

## Epistles to the Thessalonians II

### 1-Thessalonians 4-5 & 2-Thessalonians 2

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We're going to find a very interesting section in 1-Thess. 4 having to do with the return of Christ and meeting Christ in the air.

1-Thessalonians 4:8: "Accordingly, the one who rejects *these commands* is not rejecting man, but God, Who also gave His Holy Spirit to us."

It doesn't matter who it is. If this is the Word of God, which it is, and someone opens the Word of God to Exo. 20 and reads the Sabbath command, it's very important to get a concept that is true: *If it is the Word of God, which it is, then it really doesn't make any difference who reads it!* In other words, just because you may not like the messenger, does that mean that you reject the message? That's why, in spite of all the troubles with our past church experience, there was still an awful lot of success in it when they relied on the Word of God, because that *was the Word of God!*

Exodus 20:8: "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it Holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work. But the seventh day *is* the Sabbath of the LORD your God..." (vs 8-10). It belongs to Him!

"...In it you shall not do any work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter; your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your livestock, nor the stranger within your gates; for... [the reason, because]: ...*in* six days the LORD made the heaven and the earth, the sea, and all that *is* in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore, the LORD blessed the Sabbath Day and sanctified it" (vs 10-11). We can take that as a principle:

- Does it matter who reads the Word?
- Whose Word is it? *God's Word!*

Therefore, Paul coming along and teaching God's way, he can tell them that:

1-Thessalonians 4:8: "Accordingly, **the one who rejects these commands is not rejecting man, but God.** Who also gave His Holy Spirit to us." That's what's so important.

What becomes a problem is when a man comes along and presumes to sit in the seat of God, as if these words were the man's. That's where the trouble comes.

Concerning brotherly love, v 9: "Now concerning brotherly love, you have no need *for me* to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another." Right here in 1-Thess. 4 we have:

- abound in and increase in love
- love toward one another
- sanctification
- brotherly love
- taught by one another

Verse 10: "And you also practice this toward all the brethren who *are* in all of Macedonia; but we exhort you, brethren, to abound *even more in love.*" I think the closer we get to more of the troubles that we have today, the more we need to abound in that love.

Verse 11: "And to aspire to live *a quiet life*, and to tend to your own business, and to work with your own hands, exactly as we have instructed you; so that you may walk honestly toward those *who are* without, and may not need *anything* from anyone" (vs 11-12).

#### **The return of the Lord and the resurrection:**

Verse 13: "But I do not wish you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep..." That's how God views death. Although He views it that way, death is still miserable, painful and an enemy. That's why it has to be destroyed.

"...that you be not grieved, even as others, who have no hope. For if we believe..." (vs 13-14). This is the central belief that people are trying to get rid of now.

"...that Jesus died and rose again, in exactly the same way also, those who have fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say to you by *the Word of the Lord*, that we who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall in no wise precede those who have fallen asleep" (vs 14-15). So, the dead in Christ are going to rise *first*.

Verse 16: "Because the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with *a* shout of command, with *the* voice of an archangel and ***with the trumpet*** of God... [notice, not plural] ...and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in *the* clouds ***for the meeting*** with the Lord in *the* air..." (vs 16-17). We're going to see that we're going to meet Christ in the air.

Wherever you find things concerning the resurrection it is ***the seventh*** trump. Keep that in mind. The Feast of Trumpets is not when the seventh trump is to be blown. Let's see what's going

to happen; it's going to be something! It's hard to say who is going to be alive and remain until the return of Christ, but being carried up into the heavens by the angels is going to be quite an experience either way.

Matthew 24:31: "And He shall send His angels with a great sound of **a trumpet**..." You have to remember that the trumpet was always blown on every one of the Holy Days.

"...and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to *the other*" (v 31). Notice when that is going to happen. Let's see what has to happen first.

Verse 30: "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven..." What is the sign going to be? I'll tell you what I think the Scriptures say it's going to be, and it's going to happen suddenly. It's going to be up there in the heavens and there it will be.

"...and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming upon the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (v 30). What is this sign? This is way before the resurrection!

Verse 27: "For as the light of day, which comes forth from *the east* and shines as far as *the west*..." This is not talking about bolts of lightning as in a storm. This is talking about a light of day. Lightning can go from the ground up, from the clouds to the ground, it can go north, south, east, west or diagonally—however you want it.

What shines from the east to the west? *The sun!* That's the only thing that we can see every day that goes from east to west. This is going to be like all of a sudden the appearance of a sun right up in the heavens, that it's going to be seen rising in the east and setting in the west. I believe that it's going to come closer and closer to the earth as Christ is returning.

When it gets down close to the earth—all the armies are going to be like the fighting in movies, preparing for those coming from outer space. They are preparing the world to fight Christ. That's what they are doing. Let's see what's going to happen. They are going to be convinced that they are going to be invaded from outer space, and that will be true, because they will be.

If Christ comes from heaven, is He going to come from outer space? *Yes!* Therefore, it will be an invasion from outer space. Then it gets down to the clouds, because we're going to meet Christ in the air, in the clouds. What happens when you have an object that comes down and comes into the gravitational pull of the earth? *It will lock into orbit!*

I believe that the sign of the Son of man will be seen in heaven coming closer, *closer, closer* to the earth and then lock into orbit right over Jerusalem, right in the clouds.

That's going to set the world on edge! All the demons will be saying that this is Satan. Satan is going to be calling Christ *Satan* right at that time. Then the resurrection is going to take place, before the seven last plagues. That's why it has to happen before the Feast of Trumpets, because the Feast of Trumpets pictures the beginning of the final battle on the earth. All this has to happen before Trumpets.

Revelation 14:14: "And I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and *one like the Son of man* sitting on the cloud, having a golden crown on His head; and in His hand *was* a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him Who was sitting on the cloud, 'Thrust in your sickle and reap, because the time has come for You to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe'" (vs 14-15).

What are we called? *Firstfruits!* We are to be harvested. How many churches are there in Rev. 2 & 3? *Seven!* In counting to Pentecost, how many weeks are there to the harvest? *Seven!*

You have seven continuous weeks to the harvest and you have seven continuous churches in Rev. 2 & 3. So, when it comes to the end, then they will be harvested so they can rise and meet Christ in the air. Then we have to get all organized before we come back down.

Have you ever thought about what kind of chaos it might be if you're resurrected on Trumpets, rise up in the air; 'Hi, Christ, what do I do?' *You do this and that!* There would be no organization and we have 15 minutes to get back down to the earth. *No!*

It's going to be organized! Just like before they went into the 'promised land,' what did they have? *They had a big meeting!* Moses got up there and read all of the book of Deuteronomy. It's going to take quite a while to get things done after we meet Christ in the air, before we come back down on the earth.

This first one is the harvest of the Church. "...for the harvest of the earth is ripe."

Verse 16: "And He Who was sitting on the cloud thrust forth His sickle upon the earth, and the earth was reaped. Then another angel, who also had a sharp sickle, came out of the temple that *is* in heaven. And out from the altar came another angel, who had authority over fire; and he called with a loud cry to the one who had the sharp sickle, saying, 'Thrust in your sharp sickle, and gather the clusters

of the earth... [this is something entirely different; this is not the Church] ...because her grapes are fully ripe.' And the angel thrust his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast *its fruit* into the great winepress of the wrath of God" (vs 16-19). This is the Battle of Armageddon; this is a preview of what it's going to be like.

Verse 20: "And the winepress was trodden outside the city, and blood spewed out from the winepress as high as the horses' bridles, to the distance of a thousand six hundred furlongs."

Rev. 15—this where we're going to meet Christ in the air, this is where there's going to be this big sea of glass. All the world is going to be gathering their armies together to fight this big enemy up in the clouds. I image that they're going send off rockets and things like this, and they won't be able to penetrate anything.

Revelation 15:1: "Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and awesome: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is filled up. And I saw a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who had gotten the victory over the beast..." (vs 1-2). Who is the power of *the beast*? *Satan the devil!*

Rev. 12 talks about the beast with seven heads and 10 horns, 'that old serpent called the devil and Satan.' **Everybody has to get victory over him!**

"...and over his image..." (v 2). Whether it is image of *the beast* today or as it was during Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, makes no difference.

"...and over his mark, *and* over the number of his name, **standing on the Sea of Glass**, having *the* lyres of God" (v 2).

- we're going to sing there
- we're going to learn these songs
- the marriage of the Lamb is going to take place at that time
- the giving of the rewards is going to be given at that time

Where do you think it's going to be 'Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of the Lord, be you over five cities, three cities or two cities'? *The Sea of Glass is where it's going to be!* That's going to be quite time up there.

Verse 3: "And they were singing the song of Moses, *the* servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, 'Great and awesome *are* Your works, Lord God Almighty; righteous and true *are* Your ways, King of the saints. Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For *You* only *are* Holy; and all the nations shall come and worship

before You, for Your judgments have been revealed'" (vs 3-4). All of that is going to occur while the angels are preparing for the seven last plagues. Then while we are on the Sea of Glass, we are going to see:

- the angels pour out the seven last plagues
- God's judgment on Babylon the Great
- the battle of Armageddon
- all the armies gathered together to fight against Christ

Then we will come back to the earth *with* Christ. The first part of Rev. 19 is the marriage of the Lamb.

Revelation 19:11: "And I saw heaven open; and behold, a white horse; and He Who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He does judge and make war. And His eyes *were* like a flame of fire, and on His head *were* many crowns; *and* He had a name written that no one knows except Him. And *He* was clothed with a garment dipped in blood; and His name is The Word of God. And the armies in heaven were following Him on white horses... [the saints] ...*and* they were clothed in fine linen, white and pure" (vs 11-14). How do we know they are the saints?

Verse 7: "Let us be glad and shout with joy; and let us give glory to Him; for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.' And it was granted to her that she should be clothed in fine linen, pure and bright; for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints" (vs 7-8). We're clothed in fine linen clean and white. **We will be the army of God!**

What did Jesus say to Pilate? *If My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight!* That's when we're going to fight. It will be a battle! That fills out the rest of the story that is brought in 1-Thess. 4.

1-Thessalonians 4:17: "Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in *the* clouds for ***the meeting with the Lord in the air***; and so shall we always be with *the* Lord." That's one of the key reasons I did the translation of the New Testament. I thought that this one particular section was so very important in relationship to understanding the prophecies.

We're going to have from Pentecost unto Trumpets for all the things to take place. It's going to take some time for the armies to be gathered around Jerusalem for the Battle of Armageddon. We're going to see that. We're going to have an absolutely spectacular view of what's going on, on the earth, and then we're going to help execute the vengeance of God.

"...and so shall we always be with *the* Lord"

(v 17). If Christ comes back to the earth, where are we going to be? *On the earth!*

Verse 18: “Therefore, encourage one another with these words.” As we’ve seen in everything, ***keep your eye on the goal! Always on the plan of God!***

They discussed an awful lot about prophecy—didn’t they? *They had to!* We will also see in 2-Thess. that people were coming around saying that it was ‘happening now.’

1-Thessalonians 5:1: “Now then, concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, there is no need that I write to you; for you yourselves understand perfectly that **the Day of the Lord...**” (vs 1-2). Notice that this is different than the day of Christ.

2-Thessalonians 2:2: “...saying that **the day of Christ** is present.” We’ll find out the difference, but I wanted you to notice the difference.

1-Thessalonians 5:2: “...**the Day of the Lord** will come exactly as a thief *comes* by night.” In this case this is talking about all the events at the end.

How long is the Day of the Lord? *It depends on the context that you are reading!* Is it talking about all the end-time? A single day? A time called the Day of the Lord? The 6,000 years we have for man is called *the day of man*, but it’s longer than one day. The Day of the Lord is going to be longer than one day! But the final Day of the Lord, when we come down with Him from heaven to the earth, will be one day. So, in reading and understanding about the Day of the Lord, you have to determine exactly how it fits.

Verse 3: “For when they say, ‘Peace and security,’ then sudden destruction will come upon them, as travail *comes* upon a woman who is with child; and they shall by no means escape.”

I remember when Rachelle was born, we went out to a restaurant in Pasadena called *The Salt Shaker* and as we were eating Delores says, ‘We’ve got to get home, it’s coming.’ We just got home and called the midwife and she came over and just ten minutes after she got there Rachelle was born. We had gone out just as if it were another day.

That day is going to come BAM! and all the events are going to come together. Everything is going to trigger, and that’s what’s going to be at the end-time.

Verse 4: “But you, brethren, are not in darkness that the day of *the Lord* should overtake you as a thief. *For* you are all children of *the* light and children of *the* day... [that’s what we need to be: as lights and understanding] ...we are not of *the*

night, nor of *the* darkness. So then, we should not sleep, as others *do*; but we should watch, and we should be sober.” (vs 4-6).

Unfortunately, there are a lot of people sleeping, v 7: “For those who are sleeping sleep in *the* night, and those who are drunken get drunk in *the* night.” *It can come upon you when you get really sleepy and tired!* When I drive, I stay awake, but when I ride I go to sleep.

Ephesians 5:6: “Do not let anyone deceive you with vain words; for because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience.” If anyone is listening to these foolish things, *warn them!* God is not going to hold back; it’s coming! It’s going to be bad news!

Verse 7: “Therefore, do not be joint partakers with them. For you were once darkness; but now *you are* light in *the* Lord. Walk as children of light, (because the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness and righteousness and Truth); proving... [by doing] ...what is well pleasing to the Lord; and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness...” (vs 7-11).

That’s what happened! They went and had “...fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness...” and began to drink in of *their* doctrines and *their* ‘religion’ and it took them away.

“...but rather expose *them*...” (v 11). When it comes along and there’s something wrong, you’ve got to expose it! That’s what it means.

Verse 12: “For it is shameful even to mention the things being done by them in secret. But all of these things being exposed by the light are openly revealed. Therefore, He says, ‘*You* who are sleeping... [arise from the spiritual dead] ...wake up, and arise from the dead! And Christ shall shine upon you.’ So then, take heed that you walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as those who are wise, redeeming the time... [buy it back while there is time] ...because the days are evil” (vs 12-16). ***Are they ever evil today!***

It’s a very deceptive kind of evil. All is quiet and all is nice and you can take it or leave it. You can come and go, and you’re going to be overtaken with evil! Just like that, and you won’t even know it, unless you’re alert!

1-Thessalonians 5:8: “But we who are of *the* day should be sober, having put on *the* breastplate of faith and love...” {note Eph. 6; overcoming Satan the devil with the breastplate of righteousness, the Word of God and so forth.}

“...and *for* a helmet *the* hope of salvation” (v 8). This tells us that “...*the* hope of salvation”

will always protect us.

Verse 9: “Because God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us, so that whether we *remain alive until He comes* or we *fall asleep before that day*, together we may live *forever* with Him. Therefore, encourage one another, and edify one another...” (vs 9-11). Notice the emphasis is on how the teaching is to be, how the relationship with one another is to be. Completely different from what we have experienced in past years.

Encourage one another. If someone is down, lift up their spirits. Let them know that tomorrow may be better. If it’s worse then the next day will be better. Don’t worry about it; God will help you through it.

“...even as you are already doing. Now we beseech you, brethren, to acknowledge those who are laboring among you, and are overseeing you, and are instructing you in *the Lord*” (vs 11-12). Notice how the ministry is to be: *laboring, ministering, overseeing!*

I had a man come to a Bible study and I said, ‘Why don’t you draw me a chart as to what you think church organization would be.’ You know the chart that we used to have:

- God the Father & Jesus Christ
- Herbert Armstrong
- Headquarters
- evangelists
- pastors
- preaching elders
- local elders
- local, local elders
- super deacons
- deacons
- not so super deacons
- then *you*

I said, ‘What I want you do is draw that here is the Church being one big block—all the brethren together—and here is God and everyone has direct connection to God the Father and Jesus Christ; nobody in between!’

He said, ‘How do you want me to draw the teachers and overseers?’ I said, ‘Kind of on the sidelines.’ So, he did that. He drew the teachers and overseers on the sidelines, and he took it from 1-Cor. 3. Instead of a block, he drew kind of a garden patch. All the brethren were plants, growing.

1-Corinthians 3:6: “I planted *and* Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.” He had the overseers on the sidelines like squirters. We have to water the crop of God! I thought that was the best diagram of how the Church should be structured. We

ministers are all water-boys.

Now we have a whole series of short admonitions, which are very encouraging but very straightforward.

1-Thessalonians 5:13: “And to greatly respect them in love for the sake of their work. **Be at peace among yourselves**.... [sometimes that’s difficult] ...Now we encourage you, brethren, **to admonish those who are irresponsible**...” (vs 13-14). There were those who were not even working. They were saying, ‘We don’t have to work, we’re just going to wait for the Lord.’ That was a special problem at that time.

“...**console** the fainthearted, **support** the weak, **be patient** toward everyone. See that no **one renders evil for evil to anyone**; but **always be pursuing what is good**, both toward one another and toward all *men*. **Rejoice always! Pray unceasingly. Give thanks** in everything, for this is *the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. **Quench not the Spirit***” (vs 14-19).

- let God’s Spirit flow
  - let God’s spirit motivate you
  - let God’s Spirit lead you
- you quench it*
- by sinning
  - by the works of the flesh

Verse 20: “**Despise not prophecies. Prove all things. Hold fast to that which is good**.” I just want to mention one thing here: **Truth is always provable, and reproveable, and reproveable!** If you rightly put the Truth together, it will always come out the same.

Verse 22: “**Abstain from every form of wickedness**. Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly; and may your entire spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful *is He* Who calls you, Who will also perform *it*” (vs 22-24). There’s not one promise of God that He will not fulfill. He will fulfill every promise. Whether it be a blessing or a cursing! He will perform it.

Verse 25: “Brethren, pray for us. Greet all the brethren with a Holy kiss. I adjure you *by* the Lord *that* this epistle be read to all the Holy brethren.... [we’ve just done it; you’re the Holy brethren] ...The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen” (vs 25-28). Written from Athens, the epitome of idolatry!

## **2-Thessalonians**

2-Thess. 1—there are many Scriptures we could add to it, but much of what Paul says here is a repeating of some of the things in 1-Thess.

2-Thessalonians 2:1: “Now, we beseech you, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, that you not be quickly shaken in mind, nor be troubled—neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by epistle, as if from us, *saying that the day of Christ is present.*” (vs 1-2). This is *the day of the Christ*.

What does Christ mean? *Messiah!* It doesn't say the Day of the Lord. It says “...the day of Christ is present”—which means that someone is saying that Christ is here. Otherwise, they wouldn't say it “...is present.”

Verse 3: “Do not let anyone deceive you by any means because *that day will not come unless* <sup>[#1]</sup>**the apostasy shall come first...**” It's not a falling away as you've heard in the past, that people who leave the Church are falling away. The apostasy, I believe is this one-world religion “...**shall come first...**” That will be the first thing in place. Shall have come means a future completed event from when Paul wrote this.

<sup>[#2]</sup>“...and **the man of sin shall be revealed...** [it's going to be clear who the man of sin is]: ...—the son of perdition.” Let's look at the characteristics of this man and see what he's going to do. He's going to be some man.

Verse 4: “The one who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God... [the Word of God as well as anything that is called 'God.']. ...or that is an object of worship...” Greater than any Buddha, any statue of anything.

“...so that he comes into the temple of God...” (v 4). There will be a physical temple built again by the Jews. They already have the temple institute, many of the vestures, the clothing, the priests' hats, Urim and Thummim, the lots for the goats for the Day of Atonement, the candlestick holder; everything all ready to go.

What is it that the Jews say? *When the temple is built, Messiah will come!* Let's tie some of these things together.

When Paul wrote this, the temple of God was still standing. So, there could be no question that he means the temple of God. Would any other temple on earth be called the temple of God by Paul? *No!* This does not mean symbolically, spiritually standing in a Church of God. This means literally the temple of God.

“...and **sits down as God...**” I don't care how arrogant you may have thought some of the past leaders of the Church have been, none of them said that he was God! This does not apply to any of our church experiences.

“...**proclaiming that he himself is God**” (v 4). Those four verses are really powerful and really tell us a lot.

Let's put this together with some other Scriptures. Remember that it's talking about *the day of Christ is present*.

(go to the next track)

In 1978 or 79 there was a full-page ad in almost all the leading newspapers in the country: *The Christ is Here! Lord Maitreya is about to reveal himself!* When we saw that we wondered: What is this? It talked about ending famine and war, peace and prosperity for everyone.

Some of the things that I will bring out may have some speculation in it; that part is not dogmatic, but at least it gives us something to think on, which then can be adjusted as we view the fulfilling of these Scriptures as they come together in time down the road.

Matthew 24:24: “For there shall arise **false Christs...**” notice that it doesn't say *a false Christ*. It's plural! This tells us that there will be more than one. There will be 'messiah competition.' Won't that blow everybody's theories completely out of the water?

“...and false prophets, and they shall present great signs and wonders...” (v 24). They're all in 'miracle competition,' too: *Messiah competition* and *miracle competition*.

“...in order to deceive, if possible, even the elect” (v 24). This is going to be convincing because 'seeing is believing.' After all, by that time they're going to have so put down the Bible so that no one is going to believe it.

Verse 25: “Behold, I have foretold *it* to you. Therefore, if they say to you, ‘*Come and see! He is in the wilderness*’... [the day of Christ is present] **...do not go forth.** ‘*Come and see! He is in the secret chambers*’... [the day of Christ is present] **...do not believe it**” (vs 25-26). That's not how it's going to come. It is not going to be a human being. It is not going to be a man who will be the Messiah.

The Jews of Judaism believe that there is going to come a messiah. I believe there will be a Jewish messiah. The temple will be built, the Jewish messiah will come on the scene bringing miracles, signs and wonders.

Here is from the Noahide Code and the Messianic Era: the Jews have been working behind the scenes for years to bring this about. All of this, bringing all of the world's religions together, don't let it fool you that Judaism is not behind it. They allow all other nations to have their own religion *if*

they have the seven universal laws called *The Noahide Laws*. As long as they honor the unity of God and follow the seven Noahide Laws they will be part of the Kingdom of God.

Seven Noahide Laws ([jewishvirtuallibrary.org](http://jewishvirtuallibrary.org)):

1. Do Not Deny God
2. Do Not Blaspheme God
3. Do Not Murder
4. Do Not Engage in Incestuous, Adulterous or Homosexual Relationships.
5. Do Not Steal
6. Do Not Eat of a Live Animal
7. Establish Courts/Legal System to Ensure Law Obedience

They already have the agenda for all the courts under Noahide Law to be enacted throughout the world. They will bring on *their* messiah called *Moshiach*, literally meaning the anointed one who will be a teacher and leader of the Jewish people.

from: The Noahide Code and the Messianic Era ([jewishprisoner.com/Noachide.aspx](http://jewishprisoner.com/Noachide.aspx))

He will teach ethics and morality to all mankind. Most importantly, he will establish peace for the entire world.

In the time of Moshiach, there will be neither famine nor war, neither envy nor strife. People will strive to help one another, and a spirit of love and brotherhood will flourish.

Most important of all, in the Messianic era, all mankind will acknowledge the unity of G-d, and recognize that He is the sole Ruler of the Universe....

The rest of the world will not be required to keep the Sabbath, because the Jews will retain *their* laws as a higher form, because *they* are 'god.' Anyone who tries to keep the Sabbath as they do is subject to death. Anyone who tries to keep the Holy Days or Feasts in the Bible, as they do, is subject to death.

Now you know why Worldwide Church of God was taken down within. The Jews do not feel anyone has a right to keep the Sabbath and Holy Days other than themselves. We are against an implacable enemy, and this is going to come headlong with, what I believe, the Catholic messiah.

...As the prophet Isaiah said, "The world will then be filled with the knowledge of G-d, as the waters cover the ocean bed" (Isaiah 11:9).

In the past months, we have witnessed unique and miraculous events taking place in the world, especially in Russia and its

satellite regimes, and in the War in the Persian Gulf. We are indeed living in times of miracles, and it is our hope that an increased interest throughout the world in the Laws of Noah will bring us significantly closer to the long awaited time of Redemption, where the world will truly become a dwelling place for G-d.

The Jews are going to build their temple and bring in a Messianic Era of *their own*. What is this going to do to the world? Will the world accept it? *No!* All ecumenism between Jews and Catholics will break down! There's another man called *The Vicar of Christ*, the pope, and there will be competition.

Here's what I think will happen (some speculation). Let's see how it fits; you can always adjust it a little bit. Since it says there will *false Christs*, that means there will be *false messiahs*. Why not have good old-fashioned 'messiah competition'? Miracle, miracle, who's got the greatest miracle?

Using the charts in the Dan./Rev. sermon series, when I counted back the 1290 days from the time...

Daniel 12:9: "And he said, 'Go your way, Daniel, for the words *are* closed up and sealed until the time of the end. Many shall be purified, and made white and refined. But the wicked shall do wickedly; and **none of the wicked shall understand**, but the wise shall understand.'... [however it's going to be, *we will understand it*] ...And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away..." (vs 9-11).

- Why will the daily sacrifice be taken away?
- Where is the daily sacrifice offered? *At a temple in Jerusalem!*

"...and the abomination that causes desolation is set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days" (v 11). Who is going to go in and stop the sacrifices? *2-Thess. says that it's going to be man who says that he is God!*

Now then, what is going to happen with the Jewish messiah? *I think the hatred between the Catholics and Jews will come to an absolute fever pitch again!* There's going to rise up in Europe a messiah who will be the King of the North, there will be the pope who will come along who is going to endorse him as truly the messiah on earth (Rev. 13). What does the King of the North do?

Daniel 11:40: "And at the time of the end, the King of the South shall push at him. And the King of the North shall come against him like a

whirlwind with chariots and with horsemen and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries and shall overflow and sweep through. He shall also enter into the glorious land..." (vs 40-41). Why would he want to go there to Palestine? There's another Jewish problem. The sacrifices have to be stopped. That's what he's going to do. He's going to go and do it.

If you count back 1,290 days from the time that the beast and false prophet are cast into the Lake of Fire (Rev. 19), you come back to Nisan 10. What is Nisan 10? *That's when they select the Passover lamb!* Think on this: The Jews finally have:

- their temple
- their priesthood
- their sacrifices
- their messiah to bring peace to the whole world

Now the King of the North comes down and comes into the 'Holy Land' and goes into the temple and kills the Jewish messiah and says, 'I'm God, not him!' He stops all the sacrifices on the 10<sup>th</sup> of Nisan.

We don't know how long the sacrifices were going; let's just say for the sake of discussion, at least two years. Can you imagine what kind of Passover the Jews are going to have with the first time they're able to have Passover lambs at the temple? You wait and see, they'll build all kinds of other altars, because there's not enough room at the temple to do it.

Then to have that stopped! Can you imagine stopping the Jewish plan dead in its tracks and killing their messiah? Stopping the sacrifices, and a Gentile of all things, going into the temple of god and say, 'I am God!' The pope saying, 'He is God!' Pretty powerful commendation! That's not what most people are looking for! Just think of that. I think that is a distinct possibility.

- How do you think the Jews are going to react when the Jewish messiah is killed? *There will be war!*
- What kind of war? *They won't be able to come against the King of the North, because he's going to have already occupied them!*
- What are they going to do to *the beast*?
- What did they do when they found Paul in Jerusalem, whom they hated? *They sought to kill him!*

As a matter of fact, 40 men took a vow of fasting until they would kill Paul. They didn't! We've always wondered about this, so let's see if we can look at a little differently. (speculation):

Revelation 13:1: "And I stood on the sand of

the sea; and I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns..." This is the coming final beast of Babylon the Great, which will encompass the whole world.

"...and on his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads *the* name of blasphemy. And the beast that I saw was like a leopard, and his feet like *the feet* of a bear..." (vs 1-2). All of these go back to Dan. 7 and a combination of all of the beasts together.

"...and his mouth like *the* mouth of a lion; and the dragon gave him his power, and his throne and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as if it were slain to death..." (vs 2-3). Why would he receive a wound unto death? Have you ever thought about that? *He killed the Jewish messiah and stopped the sacrifices! The Jews went after him!* Think of that as a possibility.

'If you're God, come back to life. You killed our messiah, now see if you can come back to life.' *And he does!* I've never heard any other explanation to satisfactorily explain about the 'deadly wound' and it being healed.

This has nothing to do with God the Father, this is all on the earth and it's the Jewish temple revived. It's the Jewish messiah killed. There will be a Jewish messiah, without a doubt. They've got him somewhere ready to bring on the scene.

Here is the final beast: "...but his deadly wound was healed..." (v 3). I just imagine that these suicide squads going after *the beast* to get him are really going to be vicious.

Remember how affective the Mossad is, how affective their spy systems are. Now they final get him and kill him and then he's resurrected back to life. Now what is he going to do?

"...and the whole earth was amazed *and* followed the beast. And they worshiped the dragon, who gave *his* authority to the beast. And they worshiped the beast, saying..." (vs 3-4).

I want you to understand how absolutely fantastic that the end-time culture is going to be, all wrapped up in satanism and demonism, the occult and all of that. They are going to openly worship Satan! We don't even have a grasp of the magnitude of this, I don't believe! This is going to sweep the world like you have never seen. We are going to be left out in the cold and cut off as stupid and ignorant because we believe the Word of God.

"...And they worshiped the beast, saying, 'Who *is* like the beast? Who has the power to make war against him?' And a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies... [ties in with 2-Thess. 2] ...was given to him; and authority was given to him



to continue *for* forty-two months” (vs 4-5)—after the wound was healed; this is the beginning of the Great Tribulation:

- he’s going to come with wrath
- he’s going to come with power

Verse 6: “And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God... [think of the magnitude of what is being said here] ...to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. And he was given *power* to make war against the saints... [literal war; to come after us] ... and to overcome them; and he was given authority over every tribe and language and nation. And all who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from *the* foundation of *the* world” (vs 6-8).

This is an awesome event. That’s why it says that *that day of Christ shall not come unless there come the falling away—or the apostasy—first, and the man of sin—the son of perdition—be revealed!* There’s going to be *no doubt!* We’re not going to have to guess or wonder, ***we will know!***

Verse 9: “If anyone has an ear, let him hear.” When you get to something very important, Christ inserts that statement!

Verse 10: “If anyone gathers *into* captivity, he shall go into captivity. If anyone kills with *the* sword, he must be killed with *the* sword...” This is an admonition for the true saints of God. Don’t raise a weapon or gun, because that’s not the time.

“...Here is the endurance and the faith of the saints.... [they don’t get involved in it] (here is going to be the cement to put it together): ...And I saw another beast rising out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, but spoke like a dragon” (vs 10-11).

- Why do you think the pope says that it’s now okay to ‘believe in evolution? *So he can bring all the other religions of the world together!*
- Why do you think that the pope says that the seeds of salvation is contained in all the religions of the world? *He’s going to mount his own position as leader of all religions!*
- Who stands out on the side as a sore thumb on one hand, and as a sore thumb on the other hand? *The Jews on one hand, and the true Christians on the other hand!*

Verse 12: “And he exercises all the authority of the first beast before him; and he causes the earth and those who dwell therein to worship the first

beast, whose deadly wound was healed.” After all:

- He proved he was God—didn’t he?
- He came back from the dead—didn’t he?
- He went into the temple of God and killed the false Jewish messiah—didn’t he?

Verse 13: “And he exercises all the authority of the first beast before him; and he causes the earth and those who dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.”

This is not going to be virtual reality where everyone is running around with goggles and say, ‘Oh, I see fire coming down from heaven.’ This is going to be the real thing! This is going to be real fire! Satan is going to send it down and deceives them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles even so much that even the elect could be deceived (Matt. 24:24).

I can see where there would be former brethren in the Churches of God that we know who have so gone back into the world they’re going to lap this up like there’s no tomorrow when it comes on the scene.

“...saying to those who dwell on the earth that they should make an image **for** the beast, which had the wound by the sword, yet was alive” (v 14).

There’s also going to be another miracle that God is going to intervene and do. This is not going to be without a witness from God. Because I believe the Jewish messiah will be coming and will be killed, and just prior to the time that he is killed, God is going to raise up, call and convert the high priest at the temple—just like He did the Apostle Paul—and the governor of Judea and they will be the two witnesses. The drama of this is going to be stunning! God is not going to let Satan have his day without a witness.

Can God call anyone and convert them instantly? even from the brink of satanism? *Yes, He can!* Did He do it with Paul? *Yes, He did!*

Zechariah 3:1: “And He showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the LORD said to Satan, ‘May the LORD rebuke you, Satan! May even the LORD Who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! *Is this not a brand plucked out of the fire?*’” (vs 1-2).

What does that mean? *I think that means that here is a man right out on the verge of being so involved in the wrong thing that he was ready to go into the Lake of Fire and God says, ‘I’m going to call you.’* God can do that. That’s pretty tough. “...*Is this not a brand plucked out of the fire?*”

Verse 3: “Now, Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And He answered and spoke to those who stood before him, saying, ‘Take the filthy garments from off him.’ And to him He said, ‘Behold, I have caused your iniquity to pass from you, and I will clothe you with ceremonial robes.’” In this case, the first Joshua—the high priest—was given the high priest attire. Then it blends into the coming of Christ.

Verse 8: “Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, you and your fellows who sit before you; for they *are* men wondered at, for behold, I will bring forth My Servant the Branch [Christ]!” The second return of Christ.

Where is the Church? *The Church will flee, those who go to a place of safety, right before the two witnesses come on the scene!* The part of the Church that is left behind is going to be martyred.

As we’ve said concerning the place of safety, if you don’t know where it is and you make it, you’ll find out when you get there. If you know where it is and don’t get there, then it doesn’t do you any good. If your sole purpose is to get to the place of safety instead of the Kingdom of God, you aren’t going anyway! God’s got it all worked out.

Who is going to be around to be doing this? All of us are getting old and creaky! Where are the younger ones? *God isn’t done yet!* God can call them. They’ll be right on the scene and see it, they won’t have to have speculation like we’re having now in trying to understand prophecy. It’ll be a different thing. God is not done, yet.

I think God has some surprises for the Church in store. I don’t even think we’ve begun to start. We’re just getting straightened out. How is America and Britain going to be taken down? *God knows exactly how it’s going to happen! We don’t know!* It can happen one of a half-dozen different ways. I think when that begins to happen a lot of them will convert. There’s going to be a lot of converted children of Israel who are going to respond to God at that time. They know that they are going to be martyrs. I believe that those who are going to a place of safety will be there; those who remain behind will be behind. Those of us who are old and gray will be buried; we’ll be safe in the grave.

God is not going to put us through all of this hellishness, because God is God of love and mercy. I know that some of these things I’m bringing here are a little new to you. They’re new to me and I’m trying to understand what’s going on. It has worked out the way we figured before, so that means we’d better figure something else. That’s why this is speculation, but I think we can be certain that one of

the two witnesses is going to be the high priest and the other one is going to be ‘the Zerubbabel’ the governor of Judea.

Zechariah 4:11: “And I answered and said to him, ‘What *are* these **two olive trees** on the right side of the lampstand and on its left side?’ And I answered again and said to him, ‘What *are* the **two olive branches** beside the two golden pipes, emptying the golden *oil* out of themselves?’ And he answered me and said, ‘Do you not know what these *are*?’ And I said, ‘No, my lord.’ And he said... [here’s a Bible definition that puts it together]: ... ‘**These are the two anointed ones who stand by the LORD of the whole earth**’” (vs 11-14).

*That could not be Joshua back then and Zerubbabel back then, but the two witnesses at the end-time! We will see that the two witnesses are the two olive trees and the two candlesticks.*

Revelation 11:1: “Then *the angel* gave me a measuring rod like a staff, saying, ‘Arise and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and those who worship in it. But leave out the court that is within the temple *area*, and do not measure it because it has been given *up* to the Gentiles; and they shall trample upon the Holy city *for* forty-two months’” (vs 1-2).

They now know that the Mosque of Omar does not sit on the Holy of Holies place. It sits to the south of it. The Jews have two plans for a temple:

1. obliterating the Mosque of Omar, which they cannot and will not do lest they be annihilated
2. a smaller temple built right alongside the Mosque of Omar

And I think that’s where it’s going to be.

Verse 3: “And I will give *power* to My two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred *and* sixty days, clothed in sackcloth.” The reason that one is 42 months and the other is 1,260 days is because they begin and end at different points. These are not exactly overlaid times exactly the same. {note sermon series: Dan./Rev.} That’s the thing that started me on this whole thing.

- Why is a year in prophecy 360 days?
- Does it say so in the Bible? *No!*
- Why is the 1260 *days* for the two witnesses?
- Why is it 42 *months* for the temple?
- What is the difference?

Then you begin tying that in with the first resurrection ending with the two witnesses and you count back 1,260 days and you come at a different beginning point than you have when you count from the destruction of the beast and you count back 42 months from Trumpets. You have a different

beginning point. Besides, 42 months may not be 1,260 days exactly. Why? *Because you could have 28 days of one month and still be counted a month!* That's why they're different.

Verse 4: "These are **the two olive trees**... [Zech. 4] ...and *the* two lampstands that stand before the God of the earth." No other two people in the entirety of the Bible are said to stand up before the God of the earth. It has to be Zech. 3 & 4 to be the two witnesses.

Notice what's going to happen: *the beast* comes down, kills the Jewish messiah and probably the two witnesses are saying, 'You're not the messiah!' So, they will have that going on. Then *the beast* goes into the temple of God and is confronted with two nasty men, the two witnesses. *The beast* can't get rid of them. Whatever they say happens.

Verse 5: "And if anyone attempts to harm them, fire will go out of their mouths..." You want to call down fire from heaven, 'fire comes out our mouth' says the two witnesses. 'You want to show a miracle? Come and stand before us and do it.' This is going to be something!

"...and devour their enemies..." Can you imagine the television report: 'I'm standing by the ashes of these men who resisted these two men, and there they are, yes, even their teeth are all burned up.'

"...For if anyone attempts to harm them, he must be killed in this manner. These have authority to shut heaven... [awesome power] ...so that no rain may fall in *the* days of their prophecy; and they have authority over the waters, to turn them into blood, and to smite the earth with every plague, as often as they will" (vs 5-6).

They're going to bring all the plagues that were brought against Egypt, only in a great manifold manner! Tie that in with Rev. 8-9 and put all of this together. These events at the end-time are going to be so absolutely mind-boggling. They're going to be so dynamic and great! "...and to smite the earth with every plague, as often as they will" Whatever they decide! That's awesome power, and that's why they stand before the God of the earth.

Verse 7: "And when they have completed their testimony, the beast who ascends out of the abyss will make war against them, and will overcome them, and will kill them." God always lets the enemy think they're going to win—*always!* But they never do.

Verse 8: "And their bodies *will lie* in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified." In Jerusalem! What a confrontation this is

going to be.

I want you to stop and think, brethren, how stupid, dumb and presumptuous was it for us (as a church) to say that certain men that we knew, we thought would be the two witnesses! *Think!* Don't anyone volunteer me for anything! I'm not Elijah! I'm not one of the two witnesses! Nor am I both of them. I don't want to be volunteered to be an apostle. I don't want to be volunteered to be anything other than a teacher. That's it, and let God do the rest. We've had enough of all this stupidity.

When you think of what it's going to be here. We all sat there and heard those sermons and said, 'Yeah!' We're we not dumb? There are some that are still praying to this day that Herbert Armstrong will be resurrected so that he can be one of the two witnesses. They go out and stand at his grave and pray to God to raise him back. God should probably send them a message, 'I had enough trouble when he was alive, don't try it.'

Verse 9: "Then those of the peoples and tribes and languages and nations shall see their bodies three and a half days, for they will not allow their bodies to be put into tombs.... [there will be new coverage on this like you have never seen] ...And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them and will make merry..." (vs 9-10). Imagine the great pontification of *the beast* and *the false prophet*, 'Yes, we were finally able to get rid of the enemy,' standing over their dead bodies.

"...and will send gifts to one another, because these two prophets had tormented those who dwell on the earth. Then after the three and a half days, *the* spirit of life from God entered into them and they stood on their feet... [Surprise!] ...and great fear fell upon those who were watching them. And they heard a great voice from heaven, say, 'Come up here!' And they ascended into heaven in a cloud; and their enemies saw them *rise*" (vs 10-12). That's going to be an awesome event. They're the very first resurrected!

Verse 13: "And in that hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell; and seven thousand men were killed in the earthquake. And the rest were filled with fear, and gave glory to the God of heaven. The second woe is past. Behold, the third woe is coming immediately. Then the seventh angel sounded *his* trumpet..." (vs 13-15). That's when we're going to be resurrected and we'll look around and see all this going on.

I suppose the first two we're going to meet will be the two witnesses; then Moses and Elijah. We'll see Christ and all the apostles. It's going to be a marvelous thing to see what the Apostle Paul looked like. Can you imagine what the Apostle Paul

is going to say when God says, 'Paul, I put 14 of your epistles in the New Testament. Paul is going to say, **'Ah, Lord God!'**

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 Thessalonians 4:8
- 2) Exodus 20:8-11
- 3) Thessalonians 5:8-17
- 4) Matthew 24:31, 30, 27
- 5) Revelation 14:14-20
- 6) Revelation 15:1-4
- 7) Revelation 19:11-14, 7-8
- 8) 1 Thessalonians 4:17-18
- 9) 1 Thessalonians 5:1-2
- 10) 2 Thessalonians 2:2
- 11) 1 Thessalonians 5:2-9
- 12) Ephesians 5:6-16
- 13) 1 Thessalonians 5:8-12
- 14) 1 Corinthians 3:6
- 15) 1 Thessalonians 5:13-28
- 16) 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4
- 17) Matthew 24:24-26
- 18) Daniel 12:9-11
- 19) Daniel 11:40-41
- 20) Revelation 13:1-14
- 21) Zechariah 3:1-3, 8
- 22) Zechariah 4:11-14
- 23) Revelation 11:1-15

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 2; 3; 12
- Ephesians 6
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- Revelation 19
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