

# Revelation

The Kingdom is Here

Benjamin F Hoogterp

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Revelation: The Kingdom is Here

## DEDICATION

Dedicated to Jesus.



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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you, Michele.





## INTRODUCTION

There are two principles of scriptural interpretation that must stand out as primary. First, is that text stands as it is. Plainly, it means what it says and says what it means. By and large, if the text says such and such should happen, we should expect that to occur, unless there is some other thing to indicate otherwise. This is complicated, of course by several factors. In the book of Revelation, many items are referred to by prophetic titles, rather than their actual name. Some of these prophetic titles are clearly identified, such as when a city is “spiritually called Sodom”, we know “Sodom” is only a spiritual title, a parallel to it. In other cases, the parallels drawn are not as directly stated, such as Babylon, but are interpreted through the Scriptural and historical context.

Secondly, we must always interpret Scripture in a way that other Scriptures with known fulfillment have been interpreted. Does historically fulfilled prophecy support dual fulfillment? To what degree are other prophecies interpreted spiritually as opposed to primarily literally? Is there support

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for partial fulfillment and unexpected gaps in fulfillment? And, perhaps one of the most telling, if we used our interpretational model on a prophecy with a known or fulfilled result, would we have arrived at the right conclusion using our method? All of these are considering factors when trying to interpret a text. We must be careful to follow the pattern of what we do know, so that we can be sure to reach the destination we do not.

Ultimately, treatment of the book of Revelation revolves around a central set of ideas. First, that Babylon is Rome. This is drawn directly from Daniel chapter 2. The four part statue represents four successive Kingdoms, which, in the end represent one entire statue. Starting with Babylon, we see the Medes/Persians, then Greece, and finally ancient Rome. For almost 1000 years, they successively ruled the known world. Though they were four empires, as we might see them, we know from scripture that they are one continuous domain. In the end, we are told they are broken all at once, all four Kingdoms. Through scripture, we understand that God sees all four kingdoms as one. Therefore, we see that when the book later talks about Babylon, in Gods language, Rome is merely the continuation of the same unbroken statue that started with Babylon. What began at the head has carried down to the feet, and to call the bottom by the name of the top is God's designation, not man's.

But it is then the nature of the rock of Daniel 2 that is our other focus of study. Surely, Daniel is one of the key books in grounding any end times paradigm. The primary focus in my studies, initially, was simply attempting to find as many solid

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markers as possible to determine our present location. All too often, in my studies at first, I would see an initial passage referenced, and then it would be followed by such a list of assumptions that did not immediately follow in logical succession from the verse. I just wanted to know how they author arrived at the conclusions which were not self-evident from the text. Eventually, I would come across a commentary that endeavored to be a little more honest in its dealings, and would actually say what I felt, that there is no clear evidence, definitively, that this or that assumption was correct, only the general sense from the rest of scripture.

So, that is what we are looking at. If it is to come, it is by revelation, and if it is to be understood, it is to be by faith! 1Corinthians 13:2.

So my initial search was to look for as many identifiable markers in history as I could, and, being a student of the Gospels, when one starts to talk about God having a Kingdom, you're suddenly talking my language. A Kingdom that was unavailable before was suddenly available, "at hand". A dominion, while not always seen demonstrated today, was promised. And, a victory over all the powers of darkness was stated, regardless of the belief and persuasions or even results of men.

Could this Kingdom be that Kingdom rock? Of course it could be, and it must be, but then what of this the common, modern translation of all these texts that put the rock falling and crushing off in some distant future? I saw the language of Daniel, which said, will set up a Kingdom, and I see Jesus teaching His flock. I saw a Kingdom crushing Babylon/Rome,

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and today I see none of those four empires. Rather, I see a church that has filled the whole earth.

I did not set out to prove nor disprove any theory. But, rather, as I saw it, I needed to divide find which specific portions of scripture could readily be identified as historical, and which were in question or future. As I have progressed, I have understood that these truths are knowable, as they are given by God, and as one diligently searches out the scriptures. These are truths, and some of them must be known in this day and in this hour, and when you have the substance of it, that is faith, there is no doubt.

That is not to say I have perfect faith in every detail of my interpretation. I have faith in the scriptures, and, if at some point I have added to or taken away from those scriptures, or merely misinterpreted them, I know I have the unbreakable Word to come back to. If, by some stroke, the dispensationalists are totally correct, I will find out when I see it, and will at least know the written Word when it comes time.

But, for now, let us concern ourselves with what is knowable. Let us make a diligent search and ascertain that which is discoverable. If we lay aside the assumptions, the pre-suppositions, we begin a foundation of study that will provide a reliable foundation for developing the rest. Again, my study begins primarily in Daniel. The subject made little sense and held less interest until Daniel.

What are the statue and beasts of Daniel? If the rock is the Kingdom, why isn't it now? If to set up means to set up, then

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what type of Kingdom are we looking for?

And that, in essence becomes the focus of my entire interpretation: What is the nature of this Kingdom that Daniel foresaw, crushing the statue of Babylon? If you solve that riddle, you have understood the Gospels, in reverse, and if you've solved that, you are well on your way to something great.

So, from there, let us look a little more closely at this Kingdom, this rock cut out, but not with human hands (Daniel 2:34)...

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## THE KINGDOM

For the futurist to interpret End Times events is relatively easy. They simply read the text, and say, “such and such will happen, and it will happen in the future”. If an event has not happened, to their knowledge, in the time-frame, manner, and scope in which they interpret a passage to mean, they simply claim a fulfillment of a future time, claiming, “wait and see!”.

The solid answer to this line of thinking is a “limiting factor”. If you are attempting to fix the date of something, say an old barn, and the architecture and woodwork appears to be a couple hundred years old, but it has electric and plumbing built into the original design, you can know for sure that the building cannot be more than one hundred years old, simply because of the limiting factor of utilities. The same will go with the interpretation of Daniel. While, perhaps we will not encounter concrete proof of any one view, leaving the final step up to the individual’s faith and revelation, we may be able to find certain limiting factors that at least strongly

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indicate that certain events of prophecy have their fulfillment historically, rather than in the future.

This is, of course, where the interpretational crunch comes in. Once you introduce your limiting factors to limit portions to a past fulfillment, you then must fit everything that applies to it into some sort of history. If you know the barn was built in the last 60 years, that means, well, simply, that in the last 60 years the barn was built. Somewhere in those 60 years, there must be an opportunity where it would have been constructed. But, supposing no one had lived on or farmed that land for 80 years, it would create a paradox, as no one would have built a barn if there was no use for one.

So, too, when we look at prophecy, when we say a certain portion must be fulfilled, or must apply to a certain time frame, it will have consequences on scriptures surrounding it. When this happens, we must be sure to find a place for as many elements of the Word as are affected, so as to not have an issue later on with things contradicting themselves.

Take for instance Daniel, chapter 2, the vision of the four-part statue.

*And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.*

*Daniel 2:44*



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This verse sets up a limiting factor on the coming of Christ's Kingdom. There is still a question of "when" that many apply to this verse, but, what the verse establishes is that the Kingdom will be "set up" "in the days of these [or, those] kings".

Looking historically, we see that these Kingdoms do not presently exist. For someone looking for a past fulfillment, this would fit their expectations perfectly. For someone looking for a future fulfillment, however, the argument most used is for a "revived Roman empire", that somehow, there will be a re-creation of a 2000 year old pagan nation, that will then rule again over the entire world. Now, granted, Israel is a sovereign nation again after a longer period of time. And, true, God can do whatever He wants to do. But, the question most telling in this verse was what God originally planned to do. Rather than look "in the days of" for a limiting factor, in light of the various interpretational schools of thought, it is better to look at what was promised in this time period, and what would be the result of it.

*From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say,  
Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

*Matthew 4:17*

The Gospel of the Kingdom was the message Jesus preached (Matthew 24:14). It was not just the Gospel of Salvation, although it is its only door, it's only Way. It is the only Truth and Life. But, Jesus came with the message of the Kingdom.

Further, He did not say it was somewhere far away, but

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instead, “at hand”. To the crowds, He spoke in parables, but to His disciples, He explained everything (Mark 4:34).

What was the nature of this Kingdom? We need only take a look at Jesus’ own remarks.

*But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.*

*Luke 11:20*

The Kingdom was what brought about the miraculous in His life. As we read elsewhere that Jesus did nothing He did not see His Father doing, we can conclude that everything the Father does is within His own Kingdom. Hence, the “good works” that Jesus did, as John’s Gospel calls them, were the “works of my Father” (John 10:32).

Again, when Jesus stood before Pilate, He said,

*Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.*

*John 18:36*

Now, the NASB reads in the last phrase, “but as it is, My Kingdom is not of this realm.” Jesus clearly walked in a Kingdom, and it was the intersection of that Kingdom with the kingdoms of this world that brought about his demonstrations of power, notably, deliverance. The clear witness of Scripture is the

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Kingdom. Yet, what is the Kingdom? That is what the whole Gospel is about. Paul wrote concerning it,

*Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.*

*Romans 8:7*

You see, the carnal mind cannot be subject to the things of God, including (and especially) His Kingdom. This may come as a shock to students of Eschatology, but regardless of how the “Kingdom” of Daniel 2:44 comes about, the carnal mind, and the unsaved, cannot ever partake nor even grasp it.

*Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*

*John 3:3*

“No one can see the Kingdom unless he is born again”, Jesus said. What’s the reverse of that, logically? If it CAN be seen by a person that is still dead in their trespasses and sins, it is NOT the Kingdom of God. Quite plainly, if your expectation of “the Kingdom” is an earthly rule, a literal, a physical chair to sit on for a throne, and a big castle where coins with the Lord’s face are minted and big books with traffic laws are distributed from, you have missed the point entirely. The Kingdom cannot be seen by an unbeliever.

Looking at this, we make some key distinctions. Clearly, we

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see this echoed in the words of Paul, where he says that God has chosen the things which are not, the despised things, to bring down the things which are, the haughty things (1 Corinthians 1:28, 1 Corinthians 4:18). But, when we look at Jesus' demonstration of the Kingdom, we see exactly that, it's demonstration. As Jesus put it so well, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." (John 3:8).

Another way to look at this difference of the Kingdom, perhaps, is to compare it to a weather pattern. If we were to consider the Kingdom to a great high-pressure center moving into an area of lower pressure center, in terms of weather, that would create a front. At a front, there is some kind of "demonstration". Storms happen at the front, with rain, hail, lighting, thunder, and wind. No one ever looks into sky and says, "Oh, look at that big high-pressure center moving in!" No, they point to the clouds and say, "Oh, look at that thunderstorm!". The same is true with the Kingdom. The Kingdom is invisible. Which Kingdom? God's Kingdom, the Kingdom of Heaven. What do people point to? The storm front—Signs, Wonders, Deliverances, Healings, etc.

Here, then, is a clash of Kingdoms. Many would say that the Kingdom is primarily an Earthly one, namely the millennium. Some have gone so far as to say that the Kingdom Jesus brought was put on hold by His death—which looking at the numerous references to the Kingdom in the epistles quickly disproves (e.g., Acts 28:26-28). Rather, however, the very distinctions people try to raise are the very reasons they must be discarded. For every argument that the Kingdom

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must be external, according to the promises of the Old Testament, every one of those reasons would have come into consideration at the very first declaration of the Kingdom being “at hand”. Jesus wrote the Old Testament, and He knew it as a man.

You cannot separate His declaration of this being God’s Kingdom from the prophecies which foretold it. That is, in every place that you might claim a prophecy about a coming Kingdom that it was of one order or realm, Jesus is there definitively declaring that this is that. Even the use of the word “now” in John 18:36 does not clearly indicate that the Kingdom is now of one nature, and some other time it will be of some other nature. But, rather, as the NASB records, it is merely saying “as it is”. To say otherwise would seem to contradict the words of Paul in the Epistles. This is the long awaited Kingdom.

But by the nature of Who He was, and because of the weight of the burden of the Scriptures themselves, His declaration of the Kingdom becomes the absolute statement of what the Kingdom actually is. His life stands in the bearing of all those great promises, and boasts of the Lord, saying, come all who are weary and heavy laden. Because of the scriptures that promise a Kingdom, we can look at the good works that He did, and we can begin to see the true nature of God. He couldn’t have meant just any Kingdom. No, the declaration of Kingdom, from being in His position, of necessity, ties every one of those prophecies into every word of teaching on that Kingdom.

But, when Jesus sat and taught, He did not sit to teach them

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Moses, nor some abstract moral law, but, rather, He taught them on the Kingdom. Not some arbitrary Kingdom, but the very one they were expecting from the Scriptures. There can be no mistake: the invisible realm Jesus understood, and taught about, must be understood to be the Kingdom prophesied about. It is the context in which He preached it and it is what His hearers would have understood Him to mean, and to have meant something else would have to be intentionally deceitful. No, the same thing intended by the prophecies about a Kingdom, including David's throne, are precisely what Jesus was saying was responsible for His miracles, the Kingdom.

This distinction becomes an important point in the Sermon on the Mount, as well. Jesus said that there will be many in that day that look to Him, even calling Him "Lord, Lord!" who had demonstrations in their lives, signs and mighty miracles, even deliverances, but they never knew Him. There is, then, this invisible thing, this Kingdom that is of the realm of things that are not, which is all Jesus brought. The Kingdom itself, while it is not the signs and wonders, produces signs and wonders. But, the Kingdom is Eternal, invisible, and Beyond reproach. It is transcendent above time, space, and even Earth and Heaven itself.

*And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.*

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### *Daniel 7:14*

This Earth, this Sun, and all this present universe will one day be no more. But, the dominion and the Kingdom will never go away. As Jesus said, His Kingdom is not of this realm, or world. If it were, it would, eventually, fail. But, what God did, He did Eternally.

It is a Spiritual Kingdom, and that is more real than a physical one, even while the spiritual has dominion over the physical. While it may or may not have a physical manifestation, that is, while there might be a time where there is a physical throne set up on the Earth, it is primarily the throne in heaven that is to be occupied.

When it comes to the nature of the Kingdom, the question I am often left asking is an echo of what John the Baptist asked Jesus.

*And said unto him, Art thou he that should come,  
or do we look for another?*

### *Matthew 11:3*

Now, I don't have a problem if the Kingdom is manifested in the Earth in some fashion or another. I do, sincerely doubt, that Jesus will mint currency, though, or adjudicate a parliament to write laws and issue traffic citations. But, whatever manifestation of the Kingdom there is visible on the Earth, the manifestation is not in itself the Kingdom; it is only its demonstration. As I like to put it, whatever the Kingdom in the Millennium will be, it will only ever be of the

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same essence and substance as the Kingdom Jesus stood and operated in while He was in the days of his flesh.

God only has one Kingdom, as God is One. The Kingdom cannot be entered except by someone who is born of water and of the Spirit (John 3:5). No demon nor angel can enter therein (having not been born of water), and no unsaved person can see or enter, having not been born of the Spirit. Since we know that Jesus came with only one Gospel, the Gospel of the Kingdom, and we know that it was the Kingdom that He was demonstrating and operating in (hence, deliverance, as per above), we must conclude that this is the Kingdom we are expecting, whether in Daniel 2:44, in some Millennium, or in an Eternal age.

Yet, even as faith without works is dead, the Kingdom is always working on the natural. It is not to separate the two completely, but that which is born of flesh is flesh, and that which is born of Spirit is Spirit.

What is the Kingdom like? It's like a mustard seed, which when planted, is the smallest of all seeds, which when fully grown, is the largest of all garden plants. It is like a little bit of leaven, which, when hidden in a lump of dough, leaveneth the whole lump. It is like a treasure hidden in a field, which, when a man found it, he hid it again, and for joy, went and sold all he had and bought that field.

That is what the Kingdom is like. It is the invisible realm of the Holy Ghost, in the power, authority, and dominion of who He is.



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Failure to grasp the Kingdom as an invisible yet completely real force is the failure to grasp the spiritual. Demons are invisible. Angels are invisible. God is invisible. Yeast is invisible, and a planted seed is invisible. These are the descriptions of the Kingdom that Jesus gave.

*If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?*

*1 John 4:20*

Man is seen, but God and His Kingdom are not. If, in some supposed Millennium under dispensationalist thought, a governmental center is set up in Jerusalem, and a literal throne is set up, and Jesus physically sits and rules there, in Jerusalem, over the entire Earth, then where is Christ's Kingdom? Is it the buildings? Is it the government as we see it? Is it the armies?

*Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?*

*Matthew 26:53*

Have we become so carnal, so vain in our understanding, that we have missed the very thing Christ brought us 2000 years ago? Not just the new birth, but the very Kingdom we can see and enter through that regeneration unto life.

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God is invisible, and were He hungry, He would not tell you. Jesus HAD a Kingdom when He walked on this Earth, He was not in search of one, otherwise, there would have been no power. There was not a shortage just because He had no place to sleep some nights, other than a garden (Matthew 8:20). There was not a lapse in the provision of the Father and His dominion and authority, simply because women were supporting Him out of their own means (Luke 8:3). So, too, even if there is a physical manifestation of the Kingdom and government of God made displayed in the physical Earth, the physical is not the Kingdom, the heavenly is. The Heavenly is not contingent, or in need of, the physical, but the physical is true only as it is established out of the heavenly, while the heavenly remains true regardless.

There is, and only has been, one Kingdom of God. Some may argue that the Kingdom of the Millennium must be a certain way. Perhaps their arguments have merit, and perhaps they don't, but one thing is certain—if it is not of the same nature and character as the Kingdom that Jesus Christ brought to the Earth and died for, it is a demonic, anti-christ counterfeit and has nothing to do with Christ and His Cross, whatsoever.

There is, of course, much more to say about the Kingdom of God, and many other verses to consider when developing the subject, but a few basic premises must be understood from the start.

First, it is a Spiritual Kingdom. Invisible and un-enterable by those who are not born again through saving faith in Jesus Christ. It is not of this realm or world. Jesus didn't say His Kingdom was only then of another realm, only for the time

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being, but that it simply was. Again, one could raise an objection based on John 18:36, but in all honesty, Jesus didn't say that it was now one way, and tomorrow would change. In fact, this would contradict numerous other things which say the unseen is more real than the seen, and that the flesh profits nothing but it is the Spirit which gives life. If your Kingdom is already of a superior quality, why should you downgrade it?

Second, it was this Kingdom that Jesus came to teach and to proclaim, and to demonstrate. It was here in His day, as it had come upon those who witnessed the deliverance. It is Eternal and ever-increasing. Isaiah 9:7 says that “[o]f the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end”. As we have had some form of deliverance and miracles, even if rare or in partial form, since the days of Jesus, continually, we can be assured that, even as the Kingdom was here in His day, it has been with us the whole time. And, the same Spirit that raised Christ from the dead, in the very same Kingdom, lives in me, and is operative through anyone who believes.

Third, it is the realm of power and authority. As Paul put it, the Kingdom is not a matter of words, but of power (1 Corinthians 4:20). Simply having your doctrine right has nothing to do with whether you step into this dimension. You can have all the right teaching points, and not have it. Or, you can have it, and even have some doctrinal points that are off, but have it demonstrated in your life. It is always right to have right teaching, as belief and manifestation go hand-in-hand. But history demonstrates that the Kingdom is not always to those with what men consider perfect doctrine. The Kingdom is more real than the visible, operates

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through faith, and, despite the failings of men, is unstoppable. It is superior in every way, as Christ said, the least in the Kingdom is greater than the greatest without it.

These are the premises of the Kingdom that Jesus came to bring. It would be foolish to think that there would be, or even could be, any other Kingdom than the one He lived, taught, and died for. It is this Kingdom that is the one reigned in during the Millennium, regardless of any Earthly manifestation, and it is this Kingdom that will endure forever.

Again, the question I like to ask is, “Is this the Kingdom that was to come, or should we look for another?” For John the Baptist in his day, he had made a specific prophecy concerning Jesus, that He would baptize with the Holy Ghost. Having not seen that, John sent his own disciples to Jesus to ask Him this question. Jesus responded about the demonstration of the Kingdom, the miracles that were happening, without touching on the promise that was only to be fulfilled through His own death. But, the end of His response was this:

*And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.*

*Matthew 11:6*

As we look, therefore, at Daniel, chapter 2, we must ask ourselves regarding what was to be promised in this time. What types of limiting factors are set up in the light of Jesus’ words?

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*In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will SET UP a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever. This is the meaning of the vision of the rock cut out of a mountain, but not by human hands—a rock that broke the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold to pieces.*

*Daniel 2:44-45a, emphasis added*

If we take a close look at these words in light of what the Kingdom is and isn't, we may not get a definitive "proof" right away with any one text, but a definite trend begins to appear. If, on the one hand, we are expecting an Earthly government, then "set up" would imply that. If, however, the true government of God is the invisible, when exactly did that get "set up"?

Well, my line of thinking, looking toward scripture, would tend towards this:

*From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and violent men take it by force.*

*Matthew 11:12*

If we regard the Kingdom as a physical, Earthly rule, then it might appear as though it has not been "set up". However, the definitions of the Kingdom, as presented in the Gospels

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and the Epistles, never once describe the Kingdom as an Earthly seat of government. On the contrary, as is the case with deliverance, there was nothing visible in the Earth at all around Jesus. He was one as from who men hid their faces, and there was nothing in his earthly appearance to attract us to Him. But, He said himself He had a Kingdom, and He proved it by his deeds.

This Kingdom He set up, in the transition from the last of the Old Testament prophets, John the Baptist, into the beginning of the new. By His own words, from the days of John until then, and even now, men were entering and laying hold of the Kingdom. Which Kingdom? The only Kingdom God's got. It was set up 2000 years ago, and even as in Jesus' life, buildings and organizational structure are not what account for it.

And, this is the Kingdom, starting then, that will never be destroyed, nor will ever be left to another people. Even if Jesus does reign on the Earth, it will only be in the realm of this Kingdom, and even if there is a physical manifestation of it on the Earth, like the signs and wonders, they are only the visible demonstration of something invisible. But the Kingdom, from its inception, began thus.

*Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.*

*Mark 1:14-15*

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Notice, again, Jesus made his declaration clear. We must take into consideration all the historical prophecy about what the Kingdom must be, and further, remember how it is proclaimed in the Gospel of Mark. Then add that this followed on the end of the public ministry of the last of the Old Testament prophets, John the Baptist. We then see what Jesus said could be understood differently, knowing who He is, what the expectations were, and that He was The Truth

He said, “The time is fulfilled.” That is, the waiting period before the Kingdom of God was done. This was not some “initial installment”, or some invisible form what what would come later. No, the declaration was clear from the get go. The time is fulfilled, this is it. This is what you’ve all been looking for. For those words to be spoken and mean anything else, in the light of the expectations of the Scripture, would be dishonest.

While some may still claim, today, that the Kingdom must be a primarily Earthly Rule, we forget that this is precisely what the people of Jesus’ day expected, and they missed it. We believe that this next time He will come as a conquering King, but do you expect that His Kingdom, even more, His own heart, has changed since the first visit? While the dynamics of His second coming will be different than the dynamics of the first, it will be the same Jesus, with the same heart, in the same Kingdom.

This premise, then, while not yet complete, or fully developed, begins to form the basis for our limiting factor. While there are many other parts of this to consider, it is

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these roots that form the basis for the argument that a future fulfillment is not a plausible consideration when interpreting the visions of Daniel. By plausible, I mean a reasonable doubt. Ultimately, faith must be the substance of our doctrine, not mere argument, but, it is the text itself that convinces us, and not mere fable or the interpretive traditions of men, when they seem to contradict the very nature of the Kingdom itself.



## DANIEL 2 & 7

Here at the beginning, I am laying a foundation for where I am going. I am presenting a case for past fulfillment for Revelation 6-20, the first half of which was fulfilled much as traditional preterism describes. This will be developed as we go, but the basic outline is presented here for reference. In order to develop this path, however, we must work through some of Daniel. Daniel is the foundation for much eschatological understanding, and without it, the case for the rest will always be harder to establish.

So, with that, the outline of Revelation I am working with is as follows:

⌚ Rev 1-3: Introduction and letters to the churches. Introduced as “what must soon take place”.

⌚ Rev 4-5: The Throne Room Scene

- ⌚ Rev 6-9: Judgments on Israel and on Jerusalem
- ⌚ Rev 10: Another scroll, Prophecy Again
- ⌚ Rev 11: The fall of Jerusalem at the 7th trumpet, 70AD.
- ⌚ Rev 12: Christians flee to Pella.
- ⌚ Rev 13: Domitian is Nero reborn, c80AD
- ⌚ Rev 14: The church safeguarded, and the wine press is the fall of Betar in 135AD, led by anti-christ Simon bar Kochba.
- ⌚ Rev 15: Seven plagues are revealed.
- ⌚ Rev 16: The seven “last plagues”, last in that they conclude the wrath on Babylon, are released, beginning with the plague of Galen in 165AD. Literally, the army is decimated, 1 in 10, darkness is poured out on the throne and literature dries up. These were all literally fulfilled, understanding that the Euphrates and probably Armageddon are prophetic titles, referring in symbol to the Roman corollary to Babylon.
- ⌚ Rev 17: Babylon, Rome, seen.
- ⌚ Rev 18: Babylon, Rome, burned.
- ⌚ Rev 19: Babylon, Rome, the destruction celebrates.

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⌚ Rev 20: c300AD, The serpent is cast to the pit. The spiritual power of Rome, the fourth beast, was certainly broken at Constantine's conversion, if not before. The one world government that had been on the planet for 1000 years was defeated, spiritually. And the mastermind, not all demons, was locked up for 1000 years. In this time, the only governing power was the church, mind you. You must conclude one of two things, ultimately. Either the church is Rome, and the Catholics are the anti-christs, or, broken as it is, the thousand year reign began with Constantine's era, and, as Foxe's book of Martyrs records, there were no martyrs to remember for 1000 years. It is called the "dark ages" in reference to the "light of Rome", and the Renaissance, therefore, is more clearly seen as the rebirth of the serpent. And we call it art and science, mind you.

That leaves us at the middle of Rev 20, possibly before or after the Gog Magog war. Some awesome stuff has already happened in regards to Israel again being a nation. But, it leaves us just a little bit before that great day, when the elements melt with fervent heat, and the Son comes with His Father's glory, to judge the nations of the Earth, at the last trumpet, not the Seventh.

⌚ Rev 21 and 22 then stretch out into the age to come, Eternal life.

*Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.*

*Mark 1:14-15*

Again, this is the declaration of the Kingdom. As stated in the previous chapter, the language simply cannot be understood in any other way, precisely because of the prophecies, that this is the long awaited Kingdom of God told of by the Prophets. This is the only context you could understand Jesus in, without calling Him a deliberate deceiver. Therefore, every other statement referring to the Kingdom, in the Gospels and hence the Epistles, is referring only and completely to the Kingdom prophesied, and no other thing.

*Once, on being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, "The coming of the kingdom of God is not something that can be observed, nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because the kingdom of God is in your midst."*

*Luke 17:20-21*

There can be no misunderstanding. The Kingdom is a spiritual kingdom. Despite differences of opinion about various verses, and different ways of interpreting the Old Testament, which has no explicit guarantee of a physical Kingdom (as Israel already had that for hundreds of years), there are enough verses that are not questionable as to its nature:

*I declare to you, brothers and sisters, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.*

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*1 Corinthians 15:50*

Whenever this ultimate inheritance is, there can be no mistake—Flesh and blood cannot inherit it. It is not a primarily Earthly Kingdom.

But, it is the world that has an Earthly Kingdom, and that is what Daniel 2 is about.

*Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.*

*Daniel 2:31-35*

The vision itself is rather simple, that of a four-part statue. Finally, a stone, made without hands, strikes the statue, and it is all broken, and the wind carries the parts away. The stone became a mountain, and filled the whole Earth.

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*This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold.*

*And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth.*

*And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.*

*And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be*

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*destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.*

*Daniel 2:36-45*

Most interpreters agree with the four kingdoms/metals. They are Babylon, the head, which is given in the text. Historically, it was the Medes/Persians after that. They were conquered by Greece, and they, subsequently, by Rome. Most all would agree with that interpretation. The Rock is also known, it is Christ and His Kingdom who is the Rock. This is given by the New Testament. The question is, "When?"

Many would try to make further distinctions in the statue. Some would say that the two legs of iron, which are Rome, indicate the division of Rome into the Eastern and Western empire. They further say that the ten toes indicate ten sub-nations or ten kings of the last part of that empire. Whether that understanding is correct, it is important to separate man's interpretation from what is given in Scripture. As for the legs being the Eastern and Western, this does not appear to follow, as the iron started at the "thighs". It was divided into two parts from the beginning of the iron. So to say that it divided later doesn't seem to fit the vision, in my

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understanding. It is suffice to say, though, that this is interpretation of the text, and not the text itself. The other distinctions may or may not follow, but it is important to recognize the distinction of what is actually written, and what is not.

Daniel 2 was the dream given to Nebuchadnezzar, and Daniel 7 was the dream given to Daniel. They are often regarded as parallel to each other, where Nebuchadnezzar was shown the physical kingdoms and their earthly glory, and Daniel was shown the spiritual powers, the beasts, behind them. Going with this understanding, we can draw certain perspectives by comparing these two visions side-by-side.

In the one, we see from Daniel 7:17, that there are decidedly four kings/kingdoms, not 5. Some try to make a claim that the feet of iron and clay are a fifth Kingdom, or that it somehow represents something other than the iron of Rome, but this is decided as false, because of Daniel 7:17, which says, "These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth."

Second, we see what each of these kingdoms/beasts do. They rule over the entire Earth: And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. (Daniel 2:39). Each of these empires ruled over the entire "known world", or "civilized world". But, each of these nations successively conquered the other and was a "one world government".

We take note, that from the time of the Head of Gold, we



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have almost 1000 years of rule of this Babylon in history. While taking four forms, the dreams inform us that God's view of these empires is they are all one in the same. Now, also take note that at the end, in both dreams, all four of the kingdoms exist together. They are all Babylon, and in Daniel 2, all the materials are broken at the same time.

We are told that in the time of those kings the statue would be broken. Some assume this to be the ten toes, which they interpret to be ten nations or kings, but this is extra-scriptural. Suffice to say, either in the time of the Roman kings, or in the time of the kings of the statue in general, the statue would be broken.

Now, for the futurist, there clearly must be some sort of revival of Rome, to fit their understanding, since Rome and all the rest of the statue is no longer here. Looking at the world, we see Rome completely swept away for nearly 2000 years. But, unfortunately, for the text, a Roman revival is not sufficient. In order to fulfill the vision, all four materials must be broken together. This would then require a revival not only of Rome, but of the spirit of all four kingdoms simultaneously.

We also look at the transition of the metals. From one kingdom to the next, we see war and hostility on the earth. But what should we expect from the Rock? If conflict in the natural produced a transition between metals, but did not remove the previous part of the statue, should we necessarily expect that the rock striking the statue is open war? If direct overthrow in the natural did not accomplish a true overthrow spiritually, then might the real crushing of

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the whole look different than we might expect.

Indeed, it does, because Gods Kingdom works from above.

*Do not overcome evil with evil, but overcome evil  
with good.*

*Romans 12:21*

If we look at the plain facts of history, these four kingdoms, and there are four, ruled over the whole earth for almost 1000 years. At the end of that period, the remarkable thing is that Christ came declaring a Kingdom, exactly as Daniel 2 predicted. As Mark put it, the time was fulfilled. Not only was it inaugurated, but it was “set up”.

Now, consider for a moment. If there is only one Kingdom, no matter what form it is, then it would be improper to use the term “set up” to describe a later phase of it. Even if you see the current phase as merely the invisible “seed” form of a Kingdom to come, which is still a wrong viewpoint, what would manifest later would be of that same seed. There could not be “another” Kingdom, or Jesus would be a liar in Mark 1:15.

Since any future manifestation of this Kingdom would be nothing but the sprouting forth of what was already established in the spiritual, it would be wrong to call a later branching out the “setting up”. Therefore, the only possibility for the Kingdom would have been its initial planting, or Christ's first coming.

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Now, a great deal of people miss it at this point. They say that the Kingdom is invisible now, but the physical Kingdom will be then. That's all well and good, but even if that were true, it's still the same Kingdom! It wouldn't have changed. In fact, Scripture clearly teaches that it is the invisible things that are more real than the visible. If this is true, then a spiritual Kingdom is more real than a physical one anyway. And, since any physical Kingdom would only be a manifestation of a spiritual one, we must understand, that in the strictest sense of the word, "set up" must correspond to Jesus' declaration and life.

*We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands.*

*Mark 14:58*

Here Mark records nearly the identical language as that of Daniel 2:35 of a Rock cut out without hands. This, then, is the prophesied rock cut out without hands. Notice its effect. It is Him in His resurrected body. And, we know that the fullness of authority was given Him at His ascension (Matthew 28:18), but look at the effect through history.

At the time of those kings, meaning, either the Roman kings or the statue in general, God set up a Kingdom, Christ being the firstborn, and Pentecost being first-fruits. This Kingdom, this Gospel of the Kingdom, while it took some time, a little over 200 years, broke the power of Rome, spiritually, not in open conflict, but demonstrates its superiority by the conversion of its leader, Constantine. The rest reads as

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history. Rome didn't fall, it declined. Once the spiritual power of Rome was broken, it could no longer be sustained. Literally as the scripture foretold, although it decades afterwards, the wind blew the pieces away.

But let us look now to Daniel 7.

Again, while Daniel 2 is clear that the kingdoms rule the known world, Daniel 7 says there are only four (Daniel 7:17). These are recognized as the spiritual powers behind the kingdoms they represent, but they are the same four kingdoms as Daniel 2. In both, they are all there at the end, although the fate of each is slightly different.

Now, some take the throne room scene here, and feel the need to connect this, unequivocally to some other specific scriptural reference to God's throne. Unfortunately, this does not seem a requirement of logic. Simply put, God has a Kingdom, and He rules from a heavenly throne. This is not some day in the future, a one time occurrence, but it is an ongoing reality, even while He Himself is outside of time. One must understand that God is on the throne now, and releases judgments for His servants on an ongoing basis, or He would not be seen as ruling.

Further, while books are mentioned elsewhere in scripture, we must not be hasty here to correlate these books (or their opening) with some other occurrence. Books are a regular part of court proceedings, and their presence merely indicates that the record of the events is being reviewed. Even as the Ammorites were judged before Israel when they were entering into their promised land, so too, any time God

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enters a judgment on behalf of His saints, the court sits, and books would be opened. The point is the official judgment by the Ancient of Days, not attempting to go beyond what it is implying and assume that this must be the same day of judgment, simply because of certain similarities.

Further, we encounter details of the fourth beast and its judgment, and we read of the other three beasts,

*As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time.*

*Daniel 7:12*

That is, the power of these three other Kingdoms is allowed to remain, but with its ability to dominate the entire Earth removed.

See this then. For nearly 1000 years, a demonic nation named Babylon ruled the entire Earth. At the time of those kings, God set up His Kingdom. We know it is the setting up, because even if in seed form, anything else must grow from it. Sprouting leaves is not setting up, planting is. We see this clearly evidenced in history. Considering the demonically controlled nation of Babylon, it was God's kingdom, through the “called out ruling body” (literally, “ekklessia”) of the church, that broke it. As we will see again later, it was from this point that the only ruling and governing power over all the Earth, for over 1000 years, was the church of Christ. It had become a mountain and filled the whole Earth.

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But let us consider a few other important parts of these prophecies. Daniel records,

*I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.*

*And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.*

*Daniel 7:13-14*

Clearly in view here is Christ approaching the Father. As He is the only man recorded to be led thus into His presence, it is a fair enough conclusion. But, again, the topic of the event is the Kingdom. It is noted that three things are given to Him. The first of these is dominion, or authority.

Here we must ask ourselves though, what is being given? Authority. Yet, in Matthew 28:18, after ascending to the Father, we read that He says that all authority is His then. Further, in Ephesians 1, we see that the Father exerted His mighty power, and raised Him far above all other things, and every name that can be given, both in this age and the age to come. Here, by the testimony of two or more witnesses of scripture, we see that the dominion of authority is already Christ's. For those who wish to place Daniel 7 yet in the

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future, the plain question remains, if Christ has all authority right now, and all dominion, what more can be given? Surely, there can be none. Similarly, in John 17, Christ prayed that He be given the glory He had with the Father before the creation of the world. This, then too, would seem to indicate all glory has been given to the Son, now. If all glory and dominion are the Son's already, then Daniel 7 must needs be fulfilled. You cannot be given something, if you already possess all of it, and since Ephesians is so clear, in both universal scope and duration, there can be little room for any doubt.

But what else does the passage convey?

*Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom*

*Daniel 7:22*

Here, in the interpretation of the everlasting Kingdom Daniel saw Christ receive, it was told him that the time would come for the saints to possess the Kingdom. We must be fairly clear on this point. If we seek a material Kingdom, we might arrive at a negative on this fulfillment. But, we are looking, textually, for a Kingdom of Heaven. Yet, we have already seen in Mark 1:15, despite how anyone might object otherwise, Jesus was declaring this very thing.

*And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.*

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*Mark 1:15*

Regardless of any conjecture, the nature of who Christ was, speaking this statement, He could have meant nothing else. The Kingdom was now, and, by His later remarks, it was a heavenly one, more real than an Earthly one.

Further, this we look for saints in possession of the Kingdom, and find the following:

*Most Happy are the poor in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.*

*Most happy are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.*

*Matthew 5:3, 10*

First, we see that the Kingdom is in the possession of two specific classes of people, those of poor in spirit, and those persecuted for righteousness sake. Further, we read,

*And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force*

*Matthew 11:12*

So we the saints, by whatever means, taking hold of the Kingdom. Again, Jesus is THE prophet. He is the one using the



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language “The Kingdom”. He is not differentiating between some invisible stage of the Kingdom and some physical one later. This is the Kingdom, as evidenced by Jesus’ own words. And, as Daniel 7 describes, since the time of John the Baptist, it has been time for the saints to possess this Eternal Realm. Despite any future fulfillment, and culmination or consummation, any full adoption in receiving our resurrected bodies, we must concur with the authority on the subject of the Kingdom:

*Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.”*

*Luke 19:14*

That is to say, if the Kingdom belongs to anyone, and it does as to those like children, then the time really has come for the saints to possess the Kingdom. And, if it belongs to those like little children, is it any wonder it takes a theologian to talk us out of possessing it? This dominion is an everlasting dominion, and it is a Kingdom that will never pass away.

Further on, we read again,

*And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.*

*Daniel 7:27*

Again, for the whole of the statue of Babylon was broken at Christ's coming, and the only ruling power, after Rome, was the church.

If we step back and look a moment, it becomes much more clear. Babylon reigned for almost 1000 years, Christ's Kingdom is the demarcation, and the church became the only world-wide, ruling force. Simply look at this in history. Babylon is no more, and neither is Rome. They are all destroyed. The statue was not missing its shins, stopping at the knee and continuing at the ankle. No, the four kingdoms were all successive, and were all broken with Rome. They constituted a continuous one world government, ruling over all men, until the time of their destruction at Christ. From their deposition, there has never been another beast ruling over all men since then.

To read this differently, one must either have a different view of the Kingdom, or interpret it with a different agenda.

Now, there is the issue of the ten horns, and all. It is not my expertise to understand all of the Roman emperors and their places. Yet, it is sufficient to say that many men have found their ample fulfillment in the Roman emperors starting with Caesar Augustus. And although contentions always surround such topics, have proved their own research satisfactorily to their own selves and peers. Let it suffice.

So, we see a primarily Spiritual Kingdom brought about as prophesied. We see not a physical overthrow of powers, as

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that accomplished nothing in the removing of kingdoms, but an overthrow entirely of the Spirit. And, when the spirit of Rome was slain, the physical nation crumbled. Today, we need not fathom the beast of Rome, for it is no more, but even as the other three beasts continue to exist, for a season and a time, so we must be aware that their influence, while no longer rooted in the same head of power, that they still pose their devices where able. While no great beasts are able to rule the whole world at this hour, we must be certain that there are still these and other demonic forces that would try to do so, given the opportunity.

But of the prophecies themselves, we see a total fulfillment. As we continue to progress, it is the Kingdom that limits the interpretation to only a past fulfillment. If you miss the Kingdom, in its essence, you will have missed the interpretation, because they prophesy of these days. But, once the other roadblocks are dealt with, and the case is laid plain by the scriptures that this is indeed the only Kingdom we will ever have, it begins to become evident that the bulk of Daniel, while God may re use the pattern, is prophecy perfectly fulfilled.



## THE DOMINION

One last area of foundation that we must cover, due to the nature of the disagreements with various positions, is the difference between “spiritual” and “symbolic”. The book of Revelation employs both of these ideas, but they are not to be confused with one another.

*God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.*

*John 4:24*

God is a Spirit. Therefore, His Kingdom, the Kingdom of the Heavens, is spirit. But, further, what the world may call “spiritual” is certainly not.

*But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

*1 Corinthians 2:14*

You see, there must be made a distinction, even as John 3:3 says that no one can see the Kingdom unless they are born again, the natural man does not, AND CANNOT receive true the true spiritual things of God's Spirit. There may be some that touch certain demonic realms, but they never truly perceive Spirit.

It is only the new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17) that is able to perceive the Spirit, and truly have spiritual conversation, comparing spiritual things to spiritual things (2 Corinthians 2:13).

This therefore we say, that there is that which is earthly, of the Earth, and there is that which is of another realm, which is not enterable nor even discernible by those who are dead. This realm, or dominion, is properly called, The Kingdom.

Every believer, from the youngest in Christ to the oldest, has this Kingdom living within them, through the work of the Holy Spirit, but in those young in Christ, it is unformed, and undeveloped, even as a baby has all they will have but in infant form. So, as we are instructed through the Epistles, we are to grow up to become mature sons, capable of knowing our right hand from our left--discerning faith, and separating soul from spirit, discerning what is the good, acceptable, and perfect will of the Father.

It is not to put any down or to elevate another to say that there is a maturity that comes in Christ. Those new in the faith are babes, and those who through study and training

have grown up into the head are called the mature, the elders, and even the pillars of the church.

But, plainly, if the only perceptions of the Gospel you have beyond conversion is what any unsaved person could have, you should check yourself, to see if you are really growing in the faith. That is, if there is no quickening of your Spirit, if the Word of God does not come alive for you, if you do not hear His voice, if you do not experience, at some point, His chastening, blessing, and refreshing, in a real, tangible way, what Kingdom are you serving?

*Very truly I tell you, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony.*

*John 3:11*

Jesus, and His disciples, testified to a realm that was the Kingdom from a first-hand basis. They had entered into that dimension of the Holy Ghost that is the reign of God, and experienced the dramatic results of watching that Kingdom destroy the yokes of the world's Kingdoms.

This is more than simply the anointing. Anyone can walk in an anointing, especially if they get around an anointed person. But, it is another thing altogether to walk in the Kingdom. Matthew 7:22 indicates that many will call Jesus Lord, and will move in power, but will never have submitted themselves to this realm, the dominion and reign of Christ.

Certainly, all who truly love Jesus are not of these, but plainly, there will be many, according to Jesus, in that day,

that will have done miracles, signs, and wonders, even deliverance, but they will be shut out. How is that possible? Well, if we study the life of the apostles, we see that they moved in the miracles and the anointing of God so long as Jesus was there. From Passover to Pentecost, they did not move in the supernatural power, because, plainly, Jesus was the source. In one way of putting it, the apostles, and the other disciples who did miracles, would be likened to deputies of the Sheriff Jesus. They moved in HIS anointing and dominion while He was on the Earth. At His removal from the Earth, the anointing which they carried went with Jesus, although the preparation and the teaching, and even a measure of the Spirit was left (John 20:22).

But, it was at the end of His ministry that Jesus appointed a Kingdom to the twelve (Luke 22:29). With the conference of a Kingdom, a measure of His Kingdom, fulfilled at Pentecost, they were then able to operate in their own measure of power. While never separate from Christ, they were able then to operate in the gifting and the power that Christ provided, separate from His physical presence, through the agency of the Holy Spirit.

This then, draws the distinction between those who merely operate in a gifting, and those who are stable in the House of the Lord. Judas cast out demons, healed the sick, and did mighty miracles, for certain, or there would have been no question who the traitor was. Yet, Jesus called him, not a demon, but a devil (diabolo, in the Greek, John 6:70). He did not have the heart connect, the real love for Jesus. He was merely “working in the ministry” perhaps, and when it looked like he wasn’t going to get his “100-fold” return, promised in Mark 10:30, he thought of going round about



and getting his 30 pieces of silver early, his own way.

But, the distinction is made by Jesus,

*Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.*

*Matthew 7:21*

It is simply those who do the will of the Father that enter the Kingdom. Whether big or small, whether with great power or simply a glass of cold water, those who walk in power, who wish to enter heaven, must seek not their own will with it, but rather, the will of the Eternal. Even as Jesus said, He did nothing of His own, but only what He saw the Father doing. He was a man with authority, and also a man under authority, and He did not entertain His own notion of right or wrong, but merely listened, heard, and obeyed.

This understanding of the Kingdom of Heaven becomes a practical necessity, first of all, through salvation. Many a sinner might think of no need for a savior, or, being of some other religious persuasion, might feel their own religious adherence and devotion to be sufficient to merit whatever particular religious concoction of "tomorrow" might bring. But, it is the realm of the Spirit, the spiritual things, that proves them wrong.

You cannot prove a man a sinner to himself, if he doesn't want to see it. Or, worse, if he thinks his own efforts, his own religious tradition, or his own piety is sufficient to merit his reward, there is little in the realm of mere men that could

convince Him otherwise. But, man was not created thus. Man, as he is now, is dead (Colossians 2:13). How does a dead man see, but through the dirt, and that, not at all?

*For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;*

*Romans 3:23*

And,

*As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:*

*Romans 3:10*

How does a man come to know this?

*And when he [the comforter, the Holy Spirit] is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.*

*John 16:8-11, edited for clarity*

It is the job of the Holy Spirit to bring the truth of God's conviction, righteousness, and judgment to the world. While it is the job of the preacher to preach the word, that faith might come (Romans 10:14-17), the conviction and resulting

conversion is a thing wholly of the Spirit. While the mortal man may try all the while to do this and that, it is the Spiritual New Birth, regenerating the spirit of a man, that makes him whole again.

For,

*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:*

*Ephesians 2:8*

This faith, then, is a Spiritual thing. It is what is accredited to us as righteousness before God, faith in His Son. It is this realm of the Spirit, above and beyond all feelings, thoughts, powers of this present age, and beyond even the elements themselves, that is the basis of the Kingdom.

Consider, for a moment, Jesus walking on the water. Paul correctly identified the object in his own revelation of the Kingdom with these words, "Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances," (Colossians 2:20). Where "rudiments of the world" could also be translated various ways, including "elemental spirits". Ultimately, as much as the Kingdom is ours by Faith (Romans 12:6), and as it is in the will of the Father, we are not subject to the basic laws and ordinances, nor even the rudiments or elemental spirits of this present world. Including sinking in water. Including sickness. Including lack and poverty. Including heartache (Matthew 5:4).

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the spiritual

dimension of this Kingdom that Jesus brought. The accuser of both this line of argument, and of the Gospel of the Kingdom itself, would always try to take the focus away from the invisible, and get it on the visible, to get it on the problem instead of the invisible God, who is the solution. Even as the children of Israel complained in the desert, thinking they were only led there to die, they couldn't see beyond their own circumstances, to a God that was bigger, who brought them through, to bring them out.

Jesus said,

*For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.*

*Mark 11:23*

Modern commentators, including some whom I respect in other areas, have tried to minimize this passage, claiming that Jesus meant “spiritual” mountains, as if “spiritual” is easier. But, really, what is Jesus trying to say? He picked something extremely large on purpose, to show the efficiency of even the smallest amount of uncompromised faith towards the largest of obstacles. He is trying to prove the ordinary by stating the extraordinary, because if you do the great with only a little faith, then anything smaller would likewise be possible. Any attempt to make the “mountain” any less extreme, such as by calling it spiritual, only weakens the argument. And, of course, this goes against the original

purpose of the statement. No, Jesus meant a physical mountain, and the only reason to suppose differently, is, well, to put it plainly, doubt.

That said, I've seen few people who will own up to this scripture, and few, also, who have had the courage to even try. But, of the few that have tried, many attempt to use what they saw as a failure as a reason to discredit or "interpret" this scripture to mean something else. Some have said, "Well, I tried that, and it didn't work", well, obviously, from the scripture, they either didn't have any real faith in their activation, or, undetected and unperceived due to familiarity, they may have had some doubt in there. It shows up in statements or thoughts that follow, such as, "I knew that wouldn't work.", or, perhaps suppressed fears and inhibitions that prevent the fullness of the release of that faith that is in there, which we don't let ourselves even acknowledge, lest we seem to be found lacking.

But, the scripture is there, and it means what it says it means. History shows that people have walked in this kind of power. Perhaps there are few recorded mountains being moved, but, as we have seen, it is not for our own use anyway. The mantle of the Kingdom is to do the Father's will, and Jesus was only stating an extreme case to remove all possibility of confusion. If it were God's will that a mountain be moved, then it certainly would be through faith. But, if it is merely a demon or a cancer to be removed from a body, which certainly seems like a smaller thing moving a much shorter distance, then certainly, the same faith which COULD move a mountain is sufficient to remove that!

So, we talk of the dominion of the Kingdom. This is an

extreme, mountain moving faith. It is not the limit, by any means. If God wanted to move something larger through faith, a mountain is not the maximum. But, for those who would want to discredit or minimize what the Spiritual Kingdom is, we must be aware of the potentials.

What it comes down to is that the Spiritual Kingdom holds dominion over every aspect of creation. It not only dominates over the physical creation through mountain moving faith, for those who find it, and also, walking on water, transforming water to wine, and translation like Phillip in the book of Acts (Acts 8:39), but it is transcendent over all the basic principles of this world, including the elements themselves. Beyond that, it is powerful beyond the exterior, to the inward heart of man. It is efficacious to the righting of every wrong thought, emotion, and a discernment even of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Beyond the physical and the emotional, we also see that it conquers all things in the heavenlies as well, overruling them all.

*That power is the same as the mighty strength he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.*

*Ephesians 1:19a-23*

So, physically, internally, and in the invisible spirit world, both of God and of darkness, Christ is triumphant, and holds complete dominion.

This is to demonstrate, of course, that Christ is the chief among them all, the ruler and the chief amongst the entire world. As Paul wrote in Colossians,

*Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.*

*Colossians 1:15-20*

For what purpose? That in all things he might have the preeminence. And Paul finishes this with the following,

*And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now*

*hath he reconciled In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouable in his sight: If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;*

*Colossians 1:21-23*

The message of Salvation through Jesus Christ alone is the message of the Kingdom, even if it is only the “door”. That is to say, Christ Jesus Himself is The Way, The Truth, and The Life, and no one comes to the Father but through Him. John 14:6. These three titles are said to correspond to the entrances of the tabernacle. The way into the outer courts where the altar of sacrifice was is called The Way. The way into the holy place was called The Truth. And the way into the Holy of Holies, with the ark of the covenant, was called The Life. We do not leave Christ to go to deeper truths of God; on the contrary, He is the entrance into the very depths of God, into the glory of God Himself!

But, The Message is the Gospel of the Kingdom, the whole thing, from outer to inner, and He Himself is our only Lord. It is from the first germination of the seed of faith in the heart, to the growth of produce of faith in the life. The fullness of the Gospel is realized, in this life, through the germination of the Word of Faith in the heart, that grows, prospers, and produces fruit that manifests into this life, through the hearing and obeying of the Word of Faith.



As it is the work of the Holy Spirit in the inner heart of every man, who are all sinners before God before repentance, to bring to them an awareness of their desperate condition before God, this same Spirit-Life-Kingdom, when fully grown, through the agency of faith, produces the very same results in a life that Jesus demonstrated in His.

*He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well."*

*Mark 16:15-18, emphasis added*

The impact of the Gospel is most felt when it is accompanied by signs and wonders following. As Jesus said,

*If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin. He that hateth me hateth my Father also. If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.*

*John 15:22-25, emphasis added*

Even Jesus said that if He had not done among them the works which no one else could do, they would not have had sin. The true, apostolic preaching of the Gospel has always been intended to be accompanied with the witness of signs and wonders following (2 Corinthians 12:12, Romans 15:19).

That being said, we see as “spiritual”, that which pertains to God, the heavens, and His throne. We do not count what the world sees as “spiritual” as anything of the sort, for it is only a fallen, perversity of witchcraft and spiritism, relying the functioning of unclean spirits, of divination, and false prophecies. These are but a counterfeit of the real, and are perverse, demented, and evil concoctions, appealing only ever to the sensual, the earthly, and to the soulical nature of man. But, those who are in Christ are free!

For, there has always been only one true God, and He revealed Himself through Israel, only. The church, as it was told by Paul, is the root of Israel, with some branches broken out, and gentiles grafted in, to make of the two One New Man (Ephesians 2:15).

But, the Spiritual is what is above. It is that true light, the only true light, that comes into the world, that gives light to every man (John 1:9). This is different than allegory or symbol, in that the spiritual is the true, the real, and the Eternal. As it is written, the things which are seen were not made of things which do appear (Hebrews 11:3).

*For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty,*

*not many noble, are called:But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.*

*1 Corinthians 1:26-31*

So, there is allegory, which is mere fable. This does not make up the subject of prophecy or scripture. We deal with Truth, not myth--Allegorization of scripture is never intended. Next, we have the language of symbolism, or prophetic titling. To call Jerusalem Sodom (Revelation 11:8), or to call Rome Babylon (Revelation 17:5) is merely another name to attribute to something. But, to call it by another name merely adds another dimension to our understanding, it does not change the original, and actual, thing that was being named.

And, finally, we have the dimension we call "spiritual". As per above, spiritual is not allegory, and it is not symbol. It is the real, actual, and dynamic dimension of heaven, the place of God's very actual throne, and His Holy Ones.

Do not let anyone confuse allegorization of a passage with a

“spiritual” interpretation. True, spiritual interpretation actually corresponds to the truth of a higher dimension, not lessening the impact of a passage, but heightening it. Not minimizing, but maximizing it.

For example, Jesus read and declared as fulfilled by His appearing,

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.*

*Luke 4:18-19*

In the recorded ministry of Jesus, we never have a record of him visiting a prison, such that “deliverance to the captives” would be preached to those in jail. Yet, spiritually, all men were “captives”. This is not allegory, this is the Truth, as Jesus corrected the people.

*Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?*

*Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.*

*And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.*

*John 8:31-36*

The Jews said that they had never been slaves, but Jesus said that whoever sins is a slave to sin. Even as a sinner, every man, is dead in their trespasses and sin apart from Christ, so every man who sins is a slave to sin. Whether a man is aware that they are damned and destined to an eternal hell has nothing to do with the fact that a just God will judge this Earth, and all the kingdoms and men of it, for what they did in the flesh. In the same way, those who do not know they are captives are some of the hardest to bring to repentance.

*I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*

*Luke 5:32*

The difference between a spiritual interpretation and an allegorical one is the difference between a supreme truth and absolute make-believe.

We agree that the allegorization of the text is a degradation that does not hold the Word of God in high regard. However, a spiritual understanding of things pertaining to scripture is absolutely essential to its understanding.

Without an understanding of Spiritual things, how could one ever hope to understand the wheels of Ezekiel, the Throne Room of Daniel and John, and the many Theophanies

throughout scripture, including the one where all of the leaders saw God and ate and drank (Exodus 24:11). Without a spiritual understanding of these mysteries (we say mysteries because to the un-regenerate) they are foolishness as nothing, we see nothing at all.

God has a throne, and it is real. Much of the visions of Ezekiel, John, and those who saw the heavens, merely saw the scenery and the furniture. Without an understanding of a real heaven and a real throne, we might mistake the scenery for the narration, and attempt to make something of it that we ought not.

It must be understood, that every person who has ever been born, at one point, could not perceive this Kingdom, this dimension. It is only in being born again, that we are able to see and enter. And, as has been said previously, if it is see-able or know-able by the unsaved, it is not God's Kingdom.

So, as we go forward in our discussion of the Kingdom, and the times prophesied by Daniel, Revelation, and the various other passages associated with End Times study, we will continue to understand that the Kingdom remains on high, transcendent, unyielding, and eternally unchanging.

And, if some people's experience with the things of Faith shows to be less than what is expected, dare we take God at anything but other than His Word? He said, plainly, the faith of a mustard seed, without any doubt, could do anything. With God all things are possible (Mark 10:27). Regardless of our apparent results, the proclamation of the Kingdom is Dominion. Yet, to each man according to the measure of his faith.

If we pray, and find we do not witness the results that Jesus promised, we must conclude, meekly, that we either lack faith at that particular juncture, or our doubt and unbelief remain unchallenged, and our love must grow in knowledge and in depth of insight, until we can perceive.

The way up is down, in the Kingdom, and many who are first will be last. The way forward, according to John 3:19-21 is transparency and honesty, of clearly coming into the light, so that our deeds might be exposed. It is in being completely revealed, that we are freed from the power of shame and hiddenness, and can blaze boldly for the Lord.

It is only thus that we can have every dark corner of our hearts cleansed, and witness that full, manifest light like the light of a lamp shining on us, which is His anointing.

It is only in the purity of heart that the dominion of a Holy God is manifest in our lives. It is not our effort, or our struggles, but it is merely the clarity of a pure heart that sees God above all else. As it is written,

*Anyone who loves their life will lose it, while anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life.*

*John 12:25*

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## DANIEL 9

This chapter, most specifically the last four verses, is to most commentators the center-most part of any Eschatology. That is, either in it's importance, or, by contrast, in its lack thereof.

What concerns most study is the last four verses of Daniel 9,

*Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore*

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*and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.*

*Daniel 9:24-27*

That is, 70 periods of seven years are determined for the Jews and for Jerusalem. Seven year intervals made up the Jewish calendar already. Every seven years was kept track of, and in the seventh year, a Sabbath rest was ordered for the whole land. God promised that if they kept it, they would always have enough crops to not sow or reap that year, but they almost never trusted Him and kept this holy year set apart.

So, the idea groups of seven years is not new to the Jewish people. Nor is a subdivision of that into three and a half, as it is merely a common division. The fact that periods of seven, and possibly three and a half show up elsewhere in scripture is not a surprise, therefore, nor should be solid evidence that any time the scriptures mention a period of seven or three and a half years they all refer to the same chronological time period. It is merely God's time clock, and God's sub-division of that clock. It may of course refer to the same time period,

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but merely referring to a common subdivision of time is not in itself a sure guarantee. So, seventy weeks of years, or a total of 490 years, is determined for the Jews and Jerusalem.

As we begin this chapter, we must acknowledge that this is a chapter of much debate and controversy. Not only is the range of interpretation of these verses vast, so too is the actual translation of the text itself. It is a complicated group of sentences, upon which, many students of prophecy have attempted to resolve their study.

What is clear, however, is that Daniel was praying for his people, and God heard and answered. This is the context for the prayer, and the angelic visitation.

The prayer is in response to the prophesy of Jeremiah,

*Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Because ye have not heard my words, Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the LORD, and Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations. Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle. And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the*

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*king of Babylon seventy years.*

*And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations. And I will bring upon that land all my words which I have pronounced against it, even all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations. For many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of them also: and I will recompense them according to their deeds, and according to the works of their own hands.*

*Jeremiah 25:8-14, emphasis mine*

The prophesy given to Daniel lists six road-marks that are to take place in the appointed time:

1.           **To finish the transgression**
2.           **To make an end of sins**
3.           **To make reconciliation for iniquity**
4.           **Bring in everlasting righteousness**
5.           **Seal up the vision and the prophecy**

**6. Anoint the most Holy (the “kodesh kodesh”, same as the “Holy of Holies).**

The seventy “sevens” (490 years as we understand it) are the time in which to do these things. Clearly, this is aimed at Messiah, but the futurist would argue that since the six things outlined above haven’t happened, the seventh week, v27, must be still outstanding. For someone looking at a past fulfillment, however, there was no promise from the angel or God that these would be accomplished, or, at least, that they would be accomplished by ALL of Israel. In fact, Paul describes that certain Jews that were not really Israel, who were broken off because of their unbelief.

*And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree;*

*Romans 11:17*

We must be clear about this. Acts 4:12 says, “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” We know that salvation is to the Jew first, and also to the Greeks, or Gentiles (Romans 2:10), but if some of Israel was hardened that the Gentiles might be brought in, that is to God’s glory. The only way anyone finds salvation is faith in Jesus Christ, for, by grace are we saved, through faith (Ephesians 2:8). It is only through a saving knowledge of Christ, and believing that God raised Him from the dead, that we enter into the life, the Kingdom of God, and wholeness.

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There is a teaching that says the church has replaced Israel. This is hardly the case. The church is grafted into the true root of Israel, and, as Paul wrote, we are “one new man”. Some branches were broken off, and we are grafted into them. True Israel, the offspring of Abraham, are those who believe through faith. God still has a purpose and a plan for the Jewish people, and for the land He promised to Abraham, but it is to His children by faith that His covenant extends.

When we look at the above six road-marks for the time, we see this as exactly the message recorded in the Gospels. We see it as the message of Repentance, beginning with John the Baptist, through Jesus and the disciples, as culminated with the cross.

The cross alone will be the only reconciliation for iniquity (2 Corinthians 5:18), and He is the only “everlasting righteousness” there will ever be. As Paul wrote,

*And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:*

*Philippians 3:9*

As thorough as you want to study the book of Daniel and End Times prophecy, one must conclude, absolutely, that the six things of Daniel 9:24 refer exclusively to the work of Christ on the cross.

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As for the last two, sealing up vision and prophecy are completed also through His death. As John the Baptist signified the last of the Old Covenant prophets (Matthew 11:11-14), so Jesus' death on the cross was the cup of the New Covenant in His blood, making the way for the sealing up of the visions and prophecy of the Old Covenant, and ushering us into what would be the Kingdom, as witnessed by His church (without trying to equate the two directly). And, finally, anointing the Most Holy, while it could be contested, would most likely be the anointing of Jesus Himself.

The fact that all six of these were done, in some measure, by a small handful of the Jews, should not deter us from the idea of a complete fulfillment in God's eyes. After all, when the flood came, there were only eight that were saved. When Elisha was prophet in Israel, there was more than one leper, but only Namaan was cleansed. In the same way, Jesus spoke that many would try to enter, but few would be able (Luke 13:24). However else you want to interpret the ramifications of that statement, we must understand that not all Israel was going to accept Jesus as who He truly was. This was the Gospel, and not all were going to receive Him.

So, the fact that all these things have happened in Israel still leaves us in a question. The futurist says that since Israel didn't accept it, the final "seventh week" has been postponed, while the one who looks at having a partial fulfillment sees no problem with only those who entered the Kingdom receiving, and those Jews who did not believe, who did not come to faith in their Messiah, were broken off to make room for the Gentiles. There is only One Way to the

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Father, and there is only One Door. As Jesus said,

*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved;  
but he that believeth not shall be damned.*

*Mark 16:16*

This is the salvation that is offered to everyone by the true and living God,

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only  
begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him  
should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

*He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he  
that believeth not is condemned already, because  
he hath not believed in the name of the only  
begotten Son of God.*

*John 3:16, 18*

For the Jew first, and also for the Greek, the only salvation there is is through the cross of Christ, and whoever does not believe is condemned already.

The clear evidence is, however, that, for those who believe, these six things HAVE occurred, and have taken place, as is evidenced by our own salvation. The very fact that the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation, Romans 1:16, testifies that I have finished transgression (Romans 7:17), an end has been made of sin (1 John 3:9, 1 John 5:18), reconciliation has been made for iniquity (2 Corinthians



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5:18), everlasting righteousness has been brought in (Jeremiah 23:6, the Lord our Righteousness), vision and prophecy have been sealed up (Luke 16:16, the law and the prophets were until John), and we have anointed the Most Holy, Jesus Christ, the true temple, the living stone, and set Him up on high. So, while the nation as a whole perhaps did not receive Him as King then, the people of the Kingdom have.

Now, concerning dates of the 490 years, there is great disagreement, but they all fall into the same basic requirements. The scripture states that Jesus was approximately 30 years old when he began ministry, and ministered somewhere between 1 and 3 1/2 years. Since we know Pilate was governor for the crucifixion, and we know the date of his rule, we know the crucifixion took place between 26AD and 36AD.

Next, we know from Luke 4 that John the Baptist began his ministry in the 15th year of Tiberius Caesar. This would pinpoint John's ministry's beginning at 29AD, since this is well documented, except for the discrepancy that perhaps Luke was using a different calendar system, which could make it be between 27AD and 29AD. The date of the rule is not in question, but depending on how Luke was marking time, it could have been 27AD.

Next in line for the counting of the 70 weeks is the date of the decree. Historically, there are four dates recorded in scripture that have to do with Jerusalem. Ezra 1:1-4 at around 536BC. Ezra 6:1-12 at around 520BC. Ezra 7:12-16 at around 457BC. And, the Nehemiah 1-2, around 444BC. Sir

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Robert Anderson devised a system “prophetic years”, each exactly 360 days long. By figuring the number of days in 483 years, he calculated that from the decree of 444BC to the triumphal entry, to the day even, was exactly the 69 weeks allotted.

While that is certainly the most dramatic result, it does not, therefore follow, that this counting method is foolproof, as it seems to violate a normal reading of what a “year” is. While it is true that the Hebrew calendar had 12 6-month years, it is a stretch to say that a year is anything other than a year. For, even in the Hebrew calendar, whenever things got off “far enough”, they simply added an additional month. Hence, the difference in the number of days. Sometimes, scripture lists 3 1/2 years as 1,260 days, sometimes as 1,290 days. All this is the same time period, with or without the inclusion of the various “leap months”. It still measures the same interval of time, 3 1/2 years, but gives the added inclusion of where the leap month would fall. But, while it seems to me that years are years, based on the transit of the sun, and anyone would know that, a case has been made thus.

The target of the dates is generally aimed at either Christ’s triumphal entry, where it is said he presented himself as King, or it is said that the 69th week points to his baptism, where the Spirit came upon Him, hence “Messiah the Prince” (v26).

Now, the text says “cut off”. And, while this is a term used of execution, it does not necessitate that this is talking about Christ’s death. In fact, this same word, Karath (H3772) is

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used for circumcision,

*Then Zipporah took a sharp stone, and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast [it] at his feet, and said, Surely a bloody husband [art] thou to me.*

*Exodus 4:25*

Hence, the image, probably, should be that of 2Kings 6:1-2, where Elisha is overseeing the building of the chambers for the school of the prophets, and they needed more space. One man was cutting wood by the river, and the iron ax head fell in. On the instruction of the prophet, a branch was “cut off”, literally, and was cast upon the waters. Then, that which was lost was found. I believe every miracle in the Old Testament was a picture of Christ. Christ, the branch, was cut off, and cast upon the waters (people), and coming to seek such, He restored that which had been lost.

At the end of 69 weeks, probably 29AD, looking at a 33AD crucifixion, The anointed one, the prince, was baptized, where baptism is a circumcision of the heart. It is a cutting away of the flesh. It was at that point, Jesus was set apart from all men (such as John 2:24), He was the anointed one (Luke 4:18), either “not for himself” or “possessing nothing”. Either of these translations fits.

We look at a 33AD crucifixion for a simple reason—the historical record. While many Messianic believers may look at a 31AD crucifixion to have the cross on a Wednesday, not a Friday, hence a literal “three days”, we understand that to be a Hebrew idiom meaning “the day after tomorrow”. In

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the same way that Scripture also says clearly he was raised on the third day. The phrase “the third day” is simply how they put it in their language at that time. Some may want to argue the point, and that’s fine, but history records the darkness of the cross in the “4th year of the 202nd Olympiad”, which is 33AD. This is a unique, supernatural phenomenon, as Passover is always during a full moon, and a solar eclipse cannot occur during a full moon. It is recorded as a super-natural phenomenon by historians of that time, with the duration matching the Biblical account. At the same time, there is a verifiable lunar eclipse at the same time, matching what Peter spoke about the moon turning to blood when he quoted Joel 2 about the outpouring of the Spirit, and, evidence points to a large earthquake of the same time.

It is possible that there would be another possible date for the crucifixion, but as the times indicated, and much evidence suggests a 3 1/2 year ministry of Jesus, probably beginning shortly after the ministry of John the Baptist (within a year or two, certainly, if not a few months), there is a fair amount of certainty that the crucifixion happened, probably in 33AD, as the traditional historical account goes.

So, what of the seventy weeks then?

We look at the decree of Ezra 7, looking around the year 457AD. Understanding that the year of the decree is debatable of plus or minus one or two years, this fits the account close enough. Perhaps it is not as stunning as Sir Robert Anderson’s calculations with 360 day years, but it is nevertheless an accurate portrayal of the anointed Prince coming.

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In this way, after the 69 weeks are complete, we see that Messiah the Prince is “cut off”, baptized, circumcised and cut off from this world solely into the realm of the Kingdom, alone, possessing nothing, leaving a full week (seven years) to go. Now, the rest of the v26 concerns us,

*and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.*

### *Daniel 9:26b*

If it is understood that “cut off” is not the death of Jesus, but the beginning of His, ministry, and if we understand that the Romans are no longer in view after Christ’s rule (see the previous chapter on Daniel 2 & 7), then we must examine both the “prince that shall come” and the “people” of that prince. Dispensationalist thought leads one to see that prince as a coming anti-christ, and, perhaps, it still could be a reference to Titus and the Romans destroying the city, but why at this point in the text? Why is the future destruction of Jerusalem and the “sanctuary”, and the end with wars determined, mentioned after the 69th week?

If we are looking at a purely Messianic interpretation of the text, that is, the Prince in v26 is the same as in v25, which is much more plausible if “cut off” is His beginning, rather than His death, then “the people” of that prince are either the Jewish nation as a whole, or, perhaps the disciples of this Prince, namely, the sons of the Kingdom.

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*Also, in question, is the rendering of “kodesh”. Previous in the chapter, the phrase was used of the need to anoint the “kodesh kodesh”, or “most holy”. Here, only “kodesh” is said. Much conjecture has come that this must mean the “temple” or “sanctuary”, and some go so far as to interpret it to be a “wing of the temple”, but it seems as though they get ahead of themselves, perhaps, in measure.*

While it seems a hard stretch to imagine the disciples causing the destruction of the “city” and the “holy”, there is record of the Jews doing the like. Josephus does record that in the years after Jesus, before the “end”, the destruction of Jerusalem, the following,

*[Y]et were these men that now got together and joined in the conspiracy by parties, too small for an army, and too many for a gang of thieves; and thus did they fall upon the holy places and the cities;*

*Josephus, The Wars of the Jews, Book 4, Chapter 7, 408*

In addition, Josephus elsewhere records that it was the Jews, in their own rebellion, that destroyed the city and temple, and the Romans merely stopped the rebellion.

But, it was from the very beginning of Jesus’ ministry that things began to not be well-received, and even as the prophecy was recorded, even given 490 years, the nation as a whole did not turn to the Lord, but rather stayed in rebellion.

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It is no question that the first 69 weeks are fulfilled. The futurist sees a gap between the 69th week, as well as some preterists. I see no need for a gap, for, by this reading, in the midst of the 70th week, Messiah put an end to sacrifices through His own blood, and, as we read in the last verse of Mark's Gospel,

*And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.*

*Mark 16:20*

Mark indicates that the Lord Jesus confirmed the covenant, the Word, the Message, both before and after His death. Clearly, the signs and wonders continued well after that, and the Lord clearly confirms the Word in like manner today, but, for that full week, for sure, the Word, the Covenant of the Law of the Spirit of Grace was "confirmed", exactly as predicted.

In the end, we read in the second half of v27,

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

*Daniel 9:27b*

This matches the lament of Jesus on weeping over His city,

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*And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.*

*Luke 19:41-44*

Messiah had to die, one life for the good of the people, for the remission of sins. But, had they then believed, and repented, in the time afterwards, surely, God would have spared them. But, it was already foreseen and foretold that they would not. And so, for the overspreading of abominations, because their sins had become so heinous, it was made desolate, even unto the consummation, until that which was determined, what Jesus determined in Luke 19, was poured out upon the desolate. That, until the end, probably 70AD, the city was made desolate. And, then, by 135AD, with the second Jewish revolt, the final end was poured out on that one made desolate, and all Jews were banished from the city and region.

There certainly bears more study into this text, but while the “people of the prince who is to come” could still indicate the Romans, there is little cause to require that. As “the prince



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who was to come” would not refer to a future Roman emperor, it would have simply referred to Titus or another Emperor of the time. And, the people, while it could be considered the Romans, could quite easily be the Jews, who were their own undoing.

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## THE MILLENNIUM

If we look at the Millennium from a Kingdom perspective, we must come to a different conclusion than some. This concept, so often a central theme of so many eschatologies, becomes a different thing when understood in the context of a spiritual Kingdom.

*And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.*

*And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the*

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*souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshiped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.*

#### *Revelation 20:1-6*

Imagine, for a second, what Revelation 20 promises. Resurrected saints rule with Christ for 1000 years. But, we know flesh and blood do not inherit the Kingdom. Neither is the Kingdom visible to non believers. Nor is it of this realm. Nor are the bodies of the resurrection comparable to mortal flesh, other than perhaps in appearance.

This observation of the millennium is of importance, for if we are expecting some other Kingdom than the one promised, we could miss it.

As already stated, the Kingdom of the millennium must be of the same nature as the one that cast out devils. No supposed interpretation of Old Testament promises can ever change the fact that, whatever the Kingdom is, Jesus by virtue of who he is claims “this is that” by his declaration at the beginning of His ministry. Further, He never indicated in His

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earthly ministry that the Kingdom would ever be anything other than what it was then. It is not a spiritual Kingdom now, only to become somehow “more real” by becoming physical. Such logic flies in the face of faith and the New Testament.

The Kingdom, then, is spiritual. The flesh profits nothing, it is the Spirit that gives life.

*And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all? And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. The scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he: And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbor as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him any question.*

“Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God” is probably one of the better compliments that could be given to someone yet without. His heart was prepared, softened, and ready for the seed. We can only assume that such a man heard, believed, and brought forth much fruit, but we are not told.

But, the lessons remains for us. Who is the man closest to the Kingdom? The man loving God and others, hence fulfilling the Law.

What does the Kingdom look like? We must recognize that these are the secrets hidden from the foundation of the world. In such, whenever national Israel experienced a miraculous deliverance, had a judge that brought a great salvation to the nation, it was God’s Kingdom that was in operation.

For example, when the armies were in the wilderness and had no water, the prophet of the Lord told them to dig ditches. They dug them, and they filled with water overnight. When the enemy army saw them, however, they perceived them as filled with blood, not water. In such a way, the army rushed head-long, expecting free plunder, and ran into the armies of Israel.

This is a great deliverance, but it is an early display of the Kingdom of God. The operative influence here was the presence of the prophet, Elisha, on whom was the Spirit of the Lord. Because there was an anointed prophet of God in their midst, they heard the Word of the Lord, mixed it with

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faith, and saw the salvation of the Lord. These ditches, however, whether it was known to Elisha or not, were looking forward to the stripes of Christ. They literally dug the furrows and stripes of the Lord Jesus Christ, which then filled with “living water” for those in the Kingdom, and flowed red with blood for those without, which brought about their unexpected destruction.

With all the miracles of the nation of Israel, they are all pictures of Christ. Because, the prophet, through the timeless dimension of God, looked forward to the Kingdom, and, by faith through the Spirit, brought that Kingdom into the present. Hence, Jesus, in declaring the Gospel of the Kingdom, showed the secrets hidden throughout history, always in operation, but finally established and laid out by the Lord.

In the Beatitudes, Jesus taught His disciples that it was to the Poor in Spirit and the persecuted for righteousness sake that the Kingdom belongs. In this way, every miraculous deliverance, hence entrance of the Kingdom, must be accompanied by likewise conditions. These are the secrets, the keys of the Kingdom, laid out from the foundation of the world, in accordance with the heart of Jesus. You do not get the Kingdom without them, and you do not see the miraculous power of the cross apart from the anointed Word of God, coming forth in the midst of these situations, except as we live, and abide, and have our being more and more in Christ.

This is the “mystery” of the Kingdom. Not some strange hidden form, but the mysteries of God's heart towards the

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broken and persecuted, and His preference of the simple, child-like faith. This is the mystery, that these things have always been the motivation of God's response towards His people. The only difference today is simply that we are all anointed like Elisha to hear, speak, and obey.

So, when we come to the Kingdom in the Millennium, what are we to expect?

First, what does the text actually say? It says that those beheaded will reign for a thousand years. While other scholars include all saints at this resurrection, the text does not exactly say that. It mentions thrones, and those on them, and those to whom judgment will be given, and from this, it is assumed that all believers are in view from context, by those who hold this view. Second, it is not given in the text that all demons are bound, but only the dragon, the devil himself. People make assumptions based on the text, but, the text itself mentions only the dragon.

Now, consider the following quote from the abridged version of Foxxe's Book of Martyrs.

*Maxentius was the last Roman persecutor of the Christians whom Constantine set free after three hundred years of oppression and death. Constantine so firmly established the rights of Christians to worship God that **it would be a thousand years before they would again suffer for their faith.***

*The Tenth Persecution AD 303 – ABRIDGED –*



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*Foxxe's Book of Martyrs*, emphasis added

In this abridged account of Foxxe's book of martyrs, a thousand years free of remembered, religious martyrs is recorded. What is in view here? When Constantine established peace, it appears the murderer himself was cast into the pit. There were various powers, principalities, and sub-governors still on the Earth, and they have continued to try to enslave the nations, but from the time of the establishment of Christianity, no government has been able to take dominion over the entire Earth for one simple reason, the church.

Now, again, not all demons were enslaved, only the "ring-leader". For example, if a mafia group had its leader put in jail, the various sub-leaders would most likely not be able to work together. They were held together by the master-mind, the leadership of the head, and, separate from the head, they cannot operate as a group. Instead, factions, envyings, strife, and all the inner turmoil and conflicts that must come about work their way quickly, and there is fractioning, dividing, and splitting. That which was a cohesive whole, no longer held together by the fear and domination of the head, is broken small, and, ultimately, scattered by the wind.

And, this is what we see. We still see nations, but no nation has ever been able to take control of the whole Earth, as Daniel 2 and Daniel 7 depict. For 1000 years, only the church was a ruling "kingdom" over the world, infiltrating every nation with its influence and government.

It was not perfect. It incorporated politics and the flesh of

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men, and eventually succumbed to the plans of man. And, as it was written, the dragon had to be released. Whether one caused the other, and which one which, at this point, is still merely speculation. But, regardless, the dragon has been released. By judging the time frame of this release, it would then appear that the “renaissance”, with its bawdy, lustful, and filthy literature, it’s sensuality of art and what western civilizations calls “culture”, we understand that this is most understood as the “rebirth” of the serpent previously bound.

What is clear is that from this period, the rebellion started, and men began separating their search for “truth” from God, and hence, modern “science” as we understand it. In a very slow progression (to men, that is), like a step-by-step plan traceable over the generations, you can watch the construction of the evil of Evolution, and it’s false premises. Today, it is so widely accepted, that virtually everyone believes someone else holds the evidence of its veracity, which, when it is studied out, it turns out that no one has any evidence whatsoever that substantiates its claims. The truth is, regardless of how you arrange the various animals of the Earth, present and historical, no fossil is proof of evolution.

From the construction of the “geologic column” before any radiometric dating to the virtual universal adoption of such an notion, despite the circular logic in defining and defending that column, the history of Evolution is a clear marker of the deliberate, intelligent progression of evil from the time of the release of the dragon. Charles Darwin was just one step along the path, but even as he said himself that if his theory was true, that there must be innumerable intermediate fossils in the fossil record, there remains not a single verified

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one. From “innumerable” for the level of time and random chance that is statistically required for such a hypothesis to be substantiated, to, no, not one. Evolution is not science, it is religion, plain and simple.

This is but merely one of the more deadly lies being woven into our culture and minds to undermine truth that has been built in the last few hundred years. The enemy realizes that these measures take time, and these systems of belief and disbelief take time to build and unbuild. A generation does not throw away its foundation overnight, without a great stimulus, and, in the same way, a nation built upon righteousness is not immediately moved into sin. Rather, in every generation, the enemy has sought to find a man willing to sell out for lust, power, pride, or some other trap. Exchanging the offer of Eternity for the temporary and mundane, men have formed societies, and entered into agreement with the deceiver, to whom he, the enemy, has endowed virtually unlimited, yet temporary power.

And, every 50 to 100 years, each generation, we see another step towards the establishment of beliefs such as evolution, in the contrast to truth of the God's Word and of Christ. Evolution is the enemies watermark, because with it, Stalin murdered his hundreds of thousands, and Hitler's Nazi's viewed men as apes and saw no problem with the slaughter of animals. In fact, if it hadn't been the power of the Gospel, the world would be German. During the war, God had raised up a man named Rees Howells, a simple intercessor, who covenanted with a group of others at his school, and prayed a simple prayer, “God, bend Hitler”. That was the one time that Hitler, a demonized man, chose not to listen to his

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voices, and heeded the voice of men, rather than his devils. Had Hitler followed his voices at that time, the very outcome of the whole war very likely would have been different. Men prayed, God moved, and history was changed.

When I think of the Kingdom, there is only one thing I think of, prayer. When I think of governmental intercession, I do not mean praying for the government. That is “prayer for government”. Governmental intercession is prayer that is from the government of heaven, praying for whatever need arises. Whether it is a sore toe, or whether it is the shaking of continents, as the Father leads, it is prayer from a real government, prayed into the Earth, that changes the world.

There is a vanity that says we will always have what we want when we are “in the Kingdom”. That didn’t work for Jesus, and it didn’t work for any of His apostles. Those who want to be first for God, will most likely be last. John the Apostles managed to not die, but it wasn’t for their lack of trying. In this life, there will be persecutions. And, those who are persecuted for righteousness sake are Most Happy, because God is going to show up, which means His Kingdom (Matthew 5:10).

To take a “Kingdom Now” message that eliminates all suffering may appeal to a Western audience where persecution is rare, but it is not necessarily a complete message. Jesus said that all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will have persecution.

But, a man like Rees Howells managed to touch something of heaven that most people do not. He found an entrance into

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the Kingdom, where the God of heaven listened to his cries,  
and moved at the sound of His voice.

*And I knew that thou hearest me always: but  
because of the people which stand by I said it,  
that they may believe that thou hast sent me.*

*John 11:42*

Jesus knew that His every prayer was heard. He didn't show off His power, or mis-use it, but submitted all to the Father. But, in this very verse, He shows His humility, that the Father always hears Him.

Daniel Nash prayed for Charles Finney, and, when Father Nash said the breakthrough had come, after two weeks of covenanted fasting and prayer, Finney came, and without fail, the Spirit of God fell. When Daniel Nash died after several years of their partnership, it was only a matter of months before Finney left the itinerant ministry, because the power was gone.

These men knew what touching the government and Kingdom of heaven was about. These men, when they prayed, saw the Kingdom of Heaven come touch the Earth. When they prayed, God's Kingdom came, and His Will was done, on Earth as it is in Heaven. God's Kingdom and will are established firmly in the heavens. What happens when a man prays is he begins to bring the will of God from there to the Earth. When the power of God touches a person, and heals them, it is because the Kingdom of the Heavens, in which there was no sickness or brokenness, has come upon

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the Earth, even as it is in heaven.

It is a fine thing to know that in the heavenly dimension that things are perfect, peaceful, and in control. But, upon the Earth, we pray, and we pray to see that His Kingdom would be upon the Earth, even as it is there.

Rees Howells and Daniel Nash both found the Kingdom of Heaven, and changed the world through their prayer and fasting. They entered into a “governmental intercession”, praying from the government of heaven, and bringing that authority to the Earth. Surely, if there were no Kingdom, there would have been nothing for them to have connected with. There would have been no power with which they could have moved heavenly powers. There would have been no ability by which they could have affected the Earth.

But, because we have a heavenly Kingdom, any believer can change the world, and anyone with faith can see even the dead raised.

Who rules the world?

*For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*

*Ephesians 6:12*

*For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible,*

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*whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:*

*Colossians 1:16*

Though the enemies' power is overcome through the blood of the Lamb, it is the invisible, spiritual dimension in which the rulership over the men of the Earth has been lorded over them. Whether it is through Masonic or Illuminati type organizations, or through demonized leaders of nations, or evil on the more local level, the enemy finds people willing to partner with him to bring about the wickedness upon the Earth, but it is the unseen, infernal powers of the prince of the air that silently, and occultly blind, enslave, and corrupt the children of men.

While, for a thousand years, there was no one world government over the children of men, the first three beasts did remain though stripped of their dominion. Yet, now, we see such an ambition of evil, and accepted virtue of rebellion become more engrained in the culture. And, through the Media, a more rapid deployment and universal scope of ideas and ideologies, by whomever has the largest voice.

Yet, Eusebius wrote, *concerning the time of Constantine,*

*And besides this, he caused to be painted on a lofty tablet, and set up in the front of the portico of his palace, so as to be visible to all, a representation of the salutary sign placed above his head, and below it that hateful and savage*

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*adversary of mankind, who by means of the tyranny of the ungodly had wasted the Church of God, falling headlong, under the form of a dragon, to the abyss of destruction. For the sacred oracles in the books of God's prophets have described him as a dragon and a crooked serpent;and for this reason the emperor thus publicly displayed a painted resemblance of the dragon beneath his own and his children's feet, stricken through with a dart, and cast headlong into the depths of the sea.*

*In this manner he intended to represent the secret adversary of the human race, and to indicate that he was consigned to the gulf of perdition by virtue of the salutary trophy placed above his head. This allegory, then, was thus conveyed by means of the colors of a picture: and I am filled with wonder at the intellectual greatness of the emperor, who as if by divine inspiration thus expressed what the prophets had foretold concerning this monster, saying that "God would bring his great and strong and terrible sword against the dragon, the flying serpent; and would destroy the dragon that was in the sea." This it was of which the emperor gave a true and faithful representation in the picture above described.*

*Chapter III.—Of his Picture surmounted by a Cross and having beneath it a Dragon, emphasis added.*

As it was recorded, even Constantine made reference to the



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dragon being cast into the abyss. Could it be that today, after the statue has been shattered for near 2000 years, that a dragon has been at work, scheming again, and working over the centuries, to convert and corrupt men to no longer recognize their hearts, their spirits, and their barren condition? That the enemy would work so hard to ingrain such rebellion even into the history that men would even blame the church of his deceptions? This quote from an online encyclopedia actually shows the exact thing in operation.

*The caricature of the period is also reflected in some more specific notions. One misconception, first propagated in the 19th century and still very common, is that all people in the Middle Ages believed that the Earth was flat. This is untrue, as lecturers in the medieval universities commonly argued that evidence showed the Earth was a sphere. Lindberg and Ronald Numbers, another scholar of the period, state that there “was scarcely a Christian scholar of the Middle Ages who did not acknowledge [Earth's] sphericity and even know its approximate circumference”. Other misconceptions such as “the Church prohibited autopsies and dissections during the Middle Ages”, “the rise of Christianity killed off ancient science”, or “the medieval Christian church suppressed the growth of natural philosophy”, are all cited by Numbers as examples of widely popular myths that still pass as historical truth, although they are not supported by current historical research.*

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*Wikipedia, entry "Middle Ages", accessed  
6/20/2013*  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle\\_Ages](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle_Ages),  
emphasis added

Even modern historians point out that most of the claims that the church was teaching falsehood about science is actually untrue. What is the source of this dis-information? The rebellion and rage of a pagan undercurrent that no longer desired to be subjected to the authority of God. Rejecting righteousness, they rebelled, and, in every generation, have found someone willing to propagate the lie. Until today, the lie has become so prevalent, that, even like Evolution, you could prove it empty and devoid of all scientific merit, but, because people prefer the lie rather than face the concept of a creator, they continue in their willful ignorance, their departure from truth and reason, they put on the veil.

So, the world, and even much of the church, believes a lie. They believe a lie because there is an unseen evil in operation, knowing its time is short. They believe a lie, because the deception is so thick. They believe a lie, because their neighbor does, and it sounds reasonable.

But, like Jesus spoke in the wilderness, "It is written..."

What was the Millennium? It was a time of a thousand years when the murderer was in prison. His under-generals were still causing destruction, and the church wasn't perfect, but the Kingdom reigned. Christ was already reigning, and the saints reigned with Him. And, now, we are in a short period

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of time, where all eyes are on Jerusalem.

Time will tell, shortly, if this interpretation is correct. The best thing to do is always to study, showing ourselves approved. The best thing to do is to know the text, so that if I am wrong, or someone else is wrong, you at least know the Word itself. If I start to see the seals fulfilled, I will shortly know that I was wrong and understand. But, If I'm right, and others were wrong, perhaps they will join my view. But, regardless, it is those who know the actual written Word, the whole Word, and not simply the interpretations of men in the popular explanation of End Times that are those who are diligently preparing.

Proverbs 13:10 says that only by pride comes contention. Argumentativeness and debates are not the subject of prophecy. Leave that to the carnal. Rather, we attempt to obtain spiritual revelation and understanding, and, even though we see "something", we then often attempt to interpret what we are seeing through the pattern of our expectancy.

In the same way, it is my understanding that many well-meaning, prophetically gifted people are seeing rightly many things that are on the way, yet, in the expectation of [re-]fulfilling the chronology of Revelation, they rightly make many sparkling discoveries, yet, out of their necessity, they then attempt to fit them back into a text which may or may not originally have been intended to indicate them.

Countless people have been spoken to out of fulfilled prophecies in Isaiah and Jeremiah, and are right in

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interpreting them in the context of the voice of those Scriptures. Yet, historically, and contextually, those prophecies are fulfilled once, and, what God has done, while He does have a pattern, He is not duty-bound to fulfill again.

It is both, whether the revelation itself is correct, as well as how it fits into the scripture in which they say it was intended. Whether or not my chronology is correct or not does not change the fact that the vast array of God's people who have seen the great and dread catastrophes which are coming upon the Earth shortly. They are more than probably seeing portions of the judgment that God is bringing upon this planet. If the only grid they understand, or are willing to use, is the seals, trumpets, and bowls of Revelation, God is more than willing to speak through what we know, though we do not know the full context of everything He is speaking.

But, either way, judgment is coming, and judgments will come upon the ungodly. And those who seek after Him, and who call upon His Name shall be saved.

And, so, with that, we step into the chronology, starting at Revelation 11, my location for the destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD.

## THE CHRONOLOGY

Many preterist approaches have addressed Revelation 6-10, with the seven seals and the seven bowls, demonstrating adequately (with disagreements of course), their correspondence to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD. It is my opinion, that these are the things which “must soon take place” (Revelation 1:1). This is also the “great tribulation”, which of course, in my opinion does not preclude or prevent other horrible atrocities from happening. In fact, I believe there will be more until Jesus comes. However, in my opinion, none have ever reached the level of atrocity of Nero and Domitian’s day. Nothing has compared with that. Sheer numbers do not account for near as much as portion (percentage) of the whole, nor the sheer cruelty and insane depravity of that day.

*And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.*

*Revelation 10:11*

Revelation 10 ends with a new prophetic commission, to “prophesy again”. In my view, this is where John’s prophecy changes. As another commentator points out, very clearly with a literal interpretation, the entirety of Revelation must not be understood as “soon”, because the events after the Millennium in Revelation 20, v7 through the end of the chapter, must, of course, be at least 1000 years from the date of John’s prophecy! That's not “soon”.

In that light, it is a matter of historical inquiry as to whether the chapters of Revelation 12-20, including the Millennium could correspond to specific, literal interpretations throughout history.

Not having any real tools other than the internet, I am not at this point going to claim a 100% coverage of every detail listed in the book. Rather, a “good match”, of 80% or so of most of the key events, as represented throughout the Scripture, without allegorizing or overly spiritualizing key themes. Someone will most likely be quite able to bring out some finer point they think needs to be addressed, and, eventually, I may find a decent answer and issue a revised edition, or what not, but for a study of several years, largely as the Lord leads, and not myself, what I find is a chronology that fits quite well with the text, explains the shift in tone of the book, and leads us through the fall of Babylon, Rome, the statue of Daniel 2 and 4, and ends with a 1000 year reign of the Kingdom through the church, and ultimately, into the very end we see ourselves in now, with all eyes on the land of the Jews, Israel.

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With that said, I am presenting the time line of how I see Revelation, with Revelation 11 being the destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD.

*And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.*

### *Revelation 11:15*

This is a key scripture in the transition. As the seventh trumpet signifies the destruction of the capital of Israel and the physical temple, it marks a transition in the government from the Earthly rule of Israel to Christ, as this verse indicates. Those Kingdoms of the Earth, that by virtue of being God's, Israel was the head and not the tail. With its fall has now become the Kingdom of our Lord and His Christ, and His reign is now fully transferred. No longer is physical Israel the seat of David's throne (not that that was ever truly what was meant), but it is the throne upon which Christ is now seated, high above all authority and dominion. With the passing of Jerusalem and the God-established nation of Israel, things have been transferred, as it were. Consider the parallel between this and David reigning under Saul. David was fully king, the rightfully anointed, yet, it was designated to him by God to wait until the "fleshly" ruler, Saul, had expired by natural means, before the spiritual could take full rightful ownership.. The same prophetic pattern is apparently followed.

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Whether the “time has come” of the rest of the chapter refers to “immediately” or some other thing, is not clear, nor is the full scope of that judgment. While this could be in the immediacy of the fall of Jerusalem, it could also refer to the ongoing scope of the Kingdom, spoken prophetically of the future.

Christian histories record that after the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, in answer to the prophetic warning of Jesus and others, every Christian was saved by fleeing the city before the worst of the destruction came. Perhaps not even a single Christian perished.

Chapter 12 records the dragon cast to the ground, and the woman giving birth to a child. This place of Pella was the place prepared for her. Here, she was able to hide during the tribulation that encountered Jerusalem of this time, notably for a three and a half year period.

Caesar Nero died from a self-inflicted head-wound. Using an “early-date” for the dating of Revelation, or pre-70AD, meaning the temple was still standing, is virtually essential to any “preterist” leaning in interpretation. Other scholars have endeavored to prove this point either way, to which, I will continue to allow them to offer their varying viewpoints. Suffice to say that one historian says that the book was written in the time of Domitian maybe 20 years after the temple’s destruction, and several others quote him, giving the appearance of more historical references than there really are. But, since the latter were all referring to the former, were that first historian wrong, writing many decades after the original fact, it would leave the



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opportunity for an “early-date”.

But, if Nero was the beast that “was, is not, and will be”, then Domitian was the beast back up from the pit. And, in fact, many called Domitian “the beast”, and referred him to as Nero back from the dead. As for the second beast, speculation indicates that perhaps it was the cult of the emperor.

Regardless, the emperor Domitian in his day demanded worship of himself, through a pinch of incense burned in his name, and the declaration that he was “god”. Upon doing this, the worshiper would receive a writ of paper, called the emperor’s “mark”, which would then allow them to buy and sell. These are fairly well documented, historical facts and fit the description given in Revelation.

The Christians, of course, could not, and would not do this, as it is false worship, and we are responsible for every idle word. There is one God, and He is quite worth dying for, and giving everything in this life for. So, they were killed for this. As for the number of his name, the 666 of Revelation 13:18 has been shown to be able to fit both Caesar Nero and Domitian, but it fits Domitian better.

Chapter 13 indicates there is a remnant church that refuses to submit to Babylon. They do not worship the beast, and are willing to die to maintain their purity.

At the end of this chapter, we encounter another prophetic picture, the great wine press of God’s wrath.

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*Another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he too had a sharp sickle. Still another angel, who had charge of the fire, came from the altar and called in a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, "Take your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of grapes from the earth's vine, because its grapes are ripe." The angel swung his sickle on the earth, gathered its grapes and threw them into the great wine press of God's wrath. They were trampled in the wine press outside the city, and blood flowed out of the press, rising as high as the horses' bridles for a distance of 1,600 stadia.*

*Revelation 14:17-20*

It is interesting that the key to something can be sitting right before your nose, and you may not see it until the time that God decides to open your eyes to it. This is why I am satisfied with an 80% fulfillment of the text, at this time. Because, had not the Lord led me, I never would have found these things.

I had the number 135 come up repeatedly. It has had many interpretations, including Hebrews 13:5, a warning against covetousness, for He will never leave us or forsake us. However, this is also a year, 135AD that an important thing happened, which, in my current understanding, corresponds to Revelation 14.

After the destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD, there was a second Jewish revolt 55 years later, under a false Messiah. The Jewish records, however they are to be interpreted,

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record of the leader of this rebellion,

*What was an example of Bar Koziva's great strength? He would block the catapult stones with his knee and hurl them back, killing many soldiers.*

*From Jewish Talmud, Gittin 57.*

He led a rebellion in a city called Betar outside of Jerusalem, which resulted in the brutal slaughter by the Romans of hundreds of thousands of Jews to stop the uprising.

The account of the Bar Koziba's death is fascinating, yet the manner in which he is recorded to have died corresponds exactly to another scripture, often recognized as pertaining to the end-times,

*Bar Koziva became very angry and kicked him [a fasting rabbi], causing him to die. A voice was then heard from Heaven, saying: Woe to the shepherd of the idol, who has abandoned the flock, a sword on his forearm and on his right eye (Zechariah 11:17). You have broken the forearm of Israel and blinded her right eye. Therefore the forearm of that man [Bar Koziva] shall wither and his right eye shall be struck. The Jews' own sins thus brought it about that Betar was captured and Bar Koziva was put to death.*

*From Jewish Talmud, Gittin 57.*

So, here it is, that the "idol shepherd" prophecy of Zechariah

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11, which many associate as a description of the anti-christ of the book of Revelation, is completely, historically fulfilled, even in the Jewish histories. I cannot say that I remember exactly how I found this text, but it was the date of this, coupled with the text of the the abridged Foxxe's book of Martyr's that set some of the context for the historical search for a mostly-fulfilled Revelation. I cannot say I accomplished the finding of these sources, but, rather, they are simply there.

And, while the record of the siege of Betar is fascinating, it is the end of this text that brings sharp focus to the book of Revelation.

*Eighty thousand Romans entered Betar and slaughtered the men, women, and children until blood flowed from the doorways and sewers. Horses sank up until their nostrils and the rivers of blood lifted up rocks weighing forty se'ah and flowed into the sea where its stain was noticeable for a distance of four mil.*

*Hadrian had a large vineyard, eighteen mil [approximately 11.5 miles] by eighteen mil – the distance between Tiberias and Tzippori and he surrounded it with a wall made from the bodies of those slain in Betar. He also ordered that they not be brought to burial. The Sages taught: for seven years the gentiles harvested their vineyards without having to fertilize them because of the blood of Israel.*

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*From Jewish Talmud, Gittin 57, emphasis mine.*

These are publicly available Jewish texts. Yet, the description of the slaughter, outside the city, is the same, excepting, of course, the distance of the river of blood. The image, as I understand it, is not that liquid blood is as high as the horses' nostrils, but it is an image of how high the blood splashes upon the horses as they walk through it. The similarities are striking, yet, where distances are in question, the correct answer is, of course, that the Bible is right, and the Jewish text is wrong. This could very well correspond to Daniel 9:27, that that which had been determined had been poured out on the already desolate city, and all Jews were banished after this point.

After the wine press of wrath through the city of Betar, crushing the last hope of liberation of the Jews, the focus turns towards Babylon. Chapter 15 shows forth the seven vials. As this is a narrative section, not depicting anything that has actually happened, there is not as likely to be a historical marker in this text for what takes place. It doesn't mean there isn't, or that it isn't significant, simply, if you are looking for a historical fulfillment, one would do better to look for the physical things that happened on the Earth, rather than the temple that is in heaven.

Chapter 16 begins the the vials of wrath. Consideration should be given here, of course, of what the purpose of these vials is. Revelation 15:1 indicates that they represent the completion of God's wrath. The context of that statement is not qualified, and, while it is assumed by many that this is against all wickedness, it is my assumption that

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this is referring to the completion of wrath against Babylon, the kingdom stretching back some eight hundred years to a pagan king that Daniel said was “head of gold” (Daniel 2:38, cf Song of Songs 5:11).

So, when then, should we choose to look for the fulfillment of these plagues? If Revelation is a chronology, we would expect to see some kind of fulfillment between, of course, 135AD with the fall of Betar, and the imprisonment of the serpent some time around 300AD with Constantine.

As it turns out, with some understanding, there is such a set of plagues in this time frame that accomplishes the end expected, which is, the final crushing of Rome, or Babylon.

We look, therefore towards the “Plague of Galen”, or the “Antonine Plague”, occurring around 165-180AD. This began a series of various forms of plagues that broke the power of Rome.

The plague itself, perhaps a smallpox of measles variant, decimated the army, leaving 1 in 10. It brought severe destruction and death to the empire. I find no historical record for a sea or rivers turning blood, but it could well be that these are coincided with the disease itself, bringing forth death in the waters from all the dying of the populace. Again, the historical record does not necessarily record a scorching heat from the time period, but, if one were to consider the breakdown of society that the plague was already causing, a severe drought might not stand out as important. A greater historian than myself could, of course, verify such things, but, we are looking for a “probable fit”.

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There is record, however, of the fifth vial, as recorded on an online encyclopedia.

*The epidemic had drastic social and political effects throughout the Roman Empire: Barthold Georg Niebuhr concluded that “as the reign of M. Aurelius forms a turning point in so many things, and above all in literature and art, I have no doubt that this crisis was brought about by that plague... The ancient world never recovered from the blow inflicted on it by the plague which visited it in the reign of M. Aurelius.”*

*Wikipedia, entry “Antonine Plague”, accessed 6/20/2013*

*[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antonine\\_Plague](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antonine_Plague)*

The type of “darkness” is not specified in Scripture, but as it poured against the throne, it could follow that the darkness is an intellectual and creative one. Here, the effect is recorded historically, that from this point, there was a downturn “above all in literature and art”. Literally, darkness had been cast against the throne of the beast. The effect of all these plagues is bringing a “turning point” against the empire, from which, it would never recover. This is both the intent of the plagues, and their effect.

The next plague is, of course, a stumbling block for some. Since when has the Euphrates dried up? Well, historically it has, and that is the point. Cyrus the king purposely dried up the literal Euphrates to destroy the literal Babylon. That is the metaphor that is in use, here. It is a prophetic picture of

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a river, no longer the literal river itself.

Historically, the Euphrates protected Babylon from intruders. When Cyrus wanted to capture it, he went up-stream, and dug a canal to divert the waters, and then dammed it. It is recorded he actually walked underneath the gate to get into the city, once the waters were abated. They never expected the attack.

Yet, so well known is this fact, that the possibility that this is merely a prophetic title for some other thing, most probably another river, must be seriously considered. Even as, when we talk of “Babylon”, we are no longer talking about the original city on the Euphrates of history, but as Daniel 2 shows us, we are really indicating Rome, this gives us strong indication that the “Euphrates” would be interpreted as something other than the literal Euphrates, but, more, as that that which the Euphrates was to Babylon, so, the thing, probably the river, that must dry up, is that to Rome. And, as we study, the issues over the Danube are historical, with the various barbarian and other tribesmen on the border.

The seventh vial simply records a various events. Some interpret these as literal, some as symbolic. Regardless, while searching for such astronomical events is harder through Google, the point is demonstrated that the general events surrounding the Plague of Galen both seem to fit with the literal interpretation, plus the intended effect of these plagues. Through them, a turning point was formed, and the power of the demonic nations was turned. The stage would be set for the overthrow of the dragon, and the breaking of Babylon.



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And, that is what we see next.

Revelation 17 shows us the Mystery of Babylon. This is simply Daniel 2, nothing more, nothing less. Rome is Greece is Media/Perdia is Babylon. Same statue, same head. This empire is that empire, simply a continuation. Little added, little adapted, but an unbroken chain. Any student of prophecy should understand this, and taking it beyond this has little Biblical merit.

Next, in Revelation 18, Babylon is lamented, and its final doom is announced. This is Rome, not Jerusalem, and hence, there could be little case for a full preterist interpretation anyway, as Rome didn't pass away in 70AD.

Finally, Revelation 19 shows rejoicing over and final defeat of the beast of Babylon. Here, it would seem, that the beast does not indicate the specific king mentioned prior, but, as perhaps in Daniel 7, it indicates the demonic kingdom, the spiritual power controlling it.

This of course has ramifications. It means the great marriage supper of the lamb is past. It means the Armageddon of Revelation 16 is a past event, possibly also being a prophetic title for some other place, even as the Euphrates was most likely a prophetic titling, as well. Perhaps this strips some of the "glamor" off the thing. We lose our catchy phrases and slogans. So what? Since when is God interested in fulfilling our soulish, carnal need for buzzword Christianity, anyway? Or doing anything that appeals to the flesh of man? Would it seem like a let down? Good, fix your eyes on Jesus. He's better anyway.

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Yet, ultimately, what is the defeat of a spiritual power over an empire? What does it look like when the demonic power of a nation is successfully broken? As direct as it could be, it wouldn't necessarily be a military overthrow between kingdoms. That was performed between the four kingdoms themselves, without removing each other. Rather, somewhere, having to do with the conversion of Constantine, and the Edict of Toleration of 313AD making Christianity no longer a crime. I believe something of a breaking or an overthrow of the spiritual power of Rome happened.

Imagine this, of course. The serpent, the devil, ran the entire world. He lost his seat, his entire dominion and authority (which he had given to Rome) over the entire world so completely that it took one thousand years simply to get back out of prison to even attempt to marshal his demonic hosts to coordinate his hordes again. What does that look like? Well, to the eyes of Western Civilization, it looks like the dark ages. It looks like chaos and darkness. But, remember, in the book of Judges, the Israelites had no king over them. They were each man doing what was right in their own eyes, and reaping the judgments themselves for their own actions. God was their king, and they weren't subject to the rule of a man.

And, somewhere, in our Eschatological categories, we miss the possibility that, perhaps, a time when there were no great governments upon the Earth, but simply a rock cut out without hands growing and filling the whole Earth might have actually been something special.

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It depends, of course, which verses you ascribe to the Millennium and which to Eternity, of course. That still matters, but that is still in the realm of interpretation of each passage.

But, from the overthrow of Jerusalem to the breaking of the real, spiritual power behind Rome, to the next thousand years, we have thoroughly documented many people and nations, tribes and kingd.

Which, leaves us, most likely, somewhere in the midst of Revelation 20, somewhere after verse 7, nearing or having reached, depending on your perspective, the fulfillment of the time of the Gentiles.

And, that brings us to the Olivet Discourse, the last major stop along the way. As we will see, this too, with one small understanding about the interpretation of Matthew 24:29, leads us to the very same conclusions, with the Millennial Reign having occurred during the midst of the “Time of the Gentiles”.

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## THE OLIVET DISCOURSE

Having laid out a basic chronology of the book of Revelation, which seems to be in line with a perspective of a spiritual Kingdom as described and displayed in the Gospels, we must still yet be aware of the other, various scriptures relating to the end times.

Probably the most important of these is the Olivet Discourse given by Jesus on the Mount of Olives. It is recorded in three separate narratives with more or less the same content (with additions and omissions in each). They are located in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21. The struggles with this discourse, as it happens, fall right on the issue of whether or not these sayings are yet fulfilled.

Much of these passages read today as history. Jerusalem was brutally destroyed in 70AD, leaving “no stone on another”, for as the temple burned to the ground, the Romans then literally took EVERY stone apart to pry the melted gold of the temple out of them, so it was completely dismantled. The

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only thing remaining of the original stonework is the Western wall, or wailing wall, which was not part of any building, but merely used to hold up the dirt. Since Jesus' prophecy was in regards to the buildings, even this supports His prophecy in the exactness of the letter, for the "not one stone", if you read carefully, only applied to "buildings", not the "retaining walls".

The buildings and walls are the first thing in view, however, and the discussion originates from Jesus' statement that they will be overthrown. The disciples, in response to this statement ask Jesus two questions,

*And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?*

*Matthew 24:3*

Now, the disciples asked Jesus two things. First, when will these buildings be destroyed. Second, when will be the end of the world.

We have then several ways to interpret this. First, we could say these are two events quite separated in time, and one has happened, and the other has not. This is my opinion. Second, we could say that the destruction of Jerusalem detailed in this chapter was foreshadowed by the 70AD destruction, but the real one will be much worse, and will be accompanied by the "great tribulation" and will be immediately followed by the second event, the end of the

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world. This is the majority opinion. Third, there are people who say the “end of the world” has already come, obviously going with a lesser interpretation of what that would mean, hence making the entire passage completely fulfilled. This is not a mainline believe, and generally departs from orthodox Christianity.

Now, in support of two events, we must look at the Luke version of the exchange.

*And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.*

*Luke 21:20-24*

In this passage, it is clear that the historical destruction of Jerusalem is obviously in view. In fact, some well known commentators go so far as to say that the Matthew and Mark versions refer to a altogether separate destruction of

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Jerusalem, a future one, and the Luke version refers only to the Historical one. We can be sure that the Luke version is referring to the historical one for the clear reason of the mention of the “time of the Gentiles”. Clearly, we have been in that period, and the restoration of the nation of the Jews to the land of Israel and partially to the city of Jerusalem (although they temporarily controlled it completely after the 1967 war) is a strong indication that these times are drawing to a close. However, it is a bit of a stretch to assume, therefore, that the other two passages must refer to some future judgment.

But, let us also remember the question asked by the disciples before He was taken up into Heaven.

*When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

*Acts 1:6-8, emphasis mine*

They had the Kingdom already, but they wanted to know when it would be restored to the nation as a whole, or, perhaps, when the sovereignty of the nation would be restored. Jesus would not tell them, and, as interesting as



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the concept might be, He said in Matthew 24:36 that He didn't even know Himself some of the times, but that only the Father knew certain times.

So, we can either say, like some, that Luke is talking about a historical destruction of Jerusalem and Matthew and Mark both speak of a future one, or we can assume, which makes more sense in my mind, that these are speaking of the same events.

While you could still maybe argue for two separate events, I believe the best defense of these being the same event is to show that that it is the simplest, without having to do great dis-service to the text. In so doing, simple logic would steer one away from the need to even consider that these would be separate events, since it follows simple logic that they would be one and the same. Without the need for them to be distinct, why would they be?

So, we will look, and, without great effort, we will show that not only does the Olivet Discourse fit well into the previously detailed chronology, it should come as a passing notion that these three passages are talking about the same discussion, and that they all point to the same two things happening.

What we must realize, then, however, is that there ARE two things being talked about, with a period of time called the "Time of the Gentiles" in the midst. Jesus Himself said that He was not informed of the times, that only the Father knows.

If the events of 70AD fulfilled much of the text, then this

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leads us towards a comfortable explanation of that difficult passage (for some) of “this generation” not passing away until these things are accomplished. However, we immediately run into complications.

You’ll notice in Luke’s account of the destruction to the buildings, the city will be trampled down until the time of the Gentiles is fulfilled (v24). However, Matthew’s Gospel reads differently.

*Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.*

*Matthew 24:29-31*

Here we have the crux of the issue with the Luke vs Matthew/Mark paradox. Luke says there is an age between the apparent events, and Matthew says “Immediately”. This, indeed, too, is the lynch-pin, if you will, of many eschatologies in pinning down various events.

If one wants to say that the events of 70AD accomplished

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the “great tribulation”, as described in scripture, then, Matthew 24:29, above, seems to indicate that it should have been immediately followed by Christ’s glorious return. This creates a major stumbling block, and, indeed, I delayed study of this passage, simply because I could not seem to make it fit. I was content to make several conclusions, but when it came to the clear verbiage of Matthew 24:29, it seemed that the great tribulation must be immediately succeeded by the visible appearing of Christ, in a finality that no amount of allegory or even spiritualization could ever satisfy me with.

But, the solution appears to be in the word “Eutheos”, or “Immediately”, used by Matthew.

[\*\*\* For a more in depth look into this text, including this word Eutheos, please see the article on the subject by Ted Noel, author of A Primer on the Book of Revelation, in the Appendix at the end of this book.]

The transliterated Greek for “Immediately after” is “eutheōs de meta”. The phrase would mean, literally, “immediately, but after [the tribulation]”, but it is the word “eutheos” that must be examined. Now, while most modern translations interpret this word as “immediately”, the actual Greek word (G2112 -εὐθέως) is derived from the word meaning straight (G2117 -εὐθύς). This is the same word that is used when the disciples receive Jesus into the boat, and they “immediately” reach the other shore (John 6:21).

What happens in translating from one language to another is that the nuance of a word can subtly shift, or be altered. Consider the largely out-of-use word, “straight-way” (as

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opposed to straight-away). This would be likely be a closer fit to the word used, but it is not common in today's vocabulary, so it is translated to something else.

But, as with the case of the boat reaching the shore, I do not see this as a miraculous transportation of the boat to the other shore (although I had begun to take it that way until I had heard this). As another student pointed out, in every other case of a miracle, the Gospel of John clearly labels it as such, but that is not present in this case. Rather, what this word seems to indicate, both in John 6:21, and so likewise in Matthew 24:29, is a sort of "Next", without implying any duration of time. That is, Jesus got into the boat, and nothing else important happened until they got to shore. It wasn't a transportation of the vessel, as that would have been noted, but the use of the word *eutheos* merely denotes a narrative cue, that the next thing, in a "straight course" from here to there, was this thing, but with no inherent indication of the time taken to get from here to there.

Because there may not be a close enough English word to match the concept of *eutheos*, or "next in the sequence of events, straight on to this one, but not necessarily implying a duration of time", translators have done their best to supply a word, "Immediately", which adds the time dimension in English. But, with the boat and, possibly with some of the miracles, our perception of what that time frame is might be wrongly influenced by the use of the English word "Immediately".

But, if like the boat ride, the word in v29 indicates merely "next in the sequence of events", we no longer have the

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need, from this verse, to require the second coming to fall in the wake of the great tribulation. If just this one word had been changed in translation, then we can look again at the correlation of the three passages, and find that “this generation” does speak of the events of 70AD, while the text then makes a distinction for that other event which would yet come, apparently at least 2000 years later. And, this is, in fact, what it does.

So, let us lay aside the need for “Immediately” to imply a time dimension, as it does not appear to be required in the original use of the word *eutheos*. I encourage the reader to make a study of the word yourself, and draw your own conclusion. What I find fits quite well, and brings together many difficult passages.

What we have, then, are two distinct events, detailed by all three passages. They are, the destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD, and the end of the world, or the second coming. These are the two questions that were asked of the disciples. In between these two events, then, we have the “time of the Gentiles”.

Jesus said in Luke that there would be an age in between the two events, and that He Himself did not even know the hour. This also would lend credence to the idea of “immediately” not implying time. But, as Jesus describes the events of Jerusalem, He adds to them at the end, saying that this generation would not pass away. But, we must remember, whether they understood it or not, the disciples were asking about two, totally separate events (Jerusalem in 70AD and the still yet to come end). So, we make note of Jesus’

language.

Matthew 24:29 could read closer to, “The next thing of importance in the sequence of events that will happen, after the tribulation is done, is that the sun will go dark and the moon will not give its light. And then, talking now about the future time, He is no longer talking about the time related to the destruction of Jerusalem. In all the cases where He is talking about the future end of the world, there is always a clause to set it apart from the other. Such as, “in those days”, “at that time” (as distinct from the time of the fall in 70AD). In all cases, the details of the second event are always parenthetically separated from the “this generation” ones.

For example, in Luke’s account, v24 clearly interjects the “time of the Gentiles” between the two. Whereas Luke 21:20-24 clearly talk about Jerusalem, Jesus now shifts to a time that He admittedly doesn’t know the time of, saying “And then”, meaning at that future time after the time of the Gentiles.

In Mark 13:24, it talks again about “after” the tribulation of those days. What proceeds next is a parenthetical explanation of the coming end of the world, separate from the tribulation. It is a parenthetical look at a time to come, before coming back to close the dialogue and say that “this”, meaning all the destruction of Jerusalem, not the end of the world, would happen within a generation.

Clearly, the Luke passage, when taken parallel with the others, depict two elements separated by a time dimension

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of the Age of the Gentiles. Taking away the “time” element from Matthew 24:29 allows these two separate events to stand side-by-side, even as they were asked.

What the outcome of this is, is that the tribulation mentioned in these passages, then, is already completed, and that in the generation as perfectly predicted, while the second-coming, fully qualified and set apart, from them and multitude of angels, and the throne of His glory have obviously not.

This clearly indicates that the “great tribulation” is past, and was accomplished in 70AD. And, while this trial will not be surpassed, it has not prohibited the atrocities of WWII and the Nazi's, or Stalin, or any of the wicked men through history. As stated previously, the numbers of those killed certainly surpassed the days of Jerusalem, but not the degree of trial. If we consider not just numbers, but portion (percentage), plus level of cruelty and wickedness, no leader in history has topped the tribulation of those days.

In all the cases, “this generation” refers to the events of 70AD, and, when read with an eye for the Gentiles between them, it can be clearly seen that He first talks about the destruction, and letting then, parenthetically, always mentioning “at that time” referring to the undisclosed time in the future of the end.

So, the Olivet Discourse, understood this way, agrees perfectly with history, with a portion yet unfulfilled which did not fall under the mandate of “this generation”. This fits the pattern of another prophecy, notably Ezekiel 26, wherein

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Ezekiel predicted the overthrow of Tyre, but the complete fulfillment of that one prophecy was over the course of two separate leaders (Nebuchadnezzar and Alexander the Great), hundreds of years apart. Though an initial reader might not mark the language denoting two separate leaders, it is there in the text, and history records a perfect fulfillment of the text as such.

So, too, here, simply understanding that the “immediately” is probably not inherent in the text, but is a product of translation, we see that we have completed much of these scriptures exactly as proscribed, and we await the glorious returning of our Lord.



## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Revelation appears to be an altogether straightforward and largely fulfilled prophecy, leading us to the present time. It by and large happened happened consecutively over the 200 years after it was given.

It is not totally fulfilled, of course, and so we wait for our blessed hope, Jesus' soon returning.

Now, there are bound to be detractors--You can't have an opinion them. There may be 10 people with 20 opinions, but regardless of whether anyone is actually right, we need to never forget that there IS a right answer.

There are, of course, many holes in my interpretation. Some are simply available in larger preterist teaching, and it is not my intention to supply what is readily available for someone with actual interest and energy to research it themselves. Some things, like the ten horns of Daniel 7 have sufficient explanation in the Caesars of Rome, and others, with much

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better scholarship, have covered these topics in some depth, in resources that are freely available online. Some issues, like the two witnesses, I simply have no complete answer to at this point. I do not side with those who say it is “the Law and the Prophets”, or several other interpretations. I have my ideas which will be worked out over time, but, for what it is, I believe this synopsis adequately captures what I feel is the literal interpretation of the book, and its primary intent.

Oddly enough, I do not have a problem with concepts as the rapture or certain other element, necessarily. As previously stated, many a prophetic person has received true revelations, only to then fit it into the framework they are already expecting. There may be a rapture, there may not be, but the question is, is that what Revelation was really written about?

In that way, many have also seen coming judgments, destruction, and trials, and have translated this into the context of Revelation. We interpret what we receive in the frame of reference we understand and expect. Whether there are coming judgments, and it is clear that there are, and the issue of whether they are the judgments of the book of Revelation are two separate issues. Yet, God even speaks of the coming judgments in regards to the past.

Put frankly, with the current level of receptivity and prophetic awareness of the body of Christ as a whole, if there were no book of Revelation, then all prophecies of any sort of coming judgments would be treated with contempt (1 Thessalonians 5:20). Without a framework such as Revelation, if men tried to bring forth their revelations

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regarding judgments and calamities soon to come upon the Earth, many would find little footing upon which to “justify” their claims . So, too, it is not surprising that there should be mystery surrounding this book, even if it is as simply fulfilled as I put it. Yet, while it may be yet used for our good, it in itself would not change the simple fact of whether the book has been fulfilled or not.

Of course, it could turn out that they are right. I know I am right about the nature of the Kingdom, and that has led me, with little option for variance, into this interpretation. It could be that others are right on parts, or that all were wrong and God has something different and altogether more wonderful. But, as we ask, have we studied and been approved?

As for me, I am convinced more and more of this position. Not only does it fit the nature of the Kingdom, but it fits the expectations and character of the Old Testament. It requires and imparts faith, and speaks of the Eternal Kingdom, visible only to the Believer, as per John 3:19.

As it were, we were never, in the New Testament, promised a physical Kingdom (quite the opposite). Yet, from the proclamation in Mark 1:15, we must conclude either that Jesus is saying that the Kingdom He is presenting is the one prophesied in the Old Covenant, or He is a deceiver, considering who He is and what He represents to the people and the nation of Israel.

What is promised, however, is a Kingdom that will never pass away, and to the degree that we possess it, it will never be

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given to another people, for we shall never taste of death. What we have, or at least have access to, is a Kingdom that supersedes anything of this Earthly realm, as the least in the Kingdom is greater than even John the Baptist, the greatest born of woman.

Literally, if we believed in the Kingdom, we could change the world, permanently and Eternally. Yet, we must never uncouple that from what that practically looks like. Plainly, in this life, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus shall face persecutions. We must never divorce the glory of the cross from its shame.

Some would say, the Kingdom is Now! Well, maybe. I would prefer to say, The Kingdom is Here. If you want it, that is. But, for Jesus, that Kingdom was a cross, and whoever wants to follow Him, must be where He is. He is near the weak and broken, and He extends His Kingdom to those like a child. Does a mostly fulfilled book of Revelation mean city-wide revival and cultural transformation? It could, under two conditions—that God's men and women lay down their lives, and that the people to whom they are sent repent. Even Jesus didn't get Jerusalem to repent, having done nothing wrong, and the city was razed to the ground because of it.

The Kingdom always looks like the role of a servant, for the nature of the Kingdom always looks like love. And, it is a love that requires more than a little bit of surrender and sacrifice. For, as it is written, though he was like God, He humbled Himself and became in the fashion of a man, taking on the role of a servant. We should all do the same. And, if city transformation is to come, it will always look thus. For,

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they shall know we are Christians by our love, not by our bank accounts or big ministries, or even our nice Christian T-shirts.

The Kingdom, while in our hearts, is bigger than our hearts. Though none believed the Gospel, God's Kingdom would not be diminished. Yet, of the increase of his government and peace, there shall be no end. If God is Spirit, and Spirit is Eternal and flesh is not, why would we expect anything less or different of God?

There is, of course, a future aspect of the Kingdom. Peter said he was a partaker of the glory which was to come (1 Peter 5:1). There will be a time when the wicked will be destroyed, and the only Kingdom there is will be the perfect Kingdom, the heavenly one, without the presence of evil, in a new heaven and a new Earth. But, the darkness in no way has diminished the presence of the light, even as the wheat are 100% wheat, and the tares are 100% tares. There is more to come, and it will be even better than this, but what we have been given is the Kingdom, in whole and not in part. It is spiritual, but it always intersects the physical. Even as Adam stood as a perfect man in the Garden at creation, taking dominion and subduing the Earth, so will we be then, in just measure.

Other than a few holes, it seems to me that this resolves many of the textual difficulties present in some other views, and brings into clarity God's foresight and plan in and through the church over the past few thousand years.

The plain layout of the ages, from the institution of Babylon,

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it's strengthening through the breaking of the wooden yoke off of the neck of Jeremiah resulting in an iron one, through it's continuation through the ages as "Mystery Babylon" is countered by a similar reign of a better Kingdom. Much as Ishmael had twelve tribes a generation before Jacob did, the works of the flesh often come "first", only to be superseded and removed by the true, pure work of the Spirit.

So, in this outline of age of "the man", meaning, the statue of the man of Daniel 2, we see it defeated, and cast down by the "image of the invisible God" (Colossians 1:15). Even as King Nebuchadnezzar set up an image and said, "bow down and worship this or be thrown into that fiery hot place, the furnace", so God the Father, at the cross, set up His Image, Jesus Christ, and said, "Bow down and worship this, or be thrown into that fiery hot place, ghenna", where the fire is not quenched, and the worm dieth not.

Nebuchadnezzar saw, through divination as it were, the coming judgment, and recreated it to his own lust and glory. Yet, the true was coming. And, even as Nebuchadnezzar was the head of gold according to Daniel, it is Christ Jesus who is the true head of God. As it is written, "What is thy beloved more than another beloved, O thou fairest among women? what is thy beloved more than another beloved, that thou dost so charge us? " (Song of Songs 5:9).

The Kingdom is Here, and it is proved every time a demon is cast out. We are not waiting on something new from God, He has already poured it out. And it costs something. No, it costs everything. To those who believed, to them gave He power that they might become sons of God. It's up to us to

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keep on walking, and to do something with what He gave us. It doesn't have to be great things, in the eyes of man, but it has to be something. And, the only thing that pleases God is faith, and in that faith, obeying what we hear Him speak.

Jesus went about doing the works of the Father, and that was the works of the Kingdom. He only did and spoke that which was directly from the Father, and in that, never faltered nor was discouraged until He established justice in the Earth (Isaiah 42:4).

But, what of us? Seeing we have such great and precious promises, let us press on to the mark of the mark of the High calling of God in Christ Jesus.

The call to Revelation is the call to the Gospel, for, as the man who found the treasure in the field, once He saw it, He was compelled by the desire itself. He didn't have to work up the effort, and surely, every man considered him a fool. But, foolish only is the man who, having seen the treasure, and having sold all, does not straightway buy what he has pursued.

If the Kingdom is a seed, then faith is all there is. For, in the single seed itself is the largest of oaks, and it needs nothing otherwise added.

Blessed is he who is not offended (Luke 7:23, paraphrase).

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## APPENDIX

The following is a more thorough look at Matthew 24, including the treatment of the word Eutheos, “Immediately” in Matthew 24:29. It is used by permission of the author, Ted Noel, and is available at his web site, [www.BibleOnly.org](http://www.BibleOnly.org). Ted has also published a book on Revelation entitled, A Primer on the Book of Revelation. Its inclusion here is in no way an endorsement of Mr. Noel nor of all of his viewpoints, but is merely presented here on its own merits, based on its treatment of the Olivet Discourse.

The original article can be found here:

<http://bibleonly.org/prophecy/43-miscellaneous-prophecy-studies/410-matthew-24-a-structural-analysis>

## **Matthew 24: A Structural Analysis**

"When will all these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?" Matt 24:3

### **Author's note:**

This paper is the preparatory form of a paper planned for publication. It is simply exegetical, while the final form will include a considerable amount of scholarly interaction. In its present form it has been reviewed by several professors of Greek who have pronounced it good. (Note: Web fonts do not completely accurately reflect the proper transliteration of the original Greek text. Please consult a good Greek source for details.)

### **Thesis:**

The Olivet Discourse as presented in the Gospel of Matthew is a response by Christ to two separate questions from His disciples. It addresses both near and far events. The disciples did not understand that their questions were about separate issues. Christ's response addresses the two separate issues in such a way as to clearly separate them.

### **Synopsis :**

The Olivet Discourse, particularly as presented in the Gospel

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of Matthew, appears to present the interpreter with a difficult problem. In particular, Matthew 24:34 appears to require that every element of the Discourse be fulfilled within the lifetime of the generation that heard Jesus speak. Matthew 24:29 seems to require the Day of the Lord to take place at the destruction of Jerusalem in AD70. Numerous critics have pointed to these difficulties as an excuse to regard Christianity as a false belief system, since elements of the Discourse "clearly" have not been fulfilled within the prescribed time, implying that Jesus was a false prophet.

The best-known systematic approach to the resolution of the "problem of non-fulfillment" is Preterism, which basically declares that all of the Discourse **was** fulfilled in the AD70 destruction of Jerusalem, within one generation of its delivery. Other systems, such as Dispensationalism, have not to my knowledge presented a detailed analysis of the Discourse that resolves the difficulty of "this generation." Instead, they tend to rely on arguments about the semantic domain of **genea** while ignoring contextual issues. If context is considered, it is asserted that "this generation" is the generation that sees the signs of the **parousia** Jesus describes. Historicism has done little better. Of note here is the fact that ancient interpreters, in particular the Ante-Nicene Fathers, appear to be completely unaware of our modern difficulty.

The currently available explanations are generally unsatisfying. This paper will attempt to resolve the "problem of non-fulfillment" by means of structural analysis based on the pedagogic elements of the Discourse, separating it into near and far components. A critical translation issue in 24:29

will be addressed.

This paper will not deal substantially with the parallel accounts in the Gospels of Mark and Luke, nor will it attempt a detailed exegesis of the prophecy.

## Lexical Keys:

The Olivet Discourse was delivered by a native Aramaic speaker, but was recorded in Greek. Therefore, we may be certain that when the Holy Spirit inspired the apostolic writer, He led him to a careful choice of words in this second language. The writer used several key words and phrases that are critical to our understanding. Our first task is to examine these in isolation to determine their meaning before we attempt to use them to understand the Discourse as a whole.

### **Sunteleia tou aionos**

This phrase translates as "the end of the age." It has been the subject of a great amount of discussion. Does it mean the end of the Jewish age as some suggest? Does it mean the end of the age of sin as others propose?

The word **sunteleia** comes from the root word **telos**. Both of these words properly translate "end," or "conclusion." But if there were no substantive difference between **telos** and **sunteleia** in Greek, there would be no literary reason to use both forms in the Greek account of the Discourse. This suggests that the author's use of these two forms is intended to convey a substantive difference in meaning.

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**Telos** differs from **sunteleia** primarily in the addition of the prefix **sun-** (or **syn-** in some references) to the root. This prefix denotes a "combining together." Matthew uses **sunteleia** five of the six times it is used in the New Testament. In every case, the form is **sunteleia tou aionos** , the "end of the age." [1] In the parables of the tares (Matt 13:36-42) and the pearl of great price (13:45-50) this term explicitly describes the time when the wicked are "thrown into the fire" (13:42, 50) and the righteous remain. Jesus says that the "field" (13:38) is the "world" (Gr. **kosmos** ), a term Matthew uses in a universal sense. [2]

In chapter 28, Jesus says that He will be with the apostles "always, even unto the end of the age." Since we know that John lived past AD70 (Irenaeus, **Against Heresies** , 2:22:5) , either the end of the age was after AD70, or Jesus was no longer with John after AD70. The latter option is ludicrous, so the end of the age is at some point after AD70, at least in Jesus' mind. Since He had used the phrase to teach the disciples long before the Olivet Discourse, we may be confident that the disciples were using it the with the same meaning that Jesus did. That is, "the end of the age" specifically refers to a time when God's universal judgment rewards the saints and punishes the wicked. Because of its limited and specific use, it should be regarded as a technical term. [3] The **sunteleia tou aionos** ends the cursed world that resulted from the Fall.

## Parousia

The disciples ask about Jesus' **parousia** in 24:3, and Jesus uses the same word in His answer later in the Discourse to

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identify His subject. This word, used in isolation, merely means "arrival," "coming," or "presence." Our task is to determine its meaning as applied to Jesus.

In 1 Corinthians 15:23-26 **parousia** identifies the time when Jesus abolishes "all rule and all authority and power." Death is one of the powers to be destroyed. Since people still die, Jesus' **parousia** has not occurred. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 echoes this theme. There, Jesus' **parousia** is accompanied by the resurrection of dead saints. There is no evidence that this has happened, so we may again be confident that Jesus' **parousia** is still in the future. Of particular interest is the discussion in the immediately following verses that the **parousia** is also the Day of the Lord, when Jesus will destroy all His enemies (cf. 1 Cor 15:23-26).

Other passages mention Jesus' **parousia** , but they have contested interpretations.

### **Pasai ai phule tes ges**

This phrase means "all the tribes of the earth." It is used seven places in scripture. Five of them are in the LXX.[4] In Genesis 12:3 and 28:14 the usage is identical. The Hebrew says that through Abraham and Jacob "all the families of the earth" would be blessed. The Greek translators substituted "tribes" for "families." Since the gospel, by which "all the families of the earth will be blessed" is to go to "all the nations" (Matt 28:19), the phrase means "every people group on the earth."

In Amos 3:2, God speaks to the "sons of Israel. the entire

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family which He brought up from the land of Egypt." He declares that, "You only have I chosen among all the families of the earth." This is reminiscent of choosing Abraham from among the pagans in Chaldea and the rest of the world. And the intent is exactly the same. Every people group in the world is in view in the term in this passage.

Psalm 72:17 substitutes "all the tribes of the earth" in Greek for the Hebrew "all nations." [5] The context of the passage indicates that the Hebrews are included, so the term again means "every people group on the earth."

The final use is Zechariah 14:17. The Hebrew is slightly different from the others, using **ha are** (the land) instead of **ha adamah** (the world). But the meaning is the same. If any "family of the land" does not come to Jerusalem to worship, they will receive no rain. The context declares that the former enemies of Jerusalem will come to celebrate the Feast of Booths, so these people are Gentiles. The Hebrews were already commanded to come to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast (Deut 16:16), so the term means every people group in the world.

In every Old Testament case, **pasai ai phule tes ges** means "every people group in the world." There are no exceptions, and no caveats. Because New Testament writers use Old Testament quotations to import the Old Testament meaning into their writing, we may be completely confident that this is what it means.

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The phrase "four winds" occurs eight times in scripture, including Matthew 24:31. In Daniel 7:2, 8:8, Ezekiel 37:9, and Zechariah 2:6 it is used as an understood term, and does not help us. But Jeremiah 49:36 is particularly descriptive.

And I shall bring upon Elam the four winds, From the four ends of heaven, And shall scatter them to all these winds; And there will be no nation To which the outcasts of Elam will not go.

The inhabitants of Elam will be scattered "to the four winds." They will be in every nation. This means that there is no geographic limit to the four winds. They cover the entire world. When we look back at the other uses, they are consistent with this meaning.

In Mark 13:27, this understanding is confirmed.

And then He will send forth the angels, and will gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest end of the earth, to the farthest end of heaven.

The four winds extend to "the farthest end of the earth, to the farthest end of heaven." In other words, there is no place a man can go that is not covered by the four winds. And we should note that this is an expanded quotation of Jeremiah 49:36 (LXX), so the rest of the meaning of the phrase in that text is brought in by implication. The four winds extend to every nation. Matthew 24:31 is also an expanded quotation from Jeremiah.

**Ho ouranos kai he ge**



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"Heaven and earth" is the usual English rendering of this phrase. It occurs eighteen times in the LXX. It is literally "the heaven and the earth" and is used to translate "(the) heavens and (the) earth" from the Hebrew or Aramaic. The first instance (Gen 14:19) sets the tone for the rest. There, God is described as "creator of heavens and earth." There can be no question about the reference. This looks back to Genesis 1 and God's work in creating the physical universe, in particular this world and its local "heavens." In every other case in the Old Testament, this is the meaning of the term. We may suggest that the article is added in the Greek to emphasize the Creation origin of the "heaven and earth."

Exactly one Old Testament passage has the possibility of being read differently: Jeremiah 51:48. There God declares that "heavens and earth" will rejoice when Babylon is overthrown. Some have suggested that this is a symbolic description of celebration by Jewish leaders. More likely is a metaphorical personification of nature, much like Deuteronomy 4:26 and 30:19, where the term clearly denotes the physical heavens and earth. This is consistent with numerous Old Testament passages where trees (Psa 96:12, etc.), mountains (Psa 98:8, etc.), and other natural features "sing" and "rejoice." Thus, this passage, like every other Old Testament passage using **ho ouranos kai he ge** , refers to the physical heavens and earth.

## Analysis

### The Questions:

The Discourse begins with the disciples admiring the Temple

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in 24:1. Jesus responds that, "all these things. will be torn down" (24:2). So far, there can be no dispute as to the subject of conversation. "All these things" ( **panta tauta** ) describes the Temple and its immediate surroundings. The parallel accounts in Mark and Luke confirm this. The disciples respond, "When shall these things ( **tauta** ) be?" (24:3). Once again, there is no dispute as to the subject of the query. It is the Temple.

If the disciples had stopped there, there would be nothing to dispute, but they didn't. They asked another question, "What shall be the sign of your coming ( **parousia** ) and of the end of the age ( **sunteleia tou aionos** )?" This has led to a raging debate. Is that really a second question? Or is it a continuation of the first? Did the disciples expect the ultimate denouement of history with the deliverance of Israel (cf. Acts 1:6) to happen at the time of the destruction of the Temple? Curiously, the parallel accounts record a slightly different question that does not lead to this argument, so they offer no help here.

The structure of Jesus' argument indicates that the disciples **did** misunderstand what He had been trying to teach them. They had misunderstood many things in the past, and would continue to misunderstand until Pentecost. Their misunderstanding led them to ask a two-part question in 24:3, thinking both parts were integral to the same issue. Jesus' answer, on the other hand, is not constrained by their confusion.[6] He speaks as a rabbi, explaining to his disciples that the parts of their question are indeed different, both in nature and in timing.

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Jesus begins with a direct, personal instruction, "See to it that no one misleads you" (24:4). The Greek is quite clear that His statement is directed to the disciples, not some later, unidentified group. Thus, we may be certain that whatever He is discussing is germane to the disciples. And in verse 6, we see the first appearance of **telos** .

### The Discourse - AD70:

Jesus explains that there would be false Christs and wars, but this is not **yet** the **telos** (v. 6). These signs to be seen by the disciples are leading to a different "end" ( **telos** ) from the **sunteleia tou aionos** they asked about in verse 3. His arrival to reward the saints and punish the wicked (cf. 13:39) isn't in view. This is our first verbal separation between AD70 and Jesus' **parousia** .

We must pause for a moment to emphasize the implications of this. If we are correct in identifying a difference between the **telos** and the **sunteleia tou aionos** , then whatever the events of the **telos** are, they will not include the destruction of the wicked and the rescue of the saints. As noted earlier, the **sunteleia tou aionos** will end the era of sin.

Through verse 9 we see the recurrent use of "you" (2 nd person plural) indicating that the discussion is still up close and personal. Verse 10 begins with "at that time" ( **tote** ), again indicating a continuation of events that the disciples will see.

In English, verse 13 appears to many to be directed to a **parousia** in the distant future, even though it is tied verbally

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to the near events. But it is presented as the immediate result of those near events, so we must look at it carefully.

Matthew 24:13 But the one who endures to the end, he shall be saved.

What is "the end?" Is it the "end of the age" (24:3), as the distant future view seems to require? "The end" here is **telos** , not **sunteleia** . When used as it is here, it speaks of the conclusion of a single series of events.

In a modern parallel, a presidential candidate will campaign in order to be elected. His election is the **telos** of his campaign. In contrast, hundreds of election campaigns could lead to the assumption of power by a party different from the one in office. This would be the **sunteleia** , or consummation of a large series of events. It is the "combining together." [7]

This contrast shows us that verse 13 is not referring to "the consummation of the age" ( **sunteleia tou aionos** ), but to "all these things" ( **panta tauta** ), that is, the destruction of Jerusalem. In other words, the one who endures as God's servant through all the troubles listed in the preceding verses will be saved. In this context, we may propose a dual understanding of "saved." Beginning in verse 15, there is a discussion of the flight of Christians from Jerusalem. The explicitly local language in verse 16 confirms this. Tradition tells us that God's people were saved from the horrible events of AD70 when they fled to Pella in AD66 after Cestius Gallius withdrew his armies from Jerusalem (cf. Luke 21:20).

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In a different sense, we may be reasonably assured that any church member who had gone through all the events leading to AD66 would also have developed faith to continue with Christ the rest of his life. But an odd question remains.

Matthew 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all the nations, and then the end shall come.

Many evangelicals have used this verse as a rallying cry to spread the gospel to the far reaches of the globe before an expected future **parousia**. They place it in parallel with the Great Commission in Matthew 28:17-18. But the "end" in this verse ( **contra** Matt 28:20) is **telos**, not **sunteleia tou aionos**. Thus, if the semantic analysis we have done so far is correct, the **terminus ad quem** for this statement is the destruction of Jerusalem, not the **parousia**. Further, it means that every line of Jesus' Discourse so far has been devoted to the issue of AD70. He has not departed on any side discussions.

### Brief Excursus on the Gospel as a Witness:

Some may question how the gospel can be a witness. Two-witness theology runs through scripture, particularly in the New Testament where Jesus provides a number of witnesses to His death, burial, and resurrection (Acts 1:7, 1 Cor 15:1-8, etc). But the gospel stands as a witness to something that Jesus does not explicitly identify.

God chose Abraham and his descendants as His missionaries (Gen 12:3). He provided them with a homeland located

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where every nation would have contact with them through trade (Gen 48:16, Deut 28:10). He gave them the ministry of prophets and miracles. But when the greatest prophet of all (Matt 21:11, John 4:19) came to them, the physical children of Abraham rejected Him (John 1:11). They had been given a set period of time to come into conformity with the covenant (Dan 9:24), and they failed. So in AD34, Stephen, acting as God's prosecuting attorney, brought a covenant lawsuit against the Jews. They lost the birthright blessing (cf. Exod 4:22), and it passed to the church (Luke 12:32), a nation producing the fruit of it (Matt 21:43).

The gospel, spread by the church, was not simply a message of redemption. It was an announcement that salvation was no longer "from the Jews" (cf. John 4:22).[8] The physical Temple in Jerusalem was no longer important (cf. Matt 27:51, Heb 13:12-14) in God's economy. Once that message had been "proclaimed in all creation under heaven" (Col 1:23), God could execute judgment on rebellious Jews and destroy the Temple, providing the second witness that Christians should not regard the Jewish Temple services as having continuing redemptive importance. Shortly after Paul penned those words, Jerusalem was destroyed.

### **Continuing.**

Returning to the text, verses 15-16 speak of the disciples, giving a warning of a prophesied event that marks the time to "flee Judea." Verses 17-18 warn that this exit must be expeditious. Verse 19 echoes the covenant curse of Deuteronomy 28:56-57 and clearly applies to the tribulation declared in verses 21-22. And we may note from Josephus'

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account that if the siege of Jerusalem had been extended, it is likely that "no life would have been saved" (v. 22). We must be careful to note the nature of the Lord's statement in verse 22.

Matthew 24:22 And unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days shall be cut short.

This statement is a parenthesis within the discussion of the events leading up to AD70. Jesus has described a number of events that lead up to the tribulation that is the destruction of the Jewish polity. We must note that within this discussion, the Lord has provided exactly one time marker - the Abomination of Desolation. He has made a number of other qualitative comments, including woes against nursing and pregnant women. Here, while using semi-quantitative language, He simply says that God has decreed that He will not allow the troubles to last so long as to kill everyone on earth.

A problem can arise if this verse is misunderstood to provide an end-point to the tribulation. In that case, it could incorrectly be taken to provide a sequence marker in the narrative. That would break the events up into several defined steps, instead of allowing them to be generally concurrent as Jesus intended, and as Josephus confirms.

### **Don't confuse AD70 with My parousia !**

In verse 23 Jesus begins a set of directions regarding false Christs and false prophets. These imposters from verse 5 will

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be at one place or another, declaring that they are the promised **parousia** . They are not to be believed "**because** " (v. 27) the **parousia** will be "like lightning that flashes from the east to the west." We should note that the emphasis in verse 27 is not on the speed of the **parousia** , but on its universal visibility.

From verse 4 through verse 26 Jesus has been busy telling the disciples about the things they should personally expect to see before Jerusalem is destroyed. Then in verse 27, **gar** is used to introduce a strong contrast. It says that Jesus is giving the reason why His **parousia** will be **different** from AD70. And this is the second part of His pedagogical purpose. Up till AD70 there will be people claiming to be the returned Messiah in one place or another. The disciples are to ignore them **because** Jesus' **parousia** will be visible everywhere, just like lightning. He wants to emphasize the difference between the two events.

In verse 28 Jesus repeats an Old Testament curse on God's enemies, declaring that they will be eaten by birds rather than being buried (Deut 28:26, Job 39:30, Ezek 39:17, Hab 1:8). Ezekiel's portrayal is particularly graphic. There God's enemy Gog will be smashed against the mountains of Israel. On that day God will put an end to all who profane His name. This is a reference to all who follow the Devil.[9] Ezekiel (Ezek 28) has identified Satan as an angel who slandered God and wished to be worshiped in God's place. Thus, Matthew 24:28 speaks of the curse that will fall on the wicked on the universal Day of the Lord. This, of course, links Jesus **parousia** with the Day of the Lord.



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### The "Contradiction:"

In verse 29, after the intercalated curse in verse 28, Jesus restates in detail the point he introduced in verse 27.

Translated traditionally, verses 29-31 read:

But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened and the moon will not give her light and the stars will fall from the heaven and the powers of the heavens will be shaken, and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory. And He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.

If we accept the common reading, the Day of the Lord will come "immediately" (v. 29) after the troubles leading up to the destruction of Jerusalem. That is, Jesus' **parousia** should be either at or just after the time the Romans destroy the Temple. "At that time" (vv. 30-31) several specific things happen.

- ⌚ The sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky
- ⌚ All the tribes of the earth will mourn
- ⌚ All the tribes of the earth will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory

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- ⌚ Jesus will send the angels to gather His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.

In other words, everything happens at once.

Because the Old Testament Day of the Lord passages mix local and universal elements, we won't try to explore them here. But three of the four items above use terms that we have determined earlier apply to the whole world: "all the tribes of the earth" and "the four winds."

If every people group in the world had to "mourn" at Jesus' **parousia**, and if the **parousia** is "immediately after" the destruction of Jerusalem, there should be historical records of great lamentation over every part of the world then. But there are no such accounts. The destruction of Jerusalem didn't even show up on the radar screen for most of the Roman Empire, much less most of the world. And when Titus arrived in Rome with artifacts from the Temple, he was greeted as a conquering hero. They had a parade and a big celebration in his honor.

If every people group in the world had to see Jesus coming in power and great glory right after the destruction of Jerusalem, then that should be recorded as well. And again, there is no such record.

Finally, the gathering of the saints from the entire world had to happen right after the destruction of Jerusalem. This is to happen "from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other." As noted earlier, this term encompasses the **entire world**. And again, there is **no evidence whatever** that any

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event of the sort took place. Is it any wonder that the critics declare that Jesus was a false prophet? He prophesied something that **didn't happen** ! Or did He?

This presents a serious problem to all Christians. Preterists suggest that all this **was** fulfilled at AD70. Ed Stevens goes so far as to declare that the **parousia** was complete in AD70 in **Expectations Demand a First Century Rapture** (Bradford, PA: International Preterist Association, 2003). But as just noted, the "event" Stevens proposes is not testified to by **any** extant witness. And that is contrary to scripture's call for us to determine the truth from "the mouth of two or three witnesses."

If we look at the writings of the ante-Nicene Fathers, they are almost completely silent on this issue. Cyprian quotes a large section of Matthew 24 in **Treatise 11** (in Greek, of course, including verse 29), but makes no exegetical comment on verse 29. I have found no other writer of that era that even says as much as Cyprian. This suggests that these native Greek speakers and writers were completely unaware of the difficulty we are wrestling with. And **that** suggests that we need to look at the Greek again.

### A Translation Problem?

We have no choice but to look at translation. The Greek of verse 29 is:

**Eutheos de meta ten thlipsin ton hemeron ekeinon ho helios skotisthesetai kai he selene ou dosei to phellos autes kai hoi asters pesountai apo tou ouranou kai hai dunameis**

## ton ouranon saleuthesantai

The word **eutheos** is the crux of the matter. It appears 36 times in the New Testament, and is commonly translated "immediately." But this translation presents a problem. It misses a nuance of the Greek that is absent in English. Greek is far more concerned with the quality of action than English, which is more often concerned with timing. For example, the Greek aorist tense generally speaks of past action with continuing consequences beginning at an unspecified point in time.

In some contexts, **eutheos** conveys the idea of "suddenness" or "quickness." Other times it conveys the idea of moving in a direct line toward a goal, reflecting its origin from **euthus**, which means to be "straight" or "normal." Lexicons include "straightway," "at once," "soon," "next," and "immediately" in their list of equivalent English words. Unfortunately, it is not possible to determine from sentence structure just which translation is to be preferred in a given case. The context has to be considered.

### Crossing the sea " eutheos "

John relates the story of Jesus walking on water (John 6:16-21). The disciples were rowing from the east side of the Sea of Galilee toward Capernaum on the west. This would be a trip of five or six miles, and they had covered three or four (John 6:19). In other words, they were out in the middle, miles from shore when a storm came up. Jesus appears at the boat, walking on the water. He gets in the boat and calms the storm. "Immediately ( **eutheos**) the boat was at

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the land" (John 6:21, NAS).

We have two choices. Either Jesus miraculously transported the boat several miles to land, or **eutheos** is mistranslated here. The idea of a miracle here is suspect, since Jesus' miracles are all clearly identified in the Gospels, and here it would be an inference. The parallel accounts in Mark and Matthew paint a different picture.

Mark 6:53 and Matthew 14:34 say, "when they had crossed over they came to land at Gennesaret." [10] The verb **diaperao** ("crossed over") is used 13 times in the New Testament and LXX. The other 11 times it refers to the natural act of a person traveling over a body of water.

The idea that this might be an "immediate" miraculous three-mile transport of the boat is certainly not beyond God's abilities. But it is outside the language of scripture. Jesus' miracles are all clearly identified in the gospels. The story of Philip provides an instructive comparison. At the end of his encounter with the Ethiopian eunuch, "the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away." He "found himself at Azotus" (Acts 8:39-40). Philip's miraculous transportation cannot be missed in the text. The "Spirit of the Lord" is the subject and Philip is the object.

In both Matthew and Mark, the disciples are the subject of the sentence. In both accounts, "they crossed over" and "they came to land at Gennesaret." The subject is explicit. Mark goes further, recording that "they moored to the shore." Thus, the language leads us to a purely natural understanding of events where the disciples perform all the

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actions. They rowed for another four miles or so. When they got to shore, they tied up the boat.

If this was a miraculous event, there is no evidence for it in the grammar. In fact, the grammar speaks against it. If God had transported the boat for several miles, He would be the subject of the sentence. Further, the disciples or the boat would be the object of the sentence. Neither is true, so we should expect that no miracle is present in the narrative. How then, should we understand **eutheos** in John's account?

John's grammar **could** be used to infer a miracle, **if** the other accounts weren't present. But since their language is so clear, we must suggest that **eutheos** has a semantic range that includes a meaning other than "immediately." As we will develop shortly, it appears best to say that when John says the boat arrived **eutheos** , he is really saying that the disciples rowed directly to shore. They didn't take any side trips to other towns. They went "straightway." This old term, which the KJV uses thirty-two times for **eutheos** , simply means "in a direct course." It doesn't say anything about how long the trip takes. Borrowing language from our next discussion, we could say that, " **next** , the boat arrived at the land." John merely states that the next event in sequence is their arrival at the dock. There wasn't any notable event to talk about between Jesus getting into the boat and landfall.

### "Immediately" (days later!)

The second example comes from Mark 1:21.

And they went into Capernaum; and immediately on the

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Sabbath He entered the synagogue and **began** to teach.

The Greek word here is **euthus**, the root form which **eutheos** is derived. They are so closely related that the Louw-Nida lexicon treats them as interchangeable. It says, "**Euthus** probably implies what was done on the immediately following Sabbath. Accordingly, one may translate this expression in Mk 1.21 as 'and on the **next**Sabbath he went into the synagogue and taught.'" Louw-Nida goes on to say that either word describes, "a point of time immediately subsequent to the previous point of time (the actual interval of time differs appreciably, depending on the nature of the events and the manner in which the sequence is interpreted by the writer)." In other words, "next in sequence," not "right away."

In Mark 1, Jesus had recruited disciples during the week. (They were out fishing.) We have no information to tell us which day (or days) He did it. All we know is that when Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue to teach. He didn't teach on Friday night, since synagogue services were during the daylight hours. Thus, Jesus' teaching didn't even begin "immediately" as the Sabbath began. Instead, he simply began teaching at the **next** Sabbath synagogue service.

### "Next in sequence"

When we apply this to the Olivet Discourse, as Louw-Nida does, we can see that the proper understanding of **eutheos** is to convey sequence, not timing. Jesus was asked about two events. His primary purpose in discussing them is to separate

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them in both character and time. The exact timing of the later event is concealed, since only the Father knows when it will happen (Matt 24:36, cf. Acts 1:7). The near event is in "this generation" (Matt 24:34).

Let's illustrate this for clarity. Once a person is elected to office, the **next** thing for him to do is to assume that office. But if the office is President of the United States, the election is in the first week of November, and the inauguration is in the third week of January. This is a gap of about ten weeks. For our purposes, we could say that the inauguration follows the election **eutheos** , since those are the only two events we are discussing. The process of selecting cabinet officers and so on has not been included in the conversation, so even though that task happens between the election and the inauguration, it is "invisible." We didn't make it visible by including it in the discussion. In the same way, Jesus is only discussing two events: AD70 and His parousia. Nothing else is in view, so the sequence only involves the first event (AD70) and the next event (parousia).

We need to compare **eutheos** to another "chronological" word used in the Discourse. **Tote** tells us "when." In verse 23 **tote** is used to say, "If someone says to you **at that time** ." and in verse 30 to say, "the sign of the Son of Man shall appear in heaven **at that time** ." Since Matthew used this explicitly chronological word so closely on both sides of verse 29, this further suggests that he intended something other than chronology in verse 29 when he used **eutheos** . We should also note that "immediately after" is functionally the same as "at that time," since "immediately" implies no passage of time.



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If, however, we take the information we have discovered and apply it to the verse, we can now properly translate it as follows:

**Next** , after the tribulation of those days, the sun will be darkened, the moon will not give her light, the stars will fall from the heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

The careful reader will note that we have placed commas around the phrase "after the tribulation of those days." The original Greek has no punctuation, but it does use word order to help in some cases. The segment in view is **eutheos de meta ten thlipsin ton hemeron ekeinon. Meta ten thlipsin ton hemeron ekeinon** is in what is called the "attributive position" with regard to **eutheos** . That is, it describes an attribute of **eutheos** . Whatever **eutheos** means, it comes "after the tribulation of those days." And while the word order in the rendering above is good English, it is less clear than:

After the tribulation of those days, **next** the sun will be darkened, the moon will not give her light, the stars will fall from the heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

This rendering emphasizes that the tribulation will come, there will be a gap, and "next" the Day of the Lord will come. Since Jesus is only speaking of two events - AD70 and His parousia - first one will come, next the other will come. No other events are in view, so one is seen as coming in succession after the other. This should not, however, be

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mistaken to say that the interval between them is short. That information is notably absent from the Discourse.

We may note at this point that by correcting our translation of verse 29, we have placed ourselves in what appears to be the status of the ante-Nicene Fathers. If they understood the verse the way I rendered it, they would never have seen a conflict to resolve the way we do with modern English translations. This would explain why we do not see any discussion of such a conflict in their writings. Since this issue is so central to the proper understanding of the **parousia** , if it existed in the original, it is inconceivable that nearly three centuries of brilliant men would completely ignore it.[11]

Finally, our understanding conforms to Jesus' comment in Acts 1:7 where the apostles are not to know "the times or epochs the Father has set by His own authority." Comparison with parallel synoptic accounts is instructive here.

**After the tribulation** of those days, **next the sun will be darkened** , (Matt 24:29 personal translation.)

But in the days **after that tribulation** , **the sun shall be darkened** , (Mark 13:24 personal translation.)

The only substantive difference is Matthew's inclusion of "next" to emphasize the sequence. Both of them say that it will happen "after the tribulation." Neither gives a hint of how long after. Luke's more interpretive account says that the Day of the Lord will come at the end of "the times of the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24-25). While interpreters dispute the exact meaning of this phrase, it is almost certain that it

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extends at least into the modern era.[12]

Using the translation we have just determined, verses 27-31 emphatically differentiate the **parousia** from AD70. The destruction of Jerusalem **won't** be the **parousia**, because the **parousia** will be dramatically different. This perfectly matches Jesus' pedagogical purpose.

"After" the tribulation of those days (i.e. the days of the destruction of Jerusalem), the signs of the Day of the Lord will come (v. 29) and the Son of Man will appear in the sky (v. 30). All of the people groups on earth will mourn because they have rejected His grace and now suffer His wrath (cf. Rev 6:15-17). Jesus will gather the saints from the entire world (v.31). Read in this fashion, Matthew's account matches Mark and Luke perfectly. If we read it traditionally, Matthew says the Day of the Lord happens in AD70, while Mark and Luke place it "later." Such an apparent scriptural "contradiction" should alert us to the need for a resolution such as we have just found.

### **Pedagogical Purpose**

Because we are not native Greek speakers of the first century, it has been necessary to work backwards to determine a reasonable reading of **eutheos** in 24:29. But when Jesus delivered the Discourse, His language should have been properly understood as it was delivered. Thus, it is necessary for the results of our research to fit naturally with Jesus' pedagogical purpose.

Jesus delivers this entire section (vv. 27-31) as an intentional

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contrast to the destruction of Jerusalem, so that the disciples will not confuse the destruction of Jerusalem with the **parousia** . He first briefly describes the geographic universality of His parousia (v. 27) in contrast to the local claims of false messiahs. Next (vv. 29-31) He describes the relative timing of His parousia in contrast to the near events of AD70; including the details of the Day of the Lord redemption of saints and destruction of sinners.

So far, Jesus' primary message has been to inform the disciples about events leading to the destruction of Jerusalem. He took a side trip to emphasize that His **parousia** would be a different event.

In verses 32-34 Jesus finishes up His discussion of AD70. The parable of the fig tree recapitulates the idea that various signs, such as those discussed earlier, will precede the destruction of Jerusalem. This is in contrast to His parousia, which has **no** sign other than Jesus' appearance. The disciples are to discern the signs properly. But verse 33 has **another** translation issue.

The NAS says:

Matthew 24:32-33 "Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender, and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near; even so you too, when you see all these things, recognize that He is near, **right** at the door.

The KJV says, "it is near" in verse 33. The Greek does not include the subject of that clause, so it must be inferred from

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the context. "Summer" is the subject in verse 32, symbolic of the destruction of Jerusalem. Thus, "it" is the proper subject in verse 33, not "He." Jesus is saying that when the signs are seen, the event is near. We should not mis-read this to suggest that He is near.

"All these things" ( **panta tauta** , c.f. 24:2) will happen before "this generation" dies (v. 34). We may now confidently state that it does not matter how one goes about determining which generation is in view, the result is the same. If we say it is the generation of Jesus' listeners, the statement is true, since Jerusalem was destroyed 39 years after the Discourse. If we say it is the generation that sees the signs preceding the destruction, it still points to AD70. The argument that the semantic range of **genea** extends to a "race" or similar flies in the face of the structure of Jesus' argument and must be rejected.

In verse 35, Jesus changes subjects.

Matthew 24:35 "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words shall not pass away.

Here Jesus makes an explicit statement that "heaven and earth" will pass away. The Preterist argument that this is a figurative expression for the Jews or their government is unconvincing. After all, the expression **ho ouranos kai he ge** is a technical term from the Old Testament with an exact meaning: the physical earth and its immediately surrounding heavens. Here Jesus explicitly declares the future end of the physical earth.

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We must be a bit careful here. Jesus is not saying that the planet itself will be destroyed. Rather, He is using the language of Genesis 9:11. There the flood "destroyed" the earth. It didn't eliminate the planet, but it did erase everything on its surface. And that is what Peter means in 2 Peter 3:10 when he says, "the earth and its works will be burned up."

Verse 36 starts with "But of that day and hour no one knows." What "day and hour?" The rules of grammar are clear. We look backwards to the nearest antecedent. And that is the time that "heaven and earth will pass away." This is the **parousia** , as 2 Peter 3:5-7 makes quite clear.

Verse 37 begins the famous parallel with the days of Noah. At that time, the wicked people "kept on keepin' on" ("eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage") until Noah entered the ark and the flood killed them ("took them away"). We should note that this example recaps a worldwide event, emphasizing that Jesus' **parousia** will have a worldwide effect (cf. Matt 24:27-31). In exactly the same way, at Jesus' **parousia** , one in the field will be killed ("taken") while the other is "left" (remains, cf. 1 Thes 4:15).

Following this illustration, Jesus continues with a series of parables about His **parousia** . The destruction of Jerusalem is never again in view.

## Conclusion:

The Olivet Discourse is a simple, direct, exposition of two separate issues - the destruction of Jerusalem and Jesus'

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**parousia** . The **parousia** comes "after" AD70. How long "after" is not stated. It has been misunderstood for centuries because of a modern lack of appreciation for a basic nuance of Greek time perception. Its structure is as follows.

- 🕒 Verse 1: The disciples notice the Temple.
- 🕒 Verse 2: Jesus says the Temple will be torn down.
- 🕒 Verse 3: The disciples ask when it will be torn down **and** when Jesus will return to gather the saints, mistaking them to be the same event.
- 🕒 Verses 4-26: Jesus describes events around the destruction of Jerusalem, with various warnings.
- 🕒 Verses 27-31: Jesus contrasts AD70 with the **parousia** so that the disciples won't get the two confused.
- 🕒 Verses 32-34: Jesus completes His discussion of AD70.
- 🕒 Verse 35 - on: Jesus discusses the **parousia** , which is future to AD70, but at an undefined interval.

In summary, Preterists are correct in applying 24:34 to AD70. There is no legitimate contextual or lexical reason for any other conclusion. "All these things" (**panta tauta** ) refers specifically to Jesus' statement that the Temple would be destroyed in 24:2, and the disciples' follow-up question

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about "these things" ( **tauta** ) in 24:3. On the other hand, they are incorrect in applying the Day of the Lord language of verses 27-31 to AD70. Jesus was asked a compound question. He gave a direct and logical compound answer designed to distinguish the two events.

Modern interpreters have been presented with a false dilemma as a result of using a word in English that does not convey the nuance of the Greek **eutheos** . Modern translators have either been unaware of this error, or have not corrected it because of traditional readings.

All of Jesus' predictions about AD70 were fulfilled in detail. His predictions about the **parousia** remain to be fulfilled, since His **parousia** remains future. The difficulties asserted by the skeptics do not exist.

## Footnotes

1. Actually, Matthew 13:39 is an anarthrous exception, but since it is part of a pericope where the articular form is used twice, the general statement is true.

2. In 4:8, it refers to "all the kingdoms of the world." This is clearly not limited to the Jewish "land" (Grk. **ge** ). In 5:14, the Jews are "the light of the world," echoing Genesis 12:3's commission to evangelize "all the families of the world." In 13:35, he speaks of "the foundation of the world," harking back to Creation. 16:26 asks what the profit is for a man if he "gains the whole world" in exchange for his soul. 24:21



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speaks of the "beginning of the world" again looking back at Creation. 25:34 makes the same allusion. 26:13 speaks of the "whole world," emphasizing the universality of the word.

3. The sixth use of **sunteleia** is in Hebrews 9:26, and is **sunteleia ton aionon** . The plural object presents a different construction, and is therefore not directly comparable to Matthew's use.

4. Gen 12:3, 28:14, Psa 72:17, Amos 3:2, Zech 14:17

5. It would appear that the translators of the LXX viewed this text the same way we view Matthew 28:19.

6. Of course, by the time of writing, the apostolic author had experienced the anointing of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, and **did** clearly understand.

7. A more technical illustration comes from the words "thesis" and "synthesis." A thesis is a single proposition. By adding the prefix **syn-** , we describe not a single proposition, but a combination of propositions.

8. The Greek of John 4:22 is in the genitive, i.e. "of the Jews". This language allows for the disenfranchisement of Jews in the work of salvation. The KJV is more accurate than some of the other translations here.

9. In the Greek, the "Devil" is **diabolos** , which means "slanderer."

10. The disciples ended up taking the longest possible route

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from East to West, a total of about 7 ½ miles.

11. It may be worth noting that the Russian Synodal translation renders **eutheos** as "suddenly," stating that the Day of the Lord will happen "suddenly" after the tribulation of those days.

12. In this case, for the sake of discussion, I have accepted the common Dispensational position that the "days of the Gentiles" ended in 1976 when Israeli soldiers captured the Temple mount area. My personal belief is that this more properly extends to the time of the resurrection of the saints.

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### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Benjamin has been studying the book of Revelation off and on for several years. Being unsatisfied with traditional eschatologies which seemed at a loss to justify their leaps of faith from the text to the interpretation, it led him on his own study to understand this book.

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