JESUS CHRIST: THE FAITHFUL **AND TRUE** WITNESS

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JESUS CHRIST: THE FAITHFUL AND TRUE WITNESS

THE WHO,
WHAT, WHEN, WHERE,
HOW, AND WHY
OF THE TRUTH
CONCERNING
THE "LAST THINGS"

"These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness..."

The Revelation of Jesus Christ 3:14

Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

1 Timothy 1:17

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To God our Savior,
Who alone is wise,
Be glory and majesty,
Dominion and power,
Both now and forever.
Amen.

Jude 25

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Soli Deo Gloria!

**Acknowledgments** (in original 2002 text; see page A12 for background on this 2017 revision/update)

Above all, I thank my gracious Lord God, from Whom all good proceeds. In His all-encompassing providence, He has seen fit to graciously grant me endless blessings, too many of which have been received without acknowledgment. Lord, I believe and give You thanks; help my unbelief and ingratitude! And Lord, may You use this work for the edification of Your church on earth, and for Your eternal glory!

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Humanly speaking, I am most indebted to the following, even though most are my worthy teachers, yet unmet;

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Already gone home to be with the Lord David Chilton
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INTRODUCTION (remember: original text of 2002)

# Without God, there is no beginning. With God, there is no end.

In 1999, in the midst of one of the most recent waves of speculative hysteria regarding the "end times," I decided that I'd had more than enough. It was obvious that something was terribly rotten in the state of End-mark, with date-setting millionaires - who would have been stoned to death under Old Testament theocratic law for their *previous* false prophecies - not only allowed to live and flourish, without diminishment of their credibility or status among professing Christians, but brazenly foisting *new* predictions upon the Christian community and the world.

Not only was I extremely disgusted with the false prophets, false teachers, and the gullible, indifferent-to-Scripture majority of professing Christians, but I was equally disgusted with myself. I was certain they were all going to be wrong yet again, but I didn't know what *was* correct or who - if anyone - was telling the truth, either. Shame on them, but shame on me, too!

Having become an *authentic* Christian only a couple of years previous to that particular realization (that I was just as much in darkness with regard to Bible prophecy as the worst of those willing to stick their necks out), I had "fresh legs." That is, I had "Berean" fervor and energy to burn. I would go on a determined drive for the truth, and follow it wherever it led me.

The intense love of and for the truth that had been freshly instilled in me (God's grace made me differ- 1 Cor 4:7), burns without dissipation in me now. Like the Psalmist, "I hate every false way" (Ps 119:104, 128). Like the noble Bereans (Acts 17:11), I am in the *daily* habit of *searching the Scriptures* for truth. It became simply natural for me to turn to them because I know that everything begins with God. As He is the source of all life, He is the source of all light and truth.

I resolved to shut my ears to the ignorant attentionseekers, and to prick my ears attentively to hear what the infinite God, in His still, small (yet powerful!) voice (1 Kin 19:12), had to say in His Word. It *is* possible to hear even the low, calm "whisper" of the Lord in the midst of the chaotic storm.

As the Lord patiently led me from truth to truth, traveling between Genesis and Revelation, it was often that I felt as if I

myself had been one of the disciples on the road to Emmaus (Lk 24:13-32) as, "beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, He expounded [explained] to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." *My* heart "burned within" *me* (v. 32). New light flickered in my soul and quickly grew into a steady flame. Bible prophecy, and especially the book of Revelation, ceased (for me) to be a no-man's land of mystery and misty miscommunication. I had sought the Truth (Jn 14:6) where we are promised to find Him (Jn 5:39, Lk 24:27, 2 Tim 3:16), and He faithfully met me there, setting me free (Jn 8:32).

Shame on me *now* if I fail to thank God often for graciously giving me the proper perspective from which to view Biblical prophecy. Though I will never have a perfect understanding of every part of God's Word, I do see how it's truly a seamless whole; it all fits together. Every "new" truth (new to *me*) easily flows into the living water of life (Jn 4:10, 14 & 7:37-39; Rev 22:17).

This loving, gracious gift from the Faithful and True Witness, the Lord Jesus Christ, has changed my life immensely. The knowledge that He *has* fulfilled all prophecy and established His *everlasting* kingdom (Ps 145:13, Is 9:7, Dan 2:44, 4:3, 34, Lk 1:33, 2 Pe 1:11, etc.) brings me peace and joy. I earnestly desire to share these blessings with you.

"Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen." - Eph 6:24 NKJV

All of those in Christ should have this faith-affirming knowledge, so that each of us can better serve with joy our eternally-reigning Lord and Savior, giving Him due thanks, praise, honor, and glory, world *without* end (Is 45:17 and Eph 3:21 KJV).

### Jesu, Juva (Jesus, help!)

In His Name and for His sake, Steve Rauen, "Berean" servant of Jesus Christ

Spring, AD2002, a full 1931 years into the consummated, expanding, everlasting kingdom of God

Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! Rev 19:6 NKJV

### **Definition of Approach and Technical Notes**

The methodology in this work is straightforward: the Reformational principles of *Sola Scriptura* and *Toto Scriptura* (Scripture *alone*, and in total- *all* of Scripture) are followed. This is not to say that I haven't gained much profitable knowledge from extra-biblical sources (outside of the written Word of God), but in each and every case, Scripture is the only infallible arbiter (perfect judge), the ultimate, definitive last word, by which all ideas must be tested and consequently confirmed or rejected. Any concept that contradicts Scripture falsifies itself; there is no light in it (Is 8:20).

"Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him. Do not add to His words, lest He rebuke you, and you be found a liar."

- Prov 30:5-6 NKJV

God's sober warning, quoted immediately above, is not a solitary instance. Essentially the same warning is given in Dt 4:2 and 12:32, and Rev 22:18. In fact, a close reading of Gen 3:2 will provide the first recorded example of *eisegesis*, the adding to/reading into God's word that has plagued humanity since that first instance (a tradition that is alive and well today, I grieve to say). Note exactly what God said to Adam, as recorded in Gen 2:16-17. Then read again what Eve told the serpent (3:2). She added her own words to God's. The words she added had the effect of implying that God was unreasonably restrictive and unfair, the precise result for which Satan was angling. He had his opening in Eve's distortion of God's command, as if it was entirely unfair (*"nor* shall you *touch* it"), and it led to the fall of the human race. *Adding to God's word is no light matter!* 

So I will stick closely to God's Word, praying that I will avoid the blasphemous, idolatrous sin of eisegesis, and worse, compound error by spreading the infection. So help me, God!

Abbreviations used in the text— **KJV**: King James Version of the Bible **NKJV**: New King James Version of the Bible; **BDB**: Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon; **Strong**: New Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible; **Thayer**: Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, 4th ed. **Young**: Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible *Italics* used in *my* words for emphasis; *in Bible quotations* for words *not* found in original Hebrew/Greek text (added by translators to aid readers of modern English)

Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war - The Revelation 19:11 NKJV

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These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God - The Revelation 3:14 NKJV

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Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful." - The Revelation of Jesus Christ, given to John: 21:5 NKJV

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1. The *Who* of the Truth

According to the only true God, there are no atheists. That is, there are no rational beings who do not believe that there is a God. According to the all-knowing Creator-God, not only do all people know that a God exists, but that the God Who Is ("I Am") eternally exists. God has always been, and will always be. And He will always be God, the supreme Being.

According to the One who has always been, the Creator of all else that exists, all of His rational creatures *know* of His singular eternality, omnipotence (unlimited power), divine nature, and perfect righteousness. All know that all creation is God's handiwork, and that, therefore, this is *His* universe. All know to Whom they owe their very existence, and to Whom they are accountable; God's universe, God's rules.

"Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble." -Jas 2:19

According to God, speaking through His appointed servant-communicators - Paul and James, in the two passages quoted on this page - there are no true atheists. At bottom, none can deny the existence of "one God." That knowledge is built in, and always resides in the rational creature.

Just how obviously clear is it, this universal, inherent, *general* revelation to the souls of men? The English words, "clearly seen" are a translation of the Greek word, "*kathorao*," found in the original text (Rom 1:20, see margin). The definition is to "perceive clearly, understand/behold fully, distinctly apprehend" (both Thayer and Strong). This singularly emphatic word is used *only here* in all of God's written Word, so if

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in (evident among) them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made. even His eternal power and Godhead (divine nature, deity), so that they are without excuse

Rom 1:18-20 NKJV

...and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. 2 Th 2:10-12 **KJV**

so that they are without excuse: because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

Rom 1:20-21 KJV there's one thing that *everyone* knows, it's that the true God exists and is unique in His eternality and deity.

But there *is* a clear, Biblically-defined dividing line between human beings. We often hear various versions of a statement which begins, "There are only two kinds of people in the world," According to God's inspired, inerrant, infallible, and immutable Word, there *are* two kinds of people in the world: truth *suppressors* (ungodly, unrighteous) and truth *receivers* (godly, righteous).

Be honest with yourself, reader. You know that the true God exists. You can't be an *a*-theist, though you *can* be a truth-suppressor. But heed the warnings the Judge has issued: there are eternal consequences!

The Creator, and therefore, the *Owner* of the universe, the *definer*, *possessor and source* of all truth, has communicated essential truth to His creatures. Will you humbly receive it or haughtily suppress it? There are only the two options. Denying the truth will not make it go away, any more than denying that God exists will make Him go away. Pretending that the truth isn't there won't change it. The truth is immutable, because God is immutable, and God *is* truth (Jn 14:6, for one place in Holy Scripture).

So we all have to do - on a one-to-One basis - with the King of all creation, the source and definer of all existence and knowledge, and the source and definer of all that is good, righteous, and true. This King, Judge, and Teacher has spoken, and each one of us must humbly receive His communication, without doubt, and without reservation. God alone has comprehensive, infinite knowledge, so He alone truly knows. All of our knowledge comes to us ultimately from God, and is dependent upon

what He has granted to us. We know anything at all only because God knows everything, and He has wondrously fitted us with the capacity to receive information in many ways and forms, and the mechanism to process it and profit by it. He has given us not only life itself, but everything necessary to live.

Consider for a moment the amazingly gracious act of the Almighty, All-Knowing God in the sharing of His wisdom with such lowly creatures as the reader and the writer. Here we both are, attempting to gain or transmit useful knowledge. You have a marvelously intricate mass of fibers and chemicals inside your head, as do I. Our human brains are astonishingly complex and yet compact, and we marvel at their great productivity. We're really something special, aren't we?

Only because of God's grace, the answer is, "Yes! We really are something special!" (1 Cor 4:7). Did any of us weave ourselves together in our mother's womb (Ps 139:13)? Did we even choose our parents or place of birth? Were any of us on a DNA Committee, pouring over millions of patterns, deciding on what would be the best fit for Me? Do any of us even have more than a minimal certain knowledge of the millions (billions?) of bits of information encoded into our genes, and precisely what a specific chain will yield in terms of personal characteristics at the time of birth? Have any of us made an eye or an ear, much less a working brain to govern them? Do we even understand - at a high confidence level - how the brain functions, and just how many cells are involved in any one of the multitudes of decisions that the human brain routinely makes?

If you're responsibly using the amazing brain that God gave you, to think along with me, by now you should feel much like Job, when he collapsed in a heap before God, admitting that compared to God, he knew virtually nothing (Job 40:3-5, 42:1-6). You and I are in the same boat.

For the LORD gives wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding

> Prov 2:6 NKJV

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

Jas 1:5 KJV

Can anyone teach God knowledge, since He judges those on high?... Do you know how the clouds are balanced, those wondrous works of Him Who is perfect in knowledge?

Job 21:22, 37:16 NKJV

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

Gen 1:1 KJV

For I am God. and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure'

Is 46:9-10 NKJV

For the LORD is good; His mercy is everlasting, And His truth engeneration

> Ps 100:5 **NKJV**

Yes, we are extraordinary beings. But it isn't our doing at all. The Psalmist said well, "I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made (Ps. 139:14). Only God can create, in the true sense of the word (ex-nihilo; out of nothing). All other "creation" is more properly termed "construction," the combination of available resources. I dare say that we need to keep this concept in our minds at all times: God is the source of all things. The Creatorcreature distinction is fundamental and eternallybinding. Though we will all exist forevermore, either in joyful fellowship with our Creator-Redeemer in His Heaven, or experiencing His justly-deserved wrath in Hell, only God has always existed. Only God has been around for everything.

Since only God has experienced every moment of infinity past, witnessing (much better, sovereignly orchestrating) all events throughout His creation, and since only He has exhaustive, infinite knowledge of all things past, present, and future, it logically follows that He is the exclusive personal first source and distributor of all information, and of all truth.

Speaking in somewhat crass human terms, God would be the "star witness" at every trial. His observations and information are complete and infallible (incapable of error). In fact, He has information at His disposal that's unavailable to any human witness; He knows every thought and motive (Ps 139:1-12,90:8; Prov 15:11; Is 66: 18; Eze 11:5; Rom 2:16; Heb 4:13; read these verses if you cling to any notion that your innermost thoughts and desires are beyond God's view!).

God has all the facts pertaining to each and dures to all every case at His "fingertips." He is perfectly qualified to judge perfectly. He has so judged, and He will continue to do so on into eternity. This should make the truth-suppressor tremble, and the truth-receiver rejoice (Rev 19:1-6)!

At this point, it should be readily apparent to every reader who is not bent on suppressing the truth that God defines, determines, and disseminates the truth. Whatever is true is true because God has declared it so, and made it so.

When I consider the **attributes** (characteristic properties) of God, I see at least seven that come into play here: His **eternality** (no beginning, no end); His **omnipresence** (everywhere present: see again Ps 139:7-12); His **omniscience** (knowing not only "what can be known," as some famous heretical philosophers have contended, but all things); His **omnipotence** (unlimited power to do whatever He wills); His holiness (combining the concepts of a) transcendence - exceeding all else and incomparable, and setting the standard - and b) moral perfection perfectly *meeting* the standard, and in fact, embodying/being the standard): His immutability (God alone is *not* subject to change). The seventh attribute - faithfulness - is closely tied to truth, as I hope to show shortly.

But let's consider how each of the attributes named above are necessary for one to be completely truthful, and without even the possibility of being untruthful;

-Eternality- simply put, you'd have to have always been (no beginning) to be able to have comprehensive knowledge; only an infinite being, unlimited by time or space can possibly have observed, experienced, and recorded all events throughout all eternity, and retain all of that knowledge; all creatures have an entrance point into time (joined "already in progress"), and are therefore limited in time; all creatures are finite (having actual physical/spatial limits of dimension, such as our physical bodies and brain capacity), and are therefore limited by space; only the infinite (non-finite/completely unlimited) Creator can create, obtain, and retain all (infinite) knowledge; eternal presence is required

The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, And night unto night reveals knowledge. There is no speech nor language Where their voice is not heard, Their line/ sound has gone out through all the earth, And their words to the end of the world...

Ps 19:1-4 NKJV (compare Rom 1)

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For I am the LORD, I change not

Mal 3:6 (compare Jas 1:17-18)

Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there...

Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, When as yet there were none of them

### Ps 139:7-8, 16 NKJV

I know that You can do everything, And that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You

Job 42:2 NKJV **-Omnipresence**- to make a statement that is universally true, without exception (or even the *possibility* of exception), one has to have exhaustive knowledge of every spot in the universe; for example, no one who is *un*able to witness everything in every place at every time can truthfully state that there are a certain number of stars, or that there are no lime green squids; anyone who is in any way limited by physical location can not observe or know comprehensively, and, therefore, does not have all the facts and all the truth **-Omniscience**- to comprehensively know what has been true, is true, and will be true, one must comprehensively know - with absolute certainty - all things in the past, present, and future; if one doesn't have knowledge of even a single thing that could negate what he asserts to be true, that bit of missing information can easily mean the undoing of what he maintained to be truth; to know absolutely all truth, absolute omniscience (knowing all, period) is necessary

-Omnipotence- the ability to be completely truthful depends upon unlimited ability to carry out one's will; if future events and circumstances are in any way beyond one's control, what will come to pass and be known to be true in the future is beyond his/her control, too; it's a hit-or-miss proposition for anyone who is limited in control over all circumstances; in other words, if you make an absolute assertion regarding the future, you have to have absolute power over the future to make it come true; anyone lacking omnipotence can have his "truth" upended; anyone subject to control is *under* the truth, so to speak (governed by the truth, not governing by the truth); that's the essential difference between God, Who alone is all-powerful and sovereign, the Great First Cause and supreme ruler, and all creation- He is God Almighty

-Holiness- as it was briefly defined earlier, the attribute of holiness mostly involves the transcendence of One who sets the standard with particular respect to moral perfection who is singularly qualified to do so, because He embodies (is) the standard; God defines, possesses, and demands perfect morality (or "righteousness"): all holiness is derived from Him; no one else is holy in the way that God is holy (from and throughout eternity, incapable of ever being unholy); since lying or deceiving is a violation of perfect morality, God is bound by His holy nature to always tell the truth, and never to lie; if God ever lied. He would cease to be holy and cease to be God

-Immutability- the term simply means, "not able to change" - only the triune Creator-God fits the bill; all creation is subject to change and does change; God can *not* change, but this is the very aspect of God that undergirds every one of His words: every pronouncement, every prediction, and every promise; Christian, you should be *thrilled* by this fact! This means that God has been, is, and always will be (without the possibility of change!) the living, omnipresent, all-knowing, almighty, holy God!

### Brief Recap

Okay, let's recap what we should have learned to this point. In order to be an infallible teacher of truth (without the possibility of error), one has to have: existed for all eternity; been everywhere present for all eternity; had exhaustive knowledge of all things for all eternity; been all-powerful to enact his will for all eternity; been morally perfect for all eternity; been perfect period, without the possibility of ever becoming less than perfect.

How close did you come to measuring up? -or any human being of whom you can conceive? It's humbling, isn't it? It should be. And it should

God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good? Num 23:19

NKJV

the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent. For He is not a man, that He should repent. 1 Sam 15:29 **KJV** 

which God. Who cannot lie. promised before time began Titus 1:2 NKJV

That by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie... Heb 6:18 NKJV

God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last davs spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds/ ages; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high

Heb 1:1-3 NKJV

(written c. AD 63)

drive each of us to the Truth Himself, Jesus Christ, the second person of the Holy Trinity (the true, 3-in-1 God of Truth).

Do you want the truth? Go to The Truth! Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. -Jn 6:68 NKJV

Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life...' -Jn 14:6 NKJV

God's Appointed Witness: The Word, Written and Incarnate

I will raise up for them a Prophet like you [Moses, the appointed mediator of the Old Covenant-SR] from among their brethren, [from among the Jews-SR] and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him. -Dt 18:18-19

Right here we have the whole issue before us. If you want to understand what I'm trying to communicate to you in this work, reader, it's here on this page and the pages that immediately follow. Here is a brief summary of the main points;

- 1. God *alone* is all-wise (see the dedicatory page for quotes from 1 Tim 1:17 and Jude 25)
- 2. All knowledge and wisdom to be obtained by the creature ultimately comes from God, the Creator
- 3. As God has willed, He has revealed (as much as He wills us to know, He has spoken)
- 4. God has decreed the *means* (ways/ channels) of revelation (communication)
- 5. Like all of God's decrees, those concerning how He would reveal truth have been fixed in place from eternity, and carried out in history
- 6. In earthly history, God has spoken directly

to human beings, through human beings (His appointed mouthpieces, the Old Testament prophets and New Testament apostles), and through the absolutely unique God-Man, the only Prophet-Priest-King Who is true God and true man: Jesus Christ, the Son of God 7. Whatever God has revealed to human beings - no matter if that was directly spoken, spoken through the divinely-inspired writers of the Bible, or from the lips of Jesus Christ, the chief prophet and first apostle - is 100% dependable, trustworthy, and true

In short, the Word of God - and only the Word of God - can always be fully trusted. The Word of God is His written record (the Bible) and the Word *incarnate* (in the flesh), Jesus Christ.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. - Jn 1:1-2 NKJV

You probably know that "Word" in John's original Greek text is *logos*. That word means much more than something expressed in speech or writing. Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary aptly defines logos as "the expressed or manifested mind and will of God." I maintain that this is an apt definition because it lines up with God's Word:

...in whom [Christ, from v. 2-SR] are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge - Col 2:3 NKJV

...Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God...But of Him [the electing God the Father, from preceding verses-SR] you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God - and righteousness and sanctification and redemption... - 1 Cor 1:24, 30 For this is the will of God, your sanctification... - 1Th 4:3

+++++Jesus Christ is the living Word of God+++++.

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth

> Jn 1:14 NKJV

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He who comes from above is above all

• • • •

For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God does not give the Spirit by measure. The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand

> Jn 3:31, 34 NKJV

So that he who blesses himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth; And he who swears in the earth shall swear by the God of truth - Is 65:16 NKJV

So that he who is blessing himself in the earth, doth bless himself in the God of faithfulnes s, And he who is swearing in the earth. doth swear by the **God** of faithfulness -ls 65:16 Young's Literal Translation

These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness

Rev. 3:14 NKJV

Faithfulness and Truth

I previously stated that we'd be examining God's faithfulness *shortly*, so, following the example of Christ, we are *about to* do just that.

To get an idea of just how closely related the Biblical concepts of faithfulness and truth are, please look at the two translations of Is 65:16 provided in the margin to the left. "Truth" and "faithfulness" are both apt, responsible translations of a Hebrew word with which we should all be familiar: "amen!" So the original Hebrew text is most literally rendered for English readers as, "the God of Amen!" (see BDB, word #543). This adds even more force to the terms "true" and "faithful," since "amen" is a strong affirmation that truth has been spoken ("so be it; so it is!").

The Amplified Version well,...amplifies the concept for modern readers: "May the God of truth and fidelity [The Amen] bless me"..."swear by the God of truth and faithfulness to His promises [The Amen]..." Marvin Vincent (Word Studies in the New Testament, Vol II, on Rev 3:14) agrees that the correct rendering of Is 65:16 is "the God of the Amen," (in both clauses of Is 65:16).

It seems strongly implied that faithfulness is truth certainly carried out, with consistency between character and action. The concepts of undoubted, firm dependability and security in the promise are both combined here under the heading, "the God of Amen." Jesus Christ is the neverfailing God of Amen, the Faithful and True Witness (see Rev 3:14).

"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" -Is 14:24 KJV

"Thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth." -ls 25:1

AMEN!

The Who of the Truth, Part 2

I wrote shortly before about the absolute trustworthiness of God's Word, no matter how or through whom it was spoken. Whenever God has spoken through any messenger - angel, human being, or donkey (see Numbers 22) - He has always spoken truth.

It pleased the sovereign Lord of all creation to speak to His covenant people (Israel of the Old Testament) through His appointed prophets. The words that they said, recorded for us in the Old Testament, are the very words of God.

It pleased God, also, when He sent His Chief Prophet into the world (fulfilling His promise recorded in Dt 18), to speak to His people of the new and better covenant (see Heb 8), to speak through Jesus Christ, Man to men. In fact, Christ Jesus was more than that, as He was the very living, observable Word, Whom men could see, hear, and touch; He was God walking on earth in material sandals.

Lastly, and until He closed the canon of Scripture (when the last book of the Holy Bible was given and written, completing God's testaments/ testimony), God was pleased to reveal truth through His appointed apostles ("ones sent"). The first and chief of these was Jesus Christ. He, in turn, personally instructed His disciples (the full number of His followers) and His hand-picked twelve, His inner circle of disciples, known to us as The Twelve Apostles (most narrowly defined in Acts 1:21-22, where Matthias was chosen to replace Judas Iscariot as the twelfth; please consult the list of qualifications given there). In addition to these, of course, there was Paul (Saul of Tarsus), who was personally, divinely commissioned by Jesus Christ (Acts 9, Rom 1:1, 1 Cor 15:8) and taught by Him, as well (1 Cor 11:23- "For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you" and see Gal 1:12).

holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost

2 Pe 1:21 KJV

the prophets...
who prophesied..., the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand...

1 Pe 1:10-11 NKJV

However. when He. the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you [the apostles, after Judas had left-SR] into all truth...and He will tell you things to come

Jn 16:13 NKJV As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets...

Lk 1:70 NKJV

...Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you... which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as thev do also the rest of the **Scriptures**

2 Pe 3:15-16 NKJV

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness

2 Tim 3:16 NKJV Apostles, in a broader sense, included: James, a brother of Jesus (Gal 1:19); Barnabas (Acts 14:14); John Mark and Luke, companions to Paul on his missionary journeys, and inspired writers of the gospel accounts that bear their names (and the Acts of the Apostles, also authored by Luke); and the inspired writer of the book of Hebrews, whose identity remains a mystery to some (strong cases have been made for Apollos and Barnabas, going on the assumption that Paul was *not* the author, although that seems to have been the majority opinion in the early church).

What's important - *crucial*, actually - to keep in mind at all times, when studying the Scriptures, is that the titles matter little, if God spoke through them: prophet/apostle/disciple/writer (consider Solomon, for example, who is not considered to be among the prophets, according to the usual definition). What matters is that *God* spoke through them. The words of *the Holy Scriptures are God-breathed*, and therefore are inerrant (*never err*), infallible (*incapable* of error), and immutable (always so), just like God Himself.

There's a bumper sticker that's popular among Christians that reads, "God said it, I believe it, and that settles it." It's highly likely you've seen that, smiled and nodded in agreement, and maybe even saluted the driver of the vehicle. But think about that middle clause: "I believe it." Does that belong there? Does *your* assent validate truth? Does the *opinion* of any human being carry any weight, when stacked up against the *factual truth* revealed from God? No, if God said it, *that* settles it! Whether or not you or I or anyone else believes it has no bearing on what is true. Truth is not determined by surveys, polls, or elections, but by the God Who surveys all, and rules the electorate.

If God said it, that settles it. Hear God and know the truth.

Brief Summary of Chapter 1

- 1. There are no true atheists; everyone knows that the one true Creator-God exists (Rom 1)
- 2. There are two kinds of people in the world: truth receivers/righteous and suppressors of the truth/unrighteous (Rom 1)
- 3. Only the true, triune God has always been, so only the infinite God can possess all sure knowledge, wisdom, and truth (1 Tim 1:17, Jude 25, etc.)
- 4. All knowledge, wisdom, and truth must ultimately proceed from one Source the true, triune, infinite God, because God alone is the Creator, eternal (without beginning *or* end), omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, thrice-holy (Is 6:3, Rev. 4:8), and immutable
- 5. All knowledge, wisdom, and truth that proceeds from God is 100% trustworthy, for God can not lie (Num 23:19; 1 Sam 15:29; Titus 1:2; Heb 6:18)
- 6. The Great First Cause, Source of all things, the One Who is the God of Amen, Faithful and True, has spoken, having declared His nature and His will directly to and through men, especially the prophets, apostles, and in the Person of the unique God-Man, Jesus Christ
- 7. The Holy Scriptures alone are the very words of God written, inspired (Godbreathed), without error, without even the *possibility* of error in the original manuscripts, and not subject to change
- 8. To receive the truth God's revelation it's therefore necessary to search the Scriptures, God's written testimony, and to gain a proper understanding of what God is communicating through His Word

But as God is faithful. our word/message to you was not Yes and No. For **the Son** of God. Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us - by me, Silvanus, and Timothy - was not Yes and No, but in Him was Yes. For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen. to the glory of God through us. Now **He who** establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God. who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee

2 Cor 1:18-22 NKJV Cease, my son, to hear the instruction *that* causeth to err from the words of knowledge.

- Prov 19:27 KJV

Every word of **God** *is* pure; He is a shield to those who put their **trust in Him**.

- Prov 30:5 NKJV

For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God

- Acts 20:27 NKJV

The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the plans of His heart to all generations

- Ps 33:11 NKJV

I work, and who will reverse it?

- Is 43:13 NKJV

But as God is faithful, our word to you was not Yes and No...For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us

- 2 Cor 1:18, 20 NKJV

He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming quickly." Amen.

- The Revelation of Jesus Christ 22:20 (given to John *shortly* before Christ's Parousia in AD 66-70)

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2. The *How* of the Truth

According to God, Who alone is all-knowing and all-wise, we who are *not* God (the "simple" of Ps 119:130) must seek knowledge and wisdom from Him in His Word. The 66 books of the Holy Bible - *both* Testaments, we need to remember - together form God's only appointed, written witness of redemptive truth in the present day. To anyone who will humbly receive the truth that's *in* there, as opposed to "out there" (somewhere) - according to a TV series ad slogan [*The X-Files-SR*, 2017] - the truth will come.

God does not play games with the truth. He doesn't hold it just above the reach of His jumping children, taunting them. The Lord does not make the truth elusive or reclusive. Truth is as near as God's written Word (Rom 10:8), given in mercy by the Source of all truth. God is glorified by our dependence upon Him for knowledge, truth, and all things, not by our independence of/from Him. He wants us to ask Him for truth: "Ask Me of things to come..." (Is 45:11).

So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, [empty/without fruit] But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it - Is 55:11 NKJV

It may seem to the reader that I've belabored the point. You may say, "Yes, yes, I know all of this. God has the answers to our questions about the 'last things,' just as He has all the answers about everything. And I know that He's put them into His Word. Now can we move on to some of those answers?"

With the Lord's help, we'll do that soon enough. But first, it's necessary to look at the *how* of the truth.

Forever, O LORD, Your word is settled (stands firm) in heaven. Your faithfulness endures to all generations; You established the earth, and it abides (stands)..... Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path..... The entrance of Your words gives light; It gives understanding to the simple...... Your word is very pure; Therefore Your servant loves it..... The entirety of Your word is truth..... Ps 119:89-

90;105;130;

140:160

NKJV

How Do We Properly Interpret Scripture?

Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

2 Tim 2:15 KJV

Study and be eager and do your utmost to present yourself to God approved (tested by trial), a workman who has no cause to be ashamed, correctly analyzing and accurately dividing [rightfully handling and skillfully teaching] the Word of Truth.

2 Tim 2:15 Amplified Version, 1995 Because I'm a layman who's writing primarily for the benefit of other laypersons (non-clergy), I need to introduce and define a "ten-dollar word" at this point: "hermeneutics." An easy way to remember what's involved in that term is to think "rules and tools": the governing set of principles and appropriate, effective tools for interpretation of a written work. To gain the proper, profitable interpretation of a Bible passage, we must employ proper *Biblical* hermeneutics (rules and tools).

If you've been in or around Christian circles for even a short time, you've probably heard people summarily dismiss this consideration by saying, "That's not an issue for me. I just take God's Word literally." Now, that's fine, if by "literally," the person means that he or she understands what was written in the same way that it was written; finding the meaning that the writer sought to convey. In such a case, information has been effectively communicated effectively transmitted and received. But all too often, a person who makes this claim of thoroughly "literal" interpretation is a person who employs improper hermeneutics.

Two examples from John's gospel will serve to illustrate how sticking to an exact "literal" interpretation can lead to confusion and error. The thorough-going literalist will be convinced that Jesus Christ is a plant (a vine, John 15) and a door/gate (John 10), and that believers are literally branches and sheep. But maybe that's just in John, the denying, backpedaling literalist may say. But Paul speaks of Christ as "that Rock" (1 Cor 10:4), and Jesus says in Mt. 21:21 that a faithful person could tell a mountain to be cast into the sea, and it would happen. It should be obvious that a rigid, strictly literal approach to interpreting Scripture is not the correct one. We'll have to turn to a different, deeper "tool kit."

The Approved Workman's Tool Kit

The first thing that most 21st Century Americans need to include in the hermeneutical tool kit is this principle: **the Bible was written for us, but not to us!** Yes, the Bible is God's gift to people in all generations, including our own, but it was written *to* people who lived on this same planet over 1930 years in the past. This concept is probably difficult to grasp, since most Christian leaders and teachers seem to make a habit of directly applying everything in Scripture to themselves and their contemporaries, ignoring a number of important, pertinent factors.

We are about to examine some of those factors, but before we do so, reader, please get this straight: we are *not* the "terminal" generation. All of history does not lead to and culminate with us, coming to an end within our lifetimes. The fact is that every generation that's inhabited planet Earth - since the First Century, AD - has considered itself to be the "last" generation. In every generation for almost 2000 years, end-times "prophets" have observed the "unique" signs that marked their own generation as the one that would experience the last chapter of earthly history. Every generation but one has been dead wrong about the "time of the end" (that's the Biblical terminology, not "the end of time!"). And it isn't our generation. We need to get over ourselves. We are not the focus of earthly history, the be-all and end-all generation, no matter what we hear from advertisers, the media, and false "Christian" teachers. It's not "about" us.

Let's calmly review some facts: the Bible's epistles were actual *letters*, written by actual people who lived in the First Century, AD, *to their* contemporaries (actual people who lived at that same time); those real, historic people lived in real, historic cities and regions of *their* day: ancient Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Philippi, etc.; Paul (Saul) of Tarsus, Peter (Simon) and John of

One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever.

Ec 1:4 KJV

But Israel [true, spiritual Israel-SR] shall be saved in the LORD with an everlast-

ing
salvation: ye
shall not be
ashamed
nor confounded
world
without
end.

Is 45:17 KJV

Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

Eph 3:21 KJV

To all that be in Rome... Unto the church of God which is at Corinth... unto the churches of Galatia... to the saints which are at Ephesus... to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi... To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse... unto the church of the Thessalonians...

Unto Timothy... To Titus... unto Philemon...and to the church in thy house... to the twelve tribes... to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia...

[Do you find yourself anywhere among those addressees? Think about that!] Galilee, James and Jude of the same household as the Lord Jesus, etc., *all* lived, spoke, and wrote 20 centuries ago; they wrote to people who lived and died around 20 centuries ago. With the exception of Jesus, none of those men knew you or me or about any individuals who would come into earthly existence beyond their own times. And the New Testament apostles and writers were not given specific revelations regarding specific individuals of the *distant* future (as Isaiah was given, for example, concerning Cyrus: Isaiah, chapters 44-45).

The gospel writers knew nothing of you or me as individuals. They recorded events *for* us, but no future events that would directly involve us. *We are not the story*. We are to be diligent *readers and hearers* of the story, and eager to receive its truth. We must not expect to be participants in any new gospel records. The gospel story that we are to preach throughout *our* contemporary world is complete.

What I've been talking about in the last several paragraphs is the factor of **original audience relevance**. This is the first of the essential tools that all seekers of Biblical truth need to have in their hermeneutical (interpretive) kits. This tool can be wisely and effectively used in study of any and all Scriptures (both Testaments). Whenever we read God's Word, we need to be conscious of the identities of the speaker/writer and the hearers/recipients. There's probably not another principle of Biblical interpretation that's so vitally important for proper understanding and so universally neglected. Who's talking/writing to whom? We must ask how it was relevant to *them*.

Closely related to this essential consideration is the factor of the **original language and idioms**. Suppose your computer crashed, and your e-mail utility was n/a; you might have to resort to the ancient practice of letter-writing (handwritten ink on paper - can you imagine such a thing?)

Suppose you now take pen in hand and write to another person, relating your tale of temporary inconvenience (tale of woe, if you prefer). If you want to communicate this idea or any other to another person, you need to use a language, and one that's understood by both parties. This is obvious, isn't it? The recipient of your letter will most likely "get" your message because you used a set of symbols (words and punctuation), rules (spelling, sentence construction), and idioms (forms of expression, including current slang) which is common to both parties. But if you were somehow able to send the same letter (presumably in 21st Century American English/Computer Geek-speak) to a Jewish Christian in AD 60, just how successful could you expect to be in that attempt at communication? Most of what you wrote would mean nothing to such a person, who lived in a completely different time. place, and culture; who spoke a different language (greatly affected by the time, place, and culture).

Clearly, this works both ways. Unless you can "get inside the head" of that Jewish Christian in AD 60, you can't understand what he wrote to *his* contemporaries any more than he could understand what you'd written to yours, nearly 2000 years into the future.

An earnest, responsible approach to the study of God's sacred Word entails a careful look into the original languages and idioms (Hebrew/Aramaic and Greek of several centuries before the birth of Jesus, and well into the First Century AD). That's why responsible preachers and teachers of the Word often say, "In the original Hebrew/Greek, it's..." or "the English word used here is the Hebrew/ Greek word (such-and-such)..." And that's why such a preacher/teacher will take time to fill in the contextual blanks and paint the word pictures: without those helps, the message smacks into the language/time/place/culture barrier, and drops lifelessly at the feet of even the willing hearer or reader. Knowledge of linguistic nuances is important.

to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ... The elder unto the elect lady and her children... The elder unto the wellbeloved Gaius. whom I love in the truth... to them that are sanctified by God the Father and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called... John to the seven churches which are in Asia...

Salutations from the epistles, Romans through Revelation

KJV (sidebars, both pages)

For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, and do not return there, but water the earth, and make it bring forth and bud, that it may aive seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall Mv word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void (empty/ without fruit), but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.

Is 55:10-11 NKJV

So is there hope for the average Bible reader, the person who doesn't understand ancient Hebrew or koine Greek? Of course! God faithfully provides the means to serve His ends. In addition to responsible pastors and teachers, there have been those - in every age - who have virtually dedicated their lives to close study of Biblical languages and contextual factors (time/place/culture). Such competent scholars have contributed to and compiled thorough Bible translations, lexicons, concordances, and expository dictionaries, which are great aids for the laity (examples: interlinear translations and Thayer/Young/Strong/Brown-Driver-Briggs/Nave's). Because such helpful works are readily available to us in the present age, we can reasonably expect to exegete (draw out) the meaning that God put into His Word for His children of all times to find.

God wants us to understand what He has said to us in His Word. He doesn't delight in confusing us! And God wants us to employ His means, which include faithful study guides (both persons and works). So if you don't speak ancient Hebrew or Greek, it's not "cheating" to consult ably-prepared Bible versions, lexicons, concordances, and theological dictionaries. They aren't inspired, inerrant, infallible, or immutable; only the Bible (in the original manuscripts) is, but by comparing what 2 or 3 such resources say regarding the same Hebrew or Greek word or phrase in context, we can figuratively slip into the sandals of the original speakers and writers, and see things through their eyes.

Once again: God has graciously provided worthy means to a most worthy end. I am a firm believer in that formal principle of the Reformation, sola Scriptura. I am convinced that only sacred Scripture is savingly effectual (converting sinners to saints via the gospel of Jesus Christ - Rom 10:17 & 1:16). But the sincere student of Scripture in AD 2002 was not alive in Israel, 2000 years ago, personally observing the Bible taking shape. We need to use available tools.

The next essential factor in the proper interpretative process is that of literary genre (type/ form/style of literature). Here we ask the question, "Is the passage historical narrative, poetic, allegorical, didactic (directly and authoritatively teaching) or prophetic?" Quite often, it's fairly obvious into which category a particular passage fits. The Psalms, for example, are clearly poetic in style, though they contain elements of other genres. The books of the Pentateuch (Genesis through Deuteronomy) take the form of historical narrative for the most part, though they also contain elements outside of that genre. The prophetical books are mostly written in a prophetic style, and often in a type of language that is called "apocalyptic" (after The Apocalypse of Jesus Christ, the book of Revelation).

When literary genre is disregarded or incorrectly identified, fatally-flawed interpretations can result. Exhibit A: when Genesis is not taken literally as historical narrative, the whole gospel is undercut and upended. How? If Adam and Eve were fictional characters, the account of Creation, the Fall, and the promise of redemption are equally mythological. The whole gospel unravels: no Creator, only evolution from impersonal, inert matter; no such thing as sin, so no need for reconciliation or redemption, and no need for a reconciler/redeemer; no first Adam, so no "second Adam" of Romans 5 (no Jesus Christ).

Even many professing Christians and prominent "theologians" have played fast and loose with literary genres; it's relatively easy to do, either intentionally or unintentionally. Although the "main things are the plain things" in the sacred Scriptures, there's enough ambiguity in the language to allow those driven by personal agendas to twist what isn't exactly "plain" into a new distortion. Cults result. On the other hand, failure to recognize figurative language where it occurs leads to the erroneous hermeneutic of "wooden" literalism, where everything is taken in a strict, literal sense.

For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

(For Paul and his contemporary generation - c. AD 58 what was "written before" were the Old Testament books and some early New Testament writings; since the closing of the canon by AD 70 including Revelation, "what was written before" includes the entire Holy Bible, both Old Testament and New).

Rom 15:4 KJV Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place

Because the subject of this book is the witness of the One Who is Faithful and True, with regard to eschatology (study of the "last things"), and because the literary genre involved in that area of study is usually prophetic/apocalyptic, let's take a look at where the road forks: where the majority take a wrong turn from the path of truth.

On the previous page. I introduced the con-

The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away

On the previous page, I introduced the concept of "wooden" literalism, and I indicated that it can lead to serious interpretive error. First of all, I offer a definition of the term: wooden literalism is an approach to understanding the written word in an utterly straightforward fashion, admitting no possibility of poetic, allegorical, or any other type of figurative language. Basically, what the text says a thing is, that's what it is; there's no room for description by word pictures. Wooden literalism doesn't allow hyperbole (poetic exaggeration) as a legitimate literary device.

And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down

So when the wooden (strict) literalist sees a passage like 2 Pe 3:10-12, he is bound by his approach to believe that the heavens will literally pass into non-existence with a great noise; the whole universe will completely burn, melt, and dissolve into nothingness. Is that what *you* believe? If so, you are carelessly disregarding the literary genre of the passage. That passage is a prime example of New Testament apocalyptic language, which reflects and recalls Old Testament apocalyptic language (see margin quotations).

Is 13:13, 24:4, 34:4 KJV Remember: ultimately, there is one Author of the Bible, both Old Testament and New; God's Word is written by God. Every notable writer in human history has employed figurative language to communicate ideas; we don't question the legitimacy of that, and we most revere those who most skillfully use it. Doesn't the Source of all intelligence understand how to effectively use this device? Doesn't the Creator have the right to use it?

Now please examine the passage quoted in the margin of this page. It should serve to further illustrate the point presently considered. According to Peter, speaking under the divine inspiration of the Holy Spirit (recorded in Acts 2:14-20), this prophecy was fulfilled in the day of Pentecost, in AD 30. In Acts 2:19-20, these very words of Joel are quoted by Peter, as he addressed the "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem" (Acts 2:14). And Peter wasn't vague about it: "But *this is that* which was spoken by the prophet Joel" (Acts 2:16).

Two questions come to mind at this point;

1) Was Peter correct in identifying the event of Pentecost (specifically, the filling of the apostles with the Holy Spirit, and His subsequent outpouring) as the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy?

2) Was each part of the prophecy fulfilled in a strictly literal manner?

The obvious answers are yes and no, respectively. There's no historical record of the sun literally turning to darkness, or the moon becoming blood. Each retained its place, function, and form as before. Bloody heavens? Nothing of the sort was observed through the physical senses. Yet Peter - directly inspired by God, Who cannot lie (Titus 1:2) - states without equivocation that the prophecy of Joel was fulfilled in the event of Pentecost, about 1972 [1987] years in the past.

Will you dare call God a liar? If you're still looking for fulfillment of the prophecy in Joel 2, you're doing just that. And if you contend that Peter was mistaken, you accuse the Holy Spirit of ignorance, in addition to calling Him a liar; for the Holy Spirit put *His* words into the mouth of Peter. Therefore, since God said it, it's unquestionably true; the prophecy was fulfilled. The fact of its fulfillment, coupled with the lack of physical manifestations, ought to lead us to the same conclusions: the language is figurative; the prophecy

And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood. before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come

Joel 2:30-31 KJV

For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

2 Pe 1:21 KJV

And all the host of heaven shall he dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll... ...for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner

> Is 34:4 & 51:6 KJV

...the
heavens
shall pass
away...the
elements
shall
melt...the
earth also
and the
works that
are therein
shall be
burned up

2 Pe 3:10 KJV was fulfilled in spiritual terms, in the unseen spiritual (heavenly) sphere. These are the logical, viable, and certain conclusions at which we must arrive when we carefully consider the nature of the language and the nature of the kingdom of God (Jn 4:24, 6:15, 18:36; Lk 17:20).

Now let's return to 2 Peter 3, armed with the knowledge we obtained in our examination of Acts 2. Notice that the writer is the *same inspired apostle* who quoted the Old Testament in his speech that's recorded in Acts 2. Once again, we find Peter using cataclysmic, "apocalyptic" language. Once again, he's using terminology with which First Century AD Jews were familiar: it was found in their Scriptures, the Old Testament (see the sidebar on this page).

Is there any justifiable reason to assume that the same inspired apostle, employing the same type of inspired Old Testament language, is speaking here in strictly literal terms, completely departing from his method on Pentecost, when about 3000 came to believe? If you think so, you'll need to prove your contention by comparing Scripture with Scripture; we've just done that in a responsible manner, and have arrived at a proper conclusion which is supported by employing that procedure (the "analogy of faith").

It's important, also, to understand the meanings of individual words and expressions within a Biblical passage, and within a genre (languagetype). In the 2 Peter 3 passage, for example, when we look up the English word "elements" - consulting an interlinear New Testament, lexicon, or other dependable study aid - it soon becomes apparent that the Greek word in the original manuscript is *stoichea*, and in comparing how the same Greek word is used elsewhere in Scripture (Gal 4:3,9; Col 2:8,20; Heb. 5:12), we find that "elements" in 2 Peter 3:10 & 12 has nothing to do with the modern periodic table of physical elements, but everything to do with first principles and primary components of instruction.

Back to Elementary School

We should all be sufficiently familiar with the English word "elements" through our education in schools that owe their designations to precisely that word. It's at elementary school that we learn the alphabet and other "building blocks" essential to learning: the first things, rudiments, or foundational/ fundamental elements upon which we build in the learning process. Paul was disgusted with the Galatians because they were turning back to "the weak and beggarly elements" of the Jewish ceremonial law/sacrificial system. His hot displeasure wasn't occasioned by a sudden boom in the ranks of Galatian chemists! No, Paul was incensed because the Galatians were allowing Judaizers to attempt to drag Christian converts - freed by the gospel of Jesus Christ - back into the Jewish ceremonial/ sacrificial system. They were returning to the rudimentary principles of a passing system of shadows and types, which would soon be entirely replaced by the realities they'd foreshadowed (by AD 70).

Even a brief examination of the other New Testament passages that contain the Greek word stoichea - with close attention paid to immediate contexts - will produce the correct definition and usage of the word, the correct understanding of the concept, and the correct interpretation of 2 Pe 3. Stay on the path of truth. Don't read into the passage what isn't there: the cataclysmic destruction of the universe. That is decidedly not what Peter was talking about.

Specific "last things" issues will be dealt with soon enough, but for now, let's just keep this lesson in mind: figurative language is used often and effectively throughout God's Word. Jesus didn't hide the fact that He used figurative language: "These things I have spoken to you in figurative language" (Jn 16:25). When we come to grips with this, we take an important step in the right direction. Our minds are re-opened to God's message, and we can "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Pe 3:18).

Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world... how turn ve again to the weak and beggarly elements. whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?

Gal 4:3 ,9 KJV

(Note: Paul wasn't writing to people who as children had been chained up under the earth's crust!)

ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles [stoicheion] of the oracles of God

Heb 5:12 KJV

Earnestly seek to commend yourself to God as a servant who. because of his straightforward dealing with (orthotomeo) the word of truth, has no reason to feel any shame.

2 Tim 2:15 New Testament In Modern Speech, (Weymouth)

(The Greek word orthotomeo signifies straight cutting, and such careful dissection/ straight cutting is foundational to straight thinking, or orthodox thinking; to think and believe what is Biblically orthodox, we need to rightly divide the Word of Truth.

More Essential Tools For The Well-Stocked Hermeneutical Kit

It may seem to you that I've spent too much time on the three essential tools discussed so far, the proper consideration of

- Original audience relevance
- Original language and idioms
- Literary genre (type of language)

But based upon my own search for eschatological ("last things") truth, these three factors are most often overlooked and easily forgotten. As I said at the beginning of this "How" chapter, probably the biggest obstacle to the Biblical perspective on the last things is the false notion that the Bible was written *to* us in 21st Century America. If we continue to think that way, we'll never get any closer to the truth. In ignoring original audience relevance, the original language, and the appropriate literary genre, we have erred greatly, and sometimes fatally.

I suspect that there are many professing Christians who won't be able to rejoin the path of truth and light, once they've wandered off on a bunny trail that was intriguing for the moment. I'd remind you once more: the truth isn't "out there" in the darkness; instead, it's *in* there (in God's Word). Diligent study and exegesis of God's Word is *the* well-illuminated path to life.

So now to the remaining essential exegetical tools - those better known - which I'll be content to list here with only brief explanations:

- Careful consideration of **context** (words and concepts immediately surrounding; within the chapter; within the book; within the body of the author's work; within the pertinent Testament and the whole body of the Scriptures); responsibly assess subject matter and correlations.

- careful consideration of the scope and plan (combining two factors which are sometimes treated separately, under the heading of the writer's intentions; how narrow (specific) or wide (general) is the scope (range of people and/or territory in view) intended to be? Who/what is in view/taken in/covered in the text? And what was the writer intending to accomplish in writing the text?
- careful consideration of passages that appear to be parallel, either in theme or literary genre/language type, or both; the term "cross-references" could be applied here
- careful consideration of links between symbols/signs and the persons/things they signify; types linked with antitypes
- alluded to previously, but important tools of the first order: the analogy of faith (letting Scripture interpret itself, by comparing inspired text with inspired text, and drawing out the true meaning in that manner: and careful consideration of the usus loquendi (current usage, the way the word/phrase was most often used at the time of writing, in the place of writing, within the prevailing culture) [note: this Latin term wasn't used, but reference was made to the spirit of this principle in connection with examination of the original language (on pages 18-19)]
- -Finally, one which you will probably not find in most hermeneutical textbooks:

Look for the glory of God in every text

Early on, I was trained (by God) to seek out the interpretation that best gives Him (all) the glory. Any interpretation that detracts from His glory must be rejected!

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works

2 Tim 3:16-17 ΚJV

He (the Holy Spirit) will teach you [the apostles-SR] all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

Jn 14:26 NKJV

(Now it's our privilege and duty to search the written record of what the Holy Spirit taught the apostles)

Thus says the LORD. your Redeemer.. .I am the LORD, who makes all things... Who frustrates the sians of the babblers. and drives diviners mad; Who turns wise men backward, and makes their knowledge foolishness: Who confirms the word of His servant, and performs the counsel of His messengers...

Is 44:24-26 NKJV

I am the LORD, that is my name; and My glory I will not give to another

Is 42:8 NKJV

One more thing regarding the tool last mentioned, and then a few examples to illustrate its utility: if a possible interpretation of a Biblical text in any way diminishes or tends toward diminishment of an attribute of the perfect, triune God, you can safely abandon it. If the view you're inclined to adopt paints God as either: ignorant or deceptive; unjust, unfaithful, less than omnipotent; or limited by any created thing, that view is wrong. Examples: if your view of eschatology requires God to be in any way ungodly (thwarted in his plans by Satan; overruled by sinful, finite creatures; only a spectator with regard to the future; a liar, misleader, or false prophet; one who changes his mind, or even one who is "all-loving," not executing perfect justice, etc.), your view is unbiblical, untenable, and false.

If you are seeking eternal truth in God's Word - the one place you'll find it - you'll need to keep the whole character of the holy, living God in mind whenever and wherever you're reading. The glory of God is the linchpin of the universe. God's glory is the reason for its existence, and what holds it together. Start there and end there.

Brief Summary of Chapter 2 (The "How" of the Truth/ How do we properly interpret the Word of Truth?)

Carefully consider each of the following;

- 1. Original audience relevance
- 2. Original language and idioms
- 3. Literary genre (form/type of language)
- 4. Context-context-context
- 5. Scope and plan (writer's intentions)
- 6. Parallel passages (theme/language/both)
- 7. Symbols/signs and types and the people and things they signify or typify
- 8. The analogy of faith; compare Scripture with Scripture; allow it to interpret itself
- 9. Most common usage of the word/phrase as determined by time, place, and culture
- 10. Does the interpretation give God due glory?

"The present is the key to the past"
- Charles Lyell (rhymes with *lie*-well),
who laid the foundation for Darwin's evolutionary hypothesis by
proposing that "geologic ages" lasted for millions of years; it

proposing that "geologic ages" lasted for millions of years; it should be remembered that Lyell wasn't there at the time of the earth's formation, but God was!

"The past is the key to the present"
- Berean servants of God

Remember God's decrees. Remember God's faithfulness.

"There has not failed one word of all His good promise"... "not one word of them has failed"... "Search from the book of the LORD, and read: not one of these shall fail"

1 Kings 8:56Joshua 23:14Isaiah 34:16NKJV

God appointed the times, and not one word of prophecy has failed:

"Behold, I am coming quickly!
Blessed is he who keeps the words
of the prophecy of this book."
"Do not seal the words of the prophecy
of this book, for the time is at hand."

- The Revelation OF Jesus Christ 22:7 & 10 given TO John *shortly* before His return in AD 66

Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth

1 Pe 2:22 (from Is 53:9) NKJV

~~~~~

These things says
He who is holy,
He who is true:

Rev 3:7 NKJV

These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness...

**Rev 3:14 NKJV** 

As we study what was said about the last things of the age, let's keep in mind at all times just Who it was that spoke.

# The *What*, *When*, and *Where* of the Truth - Part 1 (Mt 3-23)

The time to put our straight-cutting tools to good use is at hand. We are about to enter into a close study of what Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit-inspired writers had to say - with complete authority - regarding the events and ramifications of the "last days." With the Lord's help, this study in chart form will be both adequately thorough and concise in pointing to the truth of Scripture on these issues.

One important consideration at the outset: on the basis of what I believe is unassailable internal evidence (within the New Testament Scriptures themselves), I am relying on the assumption that all of the books of the Bible were written before the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. You probably have been taught otherwise, and that could prove to be an insurmountable stumbling block in your path to last-things truth. But only if you allow it to remain so. I can heartily recommend two [3] books to the earnest truth-seeker: Ken Gentry Jr.'s excellent *Before Jerusalem Fell* and (for the more academically-oriented) John A.T. Robinson's Redating the New Testament. In these works, the authors take great pains to examine the evidence on both sides of the early date/late date debate. I trust you'll be convinced as I was. In any case, in the section to follow, I'll be providing approximate dates for the writing of the respective books, according to the best estimates of those who advocate the early (pre-70) dates. [The Ed Stevens book, Final Decade Before The End, nails these things down well!]

FORMAT NOTES FOR CHAPTERS 3-6: In the first (far left) column of each two-page spread, you'll find an entry for a New Testament passage. Read across the five columns on the same lines for related information on, in order:

- parallel passages (concept or language) and/or word-study helps;
- date of the book's writing and events involved;
- geographical locations and pertinent notes;
- notes regarding fulfillment

Lord willing, this will prove to be an edifying resource.

.....

#### Mt 3:2

Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is **at hand**!

#### Mt 3:7

Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the **wrath to come?** 

#### Mt 3:10

And **even now** the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

#### Mt 3:12

His winnowing fan *is* **in His hand**, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

#### Mt 3:16-17

and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a voice *came* from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

#### Mt 4:17

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

#### Mt 5:17-18

Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.

### Parallel Passages/Word Study

.....

re: kingdom of heaven, Mt 13 (7 parables)

eggizo = near/within reach

mello = about to; wrath (judgment) about to come (1 Th 1:10)

### ede = already

Mt 7:15-20 & Mt 12:33-34 shed light on the identity of "bad trees"; judgment clearly in view

further expression of judgment ready to take place (then, in about AD 27); threshing is the separation of wheat from the chaff- see Mt. 13:30 & 37-43

Mk 1:9-11, Lk 3:21-22, Jn 1:29-34; the dove may also signify the new creation about to result from the ministry of Christ (see Gen 1:2, where the Hebrew word *rachaph* (move/shake/brood/flutter) indicates a hovering bird; also-Noah's "scout")

Mk 1:14-15- "the time is fulfilled"; kingdom of God "at hand" (has drawn near) see Mt 10:7

"Law or the Prophets" = whole OT; "heaven and earth"-- "To our Lord's contemporaries the religious and social system seemed almost as fixed and as eternal as the earth and sky" (NT in Modern Speech, note #7, p.12); the world order is in view

26/27

Book written: c. AD 35 (range: 31-38) events: AD

.....

# Geographical Notes

John the Baptist was preaching in the Judean wilderness

they came from Jerusalem, Judea, and the Jordan River region; Pharisees & Sadducees were from Jerusalem

"His threshing floor" is possibly a special reference to the temple, which was erected on the site known before as the threshing floor of Ornan (or Araunah); see 2 Sam 24 (v.16 especially, for significance), & 1 Chr 21

Jesus left Nazareth for Capernaum in Galilee

once again, special reference is made to the temple; Jewish thought of that age was: holy place = "earth" & most holy place = "heaven"; the temple was where heaven and earth met; this is centrally important to keep in mind!

# Notes Re: Fulfillment

Dan 2:44: in the days of the fourth kingdom (Roman), the God of heaven was to set up an everlasting kingdom Re: John, see Is. 40:3, Lk 1:76, Mal 3:1 & 4:5; "wrath about to come" arrived in Roman destruction, AD 66-70, within the lifetimes of many of those "vipers"; God's axe of judgment swept through Judea via the Roman forces in AD 66-70 <<<Mal 4:1 fulfilled in AD 70, when the proud and wicked were burned up and left with neither root nor branch (all Jewish males were bound to appear in Jerusalem 3 times a year for certain feasts (Ex 23:17, Dt 16:16); in AD 70, they were trapped in the city from the time of the Feast of Unleavened Bread: Josephus)

>>>anointing of Jesus for public ministry; fulfills Dan 9:24 re: "and to anoint the Most Holy"; end of 69th "week"

>>>Is. 9:1-2 fulfilled:
First, Christ kept the Law
(fulfilled all righteousness);
then in late summer, AD 70,
the temple was destroyed, and
the Old Covenant/Law dispensation (sacrificial system) was
abrogated along with it; if
passing away of the literal
heavens and earth were
required, we are still under the
Law or on a different planet
entirely!

# .....

#### Mt 5:21, 33

You have heard that it was said to those of old ...(or "ancient times")

# Mt 10: 7, 14-15

And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand (has drawn near)...And whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when **you** depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet. Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!

#### Mt 10:16-23

"Behold, I send **you** out as sheep in the midst of wolves...they will deliver you up to councils and scourge you in their synagogues. You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake. as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to **you** in that hour what you should speak; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in **you**...But he who endures to the end will be saved. When they persecute you in this city, flee to another. For assuredly, I say to you, you will not have gone through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes."

# Parallel Passages/Word Study

.....

Jesus referred to the time of the giving of the law (around 1533 BC, about 1560 years before), as ancient times or days of old, long in the past (compare 2000 years!)

>>Mk 6:7-13, Lk 9:1-6 again: kingdom "at hand": all of the "you" and "your" references relate specifically to the twelve, whom Jesus sent out to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel " (only, at this point- see 10:5-6); citizens of Israel that did not receive the twelve nor hear their words were headed for worse judgment (already at hand, then) than those of Sodom & Gomorrah had received

>>>again: specific "you" references! consider also the fact that the wall of separation between Jew and Gentile no longer exists in the kingdom of God/heaven ("testimony to the Gentiles" no longer fits, especially since the kingdom was taken from the Jews & given to the Gentiles- Mt 8:11-12, 21:43; Acts 13:46); see Acts 5:40-41 for one incident recorded in Scripture that matches the predictions made here by Jesus; we aren't beaten in synagogues today, but they were then; remember, also: the apostles were given (by the Holy Spirit and Christ Himself- Lk 21:15) the words to speak before kings, councils, etc., but we don't have direct inspiration today as they did; "the end" refers to the end of the age, not to the end of planet Earth

or 27

# Book written: c. AD 35 (range: 31-38) events: AD 26

occasion of the sending out of the 12 to the Jews, and *not* to the Gentiles or Samaritans; this mission preceded the ascension of Christ

IMPORTANT: predictions of Jesus here pertain to the post-ascension, preparousia period between AD 30 & AD 66: the "coming" in view here (v. 23) is the return of Jesus, the parousia, (His coming with abiding presence); no other understanding of this coming fits what is described

# Geographical Notes

this mission was only

# "Sermon on the Mount"

to the cities of Israel, the "house of Israel." a forerunner to the later missions (after Christ's ascension) to the cities of Israel ("you shall be My witnesses to Me in Jerusalem [first], and [secondly] in all Judea and Samaria Ithe whole house of Israel. both northern and southern "kingdoms"], and [lastly] to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8) after Christ's ascension and "the Great Commission" (Mt 28: 19-20 and Mk 16:14-20)

# Notes Re: Fulfillment

if less than 1600 years was an ancient time - long in the past - to Jesus, things that were to take place "shortly" (Rev 1:1 & 22:6) could not be 2000 years off into the future! Jesus thoroughly understood the human perspective regarding time; He shared it!

those who rejected the twelve (and hence, Christ) received their just judgment (national/ temporal and individual/eternal) by AD 70, in the destruction of the nation, AD 66-70; an unequaled time of great tribulation: Mt 24:21; these predictions of Jesus concerned the twelve (and His other appointed servants in Israel in the First Century AD, chiefly Paul, who was personally commissioned by Christ, Acts 9; to them only were given the miraculous sign gifts and direct inspiration of "the Spirit of the Father"; these supernatural gifts ceased - at the latest with the death of the last of those so gifted; since we know that Jesus Christ foresaw the future with unerring accuracy. and as God - or as our sinless Savior - could not lie, the things that He predicted would happen to those certain individuals certainly *did* happen *by* the time He came in judgment and glory - His parousia which culminated in AD 70!

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#### Mt 11:13-14

For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if you are willing to receive it, he is Elijah who is to come.

#### Mt 11:16

But to what shall I liken this generation ...

[direct parallel = Lk 7:31 NT occurrences of same phrase/ same with added adjectives =

Mt 12:41

Mt 12:42

Mt 12:45

Mt 23:36

Mt 24:34

Mk 8:12 (twice)

Mk 8:38

Mk 13:30

Lk 11:29

Lk 11:30

Lk 11:31

Lk 11:32

Lk 11:50

Lk 11:51

Lk 17:25

Lk 21:32

Acts 2:40]

### Parallel Passages/Word Study

.....

Lk 16:16, Mt 17:10-13, Mk 9:11-13, Lk 1:17; "if you are willing to receive it" is best understood as "if you are disposed to accept it," but its truth is *not* conditional upon their acceptance, as is indicated by the statement that follows, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"; John came before Jesus "in the spirit and power of Elijah"- Lk 1:17; this is a strong indication of the proper perspective re: the nature & workings of God's kingdom, and of how we are to understand fulfillment of prophecy; we must think in spiritual terms first, and observe earthly signs of real workings in the

heavenly/spiritual realm

the first in order of appearance of no less than 6 occurrences in Matthew (20 in the NT) of the same phrase (or combined with other adjectives between "this" and "generation"); there's no mistaking that "this generation" referred to the people alive at the time the statements were made (directly to them); genea - in every NT case refers to a group of people who are contemporary with each other, and has nothing to do with genos, the term used for people of a similar kind (1 Pe 2:9- "a chosen genos ["race"/kind, see lexicons], a royal priesthood..."); the Bible makes no racial distinctions; all members of the human race (singular) are descended from Noah and ultimately, from Adam: see Prov 30:25 for similar usage (kind/strain of living creatures, human or otherwise)

|                                                                                       | T -                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | I                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Timing                                                                                | Geographical Notes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Notes Re: Fulfillment                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Book written:<br>c. AD 35<br>(range: 31-38)<br>events: AD 26<br>or 27                 | "the voice of one crying in the wilderness" (of Judea): Is 40:3; Jesus was teaching and preaching in the (home) cities of the twelve (Mt 11:1, presumably for the reason expressed in Mk 6:4, Lk 4:24, & Jn 4:44: no honor given the prophet in his own home and region) | Mal 4:5-6 fulfilled: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD."; also see Mal 3:1, which was quoted in v. 10 of this chapter; IMPORTANT: because the Jews were thinking in terms of a physical, earthly kingdom and a literal, resuscitated Elijah, they missed Elijah who was to come, and they still await both Elijah and the Messiah! Christians must not make the same mistake, looking for strictly literal, physical fulfillment of OT prophecy & NT predictions; remember: Lk                                                          |
| same as<br>above, with<br>parallels<br>recording<br>speeches<br>made from AD<br>26-30 | in all of these pas-<br>sages, the geographi-<br>cal setting is the same:<br>First Century Israel                                                                                                                                                                        | 17:20-21, Jn 18:36 ( <i>spiritual</i> kingdom of God, Who is spirit Himself- Jn 4:24)  any and all references and predictions that concerned "this generation" we must today understand as referring to " <i>that</i> generation" of the First Century AD; that generation is long gone (unless you can produce a 2000 year-old person!); since that generation has passed, all that was predicted to occur within <i>their</i> lifetimes <i>has</i> been accomplished, and it remains for those of us alive today to believe that fact, be instructed by it, and grow in/with the Kingdom of God and heaven! |

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#### Mt 11:20-24

Then He began to rebuke the cities in which most of His mighty works had been done, because they did not repent: "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you."

### Parallel Passages/Word Study

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Lk 10:12-15, Mt 10:15; this whole passage is loaded with specificity and relevance to the day of judgment; the cities are personified (the names of the cities are to be taken for the people of those respective cities), and they were real, physical locations of First Century Palestine (remember: Jesus "dwelt" in Capernaum- Mt 4:13); the in-habitants of these very cities personally witnessed the miracles performed by Jesus in the First Century AD (e.g., feeding of the 5000 and a blind man was given his sight); Bethsaida was the native city of Andrew, Peter, and Philip (remember: where a prophet was without honor);

"And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven" = and you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? (answered negatively!); IMPORTANT: "will be brought down to Hades ..." Hades (Hebrew sheol) is the word here, not gehenna (Gehenna/Hell; final, permanent, eternal hell)! Hades/ Sheol was the term used to signify the unseen realm where disembodied spirits dwelt until the day of judgment (sometimes called, "the grave"); as illustrated by the account of the rich man and Lazarus in Lk 16:19-3 (and 1 Sam 28), the spirits of both the righteous and the unrighteous who had died (physically) departed into this unseen, two-compartment "holding area" where they awaited the day of (final) judgment, which was the subject in this context

......

Book written: c. AD 35 (range: 31-38) speech: AD 26 or 27, about events that occurred throughout the years AD 26-30 and the "day of judgment" in their future, from AD 66-70

# **Geographical Notes** .....

place-specific & time-Century AD; these cities were decimated in the wars with Rome in AD 66-70; Young: "The doom pronounced against it and other cities [Capernaum & those specified in the passage-SR] has been singularly fulfilled, and in sacred topography there is no more difficult task than to discover the site." -Robert Young, Young's Analytical Concordance, p. 142

compare the case of Sodom!

### Notes Re: Fulfillment

..... the inhabitants of the cities specific passage: cities here specifically singled out of Palestine in the First that personally witnessed some of the miracles performed by Jesus Christ during His earthly ministry were the subjects of this pronouncement of woe; judgment came in the Jewish wars with Rome in AD 66-70; in (May?) AD 66, Hades/Sheol/"the grave" released all of its inhabitants in the final day of judgment; those who'd dwelt in the compartment known as "Abraham's bosom" or "paradise" (see Lk 16:22 & 23:43) were judged righteous in their Messiah. Jesus Christ, and entered the eternal, heavenly realm clothed in new, incorruptible spiritual bodies (see 1 Cor 15, especially verses 35-57); the wicked - who didn't possess the perfect righteousness of Christ were judged and banished to Gehenna/Hell/the place of burning for eternity; since that 3.5 year period of general, universal, eternally-binding judgment of nations and individuals (Mt 25 & Rev 20), when all were either found in the "book of life" or "thrown into the lake of fire" (AD 66-70), we know that those who die in Christ since His parousia, when Death and Hades, the last enemies WERE defeated - are spared any such judgment; those who die now, believing in Jesus Christ alone, pass right on into the eternal heavenly estate in new spiritual bodies (Jn 5:24; 1 Cor 15; Rev 14:13)

# Mt 12:28, 32

# But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the **kingdom** of God has come upon you

Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come

#### Mt 12:39-42

But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it...the queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it...

### Parallel Passages/Word Study

.....

# Lk 11:20

kingdom of God = kingdom of heaven (no distinction exists in Scripture; come upon you = has approached to near proximity; "this age" refers to the age of the Old Covenant, still in place at that time; the word mello is found here again: the age about to come (to them in the First Century AD); IMPORTANT: there was to be sin for which there was no forgiveness in the age that was about to come; hence, it couldn't apply to the eternal, heavenly estate, but necessarily applied to the earthly age that was to follow their own (the *only* earthly age beyond their own of which they had any concept; they knew only of "this age" and "the age to come")

Mt 16:4, Mk 8:38, Lk 11:29-32, Jn 4:48: re: Jonah, men of Nineveh. and queen of the south (Sheba) see Jonah & 1 Kings 10; in case you don't see that Jesus identified the generation of His contemporaries as the (most) "evil and adulterous generation" of which He spoke, read those parallel texts in Mark and Luke (there's positive identification!); the sign of Jonah is obviously the resurrection of Christ; here again, "this generation" is singled out as worse than all others, for their obstinate unbelief despite clear signs already given and wonderful works already performed in their view

.....

Book written: c. AD 35 (range: 31-38) speech: made AD 26-30 event: "the age about to come" was on their horizon in the First Century AD

# Geographical Notes

judging from chapters 12 & 13, at Capernaum, near the Sea of Galilee

# Notes Re: Fulfillment

..... the approach of the kingdom anticipated later, final fulfillment of Dan 2:44, 7:14 & Lk 1:33; Christ's casting out of demons was a sign that the kingdom of God was already arriving, manifested by such supernatural power unique to the Spirit of God; the Jews knew of (and the Bible speaks of) only two ages; the age that is (was, to us), and the age to come (which came in AD 70); the everlasting New Covenant age has superseded and replaced the Old Covenant age, just as the gospel system/ economy/dispensation has replaced that of the law; can you say, "Amen and Alleluia?!?"

of course, the "sign of Jonah" (the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ) was manifested in AD 30; between His resurrection and ascension, Jesus gave no more signs to unbelievers, though He did appear to many of those He made righteous, confirming the "sign of Jonah" (see Mt 28, Mk 16, Lk 24, Acts 1:3, & 1 Cor 15:5-8)

remember: all departed souls were at that time being held in Hades; it's from there that the "men of Nineveh" and "queen of the south" were to rise up in the judgment (AD 66-70)

.....

### Mt 12:43-45

When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest, and finds none. Then he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when he comes, he finds it empty, swept, and put in order. Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. So shall it also be with this wicked generation.

#### Mt 13:39-40

The enemy who sowed them [tares-SR] is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age [+compare v. 41-43 with Rev 14]

### Mt 13:47-50

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of every kind, which, when it was full, they drew to shore; and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but threw the bad away. So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

# Parallel Texts/Word Study

Lk 11:24-26, 1 Pe 5:8, 2 Pe 2:20-22; this is a picture of what was to take place in Israel (the "house" in the broader sense, while the individual Israelite is signified in the narrow sense) in the years of the Great Tribulation (AD 66-70), when demonic activity increased *seven-fold* (when it reached its peak), corresponding to the releasing of Satan "for a little while"- Rev 20:3; note once again that this refers to a particular generation: the First Century AD generation that had been named previously

Rev 14:14-16 & see Joel 3:13; Jesus explains the parable of the wheat & the tares to His disciples; end of the age is literally, "completion of the age" in the first instance, and "completion of *this* age in the second; this fixes a time/date stamp on the harvest

wailing/weeping and gnashing of teeth: Mt 8:12 (re: the casting out of the natural /fleshly sons of Abraham, acceptance of his spiritual descendants); Mt 13:42 (see above); Mt 22:13 (the man with no wedding garment); Mt 24:51 (evil servant appointed a portion with hypocrites); Mt 25:30 (unprofitable servant in parable of the talents) NOTE: all of these speak in terms of utter *finality* in judgment; when? "So it will be at the end of the age" (not at the non-biblical "end of the world!")

..... Book written: c. AD 35 (range: 31-38) speech: made AD 26-30 regarding the time of peak demonic activity, the 3.5 years before the works of Satan would be finally destroyed (made of no effect) by Christ in AD 70

the harvest was to take place at the end of the age then in place

spoken between AD 26 & 30, during the age that then was, prior to the end of *that* age

# Geographical Notes

this was to take place in the house of Israel (the land of Israel) in the First Century AD

"the field is the world" (kosmos)

# Notes Re: Fulfillment

..... the years AD 66-70 saw an unprecedented and unsurpassed wave of horrible wickedness: the "roaring lion" found many to devour in his appointed short time (the 42-month/3.5 year/ 1260 day period of Rev 11:2, 12:6, 13:5, from spring of AD 66 until late summer of AD 70, when the temple and Jerusalem were destroyed); there is abundant historical documention to support and confirm the claim: a time of unparalleled, demonically-charged evil and distress (e.g., Josephus) >>>since we know that Jesus knew what He was talking about, the harvest of both wheat and tares took place at the end of the age that was the Old Covenant age, which came to an end in AD 70

>>by examining Matthew's use of the phrase, "wailing/weeping and gnashing of teeth," we can see a definite pattern of usage: in every case, the phrase follows a pronouncement of final judgment; therefore, we can conclude with a high degree of certainty that this passage is no different; this is another description of final judgment, though more information is provided here: a time statement that specifies when it would occur (at the end of the age)

# 

#### Mt 13:51-52

Jesus said to them, "Have you understood all these things?" They said to Him, "Yes, Lord." Then He said to them, "Therefore every scribe instructed concerning the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure things new and old."

#### Mt 16:18

I will build My church, and the gates of **Hades** shall not prevail against it.

# Parallel Texts/Word Study

Jesus asked His disciples (apart from the multitude, v.36) if they understood what He'd just taught them about the gathering, separating, and judgment that was to take place at the end of the age; that Jesus is satisfied they *did* understand is indicated by His using the words *dia touto* (for this, or *because* of this), in introducing a simile that points to enthusiastic reception and a consequent, eager compulsion to share ("hurl forth") these kingdom truths; I can identify with that!

this is misquoted and misunderstood constantly! the word is hades, and NOT gehenna; the difference is important!; those figurative gates held captive all of the souls that departed prior to the release for judgment in AD 66; many members of Christ's church were among those held in Hades, but Christ "crashed the gates" and freed the prisoners of the grave (remember: even the saints were at that time separated from their bodies and from the immediate. eternal presence of their Lord); ALSO, this passage says nothing about the church invading hell - or even hades, for that matter!: no. that was the exclusive mission of Jesus Christ, Lord-Commander of Hosts (His holy angels), who held the keys to Hades and of Death (Rev 1:18) and used them: when He came in AD 66 with His angels, Christ "busted out" His people for the "upward call" (Phil 3:14), both the "dead ones" and the living righteous ones (the rapture)

26 & 30

Book written: c. AD 35 (range: 31-38) event: between AD

......

# Geographical Notes

this speech was probably made at Capernaum, near the Sea of Galilee (see 13:1 & 36)

# GET THIS

STRAIGHT!: Hades (Sheol), the unseen realm of the dead, was thought to be located in the bowels of the earth (Rom 10:7, Eph 4:9); Gehenna, translated "hell" in English, is the place of perpetual burning, and it takes its name from the Valley of Hinnom, sometimes called "Tophet(h)"; this was a place near Jerusalem where sons and daughters were made to "pass through the fire to Molech" (2 Kin 23:10), which later became a place of constantly burning refuse (a fiery pit); Hell, a real place/state of being described as the "lake of fire" exists, and it is said to now contain Hades: Rev 20:14

### cal Notes | Notes Re: Fulfillment

those who understand the basic principles, promises, and power of the kingdom of God should hardly be able to restrain themselves for the joy of that knowledge, especially for those of us who are living in the kingdom that has come! REMEMBER, ALSO: the disciples did not have questions about another time of judgment (on this or any other occasion); the concepts of final judgment and the end of the age were definitely linked in their minds

.....

>>> this bold prediction, which recalled the prophecy of Psalm 68:18 (quoted by Paul in Eph 4:8) was fulfilled in Christ's coming in judgment and deliverance in AD 66; it was then that He actually gave the liberty that had been proclaimed to the captives, and freed the bound (Is 61:1, 1 Pe 3:19; please read these verses and benefit from their light, via this perspective); it will be helpful, also, when contemplating why Jesus stopped reading the verse from Isaiah at the point He did: the day of vengeance had not yet occurred (c. AD 30); He stated that the part of the verse He'd just read was fulfilled in their hearing that day, but He stopped and closed the book (Lk 4:16-21); the rest was fulfilled before the year 70 was out! Doesn't that Luke 4 passage make more sense to you now?

Jesus Christ built His church (ekklesia - the "called out) as He said He would (through His preaching and that of the apostles) from the beginning of His earthly ministry until His coming in judgment in AD 66-70: from that time forward (forevermore), it's probably better to speak of the "kingdom of God"

.....

### Mt 16:27-28

For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and **then** He will reward each according to his works. Assuredly, I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom.

#### Mk 8:38-9:1

"For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." And then He said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power."

#### Lk 9:26-27

For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His own glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angels. But I tell you truly, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the kingdom of God.

NOTE ALSO: the word I've put in bold in Mt 16:27-28 (top of page) is *tote* ("at that time"); the only explanation that fits the judgment and reward theme expressed here is the one I've offered; there was no such thing in the Transfiguration or the other "process" events

# Parallel Texts/Word Study

Mk 8:38-9:1; Lk 9:26-27; Mt 24:30 & 25:31; Rom 2:5-6; IMPORTANT CONTEXTUAL NOTE: Mark's account makes it clear that Jesus "called to Him THE CROWD with His disciples" (v. 34); so the number of people standing there when Jesus said this was more than just the twelve closest disciples

A CLEAR, KEY PASSAGE! this must refer to Christ's coming in judgment because;

1. the Transfiguration must be ruled out as the fulfillment, since it came only 6 days later (17:1); all of the (12) disciples, at least, were still alive; none had tasted death 2. if the entire process of Christ's coming into His kingdom is to be considered as one (resurrection, ascension, sending of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost), *all* of the (12) disciples (except Judas Iscariot) were alive for that entire time; "some" doesn't fit with 11 out of 12; "most/nearly all/all but one" (shall not taste death) would fit; conversely. ALL of the twelve HAD tasted death by AD 70 (yes, even John, by AD 64 at the latest) 3. the only "coming" that fits the prediction is THE parousia coming of Jesus Christ "in the glory of His Father with His angels" in the destruction of physical Jerusalem, the physical temple, Jewish polity, and the Old Covenant system, and replacing them with the New Jerusalem (born from above), the true, living Temple (Christ and His saints), the heavenly kingdom of God, and the everlasting gospel (New Covenant) age

.....

Book written: c. AD 35 (range: 31-38) speech: AD 27-30 re: events in their future, but a future that would not see the deaths of all the larger group of disciples gathered there listening to Jesus; in other words, the predicted events would have had to take place by the time the longest-surviving hearers of Christ's words on that day died; there's just no getting around this!

# **Geographical Notes**

where were they standing? the last indication is in verse 13: Caesarea Philippi, which was located in the mountainous region of modern-day Lebanon

# Notes Re: Fulfillment

..... please see column #2 on the preceding page for a brief consideration of the proposed fulfillments, though some (incredibly!) contend that this has *yet* to be fulfilled, which would mean that at least two ("some") of those people who were standing there in the year 30 or so are *still* alive in 2017! This is how far some will go to cram their contrived last-things schemes into the Bible! They'll contend that yes, indeed, some 2000-year-old Jews must exist, because there's no way Jesus has actually done what He promised to do: come in the same kind of glory that His Father had in Old Testament times - through avenging armies - and with His angels (again, like the Father) to assert His kingdom rule and mete out judgment (please compare the featured passage and its parallels with Mt 24:30-31; Mt 25:31-32; Rev 20:13-15; for the one who is "willing to receive it," it should all click into place; Holy Spirit, grant it!

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#### Mt 17:5

"This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. **Hear Him!**"

#### Mt 17:11

Indeed, Elijah is coming first and will restore all things. But I say to you that Elijah has come already, and they did not know him but did to him whatever they wished. Likewise the Son of Man is also about to suffer at their hands.

#### Mt 19:28

in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel **Lk 22:28-30** 

But you are those who have continued with Me in my trials. And I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed *one* upon Me, that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

# Parallel Passages/Word Study

.....

Acts 3:22-23 (quotes from Dt 18) and Heb 1:1-4; Yes, hear Him! The Father commanded the disciples to hear Him, and so must we as well (and believe!): remember: "in the spirit and power" of Elijah; hence, the restoration of "all things" is to be understood in spiritual kingdom terms, and it refers to John the Baptist's reforming work (preparing the way of the LORD, making His paths straight: Is 40:3); note use of the phrase "about to" (mello is the original Greek word here, too); the suffering of Jesus came within 3 years of this prediction. *much* sooner than 20 centuries (or more) into the future, which is the length to which futurists (those still looking for the "last things" of the age to occur) have stretched the meaning of "about to" and "shortly" and "the time is near" - only in certain selective cases, mind you - so far!

>>the regeneration = paliggenesia (the re-creation/new birth/new age), found elsewhere only in Titus 3:5; this equates with the creation of the new heavens and new earth (2 Pe 3:17, from Is 65: 17 & 66:22, Rev 21:1) and the arrival of the new age; THE heavenly throne is occupied by God alone (Rev 22:3, Mt 23:22), so what's meant by 12 thrones? It might well mean more than this, but at a minimum, it implies that the martyred saints could testify against their own murderers; remember that before the great tribulation of the Jews, there was the murderous persecution of Christ's church by the Jews

Book written: c. AD 35 (range: 31-38) Transfiguration: AD 27-30

.....

soon after the event above, and after John the Baptist's death

speech: between AD 26 & 30, with regard to the regeneration/ restoration/ new creation that would take place from AD 30-70, culminating with the coming of Christ in glory, both to deliver His own and execute justice upon His (and their) enemies

# **Geographical Notes**

upon a high mountain (v. 1)

they've come down from the Mount of the Transfiguration, somewhere NE of Galilee

Judea, beyond the Jordan (19:1); though we're dealing with figurative speech, the picture makes no sense re: a time after the twelve tribes (and their cities) were destroyed in AD 66-70; today, the 12 tribes (see Jas 1:1) are non-existent, and strangers occupy the land; the current secular nation-state of Israel has no continuity with Biblical Israel: two different entities; don't confuse the two!

### Notes Re: Fulfillment

Jesus is emphatically pronounced by His Father to be the Prophet promised in Dt 18:15-19

John the Baptist started to restore all things in a spiritual kingdom sense: restored focus to the arriving Messiah, away from the hypocritical religious leaders, the "blind leading the blind" (Mt 15:14), who often made a proselyte "twice as much a son of hell" as themselves (Mt 23:15); preached repentance, restoring humility of spirit against pride, and true, unfeigned reverence for God, in the face of all the "lip service" and public show of the false "leaders");

of course, Jesus *did* suffer and die in AD 30, at the hands of the same wicked generation that killed John

once again, we must take statements regarding the regeneration/restoration/restitution (Acts 3:21 included) "of all things" in the *Biblical* sense, which is to say, in the spiritual kingdom sense; the climactic event of the regeneration (new creation) was the coming of the Lord and the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70; "all things" are now restored, in heavenly/spiritual kingdom terms, because Jesus Christ said so! If necessarv. take another look at Jn 18:36 and Lk 17:20 to reinforce the point

# Mt 22:7

But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.

#### Mt 22:46

And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore.

#### Mt 23:13-29

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites...(7 times)

#### Mt 23:31-32

Therefore you are witnesses against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers' guilt. Mt 7:2

...and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.

# Parallel Texts/Word Study

the context is the parable of the wedding feast, and the king is clearly seen to be God; remember that God often used human armies to execute His will in punishment and destruction, and those armies were said to be His/sent by Him/His right hand/His servants/etc. (see the Old Testament for several examples, like Jer 51:20, Is 45:1); in this case, there was *literal* fulfillment of a prediction in *parable* form!

no direct "last things" significance here, but a lesson for us all: hear Him, don't question Him, but believe "the Wisdom of God, Faithful and True!"

Lk 11; OT prophecies: Is 5:8 & Hab 2:2-20; these seven pronouncements of woe call to mind the seven bowls of wrath poured out in Rev 16, which in turn recall the plagues of Ex 7-10; certainly, this was no minor judgment that Christ was predicting would come upon this "brood of vipers" and "wicked, adulterous generation!"

<<<Acts 7:51-52, 1 Th 2:15-16, Rev 17:4, 18:6; the expression that's in bold (left) roughly translates to, "Go ahead and fill to the brim your measuring cup of blood. Do what your fathers weren't able to do, which you are now itching to do!" (kill the Chief Prophet!); that would seal their doom: they'd be repaid in kind (in blood and woes!)

.....

Book written: c. AD 35 (range: 31-38) parable spoken around AD 27 re: the time of the consummation of the kingdom of God & the wedding feast of the Lamb (Rev 19:9)

this applies in all ages to all people

this intense denunciation of the enemies of the true Israel of God had to come shortly before Christ was arrested, scourged, and crucified (AD 30)

# Geographical Notes

from 21:23, this parable was probably spoken in the temple, amongst the chief priests and elders; in the parable, the city is of those who were originally invited to the wedding feast (obviously, Jerusalem, in which He was standing, and which was representative of all Israel)

the hypocrites were assailed in the temple which they profaned

# Notes Re: Fulfillment

there was clear fulfillment of this parable in AD 66-70, when the Roman armies were used as God's avengers in the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple; the Father was furious with the Jews, who rejected His gracious invitation and dishonored His Son; He sent out His armies; they destroyed the murderers (of Jesus and the prophets), and literally burned up their city

Jesus always did and always will have the answers; if we sit at His feet and learn, we will know the truth

the seven woes or bowls of wrath (collective, terrible judgment, no matter what you choose to call it) hit Palestine in AD 66-70, climaxing in the destruction of "the holy city" (Jerusalem, see Mt 4:5 & 27:53, Rev 11:2) and the temple, which had been reduced to a distorted shadow of the true Temple by utter foulness; look at 1 Th 2:16: "...to fill up the measure of their sins; but wrath has come upon them to the uttermost"; consider the perfect justice of wrath to the uttermost coming upon those who killed the One who is able to save to the uttermost (Heb 7:25)

..... Mt 23:33-36

Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of

hell? Therefore, indeed, I send vou prophets, wise men, and scribes: some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.

#### Mt 23:37-39

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but **you** were not willing! See! Your house is left to you desolate; for I say to **you**, you shall see Me no more till vou sav. 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!"

# Parallel Texts/Word Study .....

Lk 11:47-51, Acts 5:40, 7:51-60 & 22:19-20, 2 Cor 11:24-25, Rev 18:24; brood of vipers: Mt 3:7, 12:34

NOTE: this whole scathing indictment was aimed directly at particular people of a particular generation; all of these "you" and "your" references have specific relevance, and are loaded with emphasis; I suggest we can no more escape the conclusion that ultimate, corporate judgment was to come upon those very people of that very generation, than could the "vipers" escape the eternal fires of Gehenna (that is the word here!)

Lk 13:34-35

points to remember as we study further;

- 1. ancient Jerusalem is fingered as "the one who kills the prophets" (not Rome)
- 2. "your children/you were not willing" = you *leaders* of Jerusalem weren't willing that the people should come to Me, and you prevented them
- 3. as a result of the above,
  - a) your house of worship will be left desolate (leveled) and
  - b) the *house of Israel* (national Israel/natural Israel) will cease to exist (be wiped out)
- 4. when Jesus left the physical temple for the last time, it truly was (then) left desolate (emptied); its Glory had departed

......

Book written: c. AD 35 (range: 31-38) speech: AD 30 re: crushing judgment in store for that generation in First Century Judea

# **Geographical Notes** .....

make a mental note: profaned by at least one murder; it was the center point from which radiated outward the hypocrisy and evil leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees (Mt 16:6); and as the virtual sun of the Jewish universe, it had to be destroyed: the ungodly invariably turn to worshiping the creation instead of the Creator

# Notes Re: Fulfillment .....

it's hard to imagine what judgthe temple was already ment could be more severe than the fierce, ultra-bloody purging of Judea, Jerusalem, and the temple that ran from spring, AD 66 through summer of AD 70; assuredly, that was the judgment that Jesus Christ had in prophetic view here: the humans involved in the prediction were precisely identified throughout this chapter and this book; it's all but impossible to miss the fact that Jesus foresaw the end of the age coming upon many of the very people who breathed the same earthly air as He did

#### AD 30

Jesus finished His temple discourse and left for the Mount of Olives (24:1-3)

when the religious leaders of Jerusalem (the blind leading the blind) zealously steered the children of Jerusalem (the people) away from Jesus, they doomed themselves and those they claimed to be protecting; together, they fell into the fiery ditch; however, those who were able to flee to Jesus in faith (spiritual, true Israel/the Israel of God and true sons of Abraham) would rejoice when He came in the name of the LORD in AD 66; for that time marked both utter destruction and amazing deliverance: some of those who heard Him may have fled to the mountains of more Christian-friendly Pella, as He had told them to do (24:16), but the truly faithful were caught up/snatched away in the Rapture at Pentecost, AD 66

# ...they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory

Mt 24:30 KJV

And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory

Lk 21:27 KJV

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

Mt 25:31 KJV

Do the passages above predict two (or even three) events, separated by time, or a single event of huge consequence?

# 4. The *What*, *When*, and *Where* of the Truth - Part 2 (Mt 24-25)

The study of the "Olivet Discourse" has come upon us. But before we enter into this look at the most complete account of our Lord's discourse to His disciples on the Mount of Olives (Matthew 24 & 25), I offer a pertinent observation about the Scriptures quoted on the prior page.

Note that in the first two passages - acknowledged by all alert commentators to be parallel accounts of the same speech of Jesus - where Matthew says, "in the clouds" (plural), Luke says, "in a cloud" (singular); this presents no problem in itself, since a cloud could just as easily be described as a cloud bank - a bank of clouds - if we're discussing vaporous formations in the skies: however, please consider another possibility. Isn't it possible that the language reflects Old Testament usage, such as we find in Jer 4:13 & Eze 38:9, where both "clouds" and "a cloud" describe armies or hosts, symbolically employing the image of a cloud/clouds? In the New Testament (Heb 12:1), we find a case where "a cloud" is used to describe a throng; what I'm suggesting is that "cloud/clouds" doesn't *necessarily* equate with visible formations in the sky, but could be taken to mean - with Scripturally-backed validity - the angelic armies, "the heavenly host" (as in Lk 2:13); see also Dan 7:13, where Christ's ascension to His throne is prophesied, and it's no stretch to imagine that "the clouds of heaven" could mean both atmospheric clouds and the attending multitude of angels (it was, after all, the coronation of the King of Kings!).

Also, there are *numerous* Old Testament instances where God occupies a "glory cloud" (*shekinah*), and there's nothing in these contexts to argue against that interpretation; personally, I think all three aspects are readily combined for a proper understanding of the concept: visible cloud or clouds in the sky/the angelic throng accompanying Christ in a climactic event, executing His orders in judgment and deliverance (gathering the "dead in Christ" from "Abraham's bosom")/and those angels with their Lord in the shekinah glory-cloud. For brilliant, detailed studies on "the cloud(s)," I highly recommend Randall E. Otto's *Coming In the Clouds* and David Chilton's *Paradise Restored*.

# Mt 24:1-3

Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down." Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"

#### Mk 13:1-3

... "Teacher, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here!"... "Do you see these great buildings?"... "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign [again, "the sign," not signs, as would be appropriate if the Lord's coming and the end of the age weren't to occur together-SR] when all these things [destruction of the temple, coming of the Lord, end of the age culminating in one event, THE Parousia of Jesus Christ-SR] will be fulfilled?"

#### Lk 21:5-7

...as some spoke of the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and donations...**these things**...what **sign**...**when these things** are about to take place?

### Parallel Texts/Word Study

..... Mk 13:1-3, Lk 19:41-44, 21:5-7; Jesus had just departed from the temple for the last time, and as He and the disciples headed up the Mount of Olives, the gleaming temple, founded upon huge stones, seemingly halfway to Heaven itself because of its mountaintop location, is in sight; the disciples have been told in no uncertain terms that the center of the Jewish universe the only place appointed by Jehovah for the offering of true worship in the Old Covenant/sacrificial system - was going to be utterly destroyed; because they clearly associated the coming of the Lord in judgment with the end of the age (remember that they understood the parable of the dragnet, and that "so it will be at the end of the age- Mt 13:47-51), they really only have one question here: WHEN?!? - this is a shocking revelation to them, but from Old Testament prophetic Scriptures (their only Scriptures), they knew that the Messiah was to come to put an end to earthly kingdoms (when the books were to be opened in the court of Heaven: judgment), and establish His everlasting kingdom (Dan 7:9-14): their asking for a sign reflects the tendency of their "faithless and perverse generation" (Mt 17:17 & Lk 9:41); Your coming = parousia (abiding presence, being alongside; coming and staying for some length of time); **age** = indefinite time/dispensation (Young)

......

Book written: c. AD 35 (range: 31-38) speech: AD 30 regarding events in their future (Jesus answered their questions when, and how will we know "when" when we see it? - the sign of these things) in the verses that follow

# Geographical Notes

in route to and upon the Mount of Olives, just east of Jerusalem; only several hundred feet from the magnificent temple, which took 46 years to build (Jn 2: 20), and was acknowledged throughout the Roman empire as a truly striking thing of beauty, and a wonder of engineering; it's important to know that "the temple" was more than just the sanctuary itself, but a complex of buildings within a walled fortress; individual base stones weighed dozens of tons apiece, and the bright white marble structure was adorned with gold, so that it reflected the sun's brilliance; it could be seen from miles away,as noted by Josephus

### Notes Re: Fulfillment

..... this center of Jewish/Old Covenant worship, though pure and dazzling from the outside, was defiled inside, just like the "whited sepulchres" to which Jesus compared the scribes, Pharisees, and hypocrites (Mt 23:27); and as long as the earthly temple made of hands was still standing, it would stand in the way of coming to/ going through the true Temple, the Mediator of the New Covenant; therefore, it had to be destroyed, and never rebuilt: one denies the finished work of Jesus Christ in imagining that the earthly temple needs to be - or ever will be rebuilt; that's a seriously damaging delusion shared by many who also consider themselves to be living stones in the true, New Covenant temple, composed of believers and of the Chief Cornerstone (1 Pe 2:4-8); that this prediction of Jesus was fulfilled is fully supported by history: in AD 70, the temple was indeed burned to the ground, and within a few years (by AD 73), even those massive foundational stones were broken up and plowed under; the "Wailing Wall" we often see in the news is not part of the temple, but actually a remnant of the western retaining wall of the ancient city; fulfilled to the letter!

# 

# Mt 24:4-8

And Jesus answered and said to them, "Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name, saying, "I am the Christ, and will deceive many. And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of sorrows."

#### Mt 24:9-13

Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. But he who endures to the end shall be saved.

# Parallel Texts/Word Study

Mk 13:5-8, Lk 21:8-11; note: in the quote to the left, italicized words are not in the original, but added by translators, and those in bold are emphasized; the points here: Jesus was talking to a specific group of people who lived in His own generation; that generation would witness "the beginning of sorrows" prior to the end of the age, and in some cases, the sign of Christ's coming and the end of the age (starting at Pentecost, AD 66); Jesus was here setting the scene (future to them, but not to us) at the closing of the age (AD 50+).

>>Mt 10:17-18, Mk 13:9-13, Lk 21:10-19; then = *tote* (at that time), and you = humas (you very persons); third "you" is more general (includes First Century AD believers); once again, we see marked specificity: the First Century AD disciples would be the ones arrested, persecuted, imprisoned, hated by the world, and killed, not us (or those coming after us); we 21st Century Americans are often the objects of world hatred, but it's not for the reason Jesus gave here: "for My name's sake"; we're hated (at least in the eyes of other nations and "progressives" within) for being egotistical and greedy, even warmongering; the disciples, on the other hand, were hated by all nations because they preached the gospel in all nations: Rom 16:26); "the end" = the end of the age; "saved" = temporally ("kept sound" physically), saved from bodily destruction

Book written: c. AD 35 (range: 31-38) speech: AD 30 regarding events to unfold within the lifetimes of the disciples to whom Jesus was speaking

re: "many false prophets" read Acts 5:33-37 & 8:9-11, & 1 Jn 2:18-22 (as Josephus confirms)

# Geographical Notes

on the Mount of Olives, with the temple in sight; the wars, rumors of wars, famines, pestilences, and earthquakes predicted here (remember, at the "beginning of sorrows") were to occur in Israel "and diverse places" (Mk 13:8, Lk 21:11) in the First Century AD

# Notes Re: Fulfillment

every generation witnesses wars, rumors of wars, and nation rising against nation, but one notable exception was the era of relative world peace (the pax Romana), which was the era in which Jesus spoke; under the Roman Empire, there were limited outbreaks and skirmishes, but war was rare, hence the "rumors of wars" would be significant; as for famines, earthquakes, etc., the histories of that time fully confirm that they occurred, and even Laodicea & Colosse were leveled by a quake c. AD 60 (though speedily rebuilt); and see Acts 16:26

written documents from within and outside of the organized church attest to the fulfillment of all these predictions in the general persecution and individual beatings, jailings, and martyring of the disciples in the First Century AD; those who would become disciples and apostles within the generation were certainly in view (Matthias, Stephen, Paul, Barnabas, James, the brother of Jesus, etc.); some fulfillments are recorded in Acts 7-8, 12, 14, 16, 17, 19, & 22, and a murder plot is detailed in chapter 23; all these fulfillments came in the First Century AD

# .....

#### Mt 24:14

And this **gospel** of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

#### Mk 13:10

And the gospel must first be preached to all the nations

#### Mt 24:15-20

"Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand), "then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath."

(NOTE: the homes of Palestine in that time usually had flat roofs. which were often joined together; escape would have been speedier via the rooftop route, than by descending to street level and fighting the crowd)

# Parallel Texts/Word Study .....

Mt 4:23; OT prophecy = Is 49:6; world = oikoumene (habitable earth or land: that is, the Roman Empire, the known world at that time: the same word as in Lk 2:1 re: the decree of Caesar Augustus that went out to "all the world"); when the gospel had been preached throughout the Roman Empire, the end of the age would take place; see last column on next page for Bible passages that confirm fulfillment of what was predicted here

Mk 13:14-18. Lk 21:20-23 & 17: 31-32: see also Dan 9:26-27 for the prophecy to which Jesus here refers; holy place = the temple area, the holy district, which was to be "the holy place" for the sanctuary (Ezk 45:4; see chapters 45 & 48 for more details); the meaning is not limited to an area within the temple, and even the land around the "holy city" fits the scene (when Luke's parallel account is compared, "But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies. then know that its desolation is near," the broader sense suggested above fits well): NOTE: Jesus then warned "those who are in Judea" to flee "to the mountains" (that leaves out anyone not living in Judea, all you would-be modern day "prophets!"); three illustrations of the dire urgency of the escape effort are next, then potential obstacles they should pray to avoid

Book written: c. AD 35 (range: 31-38) speech: AD 30 regarding events that would take place within the span of a generation (Mt 24:34)

the invasion of the land of Israel, with Jerusalem as its final objective, began in February of AD 66; when the armies marched into the area near the "holy place/city" (Is 52:1), that was the sian to faithful followers of Christ to flee to the mountains (out of Judea), before the siege of Jerusalem began

# Geographical Notes

this prediction applies to the known world of that time - the limits of the Roman Empire - as can be proved by comparing other NT texts where the word oikoumene is used, instead of kosmos, ge, or aion: Lk 2:1 & 4:5; Acts 11:28, 17:6 & 31, 19:27, 24:5; Rom 10:18; Heb 1:6 & 2:5, Rev 3:10, 12:9, & 16:14

the mountains to the east of Judea included the city of Pella (the Gentile region called, "Decapolis" - "the ten cities"); according to historians, including Eusebius, this was the place to which some of the faithful fled; here I would again remind my fellow 21st Century Americans that we don't live in Judea, and most of us don't live near mountains; and I ask you: why would we want to or need to flee to them, in order to escape the forces surrounding Jerusalem?!? Context and audience relevance, people! Hear Him!

### Notes Re: Fulfillment

..... Col 1:5-6 & 23 (written c. AD 63) - "...which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel which has come to you, as it has also in all the world ...the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven" (compare Mk 16:15 for language usage); maybe Paul used some hyperbolic speech, but his point is made: by c. AD 63, gospel preaching had already come to the whole known world; it would continue to spread for about three more years before the end; also: Rom 1:8 & 16:26, Acts 1:8;

>>>whether Jesus Christ's prediction referred to the area around the temple or just the land of Judea (He could not have meant the unseen, interior Holy of Holies), the fulfillment came sometime between AD 66 & 70, after which the temple was no more (nor ever will be!); there is a definite "time-lock" on this prediction; consider also the significance of the remark re: the Sabbath: it was aimed at the Pharisees. who invented their own rules for the Jewish Sabbath, including the maximum distance for travel on that holy day; that would severely hinder any escape attempt, wouldn't it?

.....

# Mt 24:21-22

For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.

(Old Testament prophecy): And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, *even* to that time - **Dan 12:1** 

#### Mt 24:23-26

Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe it. For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. See, I have told you beforehand. Therefore if they say to you, 'Look, He is in the desert!' do not go out; or 'Look, He is in the inner rooms!' do not believe it.

### Parallel Texts/Word Study

Mk 13:19-20, **Lk 21:22-23:** 

"For these are the days of vengeance, that all things may be fulfilled"- unprecedented and not repeated, the time of "great distress" and "wrath"; note, too, that the words, "nor ever shall be" mean absolutely nothing if this tribulation is to come at the end of earthly history!; there are two pieces of great news for those of us who trust in Jesus Christ and believe all of His words: 1) the "Great Tribulation" is past, not in our future! 2) God's faithfulness comes shining through: "but for the elect's sake" those days indeed were shortened; some of the elect survived bodily by escaping the outpouring of God's wrath upon Jerusalem, and *all* the elect will be saved eternally; God is faithful and true!

Mk 13:21-23, Lk 17:23, Acts 5:34-39; don't miss the significance of this: Christ says that if anyone claims to see Him either "here" or "there" (that is, anywhere ), they should not believe it; in other words, they should not expect to see Him (the true Christ) at all! they'd see the sign that the Son of Man was already ruling from heaven ("the sign of the Son of Man in the heaven" is the proper reading of 24:30); that sign would be the laying waste of Judea, Jerusalem, and the temple: judgment that belonged only to God was the sign of Christ's reign! Judgment indeed belonged to The Son after His ascension: Jn 5:22

.....

Book written: c. AD 35 (range: 31-38) speech: AD 30 regarding The Great Tribulation, which was to take place when the armies surrounded Jerusalem (standing in the holy place)

# Geographical Notes

this prediction comes within the same context: Jesus was speaking to the disciples on the Mount of Olives, with the temple area in sight

# Notes Re: Fulfillment

if you tend to dismiss the thorough desolation of Judea immediately prior to the fiery destruction of Jerusalem and the temple as a minor event and unqualified to be called "The Great Tribulation," you need to read Josephus; he was a Jewish chief priest and general, then an official Roman historian, who personally witnessed the horror of that time and understood its significance; remember that that wicked and adulterous generation had broken the "marriage covenant" with God by spiritual adultery, filled up the measure of their sins, and not only rejected the Son of God, but crucified Him: the punishment had to fit the crime! (see Mk 12:9, Lk 20:16)

note that Christ would *not* be spotted in the desert, nor in the inner rooms (tameion, or "secret chambers/ closets," inferring the temple); Josephus records that various false christs did lure many out to the desert (and out of view of most) and into the interior of the temple, the very focal point of God's outpouring of wrath

in Acts 5, Gamaliel named two false prophets that were typical of/in those days; again, Josephus has much to say regarding the trend, which grew in intensity right up to the end: if we continue to operate on a "seeing is believing" basis, requiring confirmation through our own physical senses for every prophecy and prediction (wooden literalism), we're never going to under-stand prophecy; we must walk by faith, not by sight- 2 Cor 5:7; that pleases our Lord!

.....

#### Mt 24:27-28

For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together.

### Lk 17:24, 37

For as the lightning that flashes out of one *part* under heaven shines to the other *part* under heaven, so also the Son of Man will be **in His day**...

"Where, Lord?" So He said to them, "Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together."

(In Ed Stevens' book, What Happened In A.D. 70?, there's a great diagram that convincingly demonstrates that the Olivet Discourse of Mt 24-25 is one continuous lecture on a single subject: the events tied to the Parousia ("Second Coming") of Jesus Christ at the end of the age; the diagram clearly shows that the "partial-preterist" position - that Christ did come in AD 70 in judament on Jerusalem, but not finally, to complete the plan of redemption - is untenable nonsense: nowhere in sacred Scripture are we told of two "Second-comings" (parousias) of Jesus Christ, separated in time (much less by 2000 years or more!); Christ didn't teach that, Paul didn't teach that; no inspired writer did!)

### Parallel Texts/Word Study

..... remember what this immediately follows: the statement that the false christs would be operating in withdrawn secrecy (the desert or secret chambers) and be limited in scope (here or there); but the comparison of Christ's coming (parousia, the second occurrence of four in this chapter) to lightning is not made to emphasize speed, but sweeping, powerful judgment; this was going to be the coming of the King of Kings in universal judgment, power, and glory, that would be worlds-defining history; there were to be colossal changes in both the physical realm and the heavenly; this coming in judgment on the land of Israel had huge ramifications for the whole world; lightning was often used in OT texts to portray the awesome judgment of the LORD: 2 Sam 22:14-15; Ps 18:13-14; Zech 9:14; "Where, Lord?"everywhere you look is the answerthat's where you'd see the bodies of over a million Jews, scattered in heaps all over Judea (a collective carcass), between AD 66 & 70; "eagles" is thought to mean vultures, which congregate at such scenes; another valid possibility is a reference to the emblem of the Roman legions, the eagle (also read Dt 28:49, where the consequences of Israel's breaking of the covenant are described: "The LORD will bring a nation against you from afar ... as swift as the eagle flies...")

......

Book written: c. AD 35 (range: 31-38) speech: AD 30 regarding a time when the Son of Man would come in sweeping glory; 1. before the disciples had gone through the cities of Israel (10:23) 2. before those standing with Him in the region of Caesaria Philippi that day would all be dead (16:27-28)3. within a generation's time (about 40 years, in Biblical terms) from this discourse in AD 30 (24:34) 4. before the temple was destroyed, never to be rebuilt (Mal 1:4, Ec 3:14, Gal 2:18, Heb 9:1 & 8, Rev 21:22)

# Geographical notes

..... there's probably no geographical reference in the simile (east to west), though accounts of those days report that the invading armies advanced from north to south and from east to west: the discourse itself was still being delivered on the Mount of Olives, with the temple only a few hundred feet to the west

# Notes Re: Fulfillment

..... this was fulfilled in the material realm over a wide range of Israel (throughout Judea in the First Century AD); the Roman legions swept through the region, leaving a trail of desolation and virtually obliterating the population; Josephus reports a death toll in the hundreds of thousands; whole cities were destroyed; once, after the Jews thought they had turned back the Romans (for some "mysterious" reason, the attack halted for a very brief time, and the Roman forces withdrew, giving any Christians who had survived the empire-wide persecution under Nero their window of opportunity to hastily flee out of Judea), the noose was fashioned and tightened around Jerusalem; after that, those caught trying to escape were slaughtered: thousands were crucified around the city; within the city walls, starvation, disease, and civil wars between factions claimed thousands, as well; bodies were thrown outside the walls in great numbers (see Amos 8:2-3); Josephus calculated that the bodies of about 1.1 million Jews littered the countryside before the largely one-sided "war" was over, and nearly 100,000 were led away as captives; it was a comprehensive cataclysm, indeed

# Mt 24:29

#### IVIL 24.25

Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. (Old Testament texts with comparable language):

#### Is 13:10

For the stars of heaven and their constellations will not give their light; the sun will be darkened in its going forth, and the moon will not cause its light to shine. [this was "the burden against Babylon," a prophecy fulfilled in the fall of historic Babylon in 539 BC-SR]

#### Is 34:3-5

And the mountains shall be melted with their blood. All the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled up like a scroll; all their host shall fall down as the leaf falls from the vine...for My sword shall be bathed in heaven; indeed it shall come down on Edom [burden against Edom and other nations that tormented Israel; fulfilled in ancient history in their destruction-SR]

#### Eze 32:7

When I put out your light, I will cover the heavens, and make its stars dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light. All the bright lights of the heavens I will make dark over you...[re: Egypt, fulfilled- 6th century BC-SR]

### Parallel Texts/Word Study

..... Mk 13:24-25, Lk 21:26 immediately = eutheos (directly/ straightway/no delay); this is very clear: if the tribulation of AD 66-70 was the time of Great Tribulation (unprecedented in magnitude and never to be equaled), what is spoken of here had to have taken place at the climax in late summer, AD 70; so to what does this extreme terminology refer? - compare this New Testament passage with Old Testament passages employing the same genre (language-type), and the answer will swiftly emerge: JUDGMENT; you may recall our brief look at Acts 2:19-20, where Peter (on Pentecost) said (under the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Who can't lie) that the event was the fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel: "I will show wonders in heaven above and signs in the earth beneath: blood and fire and vapor of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD"; now think about that: how much of that literally took place? - yet, God said the prophecy was fulfilled; look at the prophecies to the left, and compare the language (there are more examples, by the way); were all the parts of each prophecy literally fulfilled? obviously not; yet God has surely done what He said He'd do; this is figurative, prophetic (apocalyptic) language!

......

Book written: c. AD 35 (range: 31-38) speech: AD 30 regarding judgment that was to come immediately after the Great Tribulation (climactic event at the end of that period), and within the span of a generation from AD 30

# Geographical Notes

you won't find any solar system components listed here; this language mirrors Old Testament judgment language, which often used the sun, the moon, and the stars (and the heavens and earth) as symbols for religious and governmental powers; we use the term "star" in much the same way today, only we in 21st Century America are usually speaking of some entertainment figure when we refer to someone as a "star"; TV ads often boast of a "star-studded" lineup or a "galaxy of stars" etc.; the main idea is prominence; the sun, moon, and stars of the First Century AD were the religious and civil leaders; these were the stars that were to "fall from heaven" when the "heavens" were shaken: the host of heaven referred to in Christ's prediction were religious leaders in First Century Judea, not distant planets in our solar system

### **Notes Re: Fulfillment**

..... there's sufficient Biblical evidence to conclude that fulfillment in strictly literal terms is not always to be expected; the case of Acts 2-Joel 2 is just one proof; we know those OT prophecies quoted to the far left were fulfilled, with their fulfillments recorded in historical records (though the records say nothing about natural phenomena like the heavens rolling up like a scroll, or the mountains melting with their blood, the facts of the falling of those kingdoms remain in the books); if I was a better historian, I could give you more specifics, but for me the true bottom line is this: when speaking prophetically to the Jewish people of ancient times, God used language with which those people became increasingly familiar, so that by the time of the First Century AD, the Jews knew prophetic symbolism when they heard it; they got the point; they looked for spiritual upheaval, not the collapse of the material universe: that should be a lesson to us, and one which we should keep in the forefront of our thinking as we study such symbolic, figurative language in New Testament passages; otherwise, we'll miss the point and the impact of the whole truth!

# 

#### Mt 24:30

Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

#### Mk 13:26

Then they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.

#### Lk 21:27

Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

#### **Rev 1:7**

Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth [land - Greek ge-SR] will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen. [from Zech 12:10-14]

NOTE: "even they who pierced Him" can only be applied to one group of people in one place and time: the Jews in Judea in AD 30: see Jn 19:37, Acts 2:23, 36

# Parallel Texts/Word Study

we took a brief look at this text and its parallels in the beginning of this (my) chapter (p. 55); remember: the Greek sentence structure is "and then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in the heaven," pointing to the sign appearing to men on earth that the Son of Man was in Heaven and reigning (not in the heavens, or the sky); the way our English translations read is a bit misleading, since there's no necessity here in the original language for a visible sign to be posted in the sky; the sign that the Son of Man who ascended to the Father (Dan 7:13) was the Son of Man to whom was given "an everlasting dominion" (Dan 7:14) was the execution of His iudament on old, wicked Jerusalem; that was the proof of the Son of Man's Kingship, and office as Judge (see Jn 5:22); tribes of the earth = tribes of the land (Greek ge), which makes this place-specific, and limits the scene to the land in which the tribes dwelt, which was Israel only: see (in all three texts) = horao (discern/take heed/know), and not eidon (eyeball vision), the word used in the context of seeing the armies around Jerusalem: do vou see (horao ) what I mean?- the people of Israel would know that the Son of Man about whom Daniel prophesied had come in power and glory; for coming in/on a cloud/the clouds,

please read again p.55

......

Book written: c. AD 35 (range: 31-38) speech: AD 30 event: to take place "then" (tote, "at that time")- immediately after The Great Tribulation, when the sign of the Son of Man's residence in heaven as the King of Kings would be established via the unmistakable sign of His judgment upon the "holy city" that murdered Him: time limits: before those at Caesarea Philippi (Mt 16:27-28) had all died: before the disciples had gone through the cities of Israel; within a generation's time (about 40 years from the prediction)

# Geographical Notes

location of the Son of Man prior to His coming/return: His heavenly throne, where the heavenly host (the throng/cloud of angels) attended Him; coming to what location? - the land of the twelve tribes of Israel (which existed until then, but not much longer); in the heavenly/spiritual sense, this coming was universal, but in the material sense, it was exclusively to the land of Israel in the First Century AD; it's not necessary that every eye should see Him in the physical (eye-ball vision) sense, because that's *not* the word used; furthermore, consider the fact that it would be impossible to see Jesus in that way for two reasons: 1) from any one point on the planet, the sky over remote points is not visible to us 2) no one on earth could see the unveiled, glorified Christ - with eyes not suited for that vision and live; Paul was spared, but still blind for 3 days! (Acts 9:8-9)

### Notes Re: Fulfillment

..... here is an excellent example of the difference between walking by faith versus walking by sight (eidos, eyeball vision: 2 Cor 5:7); we Christians have received our marching orders: walk by faith, not by sight; to demand fulfillment that's observable through our physical senses only is carnal; leave that to the unbelievers; we must believe our Lord and commander Jesus Christ in everything He has said; Jesus identified the "abomination of desolation" spoken of by Daniel with the armies surrounding Jerusalem, to take place within the span of one generation from the time of His Olivet discourse: He identified the time of The Great Tribulation (unmatched in the past or future) as an event to take place within that same span

<<(see Dan 12:1-3; also, at least some of His disciples from a group larger in number than the twelve, per Mark 8:34 & following - would see the beginning of the end of the age); since the "time of the end" (Dan 8:17, 19) was to coincide with Daniel's prophecies regarding it (chapters 9 & 12), and the coming of the Son of Man was to occur then, at the culmination of The Great Tribulation, all these things have taken place; let God be true but every man a liar (Rom 3:4)

.....

# Mt 24:31

And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect/chosen ones from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

#### Mk 13:27

And then He will send His angels, and gather together His elect/ chosen ones from the four winds, from the farthest part of earth to the farthest part of heaven.

NOTE: trumpets were sounded (by the priests only) according to God's commands, for these reasons:

- calling the congregation
- directing movement of camps
- going into battle
- announcing the year of Jubilee, on the Day of Atonement
- announcing the Feast of Trumpets, on the first day of the 7th month, a sabbath-rest day, and the beginning of the new year (civil)
- announcing each new moon at the beginning of each month (lunar calendar)

the Jews were intimately familiar with all that connected to the *symbol* of the trumpet

# Parallel Texts/Word Study

the trumpet- 1 Cor 15:52, 1 Th 4: 16 (not a gigantic trumpet sounding from heaven, and actually heard by earth-dwellers!); this is symbolic of the mustering of the armies of the Lord and the gathering of God's people (chosen people; see to the left); also, it's a symbol of judgment (recall the destruction of Jericho. initiated by the sounding of trumpets- Josh 6); gather together = episunago (to lead or bring together); the elect were spiritually gathered into the kingdom of God in this regeneration/new creation/ birth of the new age; from then on, those who would die in Christ had an eternal home to which to go directly, bypassing Hades/Abraham's Bosom: namely, Heaven; those who had already died in the Lord prior to this "adopting" of heavenly kingdom family members preceded the then-living in entrance to the "home" of God, but only by a moment, since the living faithful were translated/caught up/raptured in the same event: 1 Cor 15 & 1 Thes 4: from the four winds = from all over the earth, wherever a true believer had earthly residence (remember that the faithful had been scattered throughout the world, and "recruited" from all the nations); Dt 30:4- "If any of you are driven out to the farthest parts under heaven, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there He will bring vou."

The LORD was faithful and true; the LORD is faithful and true

......

Book written: c. AD 35 (range: 31-38) speech: AD 30 event: the parallel text in Mark says "and then" (tote- "at that time"), which refers to the verse before it: at the coming of the Son of Man; for the timing of that event, see Mt 16:27-28, Mt 10:23, Mt 23:36, and all of Mt 24 to this point in the text

# Geographical Notes

as a result of the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities, Jews had been scattered throughout the known world, and as a result of the preaching of the gospel in all nations, there existed believers all over that known world of the day (the Roman Empire); wherever a believer was, he/she was gathered into the kingdom at the time when this prediction was fulfilled (Pentecost, AD 66): "caught up" into the heavenly kingdom, taking on spiritual bodies suitable for eternal existence in Heaven; this happened very shortly after the dead ones in Christ were resurrected out of/from the dead/Sheol/Hades (this is the Biblical terminology: 1 Cor 15:12,13,21,42; Mt 22:31; Lk 20:35; Acts 4:2, 17:32, 23:6, 24:15 & 21; Rom 1:4; Heb 6:2; 1 Pe 1:3; not once is it resurrection "of the body" or "of the flesh," and for good reason: the same material atoms are not reconstituted, but the believer gets a new spiritual body- 1 Cor 15:44)

### Notes Re: Fulfillment

..... have you ever seen a justification? when was the last time you saw a regeneration? the point should be obvious: things that take place in the spiritual realm are usually invisible to us; while we can expect to observe manifestations (proof-signs) of such lifechanging events that occur in real time and space, we don't ever witness the thing itself (on this side of the spiritual realm); example: Joe leads Jane to Christ by preaching to her the gospel of Jesus Christ; God the Father and God the Holy Spirit have drawn her to the Son, convicted her of her sin and need to flee to Jesus, and granted her the twin gifts of true repentance and faith in Him alone; how much of that did any human observer see in the material sphere? - did anyone see a rope of some sort used in the drawing, or the Holy Spirit "applying" salvation to her soul with some adhesive? or the sins being cast away as far as the east is from the west? NO!; what we see in this sphere is outward evidence (fruits) brought about by the great inward change; we don't see justifications, regenerations, etc. in this world, but they are no less real, profound events; AD 70 is different only in the magnitude of the observable signs (so many things impossible to miss for anyone paying attention)

.....

#### Mt 24:32-33

Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer *is* near. So you also, when you see all these things, know that it/He is near - at the doors!

#### Mt 24:34-35

Assuredly, **I** say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

Mk 13: 30-31 (same exact words) Lk 21:32-33 (same exact words, except "all things" instead of "all these things")

(Old Testament text):

### Is 40:5-8

The glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all the flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken. The voice said, "Cry out!" And he said, "What shall I cry?" All flesh *is* grass...the grass withers, the flower fades, because the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people *are* grass. The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever

# Parallel Texts/Word Study

Mk 13:28-29, Lk 21:29-31, Jas 5:9; this should require little explanation: when the trees bud in spring, you know that summer is near; so all the preliminary "alerts" Jesus had listed were to be "trees in the bud" to signal that it/He (His coming) was near, or "at the doors," the same expression used by His half-brother James in his epistle of about AD 61/62: "Behold, the Judge is standing at the door!"-Jas 5:9; imminency is stressed

>>>A CLEAR, KEY PASSAGE! there's no getting around the time sentry posted at this checkpoint: the generation with which Jesus Christ shared the air and ground in AD 30 would not die off until all the things He'd been talking about took place; be honest: unless He named specific dates (which were not yet given to Him by the Father), how could He have stated this in clearer terms?!? - and again, the word is generation (genea), which in every NT instance means the population of people living at the same time; and again #2: "heaven and earth will pass away" absolutely does not mean the universe ceasing to exist; read Ec 1:4; Ps 78:69, 89:36-37, 93:1, 96:10, 104:5, 119:90, 148:4,6; take a close look at Gen 8:21-22- do you think the message is that God is planning on destroying His universe by fire? made for Jesus (Col 1:16)? see Ec 3:14 (read and learn: the world is not to burn!)

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Book written: c. AD 35 (range: 31-38) speech: AD 30 regarding the event that would closely follow the signs given earlier in the discourse

in modern-day slang, "You guys alive right now won't all be dead by the time all this stuff happens"; "this" generation is "that" generation to us; if Jesus was speaking about our generation, He'd have said "that" (future) generation, and His whole discourse would have had no relevance for His questioners; every "you" would be a lie! This is vitally important to grasp.

# Geographical Notes

while I won't insist that the use of the fig tree in the parable limits things geographically (Luke says, "and all the trees"- Lk 21:29), it can be said with certainty that the fig tree grew plentifully in Israel of old, but it isn't found in great abundance in Main Street, USA, these days

a reminder repeated: if this is to be taken strictly literally, we are now standing on a new earth, on which Adam, Abraham, Moses, Paul, and Jesus never stood; why? - because Jesus and His apostles (and other NT writers, who wrote Godbreathed words) gave specific time-frames for "all these things"; none were liars, and none were mistaken (God is not the author of confusion- 1 Cor 14:33, but the God of all knowledge and order); if God said when it would happen, it happened then; new planet earth? - no; new world? - yes!

# Notes Re: Fulfillment

"all these things" refers back to everything from the "beginning of sorrows" right up to the end, the coming of the Lord (v. 4 through v. 29); at that time, He would not knock gently on the door, as He does in seeking restored communion with believers (Rev 3:20), but kick it in!: "delay shall be no longer!"-Rev 10:6; the time for repentance was up; fulfilled finally in late summer, AD 70

any commentator worth his salt will have to agree that this 34th verse takes in what was predicted before it in the text: that's usually not the problem for the honest student of Scripture; but many think they see a dramatic change of subject in the verse which follows; before we examine that possibility, let's look at the wording of the account in Luke: "all things" (period!) would take place before that generation would pass away; whether that refers to all things of the Old Covenant age or all things spoken/ written in prophecy (see Lk 24:44) makes no difference: either way, the time-frame is fixed in place; there would be no prophecy left to be fulfilled after the end-limit of the timeframe; and surely, we live in the New Covenant age, don't we? The everlasting New Covenant Age: Heb 9:12-15; 13:20. Remember this!

.....

#### Mt 24:36-44

But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only. But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. Then two *men* will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour/watch of the night the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. Therefore **vou** also be readv. for the Son of Man is coming at an hour **you** do not expect.

### Parallel Texts/Word Study

..... Mk 13:32-37, Lk 17:26-27, 34-35, & 21:34-36, 1 Th 5:6 "But of that day..."; what day? - that would be my first question for those who see a subject change here, where Jesus is supposed to suddenly start discoursing on a new subject 1987 or more years into the future, when all of those to whom he was speaking would be long dead and gone; think about that: what day are you talking about now, Jesus? - that question is begged by making the assumption that Jesus began to talk (without any indication of subject change) about a supposed event 49 or more Biblical generations into the future! - and consider this fact: the two "coming" words here are parousia; that makes the coming spoken of in this context the final coming - the parousia; it means for us now that Jesus has returned to complete redemption of all His chosen ones - past and future - and of what was predicted and required He left none undone: so Jesus here continues His discourse without suddenly going off course on a time-travel distraction that would be utterly irrelevant to his earnest inquirers; He doesn't take a completely unnecessary detour into the future, 2000 years hence; the "you" words are aimed at those who listened to Him speak on Olivet; although they would know the season (from the parable), they just wouldn't know the exact day and hour: but when Jesus ascended to the Father, HE certainly knew, and when He gave His revelation TO John (Rev 1:1), the day & hour were fixed and known by Him

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Book written: c. AD 35 (range: 31-38) speech: AD 30 regarding a season (to be determined by noting the "trees in bud" signs) that was to occur within the lifetimes of some of the First Century disciples; the exact day and hour would remain unknown to everyone until that time was very near; life would go on in the normal manner, as most would be oblivious of the impending doom; those who were watching for the signs would be prepared and take flight before it was too late or meet the Lord in the air at the "Rapture"; those who lingered would be taken captive or left to destruction

# Geographical Notes

let's learn a lesson from the comparison to the days of Noah's flood: when it's said that the world was destroyed with/by a flood, what exactly was "taken away?" - here we see that it was "them all": the people, except for eight; note that the earth itself wasn't taken away; the landscape was dramatically changed, but the planet kept on spinning in its usual place in God's universe, created for the **Son (Col 1:16)**; so if God's promise was to never again "destroy every living thing " as He had done (by water), but He was still planning on destroying every living thing by fire, we've got some serious problems here: God would be deceptive (and the rainbow would signify nothing but a covenant broken by Him), and His gift of the universe - created in perfection for His Son (Col 1:16) - would be destroyed; think about that!

### Notes Re: Fulfillment

..... this is another oft-abused text; who (in our day) hasn't heard the "theory" (I should not accord it that much respect) of a still-future "rapture" read into and imposed upon this text? in that well-known scheme (ah, now there's a word that fits!), the ones who are (yet) to be "taken" are those who are to be raptured, vacating their cars, Jetson-mobiles, or whatever futuristic vehicles they'll be driving when the Lord finally ends His "tarrying" and comes shortly/soon/quickly; those "left" will be left to destruction (that part they got right; they were); remember once again: the faithful in Judea were to heed their Lord's warning and flee to the mountains when they saw the armies surrounding Jerusalem; Eusebius records that that's exactly what happened for many, though I really have to wonder just how many *true* believers survived the empire-wide persecution under Nero that decimated the population of confessing Christians (see Lk 18:8); whereas the Romans may not have been concerned with holding those accountable who lied to save their own skin, that kind of behavior would only be seen by God as an outright denial of Jesus Christ, the appointed Savior; deny Christ, cut yourself off from His salvation (left to destruction)

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#### Mt 24:45-51

Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season/at the right time? Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods. But if that evil servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,' and begins to beat his fellow servants. and to eat and to drink with the drunkards, the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for *him* and at an hour that he is not aware of, and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

#### Mt 25:1-13

Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom...five foolish...five wise...but the wise took oil...but while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!'...the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding: and the door was shut. Afterward the other virgins came also ... But he answered and said,... 'I do not know you.' Watch therefore...

# Parallel Texts/Word Study

Mk 13:34-36, Lk 12:42-48, Mt 25:21-23, & 30, 2 Pe 3:3-9 NOTE THE CONTRAST: the faithful and wise servant trusts the words of his master, but the evil servant doubts: "My master is delaying his coming"; notice, too, that the master returns to the same servants he'd left, not their farfar-far-distant descendants!: the household over which the servants rule in the master's temporary absence? - none but the household of faith (Gal 6:9-10.16): the "food" = the gospel (see Heb 5:12-14, 1 Cor 3: 1-2); "so doing?" = making disciples, instructing the household in the gospel faith, giving them solid food as they become ready for it, in due season; this is straightforward, isn't it?

1 Th 5:6, Lk 12:35 & 13:25, Mt 7:21-23: because the phrase "the bridegroom was delayed" is included here, futurists (those still looking for fulfillment of any prophecy) often make this "exhibit A" when they attempt to prove their case; but look at what this passage really says: the bridegroom comes to the same people to whom we were intoduced in the beginning of the parable, not an entirely different group of virgins in a far distant time; the Bridegroom only briefly delayed His coming; He didn't come when all of the ten virgins were long dead and gone!

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Book written: c. AD 35 (range: 31-38) speech: AD 30 please note again: the parable is told to the 12 disciples of Jesus Christ; the master in the parable obviously represents The Master, Jesus Christ: the master returns within the lifetimes of the servants!

see above, and add the knowledge of a proper interpretation of this parable to the one above; while there is some apparent delay here, it's delay that comes to an end while the ten virgins are alive; there's no sequel with other virgins!

# Geographical Notes

this is still the speech upon the Mount of Olives, the "Olivet Discourse"; the master of the household is temporarily away and had told the servants he would return to them; this clearly depicts the situation that existed between AD 30 & 66, when Christ reigned from heaven, and His disciples "ruled" over (watched over) the church (the 12 tribes of true, spiritual Israel) in His "absence"

this parable made sense to Christ's audience (the disciples) because He referred to wedding customs with which they were intimately familiar in First Century AD Israel; if we try to wrest it out of its cultural context, we misunderstand much of the intended lesson

NOTE: Ed Stevens has gone into close historical detail on the wedding customs alluded to here; you'd do well to consult his material (print & audio) on this to add insight

#### Notes Re: Fulfillment

..... Jesus Christ (The Master) returned to His household (the household of faith, the Israel of God- Gal 6:9-10 & 16) in spring of AD 66; the "wise" servants who stayed busy doing the good things they were commanded to do in service to the master - who stayed on the alert for his promised return, as well - were rewarded with authority in judging (witnessing against) the evil servants (those who convinced themselves that The Master had delayed His coming or wasn't coming back at all; they were among those who apostasized: The Great Apostasy/Falling Away of 2 Th 2:3, 1 Tim 4:1, Rev 13:3-7, fulfilling Dan 7:25 & 8:25); they were "appointed their portion with the hypocrites": temporal and eternal death

the period of The Bridegroom's "delay" was from AD 30 until Pentecost, AD 66; the delay was in the perception of humans, but not in God's sovereign, immutable plan! but because some of the Second Century "church fathers" didn't understand that Jesus Christ came as and when He said He would (by AD 70), they invented the "theory" of the "parousia delay" to explain why (according to their carnal thinking) Christ hadn't returned by their time; the organized church has suffered from that ever since; Disgraceful!

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Mt 25:14-30

For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey... After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them... 'I have gained five more talents'...

'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'... 'I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground.'... 'You wicked and lazy servant...give it to him who has ten talents'...And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness.

# Parallel Texts/Word Study

Lk 19:11-27, Rom 12:6, 1 Cor 4:2, Mt 13:12, 8:12, 22:13, 24:51 **KEY TO UNDERSTANDING: Lk** 18:8- Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?- this is what I find here, because: 1) the talents distributed by the Lord to His servants are given for the purpose of "investing" the gospel, adding to the eternal wealth of the heavenly kingdom by taking the good news to all the world 2) spiritual (gospel) knowledge is given to one to give to another, without a loss from that expenditure (no reduction in wealth of knowledge, and no wasted effort, because the effort is owed to the Lord- Lk 17:10); the kingdom of heaven is thereby extended and enriched 3) productive (profitable) servants of the Lord use their talents (loans from the Lord) to do the Lord's bidding, which is to go to all nations and make disciples of them, baptize them, and teach them whatsoever they were commanded by Him (Mt 28:19-20) 4) in the "settling of accounts," the profitability of the servants is judged on the basis of what each contributed with his/her talents towards the growth of the kingdom, and therefore, the honor and glory of the Lord; the measuring rod is: what did you do with My Truth? Did you gain more truth and share it, or did you bury it: out of sight, mind, and soul?

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Book written: c. AD 35 (range: 31-38) speech: AD 30 because this still belongs to the Olivet Discourse, Jesus was here illustrating to His apostles what to do and not to do with the powerful gifts and talents they'd already received and would later receive, as they preached the gospel and instructed and "ruled" over the church: their ruling as deputies of the Head of the church extends through the ages in their inspired, written words those recorded in the Bible - alongside the prophets: Eph 2:20

# **Geographical Notes**

..... "a far country" is a Biblical metaphor for Heaven, to which Jesus ascended in AD 30, and from which He returned during His Parousia in AD 66-70 to inspect the fruits of His servants' labor during His visitation (Lk 19:44); the lord in the parable returned from the far country, presumably to stay, but he was an earthly lord who was human only: the Lord to Whom the parable points is omnipresent, so not similarly limited by a certain locality

### Notes Re: Fulfillment

..... fulfilled in history: AD 66-70, when the Lord Jesus Christ returned to "settle accounts" with the same generation that He'd left when He departed for the "far country" of Heaven in AD 30; the passage that's in bold in column #2 (previous page) should probably be understood as a challenge to the Lord's apostles to preach the faith once delivered to the saints (Jude 3) to all the nations, despite the natural tendency to "lay low" because of intense persecution; if they invested their talents wisely - if they readily shared the wealth of the gospel, diligently utilizing their profound, supernatural gifts of that time - the Son of Man would indeed really find faith in the earth; there were believers throughout the known world (Roman Empire), and at least some believers in Judea may have heeded the Lord's warning and escaped to the mountains outside of Judea, according to Eusebius; the apostles were profitable servants by this definition, though in Luke 17:10, we see the proper, humble attitude that they must have adopted and displayed. which serves as an example for the rest of us: "We are unprofitable servants. We have done [only] what was our duty to do."

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Mt 25:31-46

When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on His left. Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me' ... 'Lord, when did we ...?' And the King will answer and say to them. "...inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me'...Then He will also say to those on the left hand. 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was hungry and you gave Me no food...no drink...did not take Me in...did not clothe Me...did not visit Me'... 'When did we...?' Then He will answer... 'inasmuch as you did it not...' And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.

# Parallel Texts/Word Study

**Mt 24:30-31**, 1 Th 4:15-16, 2 Cor 5:10, Jn 10, Heb 13:2, Jas 2:15-16, 2 Tim 1:16, Mk 9:41, Mt 7:21-23, **Mt 13:36-43**, 2 Pe 2:4, also in the OT: Prov 14:31, Is 58:6-7, Dan 12:2

"When the Son of Man comes in His glory...then (tote, at that time) He will sit on the throne of His glory...then (also, tote) the King will say..."; this passage describes what is often called, "The Great White Throne Judgment," and is usually supposed to be an event in our future; but consider the following facts;

- 1) the time-frame for the Son of Man's coming in Glory (*the* Parousia) has already been firmly established (Mt 10:23, 16:27-28, 23:36, 24:34)
- 2) there is nowhere in Scripture a description of another coming of Christ in judgment and deliverance, qualified by a different time-frame at least 1947 years beyond the time of the *first* "second" coming; in other words, from Jesus and His apostles' NT writings, there's not one statement along these lines, "that's one parousia, then regarding the *other* /final one..."
- 3) the language of Mt 24:30-31 compares very favorably with the language here, and both passages are contained within the same discourse, with no change of subject; **conclusion:** this is the one-time general judgment, after which there can remain only *individual* judgment at death: **Heb 9:27** (though it appears that the general judgment covered *all*, past and future)

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Book written: c. AD 35 (range: 31-38) speech: AD 30 event: the general (universal) judgment, a one-time event; set within the time-frame established by Jesus throughout the book of Matthew: "this generation"; "some of you standing here will not taste death till..."; "you will not have gone through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes"; parables in which the Master always returns to the same people He left. not their far distant descendants; and keep this in mind: Jesus did not lie. unless He was not God

# Geographical Notes

this is the conclusion of the Olivet Discourse, the words of Jesus Christ to His closest disciples, upon the Mount of Olives

the judgment pictured is universal, involving "all the nations"

# Notes Re: Fulfillment

because of the teaching of the majority on this passage, it's nearly impossible to shed the erroneous presupposition that this is an event still future to us in AD 2017; but let's review the Biblical clues to the contrary; 1. Mt 16:27-28- For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then [at that time] He will reward each according to his works...

some standing here (Judea, c. AD 30) won't taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom (compare language- far left) 2. Mt 23:36 - all these things will come upon this (that First Century AD) generation 3. Mt 24:34 - this (First Century AD) generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place (including all described in verses 3-33, and especially note 30-31) 4. nowhere in Scripture: a

- 4. **nowhere in Scripture**: a differentiation between multiple *parousia* comings
- 5. **nowhere in Scripture**: a 2nd virgin birth, 2nd crucifixion of the Christ, 2nd resurrection of the Christ, 2nd public ascension, 2nd restoration of all things, 2nd destruction of a *re*constructed temple leveled in AD 70, 2nd *return* of Christ, and a 2nd universal judgment

Add it all up, and here's our conclusion: Jesus told only the truth; it has all happened

And all the people answered and said, "His blood be on us and on our children"

Mt 27:25 NKJV

I came to send fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!

Lk 12:49 NKJV

I tell you that He will avenge them speedily

Lk 18:8 NKJV

Which of you convicts Me of sin?

And if I tell the truth,
why do you not believe Me?

Jn 8:46 NKJV

# 5. The What, When, and Where of the Truth - Part 3 (Mt 26-John)

With the rich, impressionable imagery of the Olivet Discourse fresh in our minds, let's proceed through the remainder of gospel ground. We'll continue to look at passages that have eschatological ( "last things") significance, whether obvious or subtle. Like an excellent explorer, archaeologist, or detective, the Berean student of the Bible will pay close attention to each and every detail and clue, in an effort to gather the maximum amount of evidence relating to the case.

Hopefully, we've all settled into the habit of making good, profitable use of our hermeneutical tools. The more we use them, the easier it becomes to use them to great advantage, so don't let 'em get rusty! So let's try to remember important factors like context, original audience relevance, language types, and whether a proposed interpretation gives due glory and honor to God.

Because Matthew 24-25 is by far the most complete recounting of Christ's eschatological teachings in the gospels, it served as our Mount Olivet "base camp." From there, we embarked on brief excursions into other New Testament terrain, via the parallel texts and cross-references. In order to avoid duplication of effort, we won't make detailed examination of those parallel texts as we get to them, in working through the New Testament, book by book. With few exceptions, we'll be assuming that the messages of the Matthew 24-25 texts were effectively transmitted, and that the reader will recall them as we travel onward.

When we do encounter additional helpful information in a parallel text, I'll attempt to point it out and show how it supports the interpretation drawn from the passage in Matthew 24-25. But our general procedure will be to diligently search out clues pertaining to the timing and nature of events in the Kingdom of God, with special focus upon the timing of the "Second Coming" of Jesus Christ.

If this plan fits the Lord's, we can be confident of His blessing: "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that" - Jas 4:15

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### Mt 26:64

I say to **you** [plural; the high priest, Caiaphas, and all of the assembled scribes and elders of the Sanhedrin- from v. 57-SR], hereafter **you** will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.

#### Mt 27:25

And all the people answered and said, "His blood be on us and on our children."

#### Mt 28:19-20

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.

#### Mk 16:15

Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

# Lk 24:47

...and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And **you** are witnesses of these things

# Parallel Texts/Word Study

Mk 14:62; tell me something: do you know of anyone who was a member of the Sanhedrin in the First Century AD, who's still alive today? no? - I didn't think so; see = horao (discern/take heed/realize/know); once again, do you see what I'm saving?

Mt 23:31-36; OT: 2 Sam 1:16; and a covenantal connection that requires close attention: Ex 24:8 & Mt 26:28, then see Heb 9:16-22; but the sense is clearly evident at the surface: the Jews of that generation called down the ultimate curse upon themselves for the ultimate crime

Acts 18:10, 23:11; make disciples = matheteuo (teach/instruct/enroll another as a scholar (Thayer, Strong); please pardon a minisermon here: the command is not to amass numbers to impress other humans, or to spray every person on the planet with a "gospel hose," but to invest quality time in gospel instruction of individuals from all nations (end sermon): Christ is here promising to be constantly with His chosen apostles to the end of the Old Covenant age, in their mission to the world (in Mark, kosmos); every creature = ktisis (the creation, in this case: all who stood to benefit from hearing the evangelion - gospel, namely all humans); the "you" words all have specific original audience relevance

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Book written: c. AD 35 (range: 31-38) speech: AD 30 event to be witnessed by some members of the Sanhedrin in the First Century AD <<< the generation of the First Century AD took the guilt of murdering the Guiltless One upon themselves

this, the "Great Commission" was given by Jesus to "the eleven" (although it would later apply to Matthias, Paul, and others of the apostolic era) in AD 30; it *primarily* related to those people, but it remains a duty and privilege for believers in all times

# **Geographic Notes** .....

First Century Judea, both the prediction and the event

Jesus was crucified in murdered the prophets (Lk 13:33-34, Mt 23:37); Jesus was found innocent by the Roman authorities, but the mob of Jews in Jerusalem demanded His death

mountain in Galilee (v. 16); the apostles would be Christ's witnesses: First- in Jerusalem; Second- in all Judea and Samaria (all Israel): Third- to the end of the earth (Acts 1:8)

a previously appointed

#### Notes Re: Fulfillment

..... not fulfilled in Christ's ascension, since it's "at the right hand" first, "coming on the clouds" second; see Dan 7:13; the Son of Man would be coming *from* the right hand of God the Father, not ascending to Him to receive power and glory; fulfilled in AD 66-70

Jerusalem, the city that there should be no mystery here: the Jews in Jerusalem of the First Century AD rejected Christ, had Him arrested, falsely accused Him, and forced the Romans to crucify Him; His blood came down upon their heads and their children's in AD 66-70

> please see notes at Mt 24:14; Paul said, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Who can not lie (Titus 1:2), that the Great Commission was carried out already by around AD 63; the same key words can be matched - between command/ prediction and confirmation of fulfillment: see Mt 24:14 & 28:19, Mk 16:15, Lk 24:47; compare with Col 1:5-6, 23; Rom 1:8, 16:26; according to the Holy Spirit, then, the Great Commission was carried out to completion by the end of that age in AD 70; but again, that doesn't release us from a similar responsibility in the everlasting gospel age of the new covenant!

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#### Mk 8:38-9:1

For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels. And He said to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power.'

#### Mk 9:7

And a cloud came and overshadowed them; and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, 'This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!'

#### Mt 12:14

You [Jesus-SR] do not regard the person of men, but teach the way of God in truth

# Parallel Texts/Word Study

please see Mt 16:27-28 (p.46-47); though the wording here doesn't necessarily connect "this adulterous and sinful generation" with the time "when He comes," a survey of other time-statement passages makes the unmistakable connection (like the very next verse <<< - which should *not* be the place for a chapter break!); every indication gathered from the NT texts has pointed to the same (First Century AD) generation

Mt 17:5 ( "a bright cloud"), Lk 9:34-35 ( "and they were fearful as they entered the cloud"); this wasn't the first time that God appeared in a cloud! see Ex 13, 14, 16, 19, 24, 34, 40; Lev 16; Num 9-12, 14, 16; Dt; 1 Kin; 2 Chr; Eze 1, 10 (many times!); in each case, this "glorycloud" inhabited by God is an awesome, frightful manifestation; in still other places in the OT, God is portrayed as riding the clouds: Ps 104:3; Is 19:1; Nah 1:3; if Jesus came in a cloud at His Parousia in AD 66-70, it almost certainly was in this shekinah glory-cloud, which would appear to the people in the land to have the usual properties of a lightning-shooting thundercloud or cloud bank, but was in reality much more than that; the precedent had been well-established in OT history!

again: "hear Him!"

#### **Timing** Notes Re: Fulfillment **Geographic Notes** ..... ..... ..... Book written: near Caesarea Philippi there's another definite timec. AD 41 and Mount Hermon, boundary set here (or rather, it (range: 38-44) NE of Galilee confirms the one we've already speech: c. AD looked at in Mt 16:27-28): not 30. about a all of those to whom Jesus week before spoke that day in the First Centhe Transtury AD would be dead by the time He came with the angels figuration re: event to in glory and power; if you're still tempted to try to make the occur before Transfiguration the fulfillment, audience (see please review pages 46-47 Mk 8:34) all deceased <<< The please see pages 48-49, but Transfiguration, c. AD 30 one reminder here: when the voice sounded from the Father - "Hear Him!" - Jesus was emphatically marked as the Chief Prophet of the New Covenant; He was the One who fulfilled Dt 18:15; John the Baptist was the last of the Old Covenant prophets (Mt 11:13); this was the "changing of the guard"

#### It's About Time...

We now come to a brief "rest stop" on our journey through the New Testament. The lodge at which we stop for respite is offering a short slide-show lecture/discussion on God's concept of time, and in what terms He has spoken regarding it. We'll first "see a slide" from a place in Scripture where God speaks concerning a period of time, and then compare with it the "results slide." >>>

**Gen 7:4** - For after 7 more days I will cause it to rain on the earth 40 days and 40 nights>>>

**Gen 41:29-30** - Indeed 7 years of great plenty will come throughout all the land of Egypt; but after them 7 years of famine will arise...>>

**Ex 11:4** - About midnight I will go out into the midst of Egypt, and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die...>>>

**Jer 25:11** - And this whole land shall be a desolation and an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon 70 years.>>>

**Num 14:34** - According to the number of the days in which you spied out the land, 40 days, for each day you shall bear your guilt 1 year, namely 40 years, and you shall know My rejection.>>>

#### And now, an intriguing connection:

**Num 24:27** - How long will I bear with this evil congregation...? (*God the Father*, speaking to Moses and Aaron regarding the generation of the Exodus/wilderness-wandering)>>>

**Mk 9:19** - O faithless generation,...how long shall I bear/put up with you? (*God the Son*, when a demon-possessed boy was brought to him; the disciples had been unsuccessful in casting out the demon, though they'd been given the power to do so)>>>



Time period that actually elapsed, measured by our own human understanding

**Gen 7:10, 12** - And it cames to pass after 7 days that the waters of the flood were on the earth...and the rain was on the earth 40 days and 40 nights. (observation: for Someone outside of time, He sure got it right here!)

**Gen 41:47, 53-54** - Now in the 7 plentiful years the ground brought forth abundantly...then the 7 years of plenty which were in the land of Egypt ended, and the 7 years of famine began to come...(observation: "7" is often symbolic in the Bible, but when God wants His people to understand that He's talking about a specific, definite length of time, He speaks our language)

**Ex 12:29** - And it came to pass at midnight that the LORD struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt....(observation: there seems to be a pattern here!)

**2 Chr 36:21** - ...he carried away to Babylon, where they became servants to him and his sons until the rule of the kingdom of Persia, to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths. As long as she lay desolate she kept Sabbath, to fulfill 70 years. (observation: no outs yet)

**Josh 5:6** - For the children of Israel walked 40 years in the wilderness...(observation: there's hardly a more well-known number than the 40 years — one generation — the Israelites spent wandering)

see above; God put up with their unbelief, idolatry, and wickedness for 40 years (Ps 95:10), until all of that generation had died, except the two faithful servants (Joshua and Caleb); those of the *second* generation were graciously allowed to cross the Jordan

this is a claim of deity that could easily be missed; Jesus nearly quotes His Father, and clearly puts Himself in the same place; He *and* the Father put up with the First Century generation for 40 years!

Mk 13

Lk 1:33

And **He will reign** over the house of Jacob **forever**, and **of His kingdom there will be no end.** 

(Old Testament prophecy): **Is 9:7** 

Of the increase of *His* government and peace *there will be* no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

### Parallel Texts/Word Study

please see Mt 24 (p. 56-76)

Rev 11:15, 22:5; the "house of Jacob" = true, spiritual Israel, the Israel of God (Gal 6); "forever/no end" is clear enough! - yet, some insist that the last enemy (death) has not been destroyed, and that Christ will reign till that enemy is "under His feet," and then He will "deliver the Kingdom to God the Father" (all quotes here are from 1 Cor 15), in a manner that would divest Him (Christ) of His kingship; that is flawed for these reasons;

- 1) the last enemy was *spiritual* death (sin-death; eternal separation from the holy, immediate presence of God); people will continue to be born and die physically forever that hasn't changed; what has changed is that the elect of God's kingdom born again/from above/spiritually re-born will not die spiritually, but will proceed directly into the eternal, holy, immediate presence of God in Heaven at the time of physical death, since Hades/Sheol/the grave was abolished in AD 66-70
- 2) Jesus Christ was given eternal dominion in AD 30, at His ascension; He returned to Earth in power and glory (already reigning) in AD 66-70; this was His Parousia 3) at that time, He "delivered" the fully-restored, consummated kingdom to the Father, but did not give it up; They are One and reign as One forever!

#### Notes Re: Fulfillment **Timing Geographical Notes** ..... ...... ..... Book written: Nazareth, in Galilee fulfillment of Dan 2:44, 7:14, 27 AD 61 and Gabriel's pronouncement (v. 26)speech of here in Luke came in late sum-Gabriel: c.4 mer of AD 70, when the everlasting kingdom of God was BC regarding the emphatically established; permanent there's no end to the "gospel age!" establishment and everlastother things to think about: ing nature of 1. no true Christian can deny the kingdom of we are presently living in the God, as pro-New Covenant age; to deny phesied in that is to deny the finished Daniel; in turn, work of Jesus Christ, since that those prowould mean we are all still unphecies idender the Law in the Old tified the time Covenant/sacrificial system, for fulfillment and that He died for nothing as the First 2. the Bible speaks of (and the Century AD Jews conceived of) only two (Dan 2, 7-9, ages, the "age that now is" (the 12) age that was to us) and the "age which is to come" (the age in which we live); this is the same thing as the Old Covenant/Testament age and the New Covenant/Testament age 3. since we live in the second of the only two Biblical (Covenantal) ages there will ever be, there has been a time in history when the first age came to an end 4. that time came in AD 70, when the temple and the sacrificial system were irrevocably destroyed; any teaching or system that seeks to put together again what God has put asunder is categorically and unequivocally NON-biblical!

#### Lk 2:36-37

She was of a great age...a widow of about eighty-four years...

#### Lk 5:36-39

Then He spoke a parable to them: "No one puts a piece from a new garment on an old one; otherwise the new makes a tear, and also the piece that was taken out of the new does not match the old. And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine will burst the wineskins and be spilled, and the wineskins will be ruined. But new wine must be put into new wineskins, and both are preserved. And no one, having drunk old wine, immediately desires new; for he says, 'The old is better."

# **Parallel Texts/Word Study**

an included stop on the tour to make one point: "a great age" is equated with 84 years, so 84 years is considered to be a long time in human terms; see also: 1 Chr 29:28, where David died "in a good old age" (his 71st year); please keep this in mind as we continue

Mk 2:21,22; a prime example of the importance of context, as well as the relevance of covenantal thinking when studying the Scriptures: otherwise, this is a headscratcher; but the meaning is simple: the old covenant was about to be replaced; it was an old garment in disrepair, so it was time to patch it up or replace it with a new one; now look at Heb 8:13, where the writer (Paul) has just quoted Jer 31 re: the prophecy of the new covenant: "In that he says, 'A new covenant,' He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away."; from this (and considering what preceded this passage in verses 33-35, where the disciples were acting more in accord with the freedom of the new covenant than with the decaying, Pharisee-perverted old covenant system), it becomes apparent that Jesus was speaking covenantally here: the new covenant soon would entirely replace the old (it wouldn't be merely added to the old), and it could not peacefully co-exist with the old, despite some preferences

| Timing                                                                            | Geographical Notes                                       | Notes Re: Fulfillment                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Book written:<br>AD 61                                                            |                                                          | these God-breathed words indicate once again that He speaks in human terms with regard to time; though timeless Himself, He "gets it": see Gen 1:14, where it's recorded that God set the sun, moon, and stars in the heavens to allow                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| speech: AD 27-30, within the old age that was, nearing the arrival of the new age | at or near the house of<br>Levi (Matthew), in<br>Galilee | humans to mark time <<< the nature of the fast-ap- proaching kingdom of heaven/ God (the terms are inter- changable, denoting the same thing; don't put asunder what God has joined together, false teachers!) was manifested a bit at a time in the years of the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ; the religious leaders of the day didn't like what they were see- ing, mostly because the in- coming kingdom didn't seem to cater to their prodigious ap- petite for status and control; they preferred the status quo; with them, the old covenant system was just fine, because they'd been quite successful in turning the holy covenant of God into a ridiculous wax nose, which they could mold as they saw fit; when they saw signs of the new covenant coming into "their" territory, they were op- posed to change; but Jesus knew full well that the old sys- tem was corrupt; the holy couldn't mix with the unholy; they were separated in AD 70, so now don't put together what God has put asunder! Dispen- sationalists have constructed entire schemes built on idola- trous, NON-biblical imaginings that only dispense with Christ! |

Lk 9:26-27

Lk 9:26-27 Lk 9:34-35

#### Lk 10:9-12

And heal the sick there, and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.' But whatever city you enter, and they do not receive you, go out into its streets and say, 'The very dust of your city which clings to us/our feet we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near you.'

Lk 12:35-48

#### Lk 12:49-51

I came to send fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how distressed I am till it is accomplished! Do you suppose that I came to give peace on earth? I tell you, not at all, but rather division.

# Parallel Texts/Word Study

see Mt 16:27-28 (pages 46-47) see Mk 9:7 (pages 86-87)

Mt 10, 11 & Mk 6 (though not the same event; the gospels record the sending out of the 12 and the 70); the thing to note here is that the kingdom of God had drawn near to both its receivers and its rejectors; deliverance and judgment were both at hand already, before AD 30; and the Lord Jesus said that He would avenge His elect speedily - Lk 18:8; among the elect were the 70 sent out in this event

see Mt 24:45-51, 25:1-13 (pages 76-77), but verses 47-48 here, too

Mt 20:18,22,23; Mk 10:38-40; Jn 12:27. 19:30: Mt 10:34: Jn 7:43. 9:16, 10:19; yes, this was Jesus Christ speaking!; words like this are shocking to universalists who shut their ears to anything that doesn't sound like God is love, love, love, and only love!; all too easily forgotten is the fact that God is also the Judge of all the earth. Who always does right (Gen 18:25. then see Gen 19 re: Sodom); if He dispensed no punishment for sin against His personal holiness - the rule of the universe - and let everyone off the hook, He would not be a holy, perfect judge; the guilty would all be declared innocent without justification, and apart from the pure innocence of Jesus Christ; how we stand in relation to Him is the whole issue! The Christ (THE Anointed One, THE Messiah) is the dividing line!

Book written: AD 61

speech: AD 27-30 event: sending out of the seventy (not to be confused with the sending out of the twelve) - AD 27-30

speech: AD 27-30 what's the timing of the event of His fiery judgment? - consider the fact that He said He would do it speedily; and that all the righteous blood spilled from Abel onward would come down upon the generation to Whom He spoke directly in His earthly ministry (Mt 23:35-36)

# Geographical Notes

note once again that these rejecting cities were virtually obliterated in the Roman sweep through Judea in AD 66-70 (Bethsaida, Capernaum, etc.)

the earth = ge (the land); the fire would be sent upon the land of Israel specifically, but the division exists universally, and the judgment in AD 66-70 involved all the dead in Hades/Sheol/the grave to that point, and those who would die in the last hours of the age; the division is ongoing everywhere (in/out of Christ), and the judgment is ongoing now for each unbelieving person everywhere at the time of their individual, physical death (Heb 9:27)

### Notes Re: Fulfillment

..... why the 70? probably as an answer to the Sanhedrin - 70 headed by the the high priest, the Jewish council of judgment as these were The High Priest's judgment council; these seventy were sent out in the First Century AD; the cities of the land of Israel in that day were to be judged by their treatment of those men sent out to them with the message of the approaching kingdom; they were indeed avenged "speedily," and aren't still awaiting that justice!

from Christ's language, it's apparent that He wasn't able to send fire upon the earth until after He'd accomplished His "baptism" of death; but He said here that He earnestly desired that fire to be kindled, as if it couldn't happen soon enough!; this is a strong indication of imminency and urgency, and when we recall that Jesus was consumed with holy zeal to honor His Father's holy name (Jn 2:17, and the *first* petition of His model prayer - Mt 6:9), any delay in judgment beyond the sovereignly-appointed time is unthinkable! - that generation got what holy, perfect justice demanded!; the elect of that generation were speedily vindicated!; fulfilled by AD 70

.....

#### Lk 13:6-9

A certain *man* had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. Then he said to the keeper of his vineyard, 'Look, for three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree and find none. Cut it down; why does it waste/ use up the ground?' But he answered and said to him, 'Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and fertilize *it*. And if it bears fruit, *well*. But if not, after that you can cut it down.'

#### Lk 13:33-34

...for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her!

# Parallel Texts/Word Study

see in the OT: Is 5:1-7; also compare Mt 21:33-44; this has been called. "The Parable of the Barren Fig Tree," and its point is hard to miss: despite extraordinarily patient care, the nation of Israel was not bearing the fruit of repentance; recall how John the Baptist warned that the axe was already laid to the root of the trees (about three years earlier- Mt 3:10); the time of the earthly ministry of Jesus was about 3.5 years, because He was "cut off" in the middle of Daniel's "70th week" when He had been confirming "a covenant with many" (the Jews) - Dan 9:24-27: in the parable, the fig tree (in this context, an obvious reference to the nation of Israel) was given another year to produce fruit before it was to be cut down: the actual nation of Israel was given a full forty years to exhibit the required fruit, but even with that exceedingly gracious window of opportunity, the vast majority of the nation failed to bear fruit; it was then judiciously "cut down"

Mt 23:37-39 (p. 52-53), Acts 7:51-60 (Stephen's martyrdom); though we looked at this in Mt 23, the point is driven home even better here by Luke: the city of Jerusalem was the murderess of the prophets, even The Chief Prophet; don't read Rome into this text: it isn't here! - and remember this when reading Revelation!

| Timing                                                           |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Book written:<br>AD 61                                           |
| speech: c. AD<br>30                                              |
|                                                                  |
|                                                                  |
|                                                                  |
|                                                                  |
|                                                                  |
|                                                                  |
| a AD 20 tha                                                      |
| c. AD 30, the year of Jerusalem's murder of Jesus Christ.        |
| Jesus Christ,<br>The Prophet of<br>"these [those]<br>last days"- |

Heb. 1:1

# **Geographical Notes**

..... specific location unknown, though certainly within the land of Israel - the "barren fig tree"

# Notes Re: Fulfillment

..... though many individual "figs" repented and believed in Jesus Christ, the "fig tree" on the whole was found devoid of fruit, even after a long period of merciful forbearance; the "probation period" ran from John's first preaching of repentance (c. AD 26) until The Great Tribulation of AD 66-70: when the Romans arrived to shut down the rebellious Jews. the window of opportunity for national repentance had been shut by the Judge; final fruit inspection had been conducted, judgment was passed, and the sentence executed: the Lord's axe - in the hands of the Romans - chopped off branch after branch throughout Judea, and finally, in AD 70, the trunk itself was burned and uprooted, never again to be replanted

>>>if I belabor this point, it's for this reason: many of us in conservative Christian circles have been dogmatically told that Rome is the "great harlot" of Rev 17, so that's a huge presupposition we need to shed; *only* ancient Jerusalem was "God's wife," (not Rome) by a covenantal relationship, so only Jerusalem could be an adulterous covenant-breaker; old Jerusalem killed the heralds of the New Covenant, too, and paid the price: AD 70; the Roman Catholic "Church" is about 300 years away from even being founded in this historical context; nowhere in view

"outside of" means "other than in" Jerusalem (except in Jerusalem); this is spoken as a general proverb, though it clearly lays bloodguilt at the feet of "the great city...where also our Lord was **slain" (Rev** 11:8)

.....

Lk 17:20-30

Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you." Then He said to the disciples, "The days will come when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it. And they will say to you, 'Look here!' or 'Look there!' Do not go after them or follow them. For as the lightning that flashes out of one part under heaven shines to the other part under heaven, so also the Son of Man will be in His day. But first He must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation. And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: they ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: they ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed.

### Parallel Texts/Word Study

..... Jn 18:36, Rom 14:17, 2 Cor 5:7, 2 Cor 4:18 (not a material kingdom, but spiritual); Mt 24:23-39 (p. 72-75); Mk 8:31, Lk 9:22; 2 Th 1:7-10; another key passage, crucial to understanding! - any person who wants to understand the timing and nature of the kingdom of God must get this straight: you won't see it in physical, earthly splendor; all kingdoms of this planet are transient they all come to an end; they decay; the kingdom of God and the God-Man. Jesus Christ - is without end, incorruptible; it is real and eternal, but not observable via our earthbound natural senses: 2 Cor 4:18; "in His day" = the day of the coming of the Son of God, which would be manifested in the same ways that the previous comings of the Father were (each a "day of the LORD" - through human and angelic warrior/servants); "rejected by this generation," not "by this generation and 49 or more after them, and *then* in **that** future generation will come the days of the Son of Man..."; Noah entered the ark/Lot went out of Sodom = deliverance of God's chosen, and destruction of His enemies; and so it was in the day when the Son of Man was revealed = apokalupto (uncovered/ unveiled/revealed); The Apocalypse/Revelation of Jesus Christ in AD 66-70

.....

Book written: AD 61 speech: AD 30 regarding the firm establishment of the kingdom of God, when the changing of the ages would be fully accomplished; the questioners expected to be witnesses of an earthly coronation. and to have roles in an earthly kingdom; they were blind to the kingdom that was staring them in the face!; many others were "pressing into it" (Lk 16:16) because they recognized that "this is it! this is what the prophets were talking about!"

# Geographical Notes

the kingdom of which Jesus spoke is not mappable

the kingdom of God on earth is wherever Christ reigns in a heart

# Notes Re: Fulfillment

..... we will never see a material city of Jerusalem descending out of the sky, coming to rest on top of modern-day Jerusalem (or where it would have been located, if it wasn't a whole *new* planet Earth!), and Jesus Christ sitting on a material throne, reigning over a planet inhabited by human beings that never died, humans that lived in Heaven (or Hell), and returned for a stint on earth, and multitudes of spiritbeings!; God is eternal spirit, and His kingdom is eternal and spiritual; Jesus Christ reigns eternally from Heaven and in hearts, where He started His reign; His subjects are all those who have been born from above: He reigns - together with the Father and the Holy Spirit - within them (us! that's you and me, brother and sister in Christ, co-heirs with Him in the everlasting kingdom!); how it must grieve Him to see so many of us scanning the headlines for hints of His coming "quickly" to us in the 21st Century, when He's been present with us and within us and Lord over us for 19 centuries!; sadly, most of us just don't believe what our Lord has said: "My kingdom is not of this world," and, "Surely, I am coming quickly" (to persecuted coheirs of the First Century AD); believe Him!

.....

#### Lk 18:6-8

Then the Lord said, "Hear what the unjust judge said. And shall God [the perfect, just judge!-SR] not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily."

#### Lk 19:11-27

Now as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately. Therefore He said: "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return...And so it was that when he returned. having received the kingdom, he then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him...But bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay them before me."

## Jn 19:15 We have no king but Caesar!

## Parallel Texts/Word Study

Mt 25:14-30 (p. 78-79); Rev 6:9-11, 22:7, 12, 20; Heb 10:37; please read the above texts to see how they all connect! it's only because certain "church fathers" of the Second Century AD had a seriouslyflawed concept of the kingdom of God that the majority of Christians today are still looking for the deliverance of God's own, and His judgment upon His enemies; remember: God spoke to men about time with the terminology that men use and understand; "long" here means 40 years, not 40+ lifetimes beyond their own!

Lk 20:9-19, Mt 21:33-46, Mk 12:1-12; OT: see Is 60:12; "The Parable of the Minas" was told to those within the house of Zacchaeus "because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediate-Iv." Jesus then saw that it was necessary to explain that there would be some delay, but that the Son of Man would return - having received the kingdom - to them, the servants whom He'd left; in all of these kingdom parables, the situation is the same: the noble-man/ king/master always returns to deal directly with those he'd left behind, never their far-far-far-distant descendants!: and can there be any mistaking the identity of "those enemies of mine who did not want me to reign over them," who were to be slain before Him? No! Read <<< John 19 for the answer!

Book written: AD 61 speech: AD 30

......

if the "long" Babylonian captivity (Jer 29:28) was 70 years, how could God mean by "shortly/ quickly/ speedily" a period of time over 27 times as long?!?

when Jesus perceived that those people assembled in Zacchaeus' house understood the nearness of the kingdom of God. He had to urge patience. because He knew there would be one last, gracious window for repentance by national Israel, then would come the end

#### **Geographical Notes** .....

important location information: the "elect" referred to here were those who underwent the greatest persecution of Christians (by Jews and Romans) in First Century Israel and in other parts of the Roman Empire; those were the souls under the altar in Rev 6:9-11 - "who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held," and possibly those who fled to Pella

Jesus spoke these words near Jericho, a city built by Herod close to the ruins of the Jericho given into Joshua's hand (Josh 6:2), and by the means of seven trumpets; thematic connections between that event and what Jesus would talk about in the parable would be the Jewish mind of the First Century AD; the other "because" for the parable here is "He was near Jerusalem"; consider the relevance

#### Notes Re: Fulfillment .....

those Second Century "church fathers" assumed that Christ had not returned by their time because they looked for a material, earthly kingdom, just like the bulk of the Jews; they didn't walk by faith, but by sight; each child of God owes Him for the gift of his/her faith, and out of gratitude and service, a life of faith; we owe God belief; why will so many of us insist on distorting His words to conform to our own feeble understanding? - that must stop, and true faith in the One Who is Faithful and True must take over!

if my words in this column on practically every page sound like a broken record, it's precisely because this is just how often Jesus made it clear: the time of His coming in glory and power to judge and deliver was in that First Century AD generation; He said it plainly, and He said it in parables, but the message was always the same; the truth is - by sheer definition - consistent; the made quite naturally by Truth Himself is perfectly consistent in the teaching that proceeded directly from His lips, and in that which He gave to the apostles (Lk 21:15, Jn 16:13); Jesus was doublybound to tell the truth, as God and as a *sinless* Man; we owe Him unstinting, all-points belief!

## Lk 19:41-44

Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation."

#### Parallel Texts/Word Study

..... Lk 1:77-79, 7:16, 21:20; Mt 24:2, Acts 10:36, Rom 5:1, Heb 3:13 (from Ps 95); more OT: Is 29:3, Jer 6:6 (siege references); an important lesson for Christians today: unclaimed peace! like the Jews of old Jerusalem. the majority of the true sons and daughters of Abraham - we who are of the New Jerusalem - have not known two important things that make for our peace: Jesus Christ spoke truthfully and acted in unerring faithfulness by coming to iudge and deliver as and when He said He would: because so many don't know the time of His second and final visitation, many rob themselves of peace and joy; while those in Christ have a sure inheritance in heaven waiting for them, those Christians who don't believe that Christ has fully accomplished all parts of the redemptive plan don't recognize His current presence; they believe in Christ only to a point; they cling to false expectations of a coming of the Lord into a physical, earthly kingdom, in a manner which would satisfy their physical senses, though it wouldn't fit the Lord's own definition of His coming; tell me, how can you speak of "accepting Jesus into your heart" if you're still looking for Him to complete the plan of redemption, bring in the kingdom, and to return to earth to accomplish those things? - know the time of His visitation!

.....

Book written: AD 61 speech: AD 30 event: the day (time) of the Jews' visitation; from the OT texts which speak of "the day of visitation," we know that what is indicated is a time of inspection and subsequent judgment and deliverance: God's people are visited benevolently, with good news either announced or carried out, but the wicked are alerted to impending judgment and destruction, barring repentance; this "day of visitation" was already well underway in AD 30

## Geographical Notes

Jesus wept over what He foresaw concerning old Jerusalem as He approached it for His last earthly visit in public

#### Notes Re: Fulfillment

..... the primary meaning of "visitation" (episkope ) is "inspection/a looking over" (Young); keeping in mind all of the references to the necessity for national Israel to bear fruit (of repentance), it's easy to understand what was to be inspected during this "time of visitation"; but further illustration may be of assistance: if you've worked for a retail chain at some point in your life, you may recall that at an appointed time, a district manager or big boss of some sort would come to your store for a review, and if the store employees had advance warning of that store visit, they'd scramble to get everything in order (if they cared about keeping their jobs!); if the results of that inspection didn't please the boss, "adjustments" were made - sooner or later - depending upon the personal "recommendations" of the boss (people lost jobs, pay, or preferred duties); but while those visits may have been made on a regular basis, and losses could be reversed, the visitation by God of a certain generation of people (His chosen people, in this case) was onetime only, and ever-binding; lack of fruit meant final destruction (loss of peace, privileges, rewards, protection, and life)

.....

#### Lk 20:9-19

Then He began to tell the people this parable: "A certain man planted a vineyard, leased it to vinedressers/tenant farmers and went into a far country for a long time. Now at vintage-time he sent a servant to the vinedressers, that they might give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the vinedressers beat him and sent him away empty-handed. Again he sent another servant; and they beat him also, treated him shamefully, and sent *him* away empty-handed. And again he sent a third; and they wounded him also and cast him out. Then the owner of the vineyard said, 'What shall I do? I will send my beloved son. Probably they will respect him when they see him.' But when the vinedressers saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours.' So they cast him out of the vineyard and killed him. Therefore what will the owner of the vineyard do to them? He will come and destroy those vinedressers and give the vineyard to others." And when they heard it they said, "Certainly not!" Then He looked at them and said. "What then is this that is written: 'The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone'? ..." ...they knew He had spoken this parable against them

#### **Parallel Texts/Word Study**

..... Mt 21:33-46, Mk 12:1-12; OT (same theme): 2 Kin 17:13-14, 2 Chr 36:15-16; Acts 7:52, 1 Th 2:15-16; probably the clearest parable Jesus ever spoke; "The Parable of the Wicked Vinedressers" painted such a clear word-picture that the chief priests and scribes "that very hour sought to lay hands on Him (but they feared the people) - for they knew He had spoken this parable against them."; the wicked vinedressers recognized themselves in the parable and refused to accept the just decision of the owner of the vineyard (God the Father, obviously!); they attempted to make His judgment "go away" by wishful thinking that had no basis in reality, defensively protesting, "Certainly not!"; their reaction betrayed at once their pride and lack of penitence, which were confirmed in their plans and actions that followed; He would come and destroy those vinedressers, not their far-removed descendants who hadn't killed the Beloved Son, the last One sent (the Only-Begotten and last Prophet); we find here again that even a "long time" spent in a "far country" falls within the lifetimes of those in the parable; finally, are we still waiting for the Chief Cornerstone to take His place in the foundation of His temple? - He was rejected and killed by the generation living in the First Century AD!

.....

Book written: AD 61 parable: AD 30 re: what was in store for the wicked, murderous generation of the Jews in the First Century AD, as well as for the Gentiles (the vineyard was to be taken from the wicked vinedressers, and given to others, namely, the Gentiles)

## Geographical Notes

Jesus was at this time teaching the people in the temple, in the presence of the chief priests, scribes, and elders (v. 1)

## Notes Re: Fulfillment

while there is an unusually high rate of one-to-one correspondence between figure (symbol) and reality (the actual persons and actions represented by the symbols) in this parable, it should be obvious to the honest Christian reader that the Beloved Son Himself avenged His own rejection and murder in "His day" (AD 66-70); recall that the Father turned judgment over to Him (Acts 10: 42, Mt 28:19, Jn 5:22-23, 26-27, 1 Pe 4:5); then recall that the Lord said elsewhere that He would avenge the elect (the servants in this parable) speedily/shortly/quickly; also recall that in all these kingdom parables, those who saw the coming or return of the master and/or his enactment of justice were the same people as at the beginning of the parable; a different, distant, unborn generation is never introduced into the parable to receive the just reward or punishment that belongs to the original people; when you put all this together with the numerous time-frame statements, and the facts that it's impossible for God to lie and that nothing can limit Him in execution of His plan at His appointed time, the conclusion is inescapable: God did what He said He would do; all fulfilled by the fall in AD 70

.....

Lk 21:5-28

see Mt 24:1-30 (p. 64-77), Mk 13

it would be well worth the reader's time to compare this passage sideby-side with Mt 24; the accounts not only harmonize, but they complement each other, filling in "blanks": the analogy of faith in action!

Lk 21:29-33

#### Lk 21:34-36

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

#### Parallel Texts/Word Study

..... note here some additional information (not found in Mt 24): v. 24: they would fall by the sword and be led away captive into all nations (compare with Mt 25:40-41 re: what "taken" means there), and Jerusalem would be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles were fulfilled (see Rev 11:2 for the connection and explanation)

please see Mt 24:32-35 (p. 72-73)

Lk 8:14, 18:1, 20:35; 1 Th 5:6; Rev 3:3, 16:15; Mt 24:42,44, 25:13; Eph 6:13;

that Day = His Day, the Day of the Lord, the Son in particular (The Parousia of Jesus Christ); notice the link between standing before the Son of Man and escaping "all these things that will (mello, "are about to") come to pass" (referring back to v. 32): the same timeframe embraces them both: "this generation will by no means pass away till all things take place"; the "you" words here again have targeted specificity; Jesus was pointedly warning them - in the First Century AD - to be ever-vigilant; to us it falls to believe that He did come when He said He would; today, we dishonor Christ when we continue to await His coming in power and glory, as if He lied and was unfaithful to those mostpersecuted founding members of His church, and as if He is not yet the King of Kings!

Book written: AD 61 event: Olivet Discourse, AD 30

.....

things that were "about to" come to pass within the life-spans of those living in the First Century AD included the Son of Man's coming on "that Day" (His day) to judge and to complete the redemptive process (thereby consummating the everlasting kingdom of God)

## Geographical Notes

the Mount of Olives, within view of the temple

## Notes Re: Fulfillment

please refer to notes at Mt 24:1-30 (p. 64-77); times of the Gentiles = the forty-two months of the march through Judea and siege of Jerusalem, from February of AD 66 until late summer of AD 70; this does not mean a fictitious "age of the gentiles" in which we supposedly now live, that's to come to an end when God goes back to dealing with national Israel! (non-biblical!)

consider this: if Jesus Christ told His (First Century AD) disciples on numerous occasions in numerous ways that He was surely to return within some of their life-spans, all those promises were not merely slow in coming to fulfillment, but never came to be fulfilled, since the people to whom the promises and warnings were made all died long ago; the promises and warnings were issued to them. not to us. and since Jesus repeatedly established a consistent time-frame in which all the predictions were to take place, even if they did take place - but outside the timeframe (after that generation had all died) - then all the predictions failed in purpose, relevance, and as truth; Christians must realize that that is not even a possibility with our Lord!; all promises were faithfully delivered on time!

## Jn 8:46

And if I tell you the truth, why do you not believe Me?

#### Jn 11:47-52

Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, "What shall we do? For this Man works many signs. If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation." And one of them, Caiaphas, being high-priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all, nor do you consider that it is expedient for us/you that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish." Now this he did not say on his own authority; but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, and not for that nation only, but also that He would gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad.

## Parallel Texts/Word Study

This is Jesus speaking; I pass this challenge on to each reader

Acts 4:16 (same scenario, but with Peter and John), Jn 18:14; and in the OT: Ps 2:2; observations: 1. they saw many signs, so what should they do? - believe! 2. perfect irony: what they said would happen if everyone believed in Jesus, happened because of their full-scale rejection of Him (Romans came and took away their place and nation in AD 63-70) 3. Caiaphas calls the others ignorant, then unwittingly becomes a mouthpiece for the sovereign God: he spoke truth in ignorance 4. these blind leaders of the blind thought that Jesus was misleading the people into following Him as the Messiah. who was to - in their minds - overthrow the Romans and establish an earthly kingdom; they knew that the Romans would be thinking along those lines, too, and would be quick to squelch any threat to their earthly empire (making the whole nation of Israel pay)

- 5. an improper concept of the true nature of the kingdom of God can certainly lead the ignorant astray, as is made crystal clear by this Scriptural example
- 6. among men, there are various degrees of ignorance, but Christ is the wisdom of God

| Timing                                                                                                      | Geographical Notes                                               | Notes Re: Fulfillment                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| His word is eternally true                                                                                  | His word is true in every part of heaven and earth               | He meant what He said, and He said what He meant; and He said when and how!                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Book written: c. AD 60-62 event: AD 27- 30 prediction re: the Romans was fulfilled (ironically) in AD 63-70 | "place and nation" = the land of Israel and the people of Israel | here is a most unusual case, because the wicked and ignorant false teachers correctly predicted their own destruction, though they couldn't have been more mistaken about the cause; while there's no direct evidence here with regard to the timing of the "last things," it would be good to consider in this place the fact that God often turns the words of the wicked back upon themselves in ironic justice; examples:  1. Israelites in the Exodus whined for meat; God gave them meat until it came out of their nostrils (Num 11)  2. Pharaoh ordered firstborn sons of Israel killed; God kills all of Egypt's firstborn (Ex 1 & 13)  3. Jews in Jeremiah's day trusted in "the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, so it was destroyed (Jer 7:4)  4. Jews of Jesus' day demanded His crucifixion: "His blood be on us and on our children" (Mt 27:25); do I have to remind anyone how that turned out? |
|                                                                                                             | 109                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

In 40.07 24

#### Jn 12:27-34

"Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour?' But for this purpose I came to this hour. Father, glorify Your name." Then a voice came from heaven, saying, "I have both glorified it and will glorify it again." Therefore the people who stood by and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, "An angel has spoken to Him." Jesus answered and said, "This voice did not come because of Me, but for your sake. Now is the judgment of this world: now the ruler of this world will be cast out. And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself." This He said, signifying by what death He would die. The people answered Him, "We have heard from the law that the Christ remains forever; and how can You say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up?' Who is this Son of Man?"

[see how this concept of the Christ's coming only *once* factored into the disciples question(s)]:

#### Mt 24:3

Tell us when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age? [when will be Your coming into Your everlasting kingdom, the time of the end of the age that now is, yielding to the age that is to come?]

#### Parallel Texts/Word Study

Mt 26:38-46, Mk 14:34, Lk 12:50; voice from the spiritual realm, different reactions: Acts 9:1-7; defeat of the ruler of *that* world/age: Mt 12:29, Lk 10:18, Acts 26:17-18, 2 Cor 4:4; Jn 14:30, 16:11, Eph 2:2, 1 Jn 4:4, 5:19; Christ's lifting up and drawing from all peoples: Jn 3: 14, 8:28, 18:32, 21:19, Rom 5:18; OT background: Ps 89:35-37, Is

## OT background: Ps 89:35-37, Is 9:6-7. Mic 4:7

important observations:

- Jesus always did the will of His Father, and always sought His glory, above all else
- 2. the intrusion of the spiritual realm into the physical was differently sensed, experienced, and interpreted (compare Acts 9)
- 3. the ruler of *that* world (*kosmos* = arrangement/order) was about to be defeated in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ; it was at that time that Satan and death were destroyed (their power rendered null and void, though not ceasing to exist: Heb 2:14 "that through death He might destroy *katargeo* him who had the power of death"; Col 2:14-15, 2 Tim 1:10, 1 Jn 3:8- "that He might destroy (*luo* = loose/ undo/overthrow) the works of the devil."
- 4. the Jews had no concept of the Christ dying, leaving, and returning; they thought that once He'd arrived, He'd stay forever as King of an everlasting earthly kingdom; remember that when studying the disciples' question(s) Mt 24:3, Mk 13:3

.....

Book written: c. AD 60-62 exchange: AD 30, before the death and resurrection of Jesus, when the ruler of that prepassion/ resurrection world still had the power of spiritual death; his works were destroyed, and therefore, he was destroyed (in finality) in AD 70; he'd been bound for the "millennium," beginning with the start of the earthly ministry of Jesus, till the time he'd been released for a little while. AD 66-70; when Jesus ascended. He was crowned as the everlasting King, though the kingdom was not fully consummated until the plan of redemption was completed (AD 70)

## Geographical Notes

Jerusalem, at the time of the Passover

regarding the devil: he was "located" in the "bottomless pit" or "his prison" (Rev 20:3, 7) for the time of the "thousand years" (*chilioi*), which isn't to be taken literally, as shown by the following facts;

1. Revelation is an en-

- 1. Revelation is an entire book of symbols, where figurative language is the rule, rather than the exception
- 2. the First Century Jewish mind understood the symbol as representative of a "golden age" of indefinite length, with emphasis on quality, not quantity; the number 10 symbolized the ultimate/completeness. so 10x10x10 would indicate completeness and perfection; see also Talmudic writings for estimates of the duration of the transitional "age of Messiah" at the beginning of the world that was to come, several of which (estimates) are just 40 years

#### Notes Re: Fulfillment

..... the devil is an immortal being who will always continue to exist, so he will never be annihilated (nor will any human soul ever be: a sobering reminder for those who subscribe to the *non*-biblical "theory" of annihilationism, where the wicked soul doesn't experience the just, eternal wrath of God, but escapes it through ceasing to be, period); we aren't to look for Satan's obituary, but we are to believe that his power has been broken; he has no direct influence on anyone anymore, though he brought sin and death into the human race through Adam and Eve; every human being continues to be born with that corrupted, sinful nature (born children of wrath, dead in trespasses and sin - Eph 2), that is, the state of "original sin"; no one is born innocent, other than the God-Man. Who was conceived by God, and not by a mere man; so we are born sinners, and that's the way in which we continue until physical death, unless we receive the imputed perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ, and forgiveness through His blood; that is how the ruler of that world/age was destroyed by the ruler of this everlasting age, the new heavens and earth, in which righteousness dwells (2 Pe 3:13); say, "Hallelujah," Christians!

.....

#### Jn 14:1-3

Let not your hearts be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions/rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

#### Jn 14:28

You have heard Me say to you; 'I am going away and coming *back* to you...'

#### Jn 16:13

However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, **He will guide you into all truth**; for He will not speak on His own *authority*, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.

#### Jn 14:26

He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I have said to you.

## Parallel Texts/Word Study

Ps 23:6, 1 Cor 2:9, 1 Th 4:15-17; Jesus spoke these words to His most intimate disciples on the occasion of the "Last Supper"; He assured them that even though He would indeed suffer and die, He would be resurrected, ascend to the Father, prepare eternal dwelling places for those who believe in Him and The Father, and return to "pick up" both those then living and the dead in Christ to take them Home (to Heaven, for good!)

coming back to **you** = humas (specific, plural you, as "you very persons right here); as in all the parables, *not* to people who were to be born 49+ generations later! (compare Acts 1:11)

1 Cor 2:13, Jn 15:15, 14:17 (please read these to "put it all together"); the point is simple and the conclusions are powerful: the Triune God taught the apostles the truth - "all things" - so that through their teachings and writings, all keepers of their words (and therefore, Christ's), can know the truth, as did they; we can trust God's Word, without reservation; when we study the gospels and epistles, we won't be misled by any erroneous human misconceptions, because what was written by the NT writers was given to them by direct inspiration of God; I will assert this again in the strongest terms: God does not and can not lie! (Num 23:19, Titus 1:2, Heb 6:18); if we get the impression from the NT writers that Christ's coming was imminent in the First Century, it's because it was!

.....

Book written: c. AD 60-62 discourse: AD 30, at the "Last Supper" on the night of the betrayal of Jesus by Judas Iscariot

#### important

note: the "you" words were specific: the Holy Spirit led the 11 - and later, Matthias (see Acts 1:15-26) and Paul - into "all truth"; in turn, through the "laving on" of their hands (Acts 8:18), the power of the Holy Spirit was conferred on others; Paul was actually personally commissioned by Christ, and was filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 9:6, 15, 17)

## Geographical Notes

Jerusalem - the upper room, scene of the "Last Supper" with the 11 (Judas Iscariot had already left)

# the power and witness of the Spirit of truth proceeded from those gathered in Jerusalem at Pentecost (to Jews from all over the world - Acts 2:5, 9-11); then they and their converts went out into Judea and Samaria, and finally, to all parts of the known world

## Notes Re: Fulfillment

when the Son of God came (again) in AD 66, He emptied Sheol/Hades of all "the dead ones" (departed spirits) and received to Himself both those who had believed and died and those who believed who were still living on earth from earth to Heaven; the way into the Father's house had been cleared and secured for every believer since by God's Son, THE Redeemer!

the events leading up to Christ's last-day coming were witnessed by some of His First Century disciples (beyond the twelve), even that very "Last Day" (Jn 11:24-25, Mt 16:27-28)

<<< the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are One: in essence, will, plan, actions, and communication of truth; there's never a left hand/right hand mix-up between Persons of the Holy Trinity; therefore, the message from God is always truthful and completely consistent; it can be trusted 100% of the time: it pleased God to speak His truth directly to Adam, through the prophets, and in the last days of the Old Covenant age, through His Son; when His Son ascended to His heavenly throne, He sent the Spirit to lead the apostles into all truth, and they spoke it and wrote it; we have an infallible record of those truths: the Bible; so we have an infallible record of truth from the immutable Source!

.....

Jn 17:15-20

I do not pray that You should take them out of the world [yet! - SR], but that You should keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth. I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word.

#### Jn 18:36

My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here.

#### Jn 21:21-23

Peter, seeing him, said to Jesus, "But Lord, what about this man?" Jesus said to him, "If I will/desire that he remain till I come, what is that to you? You follow Me." Then this saying went out among the brethren that this disciple would not die. Yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but, "If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you?"

## Parallel Texts/Word Study

Jn 4:38, 20:21, Heb 10:10; this is sometimes known as Christ's "High-Priestly Prayer," and it's in the sense of consecrating Himself to this high-priestly office that we should understand His sanctifying Himself; observations:

- 1. Christ did *not* pray for a "snatching away" or "rapture" of believers out of this world AT THIS TIME; they had work to do before that! rather, He sent them *into* the world, so that *through their word*, many others would also believe in Him (what was just discussed on the previous page)
- 2. again: Christ and His servants are not of this world! (see Jas 4:4)

see directly above, and Jn 6:15, Lk 12:14, 17:20, 2 Cor 4:18; OT: Dan 2:44, 7:14; could Jesus have stated this any clearer?; "but now" = nun de (as it is, in contrast to what was supposed/that isn't the case)

Mt 16:27-28, Mk 8:31-9:1, Lk 9:26-27; this passage harmonizes with the passages cited above, which are three versions of the same speech of Jesus to an extended *group* of His disciples (see Mk 8:34); John himself points out that Jesus didn't say John would never die, but that if Jesus willed it (for His own reasons), John would be alive on earth when He returned in glory; however, Jesus did tell both James and his brother John that they would indeed both "drink the cup" of martvrdom (Mk 10:38-39). so we can be sure that's what happened; John died in the Neronic persecution (AD 64)

Book written: c. AD 60-62 prayer: AD 30, the night of the betrayal by Judas, into whom "the evil one" had entered

not then or

kingdom of

ever would the

Christ be of an

earthly nature

(Rome, take

note!)

#### **Geographical Notes** .....

across the Brook Kidron from the garden of Gethsemane (18:1); in the words of Jesus on several occasions. His disciples are to live in this world (on the earth), but are not to be slavish parts of it (the world-system); sadly, many Christians believe and teach a counter-theory of being worldly until escape to heavenly glory comes in a still-future rapture; sorry, but no!

#### not of this world!

notice here that this was an exchange that occurred after Christ's resurrection. vet Jesus is still talking about His coming; that eliminates the viability of notions re: His coming as fulfilled before this point in time

#### on the shore of the Sea of Galilee

#### Notes Re: Fulfillment .....

it should be remembered that the Son's prayer to the Father was honored and granted in the affirmative in all respects; therefore, the disciples were kept "from the evil one," as Jesus asked; yet we know that many were martyred for their faith; this fact sheds definitive light on the nature of the kingdom of God: it's spiritual, heavenly, and eternal, not material, earthly, and transient; our bodies will suffer injury and death, but our souls are off limits, secured in and by Christ!

the kingdom of God was fully and firmly established in summer, AD 70; though it's not discernible through our physical senses, it can be seen with the eyes of faith: 2 Cor 4:18, 5:7

what Jesus said in Mt 16:27-28 and parallels is not contradicted here in John's gospel: at the least, some disciples outside of the twelve were alive when Jesus Christ came in the glory of His Father, with His angels, in AD 66; for both statements of Jesus to be true (in Matthew and in John), it isn't in any way necessary that John had to live until the Parousia of Christ, and certainly not until AD 95/96!; but as Jesus said to Peter, His will for us today - and for every believer since - is to believe and follow! (Him; Alone!)

AD 57: "...written for our admonition, **upon whom** the ends of the ages has come" - 1 Cor 10:11 NKJV

AD 61/62: "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time." - 1 Jn 2:18 KJV

(NKJV: it is the last hour)

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AD 62/63: "...has in these last days spoken to us by
His Son..."- Heb 1:1 NKJV

"In that He says, 'A new covenant,' He has made the
first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and
growing old is ready to vanish away"-Heb 8:13 NKJV

"...but now, once at the end of the ages...to those who
eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time,
apart from sin, for salvation" - Heb 9:26, 28 NKJV

late 62/early 63 AD: "...to show His servants- things which must shortly take place...for the time is near...things which must shortly take place...for the time is at hand ...behold, I am coming quickly...Surely, I am coming quickly" - Rev 1:1, 3, 22:6, 7, 10, 12, 20 NKJV

mid-AD 63: "But the end of all things is at hand"- 1 Pe 4:7 KJV, NKJV

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"These words are faithful and true" - Rev 22:6 NKJV

## 6. The What, When, and Where of the Truth - Part 4 (Acts-Jude)

Soon we will be making our way on a journey through New Testament territory that will take us from Jerusalem to the farthest reaches of the Roman Empire, and back home to the foot of the Mount of Olives. In other words, we'll soon be studying Acts through Jude, that short epistle positioned immediately prior to John's version of the Olivet Discourse, the book of Revelation.

Any questions before we begin, like what did I mean by equating the book of Revelation with "John's version of the Olivet Discourse?" Let's walk and talk.

The gospel accounts often overlap each other, especially the "synoptic" gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Most of the time, you can find a passage in which is recorded the same event and/or words in two or three of those gospels. They often aren't in the same order, but that's because the writers had different approaches geared to different segments of the population, different emphases, and different journalistic styles. You may have noticed that John's gospel focuses more on concepts and *Christology* (simply, *the study of Christ*; examining just Who He was and is, how He relates to the Godhead and to humanity, *etc.*), and less on historical, chronological narrative (reporting of events in order). Emphasis is on the interior and the eternal, not the exterior and the temporal.

The discourse we call the "Olivet" commands a great amount of space in the three synoptic gospels. Obviously, the contents of that prophetic speech of Jesus to the twelve were vitally important: first, to them; secondly, to the very young, fledgling, persecuted church to which they would minister and "rule over"; and lastly, to all the children of the everlasting Kingdom of God. But in the gospel of John, that monumentally important teaching session is not found. Did John think it wasn't worthy of attention? Not at all! To John was given "The Apocalypse (Revelation) of Jesus Christ," according to John. Read it with the themes of the Olivet discourse in mind, and compare back and forth. Then when you're ready to approach that book in the confidence of knowing that Jesus Christ dearly desired to inform, instruct, comfort, and confirm all His co-heirs by it, and not scare them, the Truth will come to you quickly. Amen!

## Acts 1:9-11

heaven."

Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into

#### **Parallel Texts/Word Study**

..... Lk 24:51, Jn 20:12; OT basis: Dan 7:13-14; it's probable that Jesus initially ascended - unseen, not publicly - to the Father on the day of His resurrection, and descended to earth again to appear to many for forty days; the Bible seems to teach that that was the occasion of His receiving the kingdom, in fulfillment of Dan 7; some point to "in like manner" in this text and contend that Jesus would have to come again in a "reverse tape" mode, with a one-to-one correspondence in all details of His leaving the earth; but that's distorting the meaning of the phrase, "in like manner"; similarity is required, but exact duplication is not; I believe you'll find sufficient similarity between Christ's ascension and His AD 66-70 coming to satisfy the requirements of the language: 1. He was taken up from a point near Jerusalem: He came down upon Jerusalem 2. "a cloud received Him out of their sight"; He came on/in the clouds, hidden from view 3. angels attended His ascension in glory; angels attended His descension in glory 4. He left the disciples ("Men of Galilee"); He returned to at least some of those First C. Galileeans 5. He went into Heaven; He came from Heaven BUT...if you're still looking for Him to return in the exact same manner. He'd have to return to all of the same people He left, who all departed long ago! Think! You may illogically write this into your own "bible," but it isn't in THE Bible!

Book written: AD 61/62 event: the public Ascension of Jesus Christ, AD 30

.....

event predicted: His coming in a manner similar to His leaving, before the last of that generation had departed from the earth themselves

## Geographical Notes

from v. 12, we know that this took place on Mount Olivet

#### Notes Re: Fulfillment

..... Jesus Christ's reception of the everlasting kingdom, whether it took place on the day of His resurrection, or 40 days later, fulfilled Dan 7:13-14; at that time, the King was crowned; on Pentecost of AD 30, the "thousand years" period (golden age of the spread of the good news) was in full swing, and by the time of The Great Tribulation (begun c. AD 63), The Great Commission had been carried out (according to Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit); then the end came, the end of the age (the only sense in which the world is ever going to end, according to the Bible, when responsibly studied); the last "day" of the age that was was the day of: the glorified Christ's coming on/in the clouds, hidden from physical sight (which was a gracious act in itself, because the sight of the glorified Christ could turn earthbound human eyeballs to ash, being a *heavenly* vision overwhelmingly unsuitable for eyes on earth); the emptying of Sheol/Hades of all departed spirits, and gathering of the living elect (the snatching away/ catching up, or "Rapture"); His descending with His angels upon Jerusalem in judgment, His consummation of the endless, ever-expanding kingdom of God and Heaven, and the consignment of Satan, his angels, and all the wicked dead to the "lake of fire" (Rev 20)

.....

#### Acts 2:16-21

But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel...

(please read the full text)

#### Acts 2:25-27, 31

For David says concerning Him: 'I foresaw the LORD always before my face...For You will not leave my soul in Hades...' he, forseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption.

## Parallel Texts/Word Study

just a reminder: figurative language was used in prophecy regarding this actual event in the kingdom of God; strictly literal fulfillment didn't occur, but actual fulfillment did; see p. 22-24

(Ps 16:8-11 is quoted); Acts 13: 35-37; the points here;

- 1. David's body did see corruption (Acts 13:36), just as all human flesh corrupted by sin has seen it or will see it
- 2. the word is hades, NOT "hell" (gehenna)! Christ did not descend into the eternal abode of the damned! while it's true that He suffered the torments of hell on the cross, He never suffered in the lake of fire, prepared for the devil and his angels (Mt 25:41)
  2. until Hades was emptied in AD 66, the spirits (souls) of all those who died physically departed to Hades, the "holding tank(s)," and
- 3. at His death, Jesus went to Hades, staying in that realm of the departed spirits until He rose from the dead (or "out of the dead")
  4. only Christ's body didn't see corruption at death, because only His body was not corrupted by sin in life

awaited that Judgment Day at the

end of the age

5. the LORD (the Father) did not leave the soul of His only begotten Son in Hades, but raised Him ("this Jesus God has raised up": v.32); see 1 Cor 15:50, 53, 54 for light on all of this

#### **Timing Geographical Notes** Notes Re: Fulfillment ...... ..... ..... please see p. 22-24, 66-67 Pentecost, AD Jerusalem 30 Book written: Hades (Hebrew = 1. David said, under the sheol) was also c. AD 61/62 inspiration of the Holy Spirit, that the Father would not leave known as "the grave" his soul in Sheol (Hades): Hades (the or "the unseen realm realm of the (of the dead)"; the genfulfilled no later than in AD 66. dead/departed eral conception was at the coming of Jesus Christ, spirits) was that it was located in when Hades was finally still in place, in the bowels of the emptied operation until earth, hence Samuel's 2. David also prophesied by Judgment Day being called "up" (1 the Holy Spirit that the Father Sam 28:8, 11, 14-15), in AD 66 would not allow His "Holv One" and "(his) spirit asto see/undergo corruption: fulfilled when the Father raised cending out of the Jesus from/out of the dead in earth"- v. 13: Jesus provided a glimpse into AD 30 that temporary realm 3. David did *not* prophesy that in the parable of the anyone else would be spared from bodily decay, so we must rich man and Lazarus (Lk 16:22-31); the understand that the Holy One realm truly existed, was unique in that respect; though unseen by only Jesus Christ was conthose alive on earth, ceived by God, born without until it was, with Death. sin, and only He was sinless at "cast into the lake of the time of His physical death 4. we all will die; each physical fire": Rev 20:14; it doesn't exist anymore; birth now ends in a physical it served its purpose death; there's no deathless and was put out of rapture in our future; Enoch business by its and Elijah experienced "trans-Creator, Jesus Christ lations" that prefigured how the (at Pentecost, AD 66) elect who were preserved, soul, spirit, and **body** until the coming (parousia) of the Lord (1 Th 5:23) passed into Heaven 5. we won't ever die spiritually. once we've been made alive in the spirit - in Christ

## Acts 3:19-24

Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began. For Moses truly said to the fathers, 'The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear in all things, whatever He says to you. And it shall be that every soul who will not hear that Prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.' Yes, and all the prophets, from Samuel and those who follow, as many as have spoken, have also foretold these days.

## Parallel Texts/Word Study

Acts 2:38, 26:20; Acts 1:11, Lk 1:70, 24:25; please see Mt 19:28 (p. 48-49); 2 Th 1:9; OT: Dt 18:15-19

"times of refreshing" is probably a picture of personal renewal through the forgiveness found in Christ, though there may be a link to "times of restoration" two verses later; presence = prosopon (face/ countenance); "whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things" (KJV = "restitution") is almost certainly in reference to the regeneration/creation of the new heavens and earth in which righteousness dwells - then taking place - that would culminate in the complete transition of the ages at Christ's coming from Heaven (where He remained until His hour would come, at the fulfillment of the times of restoration); this interpretation is warranted by a due consideration of the sense of imminency that permeates this speech of Peter, who speaks of his current era as the focal point of all the prophets ("these days" = hermeras tautas, these particular days/the present time); note that it is "these" and not "those" to Peter, speaking in the First Century AD; also, "restoration" = apokatastasis, and it's worth noting that the word translated into the Hebrew was used in Jewish apocalyptic literature in descriptions of the new heavens and earth

Book written: c. AD 61/62

speech: probably AD 30

events about which Peter spoke: subjects of prophecy that were yet unfulfilled before the "last days" of the age, in which Peter's generation then lived (First Century AD)

## Geographical Notes

Peter was preaching from Solomon's Porch (Portico) at the temple complex in Jerusalem (v. 11)

#### Notes Re: Fulfillment

..... if the proposed interpretation given here (second column, previous page) is correct, the pieces of the puzzle fit together naturally; and this isn't something that sprang only from this layman's head; Richard Weymouth's New Testament In Modern Speech (notes by Ernest Hampden-Cook ) and A.T. Robertson's Word Pictures In the New Testament have shed light on/ supported this view (please consult them if you doubt my asssertions); frankly, it's hard for me to understand what else Peter could be talking about here, since this restoration/ restitution of all things is obviously a major wrapping-up, a one-time event with great prophetic significance; remember, too, that this same Peter wrote: "the end of all things is at hand" (1 Pe 4:7); the theme of the imminency of something big powerfully percolates throughout the New Testament: much has been written about the apostles' intense expectations, and usually, how they were mistaken: I will fight that notion with all that I have. because that would make their (our) Teacher and Lord a deceiver and ignorant; He was neither; not as God, and not as our sinless Son of Man, the Savior

#### .....

#### Acts 17:6

These who have turned the world upside down have come here, too.

(similar, in the OT):

#### Is 24:1 KJV

Behold, the LORD maketh the **earth** empty, and maketh it waste, and **turneth it upside down**, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof.

#### Acts 17:11-12

These [Bereans-SR] were more fair-minded/noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so. Therefore, many of them believed...

## Parallel Texts/Word Study

we stop here to look at a clear example of the use of figurative language; this was said about Paul and Silas specifically, as prime representatives of the Christian missionary effort in the first years of the church; for the wooden literalist, this means that our north pole was the south pole before Paul and his ilk up-ended the world; think about it!

Lk 16:29-31, Jn 5:39; OT: Is 34:16; this is how we are to humbly walk with God (Mic 6:8) daily; we are so greatly blessed today to have Bibles readily available and translated into our native tongues; yet so many of us ignore God's Word, and are eager to accept any piece of "mind candy" that's offered to us by deceivers who are strangers to the truth (or are experienced in twisting it for personal gain and fame); the Holy Spirit Himself calls the Bereans "more noble" because they 1) received the (His) word with all readiness, and 2) searched the (His) Scriptures daily to compare what was spoken to them by human beings with what was spoken and written to them by God, the ultimate Author of all the Scriptures (and the Author and Finisher of all salvation); note, too:

"Therefore, many of them believed"- because they studied the Scriptures, they believed (Rom 10:17); study God's Word, not the newspaper, and not fiction; be a noble Berean

| Timing                                                            | Geographical Notes                                                                                                      | Notes Re: Fulfillment                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Book written,<br>words spoken,<br>"world-turning"<br>all by AD 70 | Thessalonica, in the First Century AD                                                                                   | obviously, many Biblical statements are not to be taken in a strictly literal sense; here's another case where we know what the speaker was trying to convey: Paul and the other Christian missionaries were used and gifted by God to bring about huge, worldwide change in the spiritual realm (though the speaker didn't like it one bit!)                                                                                             |
|                                                                   | Berea - about 50 miles from Thessalonica - in the First Century AD; (now called Veroia or Verria, in modern-day Greece) | how do we define fulfillment in this case? - like this: if we follow the example of the fair-minded, noble Bereans, we fulfill the will of God for His servants in all times - to search His Scriptures for profit in doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work (2 Tim 3:16-17); in short: read what God has written, and live by it! |

#### .....

#### Rom 1:8

First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that **your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.** 

#### Rom 2:29

...but *he is* a **Jew** who *is one* **inwardly**; and circumcision *is that* of the heart...

#### Rom 4:11

And he [Abraham-SR] received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while still uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all those who believe...

#### Rom 9:6-8

For they are not all Israel who are of Israel, nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, "In Isaac your seed shall be called." That is, those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted as the seed.

#### Rom 9:26-27

"And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them, 'You are not My people,' there they shall be called sons of the living God... though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, the remnant shall be saved'"

## Parallel Texts/Word Study

see also: Acts 19:10; Rom 10:18, 15:19-20; Col 1:5-6, 23 (in Rom 10, although Paul quotes Ps 19:4, which had to do with general revelation, he asserts that *specific* revelation - the gospel - had gone out to the ends of the world by that time, as well); Col 1 is clearer: the world had heard

especially when seen or heard together, these texts make an indelible impression on any truthreceiving mind; the true Israel - the Israel of God - is clearly defined (see Gal 3-4 for a compare-andcontrast session, if there's still any doubt in your mind); the true sons and daughters of Abraham, the "father of *many* nations" (Rom 4:17-18), are his sons and daughters by faith in Jesus Christ, not by natural birth: within national Israel were true Jews, those who were inwardly "circumcised"; but most of national Israel weren't of true Israel, the Israel of God; the kingdom was taken away, and given to another "nation" (Mt 21:43): all those in Christ

#### Rom 11:26

And so all Israel will be saved... Phil 3:3

For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh

Gal 6:16...the Israel of God.

......

Book written: AD 58 (Acts and Colossians also written by AD 63)

book written: AD 58

though there's no specific time-frame information here, all of this had to have taken place before the covenantbreaking nation of Israel (God's "wife"see Hosea and related texts) had the kingdom taken from them and given to the Gentiles: and before the nation of Israel that existed then ceased to exist (late summer of AD 70)

## Geographical Notes

see those other texts for the range of the personal ministry of Paul, and then consider that he was only one of the apostles; between the apostles and their fellows in Christ, they covered the known world

once more: the kingdom of God - His true Israel - is not mappable; however, the vast majority of national Israel were located in the land of Israel until AD 70; old Jerusalem was destroyed; the New Jerusalem "threw open its gates" in AD 66, and was firmly established by the summer of AD 70, while old Jerusalem smoldered: from then on, the nations walk in the light of the Lamb (Rev 21:22-26)

## Notes Re: Fulfillment

a brief stop was made here to remind the reader that Paul - under the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit - maintained that the gospel had indeed gone out to the ends of the earth by AD 63; and that the end would come *soon* after (Mt 24:14); the predictions of Jesus saw fulfillment by AD 70

"all Israel" as Paul termed it are being saved (eternally) now and forever into the future; the New Jerusalem has come "down out of heaven from God" - extended from that highest of all the heavens to that "annex" in the lower heaven made for all who trusted only in Christ; that heaven-populating process began with Christ's parousia (coming with abiding presence) in AD 66; there will never be a time when all national Israel will be saved. whether temporally or eternally, because God's judgment upon national Israel was rendered irrevocably in the destruction of Jerusalem, the temple, and of that nation (the people) itself; remember that the destruction came after Israel's males had crowded into the city for the Feast of Unleavened Bread, one of three annually-appointed feasts (Ex 23:17, Dt 16:16), from all places on earth; coincidence? - if you know God, you know it wasn't! - He is sovereign over the means as well as the ends

Rom 3:4 Indeed, let God be true/found true but every man a liar

.....

#### Rom 8:19-23

For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope: because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption/decay into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. Not only that, but we also who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.

## (from the Old Testament): **Ps 98:7-9**

Let the sea roar, and all its fullness, The world and those who dwell in it; Let the rivers clap their hands; Let the hills be joyful together before the LORD, For He is coming to judge the earth. With righteousness He shall judge the world, And the peoples with equity/uprightness

## Parallel Texts/Word Study

Jn 3:33, Num 23:19, 1 Sam 15:29, Titus 1:2, Heb 6:18; only a truth-suppressor - a lover of lies - would contend with this; all men (humans) lie, but God never does

#### observations:

1. either the irrational components of the physical creation or the rational creatures (humans alone) are meant by "the creation" (*ktisis* is used either way in the NT)
2. if Paul *is* speaking of creatures other than mankind, he's using poetic, figurative language of the same sort as "the mountains skipped like rams, the little hills like lambs" (Ps 114:4) and "the mountains and the hills shall break forth into singing before you, and all the trees shall clap their hands" (Is 55: 12);

## <<<see especially Ps 98:7-9 for an OT parallel text!</pre>

3. if Paul is speaking of the rational part of creation (meaning men and women alone), we can find the same word used the same way in 2 Cor 5:17, Gal 6:15, Col 1:15 & 23 (all by Paul), and Mk 16:15 4. either way, there's pulsating imminency here: "eagerly waiting" for a) the revealing of the sons of God (at the revealing of the *Son* of God), and b) the redemption of our body; NOTE: While it may appear that there is a *collective* body (one, singular) in view here, a careful look at the original Greek reveals that Paul indeed had individual bodies (plural) in mind: "each of our own bodies" is the idea [see the work of Parker Voll. Ed Stevens, et al on this]

#### **Timing Geographical Notes** Notes Re: Fulfillment ..... ..... ..... always true true throughout all false prophets and teachers God's creation came and went, and false prophets and teachers are with us now; hear the Truth, and not the liars (Jn 14:6) Book written: if the destruction of it should be crystal clear to the c. AD 58 Jerusalem and the alert reader of this passage, temple affected only that an event of great imporevent: by those in the area at the tance had First Century Christians "on the edge of their every indicatime (or their relatives), tion in the why would Paul be seats"; Paul says - under the writing to the Roman direct inspiration of the Holy language, something that Christians - at a safe Spirit - that what they eagerly was expected distance from the anticipated way back then (with to happen destruction (physically) good reason, because God - in this manner? - besoon, within told them) was: the lifetimes of cause the destruction 1. the "revealing of the sons of Paul and/or of Jerusalem and the God" the recipients 2. deliverance from the temple coincided with of his letter. the revealing of the bondage of corruption into the Christians Son of God as the the liberty of the children of God (note: sons/children of of First glorious Redeemer of Century Rome true Israel; true Jews God in both) were residents of far-3. "the adoption, the redempflung places like tion of our body" (two terms for Rome; both judgment the same thing; compare this with being "caught up togethand complete redemption were eagerly er " in 1 Th 4:17) compare awaited by the faithful. also: the "birth pangs" (KJV= who groaned inwardly. travails) in this passage with having the "first-fruits" "the beginning of sorrows" in of the Spirit" only to Mt 24:8: it becomes graphically that point (that was the clear: this is the time of the time of "already, but woman in labor in Rev 12:2 not yet," that the (the church giving birth to the futurist insists is our new creation/age/world/ own time; not so!) heavens and earth); the new covenant age/world was born in AD 70

#### Rom 13:11-12

...knowing the time, that **now** *it is* high time to awake out of sleep; for **now** our salvation *is* nearer than when we *first* believed. **The night is far spent**, **the day is at hand**.

(reverse image): **Mk 6:35** When the **day was now far spent,** His disciples came to Him and said, "This is a deserted place, and **already the hour** *is* **late**..."

#### Rom 16:20

And the God of peace will crush Satan under **your** feet **shortly**.

(from the Old Testament):

#### Gen 3:15

And I will put enmity between you [Satan-SR] and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise/crush your head, and you shall bruise His heel.

## Parallel Texts/Word Study

Eph 6:15, 1 Th 5:4-9; "at hand": Phil 4:5, Rev 1:3, 22:10 (please read these first); what is meant by "our salvation" being "nearer than when we first believed?" - while it could refer to temporal (bodily) salvation (soteria can mean either eternal or temporal salvation in the NT), it appears to mean eternal salvation in this context, because it was nearer for them than when they first believed; but we know that whenever a person believes in Jesus Christ, he/she has eternal life from that point (Jn 5:24), so this, too, must be understood in the context of that time of the "already, but not yet" - the believers before Christ's AD 66-70 coming (parousia) had the sure promise of salvation in Him (just like all the OT believers), but redemption hadn't been completed yet; Paul urges the saints in Rome to be watchful and live a sanctified life, because "the Day" (of the Lord) was at hand; he told them to "hang in there," though the "night" seemed to be interminable

same idea as above; God was coming *shortly* (that should sound familiar: Rev 1 & 22); He was coming *soon* to crush Satan under *their* First Century AD feet (figuratively, of course); keep in mind that Paul was writing *after* Christ's death, resurrection, and ascension, but *before* His return to complete the plan of redemption; "yet" was near!

Book written: AD 58 (after the cross, but before Christ's "Day")

.....

## Geographical Notes

Paul wrote to "all who are [were, to us] in Rome [in AD 58], beloved of God, called to be saints"

#### Notes Re: Fulfillment

..... the time of the reign of spiritual darkness, which was "far spent" in AD 58, was driven away forever with the "brightness of His coming (parousia)" in AD 66-70; it was then that the sure *promise* of eternal salvation became eternal reality; the kingdom of God and heaven was consummated; temporal salvation from bodily harm was gained by those who fled out of Judea while Nero's persecution raged and/or before the final siege of Jerusalem: believers who survived until the Parousia were "caught up together," gathered into the kingdom of God; each place prepared in heaven for all believers, past and future included, was fully secured in the events of AD 66-70; when believers die now (ever since then), they pass directly from this earthly existence into the eternal heavenly "mansions," as Hades (including both "compartments") was abolished; First Century Christians passed from the night of darkness into the eternal day (Rev 21:25: "there shall be no night there"); and that is what's ahead for each of us who are in Christ when we, too, die (and we all will: Heb 9:27); in the late summer of AD 70, the Lord Jesus Christ crushed the head of Satan fully and finally, having cast him into the lake of fire, along with Death and Hades (Rev 20:10-14)

where are they now? Satan: the lake of fire and brimstone (Rev 20:10); the saints who were in Rome are forever with the Lord in heaven (Jn 14:2-3); those who survived until the Parousia never saw Hades

.....

#### 1 Cor 1:7-9

...so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will also confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

## Parallel Texts/Word Study

Phil 3:20, 1 Th 3:13, 5:23-24, Col 1:22, 1 Cor 10:13, 2 Th 3:3, Heb 2:17, 10:23, 1 Pe 4:19, 1 Jn 1:9, Rev 1:5, 3:14, 19:11; **IMPORTANT ASPECTS:** 1. you = First Century AD Corinthian Christians 2. eagerly waiting = they were instructed by the Holy Spirit through the apostles - to do so 3. for the revelation (apokalysin) of the Lord Jesus Christ (KJV says "coming"; they were the same event!) 4. will confirm you to the end: they would be confirmed (by Christ, Who is Faithful and True) to the end of *something* - obviously not the end of planet earth; the end to which they would be faithfully confirmed was the end of the age 5. that you (they, to us) may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ (revelation of/coming of/day of the Lord Jesus Christ = the end of the age; now refer back to the disciples' question(s) in Mt 24:3/Mk 13:4 to see how this is perfectly consistent!)

#### 1 Cor 2:6

However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing

an example of the concept of "the powers that be" equating with the heavens and earth, the *prevailing world order* (please think about this, and keep it in mind); Paul said that the world order of *his* day was *then* coming to nothing, on its way out; "this age" (in which he lived) was already fading = the heavens and the earth were fading

#### Notes Re: Fulfillment **Timing Geographical Notes** ..... ..... ..... Book written: letter (epistle) written this passage is saturated with AD 57 by Paul to the church time-frame evidence; and (there's very of God which is (was) since these are the words of little at Corinth, in the First Paul - personally appointed to disagreement Century AD apostleship by his Lord Jesus with this date) Christ, and who was under the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit - they are as trustworthy as God Himself; therefore, the only possible conclusion for the one who believes God is that the things predicted and promised did in fact take place within the time limits indicated by Paul, the Holy Spirit, and Jesus Christ the "world" of the wisdom and rulers of that AD 57 was former age came to nothing in giving way to summer, AD 70, when the Old the new Covenant/Law/sacrificial, shad-"world"; that ows & types system was fully age was giving replaced by the New Covenant/ Gospel/True Temple age of way to this everlasting righteousness - in (everlasting) Christ's wisdom, and under His age rule

.....

#### 1 Cor 2:13

These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual

# 1 Cor 3:16-17, 6:19-20, 2 Cor 6:16, Jn 14:23, Eph 2:20-22, Heb 3:6, 9:8-10

Do you not know that you are the temple of God?...you are the temple of the living God... having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone...not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing. It was symbolic for the present time...until the time of reformation.

#### 1 Cor 7:29-31

But this I say, brethren, **the time is short**, so that from now on even those who have wives should be as though they had none, those who weep as though they did not weep, those who rejoice as though they did not rejoice, those who buy as though they did not possess, and those who use this world as not misusing *it*. For **the form of this world is passing away**.

## Parallel Texts/Word Study

a theme throughout God's Word; note and remember:

- 1. the apostles spoke with the wisdom of God, not man;
- 2. God is spirit, and so is His kingdom; think *spiritually*!;
- 3. be taught by comparing Scripture with Scripture, not by compar-ing the words of mere sinful men with newspaper reports!

let's look at these several passages at once, so we can ensure that the concept is cemented firmly in place: the true temple of God is spiritually composed of Jesus Christ, the chief cornerstone of the foundation of apostles and prophets (of which He is chief, as the First Apostle and Chief Prophet), and all who trust solely and completely in Christ; the old, physical temple served as a symbolic shadow of the true temple, which was to come at the "time of reformation" >>>1 Pe 4:7, Heb 8:13, 1 Jn 2:17-18, Rev 1:1, 3 & 22:10, 12, 20; short = sustello (contracted/ shrunken): form = schema (KJV = "fashion"/scheme/design); world = kosmos (order/arrangement); Paul was answering questions the Corinthians had posed to him, and here he was addressing the issue of whether or not the unmarried or widowed should marry; his point: don't get attached to anyone because of the distraction and heightened danger of the time; everything was about to change

## Geographical Notes

#### Notes Re: Fulfillment

Book written: AD 57, for the instruction of the children of God in all times

.....

every Christian in every place should take heed you won't find spiritual truth in the uninspired "wisdom" of modern men, who portray the kingdom of God as a material kingdom and don't think consistently in spiritual terms; fulfillment has come for "all things" over 1945 years agothat's the teaching of God

all of the books to which we here referred (and all books of the Bible) were written before the destruction of the Jerusalem temple in AD 70 a connect-the-dots map of the true temple of the living God is not possible; the old, physical, First-Century temple in Jerusalem is gone for good; it will not be rebuilt: "For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor" - Gal 2:18

the shadows and types of the Old Covenant dispensation pointed to the antitypes (the realities) of the New Covenant dispensation (one that doesn't end); Jesus Christ came in AD 66-70 to fulfill all prophecy and destroy the old and faded, by bringing in the new and enduring: the everlasting kingdom and the true, living temple of God; the time of reformation came in AD 66-70

written AD 57, a relatively short time from the changing of the worlds/ ages since Jesus had warned His flock of the great danger in the times ahead (from AD 30), including widespread persecution, and the appearance of many false prophets, Paul urged caution everywhere in entering into relationships and getting attached to anything that was a part of the passing system

we often hear someone intending to give comfort say, "Come on, it's not the end of the world!" - we know how to take that - what that's supposed to mean, and usually only receive minimal comfort; Paul was essentially saying the opposite here, as the end of the world (that First Century world/age) was coming then (in AD 57); yet, for Christians, there was *great* comfort in his message: stay focused and endure for a short time, for everything would change for the better; MUCH better, and forever

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#### 1 Cor 10:11

Now all these things happened to them [the generation of The Exodus-SR] as examples, and they were written for **our** admonition/ instruction, **upon whom the ends of the ages have come**.

#### 1 Cor 13:8-10

Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect/complete has come, then that which is in part will be done away.

#### 1 Cor 13:12

For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.

[Think both in terms of 1) God's foreknowledge, how He knows His elect and 2) how, at the AD 66 emptying of Hades and bodily change of the then-living, the elect would know that they'd been fully redeemed and adopted into God's family: all became clear]

## Parallel Texts/Word Study

Rom 15:4, Phil 4:5, 1 Pe 4:7, Jas 5:9; our = their admonition/instruction, in the First Century AD: Paul's point to them: learn from history, and specifically from a generation so similar to this one (rampant disobedience and ingratitude); note the results (we should look at verses 1-10, to review what he'd been saying to them); they were headed for the same "fate" if they continued to live carelessly and ungratefully, when the Judge was already standing at the door! ends of the ages = ta telo ton aionon ("last part of the ages before the return of Christ"

- Thayer); that's clear, isn't it?

1 Cor 13:12; it should also be clear that the supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit here mentioned weren't intended or designed to last forever; they would cease to be given when their purposes (the edification of the young, fledgling church, and signs to unbelieving Jews that the time of the end had arrived; signs and seals of the true apostles of God, who were taking the authentic gospel to the world) had been achieved; another minisermon is in order here: you are not a divinely-appointed apostle of God, and you don't know anyone alive today who is; when the last of those who'd received the authentically-conferred gifts of the Holy Spirit died, those supernatural sign-gifts ceased; stop looking for another "anointed one" to bring a new, authoritative "word of knowledge"; it won't happen; end sermon

# Geographical Notes

# Notes Re: Fulfillment

Book written: AD 57

the ages were in transition world-wide; there weren't and aren't any time zones/ pockets where the age is not the same by God's definition (the only one that counts!)

the last days of the extinct ages (see column two for Thayer's entry) came upon the First Century AD generation, with the last Day itself - in summer of AD 70 - bringing the last days to a close; since then - beyond those last days of the extinct age, all have lived in the new, everlasting age, world without end (Eph 3:21); the last days (plural) came, and the Last Day (singular) came in the First Century AD, at the culmination of the return (Parousia) of Christ; there's no longer a stillfuture end of the age

the sign-gifts given by God to establish and prove His appointed messengers were in operation in the First Century AD; the perfect/ completeness was due soon, when the kingdom of God was to be brought in, in its fullness. and its members adopted as sons in Christ

in the arrival of the New Covenant in AD 70, OT passages were fulfilled: see Jer 31:34 and Is 54:13; in these texts, there is the promise of days in which all the children of God would no longer "know in part" - that is, they would no longer have to only hope in God's mercy, faithfulness, and redemption - but they could know it as an accomplished reality; read 1 Cor 13:12 with this perspective, and see if you agree with me: that Paul's knowing "just as I also am known" refers to his knowledge of his status as a redeemed/ adopted one when redemption would be finally accomplished and the Redeemer would be fully revealed; that happened between AD 66 and 70

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#### 1 Cor 14:33

For God is not the author of confusion/disorder but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints

#### 1 Cor 15:20-26

But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep/died. For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward, those who are Christ's at His coming. Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed is death.

### Parallel Texts/Word Study

while I understand the specific context, targets, and message of this passage, there's much here for us today: 1. God doesn't want His children to be confused or in disorder; 2. God is the *author of knowledge* and order, against confusion and disorder; 3. to avoid confusion, go to God, and not men; 4. God's Word, including the book of Revelation, is not written to confuse His children, or put them into disarray; it's written for our *peace* 

- 1 Pe 1:3, Acts 26:23, Rom 5:12, 18-19, Jn 5:28-29, 1 Th 4:15-17, 2 Tim 1:10, Phil 3:20-21; and **see pages 90-91 at Lk 1:33**; important observations:
- 1. Christ was the first to rise from the dead; this means that Lazarus, the widow's son, and others weren't resurrected in the same way Jesus was (they were restored to life in their same bodies - resuscitated - only to die again later); 2. firstfruits are representative of the whole "crop," even when it's harvested at different times 3. though all the dead were resurrected to judgment, only those in Christ were resurrected to life in heaven from "Abraham's bosom" (in Hades) at the time of His AD 66 coming (parousia);
- 4. "then comes the end" = this marks the end (of the age), when "all things" had been restored by His Son, and the eternal rule of the kingdom of God was established over all enemies; that included death, you grave-side double-talkers: don't shortchange our peace!

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Book written: AD 57 to Corinthian Christians, but for the instruction of "all the churches," and in all times

## Geographical Notes

the church meetingplace in First Century Corinth was the site of great confusion when worship services tended to slip into the chaotic disorder of ungodly, self-edifying displays

## Notes Re: Fulfillment

the point is this: for His children, God is the source of knowledge, and not confusion; it's true that He "sends delusion" to those who are obstinate in their unbelief, but He wants His children to know Him and His will for them; along with all prophecy, Revelation was given to God's children not to confuse them, but to instruct them; be afraid only of falsehood; the Truth will set you free! (Jn 8:32)

written AD 57, less than 10 years before the Parousia of Jesus Christ began

the state of the spirits: until Christ's second coming, all spirits of the dead were apparently held in the two compartments of Hades/Sheol; at His coming, Hades was emptied by the mass resurrection of the dead: to rewards in eternal life in heaven or to judgment and eternal death in the "lake of fire," where the devil and his angels are also tormented forever: since Christ's coming to judge and reward each man according to his works (Mt 16:27), the spirits of the justified are clothed with spiritual bodies suitable for heavenly life

>>>the general, universal resurrection event is past; that's evident by the time statement included here (at His parousia-coming, of which there's only one), and the overwhelming evidence throughout the NT; but that wasn't the end of what we call resurrection! - that was only the beginning of countless individual "resurrections," the home-goings, if you will, of those who die in Christ, which are no less real and eternally binding as well; Christ was the firstfruits of the eternal harvest - those of us who are in Christ have been regenerated to life by the Holy Spirit (made alive in the spirit), and then our eternal lives began; but when we die physically, we "go home" to heaven and receive our new spiritual bodies (see 1 Cor 15:44-55 and the "What Now?" chapter of this work); there we'll be perfect in our worship, sin-free, pain-free, and ever-joyful

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1 Cor 15:35-49

#### 1 Cor 15:50-55

Now this I say, brethren, that **flesh** and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed - in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we [those who have not "slept" (died) to that point-SRI shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality. So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." "O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?"

### **Parallel Texts/Word Study**

please see ch. 8: What Now?

Mt 24:31, 1 Th 4:15-17, Jn 3:3-5; Phil 3:20-21, 2 Cor 5:1-8; OT roots: Is 25:8, Hos 13:14; this is the famous "resurrection chapter," where we see most of what can be found in Scripture regarding the resurrection from/out of the dead (ones) (remember- those are the Biblical terms, not "resurrection of the body," - as some creeds have it - which would be the proper term if all of the exact same atoms were re-combined into the resurrection body); please note:

- 1. flesh and blood can *not* inherit the kingdom of God; the kingdom of God is *not* a kingdom of the naturally-born;
- 2. sin-corrupted flesh can *not* pass into the incorruptible realm of God's perfect Heaven;
- 3. so we must all be changed, in order to enter the heavenly sphere with bodies suitable for eternal existence;
- 4. at death, we "put on immortality," our incorruptible spiritual bodies (Paul explains this in verses 42-49; see my ch. 8);
- 5. Paul expected at least some of his generation to be alive at the coming of Christ: "we shall not all sleep" (die by the time of "the last trumpet"- compare Mt 24:31 & 1 Th 4:15-17); he hoped to be among them:
- 6. but *all* would be *changed*: corresponds to "being caught up *together with them* in the clouds" (the throng of God's adopted children);
- 7. Hades didn't prevail

Book written: AD 57

event to take place "at the last trumpet"; compare again Mt 24:31 & 1 Th 4:15-17 (same event); recall that what's described in v. 31 of Mt 24 was to be witnessed by that First Century generation; recall also that there's no mention made of a "secondlast" trumpet, or any other trumpet than "the last"; there's no mention of two parousias of Christ, separated by 49 generations or more, either!

## Geographical Notes

universal scope: all the disembodied spirits of the dead resided in Hades, whether they'd believed in that place/ state in their earthly lives or not; all the disembodied spirits were released from the Hadean realm for judgment and reward at the Parousia-coming of Christ; all those in Christ (remember how "all" is qualified in the context of the book: "to the church of God...") who remained alive would be changed instantly ("in a moment"); those believers still living were then transported - clad in their new, incorruptible, immortal, spiritual bodies - into the heavenly kingdom of God, an unseen, spiritual realm; the plan of redemption was then completed; Hades was emptied and put out of business forever; its gates did not prevail (they didn't hold the departed spirits when Christ used His keys (Rev 1:18), and it was "cast into the lake of fire" with Death (Rev

## Notes Re: Fulfillment

it should be re-asserted: the general, universal resurrection event is in the past, a one-time event of monumental importance, not to be duplicated on the same scale; and this is reasserted as well: resurrections - if you want to insist on that terminology - have gone on since the Lord's coming (the Parousia) in AD 66, and they will continue on into eternity, for as long as human beings are born and die on this planet (world without end- Is 45:17-18, Eph 3:21, Ec 1:4, etc.); the last trumpet sounded in AD 66, and the "quick and the dead" were gathered; the dead were judged and rewarded according to their works done on earth: condemnation rested upon those who didn't believe in God's Son: Jn 3:18, 36 (and therefore had no righteous works to present before the Judge, God's Son Himself!); but those who trusted in the Son - they who possessed His perfect, imputed righteousness - inherited the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world (Mt 25:34); from the Parousia on, that's what each human being faces at the time of his/her physical death: individual, final judgment based entirely on where that person stands in relation to Christ: either He is your condemning Judge or He is your perfect Advocate who has secured your pardon

20:14)

## 2 Cor 2:17

For we are not, as so many/the rest, peddling/adulterating for gain the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as from God, we speak in the sight of God in Christ.

#### 2 Cor 13:8

For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.

#### 2 Cor 3:11

For if what **is passing away** was glorious, what remains *is* much more glorious.

#### 2 Cor 4:18

For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

#### 2 Cor 5:17

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

### Gal 1:3-5

Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

# Parallel Texts/Word Study

2 Pe 2:3, 2 Cor 1:12, 3:5, 4:2, 12:19, 13:8, 1 Cor 3:11, 9:2; Paul spoke and wrote forthrightly from the position of genuine apostleship; his words came from the Lord, so they are to be received as if the Lord spoke them in person; in Him, there is no deceit; He is the wisdom of God (1 Cor 1:24)

Heb 8:13, 2 Cor 5:17; this is simple enough: the old covenant was *then* passing away, yielding to the new, everlasting covenant

2 Cor 5:7, Col 3:1-2, Heb 11:1; this is to be the perspective of all Christians; think spiritually and eternally

OT basis: "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered or come to mind/ upon the heart"- Is 65:17, and see Is 51:16; Rev 21:1

Mt 23:36, Mk 8:38, Phil 3:2; deliver = exaireo (take out of/pluck out/rescue: Young, Strong, and Thayer); a quick look at the texts listed above as parallels should serve the reader's memory: that First Century AD generation was supremely evil; also, that age in which Paul lived has passed; finally, some to whom Paul wrote would be in need of rescue from persecution and/or destruction

Book written: AD 57 (to Corinthians, for their instruction, and then for all of the body of Christ in all times)

in AD 57, the old covenant was passing away

true in every time

Paul described what was going on during the times of restoration/new creation (AD 30-70)

book written: c. AD 51, after the cross, but before the completion of redemption, judgment, and deliverance at the Parousia of Jesus Christ

## Geographical Notes

false prophets and teachers are everywhere in every time

the kingdom of God does not come with observation (Lk 17: 20); *heavenly* kingdom!

once again, we see that the new creation (heavens and earth) is not a new collection of stars/planets, a new material universe

remember that persecuting Jews followed Paul wherever he went with the gospel, even in Galatia; and association with Jews anywhere could prove to be dangerous: destruction would find them wherever they were (the carcass for the eagles to feed upon), so Christians would be putting themselves in harm's way by being in their vicinity

## Notes Re: Fulfillment

Paul and the other NT writers knew what they were talking about; today's would-be apostles are mere peddlers/adulterators of God's Word; steer clear of them! - they can only lead you away from the Truth (and fill their own pockets by deceiving the unwary)

the old covenant was a holy covenant, but it had been abused and broken; it had to go; it did, in finality (AD 70)

walking by faith, and not by sight, we believe that what God promised would occur *did* occur within the time-frame He outlined: AD 70

think Biblically, spiritually, and covenantally: the new creation is here now; the old system, the Jewish leadership, and the temple are all gone; live as *a* new creation within *the* new creation!

while Christ gave Himself for the sins of His elect - and that's the ultimate sense in which we are delivered from/ out of any age - there is in this passage a reference to temporal/bodily deliverance from those who would persecute Christians in the *First* Century (Jews and Romans!); the persecution of that age was unprecedented and unsurpassed since: the Great Tribulation involved both tribulation for the Christians, and tribulation for their persecutors (the Jews)

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### Gal 4:21-31

(v. 24-26)...For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar-for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children- but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all...

#### Eph 1:20-22

...which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality/rule and power/ authority and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church

## Parallel Texts/Word Study

please see p. 126-127 (at Rom 2:29, with several cited texts); Rev 21 & 22 (the New Jerusalem from above); a clear simile is put forth: Hagar = Mount Sinai = old Jerusalem = the Law = old covenant vs. the freewoman (Sarah) = Mount Zion = New Jerusalem = the Gospel = new covenant; this was the transition in a nutshell; until the old covenant was made obsolete in AD 70. the whole creation (all of humanity) was in bondage under the Law because no one could keep it and live by it; then One did keep the law perfectly, and He founded the New Jerusalem, the "mother" of all who would believe in Him, who have by imputation the righteousness (perfect law-keeping) of Jesus Christ; those of us who are born again from the Jerusalem above are free from the bondage and curse of the Law; our citizenship is in heaven (Phil 3:20)

Phil 2:9-10, Rom 8:38-39; OT basis: Psalm 110; observations:

- 1. Christ has been "seated" (installed) at the right hand of the Father since He was raised and exalted to that position of authority over all; but He is omnipresent 2. He has reigned from Heaven and in hearts ever since;
- 3. He reigned at the end of the old, passing age that was, and He reigns now in the new, everlasting age that is;
- 4. His *heavenly* reign will not cease; He will *not* reign from an *earthly* throne, as false teachers insist, against The Word

......

Book written: c. AD 51 (in the "already, but not yet" era of redemptive history: past the cross, but before the plan of redemption was completed in AD 70)

## Geographical Notes

"Jerusalem that now is" is "Jerusalem that was" to us: the old city of Jerusalem, which was leveled in AD 70; but it also served as a general metaphor for the whole old covenant sacrificial/typical system/dispensation that was rendered obsolete in AD 70; all that is gone, never to be recovered or re-lived

### Notes Re: Fulfillment

..... the mind that has been trained to think in Biblical, spiritual, covenantal terms will receive with ease the truths inherent here; and how this was fulfilled in the destruction of old Jerusalem and the temple (with all its ceremonial elements and genealogies necessary for the Levitical priesthood), should be apparent: the free Jerusalem from above - the everlasting kingdom of God and Heaven has replaced the old enslaved Jerusalem; the new covenant has displaced the old; it's impossible to reinstate the old system because the whole system was built around the temple in Jerusalem and was typical and temporary in nature, and God will not "repent" of (reconsider) what He has done- (1 Sam 15:29, Ec 3:14, Gal 2:18, Heb 9)

Book written: AD 62/63 (at the end of the age/world that then was, in anticipation of the everlasting age/ world that was to come, and now is) if you're looking for Christ to reign from an earthly throne, you might as well remove this text from your Bible (as well as the book of Hebrews); it's firmly established in this passage that Christ has been reigning with all authority in heaven and earth from the heavenly places

Jesus Christ received His everlasting kingdom at the time of His ascension into Heaven; He's reigned from there ever since, exalted "high above all" creation; there's absolutely no need for Him to sit in a visible, material throne on earth to establish His authority; to assert that He doesn't rule over all Heaven and Earth now - from Heaven - is nothing less than a blatant denial of His universal, eternal kingship!

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#### Eph 3:20-21 KJV

Now unto him that is **able to do** exceeding abundantly **above all that we ask or think**, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, **world without end.** Amen.

### Parallel Texts/Word Study

..... Lk 1:37, Rom 16:25, 1 Cor 2:9; OT: Is 55:8-9, 64:4, Ps 31:19; the central truth here is this: we are limited, but God is not; truly, God created and owns the physical, visible universe, but as awesome as that fact is, we are not giving God His due honor by acknowledging that fact alone; the children of God must look beyond that with the eyes of faith (given, too, by God); when we look for an earthly kingdom of God - even if it's supposed to last for a literal thousandyear period - we think way too low, and really "make God a liar" by teaching such a thing; His ways are higher (in knowledge, grace, and performance: Is 55:8-9), and past finding out: Rom 11:33; but God wants His children to continually exercise their faith in Him, because we owe Him that in love, and without real faith, it's impossible to please Him, the rewarder of those who diligently seek Him (Heb 11:6); that's what's involved in "calling on His name": it's praying in believing anticipation of the Father's hearing, and His granting the very best to His own in accordance with His perfect will: the Father knows and does best: He is all-wise and allpowerful, and He set His limitless, enduring love on His adopted children - through and for the sake of His Only Begotten - so that He would see the results of the labor of His soul, and be satisfied (Is 53:11)

Book written: AD 62/63

consider the phrase, "in the church" in this passagedoesn't that imply that there will always be God's "called out" (ekklesia) on earth? - and will there be "generations" in heaven? (the phrase translated "world without end" is literally, "to all the generations (geneas) of the age of the ages"; that points to everlasting earthly regeneration via procreation; there won't be procreation in heaven!

## Geographical Notes

"But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You. How much less this temple which I have built!" - Solomon, in 1 Kings 8:27

'Heaven is My throne, and earth is My footstool. What house will you build for Me? says the LORD...' - Acts 7:49

"God...since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands" - Acts 17:24

God dwells in hearts on earth, but never will He sit on a visible throne in a reconstructed Jerusalem; that teaching is an invention of earthlyoriented minds

### **Notes Re: Fulfillment**

..... because we are finite creatures, we are limited in every respect, including knowledge and imagination; so we aim too low, even when God has called us to look beyond and higher; we are each born with a corrupt, sinful nature that insists on finding righteousness within itself; we think first (with many, it's always) in natural, earthly terms; we each had a beginning, so we insist that for everything there must be an end, too; but with God, nothing is impossible: He has had no beginning, so He exists in and of Himself for eternity (Col 1:17); He is holiness itself: He defines righteousness and truth, and declares all the rules: He has created, and none shall undo His creation (Ec 3:14, Is 45:18); if God is eternal, holy, and omnipotent, it follows that to whom/what He's given eternality will exist eternally (by the word of His power: Heb 1:3); this planet isn't going to be destroyed, folks; God's plan will not be frustrated by any being, thing, or circumstance; the universe is not going to collapse into nothingness, because God made it for His glory, and He upholds it for that reason: the earth is here to stay: "world without end!" Amen.

## .....

### Eph 4:8-9

'When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men.' (Now this. 'He ascended'what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth?...)'

### Parallel Texts/Word Study .....

please review p. 44-45 (Mt 6:18); because of preconceived notions, most commentators miss the likely meaning: that Christ did descend into Hades after He died on the cross, where He presumably proclaimed His victory to the "captives," giving His elect positive hope in resurrection to eternal life in Heaven, and confirming to His enemies their resurrection to eternal death in Hell (1 Pe 3:19); "led captivity captive?"- this may mean that the captors (the devil and some of his legions) were bound at this time (Rev 20:2-3); they would later be released after the "thousand years" (symbolic of AD 30-66) for a "little while" (AD 66-70)

### Phil 1:6, 10 & 2:15-16

...that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ

...that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ...that you may become blameless and harmless/innocent children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life, so that I may reioice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.

2 Cor 1:14, 1 Th 5, 2 Th 1&2; while I will grant that Paul would be able to rejoice in the final perseverance of these, his Philippian converts, whenever the day of Christ would come, the sense of urgency in this letter to them is hard to overlook: it's obvious that Paul expected many of them to live to see the "Day of (Jesus) Christ," to be able to endure to the end (see 4:5: "The Lord is at hand"); the use of "until" and "till" strongly implies the good possibility of living long enough to experience that Day in the flesh; "crooked and perverse generation" is a bold clue, too

Book written: AD 62/63

Paul wrote this epistle at some point during the "thousand year" (golden age) period, during which the gospel spread throughout the Roman Empire, prior to the Great Tribulation (AD 63-70)

Book written: AD 62/63, while many of the "crooked and perverse generation" that rejected and killed Christ and His apostles were still alive

## Geographical Notes

the Hadean realm (Sheol to the Jews) was thought to be located in the bowels of the earth; hence, the phrase, "descended into the lower parts of the earth" fits well with the proposed interpretation; most commentators attempt to make the original language refer to Christ's "first coming" to Earth from Heaven in His humble birth, equating that with the "lower parts of the earth"

like Christians everywhere in the First Century AD, the Philippians encountered severe persecution from the Jews *and* Romans (AD 64-66 under Nero)

## Notes Re: Fulfillment

we took the time to examine this text because proper concepts of Hades and Hell are crucial to understanding eschatology; that is to say, it's important to understand the basic *first* things about the "last things" in order to get the overall picture; if Hades and Hell are confused in your mind (as they certainly were in mine!), right there is a major obstacle in your path; so let's remember:

- 1. hades = sheol = the grave = temporary realm of the disembodied spirits; hell = gehenna = tophet(h)= permanent abode of the damned (body and spirit);
- 2. Hades was emptied and abolished in AD 66; Hell established forever by AD 70

3. Christ descended into

Hades, but not into Hell >>>we can reasonably assume that the Day of Christ did arrive within the lifetimes of many to whom Paul wrote; it's assumed, and not known, only because we can't provide names of some of the recipients of Paul's letter and match them with a list of survivors until The Parousia that began in AD 66; but this we do know from the testimony of Scripture: Paul, the other NT writers, and Jesus Himself specified the era when the last things were to take place - they were all fulfilled before the year AD 70 was over

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### Phil 3:10-11

that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if by any means, I may attain to/arrive at **the** resurrection from the dead.

# Parallel Texts/Word Study

there are three Greek words that are translated as "resurrection" in English; all but 2 times, the word is anastasis; in Mt 27:53, where some of the old saints came out of the graves after Christ's resurrection, the word is egersis; only here in the NT is the word exanastasis used ("a standing up out of"); it seems to me that Paul used that particular word to serve a unique purpose: to teach what would happen at the time of Christ's coming, a one-time event, when the dead in Christ would be raised, and those who remained alive would be "caught up" and changed (1 Cor 15 & 1 Th 4); this seems to correspond with the climax of the restoration/regeneration/reformation period, a unique event that required a unique word; only once in redemptive history would there be a massive resurrection of all the departed spirits dwelling in either compartment of Sheol/ Hades to eternal life or eternal death; those believers who remained in the body would experience a bodily change - also a onetime event, and at the same time that would transform their lowly corruptible bodies of perishable flesh into glorious heavenly, incorruptible, imperishable spiritual bodies; it hardly seems appropriate for Paul to speak about his resurrection into Heaven as something he was unsure about, as something that he - who wrote Rom 8:28-30, 38-39, & 11:29 - was only hoping to, "by any means" attain! no, I believe Paul was expressing his earnest desire to be alive at Christ's second coming

Book written: AD 62/63

Christ destroyed (rendered null and void) the power of death and the devil at the cross, and in His resurrection (the first-fruits of the dead: 1 Cor 15:20. 23); but **God's** plan of redemption was not completed until the return of **Christ in AD** 66-70: this epistle was written *past* the resurrection of Christ (the very first resurrection), but before the return of Christ, when the general resurrection would occur (Pentecost "harvest" of AD 66)

### **Geographical Notes**

it's worth noting that Paul wrote this letter from prison; this may have some bearing on his use of the phrase, "if, by any means, I may attain to/arrive at the resurrection from the dead"; after all, his physical survival was in doubt, but his spiritual survival was assured

### Notes Re: Fulfillment

..... it would be nearly impossible to find another Christian who was so fully assured of his own resurrection to eternal life as Paul was; review those passages I cited in column two only a quick sampling, where dozens could be cited - if you doubt that assertion; Paul's "hope" was sure because it was grounded in Jesus Christ, the Amen - the Faithful One, Holy and True; Paul did teach the need for perseverance, but that, too, was guaranteed in Christ, Who preserves the saints without fail and grants them the necessary perseverance; so Paul must have been talking about the resurrection, and not his resurrection (the unique, general event, as opposed to an individual transitioning into the heavenly estate); when we examine Paul's body of work, we see great consistency: he constantly wrote as a "short-timer" with "inside information" would: he knew in his bones (because he was directly inspired by the Holy Spirit), and from his knowledge of Biblical prophecy, that the end times had already arrived; he had been brought to the brink of the new age, and he fervently wished to see His Lord bring it in; He did just that a couple of years after Paul died: AD 66

## .....

#### Phil 3:20

For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ

### Phil 4:5 The Lord is at hand.

#### Col 1:5-6, 23

...the gospel, which has come to you, as it has also in all the world...the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven...

#### 1 Th 2:14-16

For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus. For you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen, just as they did from the Judeans, who killed both the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they do not please God and are contrary/hostile to all men, forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved, so as always to fill up the measure of their sins: but wrath has come upon them to the uttermost.

### Parallel Texts/Word Study .....

Eph 2:6, 19, Acts 1:11, 1 Cor 1:7; here again, Paul is misleading the people of God, right? WRONG! the Holy Spirit led Paul into all truth (Jn 16:13), and Paul passed it on to Christ's church

Rom 13:12, 1 Pe 4:7, 1 Jn 2:18; self-explanatory!

### please see p. 60-61 & 126-127;

Acts 1:8, Rom 1:8, 16:26 (compare with Mt 24:14, Mk 16:15, Mt 28:19); first, the gospel would be preached in all the world, then would come the end

Acts 17:5, 2:23, Mt 5:12, 10:17, 23:32, 34-35, 24:9, Mk 13:9, Lk 11:52, 12:11, 13:33-34, Rev 16; the texts named above show the predictions of Jesus as He made them, and how they were fulfilled in the time between AD 30 and 70: this particular text confirms that persecution by the Jews was widespread, already in AD 51 or 52; and that they were contrary/ hostile to all men is confirmed by secular historians like Tacitus: they continued to fill up the cups of wrath poised over their heads (Rev 16), by hindering the preaching of the gospel, and by persecuting and slaying God's appointed messengers; Paul says that wrath has come upon them to the uttermost, because the time was so near: decisive wrath was ready to be spilled!

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## Geographical Notes

## Notes Re: Fulfillment

Book written: AD 62/63 (they eagerly waited for the return of Christ, in the First Century AD) until we who are Christians are granted full-time residency there, our feet may be planted on earth, but our thoughts should be worthy of Heaven Paul had every right to encourage the Philippian Christians in their eager expectation of the Lord's coming, and they had every reason to believe him; it was the truth, given by the Holy Spirit; the Lord was at hand already then, c. AD 63

Book written: AD 62/63 the known world (oikoumene )

the gospel had reached all nations by AD 63, according to the Holy Spirit's pronouncements through Paul; the end (of the age) came in AD 70

Book written: AD 51/52

though Satan had been bound, the unbelieving Jews carried on his work, until he was "released for a little while" from AD 63-70: then those Jews were whipped into a frenzy by their father, the father of lies (Jn 8: 39-44)

the Jews were scattered by the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities into all nations (see Acts 2:5-11); when Paul and the other apostles went out into the world with the gospel message, the Jews followed them. hounded them, and had them imprisoned or killed (just as Paul had sought to do before his conversion); even the Thessalonians in Greece tasted persecution instigated, at least, by unbelieving Jews

in Matthew 10 & 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21, we find that Jesus had predicted such things as these persecutions; they were to be signs of the approaching end, but "not yet"; the book of Acts documents specific instances of persecution in many places, and they should be taken as the "tip of the iceberg," for persecution of the young church was a daily affair: the unbelieving Jews came upon the Jewish Christians as ravening wolves upon a flock, all the while adding to the measure of their sin; the bowls of wrath were being filled to the brim, and at God's appointed time (AD 66-70), the flock would be led to safety, and the wolves would have their justly-deserved wrath come upon them; justice was served!

.....

#### 1 Th 2:19 & 3:13

For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?...so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints

#### 1 Th 4:8

Therefore he who rejects this [teaching regarding a sanctified, holy walk-SR] does not reject man, but God, who has also given us His Holy Spirit.

#### 1 Th 4:15-17

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

KEY WORDS: we (alive at His coming); coming (the Parousia); trumpet (sounded in Heaven to the angels- Mt 24:31); then (at that time, and **not** eventually, as I used to maintain because of an anti-Rapture presuppositional mindset)

## Parallel Texts/Word Study

2 Cor 1:14; coming = parousia (see Mt 24:3, 27, 37, 39; 1 Cor 15:23, 1 Th 4:15, 5:23, 2 Th 2:1, 8, Jas 5:7-8, 2 Pe 1:16, 3:4, 12, 1 Jn 2:28); Paul and James, Peter, and John expected *the* Parousia within the lifetimes of some of those to whom they wrote; a reminder: it's always "the" coming (parousia), never "a coming" or "one of the comings" of Christ

parallel texts: everywhere in the NT that apostolic authority is affirmed or confirmed; this serves to remind each of us Who the speaker/writer is, as we study these NT texts: the Holy Spirit; applies to all teachings!

>>>1 Cor 15:23, 51-54, Mt 24:30-31: we who are alive/remain = those among our (Paul's First Century AD) contemporaries who remain alive on earth (until the parousia of the Lord); they would not precede those who'd already died in Jesus (v. 13-14) in resurrection into Heaven, but they would be caught up together with them to enter in the same event: shout. voice, and trumpet are *not* to be taken literally - they are familiar symbols of gathering/marshaling/ mobilizing the congregation and armies of the Lord (see Num 10, Ex 19, Josh 6, Zech 9: 14, etc.); the dead in Christ rose from "Abraham's bosom" in Hades; NOTE OF SELF-ADMONITION: I used to put undue emphasis on a definition of epeita (English: then) that allowed for a separation in time between the dead in Christ rising at one time and others still alive, dying later; I was wrong!

#### **Timing Geographical Notes** Notes Re: Fulfillment ..... ..... ..... Book written: the unique, one-time event of AD 51/52 Jesus Christ's Parousia (coming in power and glory with His angels in judgment and deliverance, and to abide for an extended period of time) occurred in AD 66-70 ("this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place" - Mt 24:34) when we reject the teachings of the apostles, we reject the teachings of God; reject God's teachings, and you reject God you're on your own, easy prey for any false teacher that comes along if you insist that a Book written: amazing, isn't it?- that a whole AD 51/52 literal trumpet was to false eschatology could be built be literally heard, I will upon a misreading of this sinthe event insist that it was gle text as applying to our time! described is sounded and heard in (the still-future rapture view); the Parousia-Heaven (compare this these false teachers (see coming of the text with Mt 24:31, Rev above) have had to concoct an Lord, which 1:10, 4:1, 8:2, 6, 13, entire, non-biblical scheme to Paul fully ex-9:14); nowhere in the mesh with their misunderpected to take NT Scriptures do we standing of this passage; the place while read that this trumpet point of the passage was to some of the sound was to be litercomfort those who thought recipients of ally heard on earth by their deceased loved ones his letter rehuman ears (even in 1 had missed the resurrection mained alive, Cor 15: "at the last in the First Century AD!; and possibly trumpet"/ "the trumpet Paul explained that the event will sound " - but no even himself was still ahead (soon - for them ("we who...") mention of it being lit-- but in *our* distant past); no erally heard by human First Century believer would please see my ears); if more than a miss out: those who had died chapter 8 for symbol, the trumpet would go to be with the Lord in more was sounded in Heaven, and so would those

First Century believers who were still alive; and at *what* time was that, again? at "the

coming of the Lord."

Heaven

.....

#### 1 Th 4:17-18, 5:10

And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words... that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.

#### 1 Th 5:1-6

But concerning times and seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober.

## Parallel Texts/Word Study

please see preceding pages at 1 Th 4:15-17; this is just to complete the thought: Paul wrote this passage (v. 13-18) to comfort fellow Christians, and to free them from ignorance (v. 13, 18)

Mt 24:36-44, Lk 12:35-40, 17:20-36, Rom 13:11-14, Eph 5:8-15; no need that I should write to you = you've already been instructed in this (for you know...); day of the Lord = the only one mentioned in the NT: the coming ( Parousia) of Jesus Christ: sudden destruction upon them = those of the night/darkness would be going on in their wicked ways as always (see gospel texts cited above), until - suddenly - they would be destroyed without remedy (Ec 8:11 and Prov 6:15: "Because the sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil... therefore his calamity shall come suddenly: suddenly he shall be broken without remedy"); there is OT precedence for the false "peace-sayers," too: Jer 6:14, 8:11, Eze 13:10; as labor pains upon a pregnant woman (see Mt 24:8, Mk 13:8) = sudden strike of intolerable pain, with no going back; (not) overtake you = this will be in *our* time (*First* Century AD), but you won't be overtaken; however, they (the wicked) shall not escape; sobering!

Book written: AD 51/52 re: the general resurrection/ bodily change event

.....

written AD 51/52, with regard to the Day of the Lord that was still future to them, but over 1945 years in our past (as of AD 2017)

## Geographical Notes

destruction without remedy came upon the covenant-breaking Jews who rejected and killed Christ and His prophets; it was their land that was decimated; Josephus reports that in the wake of the AD 70 destruction, when the last stones of the temple had been plowed under, that one passing through the area for the first time would have thought it was always uninhabited, and it wasn't repopulated until several years later (not by the 12 tribes); many Jews headed into the temple, seeking peace and safety (it was a virtual walled fortress), and instead ran headlong into destruction; some of the faithful may have fled to Pella, following the command of the Lord (Mt 24:15-16), but probably the vast majority died in the Neronic persecution (see Mt 24:22 in the same context and compare Luke 18:8b)

## Notes Re: Fulfillment

thus = "so shall" - KJV (houtos): "in this way" we (all Christians in AD 66, whether living or dead) shall always be with the Lord (resurrected out of Hades or caught up alive)

concerning what "times and seasons" (both plural)? - of the resurrection and bodily change/ "snatching up/away" or "rapture," the subject at hand; there would be a general, universal resurrection of the dead out of Sheol/Hades to judgment and reward, and an "upward call" of the living faithful into a fully-redeemed heavenly state and eternal residency; the resurrection that Paul had hoped to "by any means attain/arrive at" (remain alive for: Phil 3:11) was the general, universal event that coincided with the beginning of Christ's Parousiacoming in AD 66; that unique event won't be repeated, just like His virgin birth, death on the cross, and His own bodily resurrection: but that doesn't mean the end of "resurrections," and that we missed out; no, we can be comforted by Paul's teaching, too: "thus" (in the same way) shall we, too who have been born again - be ushered into eternal life in Heaven, where we will be clothed in our new spiritual bodies (1 Cor 15:35-55), to be with the Lord always!; but for those living in darkness, it would be "Lights out!" forever, in an instant, without recourse

## 1 Th 5:23-24

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify/set you apart completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.

## 2 Th 1:4-10

(v. 7-8) and to *give* you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ

# Parallel Texts/Word Study

Phil 4:9 (God of peace), 1 Th 3: 13, 1 Cor 1:8-9, Jude 24; Paul invokes the blessing of the Lord upon the bodies of the Thessalonian Christians, praying for their preservation in the First Century AD; if Paul didn't expect the "coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" to occur within their lifetimes, this is an empty prayer! - why would he ask the Lord to preserve their bodies until He returns 49 or more generations after their deaths? - the simple answer is that he didn't ask that; he asked the Lord to protect them from bodily harm and death, so that they could be *alive* when He returned (less than 20 years after this writing); note, also: He is faithful, and will do it: He did do it as and when He said He would

2 Cor 7:4, 1 Th 1:3, 2:12-20, Phil 1:28-30, 3:19, Mt 25:31, Jn 17:10, Rev 6:10, 14:13; note: "with us when..." the Lord Jesus is revealed (apokalypsis) from heaven with His mighty angels (Mt 16:27-28, 24:30-31, 25:31), in flaming fire taking vengeance (fits the destruction of Jerusalem to a "t" for temple ) on those who do not know God (unbelievers in general), and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ (unbelievers to whom the gospel had been preached, especially the Jews of Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria, to whom it was first preached: first and foremost in rejection and guilt)

Book written: AD 51/52

regarding the coming of the Lord (His Parousia), within the earthly lives of some of those to whom Paul wrote

### Book written: AD 51/52

"with us"
(when...) is a clue: the revealing
(apocalypse) of the Lord
Jesus was expected by the First
Century AD generation, of which Paul was a part

## Geographical Notes

Paul was concerned for the spiritual and physical security of the early Christians; there was extensive persecution throughout the world, and it was going to intensify; by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he knew what was coming soon, so he asked for temporal, bodily salvation for those brothers and sisters in the faith; they would be exposed to the onslaught of The **Great Tribulation** (Neronic persecution), and they needed to be preserved bodily

if you read the whole text, of which only two verses were quoted in column one, you'll have it confirmed to you once again that the time in which Paul wrote was one of great persecution and tribulation for Christians all over the world (first. from the Jews, and later from the Romans, as Nero's scapegoats); it might be a good exercise for the unconvinced reader to check out every reference to "persecution/ tribulation/trouble(d)/ afflicted" in the NT

## Notes Re: Fulfillment

since Paul expected some of God's children to whom he wrote to survive until the return of the Son, and since the effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much (Jas 5:16), we have good reason to believe that some of those Christians alive in AD 52 were also alive in AD 66, when the coming of the Lord occurred; they had been spared in body, and when they each appeared before the heavenly throne, they were presented blameless, because they were clothed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ, Faithful and True

in Luke's gospel narrative, Jesus said, "but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed" (Lk 17:29-30); and of the last days that were to come He said, "For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled" (Lk 21:22, Is 63:4); if we were using a "magic 8ball" to seek last things truth. what would pop into view would be, "all signs point to AD 70"; but we don't need "magic" - we have God's Word!

.....

#### 2 Th 2:1-8

Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and **our** gathering together to Him. we ask you, not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin/ lawlessness is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Do you not **remember that** when I was still with you I told you these things? And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. For the mystery/hidden truth of lawlessness is already at work; only he who **now** restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.

## (from the Old Testament):

## Is 11:4

He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked.

## Parallel Texts/Word Study

1 Th 4:15-17, Mt 24:4, 31, 1 Tim 4:1, Jn 17:12, 1 Cor 8:5, 1 Jn 2:18, Rev 13; OT: Dan 7:24-25, 8:23-25, Is 11:4; observations:

- 1. coming = *parousia* (in both instances, v. 1 & 8);
- 2. *our* gathering to Him = we of the contemporary generation, part of which will see the Parousia (*they* who *did* see it, to us);
- 3. troubled, as though the day of Christ had come (by AD 51/52): note that they could not possibly have been fooled into thinking that way if the day of Christ was to be a universe-collapsing, end-of-time debacle; that is ruled out entirely here! they did have the proper (spiritual) kingdom perspective, or else Paul would have corrected them!;
- 4. Paul reminds them of what he'd taught them: there would be a great apostasy (falling away) before the day of Christ, so that would be a sure sign of His coming shortly (a major theme of Hebrews is an urgent warning against apostasy, and an exhortation to persevere to the end of the age, which was not far away);
- 5. though I can't tell you with certainty who the man of lawlessness was, those *Thessalonians* who survived into The Great Tribulation (at the least) *could*! he was someone from their own time, and he was revealed *then*;
- 6. finally, whoever that was, he was "consumed" and "destroyed" by the Lord at His coming. Amen!

Book written: AD 51/52

"concerning the coming (Parousia) of our Lord Jesus Christ"/ "the day of Christ"/ "that Day" after "the falling away" when "the man of lawlessness" would be revealed; also, the mystery of lawlessness was already at work; the text doesn't necessarily say that the *man* in question was already at work, opposing and exaltina himself above all that is called God or worshiped, but it portrays him in the (near) future time of his revealing, when he opposes, exalts, and sits...

## Geographical Notes

is it necessary for this man of lawlessness to have been literally seated "in the temple of God" to qualify as that "son of perdition?" - the Greek word order in the original: "so as for him in the temple of God as God to sit down, setting forth himself that he is God" - what do you think?; I'd have to say that the natural sense seems to be that this man would literally take his seat in the Jerusalem temple, presenting himself as God; but I don't think we're confined to a strictly literal interpretation, because the language is prophetic and symbolic (look at v. 8 and parallel texts); it could simply point to someone who accepted the reverence and worship that belongs to God alone, so that he was putting himself in the place of God (symbolized by what the Jews conceived of as the dwelling place of God)

### **Notes Re: Fulfillment**

..... this whole issue of identifying the "man of lawlessness" is murky; part of the problem is that the term "antichrist" has been removed from John's first two epistles and read into this context; let's nip that in the bud: "antichrist" is not in this text, and the term appears only four times in those two epistles of John's (1 Jn 2:18, 22, 4:3, and 2 Jn 7); a careful look at those texts reveals that John defined an antichrist, or those who display the spirit of antichrist, but not a specific antichrist (the antichrist); this "man of lawlessness/sin" is different: this was an individual known to Paul (by common knowledge or by direct revelation), and he identified who that person was (already then) or who he would be (who to look for) to the Thessalonian Christians; so even though we probably can't say with absolute certainty today who that was, the important thing to remember in all of this is that it was vitally important for the First Century AD Christians to know the identity of that thoroughly wicked man who had power to rule, deceive, lead into idolatry, and spiritually and physically harm them; God is faithful and true, so they did know! the people who really needed to know did get that information; however, for us today, it's more of a matter of curiosity than anything else; there really are bigger fish to fry

## 1 Tim 4:1-3

Now the Spirit expressly/explicitly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.

#### 1 Tim 6:14, 16

...that you keep...blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing, which He [God the Father-SR] will manifest...who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see...

## Parallel Texts/Word Study

2 Th 2:3, 9-11 (where we just were, on the previous two pages), 2 Tim 3:13. Mt 7:15. Rev 16:13-14: "latter times": 2 Tim 3:1, Heb 1:2, 1 Pe 1:20, 1 Jn 2:18; since the express/ explicit statement of the Spirit isn't recorded elsewhere in Scripture, we must assume that it was directly given to Paul by the Holy Spirit, and therefore, true; but don't try that at home yourself - that won't work for you today (instead, search the Scriptures, written for our instruction); look at 2 Th 2:9-11 (we left off previously at v. 8): The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie"; please see the last column on the next page, but it's quite clear what was going to happen: wicked legalism would be used to attack weak Christian consciences new to the gospel

two quick points here:

- 1. we find those concepts together again: "until" and Christ's "appearing," indicating that from another *First* Century group, some would live to see it;
- 2. think twice about whether you'd want to see the *glorified* Christ with earthly eyes!

..... Book written: mid-AD 63

Paul wrote this warning about "latter times" because he and the recipients of his letter were in them then (middle of the First Century AD); compare those "latter times" texts listed, and recall that Peter identified AD 30 as the beginning of the last days (Acts 2:16-21): the latter times and last days are well behind us today (end of the age, not of time)

### **Geographical Notes** .....

keep in mind that the Jews had significant Roman Empire: "To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad": Jas 1:1, and see Acts 2:5-11; they had presence and influence everywhere in the known world, and they could wield the hammer of the law/ sacrificial system anywhere where it was known by people raised as Jews

### Notes Re: Fulfillment

..... two great misconceptions seem to prevail in our day: 1) populations all over the that "latter times" refers to our own times; 2) that the apostates in view are the Roman Catholics, who forbid their "priests" to marry, and have until recent years required abstention from eating meat on Fridays (those who hold this position seem to fixate on those two details); these notions are both false; the Bible has nothing to say specifically about that whole apostate cult which now exists, but did not exist in the Biblical latter times/ last days: this was about the Jews of the First Century AD, who tried to forbid marriage to Gentiles, and who clung to the whole amalgamation of Levitical-ceremonial and Pharasaical law as if it held the power of salvation (including the approved and disapproved meats); those who departed from the faith succombed to the deception peddled to them and forced upon them by the likes of zealous Judaizers, nationalists, and gospel-despising Jews; this was the context!

> again and again, the thread of imminency is sewn into the NT fabric; if you remove it, your understanding falls apart; Christ appeared a second time, apart from sin, for salvation (Heb 9:28) in AD 66-70

.....

### 2 Tim 2:17-18

And their message will spread like cancer. Hymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort, who have strayed concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is already past; and they overthrow the faith of some.

#### Mt 16:27-28

For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to His works. Assuredly, I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom.

### Mt 24:31, 34

And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other...Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.

### Mt 25:31-32

When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats.

## Parallel Texts/Word Study

1 Tim 1:20, 1 Th 4:13-18, 1 Cor 15; this is the favorite text of the neo-Agrippas, who are "almost persuaded" (Acts 26:28) to become preterists, those "partial-preterist" futurists who can't deny that consistent preterism is the Biblical, covenantally-wise, God-honoring eschatology, so they whip out this passage and say, "Aha! Gotcha!"; they call consistent preterists "Hymeneans," as if their namecalling makes it so; they make this groundless charge because the phrase, "saying that the resurrection is already past" appears in this text, written 1950+ years ago; they are right about this: we believe that the resurrection (event) is already past, and we make no bones about it: but:

- 1. it *wasn't* past in AD 63, and we readily acknowledge that, too;
- 2. if these two false teachers were saying that a *bodily* resurrection a reconstitution of the material flesh was past, they could go to the graves and immediately see who was telling the truth!: bodies still there decaying? then no resurrection had occurred!:
- 3. this text shows that the concept of a resurrection of the "body" was *not* the Biblical teaching in Paul's day, so it's not the Biblical teaching in ours either! This text is *neither* futurist-friendly *nor* creedalist-friendly!

REMEMBER: resurrection of/out of/from the dead (ones)- those are the Biblical terms, not of the body or the flesh; new, spiritual bodies suited for eternal, heavenly existence: 1 Cor 15:35-54!

Book written: late AD 63

CRUCIAL: at the time that Paul wrote this letter to Timothy, the resurrection was most certainly not already in the past, but it was in the very near future (AD 66); and if Paul and the other apostles had been teaching a distant resurrection day ("the last day"), there would be no way that anyone in the First Century AD could have been deceived and had their faith "overthrown" by some claiming that it was already past! - they knew it was imminent!

Please think this through, people! Stop trying to shoehorn the past into the present!

## Geographical Notes

let's talk about graves in the First Century AD: they were usually caverns hewn out of the rock, like the catacombs (and see the gospel descriptions of Christ's tomb); you didn't even need a shovel to "unearth" the dead, in most cases; so it was much easier then to check the graves for "current occupants!"; it amounted to little more than a "bed check"

## Notes Re: Fulfillment

if we can just detach our emotions from logical, orthodox thinking (Biblical straightthinking), we can stop the name-calling (yes, I do it, too: "neo-Agrippas") and discover the truth; every one of us brings presuppositions (preconceived notions) to our Bible-reading; they've been formed into what is called a "paradigm," which might be best understood as a lens through which we view Scripture, or our perspective (position from which we view things); in looking at this text, the terms "preterist," "partialpreterist," and "futurist" were used, and they have simple definitions:

- 1. preterist: one who believes that all Biblical prophecy has been fulfilled;
- 2. partial-preterist: believes that most, but not all, Biblical prophecy has been fulfilled (usually excepting Rev 20+, and/or Mt 25; the "sticking point" is most often *the* resurrection);
- 3. futurist: anyone who's not a preterist, including "partial-preterists"; SO WHO'S RIGHT? consider this: any futurist position necessarily makes Jesus Christ ignorant, a deceiver, a false prophet, and a sinner like you and me; God is made a liar by all futurists, that's just the sad fact; Christ is God, and God can not lie (Titus 1:2), so when He says what and when, believe Him! (Rom 3:4)

.....

### 2 Tim 3:1-9

(v. 1) But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: ...(v.8-9) Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these [present tense, for Paul-SR] also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith; but they will progress no further, for their folly will be manifest to all, as theirs [Jannes and Jambres-SR] also was.

## Parallel Texts/Word Study

1 Tim 4:1-3, 2 Th 2:9-10, 2 Tim 4:1-5, Titus 1:16, 2 Pe 2:10, Mt 23:14. Rom 1:28-32. Jude 16-18: OT: Ex 7-9 (Jannes and Jambres were Pharaoh's magicians); here again, Paul was writing about what would happen "in the last days" because he and Timothy lived in them - these things were going on then; "so do these," they "resist" (not "will resist") the truth, "they will progress no further," their folly "will be" manifest; the point?- Paul was writing to Timothy in the First Century AD about wicked people of his days: the "last days"

#### Titus 1:1-3

Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect and the acknowledgment of the truth which accords with godliness, in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began, but has in due time manifested His word through preaching, which was committed to me according to the commandment of God our Savior

(from the Old Testament):

#### Prov 14:5

A faithful witness does not lie (see Rev 1:5, 3:14)

Heb 6:18; OT: Num 23:19, 1 Sam 15:29, Prov 14:5; do I beat a dead horse, quoting those words, "God, who cannot lie" so often? - if I do, it's because I know human nature, because God (in His grace ) has made me take a *long* look in my own mirror (Jas 1:23-24), and in addition to the corruption of my soul, I've seen the unworthy things I've sought, like the path of least resistance (through indifference to the truth); it's clear to me that if one just glances at the mirror, the image seen is soon forgotten; most of us need constant reminders about who we are and Who God is

Book written: late AD 63

last times/

days/hour defined in the NT: Acts 2:16-17 Heb 1:2 Jas 5:3, 7-9 1 Pe 1:5, 20, 4:7 2 Pe 3:3 1 Jn 2:18 Jude 18

book written: mid-AD 63

note "in due time" and compare with Mt 24:14 for another timeframe connection

## Geographical Notes

if you need historical confirmation that men fitting the textual description existed in the First Century, First Century historian Josephus will provide it; Judea was overrun with self-seeking deceivers

### Notes Re: Fulfillment

..... when we read this whole passage (v. 1-9) today, we shake our heads and mutter that it's like reading the newspapers or watching the daytime talk shows; we resemble those remarks (to borrow a phrase); it's true: it sounds so much like our own time: but it can't refer to our time, because the timeframe in which all Biblical prophecy was to be fulfilled was established in the Bible itself as 49+ generations ago; once more: the "last days" were the last days of the age, the first of only two this world will ever see, covenantally and Biblically-speaking, and the one in which we live today has no end; all things were fulfilled by the end of AD 70

it's so sad: the One who knows all things, performs all things, and speaks no lies has so often said what would happen, and when and where, and we sin-darkened creatures say - in our unfathomable hubris and pride - "No, that isn't right" or "Yes, but that isn't what He meant"; it's sad from the perspective of the sinner made righteous by Christ, but it's arrogant in the eyes of the Holy One!; I challenge you: how long will you persist in arrogant ignorance? - but if you do take God at His Word, let's thank Him together!

## Titus 2:11-13

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ

#### Heb 1:1-2

God, who at various times/in many portions and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has **in these last days** spoken to us by *His* Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom He also made the **worlds/ages** 

### Heb 6:11

And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end

## Parallel Texts/Word Study

1 Cor 1:7, Col 3:4, 1 Tim 6:14, 2 Tim 1:10, 4:1, Heb 9:28, 1 Pe 1:7; observations:

- 1. in the First Century AD (*their* "present age"), they were looking for the "blessed hope" which many are *still* looking for today, (in *their* "age to come"), denying its present reality:
- 2. appearing = epiphaneia (manifestation, a close synonym with revelation: apocalypsis)

2 Pe 1:21, Acts 2:16-17, 1 Pe 1:5, 20, 1 Jn 2:18; it should be pointed out that the last days arrived on Pentecost in AD 30, and if we are still in the last days, as so many claim, then just the last days of the age have already exceeded the whole Mosaic dispensation (from the giving of the law to the cross of Christ or AD 70, no matter how you calculate it: c. 1533 BC until AD 30 or 70, yields 1603 years at most, while the "last days" supposedly have lasted over 1985 years!); worlds/ages = aion (age/indefinite time/dispensation: Young)

Col 2:2, Mt 13:39, 40, 49, 24:3, 6, 13, 28:20, 10:22, 1 Cor 15:24 (and several others re: "the end"); in addition to the theme of Christ's superiority to the angels and the Levitical priesthood, Hebrews emphasizes the theme of perseverance in the midst of great tribulation and apostasy, so "you" was specifically applied; the end (of the age) would come then

Book written: mid-AD 63

near the end of the age that was, on the brink of the new, everlasting age that was to come, in which we now live

book written: AD 62/63, in the old age, on the brink of the new; the last days of the old age ran from AD 30 to AD 70 (Pentecost through Parousia)

IMPORTANT TO REMEM-BER: it would be possible for First Century Christians to live until the end; but our current age has no end

## Geographical Notes

note that Christians all over were "looking" for Christ's coming/appearing/revealing, but that it would be impossible for all of them to "eyeball" that coming down upon Jerusalem; they would, however, perceive it

# Notes Re: Fulfillment

having made our way through Paul's letters to *First* Century Christians, we'd do well at this point to review some facts:

- 1. Paul was consistent in portraying last things events as *near* in time *to them*;
- 2. Paul's message was always one of *deliverance* for those in Christ, *and* wrathful *judgment* upon His enemies

please see column two of the previous page and p. 88-89 for some thoughts about time, as viewed by humans and as viewed by God; throughout this work, those two perspectives are shown to be harmonious; since God lives in the eternal "now," it's true time has no meaning for Him, but He did invent it for the use of the human race, so when He talks about time, He uses terms to which we can relate; 2 Pe 3:8 has been abused way too often, so don't use that crutch!

>>>when the Bible speaks about "enduring to the end," it never is with reference to the end of time and/or planet Earth; nor does it mean that whoever lived until AD 66-70 would be saved for eternity; in view was temporal/bodily salvation from the coming onslaught at the end of the age; the eternal salvation of *true* Christians wasn't in doubt (Christ: our Surety)

## Heb 6:19-20

This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

#### Heb 8:1-5

Now *this is* the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary/holies and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man. For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices. Therefore it is necessary that this One also have something to offer. For if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law; who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, "See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain."

### Heb 8:13

In that He says, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

## Parallel Texts/Word Study

Heb 9:12, 24-28; please read Lev 16:1-17 to see the connections; this is a partial answer to the question, "what was going on in the heavenly realm between AD 30 and 70, while Jesus was "away?"; Jesus, as the High Priest of the true children/assembly of Israel, presented the blood (His) in the Most Holy Place, behind the veil, on behalf of all the children of true Israel (Lev 16:15-17); note that *c*. AD 63, Jesus had entered behind the veil, but had not yet emerged from it to announce to the people that atonement had been accepted (Heb 9:28: "To those who eagerly wait for Him to appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation); in the Old Covenant dispensation, that wait on the Day of Atonement was suspenseful, because forgiveness of sins for all the children of Israel (mediated by Christ via the symbol of the *cloud* of incense covering the mercy seat: Ex 16:13) hung in the balance: accepted by God or not? does the high priest live to continue to intercede for us? - why does it seem to be taking so long? - these were serious questions on their minds; similar anticipation was in the air from AD 30 to 66

has made = pepalaioken (he has made old, in the sense of rendered; replacement was imminent); ready = eggus (nigh/near)

## Timing ...... Book written: AD 62/63

## **Geographical Notes**

recall that the Most
Holy Place of the
tabernacle - and later,
the temple - was off
limits to all, except for
the High Priest, and
only on the Day of
Atonement (once each
year)

in AD 63, the True Tabernacle was in Heaven, while the copy (type) was on earth in Jerusalem; since late summer of AD 70, the True Tabernacle of God is with men (Rev 21:3, Jn 14:23), and in Heaven, and the copy is no more (never to be rebuilt- Gal 2:18)

### Notes Re: Fulfillment

..... since the Old Testament provides many glimpses into spiritual realities fulfilled in the person and work of Jesus Christ, through its types and shadows, we can learn what we couldn't personally witness; everything in the Levitical laws and ordinances had value in pointing to Christ (the whole Bible is about Him; see Lk 24:44), so one thing that must have taken place in Heaven between AD 30 and 66 was the presentation of the blood of the Lamb as the once-for-all effectual sacrifice, behind the veil of the Most Holy Place; how literally that can be taken, is not for us to know, but the certainty of the atonement's acceptance by God the Father is central to our faith; the seal of approval came in AD 70, when the old Levitical/typical/ sacrificial/old covenant system was emphatically replaced by the antitype, the fulfilled reality of the everlasting New Covenant, in the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, the life-blood of the old, typical system

clear! AD 63 was very close to the end of the old covenant age when Hebrews was written, the old covenant was "ready to vanish away"; it did vanish away in late summer, AD 70

.....

...even the first covenant had

Heb 9:1, 7-12

ordinances of divine service and the earthly sanctuary...But into the second part [the Most Holy Place/Holiest of All-SR] the high priest went alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the people's sins committed in ignorance; the Holy Spirit indicating this, that **the** way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was standing. It was symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience- concerned only with foods and drinks, various washings/baptisms, and fleshly

ordinances imposed until the

time of reformation. But Christ

came as High Priest of the good

things to come, with the greater

and more perfect tabernacle not

made with hands, that is, not of

own blood He entered the Most

Holy Place once for all, having

obtained eternal redemption.

goats and calves, but with His

this creation. Not with the blood of

# Parallel Texts/Word Study

Heb 5:3-10, 7:19, 9:24-28, Jn 14:6, Col 2:16-17, Eph 2:14-15; OT: Ex 25:8-9, 30:10; notes:

- 1. the first/Old Covenant had the earthly sanctuary, the New Covenant does not (except the priesthood of believers, in which God dwells);
- 2. the high priest went alone into the Most Holy Place once a year with the sacrificial blood - having received atonement for his own sins first, and then sought it for the children of Israel, but *The* High Priest, Jesus Christ, presented His sinless blood once for all;
- 3. while the temple of the old covenant still stood, the way into the Holiest of All (the Most Holy Place), was not yet made manifest (revealed/made known); the sacrificial system was in effect until the types/copies/symbols were removed, replaced by the Reality to which they had pointed (Jesus Christ, the true Tabernacle/Temple and High Priest forever, in the order of *Melchizedek*, and not Levi);
- 4. "until the time of reformation": it should be quite clear that this refers to the ending of the Old Covenant/Levitical ordinances that were made obsolete when the New Covenant dispensation arrived; 5. it should be clear now, too, just why the destruction of the earthly temple was necessary, and how it truly was a "big deal!"

Book written: AD 62/63

this epistle to the Hebrews was written while the Jerusalem temple still stood: "it was symbolic for the present time" (until then, a few years before it would be destroyed by God, through the human agency of Titus and his armies); the time of reformation had come, but transition was in the works until The Day of reformation, when Christ would come to make everything "official" in a very visible way!

# Geographical Notes

the temple in
Jerusalem - finished
completely in AD 63,
according to knowledgable historians would stand only a few
years beyond the
writing of Hebrews;
unless the LORD
builds [and maintains
-SR] the house, those
who build it labor in
vain: Ps 127:1

### Notes Re: Fulfillment

..... in this passage, we find the clearest Scriptural evidence that the earthly temple will never be rebuilt: "the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing. It was **symbolic**..."; that should be sufficient reason for any Christian! - I earnestly suggest to you, that if God wants the earthly sanctuary rebuilt, He also wants to return to the sacrificial/symbolic system, and return us to the bondage of sin; for He would be taking away everything that He accomplished through His Son and the Holy Spirit, and starting all over again! No!!! - that will not happen!; drop your scheme!; the promises of God in Christ are Yes and Amen, to the glory of God (2 Cor 1:18-20); the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable (Rom 11:29), and that includes, above all, the gift of His Only Begotten Son, and eternal life through Him (Rom 6:23); God will not put back together what He has destroyed according to His own holy, immutable purpose (Gal 2:18, Ec 3:14: I know that whatever God does, it shall be forever. Nothing can be added to it, and nothing taken from it. God does it, that men should fear before Him.

.....

### Heb 9:24-28

(v.26-28)...but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared [optomai -SR] to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him, He will appear [phaneroo -SR] a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.

### Parallel Texts/Word Study

..... 1 Cor 10:11, Heb 6:19-20 (see pages 170-171), 8:2, 9:1-15 (see pages 172-173), Rom 6:10, 8:34, 2 Cor 5:10, 1 Jn 4:17, 1 Pe 2:24, Mt 26:28, 1 Cor 1:7, Titus 2:13; now, once at the end of the ages = now, once in (the) consummation of the ages; He has appeared = in His "first" coming and subsequent sacrifice on the cross, when He was seen (optomai - "eyeballed"); appointed to die once = by God's immutable decree, for each person born, there will be that person's death (even Enoch and Elijah experienced a sort of physical death in their translations, though not in ways that fit our normal understanding of the term; but they did cease to live on "this mortal coil"); but after this the judgment = and after this, judgment (no "the" in the original Greek; you die, then you get judged; there's no concept un-der the new, everlasting covenant of waiting for the last person on earth to die at the fictitious "end of time." and then the universal judgment can begin!); To those who eagerly wait for Him (because the Holy Spirit instructed First Century Christians to do so, through the apostles), He will appear (phaneroo - to make manifest, present/show, not the same word in v. 26, where physical observation with the eyeballs is meant) a second time, apart from sin. for salvation: to those who were eagerly waiting for Him in the First Century AD, He made it clear that sin was removed once for all. and the plan of eternal salvation was then completed

Book written: AD 62/63

now (then, in AD 62 or 63), at the end/ consummation of the ages (see again 1 Cor 10:11), where the ages would change ("age that now is" became the age that was: "age that is to come" became the age that now is forever)

this was before the general, universal "Great White Throne" judgment that occurred at the Parousiacoming of Jesus Christ in AD 66-70; only individual eternal judgment is in our future

# Geographical Notes

please read verses 24-25 - not quoted in column one - for more information that should reinforce what was just said on previous pages re: the temple and the Most Holy Place

# Notes Re: Fulfillment

..... keeping in mind the Biblical territory through which we've most recently passed, we should all be on the same page with regard to concepts of perishable types, shadows, and copies, and how they only served to point to *permanent* realities in Christ, and of the kingdom of God; we should also be clear on the timing of the transition between ages, and just when it was that the plan of redemption was finally, firmly completed; we also know that the Bible speaks of Christ's second appearance, but never His third, as if Christ forgot to do something that He'd meant to do (and promised to do, in fulfilling Daniel's prophecies) the second time! - that's absurd!); so when our High Priest emerged from behind the veil, having successfully obtained full redemption by the sacrifice of His holy blood, He did appear a second time - apart from sin (it had been banished once for all, for all the elect, past and future) - to the very people who eagerly waited for Him (outside the Holy Place, as it were) in the First Century AD, to complete salvation, and give the visible sign of it: the destruction of the old, obsolete system of symbols and bondage under the law; in AD 70, this monumental transition was wrapped up!

# .....

#### Heb 10:12-13

But this Man. after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool.

#### Heb 10:23-25

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

### Parallel Texts/Word Study .....

Mt 22:44, Mk 12:36, Lk 20:43, Acts 2:35, Heb 1:13 (from Ps 110:1); another part of the answer: what was going on between AD 30 & 70? - the spirits of Heaven and Hell were waging war on earth (Rev 14-19), fighting (ultimately, at the end of the Great Tribulation for both the Christians and the Messiahrejecting Jews, from mid-AD 66 to 70) the battle described in Rev 20, after the devil had been released "for a little while"- (v. 3); don't think so? well, think about this: angels are spirits; they can't be seen unless made visible to us, and they can't be killed (immortal) or even bodily harmed, though they can kill and harm mortal beings; so if you're expecting a literal battle at Mount Megiddo ("Armageddon"- a symbol itself, from Rev 16:16) between visible angels who draw each other's blood, you're going to die still expecting to see it; think in spiritual terms or get it all wrong

1 Cor 1:9, 10:13, 2 Cor 1:18-20, Acts 2:42. Rom 13:11-12. Phil 4:5. Rev 1:5, 3:14, 19:11, 22:20; here again is that recurring theme of Hebrews: hang in there (together, as much as possible), because deliverance by the Faithful One is coming soon; though some stay away because of fear in these perilous, apostate times, don't you stay away from your Christian family; strengthen each other with your bodily presence, which is especially crucial as the Day of the Lord comes so near to you (in the First Century AD)

Book written: AD 62/63

Christ had received His kingdom and His servants on earth were learning to do His will on earth, as it was done by those in heaven (thy will be done in heaven and on earth): the last enemy had been destroyed (death was rendered null, void, and without the power to keep God's children separated from their Father)

while consistent Christian fellowship and assembling for genuine worship is always important, it was especially essential for spiritual and physical survival in the First Century AD

# Geographical Notes

since a full look at the book of Revelation isn't planned for this work, this seems to be a good place to put to rest the "theory" of a literal "Battle of Armageddon" still in our future; it had me going for quite some time, too; but when we are ready to think in mature, spiritual kingdom terms, we soon come to realize that the battles depicted in Revelation would (normally) not be observable through human senses, so we should not expect to see them fought on the dirt of the earth

remember that there were no church buildings dedicated to that exclusive use until the late Second Century AD; in the First Century, Christians met in private homes, catacombs, and under the sky for worship, and in synagogues - if they were sufficiently "discreet" (syncretistic is probably the term that better applies, as they'd have one foot in Christianity and the other still in Judaism)

# Notes Re: Fulfillment

please review what was said regarding the destruction of the last of Christ's enemies (spiritual death that made access to God's holv, heavenly presence impossible) at Lk 1:33, p. 90-91, and bear this in mind: the word translated "destroyed" (as in 1 Cor 15: 26, where it's said that the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death), is katargeo: made of no effect/rendered idle or inoperative/reduced to powerlessness (Young/Thayer/Weymouth); not once does the Bible say that the devil or his angels will cease to exist; on the contrary, they are already now suffering for eternity in the "lake of fire"; all angels and humans were created by God, and though humans are subject to physical death, they will exist into eternity - just like the angels in either Heaven or Hell

it's high time for this text to be retired as the hammer of intimidation for many in the organized church; the original readers/hearers of this letter - to whom it was written, remember - had the most urgent need ever to band together, because it was during the time of both the Great Apostasy and the Great Tribulation, and in only the infant years of the new faith; for them, it was a matter of life, death, and life again; P.S.- is the commandment (Ex 20:8-11), "Thou shalt go to church?" - read it again, folks, please read what's there!

# Heb 10:36-39

(v. 36-37) For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: "For yet a little while, and He who is coming will

come and will not tarry/delay.

#### Heb 11:1

Now **faith** is the substance/realization of things hoped for, the evidence/confidence **of things not seen** 

#### Heb 12:1-3

(v. 1) Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a **cloud** of witnesses...

### Heb 12:18-24

(v. 22-24) But **you have come** to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to...

- an innumerable company of angels
- general assembly/festal gathering and church of the firstborn
- (who are) registered in heaven, to God, the Judge of all
- the spirits of just men made perfect
- to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant...

# Parallel Texts/Word Study

Lk 18:8, 21:19, Col 3:24; quoted from the OT: Hab 2:3-4; in *short* (that word is pointedly used), it's what been said all along, only with even more emphasis: be patient, hang in there, for **He is coming** *soon*; **He will not delay!** 

Rom 8:24; we are to walk by faith, not by sight (2 Cor 5:7, 4: 18); we know by faith that God can't lie, nor can He fail; hope where faith belongs is dishonoring doubt (see Prov 13:12)

look at Hebrews 11, sometimes called the "Hall of Fame of Faith": that's the *cloud* (throng) of witnesses to which the writer (Paul) refers, and the picture is that of those departed saints cheering on the living saints who still ran their races of faith; they needed encouragement to endure to the end (see the rest of v. 1 and v. 2);

remember this use of "cloud"

Gal 4:21-31, Jas 1:18, Lk 10:20, 1 Tim 2:5, Heb 8:6, 9:15, 11:4; you have come = proserchomai (have come toward/come to within close proximity); Mount Zion = symbolic of the New Covenant, as opposed to Mount Sinai (Old Covenant - see Gal 4); all of these clauses (see left) are descriptive of the kingdom of God and the everlasting New Covenant age, to the brink of which those alive in AD 63 had come; Moses was relinquishing his office as Mediator (to Jesus!)

AD 66

# Book written: AD 62/63, within as few

as 3 years of

His coming in

"last things" hoped for were not yet accomplished then

the finish line was nearly "in sight" for Christians around AD 63, as the "Finisher" of faith was about to come again in glory

the Christians of the middle 60's AD were virtually standing at the foot of Mount Zion, the New Jerusalem

# Geographical Notes

# Notes Re: Fulfillment

recall that when God spoke about time to His people, He used terms that fit their understanding, and that He made promises to specific people, and that He is faithful; He came when He said He would: AD 66-70

"last things" only hoped for then were soon after accomplished, so for us, it's become a matter of faith, not hope, in the accomplishments of our God

it's entirely possible that in 1 Th 4:17, "cloud(s)" is used the same way that it is here; either way (literal clouds or symbolic), the idea is the same for us since AD 70: if we have trusted in Christ alone, we will join the throng of saints in heaven, immediately after we finish this earthly race

the Hebrew Christians of the AD 60's had drawn close to the new Mount Zion - or better the Mediator of the New and better Covenant was about to come down from the heavenly Zion to them, with the stipulations of the unbreakable covenant in His hands (unlike Moses from Sinai); "I will...I will...and they shall because I will..." - those are the new terms (see Jer 31:31-34); all conditions were met, and the new, better, everlasting covenant and age were delivered on schedule; Amen!

remember that the old city of Jerusalem sat on a mountain-top, and was often called Zion, but "Zion" is only found in the *Old* Testament; the New Jerusalem replaced old Jerusalem (spiritual over material), and so did the new "Mount Zion" displace the old one

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### Heb 12:26-28

...but now He has promised, saying, "Yet once more I will shake not only the earth, but also heaven." Now this, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain, therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace...

### Heb 13:8-9

Jesus Christ *is* the same yesterday, today, and forever. Do not be carried about/away with various and strange doctrines...

#### Heb 13:14, 20

For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come...Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant...

# Parallel Texts/Word Study

1 Cor 7:31, Heb 1:10-12, Mt 24: 35, 2 Pe 3:7, 10-13, Rev 21:1; OT: Hag 2:6 (quoted from the LXX/ Septuagint, the Greek Old Testament, since in the Hebrew text it's rendered, "yet a little while," but in the Greek, it's "yet once more"), also Is 34:4, 65:17, 66:22; "now" doesn't mean that He just now promised the following, but that now what was promised was about to be fulfilled: and since this is a part of the New (last) Testament of the inspired Scriptures, there's every reason to believe that "yet once more" meant just that: one more time, and in a little while (see context: are being shaken, and are receiving a kingdom); one other quick point: why would God shake the literal Heaven? - it has to be symbolic!

Jn 1:1, 8:58, 2 Cor 1:19-20; the context could require some explanation, but the point is clear; and it's highly significant that the second thought follows the first! - Christ is the Anchor

Heb 11:13-16, Rev 21, Lk 1:33; OT: Dan 2:44, 7:14, 27; here = on earth (we will *not* live forever in any place on earth, though the earth itself abides: Ec 1:4); the one "to come" has come: the new, heavenly Jerusalem; there's no covenant to come after this one, and there's no kingdom to come that will supersede the present, everlasting kingdom of God

Book written: AD 62/63

the "heaven and earth" were then being shaken, and *First* Century Christians were then receiving the kingdom that can *not* be shaken; the things of the new covenant age remain, just like the literal heaven and earth (Ec 1:4)

unlimited, with respect to Christ, and the admonition is for all times

the "continuing city" was then still to come, but it was "being prepared"- Jn 14:2-3

# Geographical Notes

with my "dead horse flogger" at the ready..... well, suffice it to say that this does not refer to a literal shaking of the literal Heaven and Earth

contrary to the teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses and dispensationalists (and even some errant Lutherans I know), no one will live forever on this planet, and Christ will not be ruling from a literal, visible throne in modern, rebuilt Jerusalem!

# Notes Re: Fulfillment

yet one more reading of verses 26-29 should provide two insights;

- 1. God will be served with reverence and fear; His holiness is compared to a consuming fire
- 2. God is *compared* to a consuming fire; He's not literally fire; the language in this passage is *figurative*, but it conveys solid truth

this might be a good time to read 2 Pe 3:7-13 (as well as the other parallel texts cited in column two, previous page), since the topic is the same and the language is similar; the bottom line: the old has passed, the new *remains* (since AD 70)

this is the central aspect of what's been maintained throughout this work: we can rely on Jesus Christ *unconditionally*; He is the way, the truth, and the life

to the Hebrew Christians of *c*. AD 63, that "continuing city" was *about to* come (yes, that Greek word *mello* is in the text again!); one more time: it was *about to come to them*: it was on the verge of being reality over 1950 years ago; please don't lose sight of that fact, and remember the faithfulness of God to His own

#### Jas 5:3, 7-9

You [the rich of the mid-First Century AD-SR] have heaped up treasure in the last days... Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand/has drawn near. Do not grumble/groan against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned/judged. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door!

### 1 Pe 1:1, 5:13

To the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bythnia... She who is in Babylon, elect together with *you*, greets you; and *so does* Mark my son.

# Parallel Texts/Word Study

Rom 2:5, Phil 4:5, Acts 2:16-17, 2 Tim 3:1, Heb 1:2, 1 Pe 4:7, etc. James, the brother of Jesus, wrote this New Testament book; before AD 63 arrived, he announced ("to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad" - which could then be applied to national Israel and true Israel, but only to true Israel and in a strictly figurative sense - if it were written today) that: they were living in the last days; they (his contemporary "brethren") should be patient until the coming of the Lord ("parousia" is the word, in both instances here); they should be aware that "the Judge" was then "standing at the door," a figurative expression of imminency that reinforces His being "at hand"

Jas 1:1; Acts 12:12, 25, Rev 14:8, 16:19, 17:5-6, 18:2-10, 21-24 (then see Mt 23:31-37); if you have a map of the world as it stood, c. AD 62, please refer to it now to verify that each of the places named in this greeting were Roman provinces in what is now the nation of Turkey; it's been widely supposed that since Rome isn't mentioned, this letter originated from Rome, here called "Babylon"; wrong! - 1) the circle of churches to which Peter wrote was closer to Macedonia, Thrace, and Achaia, than to Rome, and they weren't mentioned among the "dispersion," either; 2) John Mark was from Jerusalem, not Rome (see the Acts texts)

# Geographical Notes

# Notes Re: Fulfillment

Book written: AD 61/62 about 3-4 years before His return

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recall this fact: the twelve tribes of national Israel do not exist today, nor have they existed since late summer, AD 70; James greeted the Jews "scattered abroad," the result of two captivities in exile; because all males of national Israel were bound to appear in Jerusalem for three festivals each year, and the destruction of Jerusalem commenced on the heels of one of those (Passover), the twelve tribes were effectively "cut off"

at this latter point of the agetransitional/"millennial" period of forty years between the Ascension and Parousia of Jesus Christ, James used strong imminency imagery to communicate that the days were short: in the early 60's AD, they were living "in the last days," according to the directlyinspired writer; his message was that the wicked would continue as always, piling up earthly possessions and sins, and that they would be caught by the Judge unawares soon. so the faithful should be patient: He did come soon. within about four years, not two-thousand!

book written: mid-AD 63 note: it wasn't written to the churches of *Turkey* in AD 2017

this is an important pair of passages to consider together, in order to understand Rev 14-19; please follow this: Peter wrote the letter "to the pilgrims of the Dispersion" (just like James above, though he used a different term); Rome was part of the Dispersion, but Jerusalem was not; John Mark (who sent his greetings along with Peter's) lived in Jerusalem; therefore, "Babylon" was *old* Jerusalem

for several centuries now, we Protestants (as a group, generally) have been zealous to name the Roman Catholic "church" (in one word, Rome) as "Babylon the Great/The Scarlet Woman/The Mother of Harlots" (ianorina evidence): I'd been convinced of that myself until I took a calm, discerning look at what the Bible had to say about the identity of that city/woman/harlot named in Rev 14-19; it *can't* be Rome, but old covenant Jerusalem the only city that was ever God's "wife" - does fit the bill; again, we must be reminded to think spiritually, covenantally, and thus, Biblically

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#### 1 Pe 1:5

who [see note to right-SR] are kept by the power of God through their faith for salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

#### 1 Pe 1:7

That the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ

#### 1 Pe 1:13

Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ

(note that where Peter says, the "revealing," Paul says, the "appearing" or "coming" (parousia): all one concept and one event)

# Parallel Texts/Word Study

understand the key words to understand the meaning: "us" (v. 3) and "you" (v. 4) are the "who" of v. 5: (hemas - we ourselves + humas - you yourselves = our very selves or, we with you); are kept (at this present time) by the power of God through our faith for salvation (full redemption), ready (hetoimos ready, on the point of, prepared: Young/Thayer/Strong) to be revealed (apokalypthenai - uncovered, unveiled) in the last time (now! - see same chapter, v. 20); ready then to be revealed at the Parousia of Jesus Christ

see The Apocalypse of Jesus Christ (the book of Revelation); your faith = the faith of you very Christians to whom I write, which is being tested like gold in the fire; at the same revelation of Jesus Christ in which salvation was ready to be revealed (two verses prior), of which there was to be only one: The Parousia

the book of Revelation, Lk 17: 30, 1 Pe 1:7, 4:13, 5:1; ("His appearing"): 2 Th 1:7, 1 Tim 6:14, 2 Tim 1:10, 4:1, 8, Titus 2:13; note that the grace of *the* revelation/apocalypse/appearing of Jesus Christ was to "be brought to" *them* ... at the revelation of Christ; they were to "gird up the loins of" their minds and rest their hope, because redemption in fullness was ready to be revealed then

Book written: mid-AD 63

written about the last time, amid the last times (compare v. 5 with v. 20)

Peter wrote from the perspective of one who was living in the last days and times ( the words of the Holy Spirit, through him: Acts 2:16-17, 1 Pe 1:20)

see above, but note here, too, that God's grace was "being brought to" those elect who lived in the middle of the First Century AD, in the revelation "at hand"

# Geographical Notes

full salvation was ready to be revealed in the times of the Galatians, Pontians, Cappadocians, (Roman provincial) Asians, and Bithynians; it's not still about to be revealed to the *Turks* 

remember that from AD 64 to 66, active *Roman* persecution joined decades-long Jewish persecution throughout the Roman Empire

# Notes Re: Fulfillment

when we walk by sight, and not by faith, we lose sight of everything anyway: witness virtually the whole organized church taking the word of some deluded "church fathers" of the Second Century AD, who didn't think Christ had come when He said He would. only because His coming had to fit their finite, flawed understanding of what it entailed; so when God said that He would *not* delay, *they* told us what He "really meant": that He would delay ...and delay...and delay...

we recognize that the Biblical book of Revelation is called in the original Greek, *Apokalypsis* - the Apocalypse of Jesus Christ, according to St. John, so that the "revelation" of Jesus Christ is the title and subject matter of that last book of the Bible; and what are the last words spoken by Jesus in that book? - "Surely, I am *coming* quickly"; the *revelation* of Christ coincided with His *Parousia-coming* (they were the same event)

the revealing = the revelation = the apocalypse = the appearing = the parousia = the (second) coming = the return of Jesus Christ; the time was in AD 66-70, a period of 3.5 years/42 months/ 1260 days; it all clicks together, people; this is how God does things: on time and perfectly

# 4.5.4.60

### 1 Pe 1:20

He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you

#### 1 Pe 2:12

...having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.

#### 1 Pe 3:19

by whom [the Spirit, from v .18-SR] also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah...

# Parallel Texts/Word Study

Peter himself: Acts 2:16-17, 1 Pe 1:5, 4:7, 2 Pe 3:3 & 14; for you = the fulfilling of prophecy of "this (complete) salvation" - v. 10-12 - is ready to unfold (v. 5) before *you* (*First* Century saints) in *these* last times (*those* to us)

Lk 19:44 (please see p. 102-103); OT "day of visitation: Is 10:3 (day of punishment); Jer 46:21, 50:27 (day of calamity, the time of their punishment); Hos 9:7 (days of punishment); Mic 7:4 (day of your watchman and your *punishment* comes); the image is clear: final inspection and judgment was coming due for those who spoke evil of those who served God honorably in the First Century AD, when Peter wrote (they/you/yourall specific with respect to that time, in which the day of visitation was due, at the Parousia of Christ)

this refers to Christ, who was "put to death in the flesh, but made alive by the Spirit" (v .18), so Christ - by the (Holy) Spirit - went and preached (kerusso - to cry or proclaim as a herald/publish openly -Young/Strong/Thayer) to the spirits in prison (disembodied spirits in Hades, which included those who mocked and tormented Noah during the many (120 ?) years in which he was building the ark and trying to preach to them); Christ came to them in Hades and finished the job, proclaiming victory!

# **Timing** ..... Book written: mid-AD 63 while there were a number of "days of visitation" in the OT, there are no such multiple days mentioned in the NT: the same term is used only here and in Lk 19:44 in the NT, and regarding the same unique event Hades/Sheol/ the grave/the place of the disembodied spirits await-Day, was "in

# ing Judgment business" in AD 30. but not after Christ's coming in judgment at Pentecost, AD 66; that realm was emptied and done away with at that time

## **Geographical Notes** .....

remember the salutation at the beginning of Peter's first letter

## Notes Re: Fulfillment .....

the "Spirit of Christ" was responsible for whatever the prophets of old said about the sufferings and glories of Christ and when - "what manner of time" (v. 10-12) - they would take place; He also spoke through Peter here; believe God!

from the OT usage, we know that visitation meant inspection, judgment, and appropriate punishment; in old Jerusalem and among natural Israel, there were good "weathermen," but few wise readers of the signs of the times (Mt 16: 1-3, Lk 12:54-56); they didn't notice that a calamitous iudament-cloud was on their horizon, and they didn't know that the people of God had been warned by God Himself (as in the days of Noah....)

realm of the departed spirits, please see p. 44-45, at Mt 16:18, and p.148-149, at Eph 4:8-9

for more on Hades, the we've been talking about the davs of Noah, and how the people of God knew what was ahead, but the vast majority didn't (because they didn't know God!); this should be a lesson for the people of God in all times: get to know God and His will intimately; notice that the "disobedient" are the ones singled out from among the "spirits in prison," and there was never a more "captive audience!"

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## 1 Pe 4:5-7

They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit. But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers.

#### 1 Pe 4:17

For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?

# Parallel Texts/Word Study

Acts 10:42, 1 Pe 1:12, Rom 8:9-14, 13:11-12, Phil 4:5, Lk 21:32; ready to judge = hetoimos (same as in 1 Pe 1:5 - "ready to be revealed"- ready means ready, and the revealing and the judgment were both equally ready to happen, around mid-AD 63); the gospel preached also to those who are dead = the gospel was preached by Peter to some who had since died (not a reference to a "second-chance" preaching to the dead in Hades; Christ proclaimed/published His victory to the vanguished there, vindicating Noah in the process - see previous two pages); the dead to whom the gospel was preached (if they received it), would rise in the judgment to be judged along with all flesh, but would live eternally because they stood before Christ their righteousness (Jer 23:6) -Himself; *the* end = the only end of which the NT speaks, the end of the age, the consummation of all things (see Lk 21:32); the end was near

Vincent, in Word Studies of the New Testament, Vol. 2, points out that the "fiery trial" of v.12 should be understood as *in progress*, and not strictly in the future; that clarifies this whole context: the house of God would be subjected to greater persecution and *temporal* judgment (refining fire: Mal 3:2-3), but the gospel-rejectors were in for a much worse, *eternal* judgment

Book written: mid-AD 63

review Peter's own (Holy Spirit-inspired) words about the timing of the Parousia (revealing and judgment) so far:

ready and ready; brought to you; in these last times; at hand

the time for judgment to begin had come *then*, already in AD 63

# **Geographical Notes**

once more: Peter wrote to whom? - the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia (as in, the Roman province of...), and Bithynia; are we able to find those places on a current map? (mine all show "Turkey")

the "house of God" here is not a sanctuary of lifeless stones, but living stones - the household of faith (1 Pe 2:4-8, Gal 6:10, Eph 2:19-22)

# Notes Re: Fulfillment

the Holy Spirit found several ways to express the same truth through His servants, the NT writers, in the First Century AD: tell the people that the kingdom of God and Heaven, the revelation/second appearing/coming of Christ in final judgment and temporal deliverance, the completing of redemption, the general resurrection of all the dead (with the closing of Hades) and bodily change of living believers, the establishment of the eternal pattern of individuals passing directly into eternal life or death, the passing of the old covenant, the end (consummation) of the old world/age, and the establishment of the new, everlasting covenant age and "heavens and earth," the fulfillment of all things ... is near, about to be, at hand, ready to be revealed in these last days/times/hour. coming shortly/quickly, and will not tarry/be delayed (did I miss any?); fulfillment of all prophecy came by the end of summer, AD 70

we may see in this passage the difference between chastisement (of God's own) and punishment (of God's enemies): correction and temporary suffering vs. condemnation and eternal suffering; in any case, the time for judgment to begin was way back in AD 63

# 1 Pe 5:1, 4

The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed...and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.

### 2 Pe 1:16, 19-21

For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses to His majesty...And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place. until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

# Parallel Texts/Word Study

Rom 8:17-18, 2 Tim 4:8, and all revealing/appearing texts, including the book of Revelation; that will be revealed = about to be (mello) revealed (apokalypto) to that First Century generation; and once again - here, too - the revelation of Christ is equated with His (second) appearing/coming

coming (parousia): Mt 24:3, 27, 37, 39; 1 Cor 15:23, 1 Th 2:19, 3: 13, 4:15, 5:23, 2 Th 2:1, 8, Jas 5: 7-8, 2 Pe 3:4-12, 1 Jn 2:28; eyewitnesses to His majesty: Mt 17: 1-5; Holy Spirit moving prophets and apostles: Lk 1:70, Acts 1:16, 3: 18, Rom 12:6, 2 Tim 3:16-17, 1 Pe 1:11 (OT: 2 Sam 23: 2); the main point is simple: Peter and the other apostles, following the prophets, spoke the words of God Himself; they had His authority, and were confirmed in it; indeed, all would do well to heed their God-breathed words, and not the words of false prophets (Jer 23: 9-40), who speak their own devised fables; second point: Peter wrote to "those who have obtained/ received like precious faith/faith of the same value" (v. 1), so the day that would be dawning in their hearts followed their regeneration to faith (they were already reborn); by referring to "the day" dawning in their hearts in context with the coming of Christ, there's an allusion to a smaller light (like a candle) providing some illumination until the sunrise breaks forth with full illumination: Jesus Christ, the light of the world (Jn 1:4-9), was on the horizon

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### **Geographical Notes** .....

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### Notes Re: Fulfillment .....

Book written: mid-AD 63

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which Peter referred when he wrote that they were "eyewitnesses to His majesresurrection of ty" was the Transfiguration upon the Mount of Olives, so close to Jerusalem; remember that the "men of Galilee" would see Jesus return to them "in like manner" (Acts 1:9-11); Peter connects the Transfiguration and the Parousia in this regard: we (they, to us) witnessed His glory in going - disappearing into a glory-cloud and ascending to heaven and would witness His glory in descending from heaven unseen in ting return was a glory-cloud, coming

back to people He'd

left, and to the same

place (not to us or a

still-future generation,

or in a different place)

that word *mello* ("about to be") keeps showing up in these "last things" texts; it's an expression that's been used even in the work before your eyes to express imminency; if you understood it without explanation in this text, the meaning should be clear in God's text as well

since that word *parousia* is at the heart of this text, it may be a good time to review those other places in the NT where it's used the same way about the same unique event (listed in column two, previous page); it might also serve us well now to contemplate upon the following;

- 1. not once does Jesus speak of "this" coming or "that" coming, or one following another, much less a third coming that follows a second coming, separated by 49 or more generations 2. the inspired NT writers don't
- do so, either: it's always "the coming" (the Parousia) 3. the resurrection event is tied to the Parousia (Mt 24, 1 Cor 15. 1 Th 4. and in this very passage, if we have our eyes

of discerning faith open)

4. the resurrection event involved both the dead and the living faithful, who were clothed in new spiritual bodies in the upward call/snatching up or away/rapture

.....

## 2 Pe 2:1, 3

But there were also false prophets among the people [in contrast to the inspired holy men of God, from previous verse-SR], even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction...by covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not/will not slumber.

### 2 Pe 2:5

and [God, from v. 4-SR] did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly

# Parallel Texts/Word Study

Mt 7:15, 24:4-5, 23-24, Acts 20:29-30, 1 Tim 1:20, 4:1-2; as there were always false prophets mixed in with the true in Israel's history, there would be false teachers among them (First Century true Israelites); those First Century false teachers would bring upon themselves swift destruction (it wouldn't tarry), for they denied by their teachings and lives their claims to having been bought by God; but their judgment wasn't idle: they were filling up the cups of wrath that would soon be poured upon them (Rev 16 & 17:4)

(please see Gen 6:11-8:22 for the Biblical, historical account); before we move on to a critical "last things" text (2 Pe 3), it's imperative that we have the proper understanding of what exactly happened when God previously "destroyed the world"; when God did not spare the ancient world (kosmos), by bringing in the flood on the world (kosmos) of the ungodly. He destroyed all but eight people, but He did not destroy the world/globe/planet/earth itself; *kosmos* = arrangement/order/mass multitude (Young, Strong, Thayer); the planet Earth on which Noah stood is the same one on which we stand, and all those who will follow us; the landscape was changed dramatically, but the earth itself didn't cease to exist

Book written: AD 64

remember how Peter used "you" (humin, humas) in this passage: these are specific plurals, which should be understood as "you, your very selves" to whom I write

Ec 1:4- "One generation passes away, and another generation comes; but the earth abides forever"

# Geographical Notes

while we don't have a geographical referent in the salutation of this letter, it was written to First Century believers, and not to 21st Century believers (although there's no shortage of false teachers now, either!)

in the Scriptural text quoted to the immediate left, the word translated "earth" (erets) means land/ ground (Young, Strong); this physical earth will never be removed and replaced (see also Ps 104:5 & 119:90)

# Notes Re: Fulfillment

to stay on the track to truth, we must remember the time-frame clues that have been inserted into the NT by the Holy Spirit for our instruction; a reminder: the Bible was written for us, but not to us: this letter was opened and read by the addressees in the First Century AD; we've been allowed to read it, too, well over 1900 years later, but Peter didn't write to us about the false prophets of his day, and the swift destruction that was coming upon them; his original hearers/readers needed to know that!

it's important to bear the following facts in mind;

1. the teaching that God will again destroy the world is an invention of His creatures, while The *Creator* has promised otherwise (see Gen 8:21-22 and compare with texts to the left)

2. the teaching that God will destroy again by fire what He

- destroy again by fire what He has destroyed by water is a false conclusion that makes God a liar
- 3. even if we so blasphemously distrust God in disregarding the *spirit* of His promise, as if He told only a half-truth with respect to the *method* of another world-destruction, the earth *itself* would not cease to exist in its place in The Creator's perfect cosmos (Col 1:16: all things were created by Him and *for* Him; don't forget that!)

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#### 2 Pe 3:3-13

...scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of **His coming?** For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation." For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water. But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition/destruction of ungodly men. But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is long-suffering toward us/you, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away, with a great noise, and the **elements** will melt with fervent heat: both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the **elements** will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

### **Parallel Texts/Word Study**

..... 2 Pe 2:10, 2 Th 1:8, Rom 2:4, Heb 12:26-28; Rev 3:3, 16:15, 21:1; **OT** roots and language parallels: Is 1:25-26, 5:19, 13:13, 34:4, **51:16**, 65:17, 66:22, Joel 2:30-31, Hab 2:3; also, please see p. 22-25 of this work; last days defined by Peter: see Acts 2:16-17, 1 Pe 1:5, 20, 4:7 (he and the recipients of his letters were living in them); promise of His coming = where's His promised Parousia? (if you are still looking for it, you're to be classed with the scoffers of those last days, for the Lord is *not* slack concerning His promise); the world that then existed perished = the mass multitude of *people* (all but 8) perished, not the planet; fire = purging by the Word of God, separating the pure from the dross, a symbol on Pentecost, and of God's consuming holiness; a day as a thousand years = whether God's promise is for a time that's near or far off, it doesn't affect God in the least: He performs it; He communicates re: time to us in terms we understand, since He lives in the "eternal now"; elements = ordering principles, rudiments (NOT the periodic table! - see other NT usage- Gal 4:3, 9, Col 2:8, 20, Heb 5:12; hastening = *speudo* (urging on, not making it happen any sooner than God decreed); new heavens and new earth = the new "world" (kosmos) age/order of the new covenant, in which righteousness (Christ) dwells always

Book written: AD 64

according to Peter himself, he was then living in the last days and times, and all the prophecies for the "world to come" were being fulfilled in his era (1 Pe 1:10-12)

# Geographical Notes

The State of the Earth Address: same one today as in Peter's day, and in Noah's

State of the World-Age: old one dead, new one alive for good

## Notes Re: Fulfillment

..... it's a source of great frustration to me: most fellow Reformed Christians, many of whom own a Geneva Bible with the study notes, persist in the non-biblical belief that there will someday be new physical heavens and earth, when the note for Is 65:17 (For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth) reads, "I will so alter and change the state of my church, that it will seem to dwell in a new world"; please read that again, and until it sinks in; what we preterists contend agrees with what those solid Reformed Bible scholars said over 400 years ago: not that there would actually be a new, physical universe, but that things would be made new (recreated) in the church, with the permanent establishment of the kingdom of God; please recall, too, Is 51:16: "I have covered you with the shadow of My hand, that I may plant/ establish the heavens, lay the foundations of the earth" (remember that the physical heavens and earth already existed, and compare Is 59: 21); definition of a new creation? read 2 Cor 5:17: anyone in Christ; to those persons of all generations, the Lord Our Righteousness (Jer 33:16) is Lord and Savior

.....

#### 1 Jn 2:17-18, 22

And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever. Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour... Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son.

#### 1 Jn 2:28

And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.

#### 1 Jn 3:2

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

# Parallel Texts/Word Study

1 Cor 7:31, 1 Pe 1:24, 4:7, Jn 21: 5 ("children"), Rom 13:11-12, 1 Tim 4:1, Heb 1:2, 8:13, Mt 10:16, 24:5, 24, 1 Jn 2:22, 4:3, 2 Jn 7; world = kosmos (as it always is, in these texts: world order/arrangement: the prevailing "scheme of things"); is passing away = the transition had begun (in the early 60's); it is the last hour: self-evident, that it was then the last hour of something big. and what that was is indicated by "the world is passing away" and that it was then the time of antichrist: it was the time of the end (of the world/age/old covenant/ Mosaic Law dispensation, the only end of which they had a concept)

1 Jn 3:21, 4:17, 5:14, and several NT "appearing/coming" texts; John uses the terms of both Paul and Peter re: the return of Christ in this same passage: "when He appears," and "at His coming" (phaneroo - make manifest/present self, and parousia - coming alongside/abiding presence); note the use of "when," "we," and "at": He would be coming soon, to them

please see 1 Cor 13:10, 12 p. 136-137; what was to be revealed to them was their true, secure identity in Christ, but more importantly, The Messiah Himself returning in glory! - they were already children of God by grace through faith in Him, but they'd know from the revelation of His glory just what that meant: Heaven is real and we're going to our eternal home!

.....

Book written: AD 61/62, not long before the Neronic persecution of the church broke out, with the accompanying "Great Apostasy" (AD 64-66)

# Geographical Notes

deceiving antichrists could be found throughout the land of Israel in the First Century AD; Josephus, the contemporary historian, confirmed that the land was overrun with false messiahs, though he didn't use the term "anti-christs"

# Notes Re: Fulfillment

we'd do well to remember that the term "antichrist" is found only in John's first two epistles (in the whole Bible); so the whole doctrine of "antichrist" is found there, no matter what we try to connect from other places in Scripture; therefore, by John's definitions and usage of the term, antichrist was not one individual, but many who displayed the spirit of antichrist: they were teachers who had started out in apparent harmony with the true disciples ("us"), went out on their own, misleading people with false teachings (like denying the Father and the Son: 1 Jn 2:22, or that Christ had come in the flesh: 1 Jn 4:3 & 2 Jn 7), and were then being exposed ("made manifest"- 1 Jn 2:18); the many antichrists in John's "last hour" are the ones connected to the passing of the world and the (second) coming of the true Christ at His Parousia

it can be reasonably assumed that when Christ returned in His glory in the spring of AD 66, some of the recipients of this letter were alive on earth to see - "in the flesh," though only momentarily, with their new spiritual bodies at the ready - the glory of God's Son; that is breathtaking to imagine!

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#### 1 Jn 3:8

For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the **works** of the devil.

### 1 Jn 4:1-3 & 2 Jn 7

(further information on the false prophets and the spirit of antichrist that had already permeated the world in the early 60's)

#### Jude 3-4, 17-18

Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ...But **you**, beloved, re-member the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ: how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts.

### **Parallel Texts/Word Study**

Lk 10:18, Heb 2:14; destroy = luo (undo/loosen/break up/dissolve/overthrow/do away with - Young, Strong, Thayer); the works = ergon (deeds/business/toil/sin, and all the misery that springs from it - Young, Strong, Thayer); notice that the devil's works would be undone or overthrown, but he, as an immortal being, would not cease to exist (be annihilated)

please see p. 196-197 of this work

Titus 1:4, Eph 2:19-21, 4:3, 1 Cor 3:11, Phil 1:27 (common salvation and foundation); it appears that Jude intended to write in greater detail about tenets of the Christian faith, but a crisis arose, preventing him from accomplishing that; he "found it necessary" to put out a fire, so to speak: "certain ungodly men" had infiltrated the ranks of the saints; evidently, from examining verses 5-11, they were posing as true Israel, but they were not of true Israel (on the inside, insidiously doing damage); Jude warned of these apostates in their midst, and reminded them to heed the words of the apostles: they had told *them* about the mockers that would show up "in the last time" (then, in the First Century AD)

## **Geographical Notes**

# .....

# Notes Re: Fulfillment

Book written: AD 61/62

the devil is now being tormented in the "lake of fire" (Rev 20:10), regardless of how literally that is to be taken; sins and death are still in the world (because of the corrupt sinful nature with which we are born), but their power to overcome us has been overcome by Christ - for all the elect - into eternity

when the Bible says that the works of the devil have been destroyed (undone/overthrown), it means that the devil himself has been destroyed (rendered powerless), but it doesn't mean that he will ever cease to exist in the torments of Hell, or that sins will ever cease to exist on earth; I don't understand why God Almighty permits sin, but I don't question His will; rather, I'm moved to profusely thank Him for delivering all the elect from the ranks of the spiritually-dead in trespasses and sin (through His Son), and for taking them into His own eternal Home!

Book written: AD 64

that the writer (a brother of Jesus) thought of his own time as "the last time" is indicated by the language, which connects "certain men" with "mockers," who would exist to disrupt the last time (of the age. which ended in AD 70)

David Chilton, a consistent ("full") preterist at the time of his "going home" to the Lord, from whom many have learned much about Biblical prophecy, pointed out the sad story that he believed was behind this letter; as he put it, Jude was working diligently on a "systematic theology" for the young church, but an emergency situation came up: the Great Apostasy; verses 22-23 & 12 show just how urgent the situation was: the "fire" was spreading quickly, and the "twice-dead, fruitless trees" were about to be uprooted and cast into the eternal fire, so stand clear of them! Jude had to drop what he preferred to do with his life at that time to answer the urgent call of God (much like John Calvin, when he ran into Farel in Geneva)

"Thus says the LORD, who gives the sun for a light by day, the ordinances of the moon and the stars for a light by night, who disturbs the sea, and its waves roar (The LORD of hosts *is* His name): If those ordinances depart from before Me, says the LORD, *then* the seed of **Israel** shall also cease from being **a nation before Me forever**."

- Jer 31:35-36 NKJV

"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but **a new creation**. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon **the Israel of God**." - Gal 6:15-16 NKJV

"Let us hold fast the confession of *our* hope without wavering, for **He who promised** *is* **faithful**...

For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: 'For yet a little while, and He who is coming will come and will not tarry.'"

- Heb 10:23, 36-37 NKJV

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"For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us."

- 2 Cor 1:20 NKJV

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Amen!

7.

The Why of the Truth: Covenantal Faithfulness and God's Glory

As we come near to the end, we come to the *ends*. That is, as we come near to the end of this work, we now address the chief *purpose* of God in judgment of His enemies and deliverance of His own, chosen in His Son before the foundation of the world (Eph 1:4). **It's all about God's glory.**

Since all true children of God (the "Israel of God," and the household of faith - Gal 6:16 & 9) know that everything exists for the glory of God, and that He is inerrantly faithful to His chosen children, the question quickly becomes, "Why then? Why was it necessary for God to bring in judgment and deliverance through the Parousia (final coming) of Jesus Christ in the First Century AD? Wouldn't He be equally glorified in delivering on His promise at any time in earthly history?"

The answer to the second part of that question is an emphatic "No!" Just ask the heathen, skeptics, and - if you could find any - honest liberal "Christians" about that: their game plan is to prove God's unfaithfulness, deception, and interminable, inexcusable slackness (see 2 Pe 3:4 & 9) to thereby prove that He is not God! If it could be proved that Jesus Christ was ignorant about the generation to which He'd return, or that He knew it was to happen 49 or more generations past the lifetimes of the people to whom He'd promised it (making it not just late, but never to them!), the non-deity of Christ would necessarily follow. If "God" didn't know or didn't tell the truth, He wasn't God. It's that simple.

So when has as much to do as what with questions concerning Biblical prophecy. The Godhead is at stake. If God said when, it had to happen then, or He lied and wasn't God. If the God Who's revealed Himself in the Holy Bible has lied, none of us can look forward to eternal life, because the self-existing eternal One doesn't exist to grant it to anyone else. Do you begin to see the inevitable ramifications of a "qod" who didn't know and didn't tell the truth?

But God *did* know and *did* tell the truth - completely. While Jesus truthfully said - while He was still on earth, *before* ascending to the Father - that He did not *then* know the *day* and the *hour* of His Parousia at the end of the age (Mk 13:32), He certainly knew the specific time when He revealed *to* His servant John "things which must *shortly* take place," and that "*the* time *is* at hand" (Rev 1:1, 3, 22:6, 10), and when He promised the church, through John, that He was "coming quickly" (Rev 22:7, 12, 20).

**Post-Ascension, Jesus *knew*!

Either Christ *did* come quickly, within a short time as *humans* understand it, or He failed to keep His promise to the very first generation of New Testament believers. If He wasn't faithful to them - the foundational generation, which endured the most severe persecution, tribulation, and pressure to apostasize from a new, fledgling way of faith - He wasn't faithful to *any other* generation, including our own. That's the most sobering bottom line, and those are the consequences for the "church" or the "kingdom": they don't really exist, if Christ was not faithful and true to those First Century believers, and consequently, *not* God.

That's why a proper, Biblical eschatology is important for each Christian. If we've trusted in Jesus Christ for salvation, but it has to be admitted that he was ignorant, a deceiver, or ungodly in unfaithfulness, he isn't our sinless savior, after all, and we've trusted in a false prophet. Then we believed a lie and have no hope for life beyond this one. Who would then be the source of eternal life?

But God *did* know, speak the whole truth, and completely deliver on His promises to the first generation of the New Covenant church, just as He did for all His elect, beginning with Adam and Eve, during the times of the patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob), and throughout the Old Covenant dispensation (Moses, David, Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and the rest). And because we know that to be infallibly true by God's Word, we, too, can wholly rely on the covenantal faithfulness of God, Who is *forever* faithful and true. His glory depends on it, so He will do it:

"Of the increase of *His* government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this." - Is 9:7 NKJV

8. What Now?

Once I was graciously led into the truth concerning the "last things," the question above presented itself. I don't imagine that your reaction would be any different, if you've come to know eschatological truth (the *preterist*, *past-in-fulfillment* perspective). Although I know from personal experience that all of the ramifications and implications weren't immediately clear - if they ever will be, because it's an unfolding process - there are some aspects of past thinking that will be dramatically affected;

- 1. Expect shock, alienation and derision from your Christian brothers and sisters (and unbelievers, as well) when you express your new, Scriptural view; but hang onto God's promise through Peter: "If you are reproached/insulted/reviled for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you"

 1 Pe 4:14 NKJV
- 2. Expect to be without local church membership, unless you are either willing to compromise the truth *or* have been blessed with access to a rare flock that's led by preterist teachers (and not all "Full Preterists" stick closely to Scripture, either; beware of those who teach the "Collective Body View," for example); don't expect pastors and elders to change their positions on the basis of a challenge from one of the sheep committed to their care: they're human, and as such, susceptible to fear and pride; believe me, I *know*!
- 3. Because of factors like reduced Christian fellowship and a consciousness of the majority (futurist) view for most of recorded, *organized*-church history, expect to have doubts; but overcome them by hearing the voice of God in His Word: He is Faithful and True; He can't lie, it's impossible; He is God, the Holy, Almighty, Eternal Three-In-One, Who has planned all, declared it and done it perfectly, and will do it just *as and when He said He would* for all eternity; don't long for the flesh pots of Egypt (Ex 16:3), thinking how comfortable you were in your "blissfully ignorant" days when you just followed the crowd; instead, "Buy the truth, and do not sell it" Prov 23:23; *that*'s God-pleasing and glorifying, and that's to be our aim in all of life.

The good news is that what's just been presented is just about all of the bad news: you'll be ostracized and/or banished to the fringes of Christianity, or called a condemned heretic. It's realistic to expect those things, which aren't in the least pleasant. But there the temporarily negative ends, and the whole world of the eternally positive opens to you:

- 1. You've taken your Savior at His word, and He has proven Himself entirely, inerrantly, and infallibly faithful to His coheirs (including you and me, Christian believer); you can count on Him for eternal salvation and all things leading to and pertaining to it, because you could count on His predictions and fulfillments in every part (not only what, but *when*)
- 2. You can stop fretting about a Great Tribulation to come; it's over 1950 years in the past, and it won't be repeated (Mt 24:21); some of those foundational, First Century believers who heeded the command of the Lord are not only with Him now for all eternity into the future, but they were temporally (bodily) delivered from the final cataclysm of the age
- 3. You can stop wasting time scanning the news for a sign of a fictitious *still-future* rapture that will never happen; you can stop believing the invented schemes continually popping out of finite, sinful minds, and start applying yourself to the work of the everlasting kingdom of God; **stop looking for an escape**, and start looking for ways to serve your faithful Savior Who *always* told you the truth! **Be in it to win it!**
- 4. You can look forward to *eternal*, *holy fellowship* with your Maker and Preserver and *all* of His children *immediately* after physical death; we who die in Christ will not face His judgment seat with the possibility of a verdict of eternal damnation, but may even receive rewards appropriate to the good that *He* has done *through* us (2 Cor 5:10, Gal 2:20, Phil 2:13); let all of that sink in: no exclusions from membership or fellowship, no sin, no pain, no worry, no end to life with God, and *no delay* (passing into Hades first, for as long as Christ "tarried" before He finally returned) in entering into that bliss at death
- 5. You can live with confidence and a renewed sense of purpose in this life, gratefully preaching the *full* gospel of the accomplished *fact* of eternal salvation, signed, sealed, and delivered right on schedule by Jesus Christ!

Reinforcing Orthodox (Biblical) Doctrine

Resurrection:

The general, universal resurrection of all the dead to that point in time (Dan 12:2), both righteous and unrighteous, occurred at Pentecost (the "harvest") in the spring of AD 66; it won't be repeated. In this sense, *the* Resurrection is past, that one-time event that put Sheol/Hades out of business as the twocompartment "holding area" (Lk 16:22-26) has come and gone. All individuals ever since that two-pronged event of the resurrection of the dead ones and the bodily change of the living faithful either die and are condemned to everlasting torment (unbelievers) or die and go directly to Heaven, solely on the basis of Christ and the perfect work He did on our behalf; there's no stop in between anymore. Each one of us now gets either Heaven or Hell for eternity when we die. And please note, grave-side speakers: the Bible nowhere teaches "dust to dust and later, dust to Heaven!" Dust to dust? Yes, that's there (Gen 3:19), but the dust just keeps getting dustier on earth, and when the immortal soul departs the earthly body and puts on the incorruptible, imperishable, immortal spiritual body that is designed and uniquely suited for an eternal, Heavenly existence, that soul will never again be reunited with that dust! (and who would want that, anyway?) So speak the truth: nobody who has died since Christ emptied Hades is still existing partly as a dust ball in a grave and partly in the spirit realm of the dead, which WAS Hades; you can't have it both ways: you can't preach that the "dearly departed" is both in Heaven as an unclothed spirit - as if Hades is no longer the place for the disembodied dead - and awaiting the time when his/her dust - the decaying carcass - can go there, too, to complete the person. It's pure double-talk, and grossly non-biblical! What I hear ministers saying at burials makes me think that they have no clue that 1 Cor 15:35-49 is even in the Bible! We all need to remember this: Heaven won't - it can't - receive sin-corrupted bodies. That's why only Jesus Christ retained His exact same earthly body, but each of our sin-tainted earthly bodies must stay behind and decompose (the same atoms won't be re-combined to compose our new, spiritual bodies; they are two different types of bodies suitable for two different realms). Once again, you can't have things both ways: either Christ has returned, conquered Death, and abolished Hades (Rev 20:14), or He has not. If He has not, when Death comes for us, we all still go to Hades, and not to Heaven. It's just that simple. Futurists have yet to come to grips with this. But Preterists get it!

Ongoing sins and death in the world:

If you wonder how sin and death could have been destroyed and still exist, you've got a lot of company. This is the result of defective Bible teaching and improper emphasis on life in the material world. When Adam and Eve committed the first active sins, did they die that day physically? (see Gen 2:17 for the words of God's command to Adam, and 5:5 for the sum of Adam's days upon earth). Adam obviously didn't die physically that day, but he did die spiritually. Just a few verses later, in Gen 3:15, God pronounced the cure: the gospel of a Restorer to come, the curse-removing Savior of sinful men who were spiritually dead. Four more verses, and we read the verdict regarding physical death: from dust, back to dust (and not out of dust again!). Human beings will continue to die physically and be born spiritually dead, since God appointed Adam as the federal head (representative) of the whole human race (once again, it's race, not races). All of his natural descendants - born of a human father and human mother - inherit a sinful nature, and until the completion of redemption in AD 70, all were born under sin (singular), as a state of being; there was no final, permanent way to freedom from the *reign* of sin (from a state of being *only able* to sin against God's law and lacking the ability to obey it, and therefore, having no hope of living by it) to a state of being able to obey, and to avoid sin in this life (with the sustaining power of the Holy Spirit) and finally, permanently, to the heavenly state of perfect obedience, and not being able to sin at all.

This is another area in which we have gone off on our own into non-biblical territory. The Bible does *not* teach that there will ever come a time when perfect, immortal human beings will be born into a perfect world, never sin, and never die. At best, that's mere wishful thinking, but let's call it what it really is: a desire to live a care-free life apart from God. We want to run the universe on our *own* terms, if that's what we think should happen, because the reality of the universe in which we live is otherwise: there will always be a need for Jesus Christ to save sinful human beings from the eternal death that we each deserve if Christ is not in the picture. Physical death is the way into Heaven that God has provided for His beloved, and that through the death of His only Son from all eternity, Jesus Christ. When Christ defeated Death and abolished Hades, what He did was this: He made passage into Heaven possible *via* death. He *used* His conquered enemy for His own superior, holy purpose. This is how the deaths of His saints (sanctified ones) are precious in His sight (Ps 116:15).

It seems to me that Ken Davies and HL James, on the radio program, Beyond the End Times [this was 15+ years ago] explained another aspect of this quite well. They compared life under the Law (Old Covenant dispensation) to a "sindom," and life under the New Covenant dispensation to a "gracedom": the difference is that under the New Covenant, Christians have been graciously given "fireproof suits." Because we are covered by the blood of Christ and His imputed righteousness, we're immune from fatal damage from the flames - the power to damn us eternally for our sins. Remember how Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego (Dan 3:19-30) weren't singed, and didn't even have the smell of smoke on them after they came out of the fire that claimed the lives of those who just stoked it, without even entering it! We who have been born into the "gracedom" under the New Covenant, have the same powerful immunity in an *ultimate*, *spiritual* sense; literal flames will burn our physical bodies, so don't test God's patience by walking into a kiln! - and all sins in this life carry with them negative consequences, especially the lack of close communion with our indwelling Lord - but sins go on, and physical death necessarily goes on, as well. If physical death didn't provide the means of going home to be with our Father, we'd live amid sin on earth forever, away from His immediate, glorious, benevolent presence. In this, as in all things, the Father knows best!

Now, in anticipation of another common question, a brief case for *spiritual* death, and not *physical* death, as the last enemy that had to have been defeated by Jesus Christ, will be presented:

In Gen 2:9, we're told that the tree of life was in the midst of the garden of Eden, and in 3:22, we're told why Adam was separated from that tree of life: "lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever." The implications are clear: God had given that particular tree life-sustaining power, and had Adam not sinned during his "probationary period" of being tested as the head of the race, he would have probably been allowed *perpetual* access to that life-sustaining fruit (he and Eve, and all their posterity). But Adam *did* fail the test and he did fall into sin, so "therefore [because he would still have access to the life-sustaining fruit of the tree of life-SR] the LORD God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken" (3:23), and angels with flaming swords blocked the way to the tree of life (3:24). So, judging by the text of

God's Word, if Adam hadn't sinned, he would not have been cut off from the tree of life. Because he *did* sin, God - in His unfathomable mercy - found a way to restore Eden for eternity, via Jesus Christ:

"for as the days of the tree of life shall be the days of my people" - Is 65:22 LXX (Septuagint, the Greek OT)

"To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God" - Rev 2:7 NKJV

"Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city" [the heavenly Jerusalem-SR]) - Rev 22:14 NKJV

We should be able to see that physical death was an *indirect* result of Adam's sin. We know from God's Word that Adam was cut off from the tree of life, a tree to which God had given unique, life-sustaining power. And it should be clear that what was restored firmly and finally by Jesus Christ - the Way, Truth, and Life - was the pathway into God's Eternal Paradise; physical death is the gateway into that Eden.

What Now?: Duties and Privileges In the Everlasting New Covenant Age

- Praise God for His mercy and truth (Ps 115:1)
- Thank God, for He is good, and His mercy *endures forever* (Ps 118:1)
- Love God, and show it by obeying His commandments and keeping His word (Jn 14:15, 23)
- Love one another, and show it by doing the good works we were each created to do, including speaking the truth in love, that we may grow up in all things into Him who is the head - Christ (Eph 2:10 & 4:15)
- Live in the confidence of *complete* redemption, for He *has* done *all* things well (Mk 7:37)
- Make disciples from all nations (starting with our own families and associates), teaching them to observe all things that God has commanded (Mt 28:19-20); there's no onrushing deadline, so we have the time to disciple, and the freedom and ability to obey the Lord - according to His purpose - and employing His methods (Rom 3:8)

Regarding the Book of Revelation:

When I started work on this book, I intended to include a look at the Bible's last book, Revelation, within the chart-format framework. But since this work expanded beyond my original estimate, and because the reader has been given several hints, cross-references, and hermeneutical tools to aid in that book's interpretation, we'll end this work here. I do have definite ideas about the bulk of the book, and they may be turned into another work at some time in the future, Lord willing. Suffice it to say for now, that the following keys seem to me to be the most beneficial for anyone who wants to understand Revelation:

- 1. Remember that it's a book of symbols and figurative language; always think in spiritual terms first
- 2. Remember that it's John's version of the Olivet Discourse
- 3. Remember to *whom* the *letter* was written and *when* (late 62 or early 63, but either way, *before* AD 70)
- 4. Consult the texts from OT books that have to do with God's *covenantal* dealings with His people and/or temple typology, and/or employ "apocalyptic" language: Leviticus, Deuteronomy, Isaiah, Daniel, Ezekiel, Zechariah+
- 5. Look for God's glory; reject any interpretation that robs God of His due glory

"For the LORD gives wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding; He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk uprightly; He guards the paths of justice, and preserves the way of His saints."

- Prov 2:6-8 NKJV

"Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, and He who formed you from the womb: I am the LORD, who makes all things, who stretches out the heavens all alone, who spreads abroad the earth by Myself; Who frustrates the signs of the babblers, and drives diviners mad; Who turns wise men backward, and makes their knowledge foolishness; Who confirms the word of His servant, and performs the counsel of His messengers" - Is 44:24-26 NKJV

"These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness" - Rev 3:14 NKJV

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with all the saints. **Amen**" - last words of the Bible

Recommended Resources: Reformed Theology and Preterist Eschatology

Books - Preterist (alphabetical order, by author's name)

The Days of Vengeance and The Great Tribulation
- David Chilton ("partial-preterist" view; he later became a consistent (full) preterist before he died in 1997)

Babylon the Harlot City - Kenneth J Davies

Nichols, Michael Alan - several books available: www.preterist.org

Case Dismissed and Coming in the Clouds - Randall E Otto

The Parousia - J Stuart Russell (the 19th Century classic)

Expectations Demand a First Century Rapture and Final Decade Before the End - Edward E Stevens

Online - Preterist and Reformed

Ed Stevens, International Preterist Association (Preterist HQ, with articles, Q & A, links, resource ordering, *etc.*; the place to start!) **http://www.preterist.org**

Shortcuts (copy into your browser window):

Q & A: www.preterist.org/get-answers/q-a-topics/

Links to others: www.preterist.org/get-answers/related-links/

IPA Store: www.preterist.org/store/ Some of the most helpful resources include; (MP3 audio) — Apostolic Canonization

- Early Church and the Creeds
- Parables of Tares and Ten Virgins
- Passing of Heaven and Earth (Chilton, '97)
- Resurrection Studies
- Transition Period and the Millennium

(Audio **Gold Mine**) — Podcast Archives, Two DVD Set (CD of 87 PDF articles!) — Resurrection - Change - Rapture

Michael Alan Nichols: www.biblepreterist.com
My website (Steve Rauen's): www.trutholio.com/pretref.html
(Lord willing, I'll have more time to devote to this page in 2018)

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How this work came to be (2002-2017)

One of the things I had hoped to accomplish when I decided to quit my job with a K-12 Christian school system in 2001 was to write this book. After several months of daily, intense work, I got to the point that by Father's Day in 2002, I could produce *crude* printed copies of something that seemed worthy of the attention of *three* people, at least. As a result of that first "press run" of three whole copies(!), the Christian manager of the mobile home park in which I lived (Mr. Steve Byers), Mr. Edward E. Stevens (of the International Preterist Association), and my own dear father, Robert Paul Rauen, received some pretty exclusive stuff! [I kid myself, you see]

But for various reasons, those three "first edition" copies were not well-thumbed, to say the least. Steve B. may have read some of that book, but he didn't express any interest in budging from his futurist position, and I didn't have any realistic expectation that he ever would. Ed Stevens is *always* busy — God bless you, Brother! so I didn't harbor any illusions that he'd drop what he was working on at the time in favor of this new "inbox" item. And my Dad....well, he just wasn't much of a reader of anything other than newspaper articles and brief daily devotions. Even if he did tell me that he doubted a father ever got a better Father's Day gift. I guess it was the idea that I had put so much work into the project, and not that the *content* was worthy of consideration. So *that* copy was still in "mint" condition when Dad passed away on June 21, 2017, and I came here to Wisconsin to make sure that Mom can stay in the house that they both loved.

So by the providence of God, I was put into the position to be able to edit and update my 15-year-old work in 2017, a hard copy of which I did *not* have in my own home. And thank you, Susan (my beloved sister), for procuring the necessary *replacement* software!

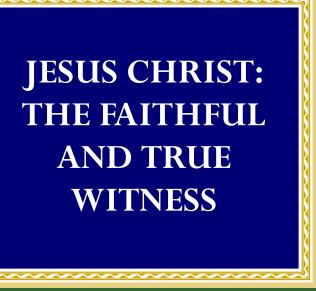
Notes on the process

Much of what was originally committed to these pages remains intact and unaltered (upwards of 90%). The basic idea was to make only cosmetic changes (format, punctuation, font size, wording in some cases), and to leave the content unchanged. You may well ask "Why the tiny 10-point type?" I wish it could be otherwise, but for one reason or another, my original font ("David") and type size (12-point) didn't transfer into this publication as it stood. So the type size *had* to be reduced in order to fit into the text frames and preserve margins, or the book would have had to grow in size (to about 280 pages) and all of the painstaking pagination and Scripture-indexing would have had to be redone; far too time-consuming for me. I wanted to get this out there to all who seek the truth and give honor to Christ *ASAP*!

For those of you who are familiar with the terminology, I'm a "Full" (consistent) Preterist; I subscribe to the Individual Body View (IBV), as opposed to the Collective Body View (CBV); and not long after I wrote this book in its original form in 2002, I became fully convinced that the First Century Rapture/bodily change of the living position is the Biblical position. That's where I've landed. So the only new stance I've taken in this 2017 update/rewrite is that last one, and my current thinking is displayed throughout the present work.

About the Author

Steve Rauen is a layman who has involved himself in self-directed Bible study and subsequent application for at least the last 20 years. Every position he takes on matters of faith, worship practice, and politics is Biblically-based. He's written books and articles in those areas, many of which are (or will be) available at: www.trutholio.com



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