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My life changed dramatically in 1995 after an emergency appendectomy the first words you hear from the surgeon is that I can actually be thankful that he struggled to get to the appendix and was making space to move the appendix around when he found this tumour in and around my small intestine and immediately knew that it was cancer. So apart from taking out my appendix he also removed about a meter of my small intestine and that was the beginning of my now 30+ struggle with NET cancer. If the tumour is functional, it causes Carcinoid Syndrome, which is just releasing so many different hormones to cause so many different problems. And every person reacts differently which makes diagnosis and treatments extremely difficult. I was also told that if they did not find the tumour I would have probably had less than a year to survive. Not the sort of news that one expects after this “minor” hiccup. So I have been not able to carry on with any full time job as I am in stage four cancer where the next step is death. And that has been the case since 2013.

I do not think that any person is ready to die at age 44. Not that you would have lived at the most for another year. But this episode in my life had the effect that I wanted to be 100% convinced that when I die I would join Jesus, the Father and all the people that are in heaven and to be with them. So after looking at all the books published by so many other people, I decided that the only way I can make sure that I will end up in heaven and spend the eighth day, the day without start or ending, is to go back to our workshop manual, the Bible, and find the answers to the questions I had. Every church grouping has their own sort of way of trying to tell you what they believe in, but none of them answered my questions. Even asking extremely popular Pastors and other clergy, I could not find answers to my questions. So all the books, videos, and articles on my site at www.shama.org.za are the answers I found that helped me in my search for the truth.

So apart from receiving a small pension, we still believe that we will find some people who will donate some money to us to fight my cancer or to give my wife her womanhood back after she had a bilateral mastectomy in her fight against cancer. I must admit that in the past fifteen years we actually had two people donate some money to us even though my books are downloaded at a rate exceeding 200 per month.

So if you want to actually donate some money to us, I have set up a QR code which you can scan with your phone and this will take you to the “buy me a coffee” site, as well as a straight forward link to my donations page at buy me a coffee.

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All quotations from the NASB and KJV unless otherwise noted.

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INTERPRETING BIBLICAL PROPHECIES

Interpreting Biblical prophecies is a subject of much controversy, and most Christians are placed in groups according to what and how they believe.

As a result of this theologians use different principals in declaring Biblical prophecies. Some of the principals are so far removed from what is actually written that it is difficult to get back to the original text, which in turn casts doubt on the divine inspiration of the Bible texts.

The four most often used principles are as follows:

1. HISTORICAL PREMILLENNIALISM

Up to the end of the fourth century after Christ the historical premillenniumism interpretation was the most widely used way of interpreting the end times. In terms of this the Antichrist would rise up and the church would go through the tribulation. At the end of the tribulation the dead in Christ would be raised and together with the living believers be taken up in heaven. They will then immediately return with Christ in order to end the tribulation, to destroy the Antichrist and his hordes of followers, the remnant of Israel save and the thousand year reign of Christ establish with Jerusalem as capital. Almost all the early church fathers held on to this way of interpreting the book of Revelation.

2. AMILLENNIALISM

This method use as a basis that Biblical statements cannot be taken literally but must be interpreted allegorically or spiritually. This interpretation has its origin in the Alexandrian theological school in the third and fourth century after Christ.

Origenes (born 185AD) is the father of this interpretation and he wrote many books following this method of interpretation. He was however exposed to the Greek philosophy of Plato, and still wanted to stay a Christian but also follow the philosophical influences of Plato.

3. POSTMILLENNIALISM

This method started during the 16th century and was a completely new way of interpretation. In terms of this way of interpretation the world would become a better place as the message of Christ is taught to all people, which would result in a world becoming better and will the church age and millennium start. At the end of this so-called "golden century" will Jesus return to earth for the final judgement. According to them there is no need for a need dispensation on earth with Jerusalem as capital.

The reformation along with the quick expansion of the British Empire and other European colonial powers started this idea that missionaries will carry the gospel across the earth which would lead to a Christian world where righteousness and law will prevail. Christian reformation and reconstruction must as a case of necessity continue until this ideal is reached.

These people obviously that the world is getting poorer in the spirit everyday and that morals are falling all over the world. They cling fast to the fact that the world must become a better place in order for the return of Christ and the millennial reign.

We still have groups that still hold on to this ideal. Some of these leaders turn into politicians in the hope that they and the LORD can appoint them and their followers in key positions in order

to take over the world that way and establish a government centred on Christ and His commandments.

Other groupings and churches follow the wonders and supernatural power play in order to expand their own empire and to start a massive revival that way. They then establish groups to do spiritual warfare and to bring down the strongholds of Satan and to remove him from earth so that he is no longer able to deceive the people on earth.

4. MODERN DISPENSATIONAL PREMILLENNIALISM

In dispensational theology the Bible is interpreted as it is using the perspective of how God communicated with man in different but following dispensations. The church dispensation is ended by the rapture of the saints in order for the following dispensation, the seven year tribulation and the reign of the Antichrist to happen. As the tribulation includes judgement from the LORD, the real Church will be raptured as these trials and tribulations are not intended for them but only for the sinners. A pre-tribulation rapture is an essential part of modern dispensational premillennialism.

Premillennialism is committed to the literal root meaning of Scripture, except where it is used out of context and it is very clear that it is symbolic language. Examples of such symbols are the red dragon with seven heads, which is described in the Bible as the devil. Symbols have therefore mostly a literal meaning such as the Lamb that suggests the Christ. When the Bible speaks of Israel, the Antichrist, the tribulation, the false prophet, the battle of Armageddon, the Second Coming of Christ and the binding of Satan in a pit for a thousand years, there are no grounds whatsoever to interpret these concepts symbolically or allegorically.

CHAPTER TWO – MY INTERPRETATION – THE EXAMPLE METHOD OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

I want to start here with a verse that I think most people do not pay attention to, but it is very important. *"I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery."*(Exo 20:2) We find in this chapter that the LORD gives them the 10 commandments, but He starts off by telling them that He is the One that is responsible for leading them out of Egypt. So in order for the Israelites to give Him their honour and glory, the LORD gives them guidelines on how they should behave towards Him and their neighbour. Like Israel I have to realise that He is the One that gives me the opportunity to rid myself of my sinful life, and as a result I will have to behave in a specific way and adapt a certain lifestyle and value system. That is the reason the LORD Jesus summarises the law with these words: *"And He said to him, "What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?" And he answered, "YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND; AND YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF."* And He said to him, *"You have answered correctly; DO THIS AND YOU WILL LIVE."* (Luk 10:26-28) Jesus here uses the example method, the same method I will use throughout this book. This is using Deuteronomy 6 where Moses told them: *"(Deu 6:5) "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might."*

My method differs from the various other methods I mentioned earlier, as I would like to see that a prophecy must be able to withstand the test of time. I know that a lot of prophecies from the Old Testament were written for specific circumstances or specific times, but the principles behind these prophecies have not changed. We still serve the same God today. When we look at any prophecy in the Bible, we will always find that they all adhere to the same layout. The people are firstly informed of what is wrong with them, what the LORD wants them to change, and then there are always two possible outcomes. The one is what will happen if they alter their ways and do what they were asked to do, and then what the outcome would be if the people do not repent and continue on their own way. Many times the prophets would use metaphors, the same way Jesus used metaphors in his parables.

The apostle Paul provides us with two further extremely important keys to unlock the Bible with which I find absent from the other views. In 1 Corinthians 10 he writes as follows: *"For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea; and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and all ate the same spiritual food; and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ. Nevertheless, with most of them God was not well-pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness. Now these things happened as examples for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved. Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written, "THE PEOPLE SAT DOWN TO EAT AND DRINK, AND STOOD UP TO PLAY." Nor let us act immorally, as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in one day. Nor let us try the Lord, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the serpents. Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall. No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it."* (1Co 10:1-13)

Paul commands these people to pay attention to how the LORD interacted with Israel and that we must learn from that. If we look at how He acted against them, then we will know for sure how He would react towards us when we do similar things today or in the future. The writer of Hebrews says the following: *"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. Do not be carried away by varied and strange teachings; for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by*

grace, not by foods, through which those who were so occupied were not benefited.” (Heb 13:8-9) This then confirms that we can use Israel as an example to evaluate what the outcome of certain actions would bring.

The second scripture that Paul uses is found in the second letter to the people of Corinth. ***“But if the ministry of death, in letters engraved on stones, came with glory, so that the sons of Israel could not look intently at the face of Moses because of the glory of his face, fading as it was, how will the ministry of the Spirit fail to be even more with glory? For if the ministry of condemnation has glory, much more does the ministry of righteousness abound in glory. For indeed what had glory, in this case has no glory because of the glory that surpasses it. For if that which fades away was with glory, much more that which remains is in glory. Therefore having such a hope, we use great boldness in our speech, and are not like Moses, who used to put a veil over his face so that the sons of Israel would not look intently at the end of what was fading away. But their minds were hardened; for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remains unlifted, because it is removed in Christ. But to this day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their heart; but whenever a person turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.”*** (2Co 3:7-18)

This passage tells us that even today as it was in the time of Israel, there is a veil over the meaning of the Old Testament. This veil can only be removed when we understand the reason behind Christ’s coming to earth. So this immediately places a question mark over the dispensation model mentioned earlier, as we only find two parts in the Bible, the Old Testament, and the New Testament. When we look at their dispensations they are arbitrary dispensations that they use with man made divisions.

I have attached a section as Addendum 1 to this book that explains their dispensations as they themselves define these dispensations. I do not even want to write anything about it as I do not want to have any part with them. I want to stress it right here in the beginning of the book that I believe this is the major Antichrist teaching, as they infer that Jesus did not complete His mission on earth, that both Jesus and the Father were surprised when the Jews rejected Him as the Christ, and that we as Church are an afterthought when the Jews rejected Jesus. We apparently now live in a period of grace that nobody ever knew would happen. Originally in the early 1800’s there were only four dispensations, but with time this has now changed to seven dispensations. They do exactly what the Roman Catholic Church did in the 16 and 17th centuries, by pushing everything to sometime in the future when the so-called Antichrist will rise. This is to take the attention away from their teachings and them so they are not seen as the Antichrist and its teachings which they are proclaiming. Something they actually forget is that the same person who wrote the book of Revelation was also the only person who actually defined who the Antichrist would be in his letters. ***“1 John 2:18 Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared; from this we know that it is the last hour.”*** ***“1Jn 2:22 Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son.”*** ***“1Jn 4:3 and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world.”*** ***“Jn 1:7 For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist.”*** By teaching that the Jewish believers must first accept Jesus as the only saviour while they have and are still rejecting Him as the Messiah they are supporting the Jewish faith and hence become part of the Antichrist as the Jewish faith rejects Jesus as the Messiah. ***“Watch yourselves, that you do not lose what we have accomplished, but that you may receive a full reward. Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this***

teaching, do not receive him into your house, and do not give him a greeting; for the one who gives him a greeting participates in his evil deeds.” (2) (For a full discussion on this and other doctrines you can download a free copy of my book entitled “The covenant of righteousness” from my website here) It is also attached as Addendum 2.

The Jews had many opportunities to see Jesus for who He is, and we read the following: *“These twelve Jesus sent out after instructing them: “Do not go in the way of the Gentiles, **and do not enter any city of the Samaritans; but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. “And as you go, preach, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ ‘Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. Freely you received, freely give. “Do not acquire gold, or silver, or copper for your money belts, or a bag for your journey, or even two coats, or sandals, or a staff; for the worker is worthy of his support. “And whatever city or village you enter, inquire who is worthy in it, and stay at his house until you leave that city. “As you enter the house, give it your greeting. “If the house is worthy, give it your blessing of peace. But if it is not worthy, take back your blessing of peace. “Whoever does not receive you, nor heed your words, as you go out of that house or that city, shake the dust off your feet. “Truly I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgement than for that city. “Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves. “But beware of men, for they will hand you over to the courts and scourge you in their synagogues; and you will even be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles.”*** (Mat 10:5-18)

This scripture tells us that Jesus sent the disciples to Israel to tell them who He was. Not only should they teach about Him, but they must *“Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons.”* Did they heed His call? No, they crucified Him. Jesus also told them what the consequences would be. **“Truly I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgement than for that city.”** Now we find that people are teaching that the Jews must get another chance to accept Jesus as they did not know that He was the Messiah. I just wonder if someone came to your town and healed the sick and raising the dead, and it is not only a single person but 12 of them and these wonders are happening in every town, how it would be possible that you will not know about it. Especially when they were living the way they did as close knit communities. Apart from this He also taught in the temple and everywhere He came.

According to these dispensationalists, Jesus still has five things He has to do which He apparently did not do while here. All five things are apparently from the book of Daniel in chapter 9. *“Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place.”* (Dan 9:24) But this is exactly what He came to do, but these people say He did not do it. If He did not do this, then what did He do? They will find out one day when the seventh seal is opened that He actually did all these things. They also mention in some of their teachings that the Holy Spirit was only active from the day of Pentecost onwards. But king David asks the following in Psalms 51: *“Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me. **Do not cast me away from Your presence And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation And sustain me with a willing spirit. Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners will be converted to You.”*** (Psa 51:10-13) **So as far as I can ascertain these people are building their faith on their faith, and are not using Jesus and the Bible as their cornerstone. Their cornerstones are Darby and Scofield.** But enough for now about the Antichrist as we will look at this again later in this book.

We can now shed light on the book of Revelations by searching for keys in the Old Testament that we can use to unlock the Revelation of John. A quick search through the Old Testament for clues gives us a number of passages we can use in our interpretation. A search for the words at the end of days, the last days, result in the following passages being highlighted: *“(Gen 49:1)*

Then Jacob summoned his sons and said, "Assemble yourselves that I may tell you **what will befall you in the days to come.**(Num 24:14) "And now, behold, I am going to my people; come, and I will advise you **what this people will do to your people in the days to come.**"(Deu 4:30) "When you are in distress and all these things have come upon you, **in the latter days you will return to the LORD your God** and listen to His voice.(Isa 2:2) Now it will come about that **In the last days The mountain of the house of the LORD Will be established as the chief of the mountains,** And will be raised above the hills; And all the nations will stream to it. (Jer 3:16) "**It shall be in those days when you are multiplied and increased in the land,**" declares the LORD, "they will no longer say, 'The ark of the covenant of the LORD.' And it will not come to mind, nor will they remember it, nor will they miss it, nor will it be made again.(Jer 23:20) "The anger of the LORD will not turn back Until He has performed and carried out the purposes of His heart; **In the last days you will clearly understand it.** (Jer 30:24) The fierce anger of the LORD will not turn back Until He has performed and until He has accomplished The intent of His heart; **In the latter days you will understand this.** (Jer 48:47) "**Yet I will restore the fortunes of Moab In the latter days,**" declares the LORD. Thus far the judgement on Moab.(Jer 49:39) '**But it will come about in the last days That I will restore the fortunes of Elam,**'" Declares the LORD.(Eze 38:8) "After many days you will be summoned; **in the latter years you will come into the land that is restored from the sword,** whose inhabitants have been gathered from many nations to the mountains of Israel which had been a continual waste; but its people were brought out from the nations, and they are living securely, all of them.(Eze 38:16) and you will come up against My people Israel like a cloud to cover the land. **It shall come about in the last days that I will bring you against My land,** so that the nations may know Me when I am sanctified through you before their eyes, O Gog."(Dan 2:28) "However, there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar **what will take place in the latter days.** This was your dream and the visions in your mind while on your bed. (Dan 10:14) "Now I have come **to give you an understanding of what will happen to your people in the latter days,** for the vision pertains to the days yet future."(Dan 12:13) "But as for you, go your way to the end; then you will enter into rest **and rise again for your allotted portion at the end of the age.**" (Mic 4:1) **And it will come about in the last days That the mountain of the house of the LORD Will be established as the chief of the mountains.** It will be raised above the hills, And the peoples will stream to it. (Zec 14:5) You will flee by the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to Azel; yes, you will flee just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. **Then the LORD, my God, will come, and all the holy ones with Him!** (2Pe 3:3) Know this first of all, **that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts,**" (Act 2:17) '**AND IT SHALL BE IN THE LAST DAYS,**' God says, '**THAT I WILL POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT ON ALL MANKIND; AND YOUR SONS AND YOUR DAUGHTERS SHALL PROPHECY, AND YOUR YOUNG MEN SHALL SEE VISIONS, AND YOUR OLD MEN SHALL DREAM DREAMS;** (2Ti 3:1) But realize this, **that in the last days difficult times will come.** (Heb 1:2) **in these last days has spoken to us in His Son,** whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. (Jas 5:3) Your gold and your silver have rusted; and their rust will be a witness against you and will consume your flesh like fire. **It is in the last days that you have stored up your treasure!**

These passages will be used later on in this book, but just reading through them we can see that most of the prophets and even Jacob knew what was going to happen in the last days, the days we are experiencing right now. So to now start with a new hypothesis, will result in it being completely wrong.

On examining the Bible, we find always find that there are two options that are used in just about every bit of history or prophecy. We can start at Adam, where we find that just like the fall of mankind was brought about by one person not obeying the word of God, the same had to happen to restore that situation, again one person Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. This gives us the right again to be seen without sin as soon as we accept His righteousness. This also tells us that the first or human attempt, will always end up fallible, whereas the second attempt will always be the Godly action. As mentioned earlier the fall of man came through the first Adam,

and was reconciled by the second Adam, Jesus Christ. This theme of first and second is found abundantly in the Bible, and as some examples Cain and Abel, Ishmael and Isaac, Esau and Jacob, the first tablets from mount Sinai which was broken as a result of Israel's golden calf, and the second that depicted the agreement with us as gentiles. In the history we find that Saul is the first king appointed and anointed by the LORD in spite of Israel rejecting His authority, and replaced with David, who walked with God and was also the last king appointed by Him as all the other kinds were never again appointed by the LORD. Then we find the same thing with Israel as the first chosen people and rejecting Christ as Saviour, and the Church as the second or Godly answer by accepting Christ as Saviour. The first covenant also gave Israel their righteousness by obeying every commandment, and the second righteousness we find in Christ. *"Deu 6:25 "It will be righteousness for us if we are careful to observe all this commandment before the LORD our God, just as He commanded us." "For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes." (Rom 10:3-4) "Jer 23:6 "In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell securely; And this is His name by which He will be called, "The LORD our righteousness."*

This is quite easily the most difficult book that also took the longest time, before I could actually sit down and start writing it. I know everyone will immediately say that it's a writer's block or something to that effect, but to me it was really difficult to see the complete picture and to understand it. We have been bombarded by so many different views of Revelation, and for me to see this picture without any prior standpoint was extremely difficult. And then once you do get the full picture, it was even more difficult to pen down this picture in order to make it easy for every person to understand. It was extremely difficult to take the various pictures of the prophets of the Old Testament, and to put it across within a New Testament context. As an example we find how Ezekiel saw the end of the ages with a new Temple and John seeing the same picture but with a new Jerusalem. Both saw the same thing, one in the Old Testament context where the temple was seen as the dwelling place of the LORD, while John sees it as the New Jerusalem, also the dwelling place of the LORD. Ezekiel sees judgements over seven nations, while John sees seven churches, Ezekiel sees dead bones becoming live and John sees the resurrection of the dead. I have attached Addendum 4 comparing the contents of these two books of the Bible for further study.

Ezekiel was also not the only prophet who knew that the LORD would extend His people to all nations. To be exact almost every prophet saw this symbolic picture where other nations will be subjected to the judgements of the LORD. This is also the mystery that many people claim that only they are capable of explaining. But Paul specifically states the opposite: *"that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief. By referring to this, **when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel, of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God's grace which was given to me according to the working of His power. To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ, and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God who created all things; so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places. This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him.**" (Eph 3:3-12)*

And this is what this book is all about. There is a series of pictures or images that the Apostle John saw, and then he had to describe this picture or image. And then we find that it was not just a single picture, but that there was movement, every image had its own movement. And then he still had to listen to the words being spoken in this dramatic scene. Words coming from both

Jesus and others, some that are not even identified for us. I think I would have had a major problem to remember everything, as at times I take a walk to our bedroom and then cannot remember why I even went there.

Fortunately for us we find many prophecies and things in the Bible where people saw different pictures. So for John it was easily understood as Jesus almost always used metaphors to describe things. And this whole book is divided into different sections with each part addressing a specific purpose. This was also the same way God spoke to the prophets of the Old Testament. So every prophecy had a structure that it adhered to, and now we can use that same structure to interpret the book of Revelation.

So as I mentioned earlier, the LORD almost always followed a certain routine in giving a prophecy to a prophet. The LORD advised how He saw His people, then would point out what was wrong with them, what they had to do to restore their relationship, what would happen if they did not obey Him, and what would happen when they do obey His words. So all the various prophecies we find had change as the central message. They had to change their ways to become acceptable again. A great many prophecies had more than one message also. We also find this in the book of Revelation. There are seven prophecies for the seven churches, and then the greater picture that binds all these prophecies together as one.

That is also the basis for prophecies in the Old Testament. Some of these prophecies had a specific message for a specific time, while others were not tied to a specific time, and are still valid today.

An example of this type of prophecy is the book of Hosea. This prophet had to do some extremely weird things. He had to marry a whore, which illustrates how the LORD viewed His people as they were forever worshipping other gods. Then he is told to give his children specific names, which also had specific meanings.

*"And the LORD said to him, "Name him Jezreel; for yet a little while, and I will punish the house of Jehu for the bloodshed of Jezreel, **and I will put an end to the kingdom of the house of Israel.** "On that day I will break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel." Then she conceived again and gave birth to a daughter. And the LORD said to him, "Name her Lo-ruhamah, **for I will no longer have compassion on the house of Israel, that I would ever forgive them.** "But I will have compassion on the house of Judah and deliver them by the LORD their God, and will not deliver them by bow, sword, battle, horses or horsemen." When she had weaned Lo-ruhamah, she conceived and gave birth to a son. And the LORD said, "Name him Lo-ammi, for you are not My people and I am not your God." Yet the number of the sons of Israel Will be like the sand of the sea, Which cannot be measured or numbered; **And in the place Where it is said to them, "You are not My people," It will be said to them, "You are the sons of the living God."**" (Hos 1:4-10)*

This scripture is still applicable today, as it states that the LORD will first reject the kingdom under Jehu, so the ten tribes of Israel, and will only continue with the tribe of Judah as Jesus had to be born from the tribe of Judah. The third child Lo-ammi will represent us as Christians as we who are not His children based on our lineage as Jews, will be called sons of the Living God. This is also quoted by the Apostle Paul in Romans 9. *"As He says also in Hosea, "I WILL CALL THOSE WHO WERE NOT MY PEOPLE, 'MY PEOPLE,' AND HER WHO WAS NOT BELOVED, 'BELOVED.' " "AND IT SHALL BE THAT IN THE PLACE WHERE IT WAS SAID TO THEM, 'YOU ARE NOT MY PEOPLE,' THERE THEY SHALL BE CALLED SONS OF THE LIVING GOD."* (Rom 9:25-26) This confirms then in Pauls' writing to the Romans that should any Roman people convert to Christianity, they will become part of the LORDS' nation, known as Israel.

So here in the second chapter of my book the question is answered that any person who repent and become part of the covenant of righteousness with the LORD, will be called by the name of Israel. *"Yet the number of the sons of Israel Will be like the sand of the sea."* The Apostle Paul also quotes this passage in his quotation of Hosea in the book to the Romans, so I am not preaching

replacement theology as some theologians call it, but only quote what the Bible has to say about it. The reason I specifically quote this passage will become clearer later in this book. *"So if the uncircumcised man keeps the requirements of the Law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? And he who is physically uncircumcised, if he keeps the Law, will he not judge you who though having the letter of the Law and circumcision are a transgressor of the Law? For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. **But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.**" (Rom 2:26-29)*

I would like to use the example of Paul in Romans to describe how and where we fit in. *"I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness? For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them. **For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?** For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. **Well; because of unbelief they were broken off,** and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee." Rom 11:11-21.*

I believe all of us know how to graft a new growth unto an older or prepared root-stock. When we buy the end product, it has the flowers or fruit that we want, and not that of the root-stock. The new growth depends on the root-stock for its nutrients and will die without it. And that is how we as Christians became children of the LORD. He removed the original growth, Israel, and grafted us into Him as the root-stock. We also know that when you allow the original plant to start bringing forth its original branches, that the plant grafted in will die. And that is what will happen to us as Church if we start following the Jewish root doctrines. We, as Church, will die. That is why there will be no rapture or anything connected to the Jews of today, as the moment we believe that they must be grafted back using a different way as what we have to follow, we as Church will die. So run from anyone teaching these false doctrines, or as the Bible calls them, the antichrist teachings. The Jews have to follow the same road as us to be grafted into the root-stock. Unfortunately nearly 80% of Americans believe this lie of the rapture, so it really makes me sick to the core when they do not see their teachings as that of the antichrist.

In the book of Jeremiah we find examples that were meant for a specific cause. *"Then Jeremiah the prophet said to them, "I have heard you. Behold, I am going to pray to the LORD your God in accordance with your words; and I will tell you the whole message which the LORD will answer you. I will not keep back a word from you." Then they said to Jeremiah, "May the LORD be a true and faithful witness against us if we do not act in accordance with the whole message with which the LORD your God will send you to us. "Whether it is pleasant or unpleasant, we will listen to the voice of the LORD our God to whom we are sending you, so that it may go well with us when we listen to the voice of the LORD our God." Now at the end of ten days the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah. Then he called for Johanan the son of Kareah and all the commanders of the forces that were with him, and for all the people both small and great, and said to them, "Thus says the LORD the God of Israel, to whom you sent me to present your petition before Him: 'If you will indeed stay in this land, then I will build you up and not tear you down, and I will plant you and not uproot you; for I will relent concerning the calamity that I have inflicted on you. 'Do not be afraid of the king of Babylon, whom you are now fearing; do not be afraid of him,' declares the LORD, 'for I am with you to save you and deliver you from his hand. 'I will also show you compassion, so that he will have compassion on you and restore you to your own soil. 'But if you are going to say, "We will not stay in this land," so as not to listen to the voice of the LORD your God, saying, "No, but we will*

go to the land of Egypt, where we will not see war or hear the sound of a trumpet or hunger for bread, and we will stay there"; then in that case listen to the word of the LORD, O remnant of Judah. Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, "If you really set your mind to enter Egypt and go in to reside there, then the sword, which you are afraid of, will overtake you there in the land of Egypt; and the famine, about which you are anxious, will follow closely after you there in Egypt, and you will die there. "So all the men who set their mind to go to Egypt to reside there will die by the sword, by famine and by pestilence; and they will have no survivors or refugees from the calamity that I am going to bring on them."'" For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, "As My anger and wrath have been poured out on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so My wrath will be poured out on you when you enter Egypt. And you will become a curse, an object of horror, an imprecation and a reproach; and you will see this place no more." The LORD has spoken to you, O remnant of Judah, "Do not go into Egypt!" You should clearly understand that today I have testified against you. For you have only deceived yourselves; for it is you who sent me to the LORD your God, saying, "Pray for us to the LORD our God; and whatever the LORD our God says, tell us so, and we will do it." So I have told you today, but you have not obeyed the LORD your God, even in whatever He has sent me to tell you. Therefore you should now clearly understand that you will die by the sword, by famine and by pestilence, in the place where you wish to go to reside." (Jer 42:4-22)

We find here that the elders of the people go to Jeremiah to enquire about a specific circumstance. They need a specific answer to a question. So for us as Christians today we can look at their circumstances, and extrapolate what the answer would be to us as Christians. So once I received the righteousness of Jesus Christ as a gift according to the new covenant, I cannot return to my previous lifestyle without losing my righteousness. **So I can lose my promise of everlasting life and die as a sinner.** The worst part about this answer is that I can never return to my previous state as a Christian, no matter what. Paul writes about it as follows: *"For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace. What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be! Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?"* (Rom 6:14-16)

In Hebrews 6 we find the following being said: *"For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame. For ground that drinks the rain which often falls on it and brings forth vegetation useful to those for whose sake it is also tilled, receives a blessing from God; but if it yields thorns and thistles, it is worthless and close to being cursed, and it ends up being burned."* (Heb 6:4-8)

Peter says the following about this subject: *"For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world by the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and are overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first. **For it would be better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn away from the holy commandment handed on to them.** It has happened to them according to the true proverb, "A DOG RETURNS TO ITS OWN VOMIT," and, "A sow, after washing, returns to wallowing in the mire." (2Pe 2:20-22)*

On the other hand we find prophecies that are still valid today, and is one that most people are aware of. *"The people who walk in darkness Will see a great light; Those who live in a dark land, The light will shine on them. You shall multiply the nation, You shall increase their gladness; They will be glad in Your presence As with the gladness of harvest, As men rejoice when they divide the spoil. For You shall break the yoke of their burden and the staff on their shoulders, The rod of their oppressor, as at the battle of Midian. For every boot of the booted warrior in the battle tumult, And*

cloak rolled in blood, will be for burning, fuel for the fire. For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this." (Isa 9:2-7)

This prophecy is about the coming of Jesus Christ, and that He will reign in the heavenly Jerusalem forever. We know that He came to take our sins (*For You shall break the yoke of their burden and the staff on their shoulders, The rod of their oppressor, as at the battle of Midian.*), and that after His resurrection He will reign in the heavenly Jerusalem and that each and everyone who will not see the second death will be with Him in the New Jerusalem. This is also the message of the book of Revelation and that is what I will try and explain.

Something that we will notice throughout this book is that everything has already been described by the prophets, in Moses (the first five books of the Bible) and in Psalms. Hence Jesus' words in the parable of Lazarus and the rich man: *"And he said, 'Then I beg you, father, that you send him to my father's house-- for I have five brothers--in order that he may warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.' "But Abraham *said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.' "But he said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent!' "But he said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.'"* (Luk 16:27-31)

This actually teaches us that we only need the Old Testament to believe that Jesus is the Christ, and that we will come to belief in Jesus just by studying the Old Covenant. To now build doctrines only on the New Testament will most probably not contain the full truth. We also read in Acts that the people also examined the Old Testament to judge Paul's messages. *"The brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so."* (Act 17:10-11) I can only assume that they could not examine the New Testament as it was still being lived and written.

For this reason I will also examine scripture and prophecies from the Old Testament that pointed to the end of time. That is also the place where the LORD started His journey with me. He would always bring me back to the Old Testament and show me the reasons why Jesus Christ had to come, where it was mentioned and what He had to achieve. This journey started in Genesis 14 where the Holy Communion was first described, and it has not stopped yet.

So the purpose of this book is to explain the Revelation of John to you in such a way that it will become alive for you, and that you will be able to see the full picture that John saw and experienced.

CHAPTER THREE – REVELATION 1 TO 3 – THE VISION AND THE LETTERS TO THE CHURCHES

The first couple of versus could actually convince us that the name of the book could have been the Revelation of Jesus Christ as He is the one giving the revelation, and that John only wrote down what he saw. But like all the other prophets in the Bible, the name of the book is given using the name of the prophet. So the name is in line with the rest of the books of the Bible. So John is the prophet, and his message is exactly like all the other prophets, the message of God with him being the scribe.

The rest of the introduction to this book really does not need any explanation, as it explained who Jesus is, what He came to do, where He currently is on His throne, and that He will come again on the clouds. *“John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace, from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and released us from our sins by His blood-- and He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father--to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen. BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen. “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”* (Rev 1:4-8)

So this book follows the example also of the Old Testament prophets, as it first of all describes who the message is from. It is from the One that is not tide to time, from the One who was there before time began, and who will still be there forever and ever. So the message is from God the Father and from Jesus Christ whose message can only be true as They are the Truth, the One who was raised the first to be from the dead and rules over everyone and everything. He then confirms what He came to do and that was to be an acceptable sacrifice for all the sins of mankind, so every person that has lived, is still living and has yet to be born. Because of this we are now all priests and do not need anyone to do any sacrifices for us, with Him as our High Priest. He is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.

The wonderful reason we were made for by the Father in the beginning and what we are supposed to do every day is to rule. We are kings and priests. So we have to take the responsibility of those who do not know the Word of God, and train them to fulfil their roles as kings and priests. The greatness of any kingdom is not in how many people you rule over, but how many people you serve, represent and take responsibility for.

THE FIRST VISION

We now find the first vision of John. He tells us that he was in Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. He does not give us any further reasons except that he was a fellow partaker in the tribulation.

When we study this prophesy of John, we find that the LORD actually kept John aside. We find numerous references to the Old Testament, but very few references to the New Testament books written by the other Apostles. So it seems that the LORD kept him apart from these people so as not to be influenced by the writings of Paul, Peter and Barnabas. So the LORD used only those scriptures that John was familiar with, without using other documents that could influence him.

John gets commissioned to write down what he sees and to distribute it to the seven congregations in Asia minor. An interesting observation is that we also read in the Old Testament that the prophets were referred to as seer, so they had to write down or tell the people about what they saw. *“(Formerly in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, he used to*

say, "Come, and let us go to the seer"; for he who is called a prophet now was formerly called a seer.)" (1Sa 9:9)

So now we find the first picture of Jesus in amongst the seven lamp stands. In His right hand He held seven stars, and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword. John gets told that the seven lamp stands are the seven churches, and that the seven stars are the seven angels of the seven churches.

We also find a description of what Jesus looked like. He said he saw someone like the Son of man, so someone who was human and could identify with us as human beings, with a two-edged sword coming from His mouth. The sword is also explained in Hebrews chapter 4: "For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart." (Heb 4:12) This tells us that everything that Jesus will say and how He will measure our lives with, will be His Word, the Bible. So we will not find any judgements that are one-sided, as our lives will be measured against what is written in the Word of God, the Bible.

Jesus then declares the following: "Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades." What wonderful words to hear, that He lives, that He will live forevermore, and that He holds the keys of death and Hades. We also know that He existed even before the earth was formed, as John earlier wrote the following; "There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him." (Joh 1:9-11)

That what we are going to hear from Him, is that what we have to do to ensure that we will be able to be with Him in Revelation 20, in order to reign with Him. So we can now study what is acceptable to Him and what is not acceptable. So the rest of the book of Revelation will show us what we as Christians will have to face and endure in order to reign with Him, and what will happen if we do not heed to His warnings and instructions.

The book of Hebrews gives us the following summary: "You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against sin; and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, **MY SON, DO NOT REGARD LIGHTLY THE DISCIPLINE OF THE LORD, NOR FAINT WHEN YOU ARE REPROVED BY HIM; FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES, AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES.**" It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? **But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.** Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness. All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness. Therefore, strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble, and make straight paths for your feet, so that the limb which is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed. **Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled; that there be no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a single meal.** For you know that even afterwards, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought for it with tears. For you have not come to a mountain that can be touched and to a blazing fire, and to darkness and gloom and whirlwind, and to the blast of a trumpet and the sound of words which sound was such that those who heard begged that no further word be spoken to them. For they could not bear the command, **IF EVEN A BEAST TOUCHES THE MOUNTAIN, IT WILL BE**

STONED. "And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, "I AM FULL OF FEAR and trembling." **But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel. See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. For if those did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape who turn away from Him who warns from heaven. And His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised, saying, "YET ONCE MORE I WILL SHAKE NOT ONLY THE EARTH, BUT ALSO THE HEAVEN."** (Heb 12:4-26) This is what this portion of scripture refers to. Jesus is speaking to John from heaven and John has to write down everything that we will have to face to get to the heavenly Jerusalem. We are also reminded and warned that we should not follow the path of the Jews and to reject Him while He was with them. If He rejected them, then He will do exactly the same with us if we reject Him.

He now has to write down the things that he saw, as well as the things that are yet to come. So what we are going to learn are the things that were happening then, that which is yet to happen, as well as the things that has already happened. So the first part to the various churches was not only applicable to them as specific churches, but also applicable to churches that hold to similar teachings today. So I will look at what these churches are warned about, and look at groupings today that follow the same doctrines or the same examples. I will also try and link these churches to groupings that we find in the Old Testament.

So the stars John saw were the people that were in leadership positions within their congregations. They were the lights to the nations, the people that are bringing the gospel to the lost and their own churches. We actually find that most of these churches had maybe one or more things that they had to rectify and that is what the leaders, the stars had to do. So each letter is addressed to the star or leader of the church, and then to the lamp stands, the members of these churches. It is written to the stars or leaders as they have to take the responsibility for the doctrines of these churches and the lives of these people should they not bring the true gospel of Jesus Christ. If they fail in this duty, they will lose their position as star but it does not hold the people unaccountable as they have to measure the message they receive against the Word of God.

Something else I would like to explain here is that when we look at the Old Testament prophecies, we always find that there were judgements against six heathen nations or territories, and then judgements against Israel and or Jerusalem. Is that a coincidence, or did these prophets know that there will be differences in the way we believe and that all the people will end up in different churches or territories? Another interesting fact is that Abraham had eight sons with Jacob representing the true gospel, Ishmael the "works" gospel, so the Jewish belief system, and the other six sons also seen as sons of Abraham, but not chosen to be lights to the nations. Maybe Jeremiah knew this when he prophesied the following: "*Jer 48:47 "Yet I will restore the fortunes of Moab In the latter days," declares the LORD. Thus far the judgment on Moab.*" "*Jer 49:39 'But it will come about in the last days That I will restore the fortunes of Elam,' Declares the LORD.*"

Peter describes for us what the prophecies of the prophets entailed. "*In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls. As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories*

to follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven--things into which angels long to look." (1Pe 1:6-12)

I would just like to leave this thought with you, and now continue with the various prophecies to the various churches.

TO EPHESUS

"To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: The One who holds the seven stars in His right hand, the One who walks among the seven golden lamp stands, says this: 'I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance, and that you cannot tolerate evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and you found them to be false; and you have perseverance and have endured for My name's sake, and have not grown weary. 'But I have this against you, that you have left your first love. 'Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lamp stand out of its place--unless you repent. 'Yet this you do have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God.'" (Rev 2:1-7)

Who were these people? We find that these people know the Lord as they are acknowledged for their works, and they persevere in the faith. They also do not tolerate evil people but put them to them to the test, especially those people that call themselves apostles but are not. They know that there are false prophets and they have persevered and have not grown weary. They are also known to hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, a message that free sexual relations and fornication are acceptable. This doctrine of the Nicolaitans also said that every woman and every man were married to every person in their church, and could thus have sexual relationships with everyone in their church and that it was acceptable and thus did not qualify as sin. This doctrine also declared that they could eat meat sacrificed to other gods, sheltering them from persecution as Christians.

This group to me sounds very acceptable and living a pure life, but the LORD still finds something wrong with them. They are asked to do the first deeds again, as they have left their first love.

But what are these first deeds? The writer of Hebrews lists it as follows: *"Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of instruction about washings and laying on of hands, and the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment."* (Heb 6:1-2) So these people are asked to start at repentance from dead works, and then to follow the steps laid out in Hebrews. So they do not understand that we are saved through the love of Jesus only and that we show our love for Him by loving our neighbour and by abiding in His word. So they must believe that Jesus was the complete sacrifice for sin and that He already paid the price for us which will rid us of our sinful nature, and then to be baptized. So this group today are those that do not believe that we have to repent of their sins by stopping with their sinful life, having faith in Jesus that He did everything required for us to be saved, and then to be baptized. No, they believe in infant baptism and that as the only requirement. When we use our example method we see that Israel had to believe that the LORD would lead them out of Egypt, but they first had to be circumcised, eat unleavened bread, come under the blood of the Lamb, and then leave Egypt by going through the sea. So these people are still in Egypt as they have never left the place where Satan rules. This means we can read the judgements spoken to Egypt in the Old Testament to find out exactly what will happen to them.

We find the following Judgement in Ezekiel: *"In the eleventh year, in the third month, on the first of the month, the word of the LORD came to me saying, "Son of man, say to Pharaoh king of Egypt*

and to his hordes, 'Whom are you like in your greatness? Behold, Assyria was a cedar in Lebanon With beautiful branches and forest shade, And very high, And its top was among the clouds. 'The waters made it grow, the deep made it high. With its rivers it continually extended all around its planting place, And sent out its channels to all the trees of the field. 'Therefore its height was loftier than all the trees of the field And its boughs became many and its branches long Because of many waters as it spread them out. 'All the birds of the heavens nested in its boughs, And under its branches all the beasts of the field gave birth, And all great nations lived under its shade. 'So it was beautiful in its greatness, in the length of its branches; For its roots extended to many waters. 'The cedars in God's garden could not match it; The cypresses could not compare with its boughs, And the plane trees could not match its branches. No tree in God's garden could compare with it in its beauty. 'I made it beautiful with the multitude of its branches, And all the trees of Eden, which were in the garden of God, were jealous of it. 'Therefore thus says the Lord GOD, "Because it is high in stature and has set its top among the clouds, and its heart is haughty in its loftiness, therefore I will give it into the hand of a despot of the nations; he will thoroughly deal with it. According to its wickedness I have driven it away. "Alien tyrants of the nations have cut it down and left it; on the mountains and in all the valleys its branches have fallen and its boughs have been broken in all the ravines of the land. And all the peoples of the earth have gone down from its shade and left it. "On its ruin all the birds of the heavens will dwell, and all the beasts of the field will be on its fallen branches so that all the trees by the waters may not be exalted in their stature, nor set their top among the clouds, nor their well-watered mighty ones stand erect in their height. For they have all been given over to death, to the earth beneath, among the sons of men, with those who go down to the pit." 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "On the day when it went down to Sheol I caused lamentations; I closed the deep over it and held back its rivers. And its many waters were stopped up, and I made Lebanon mourn for it, and all the trees of the field wilted away on account of it. "I made the nations quake at the sound of its fall when I made it go down to Sheol with those who go down to the pit; and all the well-watered trees of Eden, the choicest and best of Lebanon, were comforted in the earth beneath. "They also went down with it to Sheol to those who were slain by the sword; and those who were its strength lived under its shade among the nations. "To which among the trees of Eden are you thus equal in glory and greatness? Yet you will be brought down with the trees of Eden to the earth beneath; you will lie in the midst of the uncircumcised, with those who were slain by the sword. So is Pharaoh and all his hordes!" declares the Lord GOD." (Eze 31:1-18)

In this passage we learn of a tree that became extremely large, even though it was in Assyria. It was even bigger than the trees in Paradise. Ezekiel now describes what the LORD did to this tree. **The country of Assyria points us to the mother and child image of Semiramis which found its way to the Roman Catholic Church.** He then describes how the LORD cut down this tree which happened during the Martin Luther, John Calvin and other reformers timeframe. Ezekiel now describes how the LORD showed the leaders of the church in Egypt, so those that believe in infant baptism, what He did to the RCC, so they have seen the example and the results of not doing what the LORD requires, but they still do not want to move out of Egypt. Just as a short example the following about Semiramis and why it is applicable to the church in Ephesus. **"Semiramis was worshiped in Ephesus as the pagan fertility goddess DIANA who represented the generative powers of nature.** She was referred to as a fertility goddess because she mothered all the numerous pagan gods representing the god-incarnate Tammuz. Diana was pictured with numerous teats so that she could nurse all the pagan gods, and she wore a tower-shaped crown symbolizing the Babylonian tower of Babel."

We find that this grouping of believers have grown into an extremely large group, but they still find themselves in Egypt. They are quite content to be under the jurisdiction of the Pharaoh (Satan), and have decided not to leave Egypt. They do not believe in the baptism of believers. So their end will be with the uncircumcised, with the sinners. But Jesus calls on them to repent and to do the first deeds of a Christian again, and then they will eat with Him of the tree of life. They will then not see the second death, but they will be with Him in Paradise. Ezekiel here uses the example of what happened to the Roman Catholic Church as they denied Him. So if you find yourself in Egypt, do not think that He will deal with you differently, and will be rejected.

Fortunately for us we find that both these groups will get a chance to find out who the LORD really is, even though they are in Egypt and Assyria. Isaiah prophesies as follows: *"Now it will come about that In the last days The mountain of the house of the LORD Will be established as the chief of the mountains, And will be raised above the hills; And all the nations will stream to it. And many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; **That He may teach us concerning His ways And that we may walk in His paths.**" For the law will go forth from Zion And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And He will judge between the nations, And will render decisions for many peoples; And they will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, And never again will they learn war."* (Isa 2:2-4)

The first lesson we have to learn from this is that even if I think that I have done everything correctly, but there is still some things that are not quite right, we still are not acceptable to the LORD. We read in the book of Exodus that Israel had to remove all yeast from their homes and that they had to eat unleavened bread. This shows us that even if we only have this small sin in our lives, our bread will still contain yeast which makes us to not conform to the LORD's requirements. The other lesson I have to learn from this is that every person will be judged for his or her own life. No one will be judged because of belonging to a particular church or nation. I will only be judged on my own relationship with the LORD as expressed by Paul in Galatians 6: *"For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. But each one must examine his own work, and then he will have reason for boasting in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another. For each one will bear his own load."* (Gal 6:3-5)

So the first group of Christians are those that do not believe that baptism has any effect on your salvation. They are reminded to do the first works again, and only then will they receive everlasting life. *"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God."* (Rev 2:7) We have to be able to live as overcomers and only then will we be able to eat of the tree of life, as described in Genesis: *"Out of the ground the LORD God caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden."*

SMYRNA

"And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: The first and the last, who was dead, and has come to life, says this: 'I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich), and the blasphemy by those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. 'Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life. 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes will not be hurt by the second death.'" (Rev 2:8-11)

These people are almost always taken on by those that think that they are the only Christians that knows the Bible, but don't. (*by those who say they are Jews and are not*). The people in Smyrna will always be told that what is happening to them will never happen to real Christians. These attacks will almost always come from people that are in the church in Laodicea, as even Jesus tells the people from Laodicea *"Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent."* So if you are one of the people that always get told that there must be something wrong and are always "attacked" by church people, know that you belong to the church in Smyrna. These people are also told that they will face difficulties in life. But we also read that they will receive a crown and that they will reign with Jesus. This is further confirmed here and in Revelation 20 that they will receive crowns, and that the second death has no hold on them.

Revelation 3:9: *"Behold, I will cause those of the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie--I will make them come and bow down at your feet, and make them know that I have loved you."*

Jesus is telling us here that even though people are from the synagogue of Satan; they are still saying that they are Jews. These people are from Philadelphia, and definitely not Jews from Israel. This confirms the scripture from Revelation 2:9: *"I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich), and the blasphemy by those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan."* This piece of information is extremely important, in that Jesus is saying that all believers are Jews, and that only Jews will be saved. This confirms the scripture that Moses gave to Israel in Deuteronomy 7:6-7: *"For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any of the peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples."*

Once we realise that God does not and will not change His word, we will realise that there seems to be a problem with interpreting this verse in the light of the verses from Revelation. How is it possible then that God declares in one place that He has chosen only Israel, and then later on declares that all true believers are Jews? The answer comes partly from the book of Acts chapter 10:34-35: *"Opening his mouth, Peter said: "I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality, but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him."*

So all people who fear God and accept His righteousness, is accepted. This however still does not satisfy the requirement of Revelation, as we are still not Jews. The answer is given to us as part of the exodus from Egypt. Here the LORD gave them a commandment that they had to keep forever. The scripture comes from Numbers 15 verse 15 and 16: *"As for the assembly, there shall be one statute for you and for the alien who sojourns with you, a perpetual statute throughout your generations; as you are, so shall the alien be before the LORD. There is to be one law and one ordinance for you and for the alien who sojourns with you."*

Exodus 12 verse 48 gives us the final answer: ***"But if a stranger sojourns with you, and celebrates the Passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near to celebrate it; and he shall be like a native of the land. But no uncircumcised person may eat of it. The same law shall apply to the native as to the stranger who sojourns among you."***

In the history of Israel we find that whenever someone from another nation wanted to join themselves to Israel, they had to do whatever was required to become part of the covenant and then they were treated as people from Israel. A very good example is Ruth. Although she had the right to return to her people after her husband's death, she chose to go with Naomi. Her words were as follows: Ruth 1 verses 15 to 17: *"Then she said, "Behold, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and her gods; return after your sister-in-law." But Ruth said, "Do not urge me to leave you or turn back from following you; for where you go, I will go, and where you lodge, I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God. "Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. Thus may the LORD do to me, and worse, if anything but death parts you and me."*

Ruth answers that she chooses to go with Naomi, and that only death will part them, but that she, Ruth will die where Naomi dies. She will worship Naomi's God, and never return to her original nation. Who was Ruth? David's great grandma. Where did Jesus come from? David's tribe.

How do all these various pieces fit together? The LORD chose Israel as His nation. We as gentiles must chose to become Jews by joining Israel and its tribes. How is this done? The same way it was done in Israel's time, by becoming part of the covenant with the LORD. In the time of Israel it was by circumcision, and after Christ it is by being born again. John 3 :5-6 gives us the answer:

"Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

In other words, I have to decide, my parents cannot decide on my behalf, to become part of the LORD's people, to be born again and to become part of Israel. The next step after this for me is to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Paul gives us the following summary in Ephesians 2: *"Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called "Uncircumcision" by the so-called "Circumcision," which is performed in the flesh by human hands-- remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity. "* (Eph 2:11-16) Paul confirms that there is no difference between the Gentiles and the Jews any longer, as Christ made both one on the cross, and that all born again Christians are Jews, and is now called the Church.

To the Romans Paul writes the following: *"What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction? And He did so to make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory, even us, whom He also called, not from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles. As He says also in Hosea, "**I WILL CALL THOSE WHO WERE NOT MY PEOPLE, 'MY PEOPLE,' AND HER WHO WAS NOT BELOVED, 'BELOVED.'**" **"AND IT SHALL BE THAT IN THE PLACE WHERE IT WAS SAID TO THEM, 'YOU ARE NOT MY PEOPLE,' THERE THEY SHALL BE CALLED SONS OF THE LIVING GOD."**" (Rom 9:22-26)*

Peter again declares the following in 1 Peter 2:9-10: *"But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; for you once were NOT A PEOPLE, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF GOD; you had NOT RECEIVED MERCY, but now you have RECEIVED MERCY. "*

I trust that this short explanation will allow us all to accept that there is no difference any longer between believing Jew and gentile. We are all His people. It does not help to complicate things so nobody understands it. Jesus himself said that we must become like a child again to follow Him. I trust that a child will even understand my explanation.

Coming back to my question on who are the people out of the synagogue of Satan? Those that did not become part of the New Covenant with the LORD, in other words, everyone who does not believe that Jesus is the Christ and did not become part of the New Covenant.

Another question that is answered by the above is that we as true Church, all became Jews and can therefore lay claim to all the promises that were made to Israel.

How long is ten days, as these people are told that they will have tribulation for ten days?

We also read about ten days in the book of Daniel. *"Please test your servants for ten days, and let us be given some vegetables to eat and water to drink. "Then let our appearance be observed in your presence and the appearance of the youths who are eating the king's choice food; and deal with your servants according to what you see." So he listened to them in this matter and tested them for ten days. At the end of ten days their appearance seemed better and they were fatter than all the youths who had been eating the king's choice food."* (Dan 1:12-15)

In the case of Daniel there was a marked difference in ten days. Not only a difference but they were better looking and fatter than those that ate the food that was provided to the others. So in my interpretation it will take as long as it has to take to be able to distinguish between yourself and other Christians. You will be fed by the Word of God, and that will make a difference. The prophet Malachi says the following: *"Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, and the LORD gave attention and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the LORD and who esteem His name. "They will be Mine," says the LORD of hosts, "on the day that I prepare My own possession, and I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him." So you will again distinguish between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve Him."* (Mal 3:16-18)

I believe a lot of people see mortification as a hiding.(in Christianity the **meaning** is "putting your sin to death".) But it teaches us that there are boundaries. Within those boundaries I have total freedom and protection. The moment I go outside these boundaries, the LORD will step in to get me back to where I enjoy His support and protection. That is what mortification is all about. That is also the way David saw it: *"Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me."* It should really comfort us when we are reminded by the LORD that we have wandered outside of His protection, as I am then still in a place where He is with me and pulling me back to His place of protection and freedom. If He does not interfere with my life any longer then I am probably at a place in my life where He cannot interfere with me any longer. Then I am lost, forever. I know that is definitely not the place where I want to end up in.

These people only receive words of comfort. This takes me back to what we find in Isaiah 43: *"But now, thus says the LORD, your Creator, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel, "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are Mine! "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they will not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, Nor will the flame burn you. "For I am the LORD your God, The Holy One of Israel, your Savior; I have given Egypt as your ransom, Cush and Seba in your place. "Since you are precious in My sight, Since you are honored and I love you, I will give other men in your place and other peoples in exchange for your life. "Do not fear, for I am with you; I will bring your offspring from the east, And gather you from the west. "I will say to the north, 'Give them up!' And to the south, 'Do not hold them back.' Bring My sons from afar And My daughters from the ends of the earth, Everyone who is called by My name, And whom I have created for My glory, Whom I have formed, even whom I have made." Bring out the people who are blind, even though they have eyes, And the deaf, even though they have ears. All the nations have gathered together So that the peoples may be assembled. Who among them can declare this And proclaim to us the former things? Let them present their witnesses that they may be justified, Or let them hear and say, "It is true." "You are My witnesses," declares the LORD, "And My servant whom I have chosen, So that you may know and believe Me And understand that I am He. Before Me there was no God formed, And there will be none after Me. "I, even I, am the LORD, And there is no savior besides Me." (Isa 43:1-11)*

This is what the LORD has stored up for us. That is what we will receive after passing through the furnace of the LORD. My wish for you as reader is that you will also look forward to the day that we will be with Him in the New Jerusalem in heaven.

PERGAMUM

"And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: The One who has the sharp two-edged sword says this: 'I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is; and you hold fast My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days of Antipas, My witness, My faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. 'But I have a few things against you, because you have there some who hold the teaching of Balaam, who kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit acts of immorality. 'So you also have some who in

the same way hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans. 'Therefore repent; or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of My mouth. 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it.' (Rev 2:12-17)

We find that these people sometimes gets it wrong when they interpret the Bible. Jesus says He is the one with the two edged sword, and that He will use this to judge them. They are also told that the still dwell were the throne of Satan is. So they are still in Egypt, as Egypt is the Satan's territory. So this makes me think that they possibly believe that baptism does not really have any effect on people and that it is merely a formality to them. I can personally think of a number of Charismatic type churches that preach this.

A major problem we find here is that they hold on to the teachings of Balaam, where he tried to get Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel. This included eating things that are sacrificed to idols, and free sexual relationships. I am aware of a number of denominations that actually promote free sexual relationships, ordaining gay and lesbian "ministers". People that practice fornication without any rebuke from the church, claiming that this way they can reach out to these people. I do not find any example of this practice in the Bible, but only find that these people have to repent in order to be forgiven.

Fortunately we also find some of these people not accepting these free sexual relationships, but preach that repentance is the only option. The LORD declares that He will take them on with the sword, the Bible, and show them their errors. But like in just about every letter, the people are asked to repent and return to Him. He will then give them the hidden manna, so He will have communion with them and make them partakers of the covenant. They will also receive a special name, that only they and the LORD will know. Something to actually look forward to.

THYATIRA

"And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: The Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet are like burnished bronze, says this: 'I know your deeds, and your love and faith and service and perseverance, and that your deeds of late are greater than at first. 'But I have this against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and leads My bond-servants astray so that they commit acts of immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. 'I gave her time to repent, and she does not want to repent of her immorality. 'Behold, I will throw her on a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds. 'And I will kill her children with pestilence, and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds. 'But I say to you, the rest who are in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not known the deep things of Satan, as they call them--I place no other burden on you. 'Nevertheless what you have, hold fast until I come. 'He who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, TO HIM I WILL GIVE AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS; AND HE SHALL RULE THEM WITH A ROD OF IRON, AS THE VESSELS OF THE POTTER ARE BROKEN TO PIECES, as I also have received authority from My Father; and I will give him the morning star. 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.' (Rev 2:18-29)

In this church we find many people that does a lot for the LORD, that they suffer because of their belief in Jesus Christ, but then we still find that some of these congregations and leaders will cause their followers to become part of the whore. Isaiah spells it out as follows in chapter 1. *"Hear the word of the LORD, You rulers of Sodom; Give ear to the instruction of our God, You people of Gomorrah. "What are your multiplied sacrifices to Me?" Says the LORD. "I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams And the fat of fed cattle; And I take no pleasure in the blood of bulls, lambs or goats. "When you come to appear before Me, Who requires of you this trampling of My courts? "Bring your worthless offerings no longer, Incense is an abomination to Me. New moon*

and sabbath, the calling of assemblies-- I cannot endure iniquity and the solemn assembly. "I hate your new moon festivals and your appointed feasts, They have become a burden to Me; I am weary of bearing them. "So when you spread out your hands in prayer, I will hide My eyes from you; Yes, even though you multiply prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are covered with blood. "Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; Remove the evil of your deeds from My sight. Cease to do evil, Learn to do good; Seek justice, Reprove the ruthless, Defend the orphan, Plead for the widow. "Come now, and let us reason together," Says the LORD, "Though your sins are as scarlet, They will be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They will be like wool. "If you consent and obey, You will eat the best of the land; "But if you refuse and rebel, You will be devoured by the sword." Truly, the mouth of the LORD has spoken. How the faithful city has become a harlot, She who was full of justice! Righteousness once lodged in her, But now murderers. Your silver has become dross, Your drink diluted with water. Your rulers are rebels And companions of thieves; Everyone loves a bribe And chases after rewards. They do not defend the orphan, Nor does the widow's plea come before them." (Isa 1:10-23)

How many people do you know that will tell you that if you do not go to every service , or if you do not do this or attend this event, you are not saved and will miss heaven. People that sit in the pews every service and that is the way they spend their lives. Yet there is no sign of any faith or any of the gifts of the Holy Spirit visible in their lives. But they are okay as they do not miss an opportunity to go to church. They are so caught up in rituals and their so-called church routines that if they do not change they will be part of the whore that we read of in Revelation 17, 18 and 19.

Then we find the so-called new reformers who believe we have to study the history in order to come to the correct interpretation of scripture. Paul actually writes about these people in the second letter to the people in Corinth. *"But their minds were hardened; for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remains unlifted, because it is removed in Christ."* 2Cor 3:14. We do not need to study the history of the times, we need the Giver of all gifts in order for Him to be able to teach us. Being a Christian is not like other belief systems as we serve a living God.

In the Old Testament the prophets wrote the following about these types of people: *"Thus says the Lord GOD, "Because Moab and Seir say, 'Behold, the house of Judah is like all the nations,' therefore, behold, I am going to deprive the flank of Moab of its cities, of its cities which are on its frontiers, the glory of the land, Beth-jeshimoth, Baal-meon and Kiriathaim, and I will give it for a possession along with the sons of Ammon to the sons of the east, so that the sons of Ammon will not be remembered among the nations. "Thus I will execute judgments on Moab, and they will know that I am the LORD." (Eze 25:8-11)*

Jeremiah tells us the difference between these people and what real Christians are: *"Cursed be the one who does the LORD'S work negligently, And cursed be the one who restrains his sword from blood. "Moab has been at ease since his youth; He has also been undisturbed, like wine on its dregs, And he has not been emptied from vessel to vessel, Nor has he gone into exile. Therefore he retains his flavor, And his aroma has not changed. "Therefore behold, the days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will send to him those who tip vessels, and they will tip him over, and they will empty his vessels and shatter his jars. "And Moab will be ashamed of Chemosh, as the house of Israel was ashamed of Bethel, their confidence. "How can you say, 'We are mighty warriors, And men valiant for battle'? "Moab has been destroyed and men have gone up to his cities; His choicest young men have also gone down to the slaughter," Declares the King, whose name is the LORD of hosts. "The disaster of Moab will soon come, And his calamity has swiftly hastened. "Mourn for him, all you who live around him, Even all of you who know his name; Say, 'How has the mighty scepter been broken, A staff of splendor!' "Come down from your glory And sit on the parched ground, O daughter dwelling in Dibon, For the destroyer of Moab has come up against you, He has ruined your strongholds. "Stand by the road and keep watch, O inhabitant of Aroer; Ask him who flees and her who escapes And say, 'What has happened?' "Moab has been put to shame, for it has been*

shattered. Wail and cry out; Declare by the Arnon That Moab has been destroyed. "Judgment has also come upon the plain, upon Holon, Jahzah and against Mephaath, against Dibon, Nebo and Beth-diblathaim, against Kiriathaim, Beth-gamul and Beth-meon, against Kerioth, Bozrah and all the cities of the land of Moab, far and near. "The horn of Moab has been cut off and his arm broken," declares the LORD. "Make him drunk, for he has become arrogant toward the LORD; so Moab will wallow in his vomit, and he also will become a laughingstock. "Now was not Israel a laughingstock to you? Or was he caught among thieves? For each time you speak about him you shake your head in scorn. "Leave the cities and dwell among the crags, O inhabitants of Moab, And be like a dove that nests Beyond the mouth of the chasm. "We have heard of the pride of Moab--he is very proud-- Of his haughtiness, his pride, his arrogance and his self-exaltation. "I know his fury," declares the LORD, "But it is futile; His idle boasts have accomplished nothing. "Therefore I will wail for Moab, Even for all Moab will I cry out; I will moan for the men of Kir-heres. "More than the weeping for Jazer I will weep for you, O vine of Sibmah! Your tendrils stretched across the sea, They reached to the sea of Jazer; Upon your summer fruits and your grape harvest The destroyer has fallen. "So gladness and joy are taken away From the fruitful field, even from the land of Moab. And I have made the wine to cease from the wine presses; No one will tread them with shouting, The shouting will not be shouts of joy. "From the outcry at Heshbon even to Elealeh, even to Jahaz they have raised their voice, from Zoar even to Horonaim and to Eglath-shelishiyah; for even the waters of Nimrim will become desolate. "I will make an end of Moab," declares the LORD, "the one who offers sacrifice on the high place and the one who burns incense to his gods. "Therefore My heart wails for Moab like flutes; My heart also wails like flutes for the men of Kir-heres. Therefore they have lost the abundance it produced. "For every head is bald and every beard cut short; there are gashes on all the hands and sackcloth on the loins. "On all the housetops of Moab and in its streets there is lamentation everywhere; for I have broken Moab like an undesirable vessel," declares the LORD. "How shattered it is! How they have wailed! How Moab has turned his back--he is ashamed! So Moab will become a laughingstock and an object of terror to all around him." For thus says the LORD: "Behold, one will fly swiftly like an eagle And spread out his wings against Moab. "Kerioth has been captured And the strongholds have been seized, So the hearts of the mighty men of Moab in that day Will be like the heart of a woman in labor. "Moab will be destroyed from being a people Because he has become arrogant toward the LORD. "Terror, pit and snare are coming upon you, O inhabitant of Moab," declares the LORD. "The one who flees from the terror Will fall into the pit, And the one who climbs up out of the pit Will be caught in the snare; For I shall bring upon her, even upon Moab, The year of their punishment," declares the LORD. "In the shadow of Heshbon The fugitives stand without strength; For a fire has gone forth from Heshbon And a flame from the midst of Sihon, And it has devoured the forehead of Moab And the scalps of the riotous revelers. "Woe to you, Moab! The people of Chemosh have perished; For your sons have been taken away captive And your daughters into captivity. "Yet I will restore the fortunes of Moab In the latter days," declares the LORD. Thus far the judgment on Moab. (Jer 48:10-47)

We are taught here that the LORD passes judgement against Moab as they did not use the word of God correctly. No they are like us will define what is correct and what is wrong. The LORD also tells them that they did not go into captivity. "Moab has been at ease since his youth; He has also been undisturbed, like wine on its dregs, And he has not been emptied from vessel to vessel, Nor has he gone into exile. Therefore he retains his flavor, And his aroma has not changed." This portion of scripture got me thinking for quite some time as I could not really find what He meant with it. What He actually wants to teach us is that we want to impress people with our lives, but if something or someone upsets us, all the impurities become visible. I have to allow time for the LORD to pour me from vessel to vessel in order for me to become pure, to rid me of my lees. If I do not do it, my life will stay the same as I cannot get rid of the things that are wrong in my life. That is what the prophet is showing us in this passage. I know it is difficult to get rid of bad habits and we do not like introspection, but we like to judge others. That is what these people were doing in Thyatira.

But like most of the other churches we also find the following words: "But I say to you, the rest who are in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not known the deep things of Satan,

as they call them--I place no other burden on you. 'Nevertheless what you have, hold fast until I come. 'He who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, TO HIM I WILL GIVE AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS; AND HE SHALL RULE THEM WITH A ROD OF IRON, AS THE VESSELS OF THE POTTER ARE BROKEN TO PIECES, as I also have received authority from My Father; and I will give him the morning star. 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'" (Rev 2:24-29) This reaffirms that every person will be judged only by his own life, and not by the teachings of his church or leader.

SARDIS

"To the angel of the church in Sardis write: He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars, says this: 'I know your deeds, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead. 'Wake up, and strengthen the things that remain, which were about to die; for I have not found your deeds completed in the sight of My God. 'So remember what you have received and heard; and keep it, and repent. Therefore if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you. 'But you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their garments; and they will walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. 'He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels. 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'" (Rev 3:1-6)

This church has what Jeremiah and Ezekiel declares the pestilence. They have this image that they project that they are so good, but they are actually dead. They make me think of Sidon in the Old Testament: ""Son of man, set your face toward Sidon, prophesy against her and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I am against you, O Sidon, And I will be glorified in your midst. Then they will know that I am the LORD when I execute judgments in her, And I will manifest My holiness in her. "For I will send pestilence to her And blood to her streets, And the wounded will fall in her midst By the sword upon her on every side; Then they will know that I am the LORD. " (Eze 28:21-23)

The LORD declares that He will exalt Himself in their midst as they cling to their own belief system while the LORD is on the side and not the centre of their worship. Ezekiel also declares that He will send the pestilence to them. But what is the pestilence? That is when I believe that I am the only church who has the only correct doctrines.

They are encouraged to ensure that their repentance is real, as He will come like a thief in the night and kill them. That is why Jesus says that they have the outer image that they live, but are actually dead. I know that there are many people that hold on to their own doctrines and belief systems and that they will receive everlasting life, but there is no outward sign of faith and other characteristics of being children of God.

But like most of these churches we read about in these letters, we still find individuals who hold on to the correct standards and that have not defiled their clothes. For these people there is encouragement and the message: *"and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels."* Jesus asks them to repent again and if they don't, they will not wake up to everlasting life. How tragic.

PHILIDELPHIA

"And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: He who is holy, who is true, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, and who shuts and no one opens, says this: 'I know your deeds. Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut, because you have a little power, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name. 'Behold, I will cause those of the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie--I will make them come and bow down at your feet, and make them know that I have loved you. 'Because you have kept the

word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. 'I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, so that no one will take your crown. 'He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name. 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'" (Rev 3:7-13)

Like all the previous letters we first read who the letter comes from and how Jesus reveals Himself to this church. He starts with a quotation of Isaiah 22:22: *"Then I will set the key of the house of David on his shoulder, When he opens no one will shut, When he shuts no one will open."* Jesus proclaims that He is the only way that can open the door for us to get to His Kingdom. There is no other way. He is the one that open and closes. So no other god (idol) can provide everlasting life. Only Jesus is the way, the truth and the life.

This is only the second group of people that Jesus does not reprimand. They hold on to what is right, and should just hold on to what they have in order that nobody can take it away from them. They do not have to worry about other people taking them on, some with noble ideas and efforts. These other people will tell them that they should not expect tribulations, but Jesus tells them the following: *"Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth."* These people normally use money as an example and tell you that you have to give money to their ministries and then the LORD will bless them. What they are actually teaching is that they can bribe the LORD.

The Bible actually declares that we have to give to the poor, and not to every person how the LORD will bless you if you give to their ministry. Micah puts it as follows: *"With what shall I come to the LORD And bow myself before the God on high? Shall I come to Him with burnt offerings, With yearling calves? Does the LORD take delight in thousands of rams, In ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I present my firstborn for my rebellious acts, The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justice, to love kindness, And to walk humbly with your God?"* (Mic 6:6-8)

These people are the only group that are told by Jesus that He will protect them when the tribulation will come over the all the earth. There are so many people telling you that there will be a rapture of the saint and that we will not be part of the tribulation. But this scripture refutes that teaching completely. We will enjoy His protection when everyone will be tried and tested.

Another interesting statement Jesus makes to these people are as follows: *"Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut, because you have a little power, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name."* These people are also privileged to see what is going to happen in heaven, and how it will function. We also read in chapter four that John is asked to go up to heaven through the open door to see what will happen in heaven. So he is asked to go and see the place where Jesus already reigns as King. There he will also see the things that has already happened and the things that still has to happen. So for you as a true Christian you may feel completely hopeless and that you lack the energy to convince people of the truth and you see and hear all these lies being preached of the Word of God, Jesus says that He is aware of it. *"I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, so that no one will take your crown."* This is a confirmation of Psalms 11 verse 5: *"The LORD tests the righteous and the wicked, And the one who loves violence His soul hates."*

These people are told to hold on to what they have in order not to lose their crowns. *"Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their*

forehead and on their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years".
(Rev 20:4)

And then we know that we will be forever with Him in His new temple as described by Ezekiel from chapter 40, or as John sees it as the New Jerusalem from Chapter 21. He wants to make us pillars in His temple as He knows that we will never waiver. *"And I will write on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name."* So we will never leave the presence of the LORD.

What a privilege.

LAODICEA

"To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God, says this: 'I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot. 'So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth. 'Because you say, "I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing," and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked, I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see. 'Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent. 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me. 'He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'" (Rev 3:14-22)

Much has been written about this church and that they will be extremely perverted in their thoughts. But we are living with so many of these people without identifying them. How many groups will tell you that the LORD wants to spoil you with all the cattle on a thousand hills, and everything that you desire and covet. Don't you know that your forefathers gave so much to the church without ever claiming their inheritance, so you can now claim it and live in comfort. How does Jesus put it: *"Because you say, "I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing," and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked,"* How many people cling to the prosperity gospel to such an extent that they put up photographs of everything they covet on their refrigerators, inside their closets and are told to convince themselves that they deserve these things and claim these items from Satan as he is the one stopping them from getting what they want. But Jesus tells them that they are naked and that they lack Him. He is not their god, but their abdomen and belongings are their god. These people will also tell you that all you have to do is repeat this short sinner's prayer and then they are children of God. They have the power to regenerate people and make them Christians. Ezekiel puts it as follows: *"Son of man, because Tyre has said concerning Jerusalem, 'Aha, the gateway of the peoples is broken; it has opened to me. I shall be filled, now that she is laid waste,' "* You see even in those days the LORD knew that their churches will be filled to capacity, as they are the New Jerusalem. All you have to do is join them and you are as good as being in heaven. They will now save everybody, but all they accomplish is to make people their own disciples, and not disciples of Jesus Christ. They have opened the gateway to themselves.

Another point that Jesus makes is that He is standing at the door of this church and knocks. He is not part of this church but is on the outside looking in. When they decide to open the door, He will enter and share communion with them in order for them to become part of His covenant nation. But until this happens, they are on their own mission and fill up their churches with people clinging on to their theology, but do not have Jesus as Saviour.

Ezekiel says the following about them: *"Son of man, because Tyre has said concerning Jerusalem, 'Aha, the gateway of the peoples is broken; it has opened to me. I shall be filled, now that she is laid waste,' therefore thus says the Lord GOD, 'Behold, I am against you, O Tyre, and I will bring up many nations against you, as the sea brings up its waves. They will destroy the walls of Tyre and break down her towers; and I will scrape her debris from her and make her a bare rock. She will be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea, for I have spoken,' declares the Lord GOD, 'and she will become spoil for the nations. Also her daughters who are on the mainland will be slain by the sword, and they will know that I am the LORD.'" For thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I will bring upon Tyre from the north Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, king of kings, with horses, chariots, cavalry and a great army. He will slay your daughters on the mainland with the sword; and he will make siege walls against you, cast up a ramp against you and raise up a large shield against you. The blow of his battering rams he will direct against your walls, and with his axes he will break down your towers. Because of the multitude of his horses, the dust raised by them will cover you; your walls will shake at the noise of cavalry and wagons and chariots when he enters your gates as men enter a city that is breached. With the hoofs of his horses he will trample all your streets. He will slay your people with the sword; and your strong pillars will come down to the ground. Also they will make a spoil of your riches and a prey of your merchandise, break down your walls and destroy your pleasant houses, and throw your stones and your timbers and your debris into the water. So I will silence the sound of your songs, and the sound of your harps will be heard no more. I will make you a bare rock; you will be a place for the spreading of nets. You will be built no more, for I the LORD have spoken," declares the Lord GOD. Thus says the Lord GOD to Tyre, "Shall not the coastlands shake at the sound of your fall when the wounded groan, when the slaughter occurs in your midst? Then all the princes of the sea will go down from their thrones, remove their robes and strip off their embroidered garments. They will clothe themselves with trembling; they will sit on the ground, tremble every moment and be appalled at you. They will take up a lamentation over you and say to you, 'How you have perished, O inhabited one, From the seas, O renowned city, Which was mighty on the sea, She and her inhabitants, Who imposed her terror On all her inhabitants! Now the coastlands will tremble On the day of your fall; Yes, the coastlands which are by the sea Will be terrified at your passing.'" For thus says the Lord GOD, "When I make you a desolate city, like the cities which are not inhabited, when I bring up the deep over you and the great waters cover you, then I will bring you down with those who go down to the pit, to the people of old, and I will make you dwell in the lower parts of the earth, like the ancient waste places, with those who go down to the pit, so that you will not be inhabited; but I will set glory in the land of the living. I will bring terrors on you and you will be no more; though you will be sought, you will never be found again," declares the Lord GOD. Moreover, the word of the LORD came to me saying, "And you, son of man, take up a lamentation over Tyre; and say to Tyre, who dwells at the entrance to the sea, merchant of the peoples to many coastlands, Thus says the Lord GOD, "O Tyre, you have said, 'I am perfect in beauty.' Your borders are in the heart of the seas; Your builders have perfected your beauty. They have made all your planks of fir trees from Senir; They have taken a cedar from Lebanon to make a mast for you. Of oaks from Bashan they have made your oars; With ivory they have inlaid your deck of boxwood from the coastlands of Cyprus. Your sail was of fine embroidered linen from Egypt So that it became your distinguishing mark; Your awning was blue and purple from the coastlands of Elishah. The inhabitants of Sidon and Arvad were your rowers; Your wise men, O Tyre, were aboard; they were your pilots. The elders of Gebal and her wise men were with you repairing your seams; All the ships of the sea and their sailors were with you in order to deal in your merchandise. Persia and Lud and Put were in your army, your men of war. They hung shield and helmet in you; they set forth your splendor. The sons of Arvad and your army were on your walls, all around, and the Gammadim were in your towers. They hung their shields on your walls all around; they perfected your beauty. Tarshish was your customer because of the abundance of all kinds of wealth; with silver, iron, tin and lead they paid for your wares. Javan, Tubal and Meshech, they were your traders; with the lives of men and vessels of bronze they paid for your merchandise. Those from Beth-togarmah gave horses and war horses and mules for your wares. The sons of Dedan were your traders. Many coastlands were your market; ivory tusks and ebony they brought as your payment. Aram was your customer*

because of the abundance of your goods; they paid for your wares with emeralds, purple, embroidered work, fine linen, coral and rubies. "Judah and the land of Israel, they were your traders; with the wheat of Minnith, cakes, honey, oil and balm they paid for your merchandise. "Damascus was your customer because of the abundance of your goods, because of the abundance of all kinds of wealth, because of the wine of Helbon and white wool. "Vedan and Javan paid for your wares from Uzal; wrought iron, cassia and sweet cane were among your merchandise. "Dedan traded with you in saddlecloths for riding. "Arabia and all the princes of Kedar, they were your customers for lambs, rams and goats; for these they were your customers. "The traders of Sheba and Raamah, they traded with you; they paid for your wares with the best of all kinds of spices, and with all kinds of precious stones and gold. "Haran, Canneh, Eden, the traders of Sheba, Asshur and Chilmad traded with you. "They traded with you in choice garments, in clothes of blue and embroidered work, and in carpets of many colors and tightly wound cords, which were among your merchandise. "The ships of Tarshish were the carriers for your merchandise. And you were filled and were very glorious In the heart of the seas. "Your rowers have brought you Into great waters; The east wind has broken you In the heart of the seas. "Your wealth, your wares, your merchandise, Your sailors and your pilots, Your repairers of seams, your dealers in merchandise And all your men of war who are in you, With all your company that is in your midst, Will fall into the heart of the seas On the day of your overthrow. "At the sound of the cry of your pilots The pasture lands will shake. "All who handle the oar, The sailors and all the pilots of the sea Will come down from their ships; They will stand on the land, And they will make their voice heard over you And will cry bitterly. They will cast dust on their heads, They will wallow in ashes. "Also they will make themselves bald for you And gird themselves with sackcloth; And they will weep for you in bitterness of soul With bitter mourning. "Moreover, in their wailing they will take up a lamentation for you And lament over you: 'Who is like Tyre, Like her who is silent in the midst of the sea?' "When your wares went out from the seas, You satisfied many peoples; With the abundance of your wealth and your merchandise You enriched the kings of earth. 'Now that you are broken by the seas In the depths of the waters, Your merchandise and all your company Have fallen in the midst of you. 'All the inhabitants of the coastlands Are appalled at you, And their kings are horribly afraid; They are troubled in countenance. 'The merchants among the peoples hiss at you; You have become terrified And you will cease to be forever.'"" The word of the LORD came again to me, saying, "Son of man, say to the leader of Tyre, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Because your heart is lifted up And you have said, 'I am a god, I sit in the seat of gods In the heart of the seas'; Yet you are a man and not God, Although you make your heart like the heart of God-- Behold, you are wiser than Daniel; There is no secret that is a match for you. "By your wisdom and understanding You have acquired riches for yourself And have acquired gold and silver for your treasuries. "By your great wisdom, by your trade You have increased your riches And your heart is lifted up because of your riches-- Therefore thus says the Lord GOD, 'Because you have made your heart Like the heart of God, Therefore, behold, I will bring strangers upon you, The most ruthless of the nations. And they will draw their swords Against the beauty of your wisdom And defile your splendor. 'They will bring you down to the pit, And you will die the death of those who are slain In the heart of the seas. 'Will you still say, "I am a god," In the presence of your slayer, Though you are a man and not God, In the hands of those who wound you? 'You will die the death of the uncircumcised By the hand of strangers, For I have spoken!' declares the Lord GOD!"" Again the word of the LORD came to me saying, "Son of man, take up a lamentation over the king of Tyre and say to him, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "You had the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. "You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone was your covering: The ruby, the topaz and the diamond; The beryl, the onyx and the jasper; The lapis lazuli, the turquoise and the emerald; And the gold, the workmanship of your settings and sockets, Was in you. On the day that you were created They were prepared. "You were the anointed cherub who covers, And I placed you there. You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked in the midst of the stones of fire. "You were blameless in your ways From the day you were created Until unrighteousness was found in you. "By the abundance of your trade You were internally filled with violence, And you sinned; Therefore I have cast you as profane From the mountain of God. And I have destroyed you, O covering cherub, From the midst of the stones of fire. "Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom by

reason of your splendor. I cast you to the ground; I put you before kings, That they may see you. "By the multitude of your iniquities, In the unrighteousness of your trade You profaned your sanctuaries. Therefore I have brought fire from the midst of you; It has consumed you, And I have turned you to ashes on the earth In the eyes of all who see you. "All who know you among the peoples Are appalled at you; You have become terrified And you will cease to be forever."'" And the word of the LORD came to me saying, "Son of man, set your face toward Sidon, prophesy against her and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I am against you, O Sidon, And I will be glorified in your midst. Then they will know that I am the LORD when I execute judgments in her, And I will manifest My holiness in her. "For I will send pestilence to her And blood to her streets, And the wounded will fall in her midst By the sword upon her on every side; Then they will know that I am the LORD. "And there will be no more for the house of Israel a prickling brier or a painful thorn from any round about them who scorned them; then they will know that I am the Lord GOD." "Thus says the Lord GOD, "When I gather the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered, and will manifest My holiness in them in the sight of the nations, then they will live in their land which I gave to My servant Jacob. "They will live in it securely; and they will build houses, plant vineyards and live securely when I execute judgments upon all who scorn them round about them. Then they will know that I am the LORD their God."'" (Eze 26:2- 28:26)

What devastating words to hear. That the LORD tells you that your god is Satan, and that you will die the death of a sinner. This also confirms the part from Revelation of the beast that comes forth from the sea.

This then the prophecies to the various churches.

CHAPTER FOUR – REVELATION 4 AND 5 – THE THRONE OF THE LAMB

THE THRONE IN HEAVEN

This is really a very interesting and for some people a baffling vision. This describes the throne of the Father, all the elders with Him, and continue on to chapter 5 where we find that only Jesus is able to open the book of judgements. So everything that is described here up to chapter 20, will show us what the causes were for people's names not to be written in the other book, the book of life. *"And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire."* (Rev 20:15) So the book of life is in direct contrast with the book that will be opened from chapter 6 onwards, and explains the judgements and trials that caused people's names not to be written in the book of life.

Let us first start with chapter 4. John hears a trumpet call from heaven with a voice calling him to go up through the open door in heaven. He is now called up to heaven in order for him to see what will happen in heaven. This is in contrast to the previous chapters as Jesus was discussing the various churches and what they have to do on earth, while he now will see what will happen in heaven. So what he is going to see has been happening from the beginning of time, and will continue until the end of time, until the final person that has to be saved, accepts the gospel of Jesus Christ. It also informs us that these things will happen in heaven and not on the earth.

John explains that he was immediately in the spirit, informing us that we as fleshly beings cannot see or be in heaven, but only those people who became one with Jesus through His Holy Spirit, will understand this.

John now describes that Jesus where he was, in the palace of the LORD. How is this place described in the Old Testament: *"The LORD is in His holy temple; the LORD'S throne is in heaven; His eyes behold, His eyelids test the sons of men."* (Psa 11:4). We also find it described in Isaiah: *"In the year of King Uzziah's death I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple. Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called out to another and said, "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts, The whole earth is full of His glory." And the foundations of the thresholds trembled at the voice of him who called out, while the temple was filling with smoke. Then I said, "Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts." Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a burning coal in his hand, which he had taken from the altar with tongs. He touched my mouth with it and said, "Behold, this has touched your lips; and your iniquity is taken away and your sin is forgiven." Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?" Then I said, "Here am I. Send me!" He said, "Go, and tell this people: 'Keep on listening, but do not perceive; Keep on looking, but do not understand.' "Render the hearts of this people insensitive, Their ears dull, And their eyes dim, Otherwise they might see with their eyes, Hear with their ears, Understand with their hearts, And return and be healed." Then I said, "Lord, how long?" And He answered, "Until cities are devastated and without inhabitant, Houses are without people And the land is utterly desolate, "The LORD has removed men far away, And the forsaken places are many in the midst of the land. "Yet there will be a tenth portion in it, And it will again be subject to burning, Like a terebinth or an oak Whose stump remains when it is felled. The holy seed is its stump." (Isa 6:1-13)*

Something that interested me from both these scriptures is that the glory of the LORD is described, but He Himself is not described. Even when Moses asked to see the LORD the answer was *"Then the LORD said, "Behold, there is a place by Me, and you shall stand there on the rock; and it will come about, while My glory is passing by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock and*

cover you with My hand until I have passed by. "Then I will take My hand away and you shall see My back, but My face shall not be seen." (Exo 33:21-23)

We find that John also describes the glory of the throne of God and all the other beings with Him. John mentions His glory and majesty and explains the colour of the various gemstones as it was also made for the high priest during the exodus of Egypt, and then also used as the foundations of the New Jerusalem. *"And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God. Her brilliance was like a very costly stone, as a stone of crystal-clear jasper." (Rev 21:10-11) ""You shall mount on it four rows of stones; the first row shall be a row of ruby, topaz and emerald; and the second row a turquoise, a sapphire and a diamond; and the third row a jacinth, an agate and an amethyst; and the fourth row a beryl and an onyx and a jasper; they shall be set in gold filigree. "The stones shall be according to the names of the sons of Israel: twelve, according to their names; they shall be like the engravings of a seal, each according to his name for the twelve tribes." (Exo 28:17-21)*

So the picture that John describes is that of the High Priest, and the place where all the overcomers will gather.

John now describes who are all with the LORD in His Throne room. There are twenty four elders all sitting on their own thrones. We have to remember that the picture that John describes corresponds with the ways that were familiar to him. In those days you normally found the king on his throne surrounded by his rulers that represented a specific region. So John sees the same picture. We find the Father on His throne, surrounded by people that represented other people. Exactly who these people are we find on the various thrones are described elsewhere in the book of Revelation.

- *"Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years." (Rev 20:6)*
- *"I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, so that no one will take your crown. 'He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name. (Rev 3:11-12)*

These rulers will see why every individual either gets everlasting life, or why their names are not written in the book of life. We find the twenty four elders right through Revelation sitting on their thrones. And that is the what all the following chapters of the book of Revelation is all about. The message up to chapter 20 describes why people's names are written in the book of life, or why they failed and are forever condemned. So the book that Jesus will open is the book of judgements, that which every Christian has to go through in order to ensure that their names are written in the book of life. We find that the elders are always singing praises to the LORD, the King on the Throne, as they know that the only reason that they are in these positions are because they did what was required. So now that we know who these people are, we can continue with the rest of the book of Revelation.

But why twenty four elders? For me it means that they represent all of mankind. In the Old Covenant there were twelve tribes, and in the New Covenant we find 12 Apostles. So both covenants are represented in the throne room. They will rule over these people and see who will receive everlasting life, or everlasting rejection. So we do not find representatives of different church groupings there but only people who represent the Old and the New Covenant. Jesus told Peter the following: *"And Jesus said to them, "Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, **in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.**" (Mat 19:28)*

One major key we find in this passage and will shed light on the whole book of Revelation is that every person is responsible for his own salvation. No person is accepted or rejected for belonging to a specific church, or nation. No every person has to ensure that his own life will determine where he will spend eternity. We find the following passage in Ezekiel 18: *“The person who sins will die. The son will not bear the punishment for the father's iniquity, nor will the father bear the punishment for the son's iniquity; the righteousness of the righteous will be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked will be upon himself. "But if the wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed and observes all My statutes and practices justice and righteousness, he shall surely live; he shall not die. "All his transgressions which he has committed will not be remembered against him; because of his righteousness which he has practiced, he will live. "Do I have any pleasure in the death of the wicked," declares the Lord GOD, "rather than that he should turn from his ways and live? "But when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness, commits iniquity and does according to all the abominations that a wicked man does, will he live? All his righteous deeds which he has done will not be remembered for his treachery which he has committed and his sin which he has committed; for them he will die.”* (Eze 18:20-24) This is confirmed in Galatians 6 verses 4 and 5: *“But each one must examine his own work, and then he will have reason for boasting in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another. For each one will bear his own load.”* (Gal 6:4-5)

Who exactly will be occupying the seats of the twenty four elders is not revealed to us, but only know that both the people of the Old Covenant and the New Covenant will be represented.

THE VISION OF THE LAMB

We now read in chapter five that there is a book at the right hand of the Father, with one of the angels asking who is worthy of opening the book as it is sealed. We then hear that there is only one who can open the book, and He is the one who gave up His life to bring reconciliation for us as sinners in order to restore the relationship between man and God. It is the Lamb that stood in the centre of the room as if slain, Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As He stands in the centre of the room it also indicates that He is the mediator as only through His mediation is it possible for us to live as children of God.

He had seven horns, which could point to the seven announcements that will be made public when the trumpets will sound again. These are the seven trumpet that will be discussed later in the book. Jesus is the highest power over all that live, and there is no start and also no end to his Kingdom, the One that received all power in heaven and on earth. *“And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.”* (Mat 28:18)

We now read that He takes the book from the Father and all the living creatures worship Him and sing the following song to Him: *“And they *sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. "You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth.”* (Rev 5:9-10) *“And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, "To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever.”* And the four living creatures kept saying, *“Amen.”* And the elders fell down and worshiped.” (Rev 5:13-14)

CHAPTER FIVE – REVELATION 6 – THE FIRST SIX SEALS ARE OPENED

Before we start this chapter, I would like to add the four different creatures that we find in chapter 4: *"The first creature was like a lion, and the second creature like a calf, and the third creature had a face like that of a man, and the fourth creature was like a flying eagle. And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within; and day and night they do not cease to say, "HOLY, HOLY, HOLY is THE LORD GOD, THE ALMIGHTY, WHO WAS AND WHO IS AND WHO IS TO COME."* (Rev 4:7-8)

This chapter is the start of what every Christian will either face or witness. This is the start of why people will either receive everlasting life, or everlasting death. It starts with the white horse, representing the covenant, and shows us that even though we may succeed in passing this point, more are to follow. It is sent out by the lion, and this is what Jesus is referred to in many verses as the Lion of Judah.

I know a great many people do not care about theological reasoning, but I would much rather make 100% sure that when my time is finished on this earth, that I have done everything the LORD asked of me. I do not want to hear the words that my name is not written in the book of life. Jesus also spoke to Israel about His reasons why people will end up in heaven and why others won't, but unfortunately most pastors and teachers try to avoid this subject.

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. "Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.' (Mat 7:21-23) This then followed by what Jesus spoke about in chapter 25: *"But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. "All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. "Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. 'For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.' "Then the righteous will answer Him, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You something to drink? 'And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? 'When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' "The King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.' "Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink; I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.' "Then they themselves also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?' "Then He will answer them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.' "**These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.**" (Mat 25:31-46)*

This part recorded here was already known to Israel, as it was also recorded in the Book of Enoch that was written somewhere between 100 to 300 BC. Peter and some of the other apostles also quoted from this book. *"9.1 This place, O Enoch, is prepared for the righteous, who endure all manner of offence from those that exasperate their souls, who avert their eyes from iniquity, and make righteous judgment, and give bread to the hungering, and cover the naked with*

clothing, and raise up the fallen, and help injured orphans, and who walk without fault before the face of the Lord, and serve him alone, and for them is prepared this place for eternal inheritance."

This tells us that the names of the people not written in the book of life according to Revelation 20, are those that did not heed these words, and did not do what is expected from us as Christians. This is also confirmed in 1 Corinthians 13, the definition of love, where Paul states that I can have every other gift but if I do not have love, it is all in vain. *"For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known. But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love. (1Co 13:12-13)*

THE FIRST SEAL

John is now called by the first being according to chapter 4, a lion, to see what the first qualifying criteria is that will be used to see in which book your name is written. The first horse went out was white, a representation of what the covenant does for us, as we will be washed as white as snow according to Isaiah 1. The covenant ensures that all our sins are forgiven, and that we can appear before the throne of God without blemish. So the first horse will be sent out to convince the nations that they must become part of the covenant to have any chance of passing this test. *"Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; Remove the evil of your deeds from My sight. Cease to do evil, Learn to do good; Seek justice, Reprove the ruthless, Defend the orphan, Plead for the widow. "Come now, and let us reason together," Says the LORD, "Though your sins are as scarlet, They will be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They will be like wool. "If you consent and obey, You will eat the best of the land; "But if you refuse and rebel, You will be devoured by the sword." Truly, the mouth of the LORD has spoken." (Isa 1:16-20)*

This scripture confirms that was written in Matthew and Enoch that we as Christians should live a life worthy of someone who has his sins forgiven. I know that works alone will not ensure you entry into heaven, but that we have to believe that Jesus is the way and the life. But when I look at Revelation, it confirms that our deeds will be our clothes that we will wear in heaven, and I am convinced nobody would like to be seen naked before the throne of Christ. *"Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready." **It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.**" (Rev 19:7-8)*

We find that in the Old Testament the people had to obey the law as it would be their righteousness. *"It will be righteousness for us if we are careful to observe all this commandment before the LORD our God, just as He commanded us." (Deu 6:25)*

This is changed in the New Testament as follows: *"For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. For Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on law shall live by that righteousness. But the righteousness based on faith speaks as follows: "DO NOT SAY IN YOUR HEART, 'WHO WILL ASCEND INTO HEAVEN?' (that is, to bring Christ down), or 'WHO WILL DESCEND INTO THE ABYSS?' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead)." But what does it say? "THE WORD IS NEAR YOU, IN YOUR MOUTH AND IN YOUR HEART"--that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation." (Rom 10:3-10)* This scripture also confirms that nobody can come to the Father without going through Jesus. He is the Life, the Way and the Truth. *"Jesus *said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me." (Joh 14:6)"*

Revelation 12 verse 11: *“And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death.”* (Rev 12:11) The only way we can overcome eternal death is through the New Covenant. How is this accomplished?

- *With the blood of the Lamb (Blood on the doorposts)*
- *Word of their testimony (Circumcision)*
- *And they loved not their own life even when faced with death.*

We have to take up our cross daily and die of my own will. *“And He was saying to them all, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. “For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, **but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it.**”* (Luk 9:23-24) So the first creature that John sees in Revelation 7 was sent out by Jesus Himself. *“and one of the elders *said to me, “Stop weeping; behold, the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals.”* (Rev 5:5) So the first horse is sent by Jesus and He is also the one sitting on the horse as He also wears a crown, and only Kings wear crowns. In all the other judgements we find following this judgement, Jesus is always the one sitting on the horse, as He is the one doing judgement.

THE SECOND SEAL

The second creature has the face of a calf. The calf was used by the Father when he introduced the covenant with Abraham. *“So He said to him, “Bring Me a three year old heifer, and a three year old female goat, and a three year old ram, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon.” Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, and laid each half opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds. The birds of prey came down upon the carcasses, and Abram drove them away.”* (Gen 15:9-11) We see here that the calf was cut in half, meaning that whoever was in breach of this covenant, the other party could do to him what was done to the calf. So if I break the covenant, Jesus has the right to do the same with me as what was done to the calf. So He has the right to punish me with everlasting death.

Then the call came to John to look at what happened with the opening of the second seal, when a red horse was released. *“And another, a red horse, went out; and to him who sat on it, it was granted to take peace from the earth, and that men would slay one another; and a great sword was given to him.”* (Rev 6:4) This also declares that peace will never return to the earth. We just have to look around us daily to see how murders are committed, and how many wars are fought every day, to see that the flow of blood will never stop. We all try to get out beloved South Africa as a united country, but it will happen.

Even between differing Christian groups we find no unity. Although we might not kill people physically we kill people in the spirit. How many times have I heard that if you change your affiliation from one grouping to another that you are now no longer acceptable to Christ as only their group have exclusivity to heaven. If we look at history people were physically killed if they denounced infant baptism. John Calvin was one of those people who commanded his followers to kill people if they do not accept his gospel. We have to remember one thing and that is that this horse was given a sword, the Word of God, the Bible, and the Sword will be used to judge people, and not our own doctrines.

So this seal will cause that people’s names will not be found in the book of life, as the person failed the test, the one that distinguishes between good and bad. So even though we are in a covenant relationship with the LORD, some people will still find that their names are not found in the book of life.

THE THIRD SEAL

The third creature, the one with the face like a man, spoke the moment Jesus opened the third seal. *"When He broke the third seal, I heard the third living creature saying, "Come." I looked, and behold, a black horse; and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. And I heard something like a voice in the center of the four living creatures saying, "A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not damage the oil and the wine."* (Rev 6:5-6)

The black horse symbolizes death, and tells us that in spite of people being part of the covenant, peoples' lives are dead. So not only will sin be found in them, but they will be dead. So there is no light of salvation found in them. We see further that he has scales in his hand which will be used to weigh wheat and barley. These two grains were used to make bread from, wheat for the rich and barley for the poor. Jesus also used bread made from barley when He fed the people with the five loaves and two fishes. Jesus also declared that He is the Bread of life. *"Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst."*(Joh 6:35)

We also have to realise that people who do not want to accept the gospel of Jesus Christ will always be excluded from communion, as they do not see the bread representing Jesus as His flesh, the wine as His blood, and the oil as His anointing. His anointing is the one that gives us the gifts of the Holy Spirit. So if you do not fully accept Him as the only Saviour, you are to be excluded from the use of communion. The scale also informs us that each person will receive the correct amount of feeding and time to accept Jesus as Saviour, and hence cannot claim that they did not receive enough time or feeding to make the decision to become His disciples. As the third face of the creature is a human face it also shows us that Jesus came to live as a human amongst us, and therefore knows what our needs are.

We know that both the New and Old Testament requirements are summarized in Luke 10:27 as follows: *"And he answered, "YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND; AND YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF."* (Luk 10:27) So even if you followed all the requirements to a tee, but you did it out of obedience without love, your name can still be excluded from the book of life.

THE FOURTH SEAL

"When the Lamb broke the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, "Come." I looked, and behold, an ashen horse; and he who sat on it had the name Death; and Hades was following with him. Authority was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by the wild beasts of the earth." (Rev 6:7-8) The creature that made this declaration had a face like an eagle. *"Like an eagle that stirs up its nest, That hovers over its young, He spread His wings and caught them, He carried them on His pinions. "The LORD alone guided him, And there was no foreign god with him."* (Deu 32:11-12) This passage says that only those who have been tested, and have been gathered under His wings like an eagle does to its offspring, will be accepted as His children, as He was the only God who made Himself known to His children.

We now follow the ashen(pale) horse who was given authority to remove one quarter of the names of the people whose name was still written in the book of life. But why, what was wrong with these people? We find the exact same reason in Ezekiel: *"Son of man, if a country sins against Me by committing unfaithfulness, and I stretch out My hand against it, destroy its supply of bread, send famine against it and cut off from it both man and beast, even though these three men, Noah, Daniel and Job were in its midst, by their own righteousness they could only deliver themselves," declares the Lord GOD. "If I were to cause wild beasts to pass through the land and they depopulated it, and it became desolate so that no one would pass through it because of the beasts, though these three men were in its midst, as I live," declares the Lord GOD, "they could not deliver either their sons or their daughters. They alone would be delivered, but the country would*

be desolate. "Or if I should bring a sword on that country and say, 'Let the sword pass through the country and cut off man and beast from it,' even though these three men were in its midst, as I live," declares the Lord GOD, "they could not deliver either their sons or their daughters, but they alone would be delivered. "Or if I should send a plague against that country and pour out My wrath in blood on it to cut off man and beast from it, even though Noah, Daniel and Job were in its midst, as I live," declares the Lord GOD, "they could not deliver either their son or their daughter. They would deliver only themselves by their righteousness." For thus says the Lord GOD, "How much more when I send My four severe judgments against Jerusalem: sword, famine, wild beasts and plague to cut off man and beast from it! "Yet, behold, survivors will be left in it who will be brought out, both sons and daughters. Behold, they are going to come forth to you and you will see their conduct and actions; then you will be comforted for the calamity which I have brought against Jerusalem for everything which I have brought upon it. "Then they will comfort you when you see their conduct and actions, for you will know that I have not done in vain whatever I did to it," declares the Lord GOD." (Eze 14:13-23)

We find here that we can only be saved through our own righteousness. I cannot depend on my pastor and his interpretation, or the stand of my church grouping to save me, but only my own righteousness will be able to save me. Paul tells the people in Galatia *"For each one will bear his own load."* (Gal 6:5) It does not matter how popular I am as a Christian figure, I cannot bear the fate of other people. *"even though Noah, Daniel and Job were in its midst, as I live," declares the Lord GOD, "they could not deliver either their son or their daughter"*. So this stresses the fact that I must have my own righteousness, and that is the only thing that will save me from the everlasting fire.

We find in this scripture that there are four reasons why these people's names will not be found in the book of life. In order to find out if we are part of any of the groups we have to be able to answer the following questions. Can you take a new convert and teach that person everything that is required in order to inherit everlasting life? Do you know what the doctrine of laying on of hands means? Is it still applicable today? And if it still is, how should it be used? That is what will happen if we do not learn at our church. We become satisfied that we now know everything and does not need to be taught any longer. So we will die of the famine, as we will only receive the same milk doctrines year after year. What have you been taught the past year?

The second reason people will be killed is because of the pestilence. How do I know if I have the pestilence? We tell everyone that our church grouping is so well established in the real doctrines that all you have to do is to join our church and you are as good as being in heaven. We do not like introspection, as we then have to eyeball as it means that I have to examine every doctrine to see if it is a sound biblical doctrine. How many habits do you have that you cannot justify as being built on sound biblical principals? I also suffer from the pestilence when I declare that people can continue debating and warnings, as they will also someday reach the same conclusions that I have known for years. People should stop emphasizing all these other requirements, as I know all the rules. This is the group that will die of the pestilence.

The third reason these people will die is by the sword. Who are these people? This group will say that they do not belong to the two other groups and then declare that the requirements were only for a specific time or a specific situation. They want to leave Jerusalem and go and live in the surrounding areas as Israel did in the times of the exile of Israel during the time of Jeremiah. But Ezekiel also declared that they will die if they leave Jerusalem, the place where the LORD rules. Do you know that you cannot survive without the LORD? These people will almost always use some or other weird interpretation of scripture and that is what will cause their death. The Word of God is the Sword that will kill them.

The last reason, the wild beasts, are those people who follow other religious people but they do not teach the complete message of redemption. They will lay claim to all the wonders that they can do, and how they can solve all your problems. We as people want to live a life that has no

demands. And that is what these people promise. I spoke to a woman the one day who spent a weekend with her “medicine man”, where they lived in tepee’s, covered themselves with mud and he would then pray in his native tongue for healing for these people. And just as a token of their appreciation he would charge them an arm and a leg.

Other people that also fall into this category of wild beasts are those that are put on pedestals by Christians, people that lay claim to being Apostle this or that, and always find so many new revelations that you just have to attend one of their weekend camps. They will always have their own private place where you can gather and join other like minded individuals and return with a new life and a new outlook on life. This may last a year, but then you have to attend next years gathering to be able to continue with life again. Or you have to attend this course and everything will be perfect afterwards. Many of these camps and courses can make a very positive change in your life, but we have to examine each and every thing we learn against the Word of God, the Bible.

Only Jesus can judge us and ensure that we fulfil His requirements. *“And Jesus answered and said to them, “See to it that no one misleads you. “For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will mislead many. “You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end. “For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes. “But all these things are merely the beginning of birth pangs. “Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name. “At that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another. “Many false prophets will arise and will mislead many. “Because lawlessness is increased, most people’s love will grow cold. “But the one who endures to the end, he will be saved.” (Mat 24:4-13)* These are the wild beasts that we read of in this portion of Revelation. So ensure you are taught be a teacher and not a swindler.

This is also the end of the portion describing how Jesus as shepherd will separate the sheep from the goats. So not only do I have to become part of the covenant of righteousness, but my life must also reflect the light of Jesus. If we as Christians pass this test, we will know that we have received everlasting life.

THE FIFTH SEAL

“When the Lamb broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained; and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?” And there was given to each of them a white robe; and they were told that they should rest for a little while longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed even as they had been, would be completed also.”(Rev 6:9-11)

We now find the first words of encouragement for the Christians, those who have laid down their lives at the altar, the cross, where they lost their own lives and received the everlasting life of Christ. We actually find every now and then throughout the book of Revelation that there are always words of encouragement spoken to the saints to support them amidst the times of tribulation and testing that will come over everybody. This is the first time where we read of it after John was taken up in heaven. These people were cleansed by the blood of Jesus, and are asked to wait while some of the people that will join them still have to die before the final end of the world will come. Jesus puts it as follows in Matthew: *““And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. “He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it.” (Mat 10:38-39)* These are the people that are gathered under the altar, as they have already endured all and overcame. They are waiting for the final call to join the LORD in the throne room, where they will always be in the presence of the Father. We find

in the next chapter how many people will be there: *"After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands; and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb." (Rev 7:9-10)* The one point we have to remember that these people are all in heaven already.

THE SIXTH SEAL

This is where we find that earth as we know it today will be destroyed.

*"I looked when He broke the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth made of hair, and the whole moon became like blood; and the stars of the sky fell to the earth, as a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind. The sky was split apart like a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. Then the kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the rich and the strong and every slave and free man hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains; and they *said to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?" (Rev 6:12-17)*

Here we find the end of the physical earth as we know it today. As mentioned elsewhere in this book, there are always two contrasting situations in the Bible. The first part in this particular event was the righteousness that came from the law, while the second or contrasting part came from Jesus when He brought righteousness to every person that believed He is the Saviour in the New Covenant. The end of the first era was where Jerusalem was destroyed in 70AD, and that was the time the message went out to the gentiles. This was the message that Jesus brought in Matthew 24, when Roman soldiers would destroy Jerusalem. In this scripture in Matthew we find the physical destruction that always precede the second or God's way of salvation and life. *"Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains. "Whoever is on the housetop must not go down to get the things out that are in his house. "Whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his cloak. "But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! "But pray that your flight will not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath. "For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will. "Unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short."* (Mat 24:15-22) When we look at the history of Jerusalem, we find that the Christians were driven from the town and fled to the mountains, just like Jesus told them to do. That is where they survived. Those who still continued with their animal sacrifices in Jerusalem were destroyed by the Roman soldiers. Not one of the stones of the temple was left in its place, as it was plundered for all its riches. According to history more than a million people were killed during that time. *"Josephus claims that 1.1 million people were killed during the siege, of which a majority were Jewish, and that 97,000 were captured and enslaved,"*

John now sees the repeat of this event, but during this time the whole of earth will be destroyed. This is also the time when those people who survived the first four seals will be saved. The fifth seal was the encouragement the people who were already in heaven received. Now all the people will have to face the next judgements that we read of that all those in heaven will face. Those people that did not make it to heaven will only be resurrected when we get to chapter 20.

"But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. 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 not precede those

who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words.” (1Th 4:13-18)

Those killed during the time of the sixth seal will be those that like Israel, followed their leaders instead of following the Biblical way of salvation. These are the people that relied on their works and membership of various church groups to save them. Their worlds will fall apart, the government of the day will protect all the sinful ways of people in the name of human rights, but when we see this, we will know that the end is near.

The Apostle John already declared when he was alive that the Antichrist was alive and well and working amongst Christians without being detected. But, we know he will be exposed before the sixth seal is opened. *“Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared; from this we know that it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but they went out, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us. But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know. I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it, and because no lie is of the truth. **Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son.**” (1Jn 2:18-22)* The second scripture that defines the Antichrist is found a couple of chapters later. *“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world.” (1Jn 4:1-3)* The last scripture and the one with the largest impact on our lives follows in the next letter of John: *“For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist. Watch yourselves, that you do not lose what we have accomplished, but that you may receive a full reward. **Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house, and do not give him a greeting; for the one who gives him a greeting participates in his evil deeds.**” (2Jn 1:7-11)*

These verses actually highlight some extremely important facts that we have to take note of. The first point is that the antichrist is part of the church as we know it. *“They went out from us, but they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but they went out, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us.”* The second point he makes is that the antichrist will deny that Jesus is the son of God. *“every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world.”* The third point John makes is that if we support those that deny that Jesus is the Christ, we are one with the antichrist. *“Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house, and do not give him a greeting; for the one who gives him a greeting participates in his evil deeds”.* From this we can deduce that the antichrist is not a specific person that is yet to come, **but people who are sitting in our churches and support those who deny Jesus Christ. How many people do we find today that says that Jesus first has to return to earth to save the Jews with their rapture theory, but these scriptures shows them who they really are, the antichrist.** So we know that the antichrist is alive and doing well in our own churches today. The next chapters will show us how these people will be separated from the real Christians.

Fortunately for us as children of the living God, we also know that the end is fast approaching.

"There will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth dismay among nations, in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves, men fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. "Then they will see THE SON OF MAN COMING IN A CLOUD with power and great glory. "But when these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near." (Luk 21:25-28)

This event is also described in the book of Zechariah. This is how he saw this event: *"Behold, a day is coming for the LORD when the spoil taken from you will be divided among you. For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city. Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle. In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south. You will flee by the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to Azel; yes, you will flee just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD, my God, will come, and all the holy ones with Him! In that day there will be no light; the luminaries will dwindle. For it will be a unique day which is known to the LORD, neither day nor night, but it will come about that at evening time there will be light." (Zec 14:1-7)*

Not only is it the end of the world as we know it today, but also the resurrection of the dead. Jesus will come and those that are still alive when the earth is destroyed, will be joined by those who will rise from their graves, and will follow Jesus to heaven. *"But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. 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 not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words." (1Th 4:13-18)*

After the rising of the dead, the scene now shifts to heaven where we will be stripped from our different doctrines, and where those who truly know Jesus Christ, will receive their rewards. Here we will be stripped of our "church system" as Jesus foretold in Matthew 25 when he said he will separate the goats from the sheep. *"But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. "All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left." (Mat 25:31-33)* This is what will happen when the seventh seal will be opened, and the trumpets will sound followed by the scales.

Now we know that the current earth and the current heaven will disappear on this day, and a new earth and heaven will appear.

During this time all those who passed the judgements of the first four seals, will now learn in order to see who will be in the New Jerusalem with Jesus and the Father.

Both Micah and Isaiah described this event. *"Now it will come about that In the last days The mountain of the house of the LORD Will be established as the chief of the mountains, And will be raised above the hills; And all the nations will stream to it. And many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; That He may teach us concerning His ways And that we may walk in His paths." For the law will go forth from*

Zion And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And He will judge between the nations, And will render decisions for many peoples; And they will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, And never again will they learn war. Come, house of Jacob, and let us walk in the light of the LORD.” (Isa 2:2-5)

This is explained to us from chapter 7 to chapter 19.

CHAPTER SIX – REVELATION 7 – THE 144,000

*“After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, so that no wind would blow on the earth or on the sea or on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, having the seal of the living God; and he cried out with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, saying, **“Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees until we have sealed the bond-servants of our God on their foreheads.”** And I heard the number of those who were sealed, one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel:” (Rev 7:1-4)*

This part is probably one of the most used parts to define people with, or to form their own exclusive groups. For me to understand this part I first have to examine the verses that follow this section. *“After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands; and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, “Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.” And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying, “Amen, blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might, be to our God forever and ever. Amen.” Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, “These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and where have they come from?” I said to him, “My lord, you know.” And he said to me, “These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. “For this reason, they are before the throne of God; and they serve Him day and night in His temple; and He who sits on the throne will spread His tabernacle over them. “They will hunger no longer, nor thirst anymore; nor will the sun beat down on them, nor any heat; for the Lamb in the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and will guide them to springs of the water of life; and God will wipe every tear from their eyes.” (Rev 7:9-17)*

So for me the 144,000 people referred to in the preceding verses, are the heads of the multitude of people that is mentioned above. So they are the people elected by the LORD to come near to Him and to serve Him directly. *“It shall be for the priests who are sanctified of the sons of Zadok, who have kept My charge, who did not go astray when the sons of Israel went astray as the Levites went astray.” (Eze 48:11)* We find in this passage from Ezekiel in his description of the end times that only a select group of priests will be allowed to do the service of the LORD and be allowed in His presence. But why only these priests from Zadok? He was the priest who stood by David when Absalom tried to overthrow his dad’s kingdom. The other priest Abjatar, sided himself with Absalom although they were both priests while David was king. So Zadok shows us the sincere followers, and as such only they will be allowed to do service in the new temple.

These people are also referred to in chapter 3 verse 11: *“I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, so that no one will take your crown.”* This also tells us who will reign with Christ during the millennial reign. *“Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years”. (Rev 20:4)* Only kings are allowed to wear crowns, so these are the ones who will reign with Christ, where Jesus will be King. They are also the people that will judge the wicked.

A very interesting point made here is that these people come from every tribe, and not only from the tribe of Levi. That is in agreement with what we read of in the book to the Hebrews. *“Now if perfection was through the Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it the people received the Law), what further need was there for another priest to arise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be designated according to the order of Aaron? For when the priesthood is*

changed, of necessity there takes place a change of law also. For the one concerning whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no one has officiated at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, a tribe with reference to which Moses spoke nothing concerning priests. And this is clearer still, if another priest arises according to the likeness of Melchizedek, who has become such not on the basis of a law of physical requirement, but according to the power of an indestructible life. For it is attested of Him, "YOU ARE A PRIEST FOREVER ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK." For, on the one hand, there is a setting aside of a former commandment because of its weakness and uselessness (for the Law made nothing perfect), and on the other hand there is a bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God. And inasmuch as it was not without an oath (for they indeed became priests without an oath, but He with an oath through the One who said to Him, "THE LORD HAS SWORN AND WILL NOT CHANGE HIS MIND, 'YOU ARE A PRIEST FOREVER'"); so much the more also Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant. The former priests, on the one hand, existed in greater numbers because they were prevented by death from continuing, but Jesus, on the other hand, because He continues forever, holds His priesthood permanently. Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. For it was fitting for us to have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens; who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the sins of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. For the Law appoints men as high priests who are weak, but the word of the oath, which came after the Law, appoints a Son, made perfect forever." (Heb 7:11-28)

This confirms that Jesus has been appointed as the High Priest in the heavenly tabernacle, but that those that will serve as priests will be appointed due to their own righteousness, and not as a result of their lineage. These people are also referred to in chapter 3. *"He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name."* (Rev 3:12)

We have already quoted the following: *"Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees until we have sealed the bond-servants of our God on their foreheads."* This then makes it clear to us who these 144,000 people will be. They will receive a mark on their forehead, so their thoughts will be clear and Christ centred, and there will be no hesitation found in them. They are also referred to in chapter 3. *"I know your deeds. Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut, because you have a little power, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name. Behold, I will cause those of the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie--I will make them come and bow down at your feet, and make them know that I have loved you. Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth."* (Rev 3:8-10)

The persons that will fulfil the service to the LORD will also receive also receive a mark on their forehead.: *have sealed the bond-servants of our God on their foreheads.* So these persons will be known as they will and have always kept their thoughts busy with the LORD. Their whole life is centred around the LORD and what He requires of us.

Fortunately we also read of a great magnitude of people that we won't be able to count. *"After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands; and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."* (Rev 7:9-10) How blessed we will be that day when we find that we are part of this mass of people.

We find that the book of Enoch mentions a similar version. He mentions the first group the righteous, and those that will do the service in the new Jerusalem/temple, the blessed. Enoch

58.2-3 *"Blessed are you, the righteous and the chosen, for your lot will be glorious! And the righteous will be in the light of the Sun and the chosen in the light of eternal life. And there will be no end to the days of their life and the days of the Holy will be without number."*

CHAPTER SEVEN – BACKGROUND FOR THE REST OF REVELATION

BACKGROUND FOR THIS CHAPTER

We now get to the point that a lot of people will not believe, and that is where those that became part of the covenant but continued in their own religion, and those that followed the Bible as the only yardstick, will be separated from each other. This now follows the events that happened in Revelation 6, where the earth and heavens as we know it today will be destroyed. Those that were still alive when this happened will be taken with Jesus to the Paradise, and is described in 1 Thessolonica 4: *“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 not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words.”*(1Th 4:15-18).

The next step we have to remember is that we all, all those who clothed themselves with the righteousness of Jesus, will be in Paradise, but we will also see that Paradise is divided into different parts. On the cross Jesus said this: *“One of the criminals who were hanged there was hurling abuse at Him, saying, “Are You not the Christ? Save Yourself and us!” But the other answered, and rebuking him said, “Do you not even fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? “And we indeed are suffering justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong.” And he was saying, “Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom!” And He said to him, “**Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise.**”* (Luk 23:39-43)

So from this scripture we can see that we do not enter into a sleep and that we will only be awakened at the end of time, but that we will be with Jesus in Paradise the moment we die. Paradise is divided into various parts depending on how we believe. Both Micah and Isaiah tells us what will happen to us and that we will learn Jesus for who He is. This will enable us to rid ourselves of our own doctrine, and that we do not build our faith on what we were taught on earth, but that we will know Him for who He is. *“Now it will come about that In the last days The mountain of the house of the LORD Will be established as the chief of the mountains, And will be raised above the hills; And all the nations will stream to it. And many peoples will come and say, “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; That He may teach us concerning His ways And that we may walk in His paths.” For the law will go forth from Zion And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And He will judge between the nations, And will render decisions for many peoples; And they will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, And never again will they learn war.”* (Isa 2:2-4)

So we have to realise that our judgements will be based on how we believe. But why will we be judged? *“but if anyone suffers as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name. For it is time for judgment to begin with the household of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God? **AND IF IT IS WITH DIFFICULTY THAT THE RIGHTEOUS IS SAVED, WHAT WILL BECOME OF THE GODLESS MAN AND THE SINNER?** Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.”* (1Pe 4:16-19)

Jesus also teaches us the following on what will happen when we die. That we will find ourselves either in Paradise, or in Hades awaiting the final judgement of Revelation 20. *“Now there was a rich man, and he habitually dressed in purple and fine linen, joyously living in splendor every day. “And a poor man named Lazarus was laid at his gate, covered with sores, and longing to*

be fed with the crumbs which were falling from the rich man's table; besides, even the dogs were coming and licking his sores. "Now the poor man died and was carried away by the angels to Abraham's bosom; and the rich man also died and was buried. **"In Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and saw Abraham far away and Lazarus in his bosom. "And he cried out and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus so that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue, for I am in agony in this flame.'** "But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that during your life you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus bad things; but now he is being comforted here, and you are in agony. 'And besides all this, between us and you there is a great chasm fixed, so that those who wish to come over from here to you will not be able, and that none may cross over from there to us.' "And he said, 'Then I beg you, father, that you send him to my father's house-- for I have five brothers--in order that he may warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.' "But Abraham *said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.' "But he said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent!' "But he said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.'" (Luk 16:19-31)

We will now learn how the different groupings of Christians will be judged. This is announced by the seven trumpets. But before this happens, we find the following: "Another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a golden censer; and much incense was given to him, so that he might add it to the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel's hand." (Rev 8:3-4) So our prayers will be brought before the LORD, but despite these prayers there will be judgements based on how believed.

We read the following in the book of Enoch: "and I called his name Adam, and showed him the two ways, the light and the darkness, and I told him: 14 This is good, and that bad, that I should learn whether he has love towards me, or hatred, that it be clear which in his race love me. 15 For I have seen his nature, but he has not seen his own nature, therefore (through) not seeing he will sin worse, **and I said After sin (what is there) but death?** 16 And I put sleep into him and he fell asleep. And I took from him A rib, and created him a wife, that death should come to him by his wife, and I took his last word and called her name mother, that is to say, Eva (Eve). 31.1 Adam has life on earth, and I created a garden in Eden in the east, that he should observe the testament and keep the command. 2 I made the heavens open to him, that he should see the angels singing the song of victory, and the gloomless light. 3 And he was continuously in paradise, **and the devil understood that I wanted to create another world, because Adam was lord on earth, to rule and control it.** 6 But I cursed ignorance, but what I had blessed previously, those I did not curse, I cursed not man, nor the earth, nor other creatures, but man's evil fruit, and his works. 32.1 I said to him: Earth you are, and into the earth whence I took you you shalt go, and I will not ruin you, but send you whence I took you. **2 Then I can again receive you at My second presence.** 3 And I blessed all my creatures visible (physical) and invisible (spiritual). And Adam was five and half hours in paradise. 4 And I blessed the seventh day, which is the Sabbath, on which he rested from all his works."

Reading through this we now know that there is another world where Paradise is that the LORD prepared for His children, where Satan can no longer tempt them. Peter also attest to this earth and heaven where we will live: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (1Pe 1:3-5)

We also read in this quotation from Enoch that Adam was made perfect, as everything that the LORD does is perfect. "But I cursed ignorance, but what I had blessed previously, those I did not curse, I cursed not man, nor the earth, nor other creatures, but man's evil fruit, and his works." So

Satan could not cause the fall of man through Adam, as he was made perfect. But that which comes from man is sinful and that is why the fall came through Eve. *"And I took from him A rib, and created him a wife, that death should come to him by his wife, and I took his last word and called her name mother, that is to say, Eva (Eve)"*

Just as the fall came through Eve, the salvation also had to come by the way of the woman. So even though the LORD could just send Jesus to earth as our redeemer, He had to come through the woman so as to be fully man, but without sin as He was begotten by the Holy Spirit. With this the curse was also broken over woman, as He was born from a woman.

So we will now return to Paradise, the place where Adam and Eve had free entry into before the fall. The prophet Ezekiel also describes how Satan was cast out of Paradise. *"Son of man, take up a lamentation over the king of Tyre and say to him, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, 'You had the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. 'You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone was your covering: The ruby, the topaz and the diamond; The beryl, the onyx and the jasper; The lapis lazuli, the turquoise and the emerald; And the gold, the workmanship of your settings and sockets, Was in you. On the day that you were created They were prepared. 'You were the anointed cherub who covers, And I placed you there. You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked in the midst of the stones of fire. 'You were blameless in your ways From the day you were created Until unrighteousness was found in you.'" (Eze 28:12-15)*

But how did we end up in Paradise? *"Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, 'Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night. 'And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death. 'For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time.'" (Rev 12:10-12)*

So we stood in a covenant, a covenant based on the righteousness of Jesus, on earth even though we were in different churches and groupings on earth.

But what does this covenant consist of?

THE COVENANT WITH JESUS

We are taught the following in Ecclesiastics: *"That which has been is that which will be, And that which has been done is that which will be done. So there is nothing new under the sun. Is there anything of which one might say, 'See this, it is new'? Already it has existed for ages Which were before us." (Ecc 1:9-10).* So everything that will happen now, people of all ages have either already experienced, or will experience when they die or are taken up by Jesus on His return.

The writer of Hebrews wrote the following: *"Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. Do not be carried away by varied and strange teachings; for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, through which those who were so occupied were not benefited. We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat. For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy place by the high priest as an offering for sin, are burned outside the camp. Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside the gate. So, let us go out to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach. For here we do not have a lasting city, but we are seeking the city which is to come. Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name". (Heb 13:7-15)*

We have to examine those who went before us, see what happened to them, and then follow in their foot prints. I can immediately think of people that stand out from the crowd. People like David, Moses and Isaiah. We can also use their examples as to what we can expect when faced with similar circumstances. The apostle Paul also tells us to look at examples in the Bible. *"Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come."* (1Co 10:11)

So using Israel as an example, we can look at the New Covenant with Jesus to see where we will find ourselves in heaven. That is the reason we find that in chapter 8 everything went quiet for half an hour, as everybody knows that there is a calm before the storm. During this time we have to make our final preparations before the storm hits. Peter also notices that the prophets knew about what was going to happen, but did not receive the detail of what would happen. *"As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven--things into which angels long to look."* (1Pe 1:10-12)

In order to know where we will be in Paradise, we first have to understand the covenant. The exodus of Israel from Egypt shows us all the steps they had to follow to receive Canaan as their reward. So just like Israel had to execute the physical exodus, we as Christians have to follow the spiritual steps required in order for us to get to our Canaan, our portion of Paradise. Moses had to take the Israelites on a physical journey, so we as Christians have to make the same decisions and follow the same steps in order for us to be part of the people that will receive their inheritance in chapters 21 and 22. Those that do not follow all the steps will be found scattered from Egypt to Tyre and everywhere in between.

Jesus also did not declare that He brought new doctrines that we have to adhere to, but He fulfilled the requirements of the Old Covenant in order for us not to offer up animal sacrifices anymore for forgiveness of sin, as He shed His blood for us as an everlasting covenant. *"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lamp stand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished. Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven."* (Mat 5:14-20)

We can now take a walk through the steps of the covenant and see what each step entails:

1. CIRCUMCISION

- Covenant before Christ: **Circumcision, as they had to have a physical sign that they belonged to the LORD.** : *"The LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "This is the ordinance of the Passover: no foreigner is to eat of it; but every man's slave purchased with money, after you have circumcised him, then he may eat of it. A sojourner or a hired servant shall not eat of it." It is to be eaten in a single house; you are not to bring forth any of the flesh outside of the house, nor are you to break any bone of it. All the congregation of Israel are to celebrate this." But if a stranger sojourns with you, and celebrates the Passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near to celebrate it; and he shall be like a native of the land. But no uncircumcised person may eat of it."*

The same law shall apply to the native as to the stranger who sojourns among you." (Exo 12:43-49)

- Covenant with Christ as the Lamb: **Our hearts have to be circumcised.** All people are born in Egypt, a life separate from the LORD, a life in bondage to Satan (Pharaoh). Just like Israel cried out to the LORD for mercy and for Him to lead them out of Israel, I have to call out to the LORD to lead me to His land, Canaan. I have to change my ways and leave my sinful life behind me. I have to come to the realisation that I cannot do anything to save myself. I have to believe that Jesus did everything required to put me in a right relationship with the LORD. I have to realise that I am a sinner and that I will perish if I continue with my life on my own. I have to start living a life of love as explained in 1 John 3. I have to start showing in my daily life that I am forgiven. *"So you will again distinguish between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve Him."*(Mal 3:18) *"But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people".* Jer 31:33.

"And I will give them one heart, and put a new spirit within them. And I will take the heart of stone out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in My statutes and keep My ordinances and do them. Then they will be My people, and I shall be their God. "But as for those whose hearts go after their detestable things and abominations, I will bring their conduct down on their heads," declares the Lord GOD. (Eze 11:19-21)

"For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority; and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead."(Col 2:9-12)

What does Paul say about this? *"Or is God the God of Jews only? Is He not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, since indeed **God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith is one.** Do we then nullify the Law through faith? May it never be! On the contrary, we establish the Law."* (Rom 3:29-31) *"But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God".* (Rom 2:29)

2. BREAD

- Covenant before Christ: They had to eat unleavened bread, as yeast has the same effect as sin, it makes you puffed up. Eating unleavened bread indicates that you have received forgiveness of sin.
- Covenant with Christ as the Lamb: Jesus is the bread of life. He was sinless as He is also God. *"Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. "This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die." I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; **if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh.**"* (John 6:49-51) *"While they were eating, Jesus took some bread, and after a blessing, He broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is My body."* (Mat 26:26)

3. SLAUGHTER A LAMB

- Covenant before Christ: They had to slaughter a lamb as the blood would bring forgiveness of sin. *“Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying, 'On the tenth of this month they are each one to take a lamb for themselves, according to their fathers' households, a lamb for each household. Now if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his neighbour nearest to his house are to take one according to the number of persons in them; according to what each man should eat, you are to divide the lamb. **Your lamb shall be an unblemished male a year old**; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month, then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel is to kill it at twilight”.* (Exo 12:3-6)
- Covenant with Christ as Lamb: **“And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders a Lamb standing, as if slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth. And He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. When He had taken the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation." You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth.**” Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, **“Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honour and glory and blessing.”** (Rev 5:6-12)

4. BLOOD OF THE LAMB

- Covenant before Christ: They had to put some of the blood on the doorposts and lintels. *“For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments--I am the LORD. The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live; **and when I see the blood I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.**”* (Exo 12:12-13)
- Covenant with Christ as Lamb: We have to place ourselves under His blood. *“And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you; **for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.**”* (Mat 26:27-28) This confirms to us that when we share communion death has no hold on me as I have received everlasting life.

5. WHERE WAS THE LAW?

- Covenant before Christ: on stone tablets. Exodus 20. Moses also highlights another aspect: *“Moreover, the LORD showed great and distressing signs and wonders before our eyes against Egypt, Pharaoh and all his household; He brought us out from there in order to bring us in, to give us the land which He had sworn to our fathers.’ So the LORD commanded us to observe all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God for our good always and for our survival, as it is today.” It will be righteousness for us if we are careful to observe all this commandment before the LORD our God, just as He commanded us.”*(Deu 6:22-25) **So their righteousness was obtained through keeping of the law.**
- Covenant with Christ as the Lamb: Written on our hearts. *“And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, “But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,” declares the LORD, **“I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My***

people" (Jer 31:33) *"Behold, the days are coming," declares the LORD, "When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; And He will reign as king and act wisely And do justice and righteousness in the land. "In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell securely; And this is His name by which He will be called, **"The LORD our righteousness."**"* (Jer 23:5-6). Our righteousness will be through Christ alone.

6. WHO WAS THE COVENANT APPLICABLE TO?

- Covenant before Jesus: Both Israel and foreigners. ***"The same law shall apply to the native as to the stranger who sojourns among you."*** (Exo 12:49) ***"A mixed multitude also went up with them, along with flocks and herds, a very large number of livestock."***(Exo 12:38) This scripture confirms that strangers became part of the covenant nation during the exodus of Egypt. This is a confirmation of what the LORD promised Abraham. ***"No longer shall your name be called Abram, But your name shall be Abraham; For I have made you the father of a multitude of nations."*** (Gen 17:5)
- Covenant with Christ as Lamb: There **is no change as it does not need to change**. The rules governing the covenant already made provision for everyone to become part of God's people, His nation. Jesus did not need to change any provisions as He had to come and take the sins of the world and die in order for everyone, Jew and gentile, to be saved by His blood only. This covenant is for everyone that believes that Jesus is the Lamb, both Jew and gentile. ***"In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will dwell in safety; and this is the name by which she will be called: **the LORD is our righteousness."***** (Jer 33:16) **We can now live in righteousness, as Jesus is our righteousness.** *"Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."* (Heb 4:16)

RIGHTEOUSNESS

Paul writes the following to the Romans: *"For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. **For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.** For Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on law shall live by that righteousness. But the righteousness based on faith speaks as follows: **"DO NOT SAY IN YOUR HEART, 'WHO WILL ASCEND INTO HEAVEN?'** (that is, to bring Christ down), or **'WHO WILL DESCEND INTO THE ABYSS?'** (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead)." But what does it say? **"THE WORD IS NEAR YOU, IN YOUR MOUTH AND IN YOUR HEART"**--that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation". (Rom 10:3-10)*

When do I become a member of this covenant? The first time I share communion, when I make that public announcement that I share in His blood and His body. This also means that no uncircumcised person may share in communion, as communion shows that I have submitted myself to the lordship and obedience of the LORD.

What does the New Testament teach about this? When do I become an overcomer, and how do I overcome? *"And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death."* (Rev 12:11)

What are the similarities with the covenant before Christ?

- overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb (Blood on the door posts)
- because of the word of their testimony (Circumcision)

- they did not love their life even when faced with death. We have to take up our cross daily and die of our own will. *“And He was saying to them all, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. “For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it.”(Luk 9:23-24)*

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I BECOME PART OF THE COVENANT WITH THE LORD?

LEAVE EGYPT BY GETTING BAPTIZED

We have to leave Egypt, by getting baptised. That is the place where the might of Satan, in Israel’s time the Pharaoh, is broken in your life and you will live a life totally devoted to the LORD. That is the time when you find out that you longer have to make bricks to expand Satan’s empire, but you can now work on expanding the LORD’s empire. That is the time when you find out that sin no longer has a hold on you. *“Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. **Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.** What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be! Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?”* (Rom 6:11-16)

BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

Then, like Israel we have to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. *“Then the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke to him; and He took of the Spirit who was upon him and placed Him upon the seventy elders. **And when the Spirit rested upon them, they prophesied. But they did not do it again.** But two men had remained in the camp; the name of one was Eldad and the name of the other Medad. And the Spirit rested upon them (now they were among those who had been registered, but had not gone out to the tent), and they prophesied in the camp. So a young man ran and told Moses and said, “Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp.” Then Joshua the son of Nun, the attendant of Moses from his youth, said, “Moses, my lord, restrain them.” But Moses said to him, **“Are you jealous for my sake? Would that all the LORD’S people were prophets, that the LORD would put His Spirit upon them!”** (Num 11:25-29)*

How did Jesus put it? *“Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink.”He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.’” **But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive;** for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.”* (John 7:37-39)

OUR TIME OF LEARNING

Once we reach Sinai we will spend time to learn the LORD’s ways. That is when we will receive the law written on our hearts, where we will learn to distinguish between right and wrong. That is what our local congregation is supposed to teach us, as that is what happened to Israel at Sinai. During this time in the desert the LORD will take us under His wings and provide for us like He did for Israel by providing manna and quails.

RECEIVE OUR CALLING – GO TO CANAAN

As soon as our training is completed, we will be told by the Holy Spirit what our ministry will entail in Canaan. **That is when we move on from the sixth day to the seventh day of the LORD, when we realise that nothing that we can do will save us from damnation. We can only get there through faith in Jesus Christ.** This is what we learn in the book of Hebrews: *"Therefore, let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it. For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard. For we who have believed enter that rest, just as He has said, "AS I SWORE IN MY WRATH, THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST," although His works were finished from the foundation of the world. For He has said somewhere concerning the seventh day: "AND GOD RESTED ON THE SEVENTH DAY FROM ALL HIS WORKS"; and again in this passage, "THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST." Therefore, since it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly had good news preached to them failed to enter because of disobedience, He again fixes a certain day, "Today," saying through David after so long a time just as has been said before, "TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS." For if Joshua had given them rest, He would not have spoken of another day after that. So there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God. For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His. Therefore let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall, through following the same example of disobedience."* (Heb 4:1-11)

Remember that we cannot wait to enter into the rest of the LORD, as each day is today. We cannot delay this calling in saying we can do it later, as the Bible clearly says that today when you hear My voice. We all have a calling on our lives, and that is to make disciples of people, to show people what true love is. That is the difference between the sixth day and the seventh day. If you do not believe that you have a calling to make disciples of all people, you will die like most of the people in the desert even though they were baptised as the seventh day is the day of rest, and that is what the LORD wants from us.

Most of the people who enter into Canaan will believe that they have to serve a king like Israel did. (A king is someone that will rule over you and could be a spiritual father or your church grouping.) The first book of Samuel recorded it as follows: *"The LORD said to Samuel, "Listen to the voice of the people in regard to all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from being king over them. "Like all the deeds which they have done since the day that I brought them up from Egypt even to this day--in that they have forsaken Me and served other gods--so they are doing to you also. "Now then, listen to their voice; however, you shall solemnly warn them and tell them of the procedure of the king who will reign over them." So Samuel spoke all the words of the LORD to the people who had asked of him a king. He said, "This will be the procedure of the king who will reign over you: he will take your sons and place them for himself in his chariots and among his horsemen and they will run before his chariots. "He will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and of fifties, and some to do his plowing and to reap his harvest and to make his weapons of war and equipment for his chariots. "He will also take your daughters for perfumers and cooks and bakers. "He will take the best of your fields and your vineyards and your olive groves and give them to his servants. "He will take a tenth of your seed and of your vineyards and give to his officers and to his servants. "He will also take your male servants and your female servants and your best young men and your donkeys and use them for his work. "He will take a tenth of your flocks, and you yourselves will become his servants. "Then you will cry out in that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, but the LORD will not answer you in that day." Nevertheless, the people refused to listen to the voice of Samuel, and they said, "No, but there shall be a king over us, that we also may be like all the nations, that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles." Now after Samuel had heard all the words of the people, he repeated them in the LORD'S hearing. The LORD said to Samuel, "Listen to their voice and appoint them a king." So Samuel said to the men of Israel, "Go every man to his city." (1Sa 8:7-22)*

The time before they requested a king to rule over them, they were held responsible for their own relationship with the LORD. That is why they wanted a king. When your king tells you it is correct then you are doing fine, as you no longer had the responsibility to be directly answerable to the LORD. If you are convinced that something is a sin, if your king says it is not, then you are okay, because you only have to obey your earthly king. This does not mean that there was chaos in the land before Israel got their own king as some scholars will let you believe, as each family had their own Levite when they entered into Israel. It was the Levite's duty to teach the people what the LORD required of them and to accept their sin offerings when they needed to repent. This whole event is recorded before Israel entered into Canaan. Before they entered into Canaan they had to count how many firstborn sons there were per family, as well as count how many Levites there were. We find that on a total count of 22,000, there were 300 Levites short for each first born son. We also have to remember that the Levites did not receive any land in Canaan, so they had to live with a family and teach them the law, and ensure that they kept all the prescribed feasts and offers. That is why a portion of the tithe of every third year were given to the Levite that was with that family, so that they were also blessed when their family was blessed.

But they still did not want to obey the LORD, and demanded a king, just like all the other nations around them had.

The majority of these people that enter into Canaan will die whilst serving this king, while a remnant will be called to go into captivity. *"You shall also say to this people, 'Thus says the LORD, 'Behold, I set before you the way of life and the way of death.' He who dwells in this city will die by the sword and by famine and by pestilence; but he who goes out and falls away to the Chaldeans who are besieging you will live, and he will have his own life as booty."* (Jer 21:8-9)

PARADISE AND HOW THE PROPHETS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT SAW IT

For us as Christians who know that we are in a covenant relationship with the LORD and that we have His righteousness, can we find out in which part of Paradise we will find ourselves. The prophets of the Old Testament saw it as different countries, depending on how many steps the people followed in their relationship with the LORD. We can now study the prophets to find out what the LORD said about the various areas, and will we be in a position to also understand the next chapters of Revelation to understand what tests and trials we will have to go through. I would like to start with how the prophets divided Paradise into certain sections or countries and follow their reasoning why people found themselves in these areas.

They always prophesied over countries that were not part of Israel, places like Egypt, Edom and Assyria. When we look at Abraham, we find that he actually ended up with eight sons, but the other sons were not seen as being part of Israel or the covenant. We find that the first son, Ishmael, was the human way of trying to fulfil the covenant, but that the LORD still said that they will become a great nation. The next generation we find Esau as the first born, and Jacob the second born. But, Esau decided to exchange his first born right with Jacob, and that Esau was the father of the Edomites. This also influences our lives today, where originally Israel was directly responsible to the LORD, but then the second option they wanted was an earthly king. So today we are still reporting to our king, our denomination, and that is what will point to which area we will find ourselves in once we reach Paradise. That is now for those people that believe you have to be a member of a church grouping, as you will now do what your king expects you to do.

The areas in the Old Testament that we will identify is based on their knowledge and is as follows:

ASSYRIA AND THE CHURCH IN ASSYRIA

This is the Roman Catholic church and all the other mother and child followers. A full discussion about them is included as Addendum 3. They have even changed their ten commandments and says that Moses also made images of what God showed him, so they can also make images of Jesus and Maria and everything else.

EGYPT AND THE CHURCH IN EGYPT

These are the people that followed the first steps of the covenant, but never left Egypt, So they do not believe that baptism is part of the road that we as believers must follow, but that they can baptise infants. Even though their churches believe that children must be raised and educated in the Bible before they can be confirmed as professing Christians and then be partakers of communion, they never leave Egypt. So these are the followers of Calvin and all the other infants' baptisers. *"Then it will come about that any who are left of all the nations that went against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to celebrate the Feast of Booths. And it will be that whichever of the families of the earth does not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, there will be no rain on them. **If the family of Egypt does not go up or enter, then no rain will fall on them; it will be the plague with which the LORD smites the nations who do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths.**"* (Zec 14:16-18) What is the significance of the Feast of Booths? This was the annual feast that Israel had to obey as it pointed to the day the LORD took them out of Egypt. They had to remember that they were slaves in Egypt, but that the LORD was the one that freed them from slavery. It is also described for us after the vision that Zechariah had when the LORD showed him the end of the current earth. These people can also be directly attached to the Church in Ephesus in Revelation.

EDOM AND THE CHURCH IN EDOM

These are the people who hold on to the Jewish faith and the teachings of the Torah and Talmud. They sold their inheritance as first born to us as believers by not admitting that Jesus was and still is the Christ. They are still waiting for their messiah, but the real Messiah was here more than 2000 years ago. So they followed Esau in selling their first born right to us as Christians, giving us the opportunity to become part of the covenant of righteousness. *"When Jacob had cooked stew, Esau came in from the field and he was famished; and Esau said to Jacob, "Please let me have a swallow of that red stuff there, for I am famished." Therefore his name was called Edom. But Jacob said, "First sell me your birthright." Esau said, "**Behold, I am about to die; so of what use then is the birthright to me?**" And Jacob said, "**First swear to me**"; so he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew; and he ate and drank, and rose and went on his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright."* (Gen 25:29-34) Jacob also gives us a further insight into this subject where the second will become greater than the first, where the second is the blessed. *"Joseph took them both, Ephraim with his right hand toward Israel's left, and Manasseh with his left hand toward Israel's right, and brought them close to him. **But Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on the head of Ephraim, who was the younger, and his left hand on Manasseh's head, crossing his hands, although Manasseh was the firstborn.** He blessed Joseph, and said, "The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, The God who has been my shepherd all my life to this day, The angel who has redeemed me from all evil, Bless the lads; And may my name live on in them, And the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; And may they grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth." When Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on Ephraim's head, it displeased him; and he grasped his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. **Joseph said to his father, "Not so, my father, for this one is the firstborn. Place your right hand on his head." But his father refused and said, "I know, my son, I know; he also will become a***

people and he also will be great. However, his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations." (Gen 48:13-19) We will look at Edom later on in this book to see what judgements they will face.

AMMON AND THE CHURCH IN AMMON

They are the descendants of Lot's youngest daughter, but are excluded from any inheritance and can never become part of the LORD's people, as they refused to give food to Israel in the dessert. They were also the people that got Bileam to curse Israel. For us today we find that these people will appoint their own leaders, leaders that will prevent their flock to find the real Jesus, and not share the things that will bring people closer to Jesus. These people worshipped Baal and Molech, the same god known with various different names in the Bible. *"But they put their detestable things in the house which is called by My name, to defile it. They built the high places of Baal that are in the valley of Ben-hinnom to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire to Molech, which I had not commanded them nor had it entered My mind that they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin."* (Jer 32:34-35) So these people not only worshipped the LORD, but also other gods. And that is what will be happening in the next part of Revelation, where these people will be sifted out from the real Christians. Both the Ammonites and Moabites sacrificed their children to these gods. We always read in the Bible that when we had to purify something, there were two options. When it was metal, it had to go through fire to be refined, but when it was flesh, it had to go through water to be purified. And that is why we as human beings have to be baptised in water. These people rejected this teaching and sacrificed their children. They also believed that all religions are the same and that all people will be saved: *"I will make Rabbah a pasture for camels and the sons of Ammon a resting place for flocks. Thus you will know that I am the LORD." For thus says the Lord GOD, "Because you have clapped your hands and stamped your feet and rejoiced with all the scorn of your soul against the land of Israel, therefore, behold, I have stretched out My hand against you and I will give you for spoil to the nations. And I will cut you off from the peoples and make you perish from the lands; I will destroy you. Thus you will know that I am the LORD."* (Eze 25:5-7) A further point that we know that count against these people is that they will rejoice when real Christians are taken on by the world, those that do not believe in Jesus Christ.

MOAB AND THE MOABITE CHURCH

These are the descendants of Lot's eldest daughter, and also worshipped Molech. So they will receive the exact same sentence as the Ammonites. These people went further and build their own places of sacrifices on every high place where they could worship their own gods. It does ring a bell with us today where every denomination has to build their own place of worship, and normally at every entry or exit from a town. *"Thus says the Lord GOD, "Because Moab and Seir say, 'Behold, the house of Judah is like all the nations,' therefore, behold, I am going to deprive the flank of Moab of its cities, of its cities which are on its frontiers, the glory of the land, Beth-jeshimoth, Baal-meon and Kiriathaim,"* (Eze 25:8-9) These people like their counterpart Ammon, also believed that all roads lead to Jesus, as they say that *the house of Judah is like all the nations.*" *"But as for you, do not listen to your prophets, your diviners, your dreamers, your soothsayers or your sorcerers who speak to you, saying, 'You will not serve the king of Babylon.'" (Jer 27:9)* So these people will appoint false prophets that will proclaim lies by saying that all people will always experience only the good side of life. They will claim that all religions actually serve the same God, and as such that there is not a real difference between the various religions. We already find the same teachings today and that extremely prominent theologians share this point of view and subscribe to this theology. They even have a name for one of these viewpoints, namely Chrislam, a combination of Christian

viewpoints and Islamic viewpoints. Others in this group includes those who rather follow their so-called prophets, than the Bible. The major problem with these people are that we do not find any scripture that describe that they will be able to turn from their religion, and to become part of the real Church and Bride of Jesus Christ.

THE PHILISTINES AND THE CHURCH IN PHILISTINE

Just as we find a Church in Egypt, we will also find a church in Philistine. The people in this church followed the instructions to get to Canaan, but like Israel did not kill the Philistines as they were instructed to do. We find in the Bible that all the generations of Israel in Canaan always fought against the Philistines, and that is what has happened to these people. Eventually the Philistines took back the land that Israel occupied, and the people integrated with the Philistines. Exactly the same thing has happened in this group. They did not break with sin and eventually were overtaken by sin, but their leaders are now declaring that various sinful practises are not in conflict with the Bible, and promise new insights into the Word of God. Just like biblical times there are two factions within this church. The first part are the followers of Zebulon who inherited the area of Tyre, while Asher inherited Zidon. Ezekiel prophesied as follows against these people: *“Son of man, because Tyre has said concerning Jerusalem, 'Aha, the gateway of the peoples is broken; it has opened to me. I shall be filled, now that she is laid waste,' therefore thus says the Lord GOD, 'Behold, I am against you, O Tyre, and I will bring up many nations against you, as the sea brings up its waves.”* (Eze 26:2-3) These people are the same people we read of in Revelation 3, the Church in Laodicea. They will tell you that all you have to do is join their group and you are as good as being in heaven. Today we find the new apostolic reformation group displaying all the characteristics of this group. Isaiah said the following about this group: *“For You have abandoned Your people, the house of Jacob, **Because they are filled with influences from the east, And they are soothsayers like the Philistines, And they strike bargains with the children of foreigners. Their land has also been filled with silver and gold And there is no end to their treasures; Their land has also been filled with horses And there is no end to their chariots. Their land has also been filled with idols; They worship the work of their hands, That which their fingers have made. So the common man has been humbled And the man of importance has been abased, But do not forgive them.**”* (Isa 2:6-9)

The history also tells us of an incident between king David and Goliath. David was this young red headed youth while Goliath was this humongous giant. *“He took his stick in his hand and chose for himself five smooth stones from the brook, and put them in the shepherd's bag which he had, even in his pouch, and his sling was in his hand; and he approached the Philistine. Then the Philistine came on and approached David, with the shield-bearer in front of him. **When the Philistine looked and saw David, he disdained him; for he was but a youth, and ruddy, with a handsome appearance.** The Philistine said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. The Philistine also said to David, "Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the sky and the beasts of the field." **Then David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword, a spear, and a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have taunted. "This day the LORD will deliver you up into my hands, and I will strike you down and remove your head from you. And I will give the dead bodies of the army of the Philistines this day to the birds of the sky and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, and that all this assembly may know that the LORD does not deliver by sword or by spear; for the battle is the LORD'S and He will give you into our hands.”*** (1Sa 17:40-47)

As we can see from this passage these people put their trust in their belongings, as they are well armoured, huge in number, but do not put their trust in the LORD.

THE CHURCH IN JERUSALEM

All the people that left Egypt and followed the way outlined on how to get to Canaan will be members of this Church. We will still find people in different denominations, but that only shows that we have different kings ruling over us. The good thing though is that they are in Canaan.

But why would they also face judgements? We have to remember that the judgements of the LORD starts with the Church. But why? I believe the book of Hebrews give us a very apt answer. *"For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against sin; and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, **"MY SON, DO NOT REGARD LIGHTLY THE DISCIPLINE OF THE LORD, NOR FAINT WHEN YOU ARE REPROVED BY HIM; FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES, AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES."** It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, **then you are illegitimate children and not sons.**"* (Heb 12:3-8) Some very interesting words we find in this passage. I don't know about you as reader, but I know that I have had many a heated debate with people who says that as Christians we will not be tested or tried as the LORD will not do it to "His little children" This passage however argues the exact opposite.

Most of us believe in different interpretations of some passages, but it only shows that we stand under different kings. So every group is told and shown what needs to change, but we always have to remember what Ezekiel said to us that we each person will only be held liable for their own lives. I cannot carry the sins of my father or the sins of my adult children. So if you live a life that is acceptable to the LORD you have nothing to fear, as long as you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

THE BABILONION TERRITORY

All throughout history we find that Babylon always represented the place where Satan was king. So in interpreting the Old Testament prophesies, we have to look at these prophesies to find out what the LORD will do to those that deny Him. *"The word of the LORD came to me saying, "As for you, son of man, make two ways for the sword of the king of Babylon to come; both of them will go out of one land. And make a signpost; make it at the head of the way to the city. "You shall mark a way for the sword to come to Rabbah of the sons of Ammon, and to Judah into fortified Jerusalem. "For the king of Babylon stands at the parting of the way, at the head of the two ways, to use divination; he shakes the arrows, he consults the household idols, he looks at the liver. "Into his right hand came the divination, 'Jerusalem,' to set battering rams, to open the mouth for slaughter, to lift up the voice with a battle cry, to set battering rams against the gates, to cast up ramps, to build a siege wall. "And it will be to them like a false divination in their eyes; they have sworn solemn oaths. But he brings iniquity to remembrance, that they may be seized. "Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD, 'Because you have made your iniquity to be remembered, in that your transgressions are uncovered, so that in all your deeds your sins appear--because you have come to remembrance, you will be seized with the hand. 'And you, O slain, wicked one, the prince of Israel, whose day has come, in the time of the punishment of the end,' thus says the Lord GOD, 'Remove the turban and take off the crown; this will no longer be the same. Exalt that which is low and abase that which is high. 'A ruin, a ruin, a ruin, I will make it. This also will be no more until He comes whose right it is, and I will give it to Him.'" (Eze 21:18-27)*

We will also look at specific judgements later on in this book, when we look at the judgements against the whore.

Earlier in the book I quoted a part of scripture concerning Balaam. I would like to quote the complete section again for us in order to be able to differentiate between the various parts of Paradise Christians will inherit. *“And now, behold, I am going to my people; come, and I will advise you what this people will do to your people in the days to come.”* He took up his discourse and said, *“The oracle of Balaam the son of Beor, And the oracle of the man whose eye is opened, The oracle of him who hears the words of God, And knows the knowledge of the Most High, Who sees the vision of the Almighty, Falling down, yet having his eyes uncovered. “I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near; A star shall come forth from Jacob, A scepter shall rise from Israel, And shall crush through the forehead of Moab, And tear down all the sons of Sheth. “Edom shall be a possession, Seir, its enemies, also will be a possession, While Israel performs valiantly. “One from Jacob shall have dominion, And will destroy the remnant from the city.”* And he looked at Amalek and took up his discourse and said, *“Amalek was the first of the nations, But his end shall be destruction.”* And he looked at the Kenite, and took up his discourse and said, *“Your dwelling place is enduring, And your nest is set in the cliff. “Nevertheless Kain will be consumed; How long will Asshur keep you captive?”* Then he took up his discourse and said, *“Alas, who can live except God has ordained it? “But ships shall come from the coast of Kittim, And they shall afflict Asshur and will afflict Eber; So they also will come to destruction.”* Then Balaam arose and departed and returned to his place, and Balak also went his way.” (Num 24:14-25)

Ezekiel also promises that we will find ourselves in different areas, but that the LORD will bring everyone together as one, as His holy nation. *“I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you from the lands where you are scattered, with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm and with wrath poured out; and I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I will enter into judgment with you face to face. “As I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will enter into judgment with you,” declares the Lord GOD. “I will make you pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant; and I will purge from you the rebels and those who transgress against Me; I will bring them out of the land where they sojourn, but they will not enter the land of Israel. Thus you will know that I am the LORD. “As for you, O house of Israel,” thus says the Lord GOD, “Go, serve everyone his idols; but later you will surely listen to Me, and My holy name you will profane no longer with your gifts and with your idols. “For on My holy mountain, on the high mountain of Israel,” declares the Lord GOD, “there the whole house of Israel, all of them, will serve Me in the land; there I will accept them and there I will seek your contributions and the choicest of your gifts, with all your holy things. “As a soothing aroma I will accept you when I bring you out from the peoples and gather you from the lands where you are scattered; and I will prove Myself holy among you in the sight of the nations. “And you will know that I am the LORD, when I bring you into the land of Israel, into the land which I swore to give to your forefathers. “There you will remember your ways and all your deeds with which you have defiled yourselves; and you will loathe yourselves in your own sight for all the evil things that you have done. “Then you will know that I am the LORD when I have dealt with you for My name's sake, not according to your evil ways or according to your corrupt deeds, O house of Israel,” declares the Lord GOD.”* (Eze 20:34-44)

All the prophets saw us in different nations, while John saw us in different churches, the New Testament way of how we see the children of the Living God. This is what this whole section of Revelation is all about, and how we can look at the prophets of old to link to the visions John had. This also confirms yet again the words of Jesus to the disciples that Israel has the prophets and the law, and that is all that is required to see who Jesus is, and what the LORD expects from us as Christians.

Another extremely interesting chapter in the Bible that describes the end times just before the return of Jesus is Daniel 11. Here we find two kings opposing each other and then another

kingdom that will be very rich, but will only exist for a short time. So its timeframe is measured in days and not weeks or years as the first two kings. The king of the north represents the Roman Catholic Church, while the king of the south represents the reformation churches. During the end of the fight between these two kings we find another kingdom that will be raised up, and will be very rich. *“Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory: and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain.”* (Dan 11:39) This is the picture of the dispensationalist movement and all its “name it and claim it”, “new apostolic revolution”, Toronto blessing” type churches. But we find that their time will be preceding the immediate return of Jesus to end the world as we know it today, so as soon as the sixth trumpet seal is opened.

CHAPTER EIGHT – REVELATION 8 AND 9 – THE TRUMPETS

THE OPENING OF THE SEVENTH SEAL

The first verse in chapter eight of Revelation starts with the following words: *“When the Lamb broke the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.”* It is interesting to know where some of our everyday expressions comes from. This is one of those that we like to use. How many times have you heard the phrase “the silence before the storm”? Here it is used in similar fashion as it precedes the storm that will start when the seals are opened. Nobody knows how rough the storm is going to be, but we all sit and wait for the storm to start. We wonder if we have made adequate provision to survive this storm. People all over the world all have this apprehension that a storm is brewing. Before a storm we find that the birds seek shelter, and the wildlife on the plains huddle together waiting for the storm to start.

It is also interesting to note what different beings does before a storm. Most animals will turn their backs on the storm, as they know that should they be attacked from behind they will have advance notice by smelling the enemy. All they have to be on the lookout for is for attack coming from the front, as they will see the attackers. Mankind is somewhat different. We tend to look straight into the storm in order to see what is coming towards us in order to prepare ourselves. By looking into the storm we know what to expect.

We all know from scripture that judgement will start at the Church, so we will not miss these judgements, but we have to be prepared for what is going to happen. *“For it is time for judgment to begin with the household of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God? AND IF IT IS WITH DIFFICULTY THAT THE RIGHTEOUS IS SAVED, WHAT WILL BECOME OF THE GODLESS MAN AND THE SINNER? Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.”* (1Pe 4:17-19)

NOW WE CAN START WITH THE SEVEN TRUMPETS

We find that a bowl full of incense is given to the LORD containing all the prayers of all the saints. How many times do we bring praises to the LORD? That is surely one of the most critical subjects of prayer. We have to thank Him daily that He looks after us, that He provides for us. I have included a number of scriptures that I believe are very apt. *“2Sa 22:50 Therefore I will give thanks to You, O LORD, among the nations, And I will sing praises to Your name. Psa 9:2 I will be glad and exult in You; I will sing praise to Your name, O Most High. Psa 18:49 Therefore I will give thanks to You among the nations, O LORD, And I will sing praises to Your name. Psa 45:17 I will cause Your name to be remembered in all generations; Therefore the peoples will give You thanks forever and ever. Psa 54:6 Willingly I will sacrifice to You; I will give thanks to Your name, O LORD, for it is good. Psa 57:9 I will give thanks to You, O Lord, among the peoples; I will sing praises to You among the nations. Psa 57:9 I will give thanks to You, O Lord, among the peoples; I will sing praises to You among the nations. Psa 71:22 I will also praise You with a harp, Even Your truth, O my God; To You I will sing praises with the lyre, O Holy One of Israel. Psa 86:12 I will give thanks to You, O Lord my God, with all my heart, And will glorify Your name forever. Psa 108:3 I will give thanks to You, O LORD, among the peoples, And I will sing praises to You among the nations. Psa 118:28 You are my God, and I give thanks to You; You are my God, I extol You. Psa 145:1 A Psalm of Praise, of David. I will extol You, my God, O King, And I will bless Your name forever and ever. Psa 145:2 Every day I will bless You, And I will praise Your name forever and ever.”*

The next event is that the censor is filled with fire from the heavenly temple and emptied on the new earth, Paradise. This is extremely difficult to understand that even here with the first judgement over Christians, a third of the people will be destroyed, and will have to face the

second death. We find a similar description in Ezekiel: *"With pestilence and with blood I will enter into judgment with him; and I will rain on him and on his troops, and on the many peoples who are with him, a torrential rain, with hailstones, fire and brimstone."* (Eze 38:22) Peter describes it as follows: *"But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people 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 destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells. Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless,"* (2Pe 3:10-14)

All of these judgements will be announced by the seven trumpets, and will be directed against those people that survived the opening of the seals. But despite being warned, they still followed their own beliefs. *"And the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound them. The first sounded, and there came hail and fire, mixed with blood, and they were thrown to the earth; and a third of the earth was burned up, and a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up. The second angel sounded, and something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea; and a third of the sea became blood, and a third of the creatures which were in the sea and had life, died; and a third of the ships were destroyed. The third angel sounded, and a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of waters. The name of the star is called Wormwood; and a third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the waters, because they were made bitter. The fourth angel sounded, and a third of the sun and a third of the moon and a third of the stars were struck, so that a third of them would be darkened and the day would not shine for a third of it, and the night in the same way. Then I looked, and I heard an eagle flying in midheaven, saying with a loud voice, "Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!"*" (Rev 8:6-13)

Trumpet by trumpet it will be as follows:

THE FIRST TRUMPET

- The first trumpet will test the people by fire. This is when one third of all the people in Paradise will perish. *"and a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up"*. Trees normally refer to leaders of various groups. Ezekiel uses it as follows: *"Thus says the Lord GOD, "I will also take a sprig from the lofty top of the cedar and set it out; I will pluck from the topmost of its young twigs a tender one and I will plant it on a high and lofty mountain. "On the high mountain of Israel I will plant it, that it may bring forth boughs and bear fruit and become a stately cedar. And birds of every kind will nest under it; they will nest in the shade of its branches. "All the trees of the field will know that I am the LORD; I bring down the high tree, exalt the low tree, dry up the green tree and make the dry tree flourish. I am the LORD; I have spoken, and I will perform it."*(Eze 17:22-24) Daniel refers to it as follows: *"Now these were the visions in my mind as I lay on my bed: I was looking, and behold, there was a tree in the midst of the earth and its height was great. 'The tree grew large and became strong And its height reached to the sky, And it was visible to the end of the whole earth. 'Its foliage was beautiful and its fruit abundant, And in it was food for all. The beasts of the field found shade under it, And the birds of the sky dwelt in its branches, And all living creatures fed themselves from it. 'I was looking in the visions in my mind as I lay on my bed, and behold, an angelic watcher, a holy one, descended from heaven. 'He shouted out and spoke as follows: "Chop down the tree and cut off its branches, Strip off its foliage and scatter its fruit; Let the beasts flee from under it And the birds from its branches."* (Dan 4:10-14) Ezekiel uses trees later on in his book also. *"Son of man, set your face toward Teman, and speak out against the south and prophesy against the forest land of the Negev, and say to the*

forest of the Negev, 'Hear the word of the LORD: thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I am about to kindle a fire in you, and it will consume every green tree in you, as well as every dry tree; the blazing flame will not be quenched and the whole surface from south to north will be burned by it. "All flesh will see that I, the LORD, have kindled it; it shall not be quenched.'" (Eze 20:46-48) So apart from the trees or leaders that will be destroyed, we also find that all the green grass will be destroyed. So all the feeding these people could still feed on to understand the message of the Bible will be destroyed. From this point forward non would be able to change their minds, or learn more about Jesus Christ as Saviour. So if I still find myself clinging to my doctrine which is contrary to what the Bible teaches, I will perish, and will I be found wanting when we get to Revelation 20. "'Behold, I am going to send My messenger, and he will clear the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple; and the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight, behold, He is coming," says the LORD of hosts. "But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap. "He will sit as a smelter and purifier of silver, and He will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, so that they may present to the LORD offerings in righteousness. "Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years. "Then I will draw near to you for judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers and against the adulterers and against those who swear falsely, and against those who oppress the wage earner in his wages, the widow and the orphan, and those who turn aside the alien and do not fear Me," says the LORD of hosts. "For I, the LORD, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed. "From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from My statutes and have not kept them. Return to Me, and I will return to you," says the LORD of hosts. "But you say, 'How shall we return?' (Mal 3:1-7)

THE SECOND TRUMPET

- *"The second angel sounded, and something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea; and a third of the sea became blood, and a third of the creatures which were in the sea and had life, died; and a third of the ships were destroyed." (Rev 8:8-9) We find Ezekiel describing to us who this mountain is. "'Son of man, set your face against Mount Seir, and prophesy against it and say to it, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I am against you, Mount Seir, And I will stretch out My hand against you And make you a desolation and a waste. "I will lay waste your cities And you will become a desolation. Then you will know that I am the LORD. "Because you have had everlasting enmity and have delivered the sons of Israel to the power of the sword at the time of their calamity, at the time of the punishment of the end, therefore as I live," declares the Lord GOD, "I will give you over to bloodshed, and bloodshed will pursue you; since you have not hated bloodshed, therefore bloodshed will pursue you. "I will make Mount Seir a waste and a desolation and I will cut off from it the one who passes through and returns. "I will fill its mountains with its slain; on your hills and in your valleys and in all your ravines those slain by the sword will fall. "I will make you an everlasting desolation and your cities will not be inhabited. Then you will know that I am the LORD. "Because you have said, 'These two nations and these two lands will be mine, and we will possess them,' although the LORD was there, therefore as I live," declares the Lord GOD, "I will deal with you according to your anger and according to your envy which you showed because of your hatred against them; so I will make Myself known among them when I judge you. "Then you will know that I, the LORD, have heard all your revilings which you have spoken against the mountains of Israel saying, 'They are laid desolate; they are given to us for food.' "And you have spoken arrogantly against Me and have multiplied your words against Me; I have heard it." "Thus says the Lord GOD, "As all the earth rejoices, I will make you a desolation. "As you rejoiced over the inheritance of the house of Israel because it was desolate, so I will do to you. You will be a desolation, O Mount Seir, and all Edom, all of it. Then they will know that I am the*

LORD." (Eze 35:2-15) A mountain is used in the Bible to describe His strength, and something that we can trust in. *"But the falling mountain crumbles away, And the rock moves from its place; Water wears away stones, Its torrents wash away the dust of the earth; So You destroy man's hope. "You forever overpower him and he departs; You change his appearance and send him away."* (Job 14:18-20) We find that one third of all the ships will be destroyed. This shows us that those people and congregations that traded in the name of the LORD will be destroyed. We find this mainly in the Church in Tyre, or the Philistine church. Even though these people did everything correctly to end up in Paradise, we still find Jesus telling them: *"So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth. 'Because you say, "I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing," and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked, I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see. 'Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent. 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me. 'He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne".* (Rev 3:16-21) As we have discussed this earlier, Jesus is standing on the outside of this church with the people inside the church believing that their way of believing will allow them access to Paradise. They still have to see that Jesus is not part of their church, but is standing on the outside looking in. They have to understand that only those who are in a covenant relationship with the LORD, will be saved.

THE THIRD TRUMPET

- *"The name of the star is called Wormwood; and a third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the waters, because they were made bitter".* (Rev 8:11) This is a very interesting scripture, as we find that when Israel got to Mara, they complained that the water was bitter. So this will happen in Paradise where the water, the Holy Spirit will cease its work. No longer will people be convinced of sin, so the water will become not useable by people any longer. *"Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'"* (Joh 7:37-38) **Just like the green grass, the food of life will come to end, so will the water, the working of the Holy Spirit cease.** This tells us that the time we had to come to the full knowledge of Jesus will now cease to exist. If we still cling to "our" faith, we will be part of the whore that we will describe later in the book.

THE FOURTH TRUMPET

- *"The fourth angel sounded, and a third of the sun and a third of the moon and a third of the stars were struck, so that a third of them would be darkened and the day would not shine for a third of it, and the night in the same way. Then I looked, and I heard an eagle flying in midheaven, saying with a loud voice, "Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!"* (Rev 8:12-13) We find here that even in Paradise things will get dark, and we will wonder if we did everything correctly. So we will even question our own beliefs and things that were as clear as daylight, as the Light will be removed. And this is not the end of the trials and tribulations. Even the fourth angel warns us of still worse things that will happen during the three remaining trumpets. *"When those hired about the eleventh hour came, each one received a denarius. "When those hired first came, they thought that they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius. "When they received it, they grumbled at the landowner, saying, "These last men have worked only one hour, and*

you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the scorching heat of the day.' "But he answered and said to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius? 'Take what is yours and go, but I wish to give to this last man the same as to you. 'Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with what is my own? Or is your eye envious because I am generous?' "So the last shall be first, and the first last." (Mat 20:9-16)

THE FIFTH TRUMPET

- *"Then the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star from heaven which had fallen to the earth; and the key of the bottomless pit was given to him. He opened the bottomless pit, and smoke went up out of the pit, like the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke of the pit. Then out of the smoke came locusts upon the earth, and power was given them, as the scorpions of the earth have power. They were told not to hurt the grass of the earth, nor any green thing, nor any tree, but only the men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. And they were not permitted to kill anyone, but to torment for five months; and their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it stings a man. And in those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will long to die, and death flees from them. The appearance of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle; and on their heads appeared to be crowns like gold, and their faces were like the faces of men. They had hair like the hair of women, and their teeth were like the teeth of lions. They had breastplates like breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots, of many horses rushing to battle. They have tails like scorpions, and stings; and in their tails is their power to hurt men for five months. They have as king over them, the angel of the abyss; his name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in the Greek he has the name Apollyon. The first woe is past; behold, two woes are still coming after these things. (Rev 9:1-12) We are not told who or what the star is that will be falling down to Paradise. All we know is that the locusts and scorpions were told not to punish those who received the mark of the LORD on their forehead in Revelation 7. So the people will be safe, but those that did not receive the mark of the LORD will be tormented. We also find that the trees, or leaders and the grass the food must not be touched. Some of the people that will be tormented will wish that they can die, but as they have already died from their earthly body, they cannot die again.*

THE SIXTH TRUMPET

- *"Then the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, one saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates." And the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released, so that they would kill a third of mankind. The number of the armies of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them. And this is how I saw in the vision the horses and those who sat on them: the riders had breastplates the color of fire and of hyacinth and of brimstone; and the heads of the horses are like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths proceed fire and smoke and brimstone. A third of mankind was killed by these three plagues, by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which proceeded out of their mouths. For the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails; for their tails are like serpents and have heads, and with them they do harm. The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, so as not to worship demons, and the idols of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk; and they did not repent of their murders nor of their sorceries nor of their immorality nor of their thefts." (Rev 9:13-21) We now find that four angels are set loose that were specifically prepared for this time and purpose. It also tells us that this will be the last sifting of the people in Paradise, and that a further one third of all the people will*

die, so their names will not be found in the Book of Life in Revelation 20. So these people still clung to their interpretation of scripture, We have to remember that being a Christian is not a destination, but a path that the LORD will lead us on. So these people thought that they "arrived", and did not believe that they have to follow Jesus and His road to salvation and redemption. Peter tells us more about this road: *"In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls. As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven--things into which angels long to look. Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. **As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY."** If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay on earth; knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ. For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God. Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart, for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God. For, "ALL FLESH IS LIKE GRASS, AND ALL ITS GLORY LIKE THE FLOWER OF GRASS. THE GRASS WITHERS, AND THE FLOWER FALLS OFF, BUT THE WORD OF THE LORD ENDURES FOREVER." And this is the word which was preached to you." (1Pe 1:6-25)* Peter also comments on this road in his second letter. *"Simon Peter, a bond-servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours, by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. **For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust. Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness, and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he who lacks these qualities is blind or short-sighted, having forgotten his purification from his former sins. Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble; for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you."**(2Pe 1:1-11)*

CHAPTER NINE – REVELATION 10 – THE BOOK

*"I saw another strong angel coming down out of heaven, clothed with a cloud; and the rainbow was upon his head, and his face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire; and he had in his hand a little book which was open. He placed his right foot on the sea and his left on the land; and he cried out with a loud voice, as when a lion roars; and when he had cried out, the seven peals of thunder uttered their voices. **When the seven peals of thunder had spoken, I was about to write; and I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Seal up the things which the seven peals of thunder have spoken and do not write them."** Then the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land lifted up his right hand to heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, WHO CREATED HEAVEN AND THE THINGS IN IT, AND THE EARTH AND THE THINGS IN IT, AND THE SEA AND THE THINGS IN IT, that there will be delay no longer, **but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, then the mystery of God is finished, as He preached to His servants the prophets.**" (Rev 10:1-7)*

We learn from this passage of scripture that the tribulations are now all completed for those who are in Paradise. That which he, John, is about to receive, will support him and assist him in understanding the visions that will follow. He is however prohibited from writing down what he is about to see. So we do not know what the seven peals of thunder will be. I will not even try and guess what this may be, as I believe we will only find out what it is when we are faced with this situation. Paul also tells us something about similar situations. *"For we know in part and we prophesy in part; but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away. When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known. But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love."* (1Co 13:9-13)

The next chapters of Revelation will reveal the history of the Kingdom of God to us, who is who and why certain things happened. The contents of the book he had to eat was sweet to the taste, but to his stomach it was bitter. So it was good to know what was going to happen, but bitter once he grasped the meaning of the next happenings.

Then follows the next item on John's to do list. *"And they *said to me, "You must prophesy again concerning many peoples and nations and tongues and kings."*(Rev 10:11)

CHAPTER TEN – REVELATION 11 – THE TWO WITNESSES

"Then there was given me a measuring rod like a staff; and someone said, "Get up and measure the temple of God and the altar, and those who worship in it. "Leave out the court which is outside the temple and do not measure it, for it has been given to the nations; and they will tread under foot the holy city for forty-two months." (Rev 11:1-2)

The LORD now shares with John what the Heavenly Tabernacle looks like. He also shared this vision with Ezekiel. Moses had to make the Tabernacle exactly as the one he saw in Paradise. Now John is told that he should not measure the exterior of the temple as it is given to outsiders who will never share in the intimacy with the LORD. So they will never experience His fullness and His grace. It is really disturbing to notice that they will be known as heathen nations. Only those that have clothed themselves with the righteousness of Jesus will be allowed inside the tabernacle. Those that believed their own interpretation, will never see the inside of the tabernacle and the fullness of the LORD's mercy.

"And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for twelve hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth." These are the two olive trees and the two lamp stands that stand before the Lord of the earth. And if anyone wants to harm them, fire flows out of their mouth and devours their enemies; so if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this way. These have the power to shut up the sky, so that rain will not fall during the days of their prophesying; and they have power over the waters to turn them into blood, and to strike the earth with every plague, as often as they desire. When they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up out of the abyss will make war with them, and overcome them and kill them. And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which mystically is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified. Those from the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations will look at their dead bodies for three and a half days, and will not permit their dead bodies to be laid in a tomb. And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them and celebrate; and they will send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth. But after the three and a half days, the breath of life from God came into them, and they stood on their feet; and great fear fell upon those who were watching them. And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here." Then they went up into heaven in the cloud, and their enemies watched them." (Rev 11:3-12)

We see the two witnesses who are clothed in sackcloth, not something fancy or even desirably. But who are these two witnesses? And then why will they prophesy for 42 months or three and a half years? When Jesus started His ministry on earth it lasted for three and a half years. During that time both the old and new covenant were still acceptable. The old covenant because Jesus had not yet gone through the heavenly tabernacle, but those that believed that He was the Messiah was saved, as well as those that became part of the old covenant according to the law of Moses, as it was still valid as it was only abolished when Jesus died. Both covenants still had the anointing of the LORD as we read of in Zechariah : *"Then I said to him, "What are these two olive trees on the right of the lamp stand and on its left?" And I answered the second time and said to him, "What are the two olive branches which are beside the two golden pipes, which empty the golden oil from themselves?" So he answered me, saying, "Do you not know what these are?" And I said, "No, my lord." Then he said, "These are the two anointed ones who are standing by the Lord of the whole earth." (Zec 4:11-14)*

Both covenants were still valid while Jesus was on earth. The Jews could still receive righteousness through the law as described by Moses in Deuteronomy 6, while Jesus brought everlasting righteousness for every person who believes in Him. John sees that the people were actually joyful and glad when Jesus was crucified, as they thought that they overcame this obstacle. With the death of Steven three and a half years later, the word was fulfilled that the gospel will be preached to every nation, tongue and tribe, and that everlasting righteousness

was now available to all people. We have to remember that Jesus came to fulfil the Old Covenant, not replace it. A couple of scriptures just to confirm this viewpoint.

From Psalms we read the following: *"A Psalm of David. O LORD, who may abide in Your tent? Who may dwell on Your holy hill? He who walks with integrity, and works righteousness, And speaks truth in his heart. He does not slander with his tongue, Nor does evil to his neighbor, Nor takes up a reproach against his friend; In whose eyes a reprobate is despised, But who honors those who fear the LORD; He swears to his own hurt and does not change; He does not put out his money at interest, Nor does he take a bribe against the innocent. He who does these things will never be shaken."* (Psa 15:1-5) Here David already shows us that our deeds cannot bring us into heaven, but my actions will.

From Isaiah I will quote two portions of scripture: *"What are your multiplied sacrifices to Me?" Says the LORD. "I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams And the fat of fed cattle; And I take no pleasure in the blood of bulls, lambs or goats. "When you come to appear before Me, Who requires of you this trampling of My courts? "Bring your worthless offerings no longer, Incense is an abomination to Me. New moon and sabbath, the calling of assemblies-- I cannot endure iniquity and the solemn assembly. "I hate your new moon festivals and your appointed feasts, They have become a burden to Me; I am weary of bearing them. "So when you spread out your hands in prayer, I will hide My eyes from you; Yes, even though you multiply prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are covered with blood. "Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; Remove the evil of your deeds from My sight. Cease to do evil, Learn to do good; Seek justice, Reprove the ruthless, Defend the orphan, Plead for the widow. "Come now, and let us reason together," Says the LORD, "Though your sins are as scarlet, They will be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They will be like wool. "If you consent and obey, You will eat the best of the land; "But if you refuse and rebel, You will be devoured by the sword." Truly, the mouth of the LORD has spoken. How the faithful city has become a harlot, She who was full of justice! Righteousness once lodged in her, But now murderers. Your silver has become dross, Your drink diluted with water. Your rulers are rebels And companions of thieves; Everyone loves a bribe And chases after rewards. They do not defend the orphan, Nor does the widow's plea come before them. Therefore the Lord GOD of hosts, The Mighty One of Israel, declares, "Ah, I will be relieved of My adversaries And avenge Myself on My foes. "I will also turn My hand against you, And will smelt away your dross as with lye And will remove all your alloy." (Isa 1:11-25)*

Then chapter 58: *"Cry loudly, do not hold back; Raise your voice like a trumpet, And declare to My people their transgression And to the house of Jacob their sins. "Yet they seek Me day by day and delight to know My ways, As a nation that has done righteousness And has not forsaken the ordinance of their God. They ask Me for just decisions, They delight in the nearness of God. 'Why have we fasted and You do not see? Why have we humbled ourselves and You do not notice?' Behold, on the day of your fast you find your desire, And drive hard all your workers. "Behold, you fast for contention and strife and to strike with a wicked fist. You do not fast like you do today to make your voice heard on high. "Is it a fast like this which I choose, a day for a man to humble himself? Is it for bowing one's head like a reed And for spreading out sackcloth and ashes as a bed? Will you call this a fast, even an acceptable day to the LORD? "Is this not the fast which I choose, To loosen the bonds of wickedness, To undo the bands of the yoke, And to let the oppressed go free And break every yoke? "Is it not to divide your bread with the hungry And bring the homeless poor into the house; When you see the naked, to cover him; And not to hide yourself from your own flesh?" (Isa 58:1-7)*

Jeremiah says the following: *"Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, "Amend your ways and your deeds, and I will let you dwell in this place. "Do not trust in deceptive words, saying, 'This is the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD.' "For if you truly amend your ways and your deeds, if you truly practice justice between a man and his neighbor, if you do not oppress the alien, the orphan, or the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place, nor walk after other gods to your own ruin, then I will let you dwell in this place, in the land that I gave*

to your fathers forever and ever. "Behold, you are trusting in deceptive words to no avail." (Jer 7:3-8)

He then continues with the following statement: *"For I did not speak to your fathers, or command them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices. "But this is what I commanded them, saying, 'Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and you will be My people; and you will walk in all the way which I command you, that it may be well with you.' "Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but walked in their own counsels and in the stubbornness of their evil heart, and went backward and not forward. "Since the day that your fathers came out of the land of Egypt until this day, I have sent you all My servants the prophets, daily rising early and sending them. "Yet they did not listen to Me or incline their ear, but stiffened their neck; they did more evil than their fathers. "You shall speak all these words to them, but they will not listen to you; and you shall call to them, but they will not answer you. "You shall say to them, 'This is the nation that did not obey the voice of the LORD their God or accept correction; truth has perished and has been cut off from their mouth. 'Cut off your hair and cast it away, And take up a lamentation on the bare heights; For the LORD has rejected and forsaken The generation of His wrath.' "For the sons of Judah have done that which is evil in My sight," declares the LORD, "they have set their detestable things in the house which is called by My name, to defile it." (Jer 7:22-30)*

Ezekiel has the following to say: *"Behold, all souls are Mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is Mine. The soul who sins will die. "But if a man is righteous and practices justice and righteousness, and does not eat at the mountain shrines or lift up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, or defile his neighbor's wife or approach a woman during her menstrual period-- if a man does not oppress anyone, but restores to the debtor his pledge, does not commit robbery, but gives his bread to the hungry and covers the naked with clothing, if he does not lend money on interest or take increase, if he keeps his hand from iniquity and executes true justice between man and man, if he walks in My statutes and My ordinances so as to deal faithfully--he is righteous and will surely live," declares the Lord GOD." (Eze 18:4-9)*

Amos has the following to say: *"I hate, I reject your festivals, Nor do I delight in your solemn assemblies. "Even though you offer up to Me burnt offerings and your grain offerings, I will not accept them; And I will not even look at the peace offerings of your fatlings. "Take away from Me the noise of your songs; I will not even listen to the sound of your harps. "But let justice roll down like waters And righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. "Did you present Me with sacrifices and grain offerings in the wilderness for forty years, O house of Israel?" (Amo 5:21-25)*

Micah says the following: *"With what shall I come to the LORD And bow myself before the God on high? Shall I come to Him with burnt offerings, With yearling calves? Does the LORD take delight in thousands of rams, In ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I present my firstborn for my rebellious acts, The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justice, to love kindness, And to walk humbly with your God?" (Mic 6:6-8)*

Zechariah puts it as follows: *"speaking to the priests who belong to the house of the LORD of hosts, and to the prophets, saying, "Shall I weep in the fifth month and abstain, as I have done these many years?" Then the word of the LORD of hosts came to me, saying, "Say to all the people of the land and to the priests, 'When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh months these seventy years, was it actually for Me that you fasted? 'When you eat and drink, do you not eat for yourselves and do you not drink for yourselves? 'Are not these the words which the LORD proclaimed by the former prophets, when Jerusalem was inhabited and prosperous along with its cities around it, and the Negev and the foothills were inhabited?'" Then the word of the LORD came to Zechariah saying, "Thus has the LORD of hosts said, 'Dispense true justice and practice kindness and compassion each to his brother; and do not oppress the widow or the orphan, the stranger or the poor; and do not devise evil in your hearts against one another.'" (Zec 7:3-10)*

This was a quick journey through the Old Testament. What we find here is that not one of these prophets told the people to go back to Exodus 20 and fulfil every commandment. No, they only told the people that they have to be obedient. That when we meet someone who needs help, that we will be used as a vessel to help these people. That we must love our neighbour, as that is the way we show our love to the Father, by loving our neighbour.

The book of Hebrews describes to us why Israel as nation never received what was promised to them. *"Therefore, let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it. For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard. For we who have believed enter that rest, just as He has said, "AS I SWORE IN MY WRATH, THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST," although His works were finished from the foundation of the world."* (Heb 4:1-3)

Paul also tells us why only certain people will enter into the new temple of the LORD. *"For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea; and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and all ate the same spiritual food; and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ. Nevertheless, with most of them God was not well-pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness."* (1Co 10:1-5)

This was also the message Jesus gave to people. I have included His complete speech as He was talking to Jews and explaining to them who will inherit everlasting life. So for us today as Christians, He is saying the same thing. This message is not for those who do not know the Gospel, but for those who proclaim to be Christians. *"But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.' Then the righteous will answer Him, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You something to drink? And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' The King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.' Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink; I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.' Then they themselves also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?' Then He will answer them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.' These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."* (Mat 25:31-46)

You may ask what about things like being born again, baptism and all the other doctrines we hear every day. It will definitely make a difference, but only when I come to the realisation that all my good works that I do at church will not make a difference, but only when I show my love to my neighbour, is the deciding factor of love. Only then will I understand that everything that I am and have is a gift from the LORD, and I am required to share that with my neighbour. And we can start with our immediate family members, even if they are paupers, they are still my neighbour.

How does John define love. *"We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death. Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth. We will know by this that we are of the truth, and will assure our heart before Him in whatever our heart condemns us; for God is greater than our heart and knows all things. Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God; and whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight. This is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us. The one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. We know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us."* (1Jn 3:14-24)

John describes what real love is, and what Jesus came to do. He gave his best, His life, for us without us asking for it or deserving it. That is how I have to treat my neighbour. I have to give my best, my all and all, to my neighbour without them asking for it or deserving it. It does not matter what definition you want to attach to the word love, but this is the meaning. And it starts between myself and my spouse and my children and immediate family members.

All these passages informs us that we have to get to a place where we are not just looking what we can get from our relationship with the LORD. I have to show that I am a Christian. It does not matter what church group you belong to or what day you treat as your rest day. No, it only depends on what you do as a Christian. I am not condemning you if you do not do anything for your neighbour, all I am trying to get across is that being a Christian is not for sissies. You have to combine your actions and beliefs, and that takes some doing.

That is the first doctrine we have to learn at our local church. Now I must admit that in my nearly 65 years of life, I have never heard this message from the pulpit. No it is the work of the deacons, or this group of people, or some other group does that. No it is the first step I have to take to be able to claim that I am a Christian. Now I have been to many different denominations in my life, starting with the Reformed inspired churches, to the Pentecostal and charismatic's and everything in between, but I have never once heard this message in any of these groupings. If you do not realise how important this message is, then it does not even help to talk to you about faith as you will not understand it. I do not even mention the faith preachers like Kenneth Copeland and his cronies. They take from the poor for their own use. I know as I have had to work with people who have trusted these vultures that gave everything they had to them and they are still waiting for their promises to materialise.

"And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them and celebrate; and they will send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth." (Rev 11:10) That is why these people will celebrate when the two covenants are killed by the church people. We are only told of this easy gospel that does not ask or expect anything from us. Only when we understand what the covenant means to us will we realise why these people will never be allowed inside the New Temple.

Only when people really understand what the covenant means, will the new heaven and new temple become a reality in our lives. That is when the two witnesses will become alive again in our lives. *"But after the three and a half days, the breath of life from God came into them, and they stood on their feet; and great fear fell upon those who were watching them."* (Rev 11:11)

"And in that hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell; seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven. The second woe is past; behold, the third woe is coming quickly. Then the seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever." And the twenty-four elders, who sit

on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying, "We give You thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who are and who were, because You have taken Your great power and have begun to reign. "And the nations were enraged, and Your wrath came, and the time came for the dead to be judged, and the time to reward Your bond-servants the prophets and the saints and those who fear Your name, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth." And the temple of God which is in heaven was opened; and the ark of His covenant appeared in His temple, and there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder and an earthquake and a great hailstorm." (Rev 11:13-19)

What wonderful words to look forward to. To see Jesus as everlasting King, and to see the ark of the covenant, the promise that is there for every Christian, as Moses saw it.

CHAPTER ELEVEN – REVELATION 12 – THE ONSLAUGHT ON THE CHURCH AND JESUS AS THE LEADER

*“A great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars; and she was with child; and she *cried out, being in labor and in pain to give birth. Then another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven diadems. And his tail *swept away a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child. And she gave birth to a son, a male child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne. Then the woman fled into the wilderness where she *had a place prepared by God, so that there she would be nourished for one thousand two hundred and sixty days.” (Rev 12:1-6)*

John sees a vision of how Jesus was born, that Satan tried to kill Him, but that Jesus was taken up in heaven. Even though Herod wanted to kill all male children, the LORD ensured that Jesus was taken to Egypt, where He survived until the death of Herod. We also read the following in the verses following: ***“And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels waged war, and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, “Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night. “And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death.”*** (Rev 12:7-11)

When we look at the symbolic message of this vision, we find that the Church was born as an infant, and that the Satan tried to stop the word of God being fulfilled. When we look at history we find that Satan was the one who said that Job was the one person he could not find fault with. So at this stage Satan still had free entry into heaven. When the Church was named as the way the gospel will be spread across the world, Satan was finally cast out of heaven, and his role changed by seducing people on earth. We also read that he was and still is the ruler of the church of Philistia, the church in Zidon and Tyre. We will find in Ezekiel 26 to 28 how Satan was evicted from Heaven when Jesus arose from the dead. We have highlighted this earlier in the book already. So the real Church was given the authority to rule over Satan and his minions.

The only way to overcome Satan and his followers are also given to us, and form the basis of the covenant. ***“And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death.”*** So the only way to overcome is to become partakers of the covenant with Jesus as the lamb. We also find the following in the book of Hebrews: ***“Do not be carried away by varied and strange teachings; for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, through which those who were so occupied were not benefited. We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat. For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy place by the high priest as an offering for sin, are burned outside the camp. Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside the gate. So, let us go out to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach. For here we do not have a lasting city, but we are seeking the city which is to come. Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.”*** (Heb 13:9-15)

We have to remember also that Jesus was in heaven before He came to earth, and that He left heaven to come to earth to pay for our sins, and then returned to heaven. So in our example of Israel, he was in Canaan, left that to go to Egypt for three and a half years or 1260 days. *"Then the woman fled into the wilderness where she *had a place prepared by God, so that there she would be nourished for one thousand two hundred and sixty days."* (Rev 12:6) After this period He was taken up into heaven again where He sits in Canaan as ruler over the Church. So he left Canaan, went to Egypt to save us, and then returned to Canaan where He came from.

"For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time." And when the dragon saw that he was thrown down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male child. But the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, so that she could fly into the wilderness to her place, where she *was nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent. And the serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, so that he might cause her to be swept away with the flood. But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and drank up the river which the dragon poured out of his mouth. So the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her children, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus." (Rev 12:12-17)

This scripture highlights the fact for us why our fight and war is not against flesh and blood. Satan and his followers were expelled from heaven and can only live on this earth. *"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places."* (Eph 6:10-12) That is why Satan is trying to infiltrate the church in order for the church to serve him and his doctrine. That is why John saw that water came from the serpent's mouth, as he will even try to imitate the working of the Holy Spirit. *"Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'" (Joh 7:37-38)*

This is SO important today, where we find that people are still following the **Toronto blessing and workings of the counterfeit holy spirit**. People will do all sorts of extraordinary things and claim that it is a new movement of the Holy Spirit, when in fact it is the fake spirit brought forth from the Satan that is deceiving the world. Ask me, I saw it so many times in my life, but fortunately it could not sustain forever. Sooner or later people started losing their interest in holy laughter, jumping up and down like a jo-jo, making animal noises and other weird and wonderful things.

So Satan is highly upset and will do anything in order to win the battle against the real Church. ***So the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her children, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus."***

That is why we as Church is called to differentiate between the working of the Holy Spirit, and that which Satan produces. ***"Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world. You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world. They are from the world; therefore they speak as from the world, and the world listens to them. We are from God; he who knows God listens to us; he who is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error."*** (1Jn 4:1-6)

That is what we will see in the next chapter of Revelation. There are so many people who believe any and every person that says they were appointed by their church and therefore must have been appointed by the LORD. That is what the next chapters are all about, how the LORD will distinguish between the real Church, and the whore, between real Christians and those that followed the doctrines of man.

CHAPTER TWELVE – REVELATION 13 – THE ANTICHRIST

We find in this chapter that there are two beasts that rise from the ocean. The first beast is the king of the wicked, those that do not believe in Jesus Christ, so it embodies Satan and his troops.

“And the dragon stood on the sand of the seashore. Then I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems, and on his heads were blasphemous names. And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority. I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast; they worshiped the dragon because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?” There was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies, and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him. And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven. It was also given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them, and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him. All who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain. If anyone has an ear, let him hear. If anyone is destined for captivity, to captivity he goes; if anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he must be killed. Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints.” (Rev 13:1-10)

The sea that the beast arises from represent people, as it is also used by Daniel and is used as people and kingdoms in chapter 7. *“Thus he said: ‘The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth, which will be different from all the other kingdoms and will devour the whole earth and tread it down and crush it. ‘As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings. ‘He will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time.’ (Dan 7:23-25)*

Both these portions of scripture tells us that a great multitude will follow Satan. There will be times when he and his followers will face setbacks and where people will feel that they have gained the upper hand in the fight against him and his followers, but we know that this war will continue until the end of time. So many kingdoms will arise that will not serve Jesus but these are the people whose name will not be found in the book of life. It also tells us that we will have to endure till the end not to fall into the trap of serving Satan.

We just have to look around us today to see how many temptations we are faced with on a daily basis to understand how difficult it is to remain standing amid all the doctrines of man.

*“Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb and he spoke as a dragon. He exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed. He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men. And he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who *had the wound of the sword and has come to life. And it was given to him to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast would even speak and cause as many as do not worship the image of the beast to be killed. And he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free men and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand or on their forehead, and he provides that no one will be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for the number is that of a man; and his number is six hundred and sixty-six.” (Rev 13:11-18)*

Where the first beast openly fights with true believers, the second creature that will be in conflict with us and he will be able to do many signs and wonders. He will even call fire from the heavens, so the Christians will not see him for who he is. This is the sign of the antichrist that is also described by Paul in 2 Thessalonians. *“Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. **Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God. Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things? And you know what restrains him now, so that in his time he will be revealed. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; that is, **the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness.**”*** (2Th 2:1-12)

This is the second beast. The one Peter also wrote about: *“then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment, and especially those who indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires and despise authority. Daring, self-willed, they do not tremble when they revile angelic majesties, whereas angels who are greater in might and power do not bring a reviling judgment against them before the Lord. But these, like unreasoning animals, born as creatures of instinct to be captured and killed, reviling where they have no knowledge, will in the destruction of those creatures also be destroyed, suffering wrong as the wages of doing wrong. **They count it a pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are stains and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, as they carouse with you, having eyes full of adultery that never cease from sin, enticing unstable souls, having a heart trained in greed, accursed children; forsaking the right way, they have gone astray, having followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; but he received a rebuke for his own transgression, for a mute donkey, speaking with a voice of a man, restrained the madness of the prophet. These are springs without water and mists driven by a storm, for whom the black darkness has been reserved. For speaking out arrogant words of vanity they entice by fleshly desires, by sensuality, those who barely escape from the ones who live in error, promising them freedom while they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by what a man is overcome, by this he is enslaved. For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world by the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and are overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first. For it would be better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn away from the holy commandment handed on to them. It has happened to them according to the true proverb, “A DOG RETURNS TO ITS OWN VOMIT,” and, “A sow, after washing, returns to wallowing in the mire.”**”* (2Pe 2:9-22)

This is probably the most difficult part to get across to “church goers”. I specifically use the word church goers, as real Christians are not church goers, but disciples of Jesus Christ. Church goers want that everybody follow their definition of how to get saved and what faith is, while real Christians live a life that shows the way to Jesus and have become like Him in word and deed. We find church goers in just about every denomination, but it is more difficult to find disciples. I had a discussion with an old minister of the church my parents and I went to earlier. He knew me from birth and even acted as our MC at our wedding. I picked him up one morning

and asked him to come to our church the one Sunday as our own pastor was away on holiday. On the way back to his house after the service, he told me something that really shook me. He told me he had to ask for forgiveness to the LORD as in all his days as a pastor, he always tried to make people followers of our denomination, and never once tried to make people disciples. This really had such an impact on my life that I started studying the Bible and eventually got ordained as a pastor, and I only have one objective, and that is to make people disciples of Jesus Christ. That these people will not follow me, but will see what real disciples are like and to follow the example of Jesus.

Isaiah also gives us a very clear description of who the second beast is, the one that is amongst us and that we would never expect to be the antichrist: *“What are your multiplied sacrifices to Me?” Says the LORD. “I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams And the fat of fed cattle; And I take no pleasure in the blood of bulls, lambs or goats. “When you come to appear before Me, Who requires of you this trampling of My courts? “Bring your worthless offerings no longer, Incense is an abomination to Me. New moon and sabbath, the calling of assemblies-- I cannot endure iniquity and the solemn assembly. “I hate your new moon festivals and your appointed feasts, They have become a burden to Me; I am weary of bearing them. “So when you spread out your hands in prayer, I will hide My eyes from you; Yes, even though you multiply prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are covered with blood. “Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; Remove the evil of your deeds from My sight. Cease to do evil, Learn to do good; Seek justice, Reprove the ruthless, Defend the orphan, Plead for the widow. “Come now, and let us reason together,” Says the LORD, “Though your sins are as scarlet, They will be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They will be like wool. “If you consent and obey, You will eat the best of the land; “But if you refuse and rebel, You will be devoured by the sword.” Truly, the mouth of the LORD has spoken. **How the faithful city has become a harlot, She who was full of justice! Righteousness once lodged in her, But now murderers.** Your silver has become dross, Your drink diluted with water. Your rulers are rebels And companions of thieves; Everyone loves a bribe And chases after rewards. They do not defend the orphan, Nor does the widow’s plea come before them. Therefore the Lord GOD of hosts, The Mighty One of Israel, declares, “Ah, I will be relieved of My adversaries And avenge Myself on My foes. “I will also turn My hand against you, And will smelt away your dross as with lye And will remove all your alloy.” (Isa 1:11-25)*

From this passage we find that the whore is not someone who is still to come and is outside of the church, but they are with us in the church, some even as leaders of major groups and denominations. *“Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment.” (Jas 3:1)* That is the way Satan works. He gets us to fix our eyes on leaders in order for us to do whatever the leader wants us to do and believe in, and not what the LORD wants us to do. This is what the message to the leader of the Church in Laodicea is all about. Jesus is not inside this church at all, but is standing outside and knocking on their door to let Him in. That is what Peter referred to above also. Israel did exactly the same thing when they asked Samuel that they wanted a king as they did not want to do what the LORD wanted them to do.

So the second beast is still Satan, but how he will infiltrate the Church and make them part of the whore.

I want to reiterate it again here that the LORD will not judge you because of your affiliation to a specific grouping, but He will judge you on your own merits. But as we sometimes only believe certain sections, we can use our example model to see how the LORD judged Israel and the other nations in the Old Testament, to see how He will judge us.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN – REVELATION 14 – THE GATHERING OF THE HARVEST

“Then I looked, and behold, the Lamb was standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder, and the voice which I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps. And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders; and no one could learn the song except the one hundred and forty-four thousand who had been purchased from the earth. These are the ones who have not been defiled with women, for they have kept themselves chaste. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These have been purchased from among men as first fruits to God and to the Lamb. And no lie was found in their mouth; they are blameless.” (Rev 14:1-5)

The scene now changes back to the picture we were told of in chapters 4, 5 and 7. These are the people who were obedient in every aspect of their lives.

*“And I saw another angel flying in midheaven, having an eternal gospel to preach to those who live on the earth, and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people; **and he said with a loud voice, “Fear God, and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come; worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters.”** (Rev 14:6-7) John sees here an angel who proclaims the gospel. This tells us that the message of the gospel is not something that man invented, but it was brought forth in heaven. So no man can invent a new gospel message, as the same message was brought forth to every nation tongue and tribe. So we cannot question the message of the gospel as it is not something that man produced. The same angel now also proclaims that the time has come to gather in the harvest. This is now not a separate judgement over people, but the LORD wants to ensure that we understand why the time has come to collect the harvest, as the time that both Isaiah and Micah proclaimed has now been completed. *“Now it will come about that In the last days The mountain of the house of the LORD Will be established as the chief of the mountains, And will be raised above the hills; And all the nations will stream to it. **And many peoples will come and say, “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; That He may teach us concerning His ways And that we may walk in His paths.” For the law will go forth from Zion And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And He will judge between the nations, And will render decisions for many peoples; And they will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, And never again will they learn war.”** (Isa 2:2-4)**

This also ensures that no person will have any right to claim that they did not know what the message of redemption is all about. So we have endured the first judgement when we died or was taken with Jesus to Paradise on His return to earth. So now everyone in Paradise will know what the real message of redemption is, and it is now time to judge the various nations or churches.

“And another angel, a second one, followed, saying, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who has made all the nations drink of the wine of the passion of her immorality.” (Rev 14:8) This informs John that the time has now come to judge all people, and that those who still clung to their own gospel will be judged with those that did not accept the gospel of Jesus Christ. People will be judged from every tribe and tongue and nation, as they still defiled them with the whore.

“And another angel, a second one, followed, saying, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who has made all the nations drink of the wine of the passion of her immorality.” Then another angel, a third one, followed them, saying with a loud voice, “If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with fire and

brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. "And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name." Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus." (Rev 14:8-12) We are told that if our thoughts and deeds were not acceptable to the LORD, that we will drink of the wine of the passion of her immorality. So the people who had the mark of the beast on their foreheads, so their thoughts were sinful, and the mark on their hands, so their deeds confirmed that they did not serve the LORD, will be judged. So we can really stop looking at every new invention to see if it is the mark of the beast. The mark of the beast is already known, and comprises of your thoughts and deeds.

I can remember that in the early 1980's the mark of the beast was the introduction of barcodes, then it was the halaal sign on food, and now everyone is looking at the new applications of the microchip technology that are all labelled the mark of the beast. It is really our own thoughts on how we can benefit from others and cause them in turn to suffer, and our deeds, how I live with my neighbour, that are the two marks of the beast.

John uses a passage from the Psalms to describe the cup and the wine that these people will have to endure. *"For not from the east, nor from the west, Nor from the desert comes exaltation; But God is the Judge; He puts down one and exalts another. For a cup is in the hand of the LORD, and the wine foams; It is well mixed, and He pours out of this; Surely all the wicked of the earth must drain and drink down its dregs."* (Psa 75:6-8) So all the wicked people will have to drink from the cup of wrath of the LORD that is served mixed completely with His dregs. None of the wicked will be favoured, and all will have the same judgement.

Fortunately for us as those who are saved, we know we will not face any judgement. *"Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus. And I heard a voice from heaven, saying, "Write, 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on!'" "Yes," says the Spirit, "so that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow with them."* (Rev 14:12-13) So we do not find any new terms and conditions in the New Testament, but it is all dependant on how I as a Christian live my life, and that I believe that Jesus Christ is the Messiah and the only way to salvation.

"Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and sitting on the cloud was one like a son of man, having a golden crown on His head and a sharp sickle in His hand. And another angel came out of the temple, crying out with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, "Put in your sickle and reap, for the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the earth is ripe." (Rev 14:14-15) John now sees a vision that the final hour has come and that the harvest is ready. So every person who is part of this harvest will not have to face any further judgements.

The final part of this chapter is the judgement against the Jewish faith, or as we have seen in the Old Testament the judgements over Edom. *"And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, and he also had a sharp sickle. Then another angel, the one who has power over fire, came out from the altar; and he called with a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, "Put in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, because her grapes are ripe." So the angel swung his sickle to the earth and gathered the clusters from the vine of the earth, and threw them into the great wine press of the wrath of God. And the wine press was trodden outside the city, and blood came out from the wine press, up to the horses' bridles, for a distance of two hundred miles."* (Rev 14:17-20)

How tragic is it that the Jews do not want to see Jesus as the Messiah. This confirms Isaiah 63 *"Who is this who comes from Edom, With garments of glowing colors from Bozrah, This One who is majestic in His apparel, Marching in the greatness of His strength? "It is I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save." Why is Your apparel red, And Your garments like the one who treads in the wine press? "I have trodden the wine trough alone, And from the peoples there was no man with Me. I also trod them in My anger And trampled them in My wrath; And*

their lifeblood is sprinkled on My garments, And I stained all My raiment. "For the day of vengeance was in My heart, And My year of redemption has come. "I looked, and there was no one to help, And I was astonished and there was no one to uphold; So My own arm brought salvation to Me, And My wrath upheld Me. "I trod down the peoples in My anger And made them drunk in My wrath, And I poured out their lifeblood on the earth." (Isa 63:1-6) And the verse in chapter 19 of Revelation: ***"He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God."*** (Rev 19:13)

Just as Esau sold his birth right to Isaac, the Jews sold their birth right to us as Christians. Esau was the father of Edom, and exactly the same thing happened when the Jews rejected Christ. Hence the judgements against Edom.

So Jesus will not come again to be crowned king of the Jewish faith, but it is our obligation to share the gospel with them the same way Paul and Barnabas did.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN – REVELATION 15 – THE REWARD FOR US AS THE REDEEMED

"Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels who had seven plagues, which are the last, because in them the wrath of God is finished. And I saw something like a sea of glass mixed with fire, and those who had been victorious over the beast and his image and the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, holding harps of God. And they sang the song of Moses, the bond-servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, "Great and marvelous are Your works, O Lord God, the Almighty; Righteous and true are Your ways, King of the nations! "Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy; For ALL THE NATIONS WILL COME AND WORSHIP BEFORE YOU, FOR YOUR RIGHTEOUS ACTS HAVE BEEN REVEALED." (Rev 15:1-4)

Here we see all the redeemed together, everyone who overcame the Satan, with the Lamb, bringing glory and honour to the Father. We also find that we will sing the song of Moses. Many people do not know what this song is about or where to find it, so I have quoted the whole song for us. *"Then Moses and the sons of Israel sang this song to the LORD, and said, "I will sing to the LORD, for He is highly exalted; The horse and its rider He has hurled into the sea. "The LORD is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation; This is my God, and I will praise Him; My father's God, and I will extol Him. "The LORD is a warrior; The LORD is His name. "Pharaoh's chariots and his army He has cast into the sea; And the choicest of his officers are drowned in the Red Sea. "The deeps cover them; They went down into the depths like a stone. "Your right hand, O LORD, is majestic in power, Your right hand, O LORD, shatters the enemy. "And in the greatness of Your excellence You overthrow those who rise up against You; You send forth Your burning anger, and it consumes them as chaff. "At the blast of Your nostrils the waters were piled up, The flowing waters stood up like a heap; The deeps were congealed in the heart of the sea. "The enemy said, 'I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; My desire shall be gratified against them; I will draw out my sword, my hand will destroy them.' "You blew with Your wind, the sea covered them; They sank like lead in the mighty waters. "Who is like You among the gods, O LORD? Who is like You, majestic in holiness, Awesome in praises, working wonders? "You stretched out Your right hand, The earth swallowed them. "In Your lovingkindness You have led the people whom You have redeemed; In Your strength You have guided them to Your holy habitation. "The peoples have heard, they tremble; Anguish has gripped the inhabitants of Philistia. "Then the chiefs of Edom were dismayed; The leaders of Moab, trembling grips them; All the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away. "Terror and dread fall upon them; By the greatness of Your arm they are motionless as stone; Until Your people pass over, O LORD, Until the people pass over whom You have purchased. "You will bring them and plant them in the mountain of Your inheritance, The place, O LORD, which You have made for Your dwelling, The sanctuary, O Lord, which Your hands have established. "The LORD shall reign forever and ever." For the horses of Pharaoh with his chariots and his horsemen went into the sea, and the LORD brought back the waters of the sea on them, but the sons of Israel walked on dry land through the midst of the sea. Miriam the prophetess, Aaron's sister, took the timbrel in her hand, and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dancing. Miriam answered them, "Sing to the LORD, for He is highly exalted; The horse and his rider He has hurled into the sea." Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days in the wilderness and found no water." (Exo 15:1-22)*

The whole storyline behind the song is that the father destroyed the Pharaoh and his army in the water. All the other nations heard of this and feared the Israelites, as they knew what the LORD did to Pharaoh. That is what we as Christians have to remember, that the day we went through the water to be baptised, the hold and might that Satan and his minions had over us was destroyed. Moses uses a phrase that I believe all Christians should make their own and live their lives accordingly. **"Who is like You among the gods, O LORD? Who is like You, majestic in holiness, Awesome in praises, working wonders?"** When we make these words our own, we

will be able to live triumphantly everyday. Then we will not give in to any temptation that comes our way. To be honest, the power of the enemy was completely destroyed in the water. James also writes about this subject: *"Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you."* (Jas 4:7) The LORD has already triumphed over Satan and his followers, and we must thank Him daily for this. This is what the whole song is all about. Israel went through on dry land, while Pharaoh and his soldiers died in the sea. And that is what baptism means to us. We can now join and sing this song as we know that Satan has lost his power. *"Great and marvelous are Your works, O Lord God, the Almighty; Righteous and true are Your ways, King of the nations! Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy; For ALL THE NATIONS WILL COME AND WORSHIP BEFORE YOU, FOR YOUR RIGHTEOUS ACTS HAVE BEEN REVEALED."* (Rev 15:3-4) This confirms for us that we know that the LORD alone is God, and that He has already prepared the way for us. All the nations, so all the different church groups, will gather and rejoice in the LORD.

"After these things I looked, and the temple of the tabernacle of testimony in heaven was opened, and the seven angels who had the seven plagues came out of the temple, clothed in linen, clean and bright, and girded around their chests with golden sashes. Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God, who lives forever and ever. And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power; and no one was able to enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were finished" (Rev 15:5-8)

We now see the same scene that Moses saw before he had to build the tabernacle. That is our destiny, but we find that before we can enter into the tabernacle, we have to witness the last seven judgements, that we find in the next chapters.

Something that we see throughout the whole book of Revelation, is that judgements are passed, and then the redeemed of the LORD will find comforting words again, before the next judgements. Some of the scenes follow one after the other, like the next judgements that the unbelievers will face.

A very interesting phenomenon we find is that with the sixth seal the earth was destroyed, and now with the sixth trumpet, the sheep and the goats were separated in Paradise. What will the next six have in store for us?

CHAPTER FIFTEEN – REVELATION 16 TO 18 – THE JUDGEMENT OF THE WHORE

This part of Revelation have as many interpretations as there are theologians. One of the most popular viewpoints are that the Roman Catholic Church is the whore, and most of the reformers will hold this view. There are apparently seven hills surrounding the Vatican and people try and find all sorts of evidences that confirm their theory. It is a fact that some of their leaders and members will form part of the whore, BUT, the LORD does not condemn people because of which church they belong to. He judges every person on their own lives. Paul puts it as follows in Galatians: *“But each one must examine his own work, and then he will have reason for boasting in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another. **For each one will bear his own load.** The one who is taught the word is to share all good things with the one who teaches him. Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.”* (Gal 6:4-7)

“Then I heard a loud voice from the temple, saying to the seven angels, “Go and pour out on the earth the seven bowls of the wrath of God.” So the first angel went and poured out his bowl on the earth; and it became a loathsome and malignant sore on the people who had the mark of the beast and who worshiped his image. The second angel poured out his bowl into the sea, and it became blood like that of a dead man; and every living thing in the sea died. Then the third angel poured out his bowl into the rivers and the springs of waters; and they became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters saying, “Righteous are You, who are and who were, O Holy One, because You judged these things; for they poured out the blood of saints and prophets, and You have given them blood to drink. They deserve it.” And I heard the altar saying, “Yes, O Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments.” The fourth angel poured out his bowl upon the sun, and it was given to it to scorch men with fire. Men were scorched with fierce heat; and they blasphemed the name of God who has the power over these plagues, and they did not repent so as to give Him glory. Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became darkened; and they gnawed their tongues because of pain, and they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores; and they did not repent of their deeds. The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river, the Euphrates; and its water was dried up, so that the way would be prepared for the kings from the east. And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs; for they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty.” (Rev 16:1-14)

We now find the judgements that the people making up the whore will face. It is definitely not good words by all means, so I want to ensure that I am not part of this group of people. But how do I differentiate between the whore and the Bride?

TEACHER OR LIAR?

While doing research before starting to write this book I was dismayed at some of the things that highly thought of Christian leaders said and did. Things that are totally taken out of context just to confirm their interpretation. This made me think about how many things are told to Christians everyday that does not contain even a glimpse of the truth.

Some of the great reformers and church fathers also had a dark side that we are not told about. Things like the book Luther wrote “On the Jews and their lies”. Some of the Nazi’s even said that this book was the main reason for the massacre of the Jews during the second world war. One of the quotations I found said the following: *“William Nichols, Professor of Religious Studies, recounts, “At his trial in Nuremberg after the Second World War, Julius Streicher, the notorious Nazi propagandist, editor of the scurrilous antisemitic weekly Der Stürmer, argued that if he should be standing there arraigned on such charges, so should Martin Luther. Reading such passages, it is hard not to agree with him. Luther’s proposals read like a program for the Nazis,”* It

was Luther's expression "The Jews are our misfortune" that centuries later would be repeated by Heinrich von Treitschke and appear as motto on the front page of Julius Streicher's *Der Stürmer*. Some scholars have attributed the Nazi "Final Solution" directly to Martin Luther." I am aware of the fact that most Lutheran churches do not support this writing any longer. But, this view was only changed with the advent of the Internet during the 1990's. Most people don't even know about this, but he is still seen as one of the great reformers. I know that he was instrumental in changing many things that were wrong, but it would have been a lot easier if we all knew the full history, and not only the parts that people wants us to know about. I know that despite this book, he was still used by the LORD to reform the Church and bring it back to what the Bible actually teaches.

John Calvin made the following declaration: "*Honour, glory, and riches shall be the reward of your pains; but above all, do not fail to rid the country of those scoundrels, who stir up the people to revolt against us. **Such monsters should be exterminated, as I have exterminated Michael Servetus the Spaniard.***" And this guy only questioned Calvin's writings on predestination and of infant baptism. I know it is a very contentious subject, but something that has been shown over and over again as his own philosophy. I believe that Jesus came to earth to pay for the sins of the world, and not only for those that were predestined to be saved, and not use us as minions without any reason. I believe that Jesus laid down His life at the cross for us that we can receive His righteousness and receive everlasting life. I believe as quoted earlier that "**For each one will bear his own load**". Jesus is our righteousness. "*For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*" (Heb 4:12-16)

The problem that I wrestle with is that we also read the following in the book of Hebrews: "*Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.*" (Heb 13:7-8) I also know that murderers will not make it to Paradise unless they repent of their sin, and I do not find any statement anywhere were either confessed their sins as murderers, or told their followers not to kill people opposing their viewpoints. That is indeed what we as Christians have to do, and then refrain from falling into the same sin again, and then we will receive forgiveness.

We find the exact same things happening today. People that changes the Bible to suit their beliefs. How many different translations do we find today. Some even has the notes of their follower as part of the Bible, so they never get to see the Bible for what it is, but only seeing it through the eyes of their leaders. We have a number of translations in Afrikaans, my home language, where the word righteousness was removed from the latest translation, and watered down in the translation prior to the last one. Where most Bibles would use the word or term righteous(ness) at least 300+ times, it was only used 40 times in the 1983 translation and is completely absent from the 2008 translation. People today are doing exactly the same as what the Roman Catholic Church were doing, change the commandments in Exodus 20 to allow them to worship the mother and child statutes, which actually represent Semiramis and her son, the Babylonian goddess. So all these people will also form part of the whore.

Peter also reminds of what our lives should be like: "*Now for this very reason also, **applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness, and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly***

kindness, love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. **For he who lacks these qualities is blind or short-sighted, having forgotten his purification from his former sins.**" (2Pe 1:5-9) Ensure that you are taught what the Bible teaches at your local church in order not to end up as part of the whore. "I heard another voice from heaven, saying, **"Come out of her, my people, so that you will not participate in her sins and receive of her plagues; for her sins have piled up as high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities. "Pay her back even as she has paid, and give back to her double according to her deeds; in the cup which she has mixed, mix twice as much for her. "To the degree that she glorified herself and lived sensuously, to the same degree give her torment and mourning; for she says in her heart, 'I SIT as A QUEEN AND I AM NOT A WIDOW, and will never see mourning.'**" For this reason in one day her plagues will come, pestilence and mourning and famine, and she will be burned up with fire; for the Lord God who judges her is strong." (Rev 18:4-8)

The same thing is happening with the message of salvation. People only need to repeat this sinners prayer or someone will pray it on behalf of you and then you are saved. This is absolute rubbish and without any truth. I first have to realise that I am a sinner and that I need a saviour, then have to understand what the love of Jesus and the Father is, and then believe that He has already paid the price for my sins. I need to trust Him for salvation, not a quick 10 second prayer. John gives us some insight into salvation. **"Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.** We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love. We love, because He first loved us. **If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen.** And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also." (1Jn 4:15-21)

There are so many preachers that preach the message of the whore today, preachers that will take you on if you dare to mention that you must change your ways to be acceptable to the LORD. You must stop with your sinful life, you cannot continue on the road that you were on before you met your Maker, there must be sanctification. Jesus said the following through Peter: **"Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY."** 1Pe 1:13-16)

When you talk to the leaders of these congregations you get shunned by them because you rose up against their authority. If you do not agree with the rapture lie, you are on your way to hell according to them. Unfortunately the Bible is the one that declares that the antichrist is the one that does not see Jesus as the Messiah. **"For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist. Watch yourselves, that you do not lose what we have accomplished, but that you may receive a full reward."** (2Jn 1:7-8) **With their support of Israel and the Jews these people side themselves with the antichrist and becomes one with the whore.**

Read through Addendum 2 to see what it means to be a Christian. If you do not agree, you could end up as part of the whore, or if you do not teach it yourself, part of Zidon and Tyre, which I wrote about earlier in this book. Jesus said the following: **"So the last shall be first, and the first last, for many are called, and few chosen."** (Mat 20:16)

Paul wrote the following to Timothy: *“For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. But flee from these things, you man of God, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness. Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who testified the good confession before Pontius Pilate, that you keep the commandment without stain or reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which He will bring about at the proper time--He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen. Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy. Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed. O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you, avoiding worldly and empty chatter and the opposing arguments of what is falsely called “knowledge”-- which some have professed and thus gone astray from the faith. Grace be with you.”* (1Ti 6:10-21)

Most of the people who find themselves part of the whore will be in Paradise in Egypt, Assyria, Zidon and Tyre. They do not understand baptism or repentance, and yet they find themselves as teachers. *“But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. For some men, straying from these things, have turned aside to fruitless discussion, wanting to be teachers of the Law, even though they do not understand either what they are saying or the matters about which they make confident assertions.”* (1Ti 1:5-7)

Should you find yourself in one of these types of congregations, you will have to make the choice of staying with a teacher who does not bring the truth, or go to a congregation where it is taught correctly, or maybe ask the Holy Spirit to teach you in all things. The choice is yours. Just remember how John describes the bride in chapter 19: *“It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.”* (Rev 19:8) So if you are not taught that your deeds will follow you after your death, think again and go to a congregation that preaches sanctification.

I have included a number of verses mentioning sanctification. *“(Rom 6:19) I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification. (Rom 6:22) But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life. (1Co 1:30) But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, (2Co 7:1) Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. (1Th 4:3) For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality; (1Th 4:4) that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, (1Th 4:7) For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification. (2Th 2:13) But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. (Heb 12:14) Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord. (1Pe 1:2) according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure.*

Do not let there be any misunderstanding. There are numerous good shepherds and beautiful congregations. All I want you to do is to measure the message you hear to the right Biblical standards. That is how it was done even in the time of Paul. *"The brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so. Therefore many of them believed, along with a number of prominent Greek women and men."* (Act 17:10-12)

At this point I would like to highlight a couple of verses of this chapter. *"Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you saints and apostles and prophets, because God has pronounced judgment for you against her." Then a strong angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, "So will Babylon, the great city, be thrown down with violence, and will not be found any longer. "And the sound of harpists and musicians and flute-players and trumpeters will not be heard in you any longer; and no craftsman of any craft will be found in you any longer; and the sound of a mill will not be heard in you any longer;"* (Rev 18:20-22). We find here that the so-called Gospel music industry that uses their talents according to their own will for the LORD, is actually part of the whore. We find a similar section in the book of Amos: *"I hate, I reject your festivals, Nor do I delight in your solemn assemblies. "Even though you offer up to Me burnt offerings and your grain offerings, I will not accept them; And I will not even look at the peace offerings of your fatlings. "Take away from Me the noise of your songs; I will not even listen to the sound of your harps."* (Amo 5:21-23)

But why does it happen? For the answer we have to go back to the time of Moses to find the answer. *"Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took their respective firepans, and after putting fire in them, placed incense on it and offered strange fire before the LORD, which He had not commanded them. And fire came out from the presence of the LORD and consumed them, and they died before the LORD. Then Moses said to Aaron, "It is what the LORD spoke, saying, 'By those who come near Me I will be treated as holy, And before all the people I will be honored.'" So Aaron, therefore, kept silent"* (Lev 10:1-3)

We have to ensure that we do not bring strange fire before the LORD. Things like chanting, where two or three lines are repeated endlessly, at times up to 10 minutes long with our full psychedelic effects as it will "bring" you into the presence of the LORD. No that is strange fire. You cannot think that you can take your talents to reach people for the LORD, no, they have to hear the message of redemption, and that is what we are all called for. We have to make disciples and not followers of this or that musician or group. That is acting like Aaron's sons.

ISAIAH AND OTHER PROPHETS WITH THEIR DESCRIPTION OF THE WHORE

Isaiah and his view of the whore is as follows: *"Unless the LORD of hosts Had left us a few survivors, We would be like Sodom, We would be like Gomorrah. Hear the word of the LORD, You rulers of Sodom; Give ear to the instruction of our God, You people of Gomorrah. "What are your multiplied sacrifices to Me?" Says the LORD. "I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams And the fat of fed cattle; And I take no pleasure in the blood of bulls, lambs or goats. "When you come to appear before Me, Who requires of you this trampling of My courts? "Bring your worthless offerings no longer, Incense is an abomination to Me. New moon and sabbath, the calling of assemblies-- I cannot endure iniquity and the solemn assembly. "I hate your new moon festivals and your appointed feasts, They have become a burden to Me; I am weary of bearing them. "So when you spread out your hands in prayer, I will hide My eyes from you; Yes, even though you multiply prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are covered with blood. "Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; Remove the evil of your deeds from My sight. Cease to do evil, Learn to do good; Seek justice, Reprove the ruthless, Defend the orphan, Plead for the widow. "Come now, and let us reason together," Says the*

LORD, "Though your sins are as scarlet, They will be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They will be like wool. "If you consent and obey, You will eat the best of the land; "But if you refuse and rebel, You will be devoured by the sword." Truly, the mouth of the LORD has spoken. How the faithful city has become a harlot, She who was full of justice! Righteousness once lodged in her, But now murderers. Your silver has become dross, Your drink diluted with water. Your rulers are rebels And companions of thieves; Everyone loves a bribe And chases after rewards. They do not defend the orphan, Nor does the widow's plea come before them. Therefore the Lord GOD of hosts, The Mighty One of Israel, declares, "Ah, I will be relieved of My adversaries And avenge Myself on My foes. "I will also turn My hand against you, And will smelt away your dross as with lye And will remove all your alloy. "Then I will restore your judges as at the first, And your counselors as at the beginning; After that you will be called the city of righteousness, A faithful city." Zion will be redeemed with justice And her repentant ones with righteousness. But transgressors and sinners will be crushed together, And those who forsake the LORD will come to an end. Surely you will be ashamed of the oaks which you have desired, And you will be embarrassed at the gardens which you have chosen. For you will be like an oak whose leaf fades away Or as a garden that has no water. The strong man will become tinder, His work also a spark. Thus they shall both burn together And there will be none to quench them." (Isa 1:9-31)

This again states that there is nothing we can do to save ourselves. The LORD expects of us to trust Him to take our sins away, but then we will have to change our ways. He has no need for our gatherings and for us to trust on our gatherings to get ourselves saved. No, He expects obedience.

John tells us also what the difference is between the whore and the Church. **"See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure. Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness. You know that He appeared in order to take away sins; and in Him there is no sin. No one who abides in Him sins; no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him. Little children, make sure no one deceives you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous; the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil. No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother. For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another; not as Cain, who was of the evil one and slew his brother. And for what reason did he slay him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brother's were righteous. Do not be surprised, brethren, if the world hates you. We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death. Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth. We will know by this that we are of the truth, and will assure our heart before Him in whatever our heart condemns us; for God is greater than our heart and knows all things. Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God; and whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight. This is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us. The one who keeps His commandments abides in Him,**

and He in him. We know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.”
(1Jn 3:1-24)

I do not want to judge any person, but if you have not reached the point in life where you thank the LORD for everything in your life, you could end up as part of the whore. Everything you are and everything you have is a gift from above, and is there to test you if you are going to use it for yourself, or if you are willing to share it with your neighbour. It does not matter which group you support. Love covers many sins, and without love you cannot be part of the bride.

Now everything that John sees now is happening to those who form part of the whore. **We as the real bride will be with Jesus in Paradise and will not go through these judgements** as these judgements are meted out against the whore.

We now see the vision of the whore, and we find that most kings of the earth, the leaders of the churches, as they contaminated themselves with the whore. I wonder how many people actually know that when two people have intercourse, that everything including your and the other persons sins, becomes part of you. And that is why this is happening. The leaders saw that some teachings attracted multitudes of people to other congregations, and then they follow suit in order to up their numbers and of course their income. So even if some of the doctrines are not really 100% correct, they will follow these doctrines as it brings people to their churches, and ups their income.

Ezekiel gives us a different look at the whore. *“Son of man, there were two women, the daughters of one mother; and they played the harlot in Egypt. They played the harlot in their youth; there their breasts were pressed and there their virgin bosom was handled. Their names were Oholah the elder and Oholibah her sister. And they became Mine, and they bore sons and daughters. And as for their names, Samaria is Oholah and Jerusalem is Oholibah. Oholah played the harlot while she was Mine; and she lusted after her lovers, after the Assyrians, her neighbors, who were clothed in purple, governors and officials, all of them desirable young men, horsemen riding on horses. She bestowed her harlotries on them, all of whom were the choicest men of Assyria; and with all whom she lusted after, with all their idols she defiled herself. She did not forsake her harlotries from the time in Egypt; for in her youth men had lain with her, and they handled her virgin bosom and poured out their lust on her. Therefore, I gave her into the hand of her lovers, into the hand of the Assyrians, after whom she lusted. They uncovered her nakedness; they took her sons and her daughters, but they slew her with the sword. Thus she became a byword among women, and they executed judgments on her. Now her sister Oholibah saw this, yet she was more corrupt in her lust than she, and her harlotries were more than the harlotries of her sister. She lusted after the Assyrians, governors and officials, the ones near, magnificently dressed, horsemen riding on horses, all of them desirable young men. I saw that she had defiled herself; they both took the same way. So she increased her harlotries. And she saw men portrayed on the wall, images of the Chaldeans portrayed with vermilion, girded with belts on their loins, with flowing turbans on their heads, all of them looking like officers, like the Babylonians in Chaldea, the land of their birth. When she saw them she lusted after them and sent messengers to them in Chaldea. The Babylonians came to her to the bed of love and defiled her with their harlotry. And when she had been defiled by them, she became disgusted with them. She uncovered her harlotries and uncovered her nakedness; then I became disgusted with her, as I had become disgusted with her sister. Yet she multiplied her harlotries, remembering the days of her youth, when she played the harlot in the land of Egypt. She lusted after their paramours, whose flesh is like the flesh of donkeys and whose issue is like the issue of horses. Thus you longed for the lewdness of your youth, when the Egyptians handled your bosom because of the breasts of your youth. Therefore, O Oholibah, thus says the Lord GOD, Behold I will arouse your lovers against you, from whom you were alienated, and I will bring them against you from every side: the Babylonians and all the Chaldeans, Pekod and Shoa and Koa, and all the Assyrians with them; desirable young men, governors and officials all of them, officers and*

men of renown, all of them riding on horses. They will come against you with weapons, chariots and wagons, and with a company of peoples. They will set themselves against you on every side with buckler and shield and helmet; and I will commit the judgment to them, and they will judge you according to their customs. I will set My jealousy against you, that they may deal with you in wrath. They will remove your nose and your ears; and your survivors will fall by the sword. They will take your sons and your daughters; and your survivors will be consumed by the fire. They will also strip you of your clothes and take away your beautiful jewels. Thus I will make your lewdness and your harlotry brought from the land of Egypt to cease from you, so that you will not lift up your eyes to them or remember Egypt anymore.' "For thus says the Lord GOD, 'Behold, I will give you into the hand of those whom you hate, into the hand of those from whom you were alienated. They will deal with you in hatred, take all your property, and leave you naked and bare. And the nakedness of your harlotries will be uncovered, both your lewdness and your harlotries. These things will be done to you because you have played the harlot with the nations, because you have defiled yourself with their idols. You have walked in the way of your sister; therefore I will give her cup into your hand.' "Thus says the Lord GOD, 'You will drink your sister's cup, Which is deep and wide. You will be laughed at and held in derision; It contains much. You will be filled with drunkenness and sorrow, The cup of horror and desolation, The cup of your sister Samaria. You will drink it and drain it. Then you will gnaw its fragments And tear your breasts; for I have spoken,' declares the Lord GOD. "Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD, 'Because you have forgotten Me and cast Me behind your back, bear now the punishment of your lewdness and your harlotries.'" Moreover, the LORD said to me, "Son of man, will you judge Oholah and Oholibah? Then declare to them their abominations. For they have committed adultery, and blood is on their hands. Thus they have committed adultery with their idols and even caused their sons, whom they bore to Me, to pass through the fire to them as food. Again, they have done this to Me: they have defiled My sanctuary on the same day and have profaned My sabbaths. For when they had slaughtered their children for their idols, they entered My sanctuary on the same day to profane it; and lo, thus they did within My house. Furthermore, they have even sent for men who come from afar, to whom a messenger was sent; and lo, they came--for whom you bathed, painted your eyes and decorated yourselves with ornaments; and you sat on a splendid couch with a table arranged before it on which you had set My incense and My oil. The sound of a carefree multitude was with her; and drunkards were brought from the wilderness with men of the common sort. And they put bracelets on the hands of the women and beautiful crowns on their heads. Then I said concerning her who was worn out by adulteries, 'Will they now commit adultery with her when she is thus?' But they went in to her as they would go in to a harlot. Thus they went in to Oholah and to Oholibah, the lewd women. But they, righteous men, will judge them with the judgment of adulteresses and with the judgment of women who shed blood, because they are adulteresses and blood is on their hands. For thus says the Lord GOD, 'Bring up a company against them and give them over to terror and plunder. The company will stone them with stones and cut them down with their swords; they will slay their sons and their daughters and burn their houses with fire. Thus I will make lewdness cease from the land, that all women may be admonished and not commit lewdness as you have done. Your lewdness will be requited upon you, and you will bear the penalty of worshiping your idols; thus you will know that I am the Lord GOD.'" (Eze 23:2-49)

We find again the example method used in this message from Ezekiel. It is extremely interesting as it depicts two sisters, Oholah the older of the two and Oholibah. The meanings of these two names are as follows from the ISBE: "The exact meaning is a matter of dispute. As written, it seems to mean a tent-woman, or the woman living in a tent. With a mappik in the last consonant it could mean "her tent." The term is used symbolically by Ezekiel to designate Samaria or the kingdom of Israel. There is a play upon the words in the Hebrew which cannot be reproduced in English Both Oholah and Oholibah, or Samaria and Jerusalem, are the daughters of one mother, and wives of Yahweh, and both are guilty of religious and political alliance with heathen nations. Idolatry is constantly compared by the Hebrew prophets to marital unfaithfulness or adultery." So

the elder sister represents the old covenant where Israel had a physical place of worship, while the younger sisters name means the tent in us, or that our bodies become a temple of the LORD, the new covenant. The story line tells us that the LORD had His tabernacle as a physical place of worship, but in spite of this Israel had intercourse with all the heathen gods. Now the second sister, the Church, as the LORD now comes to live inside each of us, knows what happened to the older sister, Israel, but still does exactly the same. She also has intercourse with all the heathen gods. All we have to do is look at the news daily to see how theologians and members of church fall into a ritual that has to be followed, a worship without any power. Then we are told that the LORD will not judge us as He will not interfere with our lifestyles. That the whole story surrounding the Satan has to be studied as it is made up by man. This is why the LORD will judge the whore, and that the whore is alive and well in our own congregations.

Isaiah continues on his description of the whore. *"And He will judge between the nations, And will render decisions for many peoples; And they will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, And never again will they learn war. Come, house of Jacob, and let us walk in the light of the LORD. For You have abandoned Your people, the house of Jacob, Because they are filled with influences from the east, And they are soothsayers like the Philistines, And they strike bargains with the children of foreigners. Their land has also been filled with silver and gold And there is no end to their treasures; Their land has also been filled with horses And there is no end to their chariots. Their land has also been filled with idols; They worship the work of their hands, That which their fingers have made. So the common man has been humbled And the man of importance has been abased, But do not forgive them. Enter the rock and hide in the dust From the terror of the LORD and from the splendor of His majesty. The proud look of man will be abased And the loftiness of man will be humbled, And the LORD alone will be exalted in that day. For the LORD of hosts will have a day of reckoning Against everyone who is proud and lofty And against everyone who is lifted up, That he may be abased. And it will be against all the cedars of Lebanon that are lofty and lifted up, Against all the oaks of Bashan, Against all the lofty mountains, Against all the hills that are lifted up, Against every high tower, Against every fortified wall, Against all the ships of Tarshish And against all the beautiful craft. The pride of man will be humbled And the loftiness of men will be abased; And the LORD alone will be exalted in that day, But the idols will completely vanish. Men will go into caves of the rocks And into holes of the ground Before the terror of the LORD And the splendor of His majesty, When He arises to make the earth tremble. In that day men will cast away to the moles and the bats Their idols of silver and their idols of gold, Which they made for themselves to worship, In order to go into the caverns of the rocks and the clefts of the cliffs Before the terror of the LORD and the splendor of His majesty, When He arises to make the earth tremble. Stop regarding man, whose breath of life is in his nostrils; For why should he be esteemed?"* (Isa 2:4-22)

This tells us why these judgements will come over the whore, as they did not exalt the Father and Jesus Christ as the bridegroom. Only then will we understand why the prophets of old always used different nations to describe the judgements that churches belong to will undergo. Then we will understand the parables that Jesus used, like the one with the ten maidens where only five entered into the feast with the bridegroom.

This is what these chapters of Revelation is all about. It is there for us as a help to discern between what is right and what is wrong, what will make me part of the bride and what will make me part of the whore. *"These have one purpose, and they give their power and authority to the beast. These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful."* And he said to me, *"The waters which you saw where the harlot sits, are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues. And the ten horns which you saw, and the*

beast, these will hate the harlot and will make her desolate and naked, and will eat her flesh and will burn her up with fire. "For God has put it in their hearts to execute His purpose by having a common purpose, and by giving their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God will be fulfilled. "The woman whom you saw is the great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth." (Rev 17:13-18)

*"After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illumined with his glory. And he cried out with a mighty voice, saying, **"Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place of demons and a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird. "For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the passion of her immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed acts of immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich by the wealth of her sensuality." I heard another voice from heaven, saying, "Come out of her, my people, so that you will not participate in her sins and receive of her plagues; for her sins have piled up as high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities. "Pay her back even as she has paid, and give back to her double according to her deeds; in the cup which she has mixed, mix twice as much for her. "To the degree that she glorified herself and lived sensuously, to the same degree give her torment and mourning; for she says in her heart, 'I SIT as A QUEEN AND I AM NOT A WIDOW, and will never see mourning.'Then a strong angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, "So will Babylon, the great city, be thrown down with violence, and will not be found any longer. "And the sound of harpists and musicians and flute-players and trumpeters will not be heard in you any longer; and no craftsman of any craft will be found in you any longer; and the sound of a mill will not be heard in you any longer; and the light of a lamp will not shine in you any longer; and the voice of the bridegroom and bride will not be heard in you any longer; for your merchants were the great men of the earth, because all the nations were deceived by your sorcery. "And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints and of all who have been slain on the earth." (Rev 18:1-24)***

Fortunately there are also words of comfort for us as bride written down by Isaiah: ***“Awake, awake, Clothe yourself in your strength, O Zion; Clothe yourself in your beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city; For the uncircumcised and the unclean Will no longer come into you.”*** (Isa 52:1)

CHAPTER SIXTEEN – REVELATION 19 - BACK IN THE THRONE ROOM

*"After these things I heard something like a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, 'Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God; BECAUSE HIS JUDGMENTS ARE TRUE AND RIGHTEOUS; for He has judged the great harlot who was corrupting the earth with her immorality, and HE HAS AVENGED THE BLOOD OF HIS BOND-SERVANTS ON HER.' And a second time they said, 'Hallelujah! HER SMOKE RISES UP FOREVER AND EVER.' And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sits on the throne saying, 'Amen. Hallelujah!'" And a voice came from the throne, saying, "Give praise to our God, all you His bond-servants, you who fear Him, the small and the great." Then I heard something like the voice of a great multitude and like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns. "Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready." It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. Then he *said to me, "Write, 'Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'" And he *said to me, "These are true words of God." (Rev 19:1-9)*

The scene now changes back to the throne room and we find the 24 elders together with a multitude of people worshipping the LORD, and they see that the beast has been overcome. Everybody is bringing thanks to the LORD as the whore and all who had intercourse with her, have been destroyed. The enemy of the LORD does not exist anymore. ***"Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready." It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. Then he *said to me, "Write, 'Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'" And he *said to me, "These are true words of God." (Rev 19:7-9)***

I now have a very pertinent question for you as reader. What will your clothes look like on that day when you appear before Jesus as part of the bride? John says the people are covered with fine linen, or are you going to appear naked? Jesus used the following parable: *"To one he gave five talents, to another, two, and to another, one, each according to his own ability; and he went on his journey. "Immediately the one who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and gained five more talents. "In the same manner the one who had received the two talents gained two more. "But he who received the one talent went away, and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. " (Mat 25:15-18) "The one who had received the five talents came up and brought five more talents, saying, 'Master, you entrusted five talents to me. See, I have gained five more talents.' "His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'" (Mat 25:20-21) "Therefore take away the talent from him, and give it to the one who has the ten talents.' "For to everyone who has, more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away. "Throw out the worthless slave into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Mat 25:28-30)*

Then the following parable starts. *"But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. "All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. "Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. 'For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you*

invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.' "Then the righteous will answer Him, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You something to drink? 'And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? 'When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' "The King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.'" (Mat 25:31-40)

What happens to those that did not do as commanded to do? *"Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink; I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.' "Then they themselves also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?' "Then He will answer them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.' "These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life." (Mat 25:41-46)*

So what does your garment look like? Paul puts it as follows: *"But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who WILL RENDER TO EACH PERSON ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS: to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation. There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek, but glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek." (Rom 2:5-10)*

We now know that we are welcome as part of the bride of Christ, when we will forever be united with Him in wedlock.

"And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war. His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself. He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds which fly in midheaven, "Come, assemble for the great supper of God, so that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free men and slaves, and small and great." And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies assembled to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone. And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh." (Rev 19:11-21)

We now find the final glimpse of Jesus and the judgement over the whore, those that still clung to their own religion. We see His clothes are dripping in blood, and it is confirmed again that His name is "The Word of God". This again confirms Isaiah 63. *"Who is this who comes from Edom, With garments of glowing colors from Bozrah, This One who is majestic in His apparel, Marching in the greatness of His strength? "It is I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save." Why is Your*

*apparel red, And Your garments like the one who treads in the wine press? "I have trodden the wine trough alone, And from the peoples there was no man with Me. **I also trod them in My anger And trampled them in My wrath; And their lifeblood is sprinkled on My garments, And I stained all My raiment. "For the day of vengeance was in My heart, And My year of redemption has come.** "I looked, and there was no one to help, And I was astonished and there was no one to uphold; So My own arm brought salvation to Me, And My wrath upheld Me. "I trod down the peoples in My anger And made them drunk in My wrath, And I poured out their lifeblood on the earth." (Isa 63:1-6) The writer of Psalms 75 sees it as follows: "For not from the east, nor from the west, Nor from the desert comes exaltation; But God is the Judge; He puts down one and exalts another. For a cup is in the hand of the LORD, and the wine foams; It is well mixed, and He pours out of this; Surely all the wicked of the earth must drain and drink down its dregs." (Psa 75:6-8)*

This chapter ends with the following words: *"And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies assembled to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone. And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh." (Rev 19:19-21)*

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN – REVELATION 20 – THE BOOK OF LIFE AND THE MILLENNIAL REIGN OF CHRIST

John is now shown that the Satan is locked up for a thousand years. So we now know that he will never have any authority over us or will be any distraction for us. The next time we will see him again is when the final judgement will be passed over him and his followers. Ezekiel also describes this event: *“Son of man, set your face toward Gog of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I am against you, O Gog, prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal. **I will turn you about and put hooks into your jaws, and I will bring you out, and all your army, horses and horsemen, all of them splendidly attired, a great company with buckler and shield, all of them wielding swords; Persia, Ethiopia and Put with them, all of them with shield and helmet; Gomer with all its troops; Beth-togarmah from the remote parts of the north with all its troops--many peoples with you. "Be prepared, and prepare yourself, you and all your companies that are assembled about you, and be a guard for them. "After many days you will be summoned; in the latter years you will come into the land that is restored from the sword, whose inhabitants have been gathered from many nations to the mountains of Israel which had been a continual waste; but its people were brought out from the nations, and they are living securely, all of them. "You will go up, you will come like a storm; you will be like a cloud covering the land, you and all your troops, and many peoples with you." 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "It will come about on that day, that thoughts will come into your mind and you will devise an evil plan, and you will say, 'I will go up against the land of unwalled villages. I will go against those who are at rest, that live securely, all of them living without walls and having no bars or gates, to capture spoil and to seize plunder, to turn your hand against the waste places which are now inhabited, and against the people who are gathered from the nations, who have acquired cattle and goods, who live at the center of the world.'”*** (Eze 38:2-12)

Who will reign with Christ during this time of peace? *“Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. **And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.**”* (Rev 20:4-6) Do you know that these are the same people that were told in Revelation 2 that they will reign with Him? *“**He who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, TO HIM I WILL GIVE AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS; AND HE SHALL RULE THEM WITH A ROD OF IRON, AS THE VESSELS OF THE POTTER ARE BROKEN TO PIECES, as I also have received authority from My Father; and I will give him the morning star.**”* (Rev 2:26-28) This is our calling. To prepare ourselves as rulers. But, how can I rule here if I cannot rule over sin in my life? If I do not know the difference between right and wrong? That is our calling, to teach people the difference between right and wrong. But that is not the only experience we will have. We will also find that when the book of Life is opened, the other book of Revelation 5, our names will be written in this book.

John now takes us back to the scene of chapter 4 and 5. The book that only Jesus was able to open has now been dealt with, and we know what judgements people will face and why their names will not be found in the book of life. John now sees another book with Jesus, one that has been there with the book of judgements, and this book contains the names of the people who will be the bride.

“The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.” (Rev 20:5-6) These are really fantastic words to hear, that those who form part of the bride, will not face the second death, the eternal hell. This also serves as an inspiration for us daily, that we must live a life that glorifies Jesus every day, so that people will see Jesus in and through us. We are called to be priests and kings to rule with Him, That is our calling. But, we have to live a life of sanctification daily.

“When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore. And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them. And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.” (Rev 20:7-10) I quoted Ezekiel’s version earlier in the book, and now we find Johns’ version. That Satan and his army will be let loose again, but that their end will be in the pit of fire for ever.

We find that the scene shifts to the other book that is with Jesus, the one containing the names of those who will be with Him in His kingdom, forever and ever. *“Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. **And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.** And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.”* (Rev 20:11-15)

We see that each person will be judged according to his or hers own deeds. That we will be judged whether we exhibited the life of a disciple or not. Death and Hades are then thrown into the lake of fire, never to come back from there. So my prayer is that you will ensure that your name will be found in the book of life in order to spend eternity with Him and the other saints. That we will be able to see the New Jerusalem and be with Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and God the Father, forever.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN - REVELATION 21 AND 22 - THE NEW JERUSALEM

John now describes what we will inherit. *"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, and **He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.**" And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He *said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true." Then He said to me, "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost. "He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son." (Rev 21:1-7)*

So the New Jerusalem will not be on this earth, but a new city, or as Ezekiel sees it, a new Temple, the dwelling place of LORD God almighty, that is now described for us. He confirms again that no unbeliever will ever be found in this city. This place is what is prepared for us, the bride. Death will never be found in there, nor sorrow, and He will dry our tears when we think of those that did not abide in His Word. We will be with God forever and ever.

Then follows probably the scripture that I am sure every Christian would like to hear: **"He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son".**

The angel now asks John to follow him, as there is still one vision that he has to see.

" Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, "Come here, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb." And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God. Her brilliance was like a very costly stone, as a stone of crystal-clear jasper." (Rev 21:9-11) This is the vision of what the bride will look like, unmatched by anything anyone has ever seen. Everything that is precious for us on earth currently, will be available abundantly in the New Jerusalem, the dwelling place of the LORD.

"It had a great and high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names were written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel. There were three gates on the east and three gates on the north and three gates on the south and three gates on the west. And the wall of the city had twelve foundation stones, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. The one who spoke with me had a gold measuring rod to measure the city, and its gates and its wall. The city is laid out as a square, and its length is as great as the width; and he measured the city with the rod, fifteen hundred miles; its length and width and height are equal. And he measured its wall, seventy-two yards, according to human measurements, which are also angelic measurements. The material of the wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. The foundation stones of the city wall were adorned with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation stone was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was a single pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass. I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb. The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the

earth will bring their glory into it. In the daytime (for there will be no night there) its gates will never be closed; and they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it; and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.” (Rev 21:12-27)

We read here that there will be twelve gates, each with the name of an Apostle on it. So it will no longer be known as the town of the twelve tribes of Israel, as that era has finally passed and came to an end. People entering will not be known as Jews any more, as the gospel was preached by the twelve Apostles. We also read that all the nations will be gathered there, so all the various groupings of Christians will be in the New Jerusalem. It will also not contain a temple any longer, as the need for a place to bring sacrifices will not be required. No sin will ever be found in it. *“and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it”*. So every person in the New Jerusalem will be perfect, as only they will be allowed to enter and exit.

The description of the New Jerusalem does not need any further describing, as everything and everyone inside it will be holy and just.

Chapter 22 embroiders even further about this city. *“Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the middle of its street. On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him; they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads. And there will no longer be any night; and they will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them; and they will reign forever and ever.” (Rev 22:1-5)*

Just imagine that everything you will ever need will be available in abundance. Pure water, so the Holy Spirit will be available to every person. Water is the workings of the Holy Spirit, so it will quench our thirst to know Jesus and the Father. The trees will bear fruit year round, and nothing there will have no need. Ezekiel describe the trees as follows: *“By the river on its bank, on one side and on the other, will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither and their fruit will not fail. They will bear every month because their water flows from the sanctuary, and their fruit will be for food and their leaves for healing.” (Eze 47:12)* Every part of the trees will have a purpose. Even the leaves will insure that we will always have His righteousness.

We will also receive His name on our forehead, so our thoughts will be with Him always. Everything will be as clear as daylight, as no darkness will be found, and the fullness of the LORD will be with us forever.

Only now does John get the reason for what he was shown from chapter 1 onwards. *“And he said to me, “These words are faithful and true”; and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, **sent His angel to show to His bond-servants the things which must soon take place.** “And behold, I am coming quickly. Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book.” (Rev 22:6-7)* So John had to write it down in order that no person will ever have the excuse that they did not know.

*“And he *said to me, “Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near. **Let the one who does wrong, still do wrong; and the one who is filthy, still be filthy; and let the one who is righteous, still practice righteousness; and the one who is holy, still keep himself holy.**” “Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done. “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.” **Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city.** Outside are the dogs and the sorcerers and*

the immoral persons and the murderers and the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying. "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star." The Spirit and the bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost". (Rev 22:10-17)

We are now also taught that the words of the book should not be sealed, in order for every person to have access to it. And we will still get people in our day and age that will not heed to this message, and the LORD says let them sin even more, but that we will also find people who are holy, and still try to become holier. The choice is yours.

John is also told that no one must be allowed to remove any part of this book or add anything to what he saw. A large number of people use this to pertain to all the books of the Bible as it was already decided which books should be in the Bible. But which Bible do you use as yours, the one composed by the Roman Catholic Church or the one of the Ethiopian Church? Or maybe the one you compose yourself that only contain the books that you read? So the book of Revelation tells us what has happened already, and what will be in the future.

The question I would like to end with is: What is your choice? What do you believe? Do you build your faith on your statement of faith, or what the Bible teaches?

"He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming quickly." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen." (Rev 22:20-21)

DONATIONS / DONASIES

We are trying to raise funds to buy a vehicle in order for us to be able to get to the shops 60 km away on our own. We lost our car due to what I would call absolutely bad service from a person at a Volvo dealership who would not let us use our warrantee when I had to get someone to stop a water leak from the air conditioner into the driver side footwell. I was told when I took it in to get fixed that I should have used a MIF accredited dealer of which there apparently was two that I could have used. They were Tiger Wheel and Tyre and SupaQuick. Now I do not know how someone who fits tyres could work as a workshop to temporarily fix my car 120 km from the agent. So I ended up giving the car back to the bank when even after paying out of my own pocket to get the car working after it blew a gasket originally after the temporary fix, the same thing happened while driving it six months later and blowing the top gasket again. So I referred Nedbank to Volvo Eastern Cape and that was the end of the story. But it left me without a car, as I am totally disabled due to NET cancer.

I would also like to say that all my savings for my retirement went down the drain due to Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) which is a racially inclusive programme launched by the South African government to redress the inequalities of apartheid by giving black people (African, Coloureds and Indians) South African citizens economic privileges that were taken away from Whites. As I am white I could not continue with my business and when you are dismissed at 49 years old, your savings only last for a few years, especially when it was used it to start my own business and was stopped for a second time when I was told that I could not continue my business on my own and I had to use consultants that my clients wanted which would have bankrupted me within six months.

So now after 23 years after being diagnosed the first time with NET cancer and nearly six years after having had to stop working all together as my condition has deteriorated to a point where I cannot leave home without a wheelchair, we would like to get an older car, before electronics, that we can use to move around.

So our aim is to raise around R45,000 or \$ 3,000 to be able to achieve this. I was hoping by making my books available for free on my website that it would supply us with an income, but now ten years after starting it I have only received 1 donation of R50 (\$3) despite the fact that more than 1000 books are downloaded on a monthly basis. I also designed and made calendars available to our worldwide NET cancer community which has now been downloaded more that 1000 per annum without any donation.

You can either donate on our website which will accept funds in US \$ up to a maximum of around \$ 600, or at our donation page at Payfast which will allow you to donate in ZAR.

The links are: US Dollars: <http://shamaministries.org.za/wp/shop/>

South African Rands: <https://www.payfast.co.za/donate/go/shamaministries>

INTRODUCTION

Prof. Johan Malan was appointed as **professor of anthropology at the University of the North** (Limpopo). So he is not a professor in biblical studies or any other religious subjects, and also not a member of any theological faculties at any university. He and those promoting his ideas and articles, **use his title to influence people and for them to think that he is a theologian, which he is not.**

This is an example of how the Antichrist works, and the way he uses people to do his job for him. The Apostle John told us in his writings that the Antichrist was already at work during his time. So anyone saying that the Antichrist is yet to come is promoting a false doctrine and in this way does the work of Satan for him. ***“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world. You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world. They are from the world; therefore they speak as from the world, and the world listens to them.”*** (1Jn 4:1-5)

I can only find reference to an Old Covenant and New Covenant in the Bible, and this is the way the Bible is divided up also. There is an Old Covenant where animals were sacrificed as sin offerings, and then a New Covenant where Jesus was the complete offering for all sin. Read through the book of Hebrews as it details the covenant in every aspect.

The following is his writings and what he believes in and people use to explain the dispensationalist standpoint. This writing is based on the original work of Darby and Scofield, the originators of this heresy. This then is a summary of their teachings.

THE DISPENSATIONS OF GOD – DO YOU HAVE THE CORRECT PERSPECTIVE?

There is a progressive revelation of God and His plan for the ages in human history on earth since Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden until the end of time when humanity will reach its final destination. Seven clear dispensations can be distinguished in the counsel of God, and they are characterised by increasing knowledge of good and evil. As the dispensations follow one another, greater clarity is obtained on the kingdom of Christ which will be revealed in all its glory and splendour at His second coming. At the same time, more detail is given on the opposing kingdom of darkness which will be revealed in all its evil depravity at the time of the coming of the Antichrist.

Although there are certain timeless principles which remain the same in all seven dispensations, e.g. God’s righteousness and His abhorrence of sin, there are also new principles which are introduced to every new dispensation. These differences are often so important that a custom which was highly regarded in one dispensation, e.g. circumcision in the Old Testament, is described as an act of betrayal of Christ during the subsequent dispensation. Paul said to the legalistic Galatians: “I say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing” (Gal. 5:2).

The seven dispensations in God’s plan of salvation for humanity are the following:

1. THE DISPENSATION OF INNOCENCE

The very first dispensation in which Adam and Eve found themselves was that of innocence in Eden as they had no knowledge of good and evil. God had forbidden them to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and warned that they would surely die should they eat of its fruit (Gen. 2:17). With great cunning Satan deceived Adam and Eve to rebel against God by disobeying Him (Gen. 3:1-5). They foolishly heeded Satan's advice and yielded to his evil influence, thus becoming sinners. Not only did they become aware of the distinction between good and evil but they also became victims of evil. Spiritual death immediately set in, while they also physically became mortal beings. The original sin of our first parents gave rise to a fallen, sinful nature which was inherited by all their descendants (Rom. 5:12). This situation can only be changed by a spiritual rebirth. The dispensation of innocence ended with the Fall, leading to the eviction of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden.

2. THE DISPENSATION OF THE CONSCIENCE

For a long time after the Fall humanity had no laws and could only distinguish between good and evil by way of the voice of conscience. In spite of this innate knowledge Cain preferred to sin (Gen. 4:7-8). Various other people pursued righteousness in accordance with their inner convictions and whatever personal revelations God gave them. Some of them, like Abel, Enoch, and Noah, became preachers of righteousness. At times during this dispensation evil was so intense and pervasive that God's anger was kindled against humankind. During the Flood all but eight people were destroyed.

3. THE DISPENSATION OF HUMAN GOVERNMENT AFTER THE FLOOD

After the Flood God concluded a covenant with Noah (Gen. 9:1-9) and subsequently held the leaders of family groups responsible for their decisions and the spiritual wellbeing of their followers. According to Romans 13:1 these authorities, or human governments, were instituted by God. Genesis 10 contains a list of Noah's descendants through Shem, Ham and Japheth, who all became heads of extended families which later developed into distinct peoples or nations. When these leaders became involved with idolatry, the whole group followed suit. Abraham was also a patriarch with a large following, but he believed in the Lord and taught his followers to do the same. The consolidation of human governments gave rise to the establishment of the Babylonian world empire which constituted an extreme form of rebellion against the kingdom of God. It formed the basis for apostate government and world empires that followed, but also offered the possibility for the establishment of God-fearing governments.

4. THE DISPENSATION OF THE LAW

With the introduction of the dispensation of the law a much clearer distinction was made between good and evil. Not only in the Ten Commandments, but through a great number of other laws and decrees, God defined righteousness and sin. In this way Israel became better acquainted with God's kingdom *and* the kingdom of Satan. In spite of all the serious warnings they repeatedly worshipped the gods of the heathen nations around them because their inner motivation to serve the Lord was weak. They hardened their hearts and refused to repent to the Lord and to obey His commandments (Jer. 5:3; 23:14; 44:5).

5. THE DISPENSATION OF GRACE (THE CHURCH DISPENSATION)

With the outpouring of the Holy Spirit the church age was ushered in. After the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus the Holy Spirit was poured out to regenerate people and to guide them into all truth. Because He convicts them of sin and righteousness, they have clearer discernment between good and evil. The New Testament reveals to us deeper knowledge of God. The devil and his works are also more extensively revealed (Col. 2:15). We know much more of Satan, his

demons and how they go about to deceive people. Although we have enlightened eyes of the mind (Eph. 1:18) to understand much more about spiritual light and darkness than was the case during preceding dispensations, we still only know in part (1 Cor. 13:9). However, since the divine agape love is the guiding principle of our lives the Holy Spirit enables us to be rooted and grounded in love, to comprehend with all the saints what the width, length and depth of Christ's love is, so we may be filled with all the fullness of God (Eph. 3:16-19). The Holy Spirit imparts the heavenly life of Christ to us. We should decrease so that Christ can increase in our lives (John 3:30).

6. DISPENSATION OF THE ANTICHRIST'S REIGN

When the one who withholds – i.e. the true church indwelt by the Holy Spirit – has been taken out of the way during the rapture, the Antichrist will be revealed (2 Thess. 2:6-12). He will be globally accepted as spiritual and political leader (Rev. 13:3-8). Strong delusion will prevail on earth and the masses will blindly follow and worship the Antichrist. Evil will develop to its fullest extent and there will be no limits to blasphemous and sinful conduct (Rev. 12:12; 13:4). Satan will be worshipped as the god of this world (2 Cor. 4:4). In contradiction to this situation, the true church that will have been removed by way of the rapture will receive glorified resurrection bodies and will fully know all goodness. They will see Jesus Christ face to face and will never again be separated from Him (1 Thess. 4:16-17).

7. THE DISPENSATION OF THE KINGDOM

During the Millennium the true believers will rule with Christ in His kingdom (Rev. 5:10; 20:6). They will have glorified, immortal bodies, fullness of joy and perfect knowledge of God. There will be no more pain, suffering, death or tears. During that time the spiritually restored Israel will proclaim the praises of the Lord everywhere and the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea (Isa. 11:9). Satan will be bound (Rev. 20:2-3) and the righteousness of the Lord will reign supreme everywhere on earth. Harmony and good order will also prevail in nature. This seventh dispensation will eventually be followed by the eternal order of the new heavens and the new earth.

LAW AND GRACE

We are presently in the church dispensation, which is the dispensation of grace. This dispensation was made possible by the atoning death of Jesus on the cross, and started on the day when the Holy Spirit was poured out to convict people of their sin, to regenerate them, fill them and guide them into all truth. Before the crucifixion of Christ the law still applied and people were commanded to observe it. But subsequent to these events people had to come to Christ for salvation and were instructed to walk in the Spirit if they wanted to prevail against sin and the flesh. The Lord Jesus fulfilled all the sacrifices and feasts of the Old Testament, thereby introducing a new dispensation.

It is imperative that we make a clear and complete transition to the dispensation of grace and avoid trying to mix the Old Testament law with the grace of Christ as that would jeopardise our salvation. Paul says, "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes." We are saved only by faith based upon Christ's completed work of grace on the cross. The Holy Spirit, not the law, convicts us of sin, righteousness and judgement. In the New Testament, sin is identified as the works of the sinful flesh, and includes everything that falls short of the righteousness of Christ. Our command is not to be conformed to the law but to the holiness of God as revealed to us by Jesus Christ.

Should we in any way try to supplement our salvation by Old Testament law observance, regardless of whether it is circumcision, Sabbath-keeping or any other law, we will thereby minimise the grace of Christ and even deny the basis of our salvation. Many of the Galatians followed this course and Paul warned against the serious consequences of their actions: “You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace” (Gal. 5:4). This warning refers to people who were already saved by grace, but subsequently nullified their salvation by their legalism.

We too, after our salvation, are not subjected to the law for the upholding of moral standards, but to the principles of God’s grace: “For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace” (Rom. 6:14). The law renders people slaves of sin as it can only convict them of sin but cannot save them from their sins. But when the Holy Spirit convicts us of sin, He leads us to the cross where we can obtain full salvation.

When we are born again we are endowed with the new nature of Christ which is based upon the principles of God’s love and grace. When we completely surrender our lives to the Lord, the Holy Spirit fills our life and richly pours out the love of God in our hearts (Rom. 5:5). When we live in accordance with the demands of God’s love which has graciously been given to us, we have fulfilled the law: “For the commandments, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not bear false witness, you shall not covet, and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, you shall love your neighbour as yourself” (Rom. 13:9).

We are indeed on a higher level than the law since the Holy Spirit convicts us of sins which are not even mentioned in the law. He also promotes Christian virtues to which the law makes no reference, e.g. evangelisation, prayer, the filling of the Holy Spirit, as well as spiritual warfare by putting on the whole armour of God. The love of Christ which was given to us by grace, has its own nature and principles which teach and motivate us to live on a much higher level than was expected from people under the law: “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 Saviour Jesus Christ” (Titus 2:11-13).

The love of Christ is the basic command or principle of life in the New Testament. Jesus said to His disciples: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another” (John 13:34). From this commandment flow various other New Testament commands or instructions, including the Great Command to evangelise the entire world. The commandments of Christ should not be equated with the Old Testament law.

Why would people reduce this sublime life which is lived in the love of the Lord Jesus and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to the shadowy practices of the law? Among the Galatians there were believers who again started observing Old Testament Sabbaths and sabbatical years. Paul said to them: “Now after you have known God... how is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage? You observe days and months and seasons and years. I am afraid for you, lest I have laboured for you in vain” (Gal. 4:9-11).

How can we revert to the shadows of the law if we have its complete fulfilment in the New Testament? Nevertheless, in the early church there were Jews who went around and proclaimed that salvation in the Name of Jesus was not enough – believers also had to observe the Law of Moses to obtain salvation. Shortly after Paul and Barnabas were commissioned in Acts 13 to evangelise the Gentiles, Jews endeavoured to yoke these converts together under the law. This matter also became a serious dispute among the disciples and, according to Acts 15, gave rise to the first meeting of the early church’s synod in Jerusalem. The decision taken by this council was

that the Gentiles were not under the law as the Lord purifies their hearts by faith through His grace (Acts 15:8-11). The Gentiles were never under the law – neither before nor after their salvation.

Only the people of Israel were under the law as, for many centuries they brought sacrifices, all of which were fulfilled by the slaying of Christ as the Lamb of God. The Messiah did for them what the law could not accomplish, i.e. to deliver them from their sin (cf. Matt. 1:21). The law kept them under guard and served as a tutor to bring them to Christ. After their salvation they no longer need a tutor since they are now guided by the Holy Spirit (Gal. 3:23-25).

It is of the utmost importance that we should stand fast in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, that we should strictly walk according to the principles of His divine love, and that we should refrain from putting ourselves in bondage to the law. We must not, in the church dispensation, try to live under the shadow of the law, thereby undermining the principles of Christ's saving grace by trying to supplement them by laws.

We grieve the Holy Spirit when we infringe the high moral standards of our life in Christ. The solution to this problem is not to revert to the law, but to more intimately identify with Christ: "Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil its lusts" (Rom. 13:14). We should walk by the Spirit in the footsteps of Christ until He is fully formed in us – then He will also be to us the end of the law towards righteousness. When my heart has been filled with His love, I do not need outward laws to govern my relationship with God and with other people. He who truly loves has fulfilled the law.

DOMINIONISM

Not only is the dispensation of grace undermined and rendered powerless by integrating it with the dispensation of the law, but there are also those who give a false character to it by integrating it with the future dispensation of God's kingdom on earth. If the future dispensation of the kingdom – that is the millennial reign of Christ – is not clearly distinguished from the present church dispensation, it can give rise to serious theological confusion and also promote wrong expectations. When these two dispensations are merged they lead to a form of dominionism (kingdom-now theology) in which signs and wonders are pursued, as well as transformation meetings and manmade revivals aimed at taking control of the world. Many Christian leaders want to live as kings *now* and be able to wield great powers.

It is completely impossible to establish millennium-like conditions on earth right now. Only the Lord Jesus can save a remnant of Israel and the nations, have the devil bound in a pit, restore the throne of David, and ensure that peace and harmony prevail on earth. If we are prepared to suffer now and fulfil our ministry in the midst of great opposition, we will be worthy to rule with Christ in His kingdom which will soon be revealed (Rom. 8:17). We are not kings now who are ruling, but soldiers of the cross who are strangers and sojourners in a world which lies in the sway of the evil one.

However, it is not only deceived people who are intent on establishing a big and mighty kingdom on earth before the second coming of Christ – the devil also has similar plans. He knows very well that Christ will return to the earth as King of kings, destroy His enemies and found a worldwide kingdom of righteousness. At the present moment Satan uses all his power in various efforts to forestall this kingdom by offering an alternative kingdom to humanity. According to Revelation 6, the Antichrist will appear on the scene as a false prince of peace, conclude a covenant with all the false religions, systematically destroy all his enemies, and rule over a global kingdom of Satan.

According to the Bible these evil plans will indeed materialise, leading to a short but very distinct dispensation of the Antichrist's rule on earth which will run its course between the church dispensation and the dawning of Christ's kingdom. The true church is withholding the revelation of the Antichrist. Paul says, "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" (2 Thess. 2:7-8). After the rapture there will be a seven year-long rule of the Antichrist on earth, which will last until the second coming of Christ when He will destroy this evil kingdom and establish His own kingdom of righteousness.

The plans and expectations of the kingdom-now theologians are dispensationally completely out of place. Through their actions they do not only erode the principles of the dispensation of grace but they are actually preparing the way for the alternate kingdom of the Antichrist. The ecumenical ties which they forge, the strong emphasis on signs and wonders, their interest in extra-Biblical revelations by false prophets, as well as denying the uniqueness and deity of the Lord Jesus, will also be used as building-blocks for the kingdom of the Antichrist. He will be such a crafty deceiver that very few people will be able to see through his obscured stratagem. John says that the whole world will follow him in amazement and also worship him as prince of peace and messiah (Rev. 13:3-4).

When the Antichrist establishes his kingdom on earth he will also make concerted efforts to discredit the saving grace of Christ by means of the law and also by adherence to kingdom theology. He will encourage orthodox Jews to live according to the law, to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem and to again put their trust in animal sacrifices. In doing so they will explicitly reject the once for all sacrifice of Christ on the cross, thereby opening up the way towards accepting another (false) messiah. The Antichrist will also use the third temple to declare himself in the Holy of holies to be God and king (2 Thess. 2:4). Israel as well as the nations will be deceived to conclude a covenant with him.

The Antichrist will build a mighty kingdom on earth, based upon false peace and unity. He will only institute a military dictatorship in the middle of the tribulation period when revolt will occur against his kingdom, leading to an attempt against his life. At that time he will declare himself to be God. Israel and many of the Gentiles will only then realise that he is a false messiah, and consequently reject him. These actions will give rise to the large-scale persecution of Jews and Christians during a great tribulation as has never been on earth (Matt. 24:21).

Christ will return after the 3½ years of great tribulation, destroy the antichristian powers, bind the devil and institute His thousand-year reign of peace. That will be the seventh and last dispensation in God's plan of salvation for humanity. At the end of that dispensation the final judgement will occur and a new heaven and new earth will be created. Then, the narrow way and the broad way will each reach its final destination – the one in the new Jerusalem and the other one in the lake of fire.

We are still in the dispensation of grace and can, by faith in Christ, be transferred from the broad way of sin to the narrow way of God's righteousness. Did you come over from the darkness of sin to His marvellous light? This dispensation is racing to its end and we have little time left to settle our case with God. Soon, the Lord will come for His bridal congregation, after which the Antichrist will extend his power over a deceived world. During that time it will be much more difficult to become a Christian and to remain standing against the powers of darkness. "Seek the Lord while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near" (Isa. 55:6).

Up to here is what they say about themselves.

WHY DO I THEN SAY THAT THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE CHURCH AND THE JEWS

Where do we read of the first Christians?

*"When they heard this, they quieted down and glorified God, saying, **"Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life."** So then those who were scattered because of the persecution that occurred in connection with **Stephen made their way to Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except to Jews alone. But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who came to Antioch and began speaking to the Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a large number who believed turned to the Lord.** The news about them reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas off to Antioch. Then when he arrived and witnessed the grace of God, he rejoiced and began to encourage them all with resolute heart to remain true to the Lord; for he was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And considerable numbers were brought to the Lord. **And he left for Tarsus to look for Saul; and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. And for an entire year they met with the church and taught considerable numbers; and the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.**" (Act 11:18-26)*

Act 13:14 *"But going on from Perga, they arrived at Pisidian Antioch, **and on the Sabbath day they went into the synagogue and sat down.**"*

Act 13:42 *"As Paul and Barnabas were going out, the people kept begging that these things might be spoken to them the next Sabbath." Act 13:43 **"Now when the meeting of the synagogue had broken up, many of the Jews and of the God-fearing proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who, speaking to them, were urging them to continue in the grace of God."***

Act 14:1 ***"In Iconium they entered the synagogue of the Jews together, and spoke in such a manner that a large number of people believed, both of Jews and of Greeks."***

Act 16:1-3 *"Paul came also to Derbe and to Lystra. And a disciple was there, named Timothy, **the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek,** (2) and he was well spoken of by the brethren who were in Lystra and Iconium. (3) **Paul wanted this man to go with him; and he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in those parts, for they all knew that his father was a Greek.**"*

Act 17:1-3 *"Now when they had traveled through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to **Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. (2) And according to Paul's custom, he went to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures,** (3) explaining and giving evidence that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and saying, **"This Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you is the Christ."***

Act 17:10 *"The brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, **and when they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews.**"*

Act 17:16-17 *"Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was being provoked within him as he was observing the city full of idols. (17) **So he was reasoning in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing Gentiles, and in the market place every day with those who happened to be present.**"*

Act 18:1-4 *"After these things he left Athens and went to Corinth. (2) And he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, having recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. He came to them, (3) and because he was of the same*

*trade, he stayed with them and they were working, for by trade they were tent-makers. (4) **And he was reasoning in the synagogue every Sabbath and trying to persuade Jews and Greeks.***

Act 18:19 ***"They came to Ephesus, and he left them there. Now he himself entered the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews."***

Act 11:25-26 ***"And he left for Tarsus to look for Saul; (26) and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. And for an entire year they met with the church and taught considerable numbers; and the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch."***

So if Paul knew of a mystery that there is a difference between the Church and the Jews as these people claim, why would he spent all his time going to the synagogue to convince the Jews that Jesus was the Christ. That would have been a complete waste of time. These converted Jews were already known as Christians, and met in the church. But these were the same Jews that stoned Paul and left him for dead, which fortunately his was not, and burned Barnabas alive in a synagogue in Cyprus. To now be politically correct and say that Jesus will come again to convince these murderers, who has the same standing as any sinner, that He is the Christ and Messiah, is utter rubbish and against everything the Bible teaches. Most of the converted Jews fled to the mountains before 70AD and survived the destruction of Jerusalem. To be quite honest more than a million Jews were killed. But the converted Jews, the Christians, took heed of what Daniel prophesied in chapter 9. ***"And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering (**the cruxifixion of Jesus**); and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, **even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.**"*** Dan 9:27 This is exactly what happened to Jerusalem in 70AD. Jerusalem was destroyed by a king who was not a king during Daniel's time, the Romans, and Daniel uses the word flood in the same sense as in Daniel 11:22, 26 and 40 where soldiers are referred to as a flood. The first Christians fled Jerusalem when Saul and the other Jews stoned Steven, and in this way the LORD ensured that the first Christians would survive during the seize of Jerusalem. These Christians did exactly what Jesus told them to do in Matthew 24: ***"Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains. "Whoever is on the housetop must not go down to get the things out that are in his house. "Whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his cloak. "But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! "But pray that your flight will not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath. "For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will. "Unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short."*** (Mat 24:15-22)

Just like the fall of man happened through one person, Adam, Jesus as man had to restore that relationship in order for us to stand before the throne without blemish. We see this first and second principal throughout the Bible. We see it between Cain and Abel, Ishmael and Isaac, Esau and Jacob, the first tablets of the law which was for Israel only, but was broken by them through idolatry with the second set of tablets included us. Saul was also anointed as the first king, but rejected by the LORD and overthrown by the LORD to allow David to become king, who is known in the Bible as a friend of the LORD. None of the kings after David was anointed again as king by the LORD. We have the exact same example today, with Israel being the first nation anointed and chosen by the LORD, but then rejecting Jesus as the Messiah, and us as Church becoming the perfect solution, allowing every person who believes that Jesus is the Son of God, to be saved. The first righteousness was achieved by obeying the law (*"It will be righteousness for us if we are careful to observe all this commandment before the LORD our God, just as He commanded us."*)(Deu 6:25), and the second righteousness being Jesus as our covenantal

sacrifice. *"For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. **For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.** For Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on law shall live by that righteousness."* (Rom 10:3-5) *"In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell securely; And this is His name by which He will be called, 'The LORD our righteousness.'" (Jer 23:6)* Jesus told the Pharisees the following: *"**Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people, producing the fruit of it.** "And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust."* When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard His parables, ***they understood that He was speaking about them.***" (Mat 21:43-45)

I do not find any place in the Bible where this decision is reversed. So to now proclaim that Jesus changed His mind and that He will come to save the Jews and Judaism is in direct contrast to what Jesus said. So nobody can in any way proclaim this. So the statement still stands today: ***"Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people, producing the fruit of it"*** .

*"Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called "Uncircumcision" by the so-called "Circumcision," which is performed in the flesh by human hands-- remember that **you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.** But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. **For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity. AND HE CAME AND PREACHED PEACE TO YOU WHO WERE FAR AWAY, AND PEACE TO THOSE WHO WERE NEAR;** for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father. **So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.**" (Eph 2:11-22)*

I can continue on showing all the errors and defects of this teaching, but I have found that once a person has been influenced by this teaching, it is near impossible to convince them back to the true gospel. Even if you show them what Judaism proclaim and belittles Jesus and Christians, these people will still hold on to their false teaching.

*"For speaking out arrogant words of vanity they entice by fleshly desires, by sensuality, those who barely escape from the ones who live in error, promising them freedom while they themselves are slaves of corruption; **for by what a man is overcome, by this he is enslaved. For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world by the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and are overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first.**" (2Pe 2:18-20)*

Also see the article in The Book of Moses : <http://shamaministries.org.za/wp/moses-4-verse-5-jews-nation-church-grouping/>

APPENDIX 2

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APPENDIX 2 - A NEW THEOLOGY I BRING TO YOU

A NEW THEOLOGY I BRING TO YOU

A new theology I bring to you. An age old theology based on a covenant with Abraham, of Jesus and of righteousness. This may sound like a dichotomy, but please bear with me as I will try and explain this dilemma.

I have spent the last twenty or so years trying to find a theology that I believe is the real message of hope from the Bible. After an emergency operation and another follow up operation where cancer was found to be rampant, I had to ensure that I had to take a personal interest in where I will spend eternity. Today 22 years later, I believe I have found most of the answers I had in my own search for the truth that I could underwrite. Most of the answers I had to find myself, and others from various other types of churches. This has taken me from the typical Calvinist churches, to Pentecostal, charismatic, and even home churches. Some of these churches I attended as a member, some as a visitor, some as a pastor and yet others by visiting their websites.

I would like to add a very pertinent piece of information at this point in the book, and that is that I spent more than 30 years in the computer industry covering a wide range of functions, from programming to analysis, consulting as well as sales and marketing. This taught me from a young age that you had to find answers for problems mostly on your own, and that you had very little influence from other people.

What did I find?

I believe in a LORD whose word is consistent throughout the ages. I believe in an age old covenant with Abraham, the fulfilment in Jesus Christ His son who showed the way to a covenant of righteousness. I would like to give an answer here to a question that I believe most people do not understand. What I found was that there is a huge difference between a testament and a covenant. A testament defines what will happen after the death of the person in question, while a covenant is effective immediately once the people has reached agreement and both people complied with the requirements of the covenant. A testament cannot be changed or annulled, while a covenant can be ended by any one of the parties if the other party should break one or more of the requirements of the covenant.

The LORD took me on a trip through the Old Testament and that is one of the reasons you will find a lot of quotations from the Old Testament throughout this document. But there is a specific reason for this. Most times when Jesus spoke to people He used parables to detail what His Kingdom looks like and these utterances were recorded for us in the New Testament. However, something that we hardly find mentioned in the Gospels, is what Jesus told His disciples about what Moses and the prophets of old said about Him, especially when they were alone. We find in Luke 24 three different references where Jesus refers to these times.

*"Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just exactly as the women also had said; but Him they did not see." And He said to them, "**O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!** "Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?" **Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.**"(Luke 24:24-27). "When He had reclined at the table with them, He took the bread and blessed it, and breaking it, He began giving it to them. **Then their eyes were opened and they recognized Him; and He vanished from their sight. They said to one another, "Were not our hearts burning within us while He was speaking to us on the road, while He was explaining the Scriptures to us?"** (Luke 24:30-32). "Now He said to them, "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, **that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets***

and the Psalms must be fulfilled." Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and He said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem." (Luke 24:44-47)

The final part that I would like to use concerning this, is what Paul wrote to the people of Corinth : *"Moreover, brothers, I would not that you should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized to Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be you idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur you, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. **Now all these things happened to them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the world are come.**" (1Co 10:1-11)*

The second portion comes from 2 Corinthians 3: *"Therefore having such a hope, we use great boldness in our speech, and are not like Moses, who used to put a veil over his face so that the sons of Israel would not look intently at the end of what was fading away. But their minds were hardened; **for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remains unlifted, because it is removed in Christ. But to this day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their heart; but whenever a person turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.** Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." (2Co 3:12-17)*

So my argument is that in order build a steadfast doctrine, we have to start with the Old Covenant as basis, and then only will we have the proper understanding of the New Covenant. So we cannot build our doctrines around the New Testament as we will be wrong as we will not understand the reason Jesus came to earth, and exactly what he came to do. We can then look at the way the Tabernacle was laid out as it was a replica of what Moses saw when the LORD showed him how to do it. We can then using this information understand the book of Hebrews and see exactly what Jesus did when He died on the cross. This also spells out the sequence of how we enter into the presence of the LORD as Jesus gave us the example. But we still have to decide if that is the road we want to follow, or if we want to stay outside the temple, away from presence of the Father, Jesus Christ His son, and the Holy Spirit.

WHAT DOES THIS COVENANT ENTAIL?

For me, we have to start with Abraham, the father of all believers. We also have to remember that Abraham had eight sons in total. The eldest was Ishmael, then Isaac, and later on six more sons. *"Now Abraham took another wife, whose name was Keturah. She bore to him Zimran and Jokshan and Medan and Midian and Ishbak and Shuah."* (Gen 25:1-2) The Bible teaches us about the life of the one son He had a special covenant with, Isaac. *"But My covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you at this season next year."* (Gen 17:21) The Bible does not teach us anything about the lives of the other sons including Ishmael even though they were sons of Abraham.

Is Israel the only nation of the LORD? No. *"As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, And **you will be the father of a multitude of nations.**" No longer shall your name be called Abram, But your name shall be Abraham; **For I have made you the father of a multitude of nations.** "I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and **I will make nations of you, and kings will come forth from you.**" I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations **for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after***

you. "I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God." God said further to Abraham, "Now as for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations." (Gen 17:4-9)

Ephesians chapter 2 teaches the following: *"Therefore remember that formerly you, **the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called "Uncircumcision" by the so-called "Circumcision," which is performed in the flesh by human hands-- remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity. AND HE CAME AND PREACHED PEACE TO YOU WHO WERE FAR AWAY, AND PEACE TO THOSE WHO WERE NEAR; for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit. (Eph 2:11-22)***

In Genesis 14 we learn of someone else. *"And Melchizedek **king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of God Most High.** He blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." He gave him a tenth of all." (Gen 14:18-20). So even before Isaac, there were peoples from other nations that served the LORD. Israel is given to us as an example as confirmed by Paul in 1 Corinthians 10 verse 11. **"Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come."***

Here we find that the first covenant was celebrated with communion between Abraham and Melchizedek, where Melchizedek brought the wine and bread. If we look at the book of Hebrews in chapter 5 from verse 5 we find the following scripture: *"So also Christ did not glorify Himself so as to become a high priest, but He who said to Him, **"YOU ARE MY SON, TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU"; just as He says also in another passage, "YOU ARE A PRIEST FOREVER ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK."** In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety. **Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation, being designated by God as a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek"**. (Heb 5:5-10)*

What does this scripture mean? Melchizedek was a priest and was appointed by the LORD himself. He was not a priest appointed because of his heritage, and also not related to Abraham. Jesus was appointed as a priest according to the order of Melchizedek, in other words, by the Father himself. That is the reason he instituted communion again the night before He was crucified with wine and bread. He had to show the world he was not a priest according to the tradition of the Levites, but appointed again by the Father, and also made King of God's people as Melchizedek was also a king.

But what did the covenant with Israel entail? The first point I want to emphasize is that there are always two sides to a covenant. There is a positive side telling us what the benefits are, and a negative side that tells us what the detrimental effects would be if we do not keep the rules

governing the covenant. If we look at Deuteronomy chapter 30 we find the rules of both sides of the covenant: *"See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, and death and adversity; in that I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments, that you may live and multiply, and that the LORD your God may bless you in the land where you are entering to possess it."But if your heart turns away and you will not obey, but are drawn away and worship other gods and serve them, I declare to you today that you shall surely perish. You will not prolong your days in the land where you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess it. "I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. **So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants, by loving the LORD your God, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him; for this is your life and the length of your days, that you may live in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them.**" (Deut 30:15-20)*

The last part of the passage is extremely important to me. I have to choose to keep my side of the covenant, and then the LORD will keep His side. The ability to choose between right and wrong was given to us and recorded for us in Genesis 3:22 ***"Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"***. This confirms that because of Adam and Eve's sin, they knew what was right and what was wrong. So my whole life is about choices I make, some that are beneficial to me and some detrimental.

STEPS TO FOLLOW IN THIS COVENANT

The second point I want to investigate is the steps required in a covenant relationship. This is clearly described to us during the exodus of Israel from Egypt. Israel had to get to Canaan, the Promised Land, and they had to confirm all the steps of the covenant during this time. That is what Israel had to do physically, and what we have to do to inherit our Canaan, our destination as God's people. That is what the LORD has in store for us. I will look at what Israel had to do and then explain what we as Christians should do.

But firstly, why did the LORD decide that it was time for Israel to leave Egypt? *"Now it came about in the course of those many days that the king of Egypt died. And the sons of Israel sighed because of the bondage, and they cried out; and their cry for help because of their bondage rose up to God. So God heard their groaning; **and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God saw the sons of Israel, and God took notice of them.**" (Exo 2:23-25) "The LORD said, "I have surely seen the affliction of My people who are in Egypt, and have given heed to their cry because of their taskmasters, for I am aware of their sufferings. "So I have come down to deliver them from the power of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and spacious land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Amorite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite. **"Now, behold, the cry of the sons of Israel has come to Me; furthermore, I have seen the oppression with which the Egyptians are oppressing them."** (Exo 3:7-9)*

The LORD also tells us about the roles of the various people in this scenario. *"And the LORD said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet. Thou shalt speak all that I command thee: and Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh, that he send the children of Israel out of his land. And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt. But Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you, that I may lay my hand upon Egypt, and bring forth mine armies, and my people the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great judgments. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I stretch forth mine hand upon Egypt, and bring out the children of Israel from among them. And Moses and Aaron did as the LORD commanded them, so did they." (Exo 7:1-6)* So Moses represents the LORD, Aaron the prophet and the Pharaoh the Satan.

With this as background, we can now look at the various steps of the covenant.

1. CIRCUMCISION

- Covenant before Christ: **Circumcision, as they had to have a physical sign that they belonged to the LORD.** : *"The LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "This is the ordinance of the Passover: no foreigner is to eat of it; but every man's slave purchased with money, after you have circumcised him, then he may eat of it. "A sojourner or a hired servant shall not eat of it." It is to be eaten in a single house; you are not to bring forth any of the flesh outside of the house, nor are you to break any bone of it. "All the congregation of Israel are to celebrate this." **But if a stranger sojourns with you, and celebrates the Passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near to celebrate it; and he shall be like a native of the land. But no uncircumcised person may eat of it."** The same law shall apply to the native as to the stranger who sojourns among you." (Exo 12:43-49) "And when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What mean the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments, which the LORD our God hath commanded you? Then thou shalt say unto thy son, We were Pharaoh's bondmen in Egypt; and the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand: And the LORD shewed signs and wonders, great and sore, upon Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his household, before our eyes: And he brought us out from thence, that he might bring us in, to give us the land which he sware unto our fathers." (Deu 6:20-23)*
- Covenant with Christ as the Lamb: **Our hearts have to be circumcised.** All people are born in Egypt, a life separate from the LORD, a life in bondage to Satan (Pharaoh). Just like Israel cried out to the LORD for mercy and for Him to lead them out of Israel, I have to call out to the LORD to lead me to His land, Canaan. I have to change my ways and leave my sinful life behind me. I have to come to the realisation that I cannot do anything to save myself. I have to believe that Jesus did everything required to put me in a right relationship with the LORD. I have to realise that I am a sinner and that I will perish if I continue with my life on my own. I have to start living a life of love as explained in 1 John 3. I have to start showing in my daily life that I am forgiven. "So you will again distinguish between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve Him."(Mal 3:18) *"But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people".* Jer 31:33.

"And I will give them one heart, and put a new spirit within them. And I will take the heart of stone out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in My statutes and keep My ordinances and do them. Then they will be My people, and I shall be their God. "But as for those whose hearts go after their detestable things and abominations, I will bring their conduct down on their heads," declares the Lord GOD. (Eze 11:19-21)

*"For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority; **and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ;** having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead."*(Col 2:9-12)

What does Paul say about this? *"Or is God the God of Jews only? Is He not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, since indeed **God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith is one.** Do we then nullify the Law through faith? May it never be! On the contrary, we establish the Law."* (Rom 3:29-31) *"But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; **and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God"**.* (Rom 2:29)

2. BREAD

- Covenant before Christ: They had to eat unleavened bread, as yeast has the same effect as sin, it makes you puffed up. Eating unleavened bread indicates that you have received forgiveness of sin. *"Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."* (1Co 5:6-8)
- Covenant with Christ as the Lamb: Jesus is the bread of life. He was sinless as He is also God. *"Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die." I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; **if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever**; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh."* (John 6:49-51) *"While they were eating, Jesus took some bread, and after a blessing, He broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is My body."* (Mat 26:26)

3. SLAUGHTER A LAMB

- Covenant before Christ: They had to slaughter a lamb as the blood would bring forgiveness of sin. *"Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying, 'On the tenth of this month they are each one to take a lamb for themselves, according to their fathers' households, a lamb for each household. 'Now if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his neighbour nearest to his house are to take one according to the number of persons in them; according to what each man should eat, you are to divide the lamb. **Your lamb shall be an unblemished male a year old**; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. 'You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month, then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel is to kill it at twilight".* (Exo 12:3-6)
- Covenant with Christ as Lamb: ***"And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders a Lamb standing, as if slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth. And He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. When He had taken the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they *sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for **You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.**" You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth."** Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, **"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honour and glory and blessing."*** (Rev 5:6-12) I have to come to the place in my life where I need the workings of the cross in order to receive everlasting life. He gave up His life in order for us to live. Even in the time of Adam and Eve we find that they could cover their sin by hiding it behind fig leaves, but the LORD showed them that blood has to flow in order to forgive. That is why He slaughtered a goat to give them clothes to wear.

4. BLOOD OF THE LAMB

- Covenant before Christ: They had to put some of the blood on the doorposts and lintels. *"For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods*

of Egypt I will execute judgments--I am the LORD. *'The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live; and when I see the blood I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.'* (Exo 12:12-13)

- Covenant with Christ as Lamb: We have to place ourselves under His blood. *"And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins."* (Mat 26:27-28) This confirms to us that when we share communion death has no hold on me as I have received everlasting life.

5. WHERE WAS THE LAW?

- Covenant before Christ: on stone tablets. Exodus 20. Moses also highlights another aspect: *"Moreover, the LORD showed great and distressing signs and wonders before our eyes against Egypt, Pharaoh and all his household; He brought us out from there in order to bring us in, to give us the land which He had sworn to our fathers." "So the LORD commanded us to observe all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God for our good always and for our survival, as it is today." It will be righteousness for us if we are careful to observe all this commandment before the LORD our God, just as He commanded us."*(Deu 6:22-25) **So their righteousness was obtained through keeping of the law.**
- Covenant with Christ as the Lamb: Written on our hearts. *"And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people" (Jer 31:33) ""Behold, the days are coming," declares the LORD, "When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; And He will reign as king and act wisely And do justice and righteousness in the land. "In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell securely; And this is His name by which He will be called, 'The LORD our righteousness.'" (Jer 23:5-6). Our righteousness will be through Christ alone.*

6. WHO WAS THE COVENANT APPLICABLE TO?

- Covenant before Jesus: Both Israel and foreigners. *"The same law shall apply to the native as to the stranger who sojourns among you."* (Exo 12:49) *"A mixed multitude also went up with them, along with flocks and herds, a very large number of livestock."*(Exo 12:38) This scripture confirms that strangers became part of the covenant nation during the exodus of Egypt. This is a confirmation of what the LORD promised Abraham. *"No longer shall your name be called Abram, But your name shall be Abraham; For I have made you the father of a multitude of nations."* (Gen 17:5) So here we find that even before the exodus and the long trek to Canaan that Israel operated as a Church and not as a nation. That is what they are referred to, as a congregation in Exodus 12 verse 47 above, and not as a nation. One further point to make here is that when we look at the first five books of the Bible, and especially those written by Moses, we find that the word congregation, referring to those people who left Egypt, is used 250 times in these books. This I believe is enough proof that even Moses and the LORD saw them as a Church, a congregation, and not as a nation.

225 verses found, 250 matches

Exodus	48 verses found	49 matches
Leviticus	50 verses found	57 matches
Numbers	120 verses found	134 matches
Deuteronomy	7 verses found	10 matches

If we include the rest of the Old Testament we find that they are referred to as a congregation 363 times in 330 verses.

- Covenant with Christ as Lamb: There **is no change as it does not need to change**. The rules governing the covenant already made provision for everyone to become part of God's people, His nation. Jesus did not need to change any provisions as He had to come and take the sins of the world and die in order for everyone, Jew and gentile, to be saved by His blood only. This covenant is for everyone that believes that Jesus is the Lamb, both Jew and gentile. *"In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will dwell in safety; and this is the name by which she will be called: **the LORD is our righteousness.**"* (Jer 33:16) **We can now live in righteousness, as Jesus is our righteousness.** *"Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."* (Heb 4:16)

RIGHTEOUSNESS

Paul writes the following to the Romans: *"For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. **For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.** For Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on law shall live by that righteousness. But the righteousness based on faith speaks as follows: **"DO NOT SAY IN YOUR HEART, 'WHO WILL ASCEND INTO HEAVEN?' (that is, to bring Christ down), or 'WHO WILL DESCEND INTO THE ABYSS?' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).**" But what does it say? **"THE WORD IS NEAR YOU, IN YOUR MOUTH AND IN YOUR HEART"**--that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation".* (Rom 10:3-10)

When do I become a member of this covenant? The first time I share communion, when I make that public announcement that I share in His blood and His body. This also means that no uncircumcised person may share in communion, as communion shows that I have submitted myself to the lordship and obedience of the LORD.

What does the New Testament teach about this? When do I become an overcomer, and how do I overcome? *"And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death."* (Rev 12:11)

What are the similarities with the covenant before Christ?

- overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb (Blood on the door posts)
- because of the word of their testimony (Circumcision)
- they did not love their life even when faced with death. We have to take up our cross daily and die of our own will. *"And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come*

after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it." (Luk 9:23-24)

This then is a quick explanation of the covenant. We all become partakers of this covenant when we find that we need to receive forgiveness of our sins, and decide to follow Christ and lay down our lives at the cross. Everyone that knows the Bible has to follow Israel and their example of how to get to Canaan, in our case, that which the LORD has prepared for us. When we die, that is all people who became part of the covenant with Abraham; we will learn to know who the LORD really is in order to live forever in the New Jerusalem. *"And many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; That He may teach us concerning His ways And that we may walk in His paths." For the law will go forth from Zion And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem."* (Isa 2:3, Micah 4:2)

The Holy Spirit is the one who will work in us and in every human being on earth to get us to this point in our lives. *"But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. "And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment; concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see Me; and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged."* (John 16:7-11)

This clearly shows that all people have the ability to choose as the Bible declares that the Holy Spirit came to earth to convict all people of their sin, and then to teach them the way of righteousness. *"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, **that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. "For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. "He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."*** (Joh 3:16-18)

We have to believe that Christ was the perfect offering for sin, and that only through what He did, we can receive forgiveness and everlasting life.

If you decide that this "religion thing" is not for you even though you heard about it, you will not see the thousand year rule of Christ, and will be found guilty at the final judgement. *"Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. **And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.**"* (Rev 20:11-15)

WHAT THEN IS THE TRUE MEANING OF THE COVENANT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS?

I believe the following is an apt definition.

The right to enter into the presence of the LORD, without guilt, condemnation or inferiority. It is to be in the right relationship with Him the Creator. This can only be achieved when we have received an overwhelming gift of righteousness.

What happens after I become part of the covenant with the LORD?

We have to leave Egypt, by getting baptised. That is the place where the might of Satan, in Israel's time the Pharaoh, is broken in your life and you will live a life totally devoted to the

LORD. That is the time when you find out that you longer have to make bricks to expand Satan's empire, but you can now work on expanding the LORD's empire. That is the time when you find out that sin no longer has a hold on you. *"Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. **Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.** What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be! Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?"* (Rom 6:11-16)

This is then what baptism means to us as Christians. The might of Satan is completely destroyed in baptism and I will arise as a new being from the water. So I change ownership during baptism, as the Satan is drowned in the water and I arise as a follower of the LORD and under His Lordship.

Then, like Israel we have to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. *"Then the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke to him; and He took of the Spirit who was upon him and placed Him upon the seventy elders. **And when the Spirit rested upon them, they prophesied. But they did not do it again.** But two men had remained in the camp; the name of one was Eldad and the name of the other Medad. And the Spirit rested upon them (now they were among those who had been registered, but had not gone out to the tent), and they prophesied in the camp. So a young man ran and told Moses and said, "Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp." Then Joshua the son of Nun, the attendant of Moses from his youth, said, "Moses, my lord, restrain them." But Moses said to him, **"Are you jealous for my sake? Would that all the LORD'S people were prophets, that the LORD would put His Spirit upon them!"*** (Num 11:25-29)

How did Jesus put it? *"Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink."He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'" **But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.**"* (John 7:37-39)

Once we reach Sinai we will spend time to learn the LORD's ways. That is when we will receive the law written on our hearts, where we will learn to distinguish between right and wrong. That is what our local congregation is supposed to teach us, as that is what happened to Israel at Sinai. During this time in the desert the LORD will take us under His wings and provide for us like He did for Israel by providing manna and quails.

As soon as our training is completed, we will be told by the Holy Spirit what our ministry will entail in Canaan. **That is when we move on from the sixth day to the seventh day of the LORD, when we realise that nothing that we can do will save us from damnation. We can only get there through faith in Jesus Christ.** This is what we learn in the book of Hebrews: *"Therefore, let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it. For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard. **For we who have believed enter that rest, just as He has said, "AS I SWORE IN MY WRATH, THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST," although His works were finished from the foundation of the world. For He has said somewhere concerning the seventh day: "AND GOD RESTED ON THE SEVENTH DAY FROM ALL HIS WORKS"; and again in this passage, "THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST."** Therefore, since it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly had good news preached to them failed to enter because of disobedience, He again fixes a certain day, "Today," saying through David after so long a time just as has been said before, **"TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS."** For if Joshua had given them rest, He*

would not have spoken of another day after that. So there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God. For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His. Therefore let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall, through following the same example of disobedience." (Heb 4:1-11)

Remember that we cannot wait to enter into the rest of the LORD, as each day is today. We cannot delay this calling in saying we can do it later, as the Bible clearly says that today when you hear My voice. We all have a calling on our lives, and that is to make disciples of people, to show people what true love is. That is the difference between the sixth day and the seventh day. If you do not believe that you have a calling to make disciples of all people, you will die like most of the people in the desert even though they were baptised as the seventh day is the day of rest, and that is what the LORD wants from us.

Most of the people who enter into Canaan will believe that they have to serve a king like Israel did. (A king is someone that will rule over you and could be a spiritual father or your church grouping.) The first book of Samuel recorded it as follows: *"But the thing was displeasing in the sight of Samuel when they said, "Give us a king to judge us." And Samuel prayed to the LORD. **The LORD said to Samuel, "Listen to the voice of the people in regard to all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from being king over them. "Like all the deeds which they have done since the day that I brought them up from Egypt even to this day--in that they have forsaken Me and served other gods--so they are doing to you also. "Now then, listen to their voice; however, you shall solemnly warn them and tell them of the procedure of the king who will reign over them."*** (1Sa 8:6-9)

The majority of these people that enter into Canaan will die whilst serving this king, while a remnant will be called to go into captivity. *"You shall also say to this people, "Thus says the LORD, **"Behold, I set before you the way of life and the way of death."** He who dwells in this city will die by the sword and by famine and by pestilence; **but he who goes out and falls away to the Chaldeans who are besieging you will live, and he will have his own life as booty."*** (Jer 21:8-9)

But what does it mean to go into exile, or captivity?

Let us examine a number of scriptures on this subject. The first scripture is about the physical captivity. During the Biblical times it was custom for the loser of a war to be taken captive as slaves and to be taken to the captors land. The loser lost all his physical assets and became a slave to his captor. This meant that when someone went into captivity, he had to bring out all of his moveable assets, his furniture, his shoes, his rod, etc., outside of his home and then went into captivity. The only thing he left behind was his house. But what does this mean to us today? We have to lose the war against God in order to become his slave and to be taken away to His Land, His Canaan. I have to place my full trust in Him in order to become completely dependent on Him for all my needs. Just like in the Biblical times He will have to provide for shelter and food, but it means that I have to do His work. He already won the war and paid the price for me. He purchased us with His blood, as He overcame death and can now free us from all our sins. I cannot go into exile by myself; I have to surrender to the LORD.

The second scripture which describes our spiritual captivity, comes from Jeremiah 48 verse 11: *"Moab has been at ease since his youth; He has also been undisturbed, like wine on its dregs, And he has not been emptied from vessel to vessel, Nor has he gone into exile. Therefore he retains his flavor, And his aroma has not changed"* What the LORD is trying to tell us is that we cannot continue saying that I am clean, but as soon as someone disturbs me, all the murkiness in my life shows. I have to allow the LORD to empty me from vessel to vessel, meaning that He will change my life by getting rid of the lees or dregs in my life. This can only be done after giving my life over to the LORD. If I do not allow Him to empty me from vessel to vessel, then I will take on the taste of the lees or dregs. I must therefore allow Him to separate me from my lees, which is contaminating my life.

This cleansing process is also something that does not happen overnight. I have to allow time in between sessions for the lees to settle at the bottom again before being emptied from vessel to vessel. The LORD explains to them here that they must decide to go into captivity, in order to live. It was not a forceful removal, no; it was a decision that each inhabitant of Jerusalem had to take. Only once they decided to go, could the LORD free them from their lees, that which they depended on.

We found people then that said they will stay put in Jerusalem and that they will not go into captivity, much like people today that says that they are all right, they do not have to be separated from their lees. The answer that the LORD had to them was that should they stay in Jerusalem, they would either die by the sword, or the famine, or the pestilence. There are two questions we can ask to see if we fall into this category. The first question is if you still get taught at your congregation. Can you take a new convert and teach him what the life of a Christian comprises of? Do you know exactly what the doctrine of laying on of hands mean, how it should be used, and if it is still applicable today? This is what happens when we get comfortable as Christians. We stop learning. The moment this happens, we will die of starvation, because if anything in life stops growing, it is either dying or already dead. Have you learned anything this year?

The second question and that is the reason that Jeremiah gave to the people, is that they will die of the pestilence. How do I know if I have the pestilence? As soon as I declare that my group of people, be it a congregation, church group, or followers of a specific doctrine, have eternal life and that all of them will be saved, I have the pestilence. Why? Because we do not like introspection, as it means that I have to examine my life, and have to eye ball and change the areas I find that I am not sure is from the LORD. It also means that I have to look at every principal in my life to ensure that it is from the LORD, and can be Biblically explained. How many habits do you have that is not from the LORD? Another symptom of having the pestilence is when I declare that people can continue with their calls for repentance and debating all the issues of the Bible, as they will someday find out that it doesn't matter at all. My life is all right, and we shouldn't over exaggerate these issues. This is the group that Jeremiah declares will die of the pestilence.

The third reason why people will die if they stay in Jerusalem is that they will die by the sword. That is the group that decide that they will separate themselves from the others, and thus remove themselves from other Christians and their congregation. They want to go out to the neighbouring areas around Jerusalem, and hence will not have anything to do with those in Jerusalem. Ezekiel also declares in his prophecies the same punishment to those that leave Christianity; that they will die by the sword. We cannot survive without other Christians. It is this group that will get a hold of a passage and build a complete doctrine around it, just to justify them. The Word of God will be the sword that will judge us.

We find that some of the inhabitants of Jerusalem insisted that they wanted to return to Egypt. They took Jeremiah with them to Egypt, but none of these people ever returned to Jerusalem. *“Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, 'Behold, I am going to set My face against you for woe, even to cut off all Judah. **And I will take away the remnant of Judah who have set their mind on entering the land of Egypt to reside there, and they will all meet their end in the land of Egypt; they will fall by the sword and meet their end by famine. Both small and great will die by the sword and famine; and they will become a curse, an object of horror, an imprecation and a reproach. And I will punish those who live in the land of Egypt, as I have punished Jerusalem, with the sword, with famine and with pestilence. So there will be no refugees or survivors for the remnant of Judah who have entered the land of Egypt to reside there and then to return to the land of Judah, to which they are longing to return and live; for none will return except a few refugees.**” (Jer 44:11-14)* The few refugees that did return to Jerusalem were the family members of Jeremiah and Baruch who were taken to Babylon when Nebuchadnezzar took over Egypt, as they were forcefully taken to Egypt. **This means I cannot**

return to my previous life in Egypt, as I will then face the second death we read of in Revelation. This is what we read in the book of Hebrews about the same subject: *“For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame.”* (Heb 6:4-6)

The reason for this is that the LORD wants us to come out from under the ruling of our earthly king, be it our local congregation or even our church grouping, and put our trust in Him alone. We have to separate ourselves from the idea that our membership of our congregation ensures our everlasting life. We have to declare that we belong to the Church that the LORD is building. You see He is not preparing many brides, no He is preparing His bride, and She has to be perfect and without blemish. This does not mean that you have to end your membership of your congregation and now become a “churchless member” of the Church of Jesus Christ. No, I have to put my trust in Jesus alone. This will invariably mean that we would be willing to take a stand for God, even like Daniel did when told that he could not pray to the LORD.

This group of believers not only asks for revival, but for true reformation. What is the difference? To me revival means that I have to find the method that brings life to something that was alive before, and proclaim this. If there was life before, this message will then bring this person back to life again. Reformation on the other hand means that I will rid myself of everything that is not from the LORD, and start anew. That is the reason the LORD uses the term of captivity or exile, as one has to be separated from that which is not from Him.

How do I know this is true? The same question is asked to the believers in Revelation. *“And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.”* (Revelation 18:4).

This subject tells us that if we do not go into captivity, we are busy with religion, and religion is the same sin as adultery, leaving us as members of the whore of Revelation 18. I know I want to be, and I am sure that you want to be part of the Bride of Christ, and hence will go into captivity.

As soon as these people have served their time in captivity they will return to Jerusalem and rebuild the Temple and Jerusalem, the real church.

This then the short explanation of the **everlasting covenant, and what it means to us as Christians.**

WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES OF THIS COVENANT ON OUR COMMON THEOLOGICAL VIEWPOINTS?

CONSEQUENCES OF THE COVENANT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS ON ISRAEL

What about Israel as nation and country today? They also have to become partakers of the covenant with Jesus. As we have noted earlier there is one law for Jew and Gentile. The nation of Israel and the country of Israel have **NOTHING** in common with the Israel of the Bible. How did Jesus put them? *“Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who PLANTED A VINEYARD AND PUT A WALL AROUND IT AND DUG A WINE PRESS IN IT, AND BUILT A TOWER, and rented it out to vine-growers and went on a journey. When the harvest time approached, he sent his slaves to the vine-growers to receive his produce.”* The vine-growers took his slaves and beat one, and killed another, and stoned a third. *“Again he sent another group of slaves larger than the first; and they did the same thing to them.”* But afterward he sent his son to them, saying, *‘They will respect my son.’* **“But when the vine-growers saw the son, they said among themselves, ‘This is the heir; come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.’”** *“They took him, and threw him out of*

the vineyard and killed him. "Therefore when the owner of the vineyard comes, **what will he do to those vine-growers?**" **They said to Him, "He will bring those wretches to a wretched end, and will rent out the vineyard to other vine-growers who will pay him the proceeds at the proper seasons."** Jesus said to them, "Did you never read in the Scriptures, **'THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone; THIS CAME ABOUT FROM THE LORD, AND IT IS MARVELOUS IN OUR EYES?'**" **Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people, producing the fruit of it.** "And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust." **When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard His parables, they understood that He was speaking about them.** When they sought to seize Him, they feared the people, because they considered Him to be a prophet." (Mat 21:33-46)

Luke documented another saying of Jesus: "When He approached Jerusalem, He saw the city and wept over it, saying, "If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes. "For the days will come upon you when your enemies will throw up a barricade against you, and surround you and hem you in on every side, and they will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, **because you did not recognize the time of your visitation.**" (Luke 19:41-44)

This shows us that Israel and its inhabitants and all people who practice the Jewish faith world wide, have to become partakers of the covenant with Jesus to receive everlasting life. Jesus is the only way, the life, He alone. That was the message that Paul, Barnabas and all the other Apostles preached. They did not have one message for the Jews and a different message for the gentiles.

In fact, when we look at the book of Acts, we find that both Paul and Barnabas went to the Jewish synagogue everytime they arrived in a city. Many people believe that they only preached to the gentiles, but the book of Acts gives us a different story.

- Acts 13:14 *"But going on from Perga, they arrived at Pisidian Antioch, and on the Sabbath day they went into the synagogue and sat down."*
- Acts 13:42 *"As Paul and Barnabas were going out, the people kept begging that these things might be spoken to them the next Sabbath. Acts 13:43 Now when the meeting of the synagogue had broken up, many of the Jews and of the God-fearing proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who, speaking to them, were urging them to continue in the grace of God."*
- Acts 14:1 *"In Iconium they entered the synagogue of the Jews together, and spoke in such a manner that a large number of people believed, both of Jews and of Greeks."*
- Act 17:1 *"Now when they had travelled through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. Acts 17:2 And according to Paul's custom, he went to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures, Acts 17:3 explaining and giving evidence that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and saying, "This Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you is the Christ.""*
- Acts 17:10 *"The brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews."*
- Acts 17:16 *"Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was being provoked within him as he was observing the city full of idols. Acts 17:17 So he was reasoning in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing Gentiles, and in the market place every day with those who happened to be present."*
- Acts 18:1 *"After these things he left Athens and went to Corinth Acts 18:4 And he was reasoning in the synagogue every Sabbath and trying to persuade Jews and Greeks."*

- Act 18:19 *“They came to Ephesus, and he left them there. Now he himself entered the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews.”*
- Act 11:25 *“And he left for Tarsus to look for Saul; Act 11:26 and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. And for an entire year they met with the church and taught considerable numbers; and the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.”*

So, if we say that Paul knew a mystery and that mystery is that there is a difference between the Church (Christians as from the passage above) and the Jews and use that as an argument why there would be a rapture of the saints in order for Christ to come back to earth and become the physical king of the Jews, his ministry was in vain as he always went to the Jewish synagogues to convince the Jews and others that Jesus is the Christ. They were already known as Christians and the church.

The rejection of Israel is also seen in the following verses:

- Jer 6:30 *“**Reprobate** silver shall men call them, because the LORD hath rejected them.”*
- Jer 7:15 *“And I will cast you out of my sight, as I have cast out all your brethren, even the whole seed of Ephraim.”*
- Jer 12:7 *“I have forsaken mine house, I have left mine heritage; **I have given the dearly beloved of my soul into the hand of her enemies.**”*
- Jer 15:6 *“Thou hast forsaken me, saith the LORD, thou art gone backward: therefore will I stretch out my hand against thee, **and destroy thee;** I am weary with repenting.”*
- Jer30:12 *“For thus saith the LORD, **Thy bruise is incurable, and thy wound is grievous.**”*
- Jer31: 36-37 *“If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, **then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever.** Thus saith the LORD; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, **I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD.**”*
- Ps 53:6 *“There were they in great fear, where no fear was: for God hath scattered the bones of him that encampeth against thee: thou hast put them to shame, **because God hath despised them.**”*
- Ps 78: 58-59 *“For they provoked him to anger with their high places, and moved him to jealousy with their graven images. When God heard this, he was wroth, **and greatly abhorred Israel:**”*
- 2 Kings 17:19-20 *“Also Judah kept not the commandments of the LORD their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made. **And the LORD rejected all the seed of Israel, and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of spoilers, until he had cast them out of his sight.**”*
- 2 Kings 23:27 *“And the LORD said, **I will remove Judah also out of my sight, as I have removed Israel, and will cast off this city Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, My name shall be there.**”*
- 2Ch 7:19-20 *“But if ye turn away, and forsake my statutes and my commandments, which I have set before you, **and shall go and serve other gods,** and worship them; Then will I pluck them up by the roots out of my land which I have given them; and this house, which I have sanctified for my name, **will I cast out of my sight, and will make it to be a proverb and a byword among all nations.**”*

- Hos 4:6 *“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, **I will also reject thee**, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will **also forget thy children.**”*
- Hos 9:17 *“**My God will cast them away**, because they did not hearken unto him: and they shall be wanderers among the nations.”*
- 1 Th 2: 14-16 *“For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews: Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men: Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway: **for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.**”*

We also find that people are saying that the Jews must be saved first, but do not even know what the Jews are being taught by their priests and the Talmud today. But this is a small section about what they are being taught today:

- *“*“‘Yashu’ (derogatory for ‘Jesus’) is in Hell being boiled in hot excrement.” (Gittin 57a)*
- *[‘Yashu’ is an acronym for the Jewish curse, ‘May his (Jesus) name be wiped out forevermore.]*
- *Yashu (Jesus) was sexually immoral and worshipped a brick.” (Sanhedrin 107b)*
- *“Yashu (Jesus) was cut off from the Jewish people for his wickedness and refused to repent.” (Sotah 47a)*
- *“Miriam the hairdresser had sex with many men.” (Shabbath 104b, Hebrew Edition only)*
- *“She who was the descendant of princes and governors (the virgin Mary) played the harlot with carpenters.” (Sanhedrin 106a)*
- *“Christians who reject the Talmud will go to hell and be punished there for all generations.” (Rosh Hashanah 17a)”*

Just to explain the grafting in process, I would like to explain the process here.

I would like to use the example of Paul in Romans to describe how and where we fit in. *“I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness? For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them. **For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?** For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. **Well; because of unbelief they were broken off**, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.” (Rom 11:11-20)*

I believe all of us know how to graft a new growth unto an older or prepared root-stock. When we buy the end product, it has the flowers or fruit that we want, and not that of the root-stock. The new growth depends on the root-stock for its nutrients and will die without it. And that is

how we as Christians became children of the LORD. He removed the original growth, Israel, and grafted us into Him as the root-stock. We also know that when you allow the original plant to start bringing forth its original branches, that the plant grafted in will die. And that is what will happen to us as Church if we start following the Jewish root doctrines. We, as Church, will die. That is why there will be no rapture or anything connected to the Jews of today, as the moment we believe that they must be grafted back using a different way as what we have to follow, we as Church will die. So run from anyone teaching these false doctrines, or as the Bible calls them, the antichrist teachings. The Jews have to follow the same road as us to be grafted into the root-stock. Unfortunately nearly 80% of Americans believe this lie of the rapture, so it really makes me sick to the core when they do not see their teachings as that of the antichrist.

These were also the same Jews, the unbelieving ones, that left Paul for dead after stoning him, and which we read of in the Acts of Barnabas: *"And having bound him to take him away to the governor, and a pious Jebusite, a kinsman of Nero, having count to Cyprus, the Jews, learning this, took Barnabas by night, and bound him with a rope by the neck; and having dragged him to the hippodrome from the synagogue, and having gone out of the city, standing round him, they burned him with fire, so that even his bones became dust."* To now try and convince people that Christ has to come to earth again to save these people, who have exactly the same status as any other non believer, is utter rubbish and insane and in direct conflict with events in, and the message of, the Bible.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE COVENANT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS ON CALVINISM

Then what about Calvin and his doctrine of election? My own viewpoint is that it finds acceptance by people who like philosophy. They can think and write about subjects from all sides and enjoy coming to conclusions that ask questions from their readers. These results most of the time cannot be substantiated by the real message of the Bible. And then, like so many other people before and after him, they do not want to look at Israel as an example for us to follow, as they are worried that the LORD will reject them as He did Israel. I remember a service I attended years ago where the preacher used Israel as an example in his sermon, and he was immediately confronted by the elders following his message and nearly got shunned by them for using Israel as a parallel in his sermon. So Calvin built a philosophy and doctrine only on the New Testament disregarding the covenant, or only taking parts of the covenant that will enhance his doctrine. But, that is what happens when you build your doctrine only on selected parts of the Bible, just like the Catholics, Luther and his saying, and a bunch of other groupings. Remember that Luther and Calvin both came from the Roman Catholic Church and only modified their doctrine where they disagreed with the official standpoint. The fact that the apostles and disciples only had the Old Testament to use and to preach the gospel of Jesus is apparently not important. Acts chapter 17 teaches us the following: *"The brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, **examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so.** Therefore many of them believed, along with a number of prominent Greek women and men."* (Act 17:10-12) I assume the only scriptures they could check were Moses and the prophets. Something else that negates Calvin as someone to follow comes from Hebrews: *"Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith."* Calvin's own testimony is as follows: *"Honour, glory, and riches shall be the reward of your pains; but above all, do not fail to rid the country of those scoundrels, who stir up the people to revolt against us. **Such monsters should be exterminated, as I have exterminated Michael Servetus the Spaniard.**"* Calvin disqualifies himself by his own admission in not only that he took someone else's life, but encourages his followers to follow him and commit murder, and is certainly not something worth following. *"These things I have spoken to you so that you may be kept from stumbling. They will make you outcasts from the synagogue, but an hour is coming for everyone who kills you to think that he is offering service to God. These things they will do because they have not known the Father or Me. But these things I have spoken to you, so that*

when their hour comes, you may remember that I told you of them. These things I did not say to you at the beginning, because I was with you". (Joh 16:1-4)

They also do not believe that you must first come to the realisation of the need for a redeemer, as you are one of the elect. That means that you do not have to come to the cross and accept what Jesus did for you to establish the covenant of righteousness, as you are fine just as you are. With the exodus of Israel from Egypt and their rebellion over the Promised Land, the LORD did not punish the children under the age of twenty years old. No, the Bible declares it is follows: Num 14:29 **"your corpses will fall in this wilderness, even all your numbered men, according to your complete number from twenty years old and upward, who have grumbled against Me."** Thus the children first had to reach the age of 21 before they were treated as adults. Only then can they decide that they need to leave Egypt and take responsibility for their own lives. Only then can they be baptised. Trying to baptise infants has absolutely no effect on their lives. That is one of the reasons Calvinists give in to temptation more quickly than those who were not baptised as babies, as they still find themselves under the jurisdiction of the Pharaoh. They are still in Egypt and have to make bricks to expand his kingdom. They are members of the covenant, and that is one reason they will only learn after they die who the LORD really is. **"And it will be that whichever of the families of the earth does not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, there will be no rain on them. If the family of Egypt does not go up or enter, then no rain will fall on them; it will be the plague with which the LORD smites the nations who do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths. This will be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all the nations who do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths."** (Zec 14:17-19) What is so special about the Feast of Booths? "It had to remind them of the time they left Egypt. **"Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'On the fifteenth of this seventh month is the Feast of Booths for seven days to the LORD. 'On the first day is a holy convocation; you shall do no laborious work of any kind. 'For seven days you shall present an offering by fire to the LORD. On the eighth day you shall have a holy convocation and present an offering by fire to the LORD; it is an assembly. You shall do no laborious work. 'These are the appointed times of the LORD which you shall proclaim as holy convocations, to present offerings by fire to the LORD-- burnt offerings and grain offerings, sacrifices and drink offerings, each day's matter on its own day-- besides those of the sabbaths of the LORD, and besides your gifts and besides all your votive and freewill offerings, which you give to the LORD. 'On exactly the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the crops of the land, you shall celebrate the feast of the LORD for seven days, with a rest on the first day and a rest on the eighth day. 'Now on the first day you shall take for yourselves the foliage of beautiful trees, palm branches and boughs of leafy trees and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days. 'You shall thus celebrate it as a feast to the LORD for seven days in the year. **It shall be a perpetual statute throughout your generations; you shall celebrate it in the seventh month. 'You shall live in booths for seven days; all the native-born in Israel shall live in booths, so that your generations may know that I had the sons of Israel live in booths when I brought them out from the land of Egypt. I am the LORD your God.'"** (Lev 23:34-43)**

Children that have not come of age yet is the responsibility of the father and he has to take responsibility for them and what they do. **"Now I say, as long as the heir is a child, he does not differ at all from a slave although he is owner of everything, but he is under guardians and managers until the date set by the father."** (Gal 4:1-2)

A further major problem I have with Calvin and his teachings is his limited atonement as Jesus only came for the elect. John recorded Jesus as saying: **"And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment; concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me;"** (John 16:8-9) So no person in the world will be able to say that they did know about sin and righteousness, as that is the work of the Holy Spirit. So that in a nutshell negates the limited atonement of his teaching.

I do not know how the Calvinists interpret the following passages: *“Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord GOD: and not that he should return from his ways, and live? But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die. Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. Hear now, O house of Israel; Is not my way equal? are not your ways unequal? When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die. Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive. Because he considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die.”* (Eze 18:23-28)

And then the following passages Also from Ezekiel: *“When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.”* (Eze 33:8-9) This is especially necessary in what Paul describes in 11 Cor. 10 *“Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.”* (1Co 10:11)

CONSEQUENCES OF THE COVENANT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS ON DISPENSATIONALIST DOCTRINE

They are trying so hard to make the Bible fit their doctrine that they sometimes say and do hilarious things, and off course also rejecting what Jesus himself said. On the cross Jesus said ***“It is finished”***. But apparently not so. Jesus has to return to earth and restore the physical nation of Israel, even though He told them that He will take away their heirloom, which I quoted earlier. ***“Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people, producing the fruit of it.”*** And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust.” ***When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard His parables, they understood that He was speaking about them.*** This parable does not have an additional section telling the Jews that they will be forgiven and that the LORD will change his mind and appoint them again as heirlooms of the vineyard. If it was to happen surely Jesus would have told them so as He is God and knows everything.

That is exactly what Israel was expecting in the days of Jesus. They wanted a physical kingdom. Now these people are doing exactly the same, expecting a physical kingdom on earth.

I want to quote part of the doctrine of a local church that believes this doctrine. *“Just because Daniel does not say that 2000 years will pass between two verses in Chapter 9, and that Zechariah 9 also not specify 2000 years between verses 9 and 10, and that Micah also does not mention the 2000 year gap in chapter 5 between verses 1 and 3, does **not mean that these prophecies have to be continuous and have to be fulfilled during the same time. THE KEY IS THE MYSTERY.**”* Their attitude is that those who oppose this view, does not belong to the LORD as they do not understand the mystery. The fact that Paul spells out this mystery in many of his letters to the different congregations, does not carry any weight. *“Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God, that is, the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints, **to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.**”*(Col 1:25-27)

Another belief is that they do not believe that Jesus came to do away with the difference between Israel and the Church. **But the covenant shows clearly that all people who become**

partakers of this covenant will be His people. Paul declares that it is the mystery which the prophets did not know of, as quoted above. If these people would only accept the Bible alone as their teachings, and not those of people. The covenant teaches us that there is no difference. These people make the same mistake as the Muslims, the Mormons and so many other people in clinging to the doctrines of man. I actually want to use the quotation I used earlier just to cement this fact. Ephesians chapter 2 teaches the following: *“Therefore remember that formerly you, **the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called “Uncircumcision” by the so-called “Circumcision,” which is performed in the flesh by human hands-- remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity. AND HE CAME AND PREACHED PEACE TO YOU WHO WERE FAR AWAY, AND PEACE TO THOSE WHO WERE NEAR; for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.** (Eph 2:11-22)*

They also teach that there will be a secret rapture of the saints when Jesus returns the first time. (According to them Jesus will return more than once, sort of like a shuttle service.) They say it will be a secret, yet they use a verse that says the opposite. *“For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.”* (1Th 4:16-17) Now I am just wondering how nobody will know about it if it says the opposite.

“And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.” Apparently this verse is also not applicable to them, as they can even pray a short sinner’s prayer on behalf of someone and then that person is saved. The fact that only the LORD can add people to His nation does not worry them at all. *“Those who desire to make a good showing in the flesh try to compel you to be circumcised, simply so that they will not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. For those who are circumcised do not even keep the Law themselves, but they desire to have you circumcised so that they may boast in your flesh. But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, **but a new creation. And those who will walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.** (Gal 6:12-16)* (See circumcision earlier in this document) The last part of the passage is very interesting. It is not the God of Israel, but the Israel of God, **so not the physical Israel, but the new Israel; those who choose to serve Him and become part of the covenant.**

CONSEQUENCES OF THE COVENANT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS ON THE RAPTURE THEORY

We find these people in all sorts of belief systems. They span the whole spectrum from starting at the Dispensationalists, Calvinists, Pentecostal, Israel vision, British Jews, Charismatic’s and a whole bunch of different people. Their prime scripture is Daniel’s prophesy in chapter 9 concerning the seventy weeks and that it will only be completed during and after the seven year tribulation. According to them we as ‘non Jews’, or Christians, will be in heaven, whilst Christ will rule on earth during the millennial age. According to them, there are still things for Christ to

do on earth **and that He lied on the cross when He said:** *“Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, **“It is finished!”** And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.”* (Joh 19:30)

This doctrine is based on the fact that we are living in a dispensation of grace, that Jesus would come to rapture the Church before, during or after the tribulation, that the Jews would be restored to their former state, and that they will be given a second chance to come to Jesus, and that Jesus would then judge the people of the earth. The advocates of this doctrine maintain that there is a difference between Israel and the Church, and then refer to a mystery that Paul says was revealed to him. These advocates then claim that only certain people have the ability to interpret certain sections of scriptures, and that Paul’s mystery is one of these scriptures as it refers to the difference between the Church and Israel and the way the LORD will deal with them. They use the prophecy of Daniel regarding the seventy weeks as their main argument that the last week of this prophecy has not yet been fulfilled, and that this is part of the mystery of what Paul refers to. The fact that both Jesus and Paul tell us what the mystery is, and that the gospel will be preached all over the world, is apparently not the mystery. *“Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God, that is, **the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints, to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.**”*(Col 1:25-27)

However, we have already concluded that there is no difference between Israel and the Church. How do we then interpret Daniels prophecy, and has the seventieth week been fulfilled? I know that people have written many books about the rapture and its effect, and that many people have used it as scripts for their doctorate degrees, but is this doctrine correct?

The rapture is one of those doctrines that have a very calming effect on Christians, as it gives us a sense of relief that we do not have to worry about all these nasty things that will happen during the tribulation. The tribulation is only for Israel and the unbelievers, or that is what we are taught. If we however see ourselves as the new Israel, we end up with a problem in that we have to face the tribulation, and then things get slightly out of hand.

Many people have written books concerning Daniel’s seventy weeks, and how it must be interpreted. The first 69 weeks we find that most people agree with in that it gives us the time from the return of Israel from exile, up to the coming of Jesus. **And then we also have the fiction writers with their Left Behind series that many people take as the absolute truth, even though the writers themselves declare that their books are fiction. For this they have even received prizes as the best Christian fiction writers.**

The last week is the week that all the fuss is about. This fuss only started about 160 years ago when a certain Darby gave a different meaning to this, and now we find that most people who are not strong in their faith, are running after him. Before Darby there was no doctrine about the rapture or someone claiming that there is a difference between the Church and the latter day Jews. This doctrine has the effect that people are spending lots of money to go to Israel and to celebrate Shabbat, to fight for Israel’s right to the temple mount, and to try and establish new sacrifices to the LORD, as Jesus did not do away with animal sacrifices. The fact that most of these Jews came from Europe are also disputed by these people. The majority of Ashkenazi Jews are descended from prehistoric European women, and are the people that occupy Israel and are known as Jews today. They have very little in common with the Jews in the time of Jesus. They are the people that Hitler murdered, and they were also the theme for Luthers book, “On the Jews and their lies”. In this book he urged the Germans to burn their synagogues and a host of things that I will not use in this document. This will also never be used in any sermon by any preacher, as it promotes anti semetism.

What a great many people do not know is that the reason the rapturers believe that we now live in a period of grace that fits in between week 69 an 70 of Daniel, is that both

Jesus Christ and God the Father did not know that the Jews would reject Jesus. There are so many writings that hold on to this belief. I must admit that it is extremely difficult to find a single definition of why there will be a rapture as almost every teacher of this theory has his own interpretation.

But what does the seventieth week of Daniel actually proclaim "*And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.*" (Dan 9:27) Daniel, in this prophecy, says that in the last week, which is actually seven years, a new covenant will come in effect. When we examine our Lord Jesus Christ's ministry on earth, we find that He spent three and a half years trying to convince the Jews that He was the Christ, and that they had to change their ways and accept Him as the Christ. After this period, and as Daniel puts it, in the middle of the week, Jesus was crucified. We know that Jesus was the complete and perfect sacrifice and accepted by the Father, which is why the daily sacrifice ceased in the middle of the week, as it was no longer required.

Let us examine this scripture chronologically as Daniel wrote it. The covenant that Jesus entered into with the God the Father is the strong covenant that Daniel prophesied about, as it is the covenant between God the father and His Son, Jesus Christ. This covenant was established on our behalf. We also know that Jesus Himself said that He came to fulfil and not to establish something new. That is why He was sacrificed, and that is the reason why this is the strongest covenant that can be entered into. "***Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.***" (Mat 5:17) This confirms then that the covenant Abraham entered into was fulfilled, which required all male persons to be circumcised, and that only those that were circumcised were treated as children of Abraham. When the LORD asked Abraham to sacrifice Isaac his son, the LORD declared that He would sacrifice His Son, as one rule applied to both parties of the covenant. By asking Abraham to sacrifice Isaac, the LORD declared that He would do the same. This first covenant had to be confirmed by continually bringing sacrifices, and by circumcising all males. In addition to this the Israelites had to bring their tithes to the Levites for their service at the temple, and all first born had to be sacrificed to the LORD. The circumcision and sacrifice of the first-born was required as the LORD cursed the entire first born in Egypt as part of the plagues in Egypt. That is another reason Jesus had to die, as he had to nullify that curse.

The following is a short form summary of the vision Daniel received and the interpretation he received from Gabriël.

"At the beginning of your supplications the command was issued, and I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed; so give heed to the message and gain understanding of the vision." Daniel 9:23

1 - "*Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city*" (also see Lev 25:9 "*You are also to count off seven sabbaths of years for yourself, seven times seven years*") So the seventy weeks are actually 490 years.

2 - "*to finish the transgression,*" That during this last week the ungodliness of the LORD's nation will end after they received the gift of the Holy Spirit, where the heart of stone is replaced by a heart of flesh. We will be purchased by Jesus as He died for our transgressions.

3 - "*to make an end of sin,*" That an end will be made to the time of the law, as Jesus will be the complete sacrifice for sin and the law will be abolished as measurement of our salvation.

4 - "*make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness,*" That was the prime reason for Jesus to come to earth as He would bring everlasting righteousness to those who

believe that He was the Messiah, and the righteousness of fulfilling the law was done away with. So we are no longer seen as sinners, but are seen as a people washed by the blood of Jesus.

5 – *“to seal up vision and prophecy”* To bring an end to all the prophecies surrounding the first coming of the LORD Jesus Christ.

6 – *“and to anoint the most holy”*. Jesus also had to be anointed as King, Redeemer, and Prophet.

This is what was spoken of by Gabriël to Daniel. He then goes further and explains in detail what was going to happen during this 490 years or 70 weeks.

- *“So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks”*. So 49 years after their return from exile the temple will be rebuilt.
- *“and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress.”* So from the time of rebuilding the temple to the start of the ministry of Jesus would be 434 years. (62x7)
- Dan 9:26 *“Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off, (so during the 70th week) and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.”* So Gabriel explains to Daniel that Jesus will be cut off or killed with no benefit for Him, and then continues with what will happen to Jerusalem. The end of Jerusalem will come by the people of a prince to come, in other words someone who was not a prince in the days of Daniel, exactly as it actually happened when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem. Gabriel says that it will be by a flood but we find that in Daniel 11 verses 22, 26 and 40 soldiers are said to come as a flood. The last part Gabriel says that right up to the end of time there will be wars and desolations in, around and over the jurisdiction of Jerusalem, exactly as is still the case today.
- Dan 9:27 *“And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.”* Here we learn that a new covenant will be formed during the last week of the prophecy. When we look at the ministry of Jesus we find that He went through the land of Israel for three and a half years doing wonders and preaching to the people that He is the Christ. So as Daniel puts it, in the middle of the week, thus three and a half years into the ministry of Jesus, He was crucified. We know that His sacrifice was acceptable to the Father, and that is why the sacrifices would stop, because it was no longer required, as Jesus was accepted as the complete sacrifice. That was also the start of the new covenant, or the covenant of righteousness, and was the firm covenant that Daniel wrote about. The covenant was made between God the Father and Jesus Christ His son, who took our place for our sins. Jesus declared this in Matthew 5:17: *“Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill.”* This shows that Jesus did away with the laws governing the old covenant. When God asked Abraham to sacrifice his son, He also knew that He had to give His son as a sacrifice. And that is what Jesus came to do. He also did away with the circumcision and did away with the law surrounding the first born. We also do not need any Levites as a go between us and the Lord as we now appear before the Father covered by the blood of Jesus.

Many of the advocates of the rapture says that the daily sacrifice only ended when Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 A.D., and that we cannot use this as an indicator. What they forget however, is that if we believe that Jesus was the Christ, no sacrifices were required after His death. He was the perfect sacrifice required by the Law of Moses. So no sacrifices were required anymore. So if

they want to use this as an excuse, then they actually declare that Jesus was not the Christ as the LORD still accepted the sacrifices done in the temple by the Levites.

We find another reason why Jesus could be sacrificed and why He was acceptable to the LORD, and why the Father did not look favourably on the offer of the High Priest. The following events took place the day Jesus was brought before the High Priest: *“And said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days. And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee? But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy.”* (Mat 26:61-65) The clothing of the High priest had to be made of a single cloth, without any seams. *“These are the garments that they shall make: a breastpiece, an ephod, a robe, a coat of checker work, a turban, and a sash. They shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother and his sons to serve me as priests. They shall receive gold, blue and purple and scarlet yarns, and fine twined linen. And they shall make the ephod of gold, of blue and purple and scarlet yarns, and of fine twined linen, skillfully worked. It shall have two shoulder pieces attached to its two edges, so that it may be joined together. And the skillfully woven band on it shall be made like it **and be of one piece with it**, of gold, blue and purple and scarlet yarns, and fine twined linen.”* Ex 28:4-8. By tearing his clothing, the High Priest could not enter into the temple the next day for the sacrifice. The only way he could do it, was by sewing it together, but then it would have a seam, and would thus be rejected by the Father, as it did not comply with the Law of Moses. That is why the sacrifice Jesus brought was accepted, and the reason why His clothes were not torn, but the lot cast over it. *“And when they had crucified him, they parted his garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take.”* (Mar 15:24) Here we see that His clothes were not torn but given as complete clothing which complied with the Law of Moses.

We have to remember that Jesus was crucified at the time of the morning sacrifice, and that He died six hours later. He was crucified outside the town, as He also had to complete that sacrifice that had to be slain outside the town. *“We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle. For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.”* (Heb 13:10-13) As mentioned earlier He also did not bring His sacrifice in the earthly tabernacle, but in the heavenly one: *“It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”* (Heb 9:23-28)

When the veil was rent in the temple, Jesus was accepted in the Heavenly tabernacle. That was also the end of the first half of the last week of Daniels' prophecy.

The second half of the week was the time the apostles spent in Jerusalem to convince the Jews that Jesus was the Christ, and ended with the vision of Peter: *“On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour: And he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance, And saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great*

sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.” (Act 10:9-15) This was also about the same time that Stephen was killed by the Jews. This was the end of the last half of the week as seen by Daniel, and at this time we as believers became part of the LORDS’ nation. The one thing we have to remember is that the Jews expected a physical king to rule over them again like in the days of Saul and David, but failed to realise that these kings only ruled over them because they rejected the LORD. “And the LORD said to Samuel, Obey the voice of the people in all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them.” (1Sa 8:7)

Daniel also declares that at the end of the week abominations will start and it will continue until the end of time. As a consequence of this, Satan is now trying to destroy all flesh, and as Daniel says, it will last till the end of the earth.

I mentioned earlier that the advocates of the rapture also refer to the mystery of Paul. These words are normally used completely out of context in order for them to deceive the people and to convince people of their doctrine.

To conclude the last week then; it started with the ministry of Jesus to the Jews, and ended when the message of the gospel came to us as gentiles. From this we can also conclude that there will not be a separate rapture of the Church, but that we as gentiles are one with all believers. Jesus himself said that we must hold on to our faith till the end, and not to think that we will not go through the tribulation. Even in Paul’s time we had people that did not understand the message of the gospel: “As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine, **Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do. Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned: From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling; Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.” (1Ti 1:3-7)**

So in summary, the covenant that Jesus made on the cross was the strong covenant of Daniel, as it removed the curse of the first born, and fulfilled all the sacrifices the Levites and high priest had to bring. Jesus also paid for all our sins in order for us to appear in righteousness before the Father without blemish or sin. So He is our righteousness, and now we can do what the writer of Hebrews says: “Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” (Heb 4:16) This we can only do because of what Jesus did for us.

One major problem I also have with the doctrine of the rapture and those who believe this, is that they form part of the antichrist. The apostle John gives us a very clear definition of this: “2Jn 1:7 **For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist.**” The Jews do not believe that Jesus was the Christ, and by siding with and supporting the Jews of today, they become part of the antichrist.

SUMMARY

So my point of view is that we all live once, and then we die. Those that became partakers of the covenant will live with Christ in the millennial age to rid ourselves of how to serve the LORD, about who is saved and who is condemned. After the battle in which Gog and Magog, the Satan and all the people that did not serve the LORD, will be defeated, will we appear before the white throne. Those that lived as overcomers will live in the New Jerusalem forever.

As a closing comment I would like to stress that whoever partakes in the LORD's supper as a sign to show his faith and to show that he enters into a covenant with the LORD, will be part of the first awakening. Exactly where we will find ourselves, is a different story.

ADDENDUM 3

The following is a compilation of various sources of information from various writers, and is included to describe where the various interpretations and religious figures come from. It is in no way a complete study but worth reading to see the commonalities between the Church in Assyria, or the RCC originate from.

THE WORSHIP OF SEMIRAMIS

Semiramis, who was both Nimrod's wife and Tammuz' mother, was worshiped as the "mother of god" and a "fertility goddess" because she had to be extremely fertile to give birth to all the pagan incarnate gods that represented Nimrod. Where Nimrod is the "sun god", Semiramis is the "moon goddess". She was worshiped throughout the world by each of the titles associated with Nimrod's worship, in addition to many titles unique to herself (see table below). For instance, the respective Greek and Roman names applied to the worship of Semiramis include: Aphrodite and Venus, the goddess of love; Artemis and Diana, the goddess of hunting and childbirth; Athena and Minerva, the goddess of crafts, war and wisdom; Demeter and Ceres, the goddess of growing things; Gaea and Terra, symbol of the fertile earth; Hera and Juno, the protector of marriage and women, who was the sister and wife of Zeus in Greek mythology, and the wife of Jupiter in Roman mythology; Hestia and Vesta, the goddess of the hearth; plus Rhea and Ops, who was wife and sister of the Greek horned-god Kronos.

MOTHER AND SON WORSHIP

Semiramis was initially included in the pagan Babylonian trinity as the holy spirit or seed of the divine son in his mother's womb. With time, however, the father Nimrod was practically overlooked and worshiped only as the god-incarnate son in his mother's arms. In other words, the father became invisible and was no longer worshiped, whereas, the mother with the god-incarnate son in her arms became the grand object of worship. Numerous Babylonian monuments show the goddess-mother Semiramis with her son in her arms. This worship of mother and child spread throughout the known world, and given different names in the various languages of the world. Ancient Germans worshipped the virgin Hertha with child in arms. Scandinavians called her Disa pictured with child. The Egyptian mother and child were worshiped as Isis with the infant Osiris or Horus seated on his mother's lap. In India, the mother and child were called Devaki and Krishna, and also Isi and Iswara as they are worshiped to this day. In Asia, they were known as Cybele and Deoius; in pagan Rome, as Fortuna and Jupiter-puer, or Jupiter, the boy; in Greece, as Ceres, the great mother with babe at her breast, or as Irene, the goddess of peace, with the boy Plutus in her arms.

The image of mother with child in her arms was so firmly entrenched in the pagan mind that after the time Christianity appeared on the scene in the fourth century, these statues and paintings were merely renamed and worshiped as the virgin Mary with her god-incarnate son Jesus. Thus, the pagan mother and child entered Christianity as the Roman Catholic worship of Mary with the infant Jesus. In fact, in Tibet, China, and Japan, Jesuit missionaries were astonished to find the counterpart of the madonna and child as devoutly worshiped as they were in Rome. Shing Moo, the holy mother in China was portrayed with a child in her arms and a glory around her, exactly as if she had been fashioned by Roman Catholic artisans.

MOTHER WORSHIP

The pagan mother initially derived her deification from the divine nature attributed to her child. She was raised far above the level of all creatures, and worshiped as a partaker of the trinitarian godhead. The mother eventually became the preferred object of worship. The son was exhibited

merely as a child in his mother's arms without any particular attraction, whereas the mother's image was displayed in magnificent artistic array and invested with the exquisite beauty attributed to Semiramis during her life.

To justify worship of the mother, she was elevated to a divine station just like her god-incarnate son. The deified queen mother was adored as the incarnation of the holy spirit of peace and love. The highest titles were accordingly bestowed on her. In Egypt, the mother was styled Athor, the "habitation of god" to signify that all the "fullness of the godhead" dwelt in her womb. She was named Hestia in Greece and Vesta, which is just a Roman variation of the same name, meaning the "dwelling-place of deity."

Under her title, "mother of the gods," the goddess queen of Babylon became an object of universal worship. The mother of the gods was worshiped by the Persians, the Syrians, and with the most profound religious veneration by all the kings of Europe and Asia. When Caesar invaded Britain, he discovered the Druid priests worshiping the "**mother of god**" as Virgo-Patitura.

In Egypt, as the "**queen of heaven**" she was the greatest and most worshiped of all the divinities. During Egyptian bondage, the Israelites repeatedly departed from the one true invisible Elohim and worshiped the pagan mother. When the Israelites fell into apostasy under King Solomon, they worshiped this mother goddess as Ashtaroth (Asherah), a name by which the pagan Babylonian goddess was known to the Israelites:

*And the people of Israel again did what was evil in the sight of YHWH, and served the Baals [various lord gods depicting **Nimrod**] and the **Ashtaroth [Semiramis]**, the gods of Syria, the gods of Sidon, the gods of Moab, the gods of the Ammonites, and the gods of the Philistines; and they forsook YHWH, and did not serve him. -**Judges***

Later, during the time of the prophet Jeremiah, the Jews worshiped the **queen of heaven** so devoutly that they could not be convinced to give up this paganism even after Jerusalem had been burnt and the land desolated due to this very pagan worship:

*Then all the men who knew that their wives had offered incense to other gods, and all the women who stood by, a great assembly, all the people who dwelt in Pathros in the land of Egypt, answered Jeremiah: "As for the word which you have spoken to us in the name of YHWH, we will not listen to you. But we will do everything that we have vowed, burn incense to the **queen of heaven [Semiramis]** and pour out libations to her, as we did, both we and our fathers, our kings and our princes, in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem; for then we had plenty of food, and prospered, and saw no evil. But since we left off burning incense to the **queen of heaven** and pouring out libations to her, we have lacked everything and have been consumed by the sword and by famine." And the women said, "When we burned incense to the **queen of heaven** and poured out libations to her, was it without our husbands' approval that we made **cakes** for her bearing her image and poured out libations to her? - **Jeremiah***

Common names applied to the pagan goddess Semiramis

Title	Roman	Greek
Goddess of Love	Venus	Aphrodite
Goddess of Hunting & Childbirth	Diana	Artemis
Goddess of Crafts, War & Wisdom	Minerva	Athena

Goddess of Growing Things	Ceres	Demeter
Symbol of the Fertile Earth	Terra	Gaea
Protector of Marriage & Women	Juno	Hera
Goddess of the Hearth	Vesta	Hestia
Wife and Sister of Kronos	Ops	Rhea

Worship of mother and child spread from Babylon to the ends of the earth, but were called different names in the languages of the various counties where their worship appeared. The ancient Germans worshipped the virgin **HERTHA** with the child in the arms of his mother. The Scandinavians called her **DISA** pictured with her child. In Egypt, the mother and her child were worshiped as **ISIS** with the infant **OSIRIS** or **HORUS** seated on his mother's lap. In India, the mother and child were called **DEVAKI** and **KRISHNA**, and also **ISI** and **ISWARA** as they are worshiped to this day. In Asia, they were known as **CYBELE** and **DEOIOUS**; in pagan Rome, as **FORTUNA** and **JUPITER-PUER**, or the boy **JUPITER**; in Greece, as **CERES**, the great mother with babe at her breast, or as **IRENE**, the goddess of peace, with the boy **PLUTUS** in her arms. Even in Tibet, China, and Japan, Jesuit missionaries were astonished to find the Roman counterpart of **MADONNA** and **child. SHING MOO**, the holy mother in China was portrayed with a child in her arms and a glory around her.

Semiramis was worshiped in Ephesus as the pagan fertility goddess **DIANA** who represented the generative powers of nature. She was referred to as a fertility goddess because she mothered all the numerous pagan gods representing the god-incarnate Tammuz. Diana was pictured with numerous teats so that she could nurse all the pagan gods, and she wore a tower-shaped crown symbolizing the Babylonian tower of Babel.

Legend has it that after **Semiramis** died, she ascended into heaven and was returned to earth inside a large egg which fell into the Euphrates river. The egg was pushed ashore by a dove and she emerged from the egg as **Astarte** or **Ishtar** (in English, **Easter**). To show her gratitude to the dove, she turned it into an egg-laying rabbit, all signs of fertility. Another sign or symbol found throughout Babylonia is the obelisk, a phallic symbol. These can also be seen in Egypt, Rome and Washington DC. The obelisk in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican was dragged up to Rome from Egypt. The Washington Monument is a sign that Babylon is alive and well in the USA!

In the seventh century C.E., when Rome sought to harness the power of the great population of Ishmaelites in the desert and use them to purge Jews and Messianic believers from the holy land, they groomed a handsome young lad named Mohammed to lead them. They were the creators of the religion of Islam with the moon goddess, Ashteroth (Semiramis) and as their god - Allah.

The ten commandments, Protestant and the Catholic versions:

Abbreviated Protestant Ten Commandments:

1. You shall have no other gods but me.
2. You shall not make unto you any graven images
3. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain

4. You shall remember the Sabbath and keep it holy
5. Honor your mother and father
6. You shall not murder
7. You shall not commit adultery
8. You shall not steal
9. You shall not bear false witness
10. You shall not covet anything that belongs to your neighbor

Abbreviated Catholic Ten Commandments:

1. I, the Lord, am your God. You shall not have other gods besides me.
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord God in vain
3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day
4. Honor your father and your mother
5. You shall not kill
6. You shall not commit adultery
7. You shall not steal
8. You shall not bear false witness
9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods

What you will find is that the second commandment has been left out of the Catholic version to allow them to revere their own graven images.

SEMIRAMIS, QUEEN OF BABYLON

Any effort to trace the origins of the myth, legend, and lore of goddess-worship will eventually lead one back to a single historical figure---Semiramis, wife of Nimrod and queen of Babylon, and this is especially true when considering the goddess/planet Venus.

Before we can begin to deal with Semiramis though, we must (as with any historical figure) gain at least a general understanding of her cultural and temporal setting. Since I have found in my researches that neither proven scientific truth nor gleanings of fact from the body of ancient legends in any way contradicts a proper understanding of biblical revelation, I will use the scriptural framework of history as a basis upon which to reconstruct the story of Semiramis the woman.

When Noah and his family left the ark after the flood, they settled first at the northern feet of Ararat facing what is today Georgia, USSR. From here, these eight souls began to spread out into the surrounding districts of northern Iran and Syria, as well as eastern Turkey. After a considerable period (perhaps 5 to 6 hundred years), the families of Noah's descendants began to scatter a bit more widely due to increasing population, and perhaps some degree of rivalry or even enmity between the families of Japheth, Shem, and Ham. In this way we find that within about half a millennium the entire "fertile crescent", as well as the Nile valley, the Anatolian and Iranian plateaus, Arabia, and Ethiopia have been sparsely settled---but with a decided majority of Noah's descendants living in the lower regions of Mesopotamia (which would come to be called Sumer and Akkad).

Modern archaeology has confirmed the fact that the first inhabitants of these areas were homogeneous in both race and culture, and the most reliable researches indicate that it was from here that population, animal husbandry, metallurgy, agriculture, and "civification" spread throughout the earth. The scientific and scriptural views are in exact agreement upon the origin and spread of races and civilization---the only point of difference is the time scale involved! Whereas the scriptures clearly indicate the existence of all these elements of civilization long

before the flood; orthodox science, by its denial of the bible is required to construct a mythical stone age several millennia long in order to account for the same phenomena.

It was in Mesopotamia that the first cities were built after the flood, and the first of these was quite naturally named after the very first city built by man before the flood---Enoch. Due to vagaries of linguistic permutation, this name has come down to us as Erech or Uruk in Sumeria. In all there were seven major cities built near the head of the Persian Gulf, leading to the name "Land of the Seven Cities" commonly found in the early mythologies of the world. These seven cities are enumerated in Genesis as those which were conquered by Nimrod, establishing the world's first empire. The earliest Babylonian legends tell of a conquering people who came up out of the Persian Gulf and established an empire from these cities. This seems to fit well with what we know of the movements of Nimrod in his early career. He was a native of Ethiopia and was widely traveled among the few populated areas of those days. When he set out to build himself an army of conquest, he recruited from his "cousins" the descendants of Sheba and Dedan who had come up through Arabia to settle on the Asian mainland at the Strait of Hormuz and on the Indus river in what is now Afghanistan (these people were the Dravidians who were driven southward into India by the later Aryan invasion). After raising his army, Nimrod ferried them up the gulf in the world's first naval armada, and conquered his empire. The best estimates place the time of the conquest as about 4000 to 3500 BC, and about 1000 years after the flood of Noah.

In the midst of the tumult of war Nimrod and Semiramis met--and in none too savory circumstances, for tradition states that she was an inn/brothel keeper in the city of Erech---leading one to speculate upon the nature of their initial acquaintance. Semiramis was a native of Erech, which as evidenced by its name seems to have been built by a Hamitic family (Ham's wife was said to have been descended from Cain who built the first Erech in honor of his son). The name Semiramis is a later, Hellenized form of the Sumerian name "Sammur-amat", or "gift of the sea."

The initial element "sammur" when translated into Hebrew becomes "Shinar" (the biblical name for lower Mesopotamia), and is the word from which we derive "Sumeria". This one tarnished woman then, had such a lasting impact upon world history that not only do we call by her name the land from which civilization flowed, but God himself through the sacred writer has let us know that its distinguishing characteristic was that it was "the Land of Shinar," or Semiramis. Very little has come down to us through the millennia concerning Semiramis' rise to power, but it is safe to assume that it was initially upon Nimrod's coattails that she rode, although later in life as well as throughout history her influence overwhelmingly obscured that of her husband. Of course, it would not do to have an ex-harlot upon the throne, so the "polite fiction" was invented that she was a virgin sprung from the sea at Nimrod's landing, and hence a suitable bride for the emperor (thus the title Semiramis which has totally obscured her original name).

Semiramis was the instigator in forming the false religion aimed at supporting their rule, and of course her suggestion fell upon open ears. The religion she invented was based primarily upon a corruption of the primeval astronomy formulated by Noah's righteous ancestors before the flood. In the original this system depicted by means of constellations the story of Satan's rebellion and the war in the heavens, his subversion of mankind, the fall of Adam and Eve, the promise of One to come who would suffer and die to relieve man from the curse of sin then be installed as Lord of Creation, and the final re-subjugation of the cosmos to God through Him.

These eternal truths were corrupted by her (rather, quite obviously, by the evil one controlling her) into a mythic cycle wherein the great dragon is depicted as the rightful lord of the universe whose throne has been temporarily usurped by One whom we can recognize as the God of the Bible. The serpent creates man in his present miserable state, but promises that a child would

one day born of a divine mother---which child would supplant God, become a god himself, and return rulership of the Earth to the serpent. These fables were based upon the then widely-known story of the constellations, and were introduced under the guise of revealing the hidden esoteric knowledge concealed in them (regardless of the fact that the original was quite straightforward).

Although this esotericism was the second element in Semiramis' cult, it only masked the actual goal which was the worship of the "heavenly host," which the Bible equates with Satan's army of fallen angels. Satan was quite willing to receive worship "by proxy", hence the third major element of the mystery religion was emperor-worship. This religion was propagated by a hierarchy of priests and priestesses, to whom were assigned the task of initiating the populace at large into it's ascending degrees of revelation, culminating at the highest level in both direct worship of Satan and demon-possession.

Although Nimrod was a brilliant strategist, he made a fatal blunder when he allowed Semiramis to retain full control over this religious hierarchy, and through it the minds and hearts of the people; for when a schism occurred between them she was able to turn it from a tool of support into a deadly weapon. The rift between husband and wife occurred when the queen bore an illegitimate son, and the king threatened her with both dethronement and exposure of her true origin. Semiramis, of course would not allow this to take place, and devised a plot to overthrow Nimrod.

During the course of the New Year's festivities at which the advent of Nimrod's rule was celebrated, there was a certain feast exclusively for the royal family and the upper echelons of the priesthood. During this feast, which included "courses" of psychedelic and hallucinogenic drugs, a year-old ram was traditionally sacrificed by being torn limb-from-limb while still alive, and it's flesh eaten raw. This ram symbolized the old year passing into the heavens to allow room for the new year. A new-born lamb was then presented which, symbolizing the new year, would be kept and fattened for the next year's ceremonies. This year Semiramis directed the ritual according to the formula, with the exception that when the time came for the ram to be slaughtered, it was the king who was torn to pieces at the hands of the drug-crazed priesthood and Semiramis' bastard son was installed as king. Thus Nimrod, the mighty hunter, died a horrible death as a trapped beast himself.

Semiramis named her son Damu (from the Sumerian "dam," or blood), which in the later Babylonian language became Dammuzi, in Hebrew Tammuz, and in Greek Adonis. Of course, Semiramis assumed the regency for her infant son, and ruled as absolute monarch for 42 more years. In order to avoid having to kill her son on the next New Year's Day, she instituted an annual nation-wide sports competition, the winner of which would have the "honor" of taking Damu's place and ascending into heaven to become a god.

Semiramis was not unopposed in her arrogation of the regency, however, or her rule as a woman. The military arm of the government was divided into two camps for and against her, and a short war ensued which ended when the populace (roused by the priesthood) not only refused to support the "rebels" but actively opposed them. In the course of this war, though, things became so close that Semiramis was forced to build a system of walls, towers, and gates around Babylon to defend herself. She was thus the first to build fortifications and her crown afterwards was in the form of the turreted walls of Babylon. To oppose the accusations of "mere" womanhood laid against her, she had herself deified as the mother of the god Damu (since only a god can beget a god) , and installed as "The Queen of Heaven" pictured in the constellation Cassiopeia, which the ancients had intended as a corporate representation of those people faithful to God who will be enthroned by Him after the end of the age.

In spite of her cleverness, though, she also sowed the seeds of her own destruction. As she raised her son, she imbued him with divinity in the eyes of the priests and people as the means of retaining control as the divine mother without seeming to aggrandize herself. As Damu grew he became used to having every whim instantly gratified by a subservient, indeed groveling, populace. For safety's sake he had a personal bodyguard/companion group which he was never without, and which formed an elite corps of soldiery loyal and accountable to him alone. Upon coming to maturity and demanding of his mother to be installed as king, she not only refused him this--but, seeing him now as a challenge to her rule, slated him for the same death she had meted to his father. Damu caught on to her scheme, and pre-empted his "assumption" by slaying his mother with his own sword, and putting down any priestly protests by purging the hierarchy of all who would not vow allegiance to him. Thus Semiramis died after reigning as queen over Babylon for 102 years.

These events laid the groundwork for all of the pagan religious systems of antiquity, as well as many alive today. Semiramis, in particular was the model and original of every goddess and female cult figure in the ancient and modern worlds (either directly or by derivation); and thus it essential to know her story in order to discern what is factual legend and what is merely myth.

BABYLONIAN RELIGION

As we go back into the dim twilight of history with Scripture, we learn that the founder of Babel, or Babylon, was Nimrod, of whose unholy achievements we read in the 10th chapter of Genesis. He was the arch-apostate of the patriarchal age. He is described as a "mighty hunter before the Lord" -- "a hunter of the souls of men," the rabbis said. Going out from the presence of the Lord, he impiously sought to gather a multitude about himself, and in defiance of the express command of God to spread abroad upon the face of the earth, he persuaded his associates and followers to join together in "building a city and a tower which should reach unto heaven."

Not surely as some of us were taught in our childhood a tower by which they might climb up into the skies to escape another possible flood, but a tower of renown, rising to a great height, to be recognized as a temple or rallying center for those who did not walk in obedience to the word of the Lord. With all the effrontery of our modern apostates, they called their city and tower Bab-El, the gate of God; but it was soon changed by divine judgment into Babel, Confusion. It bore the stamp of unreality from the first, for we are told, "they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar." An imitation of that which is real and true has ever since characterized Babylon in all ages.

Nimrod, or Nimroud-bar-Cush, as he is called on the monuments, was a grandson of Ham, the unworthy son of Noah, whose character is revealed in his exposure of his father's shame. We know that Noah had brought through the flood the revelation of the true God, for he was a preacher of righteousness, and his utterances on more than one occasion show that he had the prophetic gift. Ham on the other hand seems to have been all too readily affected by the apostasy that brought the flood, for he shows no evidence of self-judgment, but the very opposite. His name, as spelled out upon Egyptian monuments is Khem, and this agrees with the literal sound of the Hebrew word rendered Ham in our Bibles. It means "swarthy," "darkened," or more literally, "the sun-burnt." The name indicates the state of the man's soul. For what is a sun-burnt person? One who is darkened by light from heaven. Ham had been granted wonderful mercies; he was saved from the flood because of his father's faith, but he abused his privileges and "turned the grace of God into lasciviousness." He was actually darkened by the burning rays of light that God caused to shine upon his soul. Thus his conscience became seared as with a hot

iron, and he became the founder of a race that departed from the living God and led the way into idolatry, worshipping and serving the creature more than the Creator.

We know something of what this means. We speak of people today who have become, as we say, gospel-hardened. They too have been darkened by the light, and are often the ringleaders in apostasy: "If the light that is in thee becomes darkened, how great is the darkness." There are many in the world tonight who used to listen with tears in their eyes to the story of the matchless grace of God as revealed in the cross of Christ, but are unmoved now though that story be told ever so tenderly; they have become hardened in their sins, and their seared consciences no longer feel the Spirit's breath. It is a most dangerous thing to trifle with the light from heaven.

But to proceed with our theme, Ham became darkened by the light. We know his failure and sin. But when Noah had recovered himself and knew what his son had done unto him he pronounced, by the spirit of prophecy, a curse upon Canaan, not on Ham. Do you wonder at that? I did, until I saw that God had already pronounced a blessing upon all three sons of Noah-Shem, Ham, and Japheth. So Noah passes over his unworthy son and utters a curse upon Canaan, who we can well believe was, as we say, "a chip off the old block." Ham begat a son named Cush, "the black one," and he became the father of Nimrod, the apostate leader of his generation.

Ancient lore now comes to our assistance, and tells us that the wife of Nimrod-bar-Cush was the infamous Semiramis, the First. She is reputed to have been the founder of the Babylonian mysteries and the first high-priestess of idolatry. Thus Babylon became the fountainhead of idolatry, and the mother of every heathen and pagan system in the world. The mystery-religion that was originated there spread in various forms throughout the whole earth, and as we shall see in a few minutes, it is with us today. It is identical with the mystery of iniquity which wrought so energetically in Paul's day, and shall have its fullest development when the Holy Spirit has departed and the Babylon of the apocalypse holds sway.

Building on the primeval promise of the woman's Seed who was to come, Semiramis bore a son whom she declared was miraculously conceived, and when she presented him to the people, he was hailed as the promised deliverer. This was Tammuz, whose worship Ezekiel protested against in the days of the captivity. Thus was introduced the mystery of the mother and the child, a form of idolatry that is older than any other known to man. The rites of this worship were secret. Only the initiated were permitted to know its mysteries. It was Satan's effort to delude mankind with an imitation so like the truth of God that they would not know the true Seed of the woman when He came in the fullness of time. To this Justin Martyr bears definite witness.

From Babylon this mystery-religion spread to all the surrounding nations, as the years went on and the world was populated by the descendants of Noah. Everywhere the symbols were the same, and everywhere the cult of the mother and child became the popular system. Their worship was celebrated with the most disgusting and immoral practices. The image of the queen of heaven with the babe in her arms was seen everywhere, though the names might differ as languages differed. It became the mystery-religion of Phoenicia, and by the Phoenicians was carried to the ends of the earth. Ashtoreth and Tammuz, the mother and child of these hardy adventurers, became Isis and Horus in Egypt, Aphrodite and Eros in Greece, Venus and Cupid in Italy, and bore many other names in more distant places. Within 1,000 years, Babylonianism had become the religion of the world, which had rejected the Divine revelation.

Linked with the central mystery were countless lesser mysteries, the hidden meaning of which was known only to the initiates, but the outward forms were practiced by all the people. Among these were the doctrines of purgatorial purification after death, salvation by countless

sacraments (such as priestly absolution), sprinkling with holy water, the offering of round cakes to the queen of heaven (as mentioned in the book of Jeremiah), dedication of virgins to the gods (which was literally sanctified prostitution), weeping for Tammuz for a period of 40 days prior to the great festival of Istar (who was said to have received her son back from the dead); for it was taught that Tammuz was slain by a wild boar and afterwards brought back to life. To him the egg was sacred, as depicting the mystery of his resurrection even as the evergreen was his chosen symbol and was set up in honor of his birth at the winter solstice, when a boar's head was eaten in memory of his conflict and a yule log burned with many mysterious observances.

The sign of the cross was sacred to Tammuz, as symbolizing the life giving principle and as the first letter of his name. It is represented upon vast numbers of the most ancient altars and temples, and did not, as many have supposed originate with Christianity. From this mystery-religion, the patriarch Abraham was separated by the divine call, and with this same evil cult the nation that sprang from him had constant conflict, until under Jezebel, a Phoenician princess, it was grafted onto what was left of the religion of Israel in the northern kingdom in the day of Ahab, and was the cause of their captivity at the last. Judah was polluted by it, for Baal-worship was but the Canaanitish form of Babylonian mysteries, and only by being sent into captivity to Babylon itself did Judah become cured of her fondness for idolatry. Baal was the Sun-God, the Life-giving One, identical with Tammuz.

When Christ came into this world the mystery of iniquity was everywhere holding sway, save where the truth of God as revealed in the Old Testament was known. Thus, when the early Christians set out upon the great task of carrying the gospel to the ends of the earth, they found themselves everywhere confronted by this system, in one form or another; for though Babylon as a city had long been but a mystery, her mysteries had not died with her. When the city and temples were destroyed, the high-priest fled with a company of initiates and their sacred vessels and images to Pergamos, where the Symbol of the serpent was set up as the emblem of the hidden wisdom. From there, they afterwards crossed the sea and immigrated to Italy, where, they settled on the Etruscan plain.

There the ancient cult was propagated under the name of the Etruscan Mysteries and eventually Rome became the headquarters of Babylonianism. The chief priests wore mitres shaped like the head of a fish, in honor of Dagon, the fish-god, the Lord of life-another form of the Tammuz mystery, as developed among Israel's old enemies, the Philistines. The chief priest when established in Rome took the title Pontifex Maximus, and this was imprinted in on his mitre. When Julius Caesar (who was an initiate like all young Romans of good family) had become the head of the States, he was elected Pontifex Maximus, and this title was held henceforth by all the Roman emperors down to Constantine the Great, who was at one and the same time, head of the church, and high priest to the heathen. The title was afterwards conferred upon the bishops of Rome, and is borne by the pope today, who is thus declared to be, not the successor of the fisherman-apostle Peter, but the direct successor of the high priest of the Babylonian mysteries, and the servant of the fish-god Dagon, for whom he wears, like his idolatrous predecessors, the fisherman's ring.

During the early centuries of the church's history, the mystery of iniquity had wrought with such astounding effect, and the Babylonian practices and teachings had been so largely absorbed by that which bore the name of the church of Christ, that the truth of the Holy Scriptures on many points had been wholly obscured, while idolatrous practices had been foisted upon the people as Christian sacraments, and the heathen philosophies took the place of gospel instruction. Thus was developed that amazing system which for a thousand years dominated Europe and trafficked in the bodies of souls of men, until the great Reformation of the 16th century brought in a measure of deliverance.

ADDENDUM 4

THE END TIMES AS SEEN BY EZEKIEL

The one aspect I have learned over the years is that everything that is described in the New Testament of the Bible has already been described in the Old Testament. That is the reason when someone tries to convince me of a doctrine based on only the New Testament, I normally ignore it as it will turn out to be a doctrine based on wrongful interpretation of the scripture. Remember that Jesus declared Himself that He came to fulfil, and not to establish new doctrines.

Many people struggle to understand the Book of Revelation, and especially the millennium kingdom, where it fits, and how and what the New Jerusalem will be.

I would like to use the book of Ezekiel to give us an understanding of the sequence of events, and that will then give us a better understanding of Revelation. The book of Ezekiel starts with a vision of the LORD. For many years people could only read this after turning thirty, as the priests were not allowed to read it in the temple. Fortunately for us Jesus came and many people saw Him, and Jesus himself declared that those who saw Him also saw the Father. So today we can read and interpret that vision. Her works that cover a great deal of the visions in the book of Revelation can be viewed on her website at www.revelationillustrated.com.

The next chapters then give us the background on his calling, as well as the purpose of his calling, namely to be a watchmen for Israel. The next couple of chapters we find what are wrong with the people of Israel, just as Revelation discusses what is wrong with the various Churches. This also includes various judgements.

The one judgement I would really like to emphasize is that of chapter 16, concerning Jerusalem. We are told that the LORD will take her, the Church under His wings and cover her with fine linen and silk. But she turned away from Him and became a harlot as the Church went after other gods. This portion confirms the scripture in Revelations 17, 18 and 19, where John discusses the whore, harlot, and the fall of Babylon. Fortunately Ezekiel ends this chapter with a wonderful word as the Church will be restored. *"Nevertheless I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant. Then thou shalt remember thy ways, and be ashamed, when thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder and thy younger: and I will give them unto thee for daughters, but not by thy covenant. And I will establish my covenant with thee; and thou shalt know that I am the LORD: That thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord GOD."* (Eze 16:60-63). The next chapter is a continuation of the judgement against the Church as they did not return to the LORD in times of oppression.

In chapter 18 Ezekiel confirms that we each have a personal choice and responsibility, and that we cannot hide behind the works of our fathers, and similarly, we won't be judged because of their sins. In the next chapter we are again reminded of how the LORD treated Israel during the exodus of Egypt, and how this should be an example to us. He then continues with judgements against the Church, and what we can expect to receive.

Chapter 23 is a very interesting chapter as it concerns two sisters Aholah, and the younger one, Aholibah. Strongs dictionary declares that the meaning of these two names are, my tent, and the second name, my tent in her. The way I see it is that the first sister represents Israel of old, where the Tabernacle of the LORD was with them, whereas the second sister represents us as the Church, because the Tabernacle is inside of us. The storyline tells us that the first sister turned her back on the LORD, and the second sister, despite seeing what the result of the first

sisters' action was, does exactly the same. Thus I can assume from this then that the Church followed the same road as Israel, even though we know what happened to Israel. Reading through the newspapers and magazines we can see how the theologians and members of the church end up in a religion without any substance, without any Power. The teachings declare that the LORD will not punish people as He is a God of grace, but it is never mentioned that you have to forsake the old road, and start a new life for Him in order to receive His grace. We are told, in South Africa, that the synod must investigate the claim that the Satan does exist, and if he is at all necessary in our religion. The next chapter continues again with judgements over the Church as they left Him and followed after other gods.

We then find the judgements over the seven nations, or as John define them, the seven Churches. Chapter 33 is a repeat of chapter three in so far that Ezekiel is appointed as a watchman by the LORD. Chapter 34 was discussed in the previous chapter as it pertains to the shepherds and the coming judgements against them. There is no repeat of Chapter 35 in Revelation, as it concerns Israel as a nation today.

The next chapter discusses the restoration of the Church and the area where it will operate, and that we will find favour by the LORD again. In chapter 37 we find that Ezekiel has to prophecy over the dead bones to resurrect them, which confirms the opening of the graves in Revelation. This is the start of the thousand year reign of Christ to restore those Christians who were misled by their pastors.

The next two chapters have most people baffled, as it concerns Gog and Magog, and their eventual demise. These two chapters describe to us the millennium reign, as well as the eventual utter destroying of Satan and his army. Satan is told the following: *"After many days thou shalt be visited: in the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people, against the mountains of Israel, which have been always waste: but it is brought forth out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely all of them. Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou, and all thy bands, and many people with thee. Thus saith the Lord GOD; It shall also come to pass, that at the same time shall things come into thy mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought: And thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates,"* (Eze 38:8-11) We are told that the people will live safely in unwalled cities, but after many days Satan will rise and take on the people of the LORD again, exactly as we are told in Revelation chapter 20.

Of the ensuing battle we read that after the battle that there would be enough wood to last for fires for seven years, and that the number of people that will die in Satan's' army will take seven months to bury.

In the next nine chapters Ezekiel describes the New Temple and how everything will function, whereas John sees a New Jerusalem appear from the sky. The LORD showed each one of them the same picture, but at the level that they expected, to the one a temple, and to the other a city.

As we can see from this comparison John established no new doctrines and no new things were added to the covenant of old, but it was only coloured in for the time that each lived. This I trust is then a summary of the prophets and their message for today. I trust that you will now look with new expectations to the Old Testament, and learn from what these prophets had to say.

HOW CAN I COMPARE THESE TWO BOOKS?

The book of Revelation is very similar to the book of Ezekiel, with Revelation seen through a New Covenant lens, while Ezekiel is seen through the Old Covenant. In Ezekiel we find that various judgements are made against certain nations, whereas in Revelation we find different churches. In Ezekiel we find the LORD sitting in the new temple, while John sees Him in the New Jerusalem. There are however a number of chapters that have no comparative chapters in Revelation, and vice versa. These include where Ezekiel describe the new temple in detail, with John describes only the majesty of the New Jerusalem.

One aspect that we have to keep in mind throughout the Bible is that Jesus said He came to fulfil, and not to through everything out of the window. We find that Jesus even says that we only need Moses and the prophets to come to the full knowledge of Him. No new requirements are set throughout the New Covenant but just the fulfilment of the sacrifice for sin and to fulfil every promise of the Old Covenant. These requirements were fulfilled for both Jew and Gentile and is available for each and every person that believes that Jesus is the Christ.

There are so many people who do not read or even know of what is written in the Old Testament, but these people are almost always struggling in their relationship with the LORD, as they do not have the peace that we should have, and do not know what is acceptable and what not. Jesus did not set any new requirements, so should any person build his faith on the New Testament only, he invariably will come to the wrong conclusion. The LORD is the same, Yesterday today and tomorrow.

WE CAN NOW START WITH DISCUSSING THE BOOK OF EZEKIEL

Chapter 1 – This gives us a description of the vision the prophet had, and can be compared to the vision of Revelation 4 and 5.

Chapter 2 – The prophet is told that he is sent to an obstinate nation, a nation that do not want to listen to the LORD. They prefer doing their own “thing”. We find a similar message in all the letters to the various churches, that they must return to their first love, and not to follow their own thoughts.

Chapter 3 – We find here the same incident as in Revelation 10 in that Ezekiel must eat the book that is presented to him. So the word that he receives will change his whole being, that is what his food must be. And that is the message that he must proclaim. He must go to the peoples of the LORD and warn them not to depart from His ways. If he decides not to do it, he will be held responsible should the people not hold on to their faith. But if he warns them and they still depart from the LORD, each person will be held responsible for his own life. That is also the reason John writes to the various churches so that they will know what the LORD wants them to do. This message is still in effect today.

Chapter 4 – In this chapter Ezekiel has to lie on one side of his body for 390 days, and then a further 40 days on the other side. There are various interpretations of this, but one that does make sense is that Israel spent 390 years in Egypt, with a further 40 years in the dessert before they could enter into Canaan. There is no comparative chapter in Revelation.

Chapter 5 – we find here that the LORD will act against Jerusalem, or in our and Johns’ time, the church. The people will die of the famine, so they are not fed the real word at church, the pestilence, so they hold on to their own faith and not faith in Jesus Christ, while the rest will be left in exile, so they will not inherit everlasting life.

Chapter 6 and 7 – Ezekiel continues with the judgements but in verse eight we find a verse that indicates that a remnant will survive. This is a direct reference to the first Christians who

survived the destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD by the Roman empire, when they fled to the mountains as instructed by the LORD.

Chapter 8 – The LORD shows Ezekiel all the wrongs that people were doing, thinking that the LORD does not know about it. But we know that He sees everything. The people he sees are not people from other nations, but his own people, the church people of today.

Chapter 9 – Just like in Revelation 7, those elected by the LORD will receive a mark on their foreheads, as that will differentiate them from the others when the judgements start. These people will keep their minds full of what the LORD desires and focus on Him, and do what He requires. That is the mark that will keep them apart from the others.

Chapter 10 – We now find that Jesus appears as in chapter 1, and told that the church will be tested, to separate the sheep from the goats. *“Behold, I am going to send My messenger, and he will clear the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple; and the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight, behold, He is coming,” says the LORD of hosts. “But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner’s fire and like fullers’ soap. He will sit as a smelter and purifier of silver, and He will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, so that they may present to the LORD offerings in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.”* (Mal 3:1-4)

Chapter 11 – We find that Ezekiel sees that the judgement will start in the temple, or as Peter and John proclaimed, at the house of the LORD. This is a very interesting verse indeed, as Ezekiel is told that the LORD will scatter the people to different nations, which in John is referred to as different churches. That is why I looked at the various countries to see which judgement will be metered out against which country. *“Son of man, your brothers, your relatives, your fellow exiles and the whole house of Israel, all of them, are those to whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said, ‘Go far from the LORD; this land has been given us as a possession.’ Therefore say, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “Though I had removed them far away among the nations and though I had scattered them among the countries, yet I was a sanctuary for them a little while in the countries where they had gone.”’ Therefore say, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “I will gather you from the peoples and assemble you out of the countries among which you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.”’ “When they come there, they will remove all its detestable things and all its abominations from it. And I will give them one heart, and put a new spirit within them. And I will take the heart of stone out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in My statutes and keep My ordinances and do them. Then they will be My people, and I shall be their God.”* (Eze 11:15-20)

Chapter 12 – The prophet is told to go into captivity. Refer to Addendum 2 for the section on captivity. So he is told to get out from under the rule of an earthly king.

Chapter 13 – We find that Ezekiel at times get more detailed information than what Apostle John received. This is one of those instances where he is told to talk to the leaders and those that call themselves prophets, but are not.

Chapter 14 – This is a continuation of the judgements against the leaders. A very interesting statement is made in this chapter: *“even though these three men, Noah, Daniel and Job were in its midst, by their own righteousness they could only deliver themselves,” declares the Lord GOD.*” (Eze 14:14) This tells us that we cannot hide behind our leaders and affiliations, as you will be judged on what you personally believes in and did.

Chapter 15 – We are told that we will end up in hell if we are found to be untrue in our relationship with the LORD.

Chapter 16 – Here we find the same information as what we find in Revelation 16 to 18, where the judgement to the whore is announced. We all know that the LORD is the father of the church, but we also know that the church had intercourse with the church in Assyria, the mother and child religion, and with Egypt, those that do not believe in baptism of the faithful, in order to rid themselves of the might of Satan, the Pharaoh. They also mingled with every other nation that they could find. Even while they did this, the LORD confirms that he will still think of His covenant that He made with us through Jesus Christ. An interesting observation is that they are also told how we even today still do as church. We find that in every town that on every turnoff to a town or nearly every square in a town you will find that people will build themselves a building where they can gather, something that is never prescribed anywhere in the Bible. The real church cannot be encapsulated in a building, but you and I are the church of Jesus Christ, and have to function as church wherever we are.

Chapter 17 – In this chapter we find the parable of the two trees. The LORD chose Israel as His nation, took them into captivity to Babylon and left some in Jerusalem. Those important people that were left behind decided to go back to Egypt hoping that the Egyptians will help them. So they thought that by going back to where they came from before the LORD saved them would be acceptable. The LORD then declares that He will take a new sprig and will start all over again with that sprig, us as Christians, and then all the nations will be in wonder about this new tree that will be formed.

Chapter 18 – The personal responsibility. This chapter shows us that each person will be responsible for his or hers own destiny. No one will be allowed to hide behind their father, pastor or church. We all have to take responsibility for ourselves. *“For each one will bear his own load.”* (Gal 6:5)

Chapter 19 – In this chapter we again find that the leaders are told that they will bear the responsibility of their incorrect teachings. They are warned not to take people on the wrong road. Our example again is Israel, that the LORD rejected them as they were not obedient to Him. Refer to Matt 21: 33-46, and Is 63:1-6 as examples.

Chapter 20 – Again we find that Israel is the example, how the LORD chose them, how they rejected Him, and how He would raise up a new Israel, one that will be obedient in every aspect. So this ties in again with Revelation 13, the exposing of the antichrist.

Chapter 21 – This is a continuation of the previous chapter where the antichrist is described.

Chapter 22 – We find here that the LORD will sift the Church to get rid of those that do not belong to Him.

Chapter 23 – This chapter was described in the book itself where the two sisters were compared. The eldest represented Israel, and the youngest the Church. In spite of seeing what the LORD did to Israel, the Church is following the same steps and even doing worse things, and still believe that the LORD will pardon them.

Chapter 24 – This ties in with the judgements against the church, or the trumpets as described by John.

Chapters 25 to 32 – We find here the judgements against all the various nations, or as we know if from Revelation, the different churches. This is a continuation of the various trumpets.

Chapter 33 – Ezekiel is reminded of his calling. That he must warn Israel to be obedient to the LORD. The last verse is something we should all remember. *“So when it comes to pass--as surely it will--then they will know that a prophet has been in their midst.”* (Eze 33:33) This reminds us again that the judgement of the LORD will start with the church.

Chapter 34 – The judgement over the leaders. This chapter has no similar event in Revelation. Ezekiel is shown what is wrong with the leaders, and that the LORD will appoint leaders in Paradise that will look after His people.

Chapter 35 – This chapter is exclusively for those who hold on to the Jewish faith and the teachings of the Talmud. It also shows us that they will face the same judgements as everybody else, and that there will be no rapture of the saints and time for Jesus to become king on the existing earth. No, they have to follow the same road as all the people of the earth.

Chapter 36 – The end of the judgements of the church is reached, so the last trumpet call will be made. What now will follow is the judgement of those who built their faith on their faith and not on Jesus.

Chapter 37 to 39 – We now find the resurrection of the dead, those who died while serving the LORD, and the final war between the soldiers of Satan and the soldiers of the LORD. It is known in both books as the war against Gog and Magog.

Chapter 40 to 48 – Ezekiel now goes into detail in how he sees the new Temple, while John describes a New Jerusalem. For Ezekiel the dwelling place of the LORD was the temple, and for John it was Jerusalem. So both described the same event, each in their own circumstances that were applicable during their times.

WHO ARE WE?

Louwrens and Hettie Erasmus are two people called by the LORD to make a difference in the lives of others. Hettie has been doing counselling for almost as long as she can remember, and has studied both formally and informally. She is still lead and taught by the Holy Spirit on a daily basis in her ministry.

Louwrens, that's me, is the person who wrote all the books and articles you will find on our website and on Amazon, Kindle and Smashwords. Unfortunately for myself, I am suffering from Carcinoid cancer, a slow growing but devious cancer. We are raising funds to fight this Carcinoid cancer I am suffering from in order for me to survive. After 21 years of fighting, our finances are depleted and we have no more resources to fight this cancer on our own any longer and have started a fundraising project to help us in this fight as I am no longer able to do any "real" work. Writing is not a real work to me but a commission from the LORD. You can contribute at any of the following places. The first place is directly at our payment processor who also handles all our transactions from our website, which has been virtually nonexistent. Their page is at

<https://www.payfast.co.za/donate/go/shamaministries>

If you would like to contribute on our website you can do so directly on our website at <http://shamaministries.org.za/wp/>

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The following books can be downloaded for free from our site:

The Book of Moses. This is a complete guide for any Christian explaining the way of a Christian, and answers most doctrinal questions, questions you have in your everyday walk with the LORD, on the end times and what heaven will look like, as well as questions about Church. Download link [here](#)

Is Egypt in Heaven? The book is based on a time in my life when I received major surgery in my fight against Carcinoid cancer, and had a near death experience. Some sections are based on the truth, and some is fiction to explain what heaven will look like. Download link [here](#)

A Wake Up Call. The book examines the doctrine of election, and then draws on the result to explain the effect on our everyday life. Download link [here](#)

Evidences of a Christian. Do I have to exhibit a different lifestyle as a non Christian, and if so, what should it be like? Download link [here](#)

The Covenant of Righteousness. This book does a detailed study of what the Covenant entails, what Jesus came to fulfil and then describes all the ramifications on all the various doctrines of today. Download link [here](#)

The Revelation of John Revealed. This book takes a completely different approach to how to interpret the book of Revelation. It uses as a basis the exact same lessons that are described in this book using Israel as our example, and then what the affect this has on our views of this book today. This book is absolutely different from anything you have read or heard. We have to remember that all the current viewpoints started somewhere in the Roman Catholic Church and

was modified or still viewed as the only view. They leave Israel as example completely out of all interpretations. Download link [here](#)

The Olivet Discourse – A description of the message about what will happen from the time of His death until the time He returns. I also look at how He will separate His sheep from the goats. You can download it from [here](#).

On a trot through Romans – In this book I tried to publish a non partisan view of how to interpret the Letter to Romans. This does not mean that I do not ignore incorrect interpretations, but I spend a lot of time on those part that both John Calvin and then another part that John Darby spent time on and completely missed the boat. I trust that you will also accept it in this light. You can download the book [here](#)

Jews – Church or Nation? In this short booklet I look at the reference to Israel in the Old Testament to find out if they were seen as a congregation of the LORD's people, or as a nation. There are so many antichrist messages found in the Church today, and I believe that this information will shock you as it shocked me when I looked at the subject. This is also possibly the biggest stepping stone used by the antichrist doctrine of the rapture. You can download it [here](#)

Books by other writers that can also be downloaded from this site include a book about the biblical interpretation of dreams and visions. Download link [here](#). I also have an old windows help file that cover dreams and visions, but can only run on PC's still running Windows 7 or older. The link is [here](#). Another book I referred to in some of my writings is The Epistle of Barnabas written by Mark. Download link [here](#). You will also find a book that I have used as part of our Bible School [here](#)

Other articles that you will find on my website are as follows:

- Matthew 24 and 25 – The Olivet Discourse and a look at how Jesus described the endtimes
- The Jews and the Book of Acts
- My testimony and why I write
- How do I spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ?
- Escape from Christendom
- Evidences of a Christian
- Wedding day sermon
- Charles Finney Letter 3 – conversion
- SETTLERS and the PIONEERS theology
- Who do you preach? The murdered or the murderer? Jesus or John Calvin
- Feeding Sheep or Amusing Goats? Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-1892)
- Israelvision or British-Israel World Federation

DVD's Some of the books have also been recorded as DVD's. These DVD sets contain most of the information in the book with the same name, but some points are expanded upon and it also

includes a section on my life with Carcinoid cancer and the effect on my daily life. These DVD's are available in HD format and can be requested by sending me an email at louwrens at shama dot org dot za. The cost per set is R400 and is sent via speed couriers post office to post office service.

YouTube All the DVD's that I recorded of some of these books are also available on my YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/user/LouwErasmus>

My testimony and why do I write and what subjects do I write about?

Most people ask me why I quote passages from the Old Testament to confirm a point of view, and why do I not use the New Testament to do this. I was difficult for me when I started my intense walk with the LORD at age 30, and started writing at age 50, that was also the time I was ordained as a pastor. To be quite honest I mentioned to Hettie that I cannot believe that there are so many answers in the Old Testament that I never knew about. At times I felt that I did not need to use the New Testament, as everything I required to answer people and to place them in a living relationship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit I could do straight from the Old Testament. But I also know that most people want to refer to the New Testament to see what the Apostles and disciples said about it, and then you will find that the Pentecostal/Charismatic type churches would always try and explain Daniel and Revelation, as this is basically all that matters to them.

As a background, I need to give you some of the incidents in our family life that had a major impact on the way I live, and the road I am on. This will explain why I am on this roller coaster ride with the LORD.

Both Hettie and I always participated at our local congregation as young adults after our marriage in 1972, as well as our time as youngsters and children. We actually met at church as she just one day suddenly changed from a young girl to this amazing looking teenager. I had to make my move before anyone else did it at church, and after some years decided to get married. So our lives were centred around the local church, and later on in life I actually surprised one of our ministers when I gave him our attestation and introduced him to our family. At that stage we moved from Amanzimtoti back to the Johannesburg area. He was so used to the fact that the previous congregation would send all the documents by mail and then it was up to them to find the people, and here he found the complete opposite. I explained to him that I was the person that handled all attestations in our previous congregations, so I was aware of all the pitfalls and that was why I could bring it myself. Hettie also told me that I have a two year syndrome, as we moved just about every second year. To be honest during the time from our marriage in 1972 and the year 2000, we actually moved 14 times during those 28 years, so she was bang on. But I have to say that we sometimes only lasted six months in a place as we would move from one apartment to the next to increase space, or like on our return to Johannesburg from Amanzimtoti we rented a house for six months before we bought our own house again. Then we also moved a number of times due to working situations which required me to move to different parts of the country.

But back to the original story. I had an extreme situation that had a lasting effect on my life and relationship with the LORD during 1982. While still at high school 15 years earlier, I broke my nose in gymnastics when my nose and knee collided when I reached the ground after a double summersault. This left me with difficult breathing and I decided it was time to sort it out. They removed section of the cartilage in the front of the nose plus some fragments of bone and it was a major success. But there was a dark side to this episode also. Hettie came to visit me the Saturday morning and left the kids with our nanny. On her return from hospital she heard that Barney, our oldest son, asked to go and play at one of his friend's house and took his younger

sister with him. Hettie told the nanny that she had to go and call them as she told the nanny not to do it in the first place. On their return Barney let go of the nanny's hand and ran across the road, but unfortunately for him he ran straight in front of an oncoming car.

He ended up with a fractured skull, and also nearly lost his left foot as his foot was caught between the tyre and the road while the driver was trying to stop. The only thing that was left of his left foot was the sole part of his foot and the bones. It looked so bad that I fainted when they showed it to me later that day. I was discharged immediately and went with him to another hospital that specialized in head trauma as he was unconscious and he had bleeding in his brain. He ended up spending more than three months in hospital and had multiple skin grafts and pins in his feet. But the thing that I want to highlight is something that happened about 10 days after the accident. I went to the hospital every morning on my way to work, and that particular morning I prayed something that I still feel was the right thing to do, but it was also the most difficult thing to do. I prayed that morning in the car before entering the hospital that the LORD would either let him die as I could not take this any longer, or if it was His will, that Barney would wake up that morning.

When I arrived at the nurses station at ICU they told me that there was no change, and that I can go through to see him as they already changed his dressings. That was all they could do at that point as they could only start reconstruction of the foot once he regained his consciousness again. I took his hand in mine and greeted him in an audible voice, and his immediate response was to greet me and to open his eyes. I was not the only one crying that morning, but all the staff cried with me, especially when I told them what I prayed for before coming into the hospital.

That was the first life changing experience for me.

The second one was four years later when I had to have surgery to my bladder and the result was the words that nobody really wants to hear, that they found the obstruction in my bladder but that it was a malignant tumour. I asked the LORD to give me more time with my children as my youngest daughter was only 4 years old. I did not want to let them grow up without a father figure in their lives, and I am still here today, 30+ years later. Little did I know that our older daughter would only have her first child eight years after the youngest daughter's youngest child. I was declared cancer free three years later as they could not find any other tumours in the bladder. But eight years later I was diagnosed with Carcinoid Syndrome, a slow growing cancer that I have been living with for 22 years now. I could quite easily have had this before my bladder cancer, and will also explain some of my problems as a young teenager where I would just fall down like a bag of potatoes when the bottom opens up when you lift it up. Every time I went to the doctors they could not find anything wrong, and I learned to live with it as I learned how to identify this feeling and how to avoid falling down.

After my first operation for the bladder cancer we as a family would get together in the morning in our bed where I would share a small passage of the Bible with them, and sing a song and pray together. During the winter months the kids would bring their own duvets to sit under or just lift our at the feet end of the bed and crawl in and use our duvet to escape the cold. That was also the time that I really started studying the bible in order to share something with the family every morning.

Something that I just could not understand at that time was that I would end up most times reading from the Old Testament. And it was not that it was a Psalm or something from Ecclesiastics or even some of the well known stories of David or some other well known person, that I would share, but something quite different. As the kids grew older they decided that they could do this on their own, and also got tired of singing the same old songs, as they needed to sing something newer that they enjoyed. During that time we were still members of the

Reformed Church, and later changed to the Dutch Reformed Church for about two years and then joined the original Corpus Christi congregation of the AFM in Brooklyn Pretoria. Just after we joined Corpus Christi, they formed Doxa Deo with multiple campuses across Pretoria, and now even have congregations in Australia, New Zealand and England. During this time Hettie and I worked with others showing the original Jesus film and I still have my original VHS version of the film and a VHS machine in full working order.

The third time I really felt the closeness of the LORD was during August 1995. I woke up with an extremely sore place on the right-hand side of my abdomen, and was forced to see the local doctor after work that afternoon. I was sent to hospital immediately with a diagnoses of acute appendicitis and told they had to operate that night as it was about to burst. I was operated on fairly late that night, but even the surgeon told me that he believes it was meant to be, as during the operation they got more than they bargained for. Apparently the surgeon could not get a decent grip on the appendix and decided to make a larger incision and to pull out a small portion of my small intestine in order for him to be able to have space to work. While he was doing this, he was talking to the anaesthetist and then suddenly found something in his hand that was bigger in size than the rest of the small intestine. When he looked down, he found a tumour of about 100 millimetres in length and when he looked at it he recognised it as cancer. According to him he probably could have stopped earlier, but he just continued. He told me that if he did not find it that night, there was a high probability that my family would have had a funeral the next year. The appendix also ended up as malignant, also with Carcinoid. According to the medical profession it is one of the major places where this type of cancer forms its primary tumour. He told me that I had to undergo another operation eight weeks later as they had to do a thorough scan of the abdomen to ensure that there was no metastasis to the lymph nodes or even more tumours. So that was nearly 22 years ago, but I still suffer from this cancer as they found a tumour that they could not remove as that would have cost my life as it encases the main mesenteric blood vessel between the small intestine and the liver. I was told that there were two things that I could do. I had to go for chemo and as the surgeon put it, he knew that the LORD could heal me.

After the follow up operation, I ended up with a very unusual experience. It was the most heavenly choir that I have ever heard in my life. I could not make out what song it was, but it really was out of this world. I was in a ward with three other people, and as they were all sleeping, I got out of bed to see if any one of them had a radio on where this music could come from. Just remember we are talking about a time before music on cell phones. In fact CD's were new technology back then. I could not find any source of this music, and I knew I was in trouble when I asked the one nurse if she could hear the music and she gave me a look that said to me I must be off my rocker.

Then I saw this strange vision. Living in South Africa we are used to platforms when visiting a game park or game farm that you have shelters above the tree line from where you can watch the game come to their favourite drinking spots, or just observe the wild life without disturbing them at all. I was standing on top of one of these platforms, and as far as the eye could see I saw people clothed in white walking up towards a hill that was so bright that I felt I needed some sunglasses to shield this brightness. There was not a split amongst these people as they were all walking shoulder to shoulder towards this bright hill. Hettie, my wife, came to visit me but left after a while as I was not really talking to her, as all I was doing was listening to this angelic song and watching these people. I eventually got up and went to the bathroom and pressed my face against the wall, but this vision did not go away. I tried closing my eyes but it was still there. All I can remember was that there were two other persons with me on this platform, and I just knew the one person was Moses. Don't ask me how I know, all I know was that the one person was Moses.

This vision was also one of the reasons we left our local church at that time as our minister told me to put this behind me and continue as before, as this would cause me to end up in an asylum for mentally ill patients. I actually thought he could help because as he was not just an ordinary minister, he also had a doctorate in Biblical studies.

So this is where my walk with the LORD took a dramatic turn. I wanted to know exactly what and why people ended up in heaven or hell, as I did not want to lose this out of this world vision I had in hospital. I started spending more time listening to various other people and their views about redemption, and the one evening a very well known evangelist in South Africa looked at me and told me that he could see that I have a very high standard to differentiate between believers and non believers. He also told my wife that he knew that she had a very close relationship with the LORD. I know for someone who has never experienced this type of input in your life that it can be challenging to understand.

I know the first time something like this happened in my life I could not handle it. I was in charge of the elders at our congregation when our minister was not there, and also the guy that was supposed to ensure that a professor or some other minister would deliver two sermons on a Sunday when our minister was on annual leave. I thought I had all bases covered when the professor I organised for the Sunday gave his secretary instruction that she should inform me that he had made alternate arrangements for the weekend, and could not come to us. I asked one of my fellow elder, an ex headmaster at a local school to help me and we decided that we would each read a sermon from a book we had at church in case of emergencies. After the service the Sunday night, people asked me why I did not study to become a minister, and I told them it was difficult to go to seminary school at age 40 with three children at school, and no cash reserves to cover the seven year studies. And then I would only have 20 years before I would retire, so it was not feasible. That Wednesday evening friend of ours asked us to come to their preschool hall as they had a couple of people that would get together in song, worship and prayer, but that they had a special host that would be playing the piano. While we were singing, this person stopped playing, turned around and looked me straight in the eyes and told me that the LORD was calling me to serve Him, and that He had a special calling for me. That gave me such a fright as I have never heard or seen something like this happen before. We attended a very orthodox church at that time and that was the first time something like this happened to me.

So back to my original story 5 years later after leaving the hospital, After the experience in the hospital, I had this urge to study the Bible, and to start writing down the explanations I found from various references. I also had this urge to share this with other people. I still have the book where I wrote down the first couple of items I felt the LORD showed me in the Bible, and still believe that He gave that to me as a calling, and I am still following that calling. The first scripture He gave me was when I asked Him what would happen to me after now having had three operations for cancer. Was it my end, or what would happen? I opened my Bible and the passage that just leaped out at me was from Jeremiah 45 *"Jer 45:5 And seek you great things for yourself? seek them not: for, behold, I will bring evil on all flesh, said the LORD: **but your life will I give to you for a prey in all places where you go.**"*

Now for someone who was told six months earlier that I only had a couple of years before I would die. Those are words that I still cling to 22 years later.

I also know today why I did not accept all the offers for financial support to study to become a minister, as I then enrolled at a Bible school to get myself qualified and ordained as a pastor. What you learn at these places are not really what the Bible teaches, but it is more about how to preach, what the various theological views are, how to interpret Greek and Hebrew texts, and then things like how to run a successful church. I finished this and started a Bible school at a

local congregation, and within months people asked me to move to another part of town and start a new church there. We did this and it was a flop. It fell apart within the first couple of months, but I knew the reason for it, as the LORD gave me a second scripture even before I started studying, and that came from Jeremiah 30 verse 2: *“Thus speaks the LORD God of Israel, saying, **Write you all the words that I have spoken to you in a book.**”*

He did not tell me to start a new church, but He told me to write down everything that he would teach me. That taught me one major lesson in life, and that is to be obedient. During the time while studying and working, He always spoke to me about the exodus of Israel from Egypt, and how they came to Canaan, the land He promised Abraham. So He took me on a journey through the Old Testament, and then would show me confirmations in the New Testament. Sometimes I also found answers not in the Bible, but in some of the books that did not make it in our western Bible.

Fortunately I am not the only person doing this. The first person that I know that took this route was Jesus himself. We find the following in Luke 16: *“But Abraham said, Son, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and you are tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from there. Then he said, I pray you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father’s house: For I have five brothers; that he may testify to them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham said to him, **They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.** And he said, No, father Abraham: **but if one went to them from the dead, they will repent.** And he said to him, *If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.”* (Luk 16:25-31)*

The two sections I emphasized is actually extremely informative. Jesus says that we only need Moses and the Prophets to believe in Him, and He also shows them that He would die and they would still not believe in Him even after He was resurrected.

Paul also used this method. *“Moreover, brothers, I would not that you should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized to Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be you idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur you, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened to them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the world are come.”* (1Co 10:1-11)

And then there is the whole book of Hebrews that we can use to find answers to our questions, as it is written to those who understand the Old Covenant, and leads us to the New Covenant. It shows us that Jesus went through the heavenly tabernacle to pay for our sins with His own blood.

So the first book I wrote was named the Book of Moses. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, I use the exodus of Israel to show people how to ensure that they are serving the God of the Bible, and the second reason because of a custom we had when I was still a kid. When you had to prove a point you had to use scripture to support your argument, and if you could not find a

quick answer your answer was always that it is somewhere in Moses. So Moses 3 verse 3 in our household was always: Do not worry.

The book of Moses also brought me to another book in the Bible, the Gospel according to Mark. He was the first person to actually write a Gospel, as he was the official scribe for Barnabas and Paul. He worked with them and documented everything they preached. It was also Barnabas who was the reason Paul started his ministry, and then they later parted also because of Mark. *“And some days after Paul said to Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brothers in every city where we have preached the word of the LORD, and see how they do. And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark. But Paul thought not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work. And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other: and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed to Cyprus; And Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brothers to the grace of God.” (Act 15:36-40)*

Mark also wrote about this instance in his Acts of Barnabas. *“And I found Paul in bed in Antioch from the toil of the journey, who also seeing me, was exceedingly grieved on account of my delaying in Pamphylia. And Barnabas coming, encouraged him, and tasted bread, and he took a little of it. And they preached the word of the Lord, and enlightened many of the Jews and Greeks. And I only attended to them, and was afraid of Paul to come near him, both because he held me as having spent much time in Pamphylia, and because he was quite enraged against me. And I gave repentance on my knees upon the earth to Paul, and he would not endure it. And when I remained for three Sabbaths in entreaty and prayer on my knees, I was unable to prevail upon him about myself; for his great grievance against me was on account of my keeping several parchments in Pamphylia.*

And when it came to pass that they finished teaching in Antioch, on the first of the week they took counsel together to set out for the places of the East, and after that to go into Cyprus, and oversee all the churches in which they had spoken the word of God. And Barnabas entreated Paul to go first to Cyprus, and oversee his own in his village; and Lucius entreated him to take the oversight of his city Cyrene. And a vision was seen by Paul in sleep, that he should hasten to Jerusalem, because the brethren expected him there. But Barnabas urged that they should go to Cyprus, and pass the winter, and then that they should go to Jerusalem at the feast. Great contention, therefore, arose between them. And Barnabas urged me also to accompany them, on account of my being their servant from the beginning, and on account of my having served them in all Cyprus until they came to Perga of Pamphylia; and I there had remained many days. But Paul cried out against Barnabas, saying: It is impossible for him to go with us. And those who were with us there urged me also to accompany them, because there was a vow upon me to follow them to the end. So that Paul said to Barnabas: If you want to take John who also is surnamed Mark with you, go another road; for he shall not come with us. And Barnabas coming to himself, said: The grace of God does not desert him who has once served the Gospel and journeyed with us. If, therefore, this be agreeable to you, Father Paul, I take him and go. And he said: Go you in the grace of Christ, and we in the power of the Spirit.

Therefore, bending their knees, they prayed to God. And Paul, groaning aloud, wept, and in like manner also Barnabas, saying to one another: It would have been good for us, as at first, so also at last, to work in common among men; but since it has thus seemed good to you, Father Paul, pray for me that my labour may be made perfect to commendation: for you know how I have served you also to the grace of Christ that has been given to you. For I go to Cyprus, and hasten to be made perfect; for I know that I shall no more see your face, O Father Paul. And falling on the ground at his feet, he wept long. And Paul said to him: The Lord stood by me also this night, saying, Do not force Barnabas not to go to Cyprus, for there it has been prepared for him to enlighten many; and do you also, in the grace that has been given to you, go to Jerusalem to worship in the holy place,

and there it shall be shown you where your martyrdom has been prepared. And we saluted one another, and Barnabas took me to himself. "

After this episode we never ever read anything about Barnabas and Mark, as they worked in Cyprus and never returned to Jerusalem. But why do I want to use Mark? Many people have a problem with the last section of the last chapter, as it seems that some of the early copies excluded the last verses, and because it is to us today controversial. But when I look at my own writings I find that I would make changes or even add new chapters to the book. So if I look at the various samples of the Gospel of Mark it might not include the last verses, but he was there and saw the snake bite Paul and nothing happened. So it is possible that some of the original copies did not include this section.

I also wonder at times if Mark was also the writer of the Book of Hebrews, as we still do not know who wrote it. Some say Paul, others Barnabas, and some other people. Mark knew what both Paul and Barnabas taught at the various synagogues they went to visit these Jews.

We find that Mark wrote two additional books that never made it into the Bible as they worked separately from the other Apostles and disciples. The one book is the Acts of Barnabas that describes what Barnabas did after splitting up with Paul, and tells us how Barnabas was killed by the Jews in Cyprus, and then we find the Epistle of Barnabas, a book that took the Old Testament happenings, and explained the significance in a spiritual form. It ties in with what Luke wrote down in The Acts of the Apostles, that Paul and Barnabas always first went to the Jews at the local synagogue and explained what Jesus came to do to fulfil the Old Covenant and to start the New Covenant. *"And the brothers immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night to Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews. These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Therefore many of them believed; also of honorable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few. "* (Act 17:10-12)

So it looks to me that I am not alone in using the Old Testament in proclaiming the Gospel message of Jesus. Here are some passages that shows that Paul and Barnabas also first tried to convince the Jews that Jesus is the Christ.

*"When they heard this, they quieted down and glorified God, saying, "**Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life.**" So then those who were scattered because of the persecution that occurred in connection with **Stephen made their way to Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except to Jews alone.** But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, **who came to Antioch and began speaking to the Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a large number who believed turned to the Lord.** The news about them reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas off to Antioch. Then when he arrived and witnessed the grace of God, he rejoiced and began to encourage them all with resolute heart to remain true to the Lord; for he was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And considerable numbers were brought to the Lord. **And he left for Tarsus to look for Saul; and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. And for an entire year they met with the church and taught considerable numbers; and the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.**" (Act 11:18-26)*

Act 13:14 *"But going on from Perga, they arrived at Pisidian Antioch, **and on the Sabbath day they went into the synagogue and sat down.**"*

Act 13:42 *"As Paul and Barnabas were going out, the people kept begging that these things might be spoken to them the next Sabbath."* Act 13:43 *"**Now when the meeting of the synagogue had***

broken up, many of the Jews and of the God-fearing proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who, speaking to them, were urging them to continue in the grace of God."

Act 14:1 **"In Iconium they entered the synagogue of the Jews together, and spoke in such a manner that a large number of people believed, both of Jews and of Greeks."**

Act 16:1-3 **"Paul came also to Derbe and to Lystra. And a disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek, (2) and he was well spoken of by the brethren who were in Lystra and Iconium. (3) Paul wanted this man to go with him; and he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in those parts, for they all knew that his father was a Greek."**

Act 17:1-3 **"Now when they had traveled through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. (2) And according to Paul's custom, he went to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures, (3) explaining and giving evidence that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and saying, "This Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you is the Christ."**

Act 17:10 **"The brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews."**

Act 17:16-17 **"Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was being provoked within him as he was observing the city full of idols. (17) So he was reasoning in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing Gentiles, and in the market place every day with those who happened to be present."**

Act 18:1-4 **"After these things he left Athens and went to Corinth. (2) And he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, having recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. He came to them, (3) and because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and they were working, for by trade they were tent-makers. (4) And he was reasoning in the synagogue every Sabbath and trying to persuade Jews and Greeks."**

Act 18:19 **"They came to Ephesus, and he left them there. Now he himself entered the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews."**

Act 11:25-26 **"And he left for Tarsus to look for Saul; (26) and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. And for an entire year they met with the church and taught considerable numbers; and the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch."**

Reading through the above I see that they only explained Moses and the prophets, and why Jesus came and for what purpose He came. So this is where I start differing from most other people, as I believe that there are no new theologies in the New Covenant, and hence we cannot through out the Old Testament and build a new theology on the New Testament only. If I do not find a corresponding reference in the Old Testament then I know that it is a man made doctrine. So the same theology that was embraced by Abraham, is the same theology in force today. When people rejected the LORD in the Old Testament, we do not find them featuring in any form in later on in the Bible. So that says to me that they will not be with Jesus in heaven.

Paul uses the same approach in 1 Corinthians 10: **"Moreover, brothers, I would not that you should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized to Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were**

overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.” (1Co 10:1-6)

Then we also find what happened during the time of Jeremiah when the people of Jerusalem when they thought they could go and hide in Egypt: *“Therefore thus said the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will set my face against you for evil, and to cut off all Judah. **And I will take the remnant of Judah, that have set their faces to go into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, and they shall all be consumed, and fall in the land of Egypt; they shall even be consumed by the sword and by the famine: they shall die, from the least even to the greatest, by the sword and by the famine: and they shall be an execration, and an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach.** For I will punish them that dwell in the land of Egypt, as I have punished Jerusalem, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence: **So that none of the remnant of Judah, which are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall escape or remain, that they should return into the land of Judah, to the which they have a desire to return to dwell there: for none shall return but such as shall escape.**”* (Jer 44:11-14) The only people that returned from Egypt were Jeremiah and Baruch and their families. They did not choose to go back, but were forced to go back.

So what else can I say about my viewpoints. Not much except that many years after I started on this journey through the Old Covenant and started writing my first book, The Book of Moses, I found the verse following the one that told me to write everything down: *“Thus speaks the LORD God of Israel, saying, Write you all the words that I have spoken to you in a book. For, see, the days come, said the LORD, that I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, said the LORD: **and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it.**”* (Jer 30:2-3) So this scripture declares that we as Christians will end up in our Canaan, and all we have to do is follow the path that Israel followed, but without all their mistakes and sins. Most of the commentaries of this portion of scripture agrees that this has not happened yet. This is what John Gill had to say about it: *“which cannot be understood of their return from the Babylonish captivity; for, as Kimchi rightly observes, only Judah and Benjamin returned from thence; and though there were some few of the other tribes that came with them, especially of the tribe of Levi, yet not sufficient to answer to so great a prophecy as this, which refers to the same time as that in Hos_3:5; as appears by comparing that with Jer_30:9; and when, as the Apostle Paul says, “all Israel shall be saved”, Rom_11:25;”*

This also agrees with what we read in verse 9 of the same passage: *“But they shall serve the LORD their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up to them.”* Fortunately for myself I do not live in the times of the reformation, as I would have been burned at the stake many years ago. And this despite quoting Jeremiah and Paul. All these passages are there as examples for us in order for us not to make the same mistakes Israel made. But then we have to use these verses and the whole Bible within context. The same Jeremiah tells the people the following in chapter 7; *“Thus said the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. Trust you not in lying words, saying, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, are these. For if you thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if you thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbor; If you oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your hurt: Then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, for ever and ever. Behold, you trust in lying words, that cannot profit.”* (Jer 7:3-8) He then continues in verse 21: *“Thus said the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Put your burnt offerings to your sacrifices, and eat flesh. For I spoke not to your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices: But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be my people: and walk you in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well to you.”* (Jer 7:21-23) This is then followed up in chapter 21: *“Thus said the LORD God of Israel;*

Behold, I will turn back the weapons of war that are in your hands, with which you fight against the king of Babylon, and against the Chaldeans, which besiege you without the walls, and I will assemble them into the middle of this city. And I myself will fight against you with an outstretched hand and with a strong arm, even in anger, and in fury, and in great wrath. And I will smite the inhabitants of this city, both man and beast: they shall die of a great pestilence. And afterward, said the LORD, I will deliver Zedekiah king of Judah, and his servants, and the people, and such as are left in this city from the pestilence, from the sword, and from the famine, into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of those that seek their life: and he shall smite them with the edge of the sword; he shall not spare them, neither have pity, nor have mercy. And to this people you shall say, Thus said the LORD; Behold, I set before you the way of life, and the way of death. He that stays in this city shall die by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence: but he that goes out, and falls to the Chaldeans that besiege you, he shall live, and his life shall be to him for a prey. For I have set my face against this city for evil, and not for good, said the LORD: it shall be given into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire.” (Jer 21:4-10)

So this is what formed my life and my relationship with the LORD. And this is what I still write about every day. What I have found that everyday something happens in my life to either confirm that which I have written about, or something new that I never thought about pops up for me to investigate. Sometimes it is only a confirmation of what I believe the Bible is to us today, a “Workshop Manual” for Christians. I do not have to believe in all these other writings and “junk” that people believe in, as if I cannot confirm it from the Old Covenant, it does not fit in the New Covenant, and can hence be thrown away. If you look at some of the things Christians spend millions of dollars on, and it only enriches their “king”, but what he says never happens, and we continue to believe them. I have seen videos put up by some of these “big name” pastors that said the antichrist will come on 5 May 2016, and when it did not happen the title was changed to 28 August, and when that did not happen it was changed to 28 December, but people still spend millions on his books when it is obvious that he is a false prophet.

That is why my motto in life is a quote from Matthew 13:52 ***“Then said he to them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed to the kingdom of heaven is like to a man that is an householder, which brings forth out of his treasure things new and old.”***

And then probably one of the most important things we can learn from the Bible and that is to be obedient. That is also where the name of ministry, Shama Ministries in South Africa, comes from. The meaning of the word is as follows from Strong’s:

H8085 שָׁמַע **shâma’**, shaw-mah’; a primitive root; to hear intelligently (often with implication of attention, obedience, etc.; causatively, to tell, etc.):—**×** attentively, call (gather) together, **×** carefully, **×** certainly, consent, consider, be content, declare, **×** diligently, discern, give ear, (cause to, let, make to) hear(-ken, tell), **×** indeed, listen, make (a) noise, (be) obedient, obey, perceive, (make a) proclaim(-ation), publish, regard, report, shew (forth), (make a) sound, **×** surely, tell, understand, whosoever (heareth), witness.

What challenges do I face today. I still have Carcinoid Syndrome (NET) and everyday it is still a battle 22 years every day after they found it the first time, and at the time of writing this my wife was receiving her first chemo after a bilateral mastectomy in January 2017, and after the chemo it will be a month of radiation treatment. So this is my story and what I try and live every day of my life.