” (Rev. 13:7). “...the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority” (Rev. 13:2c). This dragon is the Devil (Rev. 12:7-9). As Jesus is God incarnate, this “beast” will be the Devil incarnate. Satan’s false Christ will imitate the death and resurrection. “And I saw one of his heads, as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast” (Rev. 13:3). The “beast” will have ten horns. “And the ten horns which you saw are ten kings, who ... are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast” (Rev. 17:12-13). The European Community united ten countries as one federation January 1st, 1992. The political power of the EC will soon exceed the United States, and as the revived Roman Empire they will one day rule the world.

**ONE WORLD RELIGION.** Dr. Jack Van Impe recently said, “Powerful forces are at work today to create a United Religions organization that mimics the United Nations in structure, scope and authority. This group met in June of 1997 to create the UR, or United Religions.” Revelation 17, this false religion is called, “Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and of the Abominations of the Earth” (vs. 5). Religion has been personified as a woman, e.g., Israel is God’s wife and the church is the bride of Christ. False religion has been called “harlotry”. The “great harlot” of false religion will ride on the beast (Revelation 17:1-5). The beast had seven heads. “...the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits” (Revelation 17:9). “And the woman whom you saw is that great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth” (Rev. 17:18). Since Rome ruled the world at that time, we can know headquarters for United Religions will be in Rome.

The apostle John sees “... another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and spoke like a dragon” Rev. 13:11). This beast is also referred to as “the false prophet” (Rev. 16:13). He will head this new world religion. “And he ... causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast ...” He will perform miracles, making fire come down from heaven (vs. 13). Making an image of the first beast to speak, demanding that everyone worship the first beast or be killed (Rev. 13:12-15).

**ONE WORLD ECONOMY.** This second beast will also implement a world wide cashless economy. “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, 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...His number is 666” (Rev. 13:16-18). Eliminating cash and checks could save billions of dollars. Recently I got groceries with my bankcard. They transferred the money from my bank to theirs. It’s called a “debit.” A microchip could be embedded under the skin, which could be scanned at stores for purchases. Imagine three rows of six UPC-type digits as the 666 to identify and control every person on earth. This will all happen during the tribulation after Jesus takes His church to heaven. Escape this terrible time by trusting Jesus Christ as your Savior today. Maranatha! Amen.

## 7. Escape the Coming Tribulation

“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” (Matthew 24:21).

Jesus describes a future time of “great tribulation” worse than any time past or future. All people left on earth after the “rapture” of the church will face a seven-year tribulation period. We know it is seven years from the “seventy weeks” prophecy in Daniel 9:24-27. With a year for a day, this is a total of 490 years. This “clock of years” dates God’s dealing with the Jews. The “clock” started with the decree to rebuild Jerusalem (Nehemiah 2:1-8). Daniel wrote his prophecies during the Babylonian captivity, predicting 69 weeks of years, or 483 years from that decree, to the coming of the “Messiah” (vs. 25).

Sir Robert Anderson’s book, *THE COMING PRINCE*, documents exactly 483 years, to the day, from that decree until Palm Sunday. Daniel said the Messiah would be “cut off”, referring to the cross (vs. 26a).

Later, when the Jews rejected and had Jesus crucified, God’s seventy-week clock of God’s dealing with the Jews stopped with one week of years to go. Jesus said, “...Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the time of the Gentiles be fulfilled” Luke 21:24). Since the cross we have been in the times of the Gentiles.

Daniel also tells us another “prince” would destroy Jerusalem and the temple (vs. 26b). In 70 A.D., Titus, a Roman general, fulfilled that prophecy. He later became the Roman emperor. Daniel adds that an end time “prince” of the same people that destroy Jerusalem, “... shall confirm a covenant with many for one week [i.e., seven years]” (vs. 27). The European Community, which is the revived Roman Empire, will appoint this Roman prince as their leader (Revelation 17:9-18). As he moves toward world rule, he will convince the Jews (privately) that he is their Messiah. The Jews will accept him as their Messiah when he negotiates a seven-year peace covenant with the Arabs, allowing the rebuilding of the Jewish temple. The signing of this covenant begins the 70th week (of years) prophesied in Daniel 9:27), which is also the “tribulation.”

Why doesn’t the beast take over now? Paul calls him “the mystery of iniquity.” He says, “For the mystery of iniquity doth already work; only He who now hindereth will continue to hinder until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that wicked one be revealed” (2 Thessalonians 2:7-8). Something, or someone, is hindering the world dictator from taking over today. I believe it is the church, indwelt by the Spirit of Christ. Millions of Christians are salt and light, hindering evil from completely taking over.

When Jesus calls His church out of the world, then the “beast” will be revealed. Revelation describes “seven seals, seven trumpets and seven vials” of judgments during the seven-year tribulation. One fourth of the people on earth will die during the “seals” judgment period (Rev. 6:8). An additional one third of the people on earth will die during the “trumpet” judgment period (Rev. 9:18). This means more than half of the world population will die during this seven-year time of tribulation on earth. We are not told how many will die during the “vials” (bowls) judgment”, which will likely be the worst part of the tribulation (Rev. 16).

All the signs Jesus gave are for the full return of Jesus to earth. If the full return is that near, then the rapture, which is seven years earlier, is upon us. These signs are present today. Jesus said,” So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near – at the doors!” (Matt. 24:33).

Just before this “tribulation,” Jesus will come to take His bride of true believers out of the world. After Jesus rescues His church, they will move toward Heaven for the judgment seat of Christ and the marriage of Jesus and His church. Escape the tribulation and be part of the wedding. Amen!

## **8. Will The Church Go Through The Tribulation?**

Bible prophecy predicts a period of seven years of great suffering on earth called the “tribulation.” Some believe this prophecy was fulfilled during the Roman persecutions of the church. This can’t be, since Jesus spoke of it being near His second coming and said it would be the worst time ever on earth (Matthew 24:21). Daniel spoke of it (Daniel 9:24-27 & 12:1). The book of Revelation describes this seven- year tribulation in the judgments of “the seven seals,” “the seven trumpets,” and “the seven vials” (Revelation 6,8,9 & 16).

The burning question is, “Will true Christians go through this tribulation?” Some Christian leaders say, “Yes” and offer “survival kits.”

### **Here are some reasons I believe the church will NOT go through the tribulation:**

#### **1. GOD’S PATTERN OF REMOVING THE FAITHFUL BEFORE MAJOR JUDGMENT.**

Before bringing the flood, God removed righteous Noah and his family to the ark of safety (Genesis 6:9). Jesus said at His return, it would be like the days of Noah (Matthew 24:28-30). Before God rained fire and brimstone on Sodom for their gross sins, including “sodomy” (homosexuality), He brought Lot and his family out (Genesis 19). Jesus also said the time of His return would be like the days of Lot (Luke 17:28-30). Just so, Jesus will remove His bride, the church, before this terrible time of judgment on the earth.

**2. THE RESTRAINING MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH.** This “tribulation” will feature powerful leader forming a “one-world government,” “one-world religion” and “one-world cashless economy” (Revelation 13 & 17). Paul refers to him as “the man of sin,” or “the son of perdition” and “the mystery of iniquity”. He says, “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. And then the lawless one will be revealed...” (2 Thessalonians 2:7-8). Who “restrains” this evil dictator from being revealed? I believe it is the Holy Spirit indwelling the church. The Holy Spirit in Christians makes them “salt” and “light” (Matthew 5:13-16) in a decaying, dark world. When the Spirit empowered church is removed, evil will take over.

**3. THE PROMISES OF GOD TO HIS FAITHFUL CHILDREN.** Paul said, “... to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath to come” (I Thessalonians 1:10). “For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ” (I Thessalonians 5:9). Jesus promised His faithful church at Philadelphia, “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” (Revelation 3:10).

**4. THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION.** In Revelation 1-3, the word “church” appears 16 times. In Revelation 4:1-2, John is caught up into Heaven, representing the “rapture” of the church. The church does not appear again in Revelation until the end of the book. Most of Revelation 5-19 describes the “tribulation.” The church is not there!

**5. THE IMMINENT RETURN OF JESUS.** If the church is going through this “tribulation,” and the “tribulation” clearly has not come yet, then Jesus could not come today. The Bible repeatedly says that Jesus could come at any time (Matthew 24:36, 44, & 25:13). Perhaps today!

**6. THE RAPTURE AND THE FULL RETURN ARE NOT THE SAME EVENT.** If so, there would be no Christians in natural bodies in the millennium to have children.

Jesus died for your sins and arose from the dead. He’s now seated at God’s right hand and coming soon to rescue all who trust Him for salvation. Receive Him today and be ready to welcome Him and escape the “tribulation.” Maranatha! Amen

## 9. Revival in the Tribulation

After Jesus comes and “raptures” His church out of the world, millions of people will be left on earth to face a seven-year tribulation. Is there hope for them? The answer depends on whether they heard the gospel and rejected it or not. Paul says those who have clearly heard the gospel and either rejected Jesus or postponed their decision will not have a second chance. They will receive “strong delusion” to believe Satan’s lies because they believed not the truth (2 Thessalonians 2:9-12). However, what about the millions who have not heard the gospel or have not heard it clearly enough to make a responsible decision? There is evidence that many who have not heard can be saved. Only God knows where the line is drawn between those who can be saved in the tribulation and those who can’t.

**144,000 JEWISH CHRISTIAN WITNESSES.** Following the shocking seven seal judgments in Revelation 6, God sends an angel to interrupt four destroying angels, saying, “Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads” (Rev. 7:3). Twelve thousand Jews will be sealed from each of the twelve tribes of Israel (Rev. 7:4-8). These 144,000 Jews, living on earth during the tribulation will be called “. . . the servants of our God . . .” How could this be? In Genesis 1, God gave a summary of the creation. In Genesis 2, He explained some of the details of how it was done. Just so, Jesus introduces the 144,000 Jewish Christians in Revelation 7 but in Revelation 11 explains how they were saved.

**TWO WITNESSES SENT TO JERUSALEM.** God will send two witnesses to Jerusalem (Rev. 11:3 - 8). Though not named, verse 6 suggests (from their abilities), they are Elijah and Moses. God protects them from death while they witness for 1260 days (vs. 5). Remember on the Mount of Transfiguration? Elijah and Moses were there with Jesus discussing His “decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem” (Luke 9:31). They were talking about the cross, resurrection, and return of Jesus to Heaven. They were preparing their sermons for these last days. Isn’t that interesting?

I believe these 144,000 Jewish Christians will believe in Jesus under the preaching of these two witnesses. They will be sent out to witness to all nations, resulting in one of the greatest revivals in history. Here are their converts: “After this I beheld and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands, . . .” (Revelation 7:9). “And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, who are these who are arrayed in white robes? And from where did they come? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, ‘These are they who came out of the great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb’” (Revelation 7:13-14).

When the two witnesses complete their testimony, they will be killed by the Beast (11:7). Their bodies, left in the streets of Jerusalem for three and one-half days, will be seen by God’s enemies from all over the world (satellite T.V.?). The enemies of God will rejoice and send gifts to one another, celebrating victory over God’s witnesses (vss 8-9). Then the two witnesses will be raised to life and caught up to Heaven (vs. 12).

In Genesis 12:3, God promised to bless the whole world through the children of Abraham. Of course, He did that through His Son, Jesus Christ, who was also a descendant of Abraham. However, I believe God still plans to bless the world through these 144,000 Jewish evangelists who will be children of Abraham who believe in Jesus as their Messiah early in the tribulation!

This revival in the tribulation is a great demonstration of the sovereign power and mercy of God. He loves you and sent His Son, Jesus, to die for your sins. Jesus arose to save you. Believe in Him and be saved today. Don’t wait for the tribulation revival. Be saved today. Amen!

## 10. The Full Return of Jesus and Armageddon

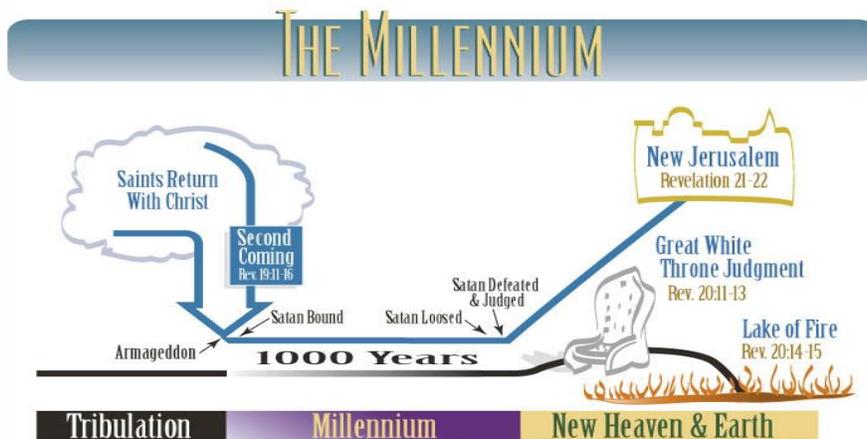


Chart 3 Enlarged chart of last half of End-time events. See Page 20 for full chart

“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...the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. 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. And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS” (Rev. 19:11, 14-16).

There are two phases of Jesus’ return; His secret coming in the air to “rapture” His church out of the world, and His full return to earth seven years later for the Battle of Armageddon. Our text today describes this second phase, i.e., the full return of Jesus at Armageddon. The departure of the church at the rapture begins a seven-year period of great suffering on earth called “The Tribulation.” A world dictator the Bible calls the “Beast” will take over (Rev. 13:1ff). He will deceive the Jews into signing a seven-year covenant authorizing them to rebuild their temple and resume their sacrifices. In the midst of those seven years, as the Beast gains control of the world, he will stop the sacrifices by the Jews (Dan. 9:27). The “False Prophet,” (first assistant to the Beast), will unite all religions in worshiping the Beast (Rev. 13:11-14). When the Jews refuse, the Beast will mobilize all his armies to force Israel to submit.

Jesus will come forth on His white horse with the armies of Heaven following Him. His armies are clothed in fine linen, white and clean, suggesting they include His church (Rev. 19:11 & 14). Zechariah describes the sudden conversion of Israel to Jesus as their Messiah: “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” (Zechariah 12:10).

The Beast will bring armies from all nations against Jerusalem for what he believes will be the “final solution” to the “Jewish problem” (Zechariah 14:2-4). The Bible calls this the “Battle of Armageddon.” “...to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.... And they gathered them together into a place called in Hebrew, ARMAGEDDON” (Revelation 16:14-16). Armageddon refers to the Plains of Megiddo between the Sea of Galilee and the Mediterranean Sea. Gideon defeated the Midianites there. King Saul and his

sons died in battle there. King David fought there. Nebuchadnezzar fought there. During the Crusades, Richard the Lion Hearted fought there.

Napoleon described the Plains of Megiddo as the greatest natural battlefield he had ever seen. Jesus will do all the fighting at Armageddon, "... out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations ..." (Rev. 19:15). He will speak and the armies of the Beast will be destroyed. The prophet Zechariah describes this battle, "... 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" (Zechariah 14:12).

Jesus will return to His place of ascension (Acts 1:9-12). "And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which faces Jerusalem... And the Lord shall be king over all the earth ..." (Zechariah 14:4 & 9). One day, Jesus will come and bring justice and righteousness to this world. Believe in Him as your Savior today and receive His forgiveness and mercy. If you reject Him, you will face His judgment and wrath. Amen.

## 11. A Millennium of Peace on Earth

"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" (Revelation 20:6).

Jesus is coming to establish His kingdom on earth for 1000 years! When? Jesus said, "But of that day and hour no man knows, ..." (Matthew 24:36). But He's coming, and it may be soon. Our text says those in the "first resurrection" will reign with Christ 1000 years. The "first resurrection" saints begin with the "raptured church" when Jesus comes in the air. Those left on earth will face a seven-year "tribulation" under a cruel world dictator called the "Beast" (Revelation 13). The Tribulation ends when Jesus comes from heaven on a white horse. His armies include His church, the risen Old Testament saints and the tribulation saints martyred by the Beast. This completes the "first resurrection."

Jesus will defeat "the Beast" and all his armies (Revelation 19:11-21). The Beast and the False Prophet will be cast into the Lake of Fire. Satan will be bound. "Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, ... He laid hold of the dragon, ... who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years ..." (Revelation 20:1-2).

What is the second resurrection? "But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished..." (Revelation 20:5). These are the lost dead who face "the second death" (vs. 6) at the last judgment after the millennium (Revelation 20:11-15). Now Jesus sets up His millennial kingdom on earth. Jesus taught His disciples to pray, "Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth, ..." (Matthew 6:10). Would He ask His disciples to pray that prayer if He did not plan to answer it? It has not been answered yet but it will. During the millennial reign of Jesus on earth, His kingdom will come to earth and His will done on earth as it is in Heaven. Hallelujah!

The "first resurrection" saints are ready to reign with Jesus in glorified bodies like Jesus (Philippians 3:21 and I John 3:2). Millions of Jews and Gentiles who are saved during the tribulation and are alive at the full return of Jesus will go into the millennium in their natural bodies. They will marry, have children, and enjoy life. "They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards, and eat their fruit" (Isaiah 65:21). Their children will still have to believe in Jesus to be saved. "... for the child shall die one hundred years old, but the sinner, being one hundred years old, shall be accursed" (Isaiah 65:20). This could mean at age 100 the saved are transferred to the camp of the glorified saints to continue to reign with Christ, while the lost are accursed to Hell.

There will be safety and security. "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them" (Isaiah 11:6). There will be peace on earth! "... 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 any more" (Micah

4:3). Jesus will keep the peace. "... He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron.... And He has ... a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS" (Revelation 19:15-16).

The release of Satan reminds us the millennium is not heaven yet. "Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison, and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle;... and surrounded the camp of the saints ... and fire came down from God out of Heaven and devoured them" (Revelation 20:7-9). Satan may be released to give those not yet 100 a choice.

What is your choice? Choose Jesus and reign with Him during His millennium of peace on earth! Amen.

## 12. The Great White Throne Judgment & Hell

"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. 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. 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. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:11-15).

Suppose you knew tomorrow you would stand before God to give an account of your life; that the judge knew everything about you and it would all come out at the trial. How would you fare? It may or may not be tomorrow, but someday each of us will stand before Jesus Christ ...and He knows all about us.

This last judgment is called "great," because of the awesome authority of the judge. It is called "white" for the righteous standards He upholds. Where is this tribunal to be? Apparently, it is suspended in space because when it appears, "... the earth and the heaven fled away, ..."

But the "dead, small and great stand before God." They will want to escape, but it is too late. Like the words of the spiritual, "I went to the rock to hide my face and the rock cried out, 'No Hiding Place'." This is the consummation Peter described, "...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" (2 Peter 3:10).

Who is the judge? God the Father delegates this to His Son, Jesus Christ. "For the Father judgeth no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son" (John 5:22). Jesus is qualified. He came first as the Lamb, dying for our sins, rising from the dead and saving all who receive Him. But when Jesus comes again, He will come as a lion to pour out His just wrath on all who have rejected Him and lived selfish lives. The great white throne is a judgment of condemnation. The only destination mentioned is the "lake of fire."

We are told that books will be opened. "And the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works" (Rev. 20:12). Jesus knows about your secret sins. He said, "...every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment" (Matthew 12:36).

How many sins will it take to keep you out of heaven? The next chapter in the Revelation describes the new perfect heaven and concludes, "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" (Rev. 21:27). The bad news: One lie will keep you out of heaven. The good news: You can have your sins erased out of the books of condemnation and escape the great white throne judgment! There's another book, the "Lamb's book of life." It contains the names of all who have received Jesus, the Lamb of God. All whose names are written in this book go to heaven! John the Baptist introduced Jesus, "...behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). If you receive Jesus and His full payment on the cross for your sins, your name will be written in the Lamb's book of life. You will pass from death unto life (John 5:24).

The great white throne judgment is for the lost dead. Christians are neither lost nor dead. They are alive evermore (John 11:25-26) and will appear instead before the Christian judgment seat of Christ to receive rewards and assignments for eternal service.

Receive Jesus as your attorney now (1 John 2:2), or He will be your Judge, there. Amen.

## 13. The New Heaven

Heaven is so beautiful and wonderful that after Paul had been caught up to “the third heaven” (2 Cor 12), God would not let him talk about it (vs. 4). He did say, however, “...to depart and be with Christ, which is far better” (Phil. 1:23). Why wouldn’t God let Paul talk about it? If we knew how wonderful Heaven is we might be too careless and walk out into the path of a truck, being too anxious to go there.

The Bible uses this word “heaven” in three ways. The first heaven is the atmosphere where the birds fly (Gen. 1:6-8). The second heaven is outer space where the stars run (Gen. 1:14-18). The third heaven is where God is (2 Cor. 12:2-4). “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. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God...God Himself will be with them and be their God...there shall be no more death, nor sorrow nor crying. There shall be no more pain...” (Rev. 21:1-4).

Before God delivers His final heaven, He must purge what sinful man has defiled. At the last judgment, the first earth and heaven will pass away (Rev. 20:11). This includes the earth and the atmospheric/stellar heavens. The sun, moon and stars are not needed in the new heaven (Rev. 21:23 & 22:5). John saw the “new Jerusalem” coming down from God out of heaven. This proves paradise heaven had not passed away (Rev. 21:2).

Our eternal home will merge paradise heaven with the new earth and the new Jerusalem. The size of the new earth is not given, nor is it clear whether our present earth is renewed or an entirely new earth created. We know there are no seas in this new earth (Rev. 21:1c). There is, however, a river of the water of life proceeding out of the throne of God (Rev. 22:1). This river will supply all the water needed. The tree of life beside the river will bear twelve kinds of fruit every month (Rev. 22:2). God provides our food and drink for heaven.

“And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. They shall see His face: ...” (Rev. 22:3-4). Heaven will be a perfect place of joy without tears, pain or death! (Rev. 21:4). We will worship and serve God in perfect harmony. There is no temple in the new Jerusalem for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple (Rev. 21:22). We will not need a temple for we will see God in all His glory and enjoy Him and all the redeemed forever.

The new Jerusalem is a 1500-mile cube (Rev. 21:16). It has twelve foundations (Rev. 21:19). This could be twelve living levels of 2,250,000 square miles each, or a total of 27,000,000 square miles. There could be a 125 mile space between each level. Each foundation will feature a different precious stone for each of the twelve tribes of Israel (Rev. 21:19-20 & Exodus 28:17-20). The twelve foundations will also include the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb (Rev. 21:14).

The walls and building of the new Jerusalem are made of jasper, clear as crystal, allowing the light of the glory of God and the Lamb into every area (Rev. 21:10-12 & 23). There are twelve gates, three on each side. Each gate, a single pearl, is engraved with one of the names of the twelve tribes of Israel (Rev. 21:12 & 21). The gates are never shut, for there is no night there (Rev. 21:25). The street of the city is pure gold (Rev. 21:21b).

Do you want to go to Heaven? “...there shall be no wise enter it anything that defiles, ... but those who are written in the Lamb’s book of life” (Rev. 21:27). Jesus, the Lamb of God, died for your sins and arose. When you believe in Him, receiving Him as your personal Savior, all your sins are forgiven and your name is written in His book. Make your reservation for heaven today! Amen.

## **Definitions of Prophecy Terms**

Apocalypse - Greek: "Revelation" = unveiling.

Armageddon - Last war on earth.

Beast (AntiChrist) – Tribulation World Ruler.

Eschatology - Greek: Study of last things.

False Prophet - Tribulation Religious Leader.

Great White Throne Judgment - Last Judgment of the lost.

Judgment Seat of Christ - Last judgment of Christians.

Lamb - Name for Jesus used in Revelation.

Marriage of the Lamb - Jesus is united with His bride, the Church.

Millennium - 1000 year reign of Jesus on earth.

The Rapture - Evacuation of the Church from earth to heaven by  
Jesus.

The Tribulation - 7-year judgment on earth.

# Bible Numbers

1. Unity of God as One.
2. Witness. \*Disciples sent out two by two
  - It took two witnesses to convict, OT & NT.
3. Tri-unity of God. Father, Son & Holy Spirit
4. Earth. \*4 directions, 4 Winds, 4 seasons, etc.
5. Grace. \* Hebrew & Greek words for grace both, 5 Letters.
  - \* David took 5 stones to fight Goliath.
6. Man. \* Created on 6<sup>th</sup> day. \* Highest creation, but falls short of God (7).
7. Completeness, perfection. God's Numbers are 1, 3, and 7.
8. New beginnings. \* 1st day of new week.
  - \* 8 souls in Noah's Ark for new beginning.
9. Unknown.
10. Divine Law.
11. Unknown.
12. Human Government. \* 12 Tribes of Israel, \* 12 Apostles
40. Testing.
  - \*Flood –Rained 40 days,
  - \*Moses on Sinai 40 days,
  - \*Israel 40 years in Wilderness,
  - \*Jesus 40 days wilderness testing.

# Four Approaches to Revelation

1. Preterist. Revelation was fulfilled in the first three centuries and book of revelation all code to encourage early Christians.
2. Historical. Millennium comes in history through the church. Christ comes at the end. Also called Post-millennial.
3. Allegorical.  
No literal millennial reign of Christ on earth. Similar to Preterist but beyond the first three centuries. Revelation was written to encourage suffering Christians. Also called Amillennial.
4. Futurist Approach. Revelation chapters 4-22 are yet to be fulfilled. These are all called Pre-Millennial, include a rapture, a seven year tribulation and Millennium but differ on the time of the Rapture relative to the Tribulation:
  - a. Pre-Trib Rapture -Christ evacuates church before Tribulation, returning after the Tribulation to reign.
  - b. Mid-Trib Rapture ---Same as Pre-Trib except the Church goes through first half of Tribulation.
  - c. Pre-Wrath Rapture View. (Marvin Rosenthal). Very similar to Mid-Trib rapture except it places the rapture later in Tribulation before the worst part, aka The Great Tribulation.
  - d. Post-Trib Return --- Church goes through the Tribulation with the Rapture & Christ's full return happening simultaneously. Also referred to as Historical Pre-millennialism. They also believe the church replaced Israel in the covenant promises (aka Prophecy Replacement Interpretation).

# THE SEVEN CHURCHES (Revelation 2-3)

## Application:

1. Seven literal churches of that day.
2. Seven types of churches of every age.
3. Seven ages of church history.

### EPHESUS (2:1-7, Apostolic, 29 – 100 A.D.)

“Desirable” Commendation: Good works, convictions.  
Rebuke: Left first love. Counsel: Remember & Repent.  
Promise: Faithful will eat of tree of life.

### SMYRNA (2:8-11, Persecuted, 100-312 B.C.)

“Perfume” Commendation: Suffering. Rebuke: None.  
Counsel: Be Faithful to death. Promise: Crown of Life.

### PERGAMOS (2:12-17, Compromised, 312 – 606 A.D.)

“Marriage” Commendation: Much works, remnant faithful.  
Rebuke: Tolerated Baalam, Nicolaitans.  
Counsel: Repent or sword of mouth.  
Promise: Hidden manna & white stone.

### THYATIRA (2:18 – 29, Idolatrous, 606 – 1520 A.D.)

“Continuing Sacrifice” Commendation: Good works, love.  
Rebuke: Allowed Jezebel – idolatry.  
Counsel: Repent/hold fast. Promise: Share with Jesus.

### SARDIS (3:1-6, Sleeping, 1520 – 1750 A.D.)

“Remnant” (Reformation) Commendation: None.  
Rebuke: Dead works (Orthodox, but dead).  
Promise: Faithful to be clothed in white.

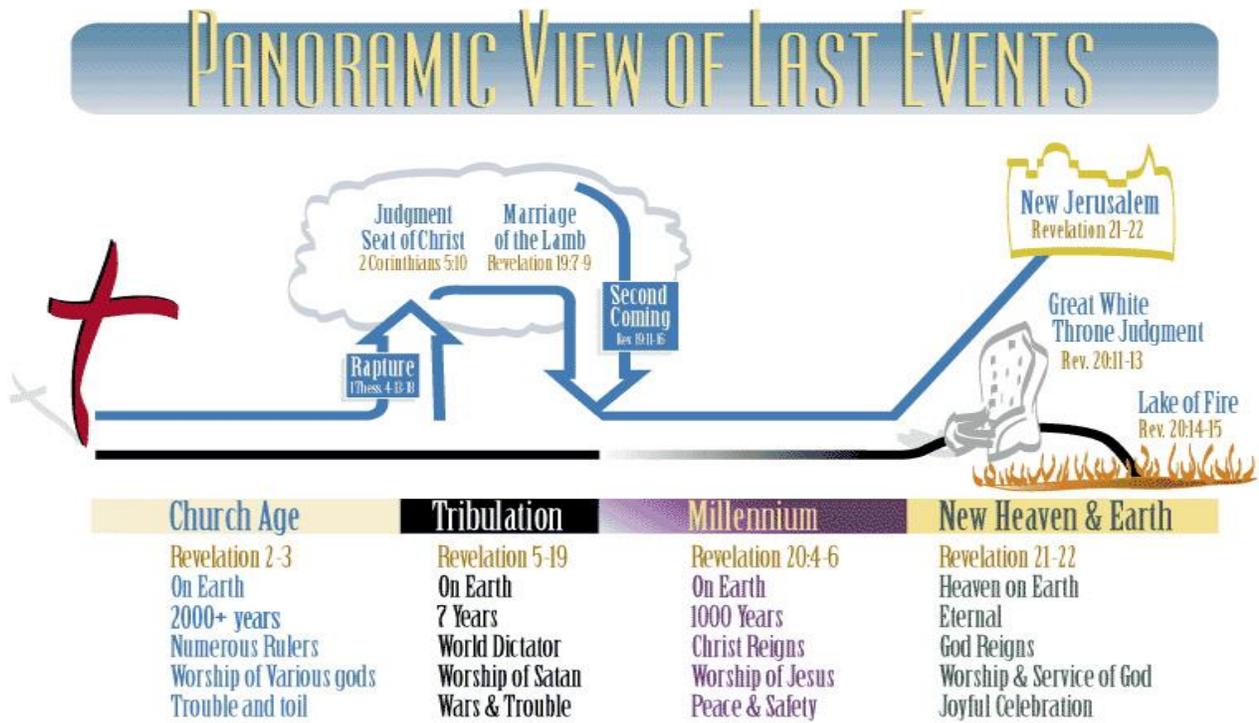
### PHILADELPHIA (3:7-13, Missionary, 1750 – Rapture)

“Brotherly Love” Commendation: Mod. miss. movement -kept word.  
Rebuke: None. Counsel: Hold fast to crown.  
Promise: Vindication & deliverance from Tribulation.

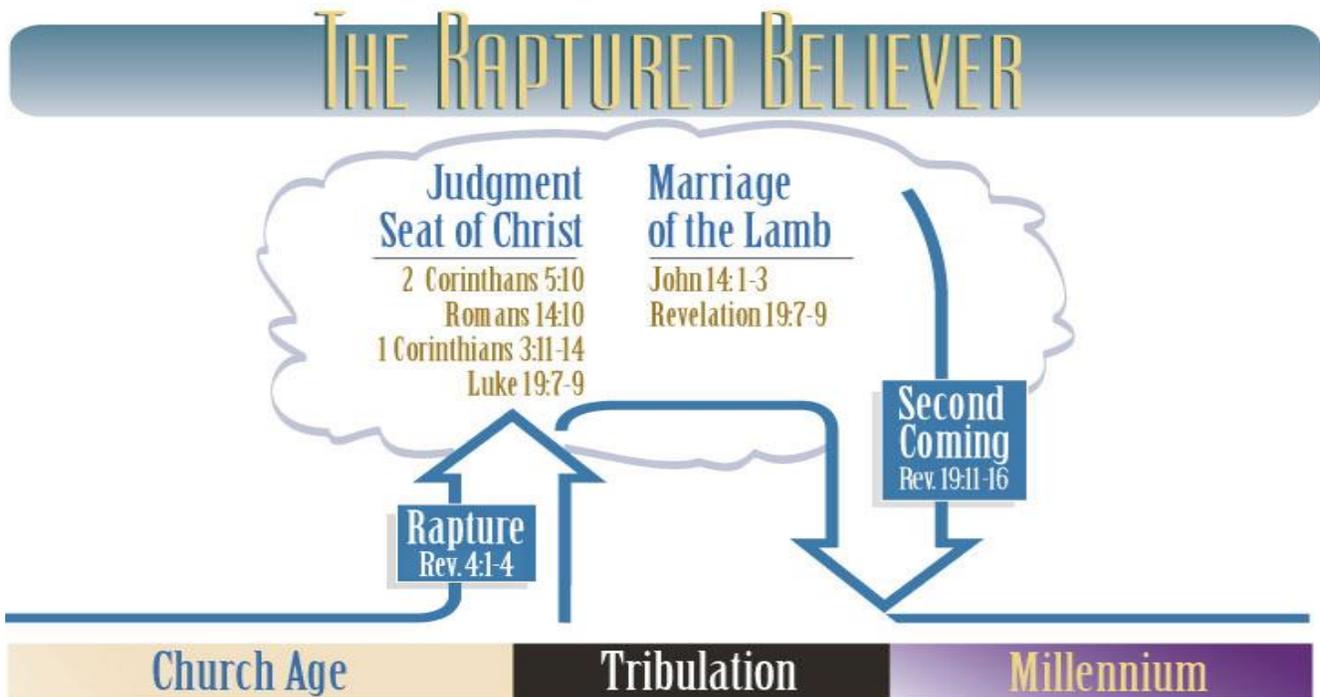
### LAODICEA (3:14-22, Lukewarm, 1900 – Rapture)

“Rights of People” Commendation: None.  
Rebuke: Lukewarm, materialistic.  
Counsel: Repent, real gold, anoint eyes.  
Promise: Knocking on door, salvation to remnant.

# Chart 1

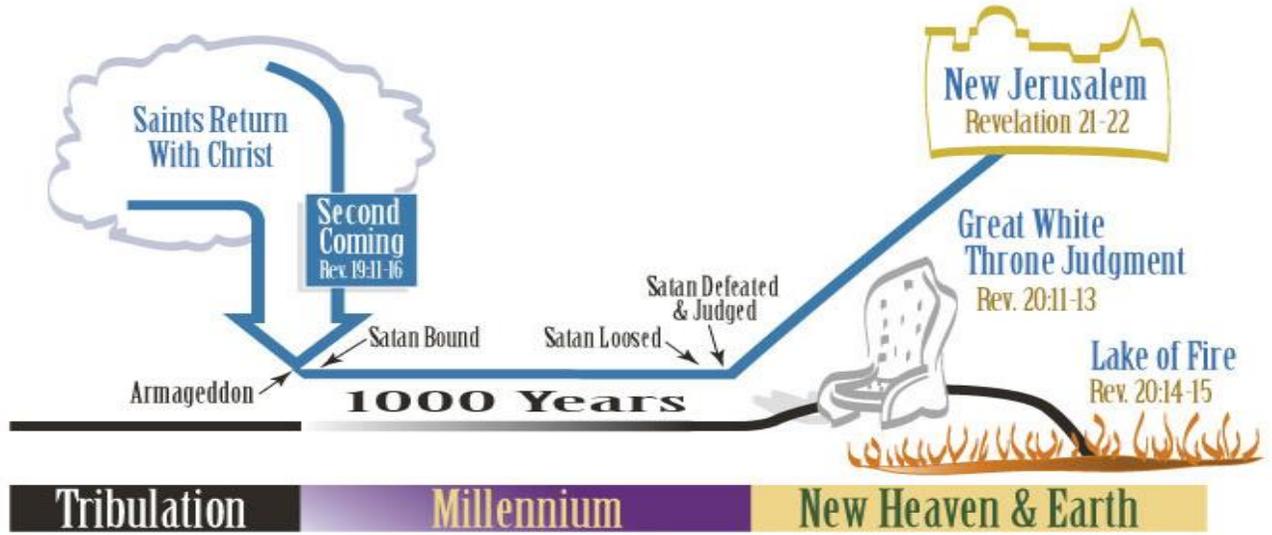


# Chart 2



# Chart 3

## THE MILLENNIUM



# The Bible Speaks of the Next Israel Wars (Psalm 83 & Ezek. 38-39)

By the President of BGLVA

The eyes of the world are on the Middle-East and especially conflicts between the Muslim nations and Israel. While there is a shaky peace there at this time, a major war could break out at any moment. Israeli leaders know Iran either has nuclear weapons now, or is near getting them and missiles to “wipe them off the map.” It is a crisis time in Israel and with the oil issues; it could affect the whole world.

What does the Bible say about it? Many, including this author, think it fits the war against Israel described in Psalm 83. The Psalmist, Asaph, cries out to God to protect Israel from a confederacy ready to destroy their nation.

Psalm 83:1-5: “Do not keep silent, O God! Do not hold Your peace, and do not be still, O God! 2 For behold, Your enemies make a tumult; and those who hate You have lifted up their head. 3 They have taken crafty counsel against Your people, and consulted together against Your sheltered ones. 4 They have said, “Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation, that the name of Israel may be remembered no more.” 5 For they have consulted together with one consent; they form a confederacy against You:”

Doesn't this sound like what Iran's former President Amadinijab has said many times, “Israel will be wiped off the map”? He and many other Muslim extremists have repeatedly said the Jews have no right to have a nation in the Middle East and must somehow be removed.

This war described in Psalm 83 has not happened yet, but the Bible says it will. Some say it was fulfilled in the Arab/Israel wars of 1948, 1967 or 1973, but those wars were very different. Egypt had a big part in all of them but is not mentioned in Psalm 83. Why not? Apparently Egypt tired of losing to Israel in every modern war they had, and signed a treaty recognizing Israel in 1979. They have not fought Israel since; in fact, they have tried to prevent the Hamas from re-arming in Gaza, and do not trust Iran.

Also, the Nile River is the lifeline of Egypt's economy. In the 60's, the Russians helped Egypt build the Aswan Dam on the upper Nile River, completing it in 1970. 169 Billion Cubic meters of water are backed up in that flood control and hydro-electric project. This forms Lake Nasser, which is the third largest man-made water reservoir in the world. Now if Egypt were to attack Israel, one or two well-placed bombs from an Israeli jet could knock the Aswan Dam out and Egypt would be history. They have a veritable “Sword of Damocles” hanging over their heads. No, Egypt is not mentioned in this Psalm 83 war.

Who are these countries described in this Psalm 83 confederacy seeking to destroy Israel? They are listed in Psalm 83:6-8. The names of most of them have changed but they are the following countries and people groups in bold type:

1. Edom (6a) - Descendants of Esau (Gen. 36:1)-Land-areas around the southern shores of the Dead Sea, now known as part of Southern **Jordan** and also some land now occupied by the **Palestinians**.
2. Ishmaelites (6b) - Son of Abraham by Hagar (Gen. 25:12ff). **Saudi Arabia**.
3. Moab (6c)—descendants of Lot's older daughter (Gen. 19:30ff), land east of Dead Sea, South **Jordan**.
4. Hagrites (6d) – Children of Hagar, lived east of Gilead. (1 Chron. 5:10, & 18-22). North **Jordan**.
5. Gebal (7a) – Northern coastal area of **Lebanon**.
6. Ammon (7b) – Descendants of Lot's younger daughter (Gen. 19:38), east of Israel –central **Jordan**.
7. Amalek (7c) – A son of Esau whose people lived in the desert between Israel and Egypt.-**Palestinians**
8. Philistia (7d) – Gaza area, where the Hamas enemies of Israel live today. **Hamas Palestinians**
9. Tyre (7e) – An ancient coastal city of what is today **Lebanon**, especially the **Hezbollah in Lebanon**
10. Assyria (8a) –**Syria and Iraq**.

While Iran is Muslim (though not Arabic), and is clearly provoking this Psalm 83 war, it is not listed as a part of the Psalm 83 confederacy. This is surprising! How can they stay out of it?

All these countries in bold type above are filled with Muslim extremists who hate Israel and refuse to recognize it as a Jewish nation with the right to exist in the Middle East. Like Egypt, Jordan has a treaty with Israel, but it does not have the liability of the vulnerable Aswan Dam like Egypt.

Notice that four people groups attacking Israel in Psalm 83 are now part of modern Jordan; Edom, Moab, the Hagrites and Ammon. Jordan can not stay out of this Psalm 83 war. It has been estimated that more

than 70% of the people in Jordan hate Israel and want to destroy the Jews. It is quite possible that there may soon be a regime change in Jordan and the treaty with Israel abrogated.

When Iraq was occupied by American troops some questioned how Iraq could participate in the Psalm 83 war? However, Iraq now has its own government and U.S. troops have virtually been withdrawn. There is no question whose side Iraq would be on in the event of an Arab/Israel war.

The modern beginning of the Psalm 83 war was 2006 when both the Hezbollah (from Lebanon) and Hamas (from the Gaza strip) attacked Israel with support from both Iran and Syria. It continued until the U.N. and U.S. forced a cease-fire. It was resumed in late December of 2008 with the Hamas in Gaza after the Hamas had fired 1700 rocket bombs into Israel. It stopped again in mid-January of 2009.

If Israel takes action to remove Iran's nuclear threat, this could trigger the full resumption of the Psalm 83 war. All the countries in bold type above will participate in this Psalm 83 war against Israel, either directly or indirectly; but the enemies of Israel will fail.

The Bible says Damascus, capital of Syria, will be destroyed. "Behold, Damascus will cease from being a city, and it will be a ruinous heap" (Isaiah 17:1). Damascus claims to be the oldest continuously occupied city in the world. There's no record of it ever being destroyed to the point of not being occupied, but the Bible says it will be utterly destroyed, and it could be in this Psalm 83 war. Israel's victory is described in Isaiah 17:1-5, Jeremiah 49:23-27 and Amos 1:3-5, and Zephaniah 2. These Scriptures record the defeat of the countries named in Psalm 83.

Israel's victory in this war is also described in Psalm 83:9-18. Many of the leaders from earlier Biblical wars with these countries are mentioned, comparing how this victory will be similar to those victories. God will help Israel, but He will also undoubtedly use the Israel Defense Forces (IDF).

However, Israel will suffer much damage. In Isaiah 17 where the future destruction of Damascus is described, Isaiah goes on to say, "In that day it shall come to pass that the glory of Jacob [Israel] will wane and the fatness of his flesh grow lean" (vs. 4); but God will also give them a great victory (vss. 13-14).

Some say that the Psalm 83 war is the same as the Ezekiel 38-39 war of Gog-Magog. Compare the countries listed in the Ezekiel 38-39 war found in Ezekiel 38:2-6.

These countries are Russia (including many of the former USSR republics), plus Persia (now known as Iran, vs. 6), Sudan, Ethiopia, Cush (southern Egypt and Ethiopia), Libya, Turkey (Togarmah) and Gomer, whose people were originally in Turkey but now includes much of central Europe and eastern Europe.

It is striking that none of the countries listed as Israel's enemies in the Psalm 83 war are mentioned in the Ezekiel 38-39 war and vice versa. This proves that they are not the same war. Why aren't the Psalm 83 enemies of Israel involved in the Gog-Magog war? They may be virtually taken out by God and Israel Defense Forces in the Psalm 83 war, or at least so reduced in power that they are unable to significantly participate in the Ezekiel 38-39 war. Some think Israel will have such a victory in this Psalm 83 war that they may occupy the territories of their Psalm 83 war enemies. This would simply be an expansion of Israel into the land-area God promised Abraham and his covenant descendents in Genesis 15:18, "On the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying: "To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates." How could this be? With God all things are possible.

Could the Ezekiel 38 war happen today? Not likely, according to Ezekiel 38:11. God says to Gog and his allies, "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.'"

After three recent trips to Israel the author can testify that Israel is not dwelling safely and without walls at this time. The Hamas of Gaza continue to send rocket bombs into Israel. Israel has built many walls to control terrorism and is clearly living in fear today, not in peace. In other words, it does not sound like the Ezekiel 38-39 war is likely to happen at this time. Some suggest that only a great victory by Israel in the Psalm 83 war could produce such a time of peace and safety in Israel as described in Ezekiel 38:11.

Accordingly, we suggest the Psalm 83 war will precede the Ezekiel 38-39 Gog and Magog war.

The Bible is not clear when the Ezekiel 38-39 war will happen, but it is future. Some believe it will happen before the rapture of the church. Others believe it will be early in "The Tribulation." We do not know. This war is not Armageddon, but likely a prelude to Armageddon.

God will help Israel in the Psalm 83 war as described in Psalm 83:9-18, but He will also use the IDF (Israel Defense Forces) to defeat their enemies. This is the mighty Israel army God will raise up from the “dry bones” of Ezekiel 37. The British Balfour Declaration in 1917 created a homeland for Jews in Palestine. This began a significant re-gathering of the scattered Jews back to their ancient homeland. May 14, 1948 the independent nation of Israel came into existence again after more than nineteen centuries of being scattered. Now, the military prowess of Israel is highly regarded and feared in the Middle East and around the world.

However, Ezekiel 38-39 describes an entirely different war. God will do all the fighting, virtually destroying the forces of Gog-Magog and their allies. Ezek. 38:19-23 describes God fighting Israel’s enemies. He uses a great earthquake in verse 19. Mountains are thrown down on the invading enemies in verse 20. Then the enemy troops start killing each other in verse 21. Finally, God uses diseases, flooding rain, great hailstones, fire and brimstone in verse 22. Israel will not have to fight in that battle. God will do it all.

The KJV translation of Ezekiel 39:2 quotes God saying to the Gog-Magog forces, “And I will turn thee back, and leave but the sixth part of thee, ...” However, the Hebrew text is apparently not that clear because other contemporary Bible versions do not confirm that translation. However the 5/6<sup>th</sup> casualty rate sounds right in the context of what was described. Ezekiel 39:11-14 clearly states that so many in the armies of Magog and her allies will be killed in this Ezekiel 38-39 war against Israel that it will take seven months for Israel to bury their dead enemies (Ezekiel 39:11-12).

It is interesting that none of these countries attacking Israel in Psalm 83 or in Ezekiel 38-39 have significant roles the rest of the end-time events after those wars. These two wars include almost all the Muslim nations on earth and they lose big. This would appear to refute the position that a Muslim Caliphate take over the world and produce the Beast described in Revelation 13.

However, their loss only fulfills God’s promise to Abraham and passed to Israel in Genesis 12:3. “...I will bless those who bless you, And will curse those who curse you.”

We do not rejoice in their loss. God loves all people including the Muslims and they could be delivered from this sad destiny through accepting Jesus Christ as their Savior.

In conclusion, we are seeing Scripture fulfilled before our eyes. We must pray for the peace of Jerusalem (Psalm 126:6). However, let me say that Jesus said in Luke 21:28, "Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near." Paul described these end-time events like birth-pangs, coming closer together and with increasing intensity (1 Thes. 5:3). If you are not saved, trust Jesus today. We may well be near His coming. We must be faithful to spread the gospel to the lost. This should also cause us to live righteous lives, lest we be ashamed at His coming (1 John 2:28). Amen!

**Note:** The author acknowledges indebtedness to Bill Salus and his book, **Israelestine**, HighWay Publishers, subsidiary of Anomalos Publishing House, Crane, Missouri. Copyright 2008 by Bill Salus.

The author highly recommends this book. It is well done, even though we disagree re: his interpretation that the Hagrites refer to Egypt and that Egypt is in the Psalm 83 war. The Hagrites became a people living east of Gilead.

See what the Bible says about them: I Chron. 5:10, “Now in the days of Saul they made war with the Hagrites, who fell by their hand; and they dwelt in their tents throughout the entire area east of Gilead.” (Continuing verse 18), “The sons of Reuben, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh had forty-four thousand seven hundred and sixty valiant men, men able to bear shield and sword, to shoot with the bow, and skillful in war, who went to war. 19 They made war with the Hagrites, Jetur, Naphish, and Nodab. 20 And they were helped against them, and the Hagrites were delivered into their hand, and all who were with them, for they cried out to God in the battle. He heeded their prayer, because they put their trust in Him” (1 Chron. 5:10 and 18-20).

These Scriptures say it took three tribes of Israel to defeat the Hagrites in a war. We have heard no other evidence the Hagrites represent Egypt except that the word, “Hagrites” is built on the name Hagar, Egyptian maid of Sarah, who became Abraham’s second wife. The Hagrites seem to clearly be part of what is today called Jordan. Egypt has been Egypt most of recorded history. Why should the Psalmist call Egypt Hagrites? (Check Bill’s website, [www.prophesydepotministries.net/](http://www.prophesydepotministries.net/) (For Current Bible Prophecy Updates).