

# So You Missed the Rapture What Will It Look Like and What Should You Do Now?

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Earlier this year our pastor, Peter Philippi, came up with an idea that I thought was quite fascinating, and that was to develop a series of messages designed to educate and instruct those people who will be left behind after the Rapture.

Let's face it, if the Rapture were to occur tomorrow, every person here has some family member or some friends who are currently unsaved and who they would want to have access to accurate information about what they should do now, as God's program for mankind reverts from this present dispensation of grace back into Israel's prophetic kingdom program.

Well, I thought that was a great idea, and the thought would be something like this - that everyone in the assembly should have a copy of the message in an envelope clearly labelled -

**"In case of my mysterious disappearance, this will explain everything"** - or something like that.

Wouldn't you think that the chances are very good that the message would be listened to by somebody? And it certainly will have the potential to favorably determine the eternal destiny of anyone who does. So, that's what we're going to be looking at in this study.

I'm also going to present the information in such a way that it will be just as beneficial for any unsaved person living today during this present age of the church, before the Rapture occurs.

And for anyone who is interested in end times prophecy, I think you'll enjoy some of the things which it will be necessary for us to look into out of the prophets and from the book of the Revelation.

## **So You Missed the Rapture - What Will It Look Like and What Should You Do Now?**

One of the interesting questions which many Bible believing Christians have contemplated over the years has been the question - "What will happen to those people who will still be living on this earth once the Rapture of the church has taken place?"

Now, for those of our listeners who don't know what the Rapture of the church is all about, the Rapture is a term that is used to define that event whereby all saved members in the church (also known in the Bible as the church, "the body of Christ") - when all saved members in the church are taken out of this world and relocated up into the 3rd heaven by the Lord Jesus Christ.

These members of the church who will be located into the 3rd heaven are Christian people who have been given a righteous standing in the eyes of God based on what they believed about the death of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And to anyone who might be listening to this message **after** the Rapture has occurred, you would certainly be doing yourself and your family a great service by picking up a King James Bible from somewhere and following along with this message, because I'm going to be giving you information which will undoubtedly determine your eternal destiny.

But the first thing we want to do is to establish a clear understanding of what this Rapture is, and what it is not.

Although the term "Rapture" is not actually found in the Bible, it's a very good term which appropriately describes the event. The Rapture is referred to in various places in the Bible with such descriptions as "being **caught up** with other believers in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air" which we will see in

1 Thessalonians 4, or “our **gathering together** unto the Lord Jesus Christ” as it is described in 2 Thessalonians 2.

The event which we call the Rapture is described in its greatest detail in the 1Thessalonian 4 passage.

**1 Thessalonians 4:13** But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning **them which are asleep**, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

**...them which are asleep...**

Them which are asleep refers to people who have died. The verse is saying that there are members of the churches at Thessalonica who have died since Paul had first visited Thessalonica and explained to them the “gospel of the grace of God.” Many people at Thessalonica believed that gospel, they trusted in the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in that alone as the payment for their sins, and had become saved.

And now, these words by the apostle Paul are being written to the believers in the churches at Thessalonica because those believers are concerned over the fate of their loved ones who had died since they became saved. What is happening with those folks?

And Paul is going to explain to them why they have no reason to sorrow over the death of their loved ones as the rest of the world which has no hope might sorrow. As Paul explains:

**1 Thessalonians 4:14** For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

**15** For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

**16** For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and **the dead in Christ shall rise first:**

**17** Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

**18** Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

What we want to see here is in verse 16:

**...and the dead in Christ shall rise first...**

Understand that when the Bible refers to someone who is “in Christ” it is referring to someone who is saved and who has eternal life. Anyone who is saved is “in Christ.”

This is why the believers at Thessalonica don't have any reason for concern over their loved ones who have already died. Those who have already died will be raised up, and in fact, they will be the first ones to rise.

And then in verse 17, we see the fate of those who should happen to still be living at the time at which this event will occur:

**1 Thessalonians 4:17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.**

Those who are still alive at the time of the Rapture will follow those who have already risen from their graves and **all** believers ever since this present church age began will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord Jesus Christ in the air and will forever be with the Lord.

This is what the Bible refers to as “the hope of the Lord's calling” for believers in Ephesians 1:18.

Now, something which needs to be understood about this event is that the Rapture is **not** what is commonly referred to as the 2nd coming of Christ.

There are probably a lot more people who are at least familiar with the concept of the 2nd coming of Christ than might be familiar with the event which we call the Rapture - even among those who are not Bible believers.

In fact, I didn't understand anything at all pertaining to the Rapture until I had been a Christian for at least 25 years. Now that may seem incredulous to some folks who might be listening to this message, but my ignorance of the Rapture was certainly not unique by any means. And we'll see some reasons why that is true as we continue on with this message.

But understand that the Rapture is **not** the same thing as the 2nd coming of Christ. The 2nd coming of Christ is an event which was a familiar theme in the Old Testament prophets, but the Rapture is actually an event that had never been made known to anyone until **after** the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The Rapture is part of the body of doctrine and instructions which were given by the risen Lord Jesus Christ to the apostle Paul for the church of this present age.

Those doctrines and instructions for the church are components of what God and the Bible refer to as the mystery.

We also see the Rapture as part of the mystery in:

**1 Corinthians 15:51** Behold, I shew you a mystery; **We shall not all sleep**, but we shall all be changed,

**...We shall not all sleep...**

Sleep is referring to death again. This is just as we read in 1 Thessalonians 4:17 where Paul had told the Thessalonians that some believers will still be alive at the time of the Rapture. And in this passage Paul gives a little more detail on what will actually happen to the believers who are caught up with the Lord at the Rapture:

**1 Corinthians 15:52** In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and **we shall be changed**.

**53** For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

Here we see the dead believers being raised just as we read in 1 Thessalonians 4:14, and we see how that the bodies of all believers are going to be **changed** such that they will no longer be subject to corruption. This is a description of when believers receive their resurrection bodies - incorruptible bodies - no longer subject to illness, pain, deterioration or even sin.

This is also that time at which the Lord will determine the ability of every believer to serve in the heavenly places throughout all of eternity. Any and all believers will be given some position of authority which will be appropriate with the spiritual growth and edification which they had built up their soul, in their inner man, during their life as a Christian here on the earth.

The Rapture will be the last event pertaining to this present church age, and with the Rapture this present church age will abruptly come to an end. So there you have a little basic information on the Rapture and what it's all about.

What we want to address next is how this event is going to be viewed and understood by the world. Just think about this for a minute; In a moment of time, there are going to be (probably) millions of people who will mysteriously vanish from the earth - those believers who are still alive at the time of the Rapture. They'll be gone.

This brings to mind that famous series of "Left Behind" novels which were written by Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins back in the mid 90's. There were at least twelve books in that series which took the reader through the Rapture, the rise of the Antichrist, the 7 years of Tribulation on the earth and the 2nd coming of Christ.

All these events were described through the eyes and experiences of Rayford Steele and his daughter Chloe, who were the main characters in the series and who were literally left behind when the Rapture took place. Rayford Steele's wife and his younger son were both taken in the Rapture; They were believers. But Rayford and Chloe were not believers and consequently, they were left behind.

Although the Rapture, the reality of the Antichrist, the 7 years of Tribulation on the earth and the 2nd coming of Christ are all certainly events which are unquestionably going to take place at some point in the future, and although there is always going to be some degree of speculation as to exactly how these events will play out in all of their details, the portrayal of all those events in the Left Behind series certainly left a lot to be desired as far as Biblical accuracy is concerned.

So, we want to see what this event which we call the Rapture will **really** look like to the world when it actually happens?

In the Left Behind series, Rayford Steele is an airline pilot based out of O'Hare International Airport right here in Chicago, Ill. In the story, Rayford first comes to understand that something very odd is happening when his co-pilot suddenly vanishes and when it is reported to him by a flight attendant that a number of the passengers who had been on board had apparently vanished as well, and Rayford brings down the aircraft by himself.

Elsewhere around the world things did not come off so smooth. Once on the ground, Rayford discovers that all around the world, there is a state of relative chaos due to planes and other vehicles crashing because their operators had simply vanished. There is chaos, destruction and death all over the world as a result of the Rapture.

More people than not presume that this is probably what will happen when the Rapture actually does take place, and although I would be reluctant to state that this is a totally impossible scenario, I suspect that complete chaos is not the manner in which the Lord is going to do this.

We've already looked at two passages from the Bible which give us information pertaining to the Rapture. One of those passages was:

**1 Corinthians 15:51** Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

**52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump:** for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

**53** For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

Notice that verse 52 says that the believer's body would be changed from corruptible to incorruptible "**in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye...** In a moment of time, the believer will have his resurrection body.

But verse 53 also stated that this will happen **at the last trumpet** sound. That last trumpet sound (and there may actually be more than one trumpet sound since the verse states that the believer's body will be changed "at the **last** trump...) If there is going to be a last trump, perhaps there is going to be a 1st, 2nd, or 3rd trumpet sound.

And this trumpet sound (or sounds, if there does turn out to be more than one trumpet sound) is actually the last in a series of three proclamations associated with the fact that the Rapture is here.

Let's go back and look at that again in the 1 Thessalonians 4 passage.

**1 Thessalonians 4:16** For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a **shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump** of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

**17** Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Do you see the order there? First there is the Lord Jesus Christ descending with a shout. What do think that shout will be? Do you think that shout might just be like when Jesus called Lazarus to come forth out of the grave in?

**John 11:43** And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, **come forth**.

My own personal opinion is that the Rapture will be personalized in some manner for every believer, just as it was when Jesus called forth Lazarus. But that's not all:

Then there is "**the voice of the archangel...**

What do you think the archangel might be saying? He's going to be saying something. Maybe he'll be saying,

"People get ready, there's a train a coming'.  
You don't need no baggage, you just get on board..."  
(The Impressions - 1965, et.al.)

Well, I doubt that the archangel will be singing "People Get Ready" but you get my point. The archangel will be saying something. But that's still not all because then you have **the trump sound**, or sounds, when every believer's body will be changed instantly. So you actually have a series of events here associated with the Rapture. This could span some time.

When you consider this shout from the Lord and the words which will be spoken by the archangel, to me, this immediately brings to my mind the apostle Paul's experience on the road to Damascus when Christ spoke to him. Christ spoke personally to Paul and called Paul out to be the apostle for the Gentiles for this present church age apart from anything having to do with the nation Israel.

This was that unique event, completely apart from prophecy, which initiated the present church age of today. It began with Paul, and it will end with the Rapture. It began with a personal message to Paul, and it seems quite appropriate that it would end with a personal message to every believer who will be involved.

My point is this: It is my own personal opinion that the Rapture will be personalized for every individual believer and that the believer will have ample time in which to land a plane, park his car or to do whatever might be necessary to avoid a totally chaotic worldwide scenario.

Nevertheless, and **however** that whole aspect of the Rapture will play out, there will probably be millions of people who will simply vanish from the earth.

Now then, what else will the world see with this remarkable event we call the Rapture?

Although there will probably be millions of Christians who will vanish in the Rapture, there are going to be many multiple millions of people - people who **considered** themselves Christians who will still be here on the earth. They will have been left behind. That's who this message is for.

In fact, there are going to be multitudes of denominational church groups where almost no members or their leaders and teachers are going to be missing. Sunday morning may come and it will look like business as usual - no different than any other Sunday morning prior to the Rapture. How can that be?

It has been accurately noted by many true Bible believing Christians that one of the most shocking realities pertaining to heaven is going to be those folks who are going to be there who you never thought would be there - and conversely, those folks who everyone believed could not possibly fail to be there, who won't be there - people like popes, church pastors and leaders,

TV / radio Bible teachers and evangelists - many whose names may be known world-wide.

Is that a shocking statement to make? It should not really come as a shock to anyone who truly understands what the Bible actually teaches about salvation and eternal life. So we need to look at that for a bit.

This phenomenon regarding who will be in heaven and who will **not** has everything to do with the confusion and the divisions which are commonplace within the church during this present church age. It's not supposed to be that way but that's the way it is.

There is certainly not supposed to be divisions and confusion, because one of the first exhortations which Paul makes to the churches of this present age is that they all be of the same mind teaching the same things **without** any divisions:

**1 Corinthians 1:10** Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, **that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.**

Paul is writing these words to the churches in Corinth because they were **not** all speaking and teaching the same things, and because there **were** divisions among the churches. This was a problem way back then and the situation has not changed even up unto this present day. In fact, it's more of a problem today than it was when Paul wrote this letter.

As I said at the beginning of this message using myself as an example, I had been a saved Christian for probably 25 years before I ever even heard of the Rapture. How can that be?

The reason was that I had been brought up as a child in a Lutheran church which thought this concept of the Rapture, as we are considering it today, was nonsense. They didn't believe any of this and so they never taught it. But I was saved.

When I was somewhere around the age of 12 or 13, I began attending AWANA youth group activities at a nearby church. A lot of my friends attended that church and the activities of the AWANA organization were

extremely popular at the time, and just about everybody I knew would be there every week so I was there too.

The main attraction of course were the sports activities but we also had Bible teaching at every meeting, and we were encouraged to memorize important verses in the Bible and things like that.

I don't recall ever having learned anything at the AWANA meetings pertaining to the Rapture. If it was ever taught to us, it certainly went right over my head at the time.

But It was there where I **did** receive a clear understanding of the gospel of the grace of God - that I was a sinner, that I was not a righteous person in the eyes of God because of that sin, that the penalty for my sins was eternal death, that I needed a Saviour, and that Jesus Christ **was** that Saviour having paid the penalty for my sins.

And it was inherently reasonable to me that if the God of all creation had to die in order to save me that there was absolutely nothing that I could **possibly** do to improve on that - that the issue was one entirely based on faith - faith in what God is saying I needed to believe to be saved.

And folks, that in a nutshell, is the gospel of the grace of God for this current age of the church until the Rapture - trusting exclusively in what Christ accomplished for you on the cross adding absolutely nothing to it.

That is the gospel message which was given to the apostle Paul by the risen Lord Jesus Christ. That is the gospel message for any and all people living in this current age of the church. That is the gospel message which began when this present church age began with the apostle Paul and which will be appropriate until the Rapture occurs.

That is the gospel message which I heard and which I believed and which saved me. And it would not have mattered if I had **never** heard of the Rapture, because the moment I got saved, I had a ticket for that train, and I was going to be placed on that train no matter what.

Now, I need to say a little more about the confusion and divisions which have permeated the church since Paul wrote that letter to the Corinthians.

In order to understand why these divisions and confusion have evolved throughout the course of church history, you need to have at least a basic understanding of the driving force behind the source of evil and deception which has always been present in human society and in the church.

Folks, the force versus the dark side is not a concept which began with Stars Wars. The drama and intrigue associated with this concept of the force versus the dark side is based on reality and we might as well call it what it really is. It is the epic battle of the ages between God and Satan - light versus darkness - the battle between good and evil - the battle between truth and the lie.

For anyone who is interested in learning more specific details regarding this epic battle of the ages, you might consider listening to the message which is titled "The Big Picture" which can be found on the [gbcrm.org](http://gbcrm.org) website.

I made the statement earlier that although there will be millions of Christians who will vanish in the Rapture, there are going to be many more multiple millions of people - people who considered themselves Christians who will still be here on the earth. They will have been left behind.

And I also said that there are going to be multitudes of denominational church groups where almost every member and sometimes **even** every member will fail to be taken in the Rapture as well. They **all** will have been left behind.

And I also said that this would include popes, church pastors and leaders, many TV / radio Bible teachers, preachers, and evangelists and others who most people would have thought were going to be taken up to heaven for sure, if indeed there is a heaven. But they **all** will have been left behind.

And in order to understand **why** those people are going to be left behind, you need to have a basic understanding of that epic battle of the ages - God versus Satan - good versus evil - truth versus the lie. When you understand what that battle is all about, then you can understand why certain folks who **call** themselves Christians will be left behind at the Rapture.

The epic battle of the ages is Satan versus God. Who is Satan and what is he all about? You can learn about the creation of Satan, his corruption, and his ultimate demise in the Bible in Ezekiel 28 where he is metaphorically referred to as the king of Tyrus.

**Ezekiel 28:13** Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created.

**14** Thou art **the anointed cherub** that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.

**15** **Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.**

**16** By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.

**17** Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.

Referred to as “**the anointed cherub**” in verse 14, he was created by the Lord as the leader - as the preeminent creation of the angelic community. He was created in perfect beauty, filled with wisdom and talents and he was perfect in all his ways. His intended role was to channel the praise and worship of the angelic community towards their Creator.

That was Satan’s role, but as a result of his wisdom and his abilities and his perfection and all that he was, he became overcome with pride and decided that **he** should be the one who should rule the universe and receive all the praise and the glory, instead of his Creator. And Satan was able to convince 1/3 of the angelic community to rebel against their Creator and to follow him.

In Isaiah 14, we learn that up until the time of his corruption, Satan’s name was originally Lucifer, and in Isaiah 14 his rebellious program of lies is outlined in his five “I will” declarations:

**Isaiah 14:12** How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!

**13** For thou hast said in thine heart, **I will** ascend into heaven, **I will** exalt my throne above the stars of God: **I will** sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:

**14 I will** ascend above the heights of the clouds; **I will** be like the most High.

And from that day forward, everything Satan has done has been designed to undermine whatever it is that God is trying to accomplish at the time.

Moving forward from Satan's rebellion in the heavenly places, you come the creation of the earth and everything associated with the earth. God creates Adam and Eve and places them in the garden of Eden with all the provisions they could ever need to establish dominion over all the earth.

**Genesis 1:26** And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and **let them have dominion** over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and **over all the earth**, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

God's plan was to establish a kingdom where God Himself will one day rule with Adam and dwell with mankind in that kingdom throughout eternity.

So, what did Satan do then? In Genesis 3:1-6 Satan convinces Eve to rebel against God's instructions, then Adam does the same and Adam forfeits the right to be the co-regent over all the earth which God had intended for him to be.

God responds immediately by promising Adam that from the seed line of his wife, Eve, there is going to come someone who is going to be able to restore what Adam had just forfeited as a result of his sinful rebellion against God:

**Genesis 3:15** And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

Of course, this is a reference to the very distant coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So then, what does Satan **do** because of this promise regarding the seed line of Eve? Through the instrumentation of his fallen angels, Satan sets out to corrupt the entire seed line of Eve - which he does successfully - except for Noah and Noah's family.

Noah and his family are the only human beings left on the face of the earth at that time who have somehow escaped the corruptive influence of Satan and his fallen angels. This is all taking place in Genesis chapters 4-6. Genesis 6:5 provides a perfect summary of the effect of Satan's influence on the state of human society at the time.

**Genesis 6:5** And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

The only course of action for God at this point is to totally destroy this wicked generation and to begin human society all over again through Noah. By means of the flood, God destroys all of human society except for Noah and his family. This takes place in Genesis chapters 6-8.

After the flood, Noah is then instructed to replenish the earth. His three sons begin doing just that. Included in God's instructions to Noah and his family, they are supposed to spread out into all the lands of the earth.

But by the time you get to Genesis 11, we see that mankind is once again rebelling against God's instructions. Men are gathering together in a city in direct rebellion against God's instructions, and they are developing false religious systems with the intent to replace the one true God and Creator with false gods and religious systems of their own design. They choose to follow a lie. And it is Satan who is orchestrating all this rebellion.

Many centuries later, it is the apostle Paul who actually provides the commentary on all of this rebellion in Romans 1:21-32.

At this point God gives rebellious mankind over to their own desires - to live anyway they want to live, and God sets out to accomplish his plans and purposes for the earth through a man named Abraham.

God is going to make Abraham the progenitor / the father of the nation Israel. And it is now going to be the nation Israel through which God is going to accomplish His plans and purposes for establishing that kingdom on the earth where He will live with mankind. This begins in Genesis chapter 12 with the Abrahamic Covenant.

Now, it's interesting to take note of the fact that approximately 94% of the Bible is devoted to doctrines and descriptions pertaining to God's plans and purposes for the earth through the instrumentality of the nation Israel. All of that is what the Bible refers to as prophecy - Israel's prophetic kingdom program. It starts with the Abrahamic Covenant in Genesis chapter 12. Then there's going to be the Palestinian Covenant, the Law Covenant, the Davidic Covenant, the New Covenant, and much, much more. That's a lot of information about Israel, and Israel's program.

And it's also interesting to take note of the fact that as soon as God begins working through Abraham and through the nation Israel, where do you suppose Satan shifted his disruptive focus to? That's right - to God's chosen nation Israel.

Satan begins doing everything he can do to disqualify the nation from being everything which God requires the nation to **be** in order to establish that kingdom here on the earth. And Satan is so successful in this that God literally interrupts His earthly kingdom program with the nation Israel and begins doing something else - something entirely different.

The interruption of God's prophetic kingdom program with the nation Israel took place in Acts 7 with the complete and final rejection of Jesus of Nazareth, their Messiah - that Messiah which God had promised from the seed line of Eve way back in Genesis 3:15.

God then began doing something else - something entirely different in Acts 9 with the calling out of Paul as the apostle of the Gentiles. With the calling out of Paul as the apostle of the Gentiles - as the apostle for the church of this present age, and since the calling out of Paul and the church of this present age is **now** what God is doing, where do you suppose Satan has shifted his disruptive focus to now?

That's right - on Paul and on the church of this present age. Everything Satan is focusing on since the church of this present age began in Acts 9 has been designed to undermine Paul's unique doctrines and instructions for believers of this present church age.

And there are no doctrines or instructions which have more devastating eternal consequences than those doctrines which have to do with

justification of an individual in the eyes of God resulting in eternal salvation - versus eternal damnation to hell and the lake of fire.

When I recounted the history my own personal justification and how I became saved (which is no different than how anyone in this present church age becomes saved) how did I explain that to our listeners? I came to the place where I understood that I was a sinner, that I was not a righteous person in the eyes of God because of that sin, that I needed a Saviour, and that Jesus Christ **was** that Saviour having paid the penalty for my sins.

I want our listeners to understand where this information comes from. It came from the risen Lord Jesus Christ when He gave the information to the apostle Paul for Paul to write down in his letter to the Romans:

**Romans 3:10** As it is written, **There is none righteous, no, not one:**

**Romans 3:21-25** But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

**22** Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

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

**24** Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

**25** Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

Every word in these verses is important, and if you would like to break the passage down word for word to gain a better understanding of what some of these unique words and terms mean, I would suggest you give a listen to the message titled "The Gospel for the Denominational Churches in Christianity" which can be found on our website at [gbcrm.org](http://gbcrm.org).

Now turn for a moment to Romans 4 where Paul reinforces another very important part of this gospel message.

**Romans 4:5** But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

As I said to you earlier in this message, when I heard the gospel of the grace of God at the age of 12 or 13, it was inherently reasonable to me that if the God of all creation had to die in order to save me that there was absolutely nothing that I could possibly do to improve on that. And that is what Romans 4:5 is teaching. And that is what God and Paul are trying to firmly establish in our understanding in other verses like:

**Ephesians 2:8-9** For **by grace are ye saved through faith**; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

**9 Not of works**, lest any man should boast.

And that is what God is looking for in the heart of anyone who desires to be saved in this present age of the church - simply trusting in what Christ accomplished on the cross, and in that alone, because God is not willing to share the priceless value and glory of what His Son did on the cross with anything or anyone - and rightly so.

Now, something else which needs to be understood is that this is **not** how personal, individual salvation was previously given to someone in Israel's prophetic kingdom program.

Let me elaborate on this:

There was never any point in Israel's prophetic kingdom program where individual, personal justification for salvation and eternal life was based on trusting in Christ's death on the cross as a payment for the individual's sins.

During the time of Christ's earthly ministry to the nation Israel in the gospel accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, and even on into the early part of Acts when Israel's prophetic kingdom program was still going on, individual justification was still based on faith, but it was based on faith in what God was telling an individual he needed to believe and **do**, at that time.

In those Gospel accounts someone needed to believe and accept the fact that Jesus of Nazareth **was** their prophesied Messiah, and that He **was** the son of God. But it was **also** necessary to be water baptized as part of the kingdom program which was being proclaimed to be "at hand" now that the Messiah had arrived.

You will see that profession of faith in Matthew 16:16, in John 11:27 and in Acts 8:36-37 by Peter, Martha and the Ethiopian eunuch. Believe that

message, become water baptized, and you were saved. If you rejected the message that Jesus was the prophesied Messiah, you were in trouble. it is exactly as Jesus said in:

**John 8:24** I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.

You see, all throughout the history of Israel's prophetic kingdom program there had always been some type of ritual or work which the Jew was instructed to do **in faith**, to maintain a right relationship with God.

Now, if you can understand all this, then you can understand why so many people who call themselves Christians - people who thought they **were** Christians, or who you might have **presumed** were Christians will be left behind at the Rapture.

They will be left behind because they were never really Christians at all. They will be left behind because they were trusting in a gospel message which had been corrupted by Satan, and which had no power to save a person during this present age of the church.

There are two classical passages where Paul warns about corrupted, perverted gospel messages during this present church age. Those passages are Galatians 1:6-9 and 2 Corinthians 11:3-4, 13-15. Everyone who considers themselves a Christian in this present church age should know those passages.

This is serious business folks. There are serious, eternal consequences for an individual as a result of this epic battle of the ages between God and Satan. Satan's current disruptive focus is on the distinctive message of the apostle Paul and on the doctrines and instructions pertaining to everything having to do with this present church age.

How is Satan undermining and corrupting all of this? Very simply by going back into Israel's prophetic kingdom program - the program which God interrupted in Acts 7 and which has nothing to do with what God is doing today, and bringing elements from that program into the requirements for believers during this present church age.

All Satan has to do is to take something out from that program - something which is very Biblical - something which is very Scriptural - and something which had **everything** to do with salvation in Israel's prophetic kingdom program **then** but which will corrupt and destroy the gospel of the grace of God which is the **only** gospel message which will save a person in this present age of the church **now**.

And I'll get right to the crux of the matter: The two most common gospel corrupting works (in opposition to the **prohibition** of works for salvation which we saw in Romans 4:5) are the rituals of water baptism and the ongoing confession of sins by the individual.

The issue is not that either of these two works will automatically condemn you to hell. The issue is **why** are you doing them? If an individual is deceived into thinking that either of these rituals are **necessary** to become saved, or to remain saved, then they are functioning under a corrupted gospel and they are lost, and they will be left behind at the Rapture, because there have been, and still are thousands of churches where it is taught that water baptism is absolutely necessary for salvation.

In fact, in the history of this present church age there have been churches which have had the authority to put to death anyone who taught or even believed that water baptism was **not** necessary for salvation.

Now, the sad reality of all this is that anyone who has died before the Rapture and who had been deceived into functioning under such a corrupted gospel has no hope. They are destined to eternal damnation.

But if you should happen to be alive when the Rapture occurs, you may still be saved. Obviously, that's why I'm doing this message. But one thing which is certain is that **after** the Rapture has occurred, the doctrines and information necessary for salvation are going to change again, and with those changes so will the disruptive focus of Satan change again. And I'll certainly have a lot more to say about that later on in this message when we begin to look at just what those who missed the Rapture should do.

So, we've spent a great deal of time on this one aspect of what the world can expect to see when the Rapture does take place - why certain people will be gone and why others will be left behind, but I think it was absolutely

necessary to examine and understand all of that in order to understand what those who will be left behind will need to do and why they will need to do it.

And now, we want to continue looking at what else the world can expect to see after the Rapture.

There are certainly going to be some very interesting things evolving pertaining to the nation Israel. And why is that? Because God has every intention of resuming and then completing His prophesied kingdom program for the nation Israel here on the earth. God didn't abandon His prophetic kingdom program for Israel in Acts 7 - He simply interrupted it.

That program had to be interrupted because Jesus of Nazareth who was Israel's prophesied Messiah and King was officially and finally rejected in Acts 7, so there was no way the program **could** continue. There can be no kingdom program if you don't have a King.

With the setting aside of Israel's prophetic kingdom program, God **then** began doing what He has been doing for more than the last two thousand years, and that is to call out a separate body of believers to accomplish His purposes in the heavenly places. That will be the destiny and role of all believers taken up at the Rapture at the conclusion of this present church age.

But God most certainly **will** turn His attention back to the nation Israel once again, and He will take Israel's prophetic kingdom program on to its completion. If God **doesn't** do that - if God **doesn't** resume and complete that program, He will make Himself the greatest liar and perpetrator of fraud and deceit that mankind has ever known.

But don't hang on to **that** thought, because God **will** resume and complete that program after the Rapture at which time everything will once again be focused on what God will then be doing with the nation Israel.

One of the profound blunders of the overwhelming majority of the churches of this present church age has been to presume that the churches of this present age have replaced Israel - that there has not been any change in God's program.

If you actually believe that, then naturally you're going to go back into Israel prophetic kingdom program and extract all sorts of doctrines and information **from** that program and force those doctrines to apply to this present age of the church. And that simply doesn't work.

And we saw the consequences of being deceived into believing that certain aspects of Israel's program are necessary during this present church age. Those who have been deceived with a corrupted gospel message will be left behind at the Rapture.

So then, after the Rapture, God **will** resume and complete His prophetic kingdom program for the nation Israel down here on the earth. We'll look at a couple of passages which teach that:

### **Acts 15**

The **timeframe** for Acts 15 is some years **after** the church of this present age had been set in motion and was going strong with the apostle Paul as God's administrator for that program.

The **context** of Acts 15 is the coming together of the apostle Paul and the apostles and leaders from Israel's prophetic kingdom program, which God had interrupted back in Acts 7. The meeting took place in Jerusalem and is described also in Galatians chapter 2.

The **purpose** of the meeting in Acts 15 and Galatians 2 was to come to an understanding of why Paul was teaching and practicing things which were so **different** from what had been both necessary and appropriate in Israel's prophetic kingdom program.

There are a lot of things we can learn from this passage, but we're coming here specifically to see one of the conclusions which the apostles and leaders from Israel's prophetic kingdom program came to understand pertaining to Paul's ministry and this present church age.

**Acts 15:12** Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them.

**13** And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me:

**14** Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, **to take out of them a people for his name.**

**15** And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written,

**16 After this** I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up:

**17** That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.

In verse 12, Paul describes the nature of his ministry among the Gentiles.

In verse 14, the apostles and leaders in Israel's prophetic program (referring to what took place in Acts 10) see how that God had been preparing them for this change in programs when He sent Peter to the Gentile household of Cornelius in Acts 10.

As verse 14 says, God visited this Gentile man because God was preparing to take out of the Gentiles, a people for his name. **That** was to become Paul's ministry - the apostle to the Gentiles forming the church of this present age.

And then the point which we came here to see is in verse 16 which says,

...**After this**...After what? After God has finished "**taking out of the Gentiles a people for His name,**" through the apostle Paul and according to the doctrines which Paul had been given for this present church age. After **that**, Israel's prophetic kingdom program will resume once again.

Israel's prophetic kingdom program is what verse 16 is describing, and all of the covenants which God had made with the nation Israel will then be fulfilled. The "**taking out of the Gentiles a people for his name**" will end with the Rapture.

Other important passages explaining how that Israel's prophetic kingdom program will most certainly be resumed are in Romans 11. After Paul had written the first eight chapters in Romans which form the foundational doctrines for the church of this present age, Paul addresses all sorts of questions which would naturally arise due to the fact that Israel's prophetic program has been interrupted. Paul addresses those questions in Romans chapters 9-11. We'll look at Romans chapter 11.

**Romans 11:1** I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.  
**2a** God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew...

It can't be stated any clearer than it is right here. Israel's prophetic kingdom program was interrupted in Acts 7, but God is not finished with Israel.

**Romans 11:11** I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall **salvation is come unto the Gentiles**, for to provoke them to jealousy.

**12** Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more **their fulness?**

In verse 11, the "**salvation which is come unto the Gentiles**" is God's program for the church of this present age which has been given to us through the apostle Paul. But God is not through with Israel.

Verse 12 speaks of "**their fulness.**" It refers to Israel's fulness - all the blessings associated with the eventual completion of the prophetic kingdom program.

**Romans 11:25** For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, **until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.**

**...until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in...**

This is the Rapture. And here we have the fullness of the Gentiles - all the blessings associated with the completion of this present church age.

All of these things must come to pass. Why? Romans 11:29 explains why.

**Romans 11:29** For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.

There is no way that God is going to change His mind about accomplishing everything He has promised to accomplish pertaining to Israel's prophetic kingdom program.

So, God makes it perfectly clear that when this present church age is completed with the event which we call the Rapture, He will resume His prophetic kingdom program with the nation Israel once again.

By the way, I should mention that if you wanted a chronological account of the resumption of Israel's prophetic kingdom program following the Rapture, you have exactly that in the sequential books of Hebrews through Revelation in the Bible. The books of Hebrews through Revelation provide a chronological account of how events will unfold following the Rapture.

The book of Hebrews begins with all sorts of information which those Jews who will be living in Israel will need to know when their program resumes. After the book of Hebrews there is all sorts of information which those Jews who are living **outside** of the land of Israel will need to know.

So, all the information which will need to be known by the Jews associated with God's Israel and the resumption of their program is laid out in a perfectly logical order in the books of Hebrews through Revelation.

But the question is, having missed the Rapture, what can those who have been left behind expect to see going on **with** the nation Israel, and what should those people now **do** in order to be right with God? Those are the questions which the rest of this message will attempt to answer.

There are a number of events which are described in the Bible which will enable those who will be living at that time to know exactly where things are in the timeline of events which will accompany the completion of Israel's prophetic kingdom program. One of those events will be the revealing of the man who is known in the Bible as the Antichrist.

The prophetic scriptures dealing with Israel's program have quite a bit to say about this man - about the Antichrist. For example, the Antichrist will come out of the country of Assyria, or Syria. Israel's prophetic scriptures repeatedly refer to the Antichrist as the Assyrian.

The Bible also makes it clear that the Antichrist will be revealed at some point in history when the nation Israel will be in a state of tremendous persecution and unrest. There will be anything **but** peace in the land of Israel at that point in history, and this is of **great** significance in that this Antichrist will somehow

be able to establish peace in the Middle East - peace between Israel and her enemies.

The Antichrist will essentially become Israel's advocate, and under his leadership Israel's temple will be rebuilt, Israel's sacrificial system will resume, and the Antichrist will orchestrate a treaty which will establish peace between Israel and all of Israel's enemies.

This man - the Antichrist will be quite a charismatic figure and he is going to be welcomed with open arms by **most** of the Jews in Israel, and in fact by most of the world at that time. After all, peace in the Middle East is something the world has never seen.

However, there will be a segment of Jews within the nation of Israel, who **will** know from the Bible how that everything the Antichrist is doing is merely deception - a lie.

This peace treaty which the Antichrist will orchestrate will not be done in a corner; It will be front page news everywhere, and it will be the establishing of this peace treaty which will mark the **first day** of the last 7 years of Israel's prophetic kingdom program before the 2nd coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to establish His kingdom.

We'll begin looking at this in:

**Daniel 9:27** And **he** shall confirm the covenant with many for **one week**...

This prophecy refers to the covenant - to the peace treaty which will initiate those last 7 years of the Tribulation before the 2nd coming of Christ. In this verse, "**he**" refers to the Antichrist.

The "**one week**" referred to in the verse is specific to Jewish terminology which refers to one week of years which is a 7 year period of time. This week referred to here is the last 7 years of the Daniel's full "seventy weeks" prophecy which begins back in verse 24. This is also commonly referred to as the 70th week of Daniel's prophecy.

**Daniel 9:27** And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and **in the midst of the week** he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation

to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate...

Daniel 9:27 then goes on to explain what is going to happen midway into these last 7 years. At approximately the mid-point during these last 7 years of Israel's prophetic program, the Antichrist will reveal his **true** nature and intentions when he steps into Israel's temple and declares himself to be God.

This is that point at which the Antichrist will declare **himself** to be Israel's messiah, and he will then begin his extermination policy against that remnant of true believers in Israel and throughout the Middle East. This period of time is what the Bible refers to as "the time of Jacob's trouble." Jeremiah 30:7

So, I've just outlined a large segment of what people who will have missed the Rapture can expect to see. Now, let's look at some verses where this information comes from.

How do we know the Antichrist will be an Assyrian? From the prophets:

**Isaiah 10:24** Therefore thus saith the Lord God of hosts, O my people that dwellest in Zion, be not afraid of **the Assyrian**: he shall smite thee with a rod, and shall lift up his staff against thee, after the manner of Egypt.

**Isaiah 14:24** The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand:

**25** That I will break **the Assyrian** in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot: then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders.

**Isaiah 30:31** For through the voice of the Lord shall **the Assyrian** be beaten down, which smote with a rod.

Now, what about that false peace treaty which the Antichrist will establish? We just saw that treaty in Daniel 9:27, but there are numerous passages in the Bible which reveal important details about the deceptive nature of that treaty:

**Isaiah 28:14** Wherefore hear the word of the Lord, ye scornful men, that rule this people which is in Jerusalem.

**15** Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: **for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves:**

This treaty made by the Antichrist, which they will think will be their assurance of safety and refuge is going to be no more than a covenant with death. It will all be lies.

**Daniel 11:21** And in his estate shall stand up a **vile person**, to whom they shall not give the honour of the kingdom: but **he shall come in peaceably**, and obtain the kingdom **by flatteries**.

**22** And with the arms of a flood shall they be overflowed from before him, and shall be broken; yea, also **the prince of the covenant**.

**23** And after the league made with him **he shall work deceitfully**: for he shall come up, and shall become strong with a small people.

**24 He shall enter peaceably...**

That “**vile person**” in verse 21 is the Antichrist. He is “**the prince of the covenant**.” He is going to come onto the scene “**peaceably**” with “**flatteries**”, but it will all be nothing but deceit.

**Psalms 55:20** He hath put forth his hands against such as be at peace with him: **he hath broken his covenant**.

**21** The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but **war was in his heart**: his words were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords.

As was pointed out when examining Daniel 9:27, it will be the mid-point of the 7 year Tribulation when the Antichrist will reveal his true nature and intentions. There are many passages in the Bible describing the true nature and intentions of the Antichrist at that particular point in time:

**Daniel 11:31** And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place **the abomination that maketh desolate...**

**Daniel 11:36** And the king shall do according to his will; and **he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god**, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done.

These verses are speaking of that time in the midst of that 7 year Tribulation when the Antichrist steps into Israel's temple and declares himself as god and Israel's messiah. This is when the Antichrist reveals his true nature and intentions, and this event is even spoken of by the Lord Jesus Christ in

**Matthew 24:15** When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

**16** Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:

Even the apostle Paul referred to this event in:

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

**2** That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that **the day of Christ** is at hand.

In verse 1, "**our gathering together unto him**" (unto Christ) is the Rapture. There were some people in Thessalonica who were confused and troubled because of some erroneous teaching that was floating around about the 2nd coming of Christ ("**the day of Christ**"). Some people were teaching that the 2nd coming of Christ had already occurred, and Paul is assuring them that this could not possibly be the case since the Rapture hasn't even happened yet. And not only that, but the 2nd coming of Christ could not have occurred yet because of verses 3 and 4.

**2 Thessalonians 2:3** Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that **man of sin** be revealed, **the son of perdition**;

**4** Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

So here it is again - that point in the midst of the 7 year Tribulation when the Antichrist steps into the temple and declares himself to be god and Israel's messiah.

In passages like this, it's helpful to understand that the Antichrist is referred to by many names in the Bible. Here in verse 3 he is called "**the man of**

**sin”** and then in the very same verse he is called “**the son of perdition.**” These names have particular significance.

During the first half of the 7 year Tribulation, before the true nature and intentions of the Antichrist are made manifest for all to see, he is referred to as **the man of sin.**

During the last half of the 7 year Tribulation, he is referred to as **the son of perdition.** In other places in the Bible, especially in the prophecies given to Daniel, and in the book of the Revelation, the Antichrist is referred to as **the beast.** We'll see some of those passages as we go on.

So, the Antichrist goes by multiple titles in the Bible. The designation here as **the son of perdition** is particularly interesting in that this particular title is seen in only one other place in the Bible and that is in association with Judas Iscariot when he betrayed Jesus leading to the crucifixion in the gospel accounts.

That betrayal took place almost immediately after Luke's gospel account describes how that Satan himself actually entered into Judas to make sure that the murder of Jesus would take place without any complication. The account is in:

**Luke 22:3** Then **entered Satan into Judas** surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve.

And that entering of Satan into Judas, to carry out the betrayal subsequently prompts Jesus to refer to Judas as **the son of perdition** in John 17:12.

The entering of Satan into the Antichrist will take place near the mid-point of the 7 year Tribulation as described here in 2 Thessalonians 2:4 when the Antichrist will exalt “**himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God...**

Here in 2 Thessalonians 2:3, that same title (**the son of perdition**) is used for the Antichrist because it designates that point at which Satan will enter **into** the Antichrist - into the man of sin, (just like he had previously entered into Judas) to enable the Antichrist to perform all of the signs and wonders which he will be doing to deceive Israel and, in fact, to deceive the

whole world as well. Paul makes a reference to those deceptions as you continue on down through chapter 2 to verses 8 and 9.

**2 Thessalonians 2:8** And then shall that **Wicked** be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

**9** Even him, whose coming is **after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,**

That “**Wicked**” in verse 8 is another of the names for the Antichrist, and the entering into the Antichrist of Satan is going to empower the Antichrist to perform all kinds of “**signs and lying wonders.**” We also see a great deal more about the power given to the Antichrist by Satan and the deceptive signs and wonders which the Antichrist will be doing in:

**Revelation 13:1** And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw **a beast** rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

**2** And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and **the dragon gave him his power,** and his seat, **and great authority.**

**3** And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.

**4** And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?

**5** And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and **power was given unto him** to continue forty and two months.

**6** And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.

**7** And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.

**8** And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

So, those who will be left behind after the Rapture will need to know that there are going to be some very convincing signs and wonders which will be

performed by the Antichrist who is attempting to deceive Israel and in fact attempting to deceive the whole world, into believing that **he** is God - and that **he** is Israel's messiah.

But anyone who has been following along with the career of this man - with the initiation of the peace treaty with Israel, with the rebuilding of the temple, and all those things which will **appear** to be establishing peace and safety for the nation Israel should be able to appreciate who this man **really** is. He is the Antichrist, and his intentions are to exterminate all true believers within the nation Israel.

Something else which those who have been left behind can expect to see will be the appearance of many thousands of Jews (144,000 to be exact) who will be preaching **truth** pertaining to **God's** program for the nation Israel now that God's program for the nation Israel has resumed.

**Revelation 7:1** And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

**2** And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,

**3** Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

**4** And I heard the number of them which were sealed: **and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.**

As you read on down through the chapter, we see how that this group of 144,000 servants of the Lord will consist of 12,000 Jews from each of the twelve tribes of Israel, and their job is going to be world evangelism.

What this is, is the re-establishing of what Jesus Christ and the Bible previously referred to as the little flock of true believers associated with the **1st** coming of Christ. When Israel's prophesied kingdom program resumes again after the Rapture, it will resume basically where the program was interrupted in Acts 7.

There was a little flock of true believers back then, and there will have to be a little flock of true believers **after** the Rapture to get Israel's program going

once again, and it is this re-establishing by the 144,000 as the little flock of believers who will initiate the resumption of Israel's prophetic kingdom program following the Rapture.

It appears that the sealing of these 144,000 servants of the Lord will be the very first event associated with the resumption of Israel's prophetic kingdom program, and it will probably occur immediately following the Rapture.

These 144,000 servants of the Lord are extremely important for anyone who will have been left behind following the Rapture and who will be living at that time, because these servants of the Lord will be preaching a gospel message which will need to be accepted by anyone who desires to obtain salvation and justification in the eyes of God.

These servants of the Lord are those who will be doing exactly what Jesus Christ said would be done in Matthew 24 in association with Israel's prophetic kingdom program.

**Matthew 24:1** And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple.

**2** And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

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

**4** And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.

**5** For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

As I've already pointed out to you, the Antichrist will be attempting to deceive people into believing that **he** is the Christ - that **he** the Messiah, but there will be others who will be claiming to be the Christ as well. Those others will be relatively minor players compared to the Antichrist, but they will be there nonetheless.

**Matthew 24:6** And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

**7** For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.

**8** All these are the beginning of sorrows.

**9** Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

**10** And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.

**11** And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

**12** And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

**13** But he that shall endure unto **the end**, the same shall be saved.

...**the end**...

This means the end of the 7 year Tribulation period. That is when Christ will return and defeat the Antichrist and his armies and avenge Israel of all of her longstanding enemies. But for those Israelites who are in the center of all this and who are the focus of all this persecution and turmoil, enduring to the end will be nearly impossible. And now look at:

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

...**this gospel of the kingdom**...

This "**gospel of the kingdom**" is what anyone who has been left behind had better take very careful note of. It is the same gospel message which had been preached by John the Baptist, by Jesus, and by the 12 apostles in the gospel accounts during Christ's 1st coming - before the crucifixion. That gospel of the kingdom is what the 144,000 servants of the Lord will be preaching.

And what exactly was that "gospel of the kingdom?" It was believing that Jesus of Nazareth **was** the Son of God, and that He **was** the Christ, and that He **was** Israel's prophesied Messiah.

But that's not **all** that was involved in that gospel message. Anyone who had truly believed that Jesus of Nazareth **was** the Son of God and that

He **was** Israel's Messiah would also **do** what they were instructed to **do** in response to their faith, and one of the things which they were instructed to do was to be water baptized.

So, to anyone who is left behind following the Rapture or who is living at that time in the future - pay close attention to what those 144,000 servants of the Lord will be preaching, because we don't know but there just might be some additional requirements which those servants will be making known to you and to the world when that time arrives.

Now, before leaving Matthew 24, it's important to understand that all the events in this section of Matthew 24 are not in a strictly chronological order. For example, "**the end**" referred to in verses 13 and 14, refers to the end of the 7 year Tribulation, but in verse 15, that "**abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel**" occurs in the middle of the 7 Year Tribulation. We've gone over that already.

Likewise, the worldwide preaching of the gospel of the kingdom in verse 14 is an event which actually begins **before** the 7 year Tribulation even begins.

As was pointed out previously, it appears that the sealing of these 144,000 servants of the Lord who will be preaching the gospel of the kingdom will be the very first event associated with the resumption of Israel's prophetic kingdom program, and it will probably occur immediately following the Rapture, because this is the re-establishing of what Jesus Christ and the Bible previously referred to as the little flock of true believers associated with the 1st coming of Christ.

Now, you might recall that I did everything I could do in the beginning of this series to make it clear to anyone hearing this message how that water baptism as a part of the salvation / justification process for an individual is strictly **prohibited** as part of the gospel of the grace of God during the church age **prior** to the Rapture. But in Israel's prophetic kingdom program water baptism was absolutely essential. And so will it be again as part of the gospel of the kingdom when Israel's prophetic kingdom program resumes.

And you can be sure that when the requirements for salvation and justification change in the future in association with the resumption of Israel's prophetic kingdom program and the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom

that Satan will be doing whatever he has to do to confuse those requirements once again.

So, if you hear it from the Antichrist, understand that it's a lie. Pay attention to the 144,000 who will be preaching the gospel of the kingdom.

It's my own personal opinion that when this time does come - when the gospel of the kingdom is being preached once again for justification and salvation in Israel's program, that Satan will somehow deceive multitudes of people who might be otherwise be well intentioned to rely and trust in the **previous** gospel message - which won't apply any more.

Now, there are also going to be two very interesting individuals which you can also expect to hear from when Israel's prophetic kingdom program resumes. They are referred to in the Bible as the two witnesses and they are seen in:

**Revelation 11:3** And I will give power unto **my two witnesses**, and they shall prophesy **a thousand two hundred and threescore days**, clothed in sackcloth.

**4** These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.

**5** And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.

**6** These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.

...**a thousand two hundred and threescore days**...is 42 months or 3 1/2 years according to the Jewish manner of reckoning months. These two witnesses are going to be real headliners. These two witnesses will be doing their thing in Jerusalem from the grounds of the temple where they will be giving out the word of God for 3 1/2 years and they will be untouchable.

The Bible does not tell us specifically what they will be preaching. Perhaps they will be giving the world further instructions in how to be right with God. Perhaps they will be preaching that this Antichrist who is posing as Israel's advocate is really a phony. In fact, I'm sure they'll be preaching

things contrary to the lies which the Antichrist will be attempting to sell to the world.

But whatever they have to say, you better pay close attention to what it is, because they will be preaching what God wants Israel and the world to know, so you better hang on every word they have to say.

As we'll see in the verses further down in Revelation 11, much of the world is not going to be receptive to what they will have to say. And that's really no different than it's always been when the word of God is being given out. That's the way things were before the Rapture, and in fact, that's the way things have always been during any age throughout the history of human society. Most of society has no use for the word of God; they don't want it and they're hostile to it.

But for 3 1/2 years it won't make any difference how the nations surrounding Israel and throughout the world are going to feel about what these two witnesses are preaching, because no one is going to have the power to suppress their testimony.

Look back at verse 5 again:

**Revelation 11:5** And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.

These two witnesses are going to be able to incinerate any one or any thing that might come up against them. But that's not all they're going to be able to do. Let's say for example, some distant nation like the US decides to bad mouth or officially reject what these witnesses are preaching. Look at verse 6 again.

**Revelation 11:6** These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.

These witnesses will have the power to produce 3 1/2 years of total drought anywhere on the earth. They'll be able to completely destroy any nations agricultural economy. And they will be able to send plagues upon any nation they choose - like turning all sources of water into blood.

We took a look earlier at the deceptive signs and wonders which the Antichrist will be doing in 2 Thessalonians 2:8-9, and in Revelation 13, but there will be some equally impressive signs and wonders which will be taking place in Israel and all around the world which will **not** be deceptive in nature. There will be signs and wonders which will be seen as a result of what the one true God is doing.

This is going to be a very difficult time in the history of human society and anyone who is living during that time is going to have to be Biblically intelligent if they want to have any chance at all of understanding what is **really** going on, or **who** they should believe, and especially what they need to **do**.

Because of the specific supernatural nature of the types of miraculous things which these two witnesses will be able to do the speculation is that these two witnesses will be Moses and the prophet Elijah, because these are miraculous interventions which those two men did when they were down here on the earth.

Also, it is well known from the Bible that the prophet Elijah is going to return before the 2nd coming of Christ. That prophecy is given in Malachi 4:5 and re-affirmed by Christ in Matthew 17:10-11.

So, to summarize a bit, we've looked at three specific events which those who have been left behind after the Rapture can expect to see:

1. The appearance of the 144,000 Jewish evangelists who will be preaching the gospel of the kingdom throughout the world. This will probably occur immediately after the Rapture and will be the very first event signaling the resumption of Israel's prophetic kingdom program.

2. The revealing of the Antichrist who will negotiate peace in the Middle East between Israel and all of Israel's enemies and who will **appear** to be Israel's advocate. When the revealing of the Antichrist takes place in association with the peace treaty between Israel and all of Israel's enemies, there will 7 years remaining before the 2nd coming of Christ to establish the kingdom. It's important to understand that the commissioning of the 144,000 servants of the Lord could precede the revealing of the Antichrist by months or even years.

3. The appearance of the Lord's two witnesses who will be giving out the word of God from Jerusalem. Their ministry will cover the first 3 1/2 years of the 7 year Tribulation period, so the appearance of these two servants of the Lord should coincide with the revealing of the Antichrist at the very beginning of the 7 year Tribulation.

Now, let's continue on with the account of these two witnesses in Revelation 11. In verse 7, their ministry comes to an end.

**Revelation 11:7** And when they shall have finished their testimony, **the beast** that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.

The beast referred to here is the Antichrist. After 3 1/2 years, their ministry is finished and they are killed by the Antichrist. During the 3 1/2 years of their ministry they were untouchable but now they're killed.

Those 3 1/2 years are obviously the first 3 1/2 years of the 7 year Tribulation period which enables us to give a meaningful context for what we are reading about here. We are in a timeframe here which corresponds to that midpoint of the 7 year Tribulation period when the Antichrist reveals his true nature and intentions.

This timeframe corresponds to that point when the Antichrist steps into Israel's temple and declares himself as God and as Israel's messiah. We saw previously how that Christ referred to this point in time in Matthew 24:15, and how that the apostle Paul referred to it in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4.

This is that point in time when the Antichrist breaks the treaty and sets out to exterminate all the true believers within the nation of Israel. And obviously, he is intent on suppressing anyone who is giving out truth - the true word of God - like these two witnesses.

**Revelation 11:8** And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.

**9** And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.

**10** And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.

Here you see the reaction of people all over the earth who had rejected the preaching and testimony of these two witnesses - people who had obviously suffered those droughts or the plagues which the two witnesses had leveled against them. Here you see their reaction to the death of these two men. They're overjoyed; they've had all they take of droughts and plagues.

But God is still going to have one last word so to speak regarding these two great witnesses - one last demonstration of who is really in charge of the fate of his servants.

**Revelation 11:9** And after three days and an half the spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.

**12** And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.

The Lord always takes care of His servants.

But now we're in the 2nd half of the 7 year Tribulation. During the first 3 1/2 years the Antichrist has been operating under the false persona of Israel's advocate and protector - the man of sin. But at this point, the Antichrist has now made it clear what his true nature and intentions have been all along. The Antichrist made his true nature and intentions clear when he entered into Israel's temple and declared himself as God and as Israel's Messiah.

It is interesting that most of the Jews in Israel will be deceived into believing that the Antichrist **is** their God and Messiah. But just as there always has been and always will be, there will be a faithful remnant of Jews within the nation who will know from God's written word to **them** that the Antichrist and his program is a lie, and they will be responding to the events which unfold just as they have been instructed to respond in the word of God - in those books from Hebrews through Revelation.

As we read those verses in Revelation 11 about the two witnesses and their ministry during those first 3 1/2 years, we read something there which deserves some further explanation, and that was in:

**Revelation 11:7** And when they shall have finished their testimony, **the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit** shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.

**...the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit...**

As was pointed out earlier, this beast is the Antichrist. But this ascent out of the bottomless pit needs some explanation.

The Bible does not tell us exactly when this will take place, but sometime during the first 3 1/2 years of the 7 year Tribulation the Antichrist is going to be physically wounded during what would appear to be an assassination attempt. He will then appear to die. It will then be **made** to appear, through the orchestration of Satan, that the Antichrist rises from the dead. Obviously, that is going to impress a lot of people and will only serve to reinforce the deceptive tactics of the Antichrist.

We read the beginning of Revelation 13 previously, but we're going to look at this again to see this intimate relationship between the Antichrist and Satan.

**Revelation 13:1** And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw **a beast** rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

**2** And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and **the dragon** gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.

Here we see the beast and the dragon. We saw previously that the beast is the Antichrist and the dragon is Satan. The dragon is one of the classical Biblical titles for Satan.

**Revelation 13:3** And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.

This is where the Antichrist appears to rise from the dead, and that is why verse 7 in chapter 11 said that he will be ascending out of the bottomless pit. So, if you wanted to paraphrase that phrase “**ascendeth out of the bottomless pit**” in Revelation 11:7, it simply means that he will be rising up out of the grave - or at least that’s what it’s going to look like he is doing.

If you haven’t figured this out yet, it certainly bears pointing out now that the Antichrist is always attempting to counterfeit what Jesus Christ as Israel’s **true** Messiah actually **did** at His 1st coming and what Jesus Christ **will** be doing at His 2nd coming. That **is** the reason why he is referred to as the Anti - christ. He is always trying to copy Christ, but he is not the real Christ.

This apparent resurrection from the dead will just be another event which will deceive many people into believing that the Antichrist is the real thing. This is also that point in time when the Antichrist, who is called **the man of sin** during the first half of the 7 year Tribulation becomes personally indwelt by Satan as **the son of perdition** for the 2nd half of the 7 year Tribulation.

And this is when persecution against those Jews who are the **true** believers in Israel’s program will be unlike anything they have ever experienced before. As Christ said in

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

In a while, we’ll come back here again to Revelation 13 to look at some other things which the Antichrist will be doing - things which will have a direct relationship to what those who have been left behind at the Rapture will need to understand in order to enable them to make the right decisions when Israel’s prophetic kingdom program resumes.

These decisions are going to be decisions which will be based on the **consequences** which a person can expect to receive as a result of either blessing or cursing members of the true believing remnant in Israel during their time of great persecution and tribulation. This is a principle which goes all the way back to Gen.12 as part of the Abrahamic Covenant.

**Genesis 12:1-3** Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:

**2** And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

**3** And **I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee:** and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

As one of the components of the Abrahamic Covenant God says:

**...I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee...**

“**Them**” refers to people who are not part of the nation of Israel - people who are not Jews. “**Them**” are the Gentiles of the world. And this is a very significant part of the Abrahamic Covenant. This is a promise made by God which God has honored, and will honor again, whenever Israel’s prophetic kingdom program is active.

It is **not** a promise which God is honoring today during this current church age simply because Israel’s prophetic kingdom is **not** currently active, and because the nation over there in the Middle East which calls itself Israel today during this current church age is **not** the Israel of God. It will not **be** the Israel of God until after the Rapture when God resumes His prophetic program for Israel once again. When **that** happens, this promise will once again come into play just as had in the past prior to the cutting off of Israel’s prophetic kingdom program in Acts 7.

In the past, one of the first notable examples of how this principle greatly benefited the Gentiles was demonstrated in the book of Joshua. As the armies of Israel were preparing to enter the promised land they sent out spies ahead into the city of Jericho. Those spies were sheltered and assisted by the harlot Rahab, a Gentile woman and citizen of Jericho, who recognized and believed that the God of Israel was indeed the one true God. Rahab knew and believed what the one true God had done for Israel when God delivered Israel from the Egyptians and destroyed Pharaoh and Pharaoh’s army.

The account of all this comprises most of Joshua chapter 2. And because she had aided the spies from Israel, Rahab and her entire family were spared

when Israel came in and conquered the city. In fact, Rahab and her family were actually taken in as part of the nation.

**Josh.6:21** And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox, and sheep, and ass, with the edge of the sword.

**22** But Joshua had said unto the two men that had spied out the country, Go into the harlot's house, and bring out thence the woman, and all that she hath, as ye swore unto her.

**23** And the young men that were spies went in, and brought out Rahab, and her father, and her mother, and her brethren, and all that she had; and they brought out all her kindred, and left them without the camp of Israel.

**24** And they burnt the city with fire, and all that was therein: only the silver, and the gold, and the vessels of brass and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the Lord.

**25** And Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's household, and all that she had; and she dwelleth in Israel even unto this day; because she hid the messengers, which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

So, the Lord saw to it that Rahab was blessed for having blessed Israel. And not only that but many centuries later in the book of Hebrews 11:31, God informs us that because of Rahab's faith, and because of what she had done in response **to** that faith, that Rahab had actually received personal salvation and justification in the eyes of God and will one day be raised up with all of the other Old Testament saints to be a part of Israel's kingdom. So, this is the type of thing God means when He promises that He will bless those who bless Israel.

But then how will this principle play out for Gentiles in the future after the Rapture? We're going to see how by going back to Revelation 13 again where we can learn about something else that the Antichrist is going to do.

We saw previously how that Revelation 13 takes us into the last 3 1/2 years of the Tribulation when the Antichrist is attempting to exterminate anyone and anything which has anything to do with God's prophetic kingdom program for Israel.

We noted how that the Antichrist will be making war with the saints and overcoming them. We noted how that all these events are entirely consistent with what Jesus had foretold to His disciples - how that this would be a time

when there shall be great tribulation “such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.”

In Daniel 7:25 the prophet writes how that the Antichrist will literally “**wear out the saints.**” The persecution of God’s people will be relentless. But we need to see what else the Antichrist will be doing to make life even more impossible to survive during this time of tremendous persecution.

**Rev.13:16** And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive **a mark** in their right hand, or in their foreheads:

**17** And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

**18** Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.

Under the control of the Antichrist there will be some type of identifiable mark which will be necessary for a person to take in order to be able to buy or sell anything during those last 3 1/2 years of the Tribulation. This is commonly referred to as “the mark of the beast.”

Those believing Jews are going to be instructed **not** to take this mark because anyone who **does** take this mark is basically aligning himself and his allegiance with the Antichrist. So the believing Jews will be unable to buy food or provisions or anything they might need during this last 3 1/2 years of the Tribulation.

Now, I want to point out here that this restrictive economic policy by the Antichrist is an event which has been pretty much mis-understood even by Bible believers. This mark which is going to be necessary in order to partake in commerce is not going to be a worldwide restriction. This is going to be something which will be confined the Middle East, because the Antichrist will be in control of the Middle East - not the entire world as some might presume.

But that does not mean that the rest of the world will not be affected by this policy. They **will** be affected in the sense that this policy will give a multitude of nations the ability to either bless or curse Israel in response to what the Antichrist will doing to God’s people at that time. This is exactly what Jesus was referring to in:

**Matthew 25:31** When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

You want to understand where we are here along the timeline of events. As the verse says, the 2nd coming of Christ has already occurred. The 7 year Tribulation period is over. The career of the Antichrist has come to an end; He has been cast into hell. And now, Israel's long awaited for prophesied kingdom is finally set to begin. But look at what is going to take place when Christ goes to establish that kingdom.

**Matthew 25:32** And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:

**33** And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

**34** Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, **Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom** prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

**35** For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

**36** Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

**37** Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?

**38** When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?

**39** Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

**40** And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

So what do we see here? In verse 32 we see all nations gathered before the Lord Jesus Christ.

In verses 33-34 we see how that those nations are going to be separated out as either sheep or goat nations. Those nations who the Lord refers to as sheep will be on the right hand of the Lord and they are actually going to be admitted into the kingdom.

Verse 34 says... **Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom...**

These nations are going to be blessed by the Lord. And what is the basis upon which these nations are being blessed? They are being blessed on the basis of that principle which goes all the way back to the Abrahamic Covenant in Genesis 12 where God had said:

**...I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee...**

And how did these nations bless Israel? The Lord tells us how in verses 35-36.

**Matthew 25:35** For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:  
**36** Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

This is the manner in which certain nations will be blessing Christ's Jewish brothers during those last 3 1/2 years of the Tribulation - when those Jews couldn't buy food, clothing or anything they needed because of the restrictive economic policy and persecution of the Antichrist.

Some of those Jews will not have any place to live or hide from the Antichrist, and somebody took them in, or gave them food and water, and clothing, or hid them. Some of those Jews will have been imprisoned - and somebody came to their assistance.

So, there are going to be continual, blatant attempts by the Antichrist to exterminate the true believers in Israel during the last 3 1/2 years of the 7 year Tribulation and the question might arise as to why the Antichrist will be doing that?

The reason is because those true believers are the only ones who are standing in the way of Satan's deceptive program of lies - that he is God. Those true believers in Israel's program know full well that he's a fraud.

Just as we learned in the beginning of this message, Satan's tactics are always working contrary to what God is doing at any point in history. Those true believers know the truth. They know that the Antichrist is not God.

We were in Matthew 24 a while back where we saw that the gospel of the kingdom was going to be preached throughout the world by the 144,000 servants of the Lord.

Verse 21 in Matthew 24 went on to say, "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be..."

Again, that's a reference to last 3 1/2 years of the Tribulation when the Antichrist begins his extermination policy against the true believers in Israel.

In order to gain a more complete appreciation and understanding of the full scope of the nature of the tribulations and persecutions which these believing Jews will be experiencing, it's very helpful to examine as many passages as you can find in the Bible which relate **to** those tribulations and persecutions.

Another one of those passages is found in Matthew chapter 10. In this passage, Jesus gives His 12 apostles sort of an outline of what to expect during those last 3 1/2 years of the Tribulation.

**Matthew 10:16** Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.

**17** But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues;

**18** And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.

**19** But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.

**20** For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.

**21** And **the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death.**

**22** And **ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake:** but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.

What we want to appreciate here is the extent to which most of the Jews in Israel are going to buy into the deceptive lie program of the Antichrist and will actually be working in conjunction **with** the Antichrist to have members of their own family apprehended and killed by the Antichrist.

I want to bring up something here which is very important to understand about the 7 year Tribulation period. It needs to be understood that one of the main reasons **for** the Tribulation is so that the Lord will be able to purge out / to separate out from Israel all those Jews who are **not** believers. That will leave **only** the true believers who will have endured to the end, and they will enter right into the kingdom when the Lord Jesus Christ returns.

There is a 2nd main reason for the Tribulation and I'll get to that very soon, but I want to stop here for a few minutes so that we can think this through.

Obviously, since the control of the Antichrist and his economic policies are going to be oppressions which will be confined to the Middle East, it will be those countries in and adjacent to the Middle East who will have the greater opportunity to either bless or curse those Jews who are true believers in Israel's program at that time.

Some of those nations will be under the direct control of the Antichrist, so for **those** nations to come to the aid of the Jews at that time will not be without extreme risk, and the Lord is going to reward that. The Lord will bless those who aided the Jews in some way.

Now, something else which needs to be considered is how those nations all over the world are going to respond to what is happening with Israel during her time of great tribulation.

Just as things are today in year 2018 when this message was made, nations around the world either tend to come to the aid of people who are being oppressed, or not. Some nations will even fall on the side of the oppressors rather than on the side of the oppressed. It's always been that way. Who is whose ally, and who is whose enemy?

So then, just for the sake of example, nations like the US, England, Australia or whoever will have the opportunity to come to the aid of national Israel with such things as military support, financial support, food, intelligence gathering, or whatever.

It's also important to remember that the 7 year Tribulation is going to end with a battle which the Bible refers to as the battle of Armageddon. The battle of Armageddon will be when the Antichrist gathers up all his armies

from all the countries over which he has control with the intent to wipe Israel off the face of the earth. We see this taking place or being referred to in multiple places in the Bible. One of those places is in Revelation chapter 16.

**Revelation 16:12** And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.

**13** And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.

**14** For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

**15** Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.

**16** **And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.**

**17** And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.

**18** And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.

**19** And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.

**20** And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.

**21** And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.

The prophet Joel describes this same battle as taking place in the valley of Jehoshaphat - which is between Jerusalem and the mount of Olives.

**Joel 3:2** I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom **they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land.**

Notice that it is the Lord who is speaking here, and that the verse says that it is the Lord who will be gathering these nations to battle against Israel. What

is interesting about all this is that the Antichrist is going to be under the false assumption that **he** is orchestrating everything having to do with this ultimate confrontation against the Lord's people, but it is really the Lord who is putting into the hearts and thinking of the Antichrist and his nations to take this course of action against Israel. It is the Lord who is actually egging these nations on to battle. We see this also in:

**Joel 3:9** Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up:

**10** Beat your plowshares into swords and your pruninghooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong.

**11** Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together **round about**: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord.

**12** Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about.

The nations being referred to here are primarily those nations which are "**round about**" Israel who have been Israel's enemies throughout Israel's history. Looking back at Joel 3:2, the Lord makes it known why these nations are the Lord's enemies and why they will be avenged. These are the nations who are responsible for scattering the Lord's people and for taking over the land which God had promised to Abraham and the nation Israel.

So, you want to understand that the 2nd main reason for the Tribulation is so that the Lord can completely avenge those nations which have had a perpetual hatred for the nation Israel and who have done nothing but persecute and cause problems for Israel throughout her history.

So, the Tribulation is going to have a two-fold purpose. It is going to purge / purify the nation so that those within the nation who have endured to the end can enter into the kingdom, and it is going to completely avenge Israel of her perpetual, longstanding enemies.

However, it is entirely possible that countries all around the planet could be sending military assistance or some type of aid to one side or the other - to assist either the Antichrist or Israel. This means that even countries like the US, England or Australia could very easily have the opportunity to either bless or curse Israel.

Although this principle of either blessing or cursing Israel is a relatively easy principle to understand, the mechanics of how this will be implemented unto the sheep and goat nations needs to be thought through. What do I mean by that?

Let's take the US as an example, and this could be any country: It's the last 3 1/2 years of the 7 year Tribulation. Believers in Israel are now being persecuted and exterminated relentlessly. People in the US are watching these events on the internet and in the media every day. They have heard the preaching of the 144,000 servants of the Lord which began immediately after the Rapture.

People have also heard the word of God being given out by God's two witnesses from Jerusalem during the 1st 3 1/2 years of the 7 year Tribulation after the Antichrist establishes that false peace treaty with the nation Israel. They have heard that preaching for the 1st 3 1/2 years of the Tribulation. They are now in a position where they can either respond to the word of God or reject it.

Remember, the word of God is going to be available not only from the 144,000 servants of the Lord, and from the two witnesses in Jerusalem but in the Bible as well, because God has made it perfectly clear that His written word is always going to be here. People will be able to check all these things out in the Bible.

So, people will have heard the gospel of the kingdom from the 144,000. They will have heard the word of God from the two witnesses. They've also heard all the claims of the Antichrist and they're going to have to decide whose side they're on. Who are they going to believe?

Our political leaders never seem to be able to take a completely hands-off neutral position on anything, so what if they decide to support the position of the Antichrist? It's quite possible that the political leaders in the US may choose to provide military weaponry to the cause of the Antichrist. Those provisions may be direct or they may be indirect through other countries via what would be really nothing more than weapon laundering as is quite common in 2018 when this message is being put together.

But it doesn't make any difference how those provisions might have been made, because anyone who had any part in the decision-making process to do this has cursed Israel and they **will** pay the price of eternal damnation.

Let's take this one step further: What if the political leaders in the US should decide to actually supply troops - "boots on the ground" for the great battle of Armageddon when the Antichrist and his nations come up against Israel?

I **can** tell you what the fate will be of anyone who physically takes part in the battle against Israel and Christ. Those military boots on the ground are going to be incinerated by the Lord Jesus Christ during the battle of Armageddon when Christ avenges all of Israel's enemies at His 2nd coming. It will be devastating to say the least.

But what about all those citizens back in the US who did not agree with their political leaders about the position of cursing Israel which those leaders chose to take? What if they did everything they could do to influence their political leaders to either remain neutral on the issue or to actually come to the aid of Israel - to bless Israel? What about those folks?

My contention is that those folks will have nothing to fear. Remember, the Lord knows the heart of every man. The Lord is perfectly capable of sorting it all out.

It will be just like the Lord blessed Rahab the harlot and her family back in Jericho in the book of Joshua.

One of the points I'm trying to make here is that this separating out of the sheep and goat nations by the Lord Jesus Christ which we read about in Matthew 25 is not going to be an all or nothing situation where everyone in the nation will either perish or be saved. There has to be some specific selectivity coming into play as to who will perish and who will be saved. We can begin to appreciate some insight into this in

**Zechariah 14:16** And it shall come to pass, that **every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem** shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.

**17** And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.

**18** And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the Lord will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.

Notice that verse 16 says that “**every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem**” ...

I take this to mean exactly what it says - that within any particular nation which came up against Israel during the battle of Armageddon there are going to be some people left because they took the position of blessing Israel rather than cursing Israel. Maybe these will be folks who believed the preaching of the 144,000, and of the two witnesses. Maybe these folks tried, but were unable to influence the minds of their congressmen who wanted to take that position of cursing Israel, and maybe they didn't have the means in which to personally do so on their own, but the Lord will know their heart.

At this point, I want to point out some prophecies about ten of the nations which always have been and which will continue to be Israel's greatest enemies, and then I'm going to point out some very interesting prophecies about one of these ten nations.

**Psalm 83:1** Keep not thou silence, O God: hold not thy peace, and be not still, O God.

**2** For, lo, thine enemies make a tumult: and they that hate thee have lifted up the head.

**3** They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones.

**4** They have said, **Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance.**

**5** For they have consulted together with one consent: they are confederate against thee:

**6** The tabernacles of Edom, and the Ishmaelites; of **Moab**, and the Hagarenes;

**7** Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek; the Philistines with the inhabitants of Tyre;

**8** Assur also is joined with them: they have holpen the children of Lot. Selah.

Geographically, these ten nations completely surround the nation of Israel. And although these ten nations may have some very significant

differences with one another, they all share one common goal, and that goal is expressed in verse 4 which says:

...**“Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance...”**

Their goal is to wipe Israel off the face of the earth. One of those nations is the nation of Moab in verse 6. Moab today is roughly the central 1/3 of present day Jordan. These are the Palestinians of our present day.

Moab is a nation which goes all the way back to Genesis chapter 19, and Moab has been a nation which has always been Israel’s enemy, and we’re going to see something very interesting about Moab which is going to take place during the Tribulation. There are many prophetic passages in the Bible pertaining to Moab. We’re going to see what happens in:

**Isaiah 16:3** Take counsel, execute judgment; make thy shadow as the night in the midst of the noonday; **hide the outcasts; bewray not** him that wandereth.

**4 Let mine outcasts dwell with thee, Moab; be thou a covert to them from the face of the spoiler:** for the extortioner is at an end, the spoiler ceaseth, the oppressors are consumed out of the land.

The subjects in these two verses are **“the outcasts”** of the Lord. The fact that these outcasts here are the Lord’s is important. It would take a great deal of time to demonstrate exactly who these outcasts are, and why the Lord considers them His, but suffice it to say that these outcasts are Jews who happen to be in the wrong place at the wrong time.

If you wanted a better understanding of exactly who these outcasts are and why they are where they are, you could gain that understanding by studying the series on the Mystery Kingdom Parables of Matthew 13 which can be found on the [gbcrm.org](http://gbcrm.org) website.

But notice what this prophecy says about these Jewish outcasts. First of all, they are in Moab and the Lord is exhorting the people of Moab not to **bewray** them / not to betray them. Verse 4 goes on to exhort the people of Moab to be a **covert** / a shelter for these outcasts. A shelter from who? From **the spoiler** / the Antichrist.

So, here is the nation of Moab, a nation of people right in the heart of the Middle East where the Antichrist will be reigning supreme and in complete control over everything that will be going on at the time, yet it appears that there are going to be some people in Moab who are going to shelter these Jewish outcasts from the persecution of the Antichrist.

The point is that there may not be **any** nation where the **entire** nation will be wholly given over to the policies of the Antichrist and anyone **from** those nations who risked their lives to bless Israel will be blessed.

This is why we can understand what is going on in that passage we read in Zechariah 14:16 and see how it relates to the separating out of the sheep and goat nations in Matthew 25.

Zechariah 14:16 said that...**every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem...**

There are going to be **people who will be left** from those nations. And if the Lord judges that those people risked their own lives to actually bless Israel, many of them will actually be admitted into Israel's kingdom when the Lord Jesus Christ establishes it.

Now then, let's go back to Matthew 25 and look at the rest of the chapter which deals with those nations (or as we have just seen, the people **within** those nations) who will **not** be entering the kingdom.

In Matthew 25:31-40, we read about those who the Lord will separate out as sheep, and we've seen a few things about those folks. Now let's take a look at the fate of the goats.

**Matthew 25:41** Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

**42** For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink:

**43** I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

**44** Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?

**45** Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.

**46** And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

The point is, if you should happen to be in a position to help out the Jews in Israel during their time of great persecution, you better do it.

Obviously, those people in the Middle East who are actually **in** the lands where these Jews will be at the time will undoubtedly have the greater opportunities to bless those Jews, but the principle of either blessing or cursing Israel will be operative for anyone, anywhere.

So, we've spent a great deal of time examining what the world scene will look like during the 7 year Tribulation period prior to the 2nd coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to establish Israel's kingdom.

We have seen how that the final 7 year period will begin when the Antichrist negotiates a peace treaty between Israel and all of Israel's enemies - how this man will bring peace to Middle East and **appear** to be acting as Israel's advocate.

The Antichrist will orchestrate the rebuilding of Israel's temple. The sacrificial system in Israel will be restored as it was back in Old Testament times, and everything in Israel is going to appear to be honky dory - for at least the 1st 3 1/2 years during which time the 144,000 servants of the Lord will have been preaching the gospel of the kingdom - perhaps for many years ongoing at that point.

And the two witnesses in Jerusalem will be preaching whatever it is that they will be preaching - undoubtedly giving the world information that the world will need to be able to make intelligent decisions about how to respond to Israel's program and how to be right with God.

As we've examined all these things, I've tried to point out to you what those who have been left behind will need to **do** in order to be right with God. I tried to point out to you that those who will have been left behind following the Rapture will certainly need to respond to the gospel of the kingdom which the 144,000 servants of the Lord will be preaching and that water baptism will once again become a necessary component for salvation.

And then we looked at that great principle of the Abrahamic Covenant whereby those who bless Israel will be blessed and those who curse Israel will be cursed and how that that principle will be critically operative especially during the **last** 3 1/2 years of the Tribulation when the Antichrist reveals his true nature and intentions and sets out to exterminate every true believer within the nation Israel.

But you may have noticed that there is a period of time which I've said very little about so far. And that period of time is an unspecified period of time following the Rapture **before** the 7 year Tribulation actually begins.

I need to say a few things about that. Everything we've looked at so far is relatively straight forward in that it has been quite easy to advise those who will have been left behind following the Rapture, what they need to do in order to be right with God at various points in time when Israel's prophetic program resumes once again.

But there is this unspecified period of time between the Rapture and the beginning of the 7 year Tribulation. For simplicity, we're going to refer to this unspecified period of time between the Rapture and the beginning of the 7 year Tribulation as a gap, because that's exactly what it represents - a gap of time between the Rapture and the beginning of the 7 year Tribulation - two events which **can** be very clearly defined and identified.

But what about this gap?

There will definitely be prophetic events occurring pertaining to Israel's prophetic kingdom program during this gap. The 144,000 servants of the Lord who will be preaching the gospel of the kingdom are the perfect example of that. As we've seen, they will begin preaching the gospel of the kingdom immediately after the Rapture. But the peace treaty initiated by the Antichrist will not come into play immediately after the Rapture. There will be this gap between the Rapture and the signing of the peace treaty by the Antichrist which will mark the **beginning** of the final 7 year Tribulation period.

So how long will this gap be?

We don't know how long it will be, but in a previous study, I pointed out that this gap could conceivably be as long as 30 years or even more. Personally,

I don't think it will be that long, and this is all quite speculative, but we can reasonably conclude from various passages in the Bible that this gap is going to more likely be in the nature of months to years - as opposed to days or weeks.

How do we know this?

In Daniel chapter 11 beginning in verse 5, Daniel gives us a very orderly chronological account of a number of events which the world will see **after** Israel's prophetic kingdom program resumes, but **before** the Antichrist is revealed. As we saw earlier in this message, the Antichrist is revealed in verse 21.

In Daniel 11, the Antichrist is referred to as one of the kings of the north - which is consistent with the fact that he will be an Assyrian. However, there are going to be at least 3 other kings from the north who will constantly be battling with at least 2 different kings from the south (Egypt) **before** the Antichrist makes his appearance on the world scene in the Middle East. These are actually things which Christ referred to in Matthew 24.

**Matt.24:6** And ye shall hear of **wars and rumours of wars**: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.  
**7** For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.  
**8 All these are the beginning of sorrows.**

Those wars and rumors of wars described in Daniel chapter 11:5-20 are merely -

**...the beginnings of sorrows...**

These things will be going on for a while **before** the 7 year Tribulation actually gets underway. Obviously, those events are going to take some time.

For anyone who might desire to look into these events in more detail (in fact, in about as much detail as you're ever going to hear anywhere) - you can do that by listening to the series of messages on the [gbcrm.org](http://gbcrm.org) website which are titled "The Perpetual Hatred of Israel and the Arab Muslim Conflict in the Middle East - How Will it All End?"

In that series you will learn how that the Bible suggests that one of the events which will be occurring during this gap will be the suppression of Arab - Muslim terrorism (as we know it today in year 2018) - and that for a period of time Israel will actually be living in peace and safety, **before** the 7 year Tribulation begins.

That suppression of Arab Muslim terrorism is an event which God, through the prophet Ezekiel says in the Bible, will be accomplished “by the hand of my people Israel” in Ezekiel 25:14.

That passage in Ezekiel 25 and several others like it are very interesting in that there is no way that Israel will ever be an offensive power or threat at any point **during** the 7 year Tribulation.

So, there are some extremely interesting events which the world might expect to see during the gap after the Rapture but before the beginning of the 7 year Tribulation.

I thought about bringing that information into this series but there is so much background information which is needed in order to understand the complexity of that series that I thought it would be better not to bog this study down with all of that, but I want our listeners to know that the information is there, and for those who will have been left behind following the Rapture, they will certainly have plenty of time to check all that information out in the Bible.

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