The Revelation And The Eyewitness Generation: Second Edition

A Study of the Prophecies Of:
The Book of Daniel,
The Gospel of Matthew Chapter 24,
And The Book of Revelation

By James C. Downing

Third Edition: Revised 2006

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Truth is important. Many years of research have been spent by the author in seeking truth. This book and references represents some of the best information that I have found.
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**Eusebius**

“The Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius Pamphilus” (1966, the original work was published circa 335 A.D.) is one of the most important non-biblical Christian historical documents. Eusebius cites many earlier Christian and historical writers whose religious views and interpretations, of the Scripture, are fundamental to this study. Table 3 presents the chronological listing of the early Christian writers that are discussed by Eusebius Pamphilus (1966, pp. 474-478). The references will be discussed in the order that they appear in his work. Many of these references are self-explanatory and need little further commentary. See chapter 6 of this study.

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### Chronological Table Of Early Christian Writers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 96, 1st Year of the Emperor Nerva who followed Domitian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 98, Clement of Rome</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A.D. 107, Ignatius dies</td>
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<tr>
<td>A.D. 117, Hegesippus</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A.D. 166, Justin’s and Polycarp’s martyrdom</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A.D. 180, Clement of Alexandria</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 194, Tertullian writes his Apology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 205, Origen and Irenaeus die</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 230, Hippolytus of Rome</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 250, Dionysius of Alexandria, his writings from circa A.D. 256 to 295</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 295, The schism of Nepos</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 324, Constantine the sole master of the Roman world</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 325, The Council of Nicea</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3.** Pamphilus, *The Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius Pamphilus* (1966, pp. 474 - 478)

**Josephus**

**The Life of Flavius Josephus**

There are important facts in Chapter 6, concerning the life of Josephus, that are relevant to this study. The chronology of important historical events and the identity of his religious affiliation in the 1st Century with the Pharisees [like the Apostle Paul], and the Priesthood, can be accurately determined. Consider the following references, “Now, I am not only sprung from a sacerdotal [Priest from Levi] family in general. . . . I returned back to the city, being now nineteen years old [in A.D. 56], and began to conduct myself according to the rules of the Pharisees” (pp. 1-2).

The date of his birth can be established from the Antiquities (Bk. XX, Ch. XI, 3):
“...which is the thirteenth year of the reign of Caesar Domitian [A.D. 93], and the fifty-six [56] year of my own life” (p. 603). His age at other corresponding chronological events can be determined by interpolation. Therefore, it is established that Josephus was born about A.D. 37, seven years after the crucifixion of Jesus. He was 33 years old in A.D. 70 during the siege of Jerusalem.

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The Antiquities of the Jews

Preface

A footnote in the preface to “The Antiquities” states; “Those books of the War were published about A.D. 75, and these Antiquities (A.D. 93) about eighteen years later” (p. 29). The chronological perspective of A.D. 75 versus A.D. 93 is also important, especially in setting the date for, and interpreting the events in the Book of Revelation.

Notice how the works of Josephus reflect the understanding of the Pharisees. Paul was a Pharisee and he reflected the same fundamental beliefs. The Pharisees believed that the prophecies of Jeremiah and Ezekiel were dual prophecies of the destruction of Jerusalem in both 586 B.C and in A.D. 70. Please Chapter 6.

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Book of Enoch

The Book of Enoch is another example of Jewish apocalyptic literature that was known by the early Church fathers. Like the Book of 4th Ezra, the Book of Enoch contains many of the common Jewish perceptions that formed the background of common beliefs into which Jesus preached His Gospel. It was within this environment that Christianity was first nurtured.


Dupont-Sommer (1962), in the Introduction to The Essene Writings from Qumran, or what is commonly known as “The Dead Sea Scrolls”, discussed some of the books found within the Qumran library. Included in the library were works from the “Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament, including the “The Book of Enoch”. See The discussion in Chapter 6.

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Epistle of Barnabas

In his introduction to “The Epistle of Barnabas”, Lightfoot (1891) makes the following remarks:

Who then was the writer of this Epistle? At the close of the second century Clement of Alexandria quotes it frequently, and ascribes it to the ‘apostle’, or the ‘Prophet Barnabas’, identifying the author with ‘Barnabas’ who himself also preached with the apostle’ (i.e. St. Paul) in the ministry to the Gentiles.’ Yet
elsewhere he does not hesitate to criticize the work, and clearly therefore did not regard it as final and authoritative. A few years later, Origin cites the Epistle with the introductory words, it is written in the catholic (i.e. general) Epistle of Barnabas’. The earliest notices however are confined to the Alexandrian fathers, and the presumption is that it was written in Alexandria itself.

It will be observed that the writer nowhere claims to be the Apostle Barnabas; indeed his language is such as to suggest that he was wholly unconnected with the Apostles. . . . The Epistle was certainly written after the first destruction of Jerusalem under Titus, to which it alludes; but, had it been composed after the war under Hadrian ending in the second devastation, it hardly have failed to refer to that event. . . . For these reasons we should probably place the date of the so-called Epistle of Barnabas between A.D. 70 - 79. (pp. 133-134)

The Epistle of Barnabas is a very important early Christian historical document. The epistle views the destruction of Jerusalem as an event in the immediate past and, yet, the Christian author still expected the “end of all things” in the immediate future. Also, there is no mention of any living Apostles [see John 21:18-23]. In addition, the commonly believed prophetic scenarios of both the Jewish sectarian groups and the Christians, of that time frame, were not fulfilled in the manner that was anticipated. Thus, it appears that the Christian theologians, immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, were in a state of confusion as they struggled to fathom the message of the “end time prophecies”. See the discussion in Chapter 6.

2 Esdras

The Book of 2nd Esdras [4th Ezra], which is discussed in Chapter 6, provides additional historical evidence that helps decipher the Book of Revelation. Some of the imagery, which is found in the Revelation, was also common to the earlier Book of 4th Ezra. It is fairly certain that 4th Ezra was written in pre-Christian times and was of Jewish origin. McClintock & Strong (Vol. III, 1981) state:

The quotations from it [4th Ezra] in the epistle of St. Barnabas (ch. xii with 2 Ezra v, 3) and in Clemens Alexandrinus [A.D. 180, see table 3] (Strom. iii, 16), showing beyond doubt that the book was well known at the commencement of the Christian era, and must therefore have been written some time before to have such general currency and acceptance. . . . We therefore safely assign it to about B. C. 50. (p. 296)

Crucifixion Article by James Downing

This article is also included (see folder). It discusses that Jesus was actually crucified on “Good Thursday”

Best Regards

James C. (Sonny) Downing, July 2006
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By

James C. Downing
Revised 2006
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James C. Downing
8832 W Cavalier Dr.
Glendale, AZ 85305

E-Mail: jedcpl@aol.com
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To God belongs all of the Glory. And “Praise be to His Son Jesus, Who gave us the “Faith” and insight not to be mislead [Matt. 24:4].

Foremost, this book is dedicated to my lovely and beloved wife and best friend Carol. We traveled on this Spiritual and enlightening journey together from the very beginning of our marriage many years ago. She provided many hours of typing, proof reading, and keeping me focused on the important things of life.

Secondly, this study is dedicated to our children James III, Rebecca, and John. They provided the joy of knowing that a successful life is a balance of both the Spiritual and physical things. They are the greatest gift of God to our marriage.

Thirdly, this work is dedicated to my family and friends who provided the moral support and encouragement to continue the many years of research on such a difficult topic.

And finally, this book is dedicated to those who might find something of value in this study. It was written in a Spirit of academic honesty and Christian love [agape]. The driving force was the ultimate goal of finding “Truth” and then sharing it with those on similar Spiritual journeys.

James C. “Sonny” Downing, July 1999
Phoenix, Arizona
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ABOUT THIS STUDY

Notes to the Reader

2 Kings 22:8  Then Hilkiah the high priest said to Shaphan the scribe, "I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD." And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan who read it.

9  And Shaphan the scribe came to the king and brought back word to the king and said, "Your servants have emptied out the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of the workmen who have the oversight of the house of the LORD."

10 Moreover, Shaphan the scribe told the king saying, "Hilkiah the priest has given me a book." And Shaphan read it in the presence of the king.

11 And it came about when the king heard the words of the book of the law, that he tore his clothes.

12 Then the king commanded Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam the son of Shaphan, Achbor the son of Micaiah, Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah the king's servant saying,

13 "Go, inquire of the LORD for me and the people and all Judah concerning the words of this book that has been found, for great is the wrath of the LORD that burns against us, because our fathers have not listened to the words of this book, to do according to all that is written concerning us."

This Old Testament story is a testimony to the fact that God did allow the Law of Moses to be lost for a period of time and then to again be found. A similar recent archeological discovery at Qumran brings to light some of the lost religious understanding that was present in Israel during the “eyewitness generation”. The “eyewitness generation” refers to the generation of Jews and Christians that were alive in the First Century. These Qumran documents, which were contemporary with Jesus and the Apostles, were lost from about A.D. 68 until 1947 when the “Dead Sea Scrolls” were found.

Thus, like this Old Testament example, the ultimate test of “wisdom” is the reaction to this ancient knowledge, which is now brought to light. In matters of religion it is a very difficult and a very painful experience to lay aside one’s accepted “ingrained beliefs” in order to embrace something different, even if it is true.

However, “true faith” should be produced by “ultimate truth” [“So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ” (Rom. 10:17)]. The modern academic management disciplines teach that “good decisions are made based on good data”.

Moreover, as well intentioned as the “Restoration Movement” teachers were in restoring 1st Century Christianity, the recent discoveries have brought to light information that was not readily available to these noble 19th Century theologians. Had this information been available to them, the “Restoration Doctrine” concerning the “end of all things” (eschatology) would certainly have been different.

In regard to the “Restoration Movement” of the 1800’s, it will be very difficult for many in the Church to accept the fact that some of the “relatively recent Restoration
Document”, in actuality, was based primarily on well meaning assumptions. And that some of these assumptions do not accurately represent what was actually taught and commonly believed in 1st and 2nd Century Christian Churches.

Therefore, in the interest of “Truth” the earliest historical documents of Christianity must be carefully re-examined in order to establish what was actually believed in the 1st Century. This is the purpose of this study. The historical documents discussed in this study are actually some of the oldest known records from the dawn of Christianity. These documents are at least 16 centuries older than the teachings of the 19th Century, when the “Restoration Movement” emerged.

Thus, many Christians in the Church today might tend to reject these ancient testimonies as “new or liberal innovations”. In reality, the “modern doctrine” actually reflects the “modern innovation” and the departure from what was, in fact, believed in the 1st Century.

This study is not intended to be the last word on Biblical prophecy nor is it intended to offend modern Christians. If the historical record is correct, then it has now been over 2000 years since the “magi from the East arrived in Jerusalem” (see Matt. 2:1). It is even more interesting that the “wise men”, who were probably not even Jews, had the insight to trace the “Great One” to Bethlehem.

The “search for truth” and the innate desire to understand Biblical prophecy as it was intended are the primary goals of this study. The author has no intention of maintaining either an “un-Scriptural” or an inflexible position in this study. There is no opinion or conclusion drawn in this study that cannot yield to better data and better information. Truth is important and it should be the end result of any academic research.

This study is intended to be a resource of historical information that will aid “true believers” in the understanding of God’s Word and in “restoring 1st Century Christianity”. The actual empirical historical record and the many scientific discoveries, since the birth of Jesus, forces Christendom to re-evaluate the long held “traditions and sacrosanct assumptions”.

It has been about 1970 years since the Church was established by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the first Pentecost after the Lord’s resurrection. In order to accomplish the above stated goals, truth was sought anywhere truth could be found. For Christians, the “Word of God” is the “primary source” of religious truth.

Over 37 years ago, as a young man, the author discovered an abundance of secular historical evidence that appeared to confirm the fulfillment of many of those ancient Biblical predictions. Thus, there has been a lifelong fascination, a passion, and a never-ending study to find the answer to the question that was asked of Jesus by Pilate, “What is truth” [see John 18: 38]? The honest search for truth also demands an accompanying willingness to change ones understanding of things. Very often the “Judeo-Christian Ethic” has viewed “truth” and “change” as mutually exclusive terms.

The first draft was prepared in 1999 for a limited distribution and review prior to this edition. This work continues to be updated and revised. The recent revisions are designed to be viewed in an electronic format.
The quotations in this study are primarily from The New American Standard Version of the Bible unless otherwise indicated. In many instances the actual Scriptural passages have been included in this text for both emphasis and for the ease in finding the corresponding Biblical references.

Information that is enclosed within brackets [ ] or that has been inserted within a quoted Biblical text and is between horizontal lines and annotated, “Author’s Note” or “Author’s Comment” has been provided by the author. Bolding and italics in the text have also been provided by the author for contrast and/or for emphasis.

An indentured “family tree” chapter heading numbering system, which is identified in the “Table of Contents”, is incorporated for each chapter and major heading within this study. This type of reference system facilitates locating cross-references associated with major headings. Hyperlinks have been added for ease of navigating the document. This form will also facilitate the easing of the task of editing future revisions of this document without having to constantly revise page number references within the text.

Definitions Used In The Text

**Catholic Church:** This term is used in the text to identify the evolved organization of the Church in Rome that was established in the reign of the Emperor Constantine as the result of the Council of Nicea in A.D. 325.

**Christendom:** This is a general term that is used to indicate the realm of Christianity that was ruled by officials who professed a belief in Christian doctrine. This term is often used in this text to associate the dogmatic and inflexible doctrine with the various Christian sectarian groups throughout the Christian Age.

**Church:** This word is often used in the text to reflect the idealistic and righteous universal body of “Christian true believers”. The Church was established by Jesus in the 1st Century. It is the one described in the Scriptures.

**Duality in Conflict:** This term is related to “The Golden Thread”. This most fundamental Biblical principle illustrates the signature of the Godhead within the whole physical creation. The opposing forces, contrasts, and perspectives are pervasive throughout every aspect and level of the universe. This principle is recognized as the inherent struggle between “good and evil”. It is manifested as the conflict between God and Satan, the fleshy and Spiritual natures of mankind, and the two realms [that is, the “Spiritual Heavenly” and the “physical created universe”] of God. There are also many other applications.

**Eyewitness Generation:** This term is used in this study to refer to the people who lived during the time that Jesus was in a bodily form on this earth. It specifically is concerned with the period of time from when John the Baptist started his ministry to approximately the time of the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. In ancient times about 40 years was regarded as the length of one generation. There also appears to be a similar 40 years “dual” parallel to the generation of unbelief during the time of Moses [see Num. 14:30-34, Deut. 32:5].
Golden Thread: This term is used to reflect the unfolding of the Spiritual Design of the Creator. It also reflects the physical development of mankind since the beginning of creation. The Spiritual evolution of mankind reflects the duality and the central theme of the “Divine Plan”. The unfolding of this “Divine Plan” is pervasive in both the Old and New Testament Scriptures. It relates to the “flesh and Spirit”, Adam’s sin [death] and the resurrection, the “physical” [Gen. 1:1ff] and the “Spiritual” [John 1:1ff] creations, the “earthly” and “heavenly” Jerusalem [Gal. 4:21-31], and the fulfillment of the Law of Moses by the New Testament Covenant of Christ [see Deut. 18:15-19].

Roman Church: This term is used in this text to refer to the Church in Rome from the 1st Century to the reign of Constantine. This Gentile Church came to be regarded as the authority on questions of Christian doctrine after the Jewish Church in Jerusalem was disbanded during the war with the Romans in A.D. 70 (Matt. 21:43). It was during this time frame that Christian doctrine began to solidify into traditions. Most of the relevant secular historical literature that is identified and discussed in this study was written during this period of time from A.D. 70 to A.D. 325.

Abbreviations Used In The Text

Antiq., Josephus, “The Antiquities of the Jews”
Barnabas, The Epistle of Barnabas

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<td>Gen., Genesis</td>
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<td>Exod., Exodus</td>
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<td>Num., Numbers</td>
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<td>Josh., Joshua</td>
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<td>Judg., Judges</td>
<td>1st Cor., First Corinthians</td>
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<td>2nd Sam., Second Samuel</td>
<td>Eph., Ephesians</td>
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<td>1st King., First Kings</td>
<td>Phipp., Philippians</td>
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<td>2nd King., Second Kings</td>
<td>Col., Colossians</td>
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<td>Neh., Nehemiah</td>
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<td>Psa., Psalms</td>
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<td>Prov., Proverbs</td>
<td>Jam., James</td>
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<td>Eccl., Ecclesiastes</td>
<td>1st Pet., First Peter</td>
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Downing - The Revelation And The Eyewitness Generation: Introduction

Song., Song of Solomon  2nd Pet., Second Peter
Isa., Isaiah  1st John, First John
Jer., Jeremiah  2nd John, Second John
Lam., Lamentations  Jude
Ezek., Ezekiel  Rev., The Book of Revelation
Dan., Daniel
Hos., Hosea
Joel
Amos
Obad., Obadiah
Jonah
Micah
Nah., Nahum
Hab., Habakkuk
Zeph., Zephaniah
Hag., Haggai
Zech., Zechariah
Mal., Malachi

Bk., Book
Ch., Chapter
ff., When used with a Scriptural reference [Matt. 24:1ff] denotes the text that follows.
RSV., Revised Standard Version (RSV) Bible translation
Thomas, The Gospel of Thomas
War, “The War of the Jews” by Josephus
THE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

27 "For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and WILL THEN RECOMPENSE EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS.
28 "Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who shall not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom" (Matt. 16:27-28).

The inherent mystery and the subsequent understanding of the words of this passage from the Book of Matthew provided the driving force for this study. Christendom has rationalized away the obvious meaning of what the words themselves actually convey.

The author sincerely believes that there is sufficient documented proof to establish the fact that Jesus did indeed appear during the Jewish War (A.D. 66 - 70) in the same way that the “Glory of God” appeared at Jerusalem during the destruction of Jerusalem in 587 B.C. by the Babylonians. Please compare the account from the Book of Ezekiel with the first century account of the Jewish War (A.D. 66 - 70) by Cornelius Tacitus, the 1st Century Roman Historian.

Ezek. 9:1, "Draw near, O executioners of the city, each with his destroying weapon in his hand." [See Jer. 51:20]...
3 Then the glory [see Matt. 24:30] of the God of Israel went up from the cherub on which it had been, to the threshold of the temple. And He called to the man clothed in linen at whose loins was the writing case.
4 "Go through the midst of the city, even through the midst of Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and groan over all the abominations which are being committed in its midst." [See Rev. 7:3, 14:1].
5 But to the others He said in my hearing, "Go through the city [Jerusalem, Rev. 11:8] after him and strike; do not let your eye have pity, and do not spare.
6 "Utterly slay old men, young men, maidens, little children, and women, but do not touch any man on whom is the mark [similar to the passing of the death angel, Exod. 12:27-29]; and you shall start from My sanctuary."
7 And He said to them, "Defile the temple and fill the courts with the slain [there is much testimony in Josephus concerning A.D. 70]. Go out!" Thus they went out and struck down the people in the city [see Rev. 11:1-8].
8 Then it came about as they were striking and I alone was left, that I fell on my face and cried out saying, "Alas, Lord GOD! Art Thou destroying the whole remnant of Israel by pouring out Thy wrath on Jerusalem?" [See the above discussion of the remnant, Section (2.3.4)] . . . .
10 "But as for Me, My eye will have no pity nor shall I spare, but I shall bring their conduct upon their heads" [Matt. 16:27-28].
11 Then behold, the man clothed in linen at whose loins was the writing case reported, saying, "I have done just as Thou hast commanded me." (Ezek. 9:1-11)

From Cornelius Tacitus:
13. **Prodigies had occurred**, which this nation, prone to superstition, but hating all religious rites, did not deem it lawful to expiate by offering and sacrifice. **There had been seen hosts joining battle in the skies, the fiery gleam of arms, the temple illuminated by a sudden radiance** [see Ezek. 1:28, 11:23, Zech. 14:4] from the clouds [Matt. 16:27-28, 24:30-31, Rev. 1:7, Dan. 7:13]. The doors of the inner shrine were suddenly thrown open, and a **voice of more than mortal tone** was heard to cry the Gods were departing. At the same instant there was a mighty stir as of departure. Some few put a fearful meaning on these events, but in most there was a firm persuasion, that in the **ancient records of there priests was contained a prediction of how at this very time the East was to grow powerful, and rulers, coming from Judea, were to acquire universal empire** [see Dan. 2:44, 7:22, Luke 21:31]. These mysterious prophecies had pointed to Vespasian and Titus [Rev 13:11], but the common people, with the usual blindness of ambition, had interpreted these mighty destinies of themselves, and could not be brought even by disasters to believe the truth. I have heard that the total number of the **besieged**, of every age and sexes, amounted to six hundred thousand [Rev. 11:8]. All who were able to bear arms, and a number, more than proportionate to the population, had courage to do so. Men and women showed equal resolution, and life seemed more terrible than death, if they were forced to leave their country. Such was the city and nation; and **Titus Caesar**, seeing that the position forbade an assault or any of the more rapid operations of war, determined to **proceed by earthworks and covered approaches** [Luke 19:43-44]. The legions had their respective duties assigned to them, and there was a cessation from the fighting, till the inventions, used in ancient warfare, or devised by modern ingenuity for the reduction of cities, were constructed. (Tacitus, 1952, p. 298 [An account concerning A.D. 70])

In view of the above introductory references, this study is the culmination of more than 37 years of in depth individual research, **which investigated the validity of a 1968 perception of the author of this study concerning the fulfillment of Matthew Chapter 24 during the Great War with the Romans in A.D. 70**. A desire to understand this and other similar “time-definite” passages, which are found in both the Old and New Testaments, was the catalyst for this study.

**Without any further external historical proof, the Scriptures by themselves, clearly indicate that there must be a 1st Century fulfillment of the “coming of the Lord”, the fulfillment or consummation of the “Kingdom of Heaven” that is associated with “second destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in A.D 70”**.

The aim of this study is to convince the modern Church that many of these prophecies were fulfilled within the natural lifetime of the “eyewitness generation”. Jesus personally called the living unbelieving Jews, who crucified Him, “the wicked generation” [see Deut 32:5, Luke 11:29]. Evidently it was these wicked Jews who were identified as the “lawless ones” during the period of the apostasy or the “falling away” [see Matt. 24:10-12, 2 Thess. 2:7].

The major difference between this study and other commentaries on the Book of Revelation is the careful analysis and the comparison of the Scriptures with the profuse corresponding secular historical records of that 1st Century time period of the “eyewitness generation”. Therefore, as a modern analytical technique, the validity
or the test of this perception or assumption would be either accepted or rejected in accordance with the following hypothesis:

**The 1st Century historical record must produce evidence of a belief of a fulfillment of an imminent “New Kingdom” that would be directly linked to the time frame of the war with the Romans from A.D. 66-70.**

This study also identifies and presents abundant evidences from both the internal Biblical sources and from the profuse secular historical literature of the early Jewish, Roman, and Christian historians. Some of these earliest historians expected the fulfillment of much of the Biblical prophecy to occur within the context of the war of the Jews with the Romans from A.D. 66-70.

**Without question, the ancient historical record supports this view. The earliest Christians believed that many of the prophecies identified in the Book of Daniel, Matthew Chapter 24, the Book of Revelation and others were fulfilled during the war with the Romans that ended with the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.** The information in the various chapters of this study was developed to follow the sequence in which the research was actually conducted.

**Chapter 1** provides a discussion of the mystery of the “Kingdom of Heaven” and it identifies other background information as it relates to the fulfillment of Biblical prophecy. Here the scope of the problem and the methods of research for this study are presented.

**Chapter 2** discusses the various Covenants that God made with Abraham, Moses, and the New Testament Christians. In addition, this chapter traces the Spiritual evolution and establishes the time frame of the transition, from the old “fleshly and physical” Law of Moses to the “Spiritual and Eternal” New Testament Covenant of Christ. This also reflects God’s Devine Plan for His creation.

The specific event [that is, the destruction of the Temple in A.D. 70] that marked the official end of the Law of Moses and the fulfillment of the “New Kingdom of Heaven” can now be established by an analysis of the topics listed as the subheadings of Chapter Two. Thus, “The Generation of Unbelief”, “The Wicked Generation”, “The Time of the Gentiles and the Partial Hardening”, “The Elect or First-Fruits of Christianity”, “The Remnant”, “The Harvest and the End of the Age”, “The New Heavens and the New Earth”, “The Destruction of the Earth by Fire”, and “The Parallel Destructions of Jerusalem in 586 B. C. and A.D. 70” are discussed there. The understanding of these topics aid in the interpretation of Biblical prophecy. **From personal experience, the author has found that an understanding of the Old Testament Scriptures and the knowledge of the secular history of the early Church provides the basis for understanding the prophecies found in the Book of Revelation.**

**Chapter 3** provides the internal core evidences from the Bible, itself, of a fulfillment of the majority of the Biblical prophecies during the war with the Romans. The key to this interpretation is found in the Book of Daniel. **In the author’s opinion, the key to understanding the prophecies of the Book of Daniel is found in the Book of 1 Maccabees from the Apocrypha.**

However, a great deal of additional evidence has also been provided from the other Old Testament Books and from the Christian writings recorded in the New Testament.
All of these writings point to A.D. 70 as the most logical time of fulfillment of the time-definite prophecies (Matt. 16:27-28, there are some of those who are standing here who shall not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom”).

Chapter 4 illustrates some of the early preliminary conclusions of this study as to how the puzzle of prophecy could be logically researched and ultimately be solved. Even a cursory review of the time-definite Scriptures suggests a fulfillment within the time frame of the war with the Romans.

The parallel discussion of Matthew Chapter 24, Mark Chapter 13, and Luke Chapter 21 provides a powerful perspective and insight into the things that Jesus spoke concerning the destruction of Jerusalem during the lifetime of the “eyewitness generation”. This study will delineate, from the parallel Gospel accounts, how the “fullness of the Kingdom” [consummation of the marriage of Christ and the Church] and “the end of the Jewish age” were fulfilled in A.D. 70, and not at Pentecost A.D. 30-33 [the betrothal of the promised marriage]. It is also noteworthy to understand that this 40 year process also corresponds to the “generation of unbelief” in the time of Moses.

It is the author’s belief that the first Pentecost after the Lord’s resurrection was the time that the Church was first established exclusively with the Jews. This betrothal or marriage promises would then be consummated forty years later in A.D 70 when the marriage process was finally complete. The final process would also include Gentiles being included in the Church beginning with Cornelius the Roman Centurion (Matt. 21:43, 24:14, Acts 10:34, Col. 1:23).

Chapter 5 provides important discussions of the different “Kingdoms” that are identified within the Scriptures. Christendom has apparently failed to comprehend the true meaning of and the difference between, the “Eternal Kingdom of God” that was prepared before the foundation of the world [Matt. 25:34] and the “Church that was established on Pentecost” about A.D. 30-33.

Thus, in actuality, the “fullness of the Kingdom” [personal communication from Homer Hailey circa 1969] or consummation was completed at the destruction of Jerusalem and not 40 years earlier at Pentecost, which marked the betrothal.

Chapter 6 is a crucial chapter of this study since the actual profuse external historical evidence from the dawn of Christianity is presented there. The earliest writings of the Church, the evidence from Flavius Josephus the 1st Century Jewish historian, and the accounts of the 1st Century Roman historians Cornelius Tacitus and Suetonius Tranquillus provide actual accounts of the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

The Jewish Book of Enoch, the Book of 4th Ezra, and the “Dead Sea Scrolls” provide even more compelling historical evidence in support of the A.D. 70 fulfillment of the prophecies of the Book of Daniel, Matthew Chapter 24, and the Book of Revelation.

The Christian non-Inspired early literature such as the Epistle of Barnabas, the Fragments of Papias, and the Gospel of Thomas also provide profound historical support for the A.D. 70 hypothesis. The remainder of Chapter 6 provides an overview of the consecutive history of Jerusalem from A.D. 70 to the present time. Included within this stormy historical period is the description of the violent impact that Islam, as the descendants of Abraham by Ishmael, has on the City of Jerusalem.
Chapter 7 provides a much more detailed discussion of the contents of the Book of Revelation. Many of the individual verses or prophecies within the Revelation will be discussed in view of the much earlier similar Jewish sectarian writings. Many of these writings were already present in Israel up to a century before the publication of the Book of Revelation.

The profound similarities of the writings of the Apostle John to the “Dead Sea Scrolls” and to the other Jewish sectarian writings from that same era, no doubt, will redefine Christendom’s concept of “Eschatology” or “the things of the end”.

And finally, Chapter 8 provides a review, final comments and conclusions that the author has drawn from this study.

The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever, that we may observe all the words of this law. (Deut. 29:29)

This study does provide abundant evidence of the “revealed things” that were believed by the eyewitness generation to be fulfilled in the past. The author gave up years ago trying to speculate on the “secret things” that are yet to be revealed.

Furthermore, the secular historical evidence that is presented in this study has been extant for centuries, but it remained hidden until relatively recently. The rediscovery of these ancient documents will challenge and shake the very foundation of the modern mind-sets of Christendom. Therefore, Christians are expected and urged to always reflect the noble attitude of the Bereans [see Acts 17:10-11] in the search of “Ultimate Truth”.

Chapter 1 will begin with a discussion of the “Mystery of the Kingdom of Heaven”.

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CHAPTER ONE
(1.0) THE MYSTERY OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

Chapter One Topic Headings:

(1.1) The Duality Principle Manifested in the Lord’s Creation (Go there)
(1.1.1) Duality in Conflict: The Golden Thread of Creation (Go there)

The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever, that we may observe all the words of this law. (Deut. 29:29)

6 Do not give what is holy to dogs, and do not throw your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces.
7 Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you.
8 For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it shall be opened. (From the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 7:6-8)

Modern Christians must accept the fact that some of the ancient prophecies and passages found within the Bible, and especially in the Book of Revelation, are very difficult if not impossible, to understand this side of eternity. Conversely, the acquisition of previously unknown archaeological and other scientific discoveries and the passing of 20 centuries should promote a continued evolutionary spiral to higher levels of wisdom and Spiritual understanding.

Therefore, the acquisition of knowledge and the ever-increasing higher thresholds of understanding have brought to light things that were previously hidden from view. This increased understanding inevitably demands that the earlier unfounded or obsolete opinions and assumptions be discarded. This is the precept of modern scientific inquiry.

However, to our embarrassment, this principle as it relates to religious thought, has never been easily accomplished throughout the entire Judeo-Christian Era. Established religions almost always resist change.

Even today’s modern school students are taught how such men as Galileo Galilei and Nicolaus Copernicus endured ridicule, for the cause of truth, in order to change the unfounded mind-sets of the Catholic Church during the “Middle Ages”. The modern revolutionary concepts proposed by Albert Einstein and others also cause the academic community to continually revise its understanding of religion, astronomy, cosmology, and the creation.

In the same way, the wisdom and understanding of the early non-inspired Roman Church theologians pale in comparison to the information that is readily available today in the modern “Information Age”. Additionally, there are almost two thousand years of empirical history and scientific advancement that must be reconciled with those early assumptions that were made in antiquity by the uninspired theologians.

To the embarrassment of the dogmatic factions of Christendom, the ancient religious opinions, assumptions, and traditions must now yield to hypotheses based
on more complete information and factual evidence. Thus, it matters not who might bring truth to light, provided that the evidence that comes to light is, indeed, true.

Moreover, the very purpose of both the “Reformation” and “Restoration” movements was to restore Biblical truth. Both movements emerged from different eras in response to perceived error, traditions, or gross immorality that crept into the Catholic Church over the centuries. Mundane philosophy, religious traditions and contemporary perceptions have always caused Church doctrine to drift away from the “Truth”. It is no different than the changes that are now taking place in the Church since the noble “Restoration Movement” began not long ago.

To further complicate the problem, some of the most fundamental early Church history and traditions found in the 1st and 2nd Century writings, apparently were not even considered during the formulation of the relatively recent “Restoration doctrine”. The reason for this shortcoming is understandable, since the “Restoration Plea” was to “get back to the Bible and to the Bible alone.” Nevertheless, the perception of truth was somewhat limited in scope without the corresponding historical evidence.

On the other hand, the Church should not and must not be offended by the iterative academic evaluation of valid information, as it becomes available. Except for instances of outright deception, what could possibly be uncovered that would destroy truth? Opinions and false perceptions have to be changed, but ultimate truth does not. Jesus said “the truth will set you free”.

Even the modern management initiatives such as, “business process reengineering”, total quality management (TQM), and others now foster the concept of periodically reevaluating everything, incorporating new learning, and discoveries as a method of continuous improvement.

It is apparent that the Devil’s continuing ploy, since the “Garden of Eden”, is to try to keep mankind at odds with God’s Word and to create false illusions of reality. Some of these illusions still plague Christendom even today as unyielding mind-sets.

Faith in God and the empirical record should be enough to convince the Church that the “Inspired Word” is always true explicitly as it is written. If this were not the case, then God’s Word can be manipulated to mean anything. This fact continues to be evidenced by the many conflicting Christian beliefs throughout the centuries.

True enlightenment only comes when the understanding and the interpretations of the difficult passages of Scripture conform exactly to the obvious meanings as they are plainly written. Satan takes the liberty to say, “the Bible says this, but that is not what it means”. Furthermore, the Bible is of no practical value if it takes an Inspired or an ordained clergy to decipher it. This is another of Satan’s ploys.

History seems to validate the fact that the established Jewish and Christian clergy lost sight of the Spiritual essence of religion. The Roman clergy lapsed into a practice of rule based on dogmatic traditions as they pursued mundane power and control, rather than being led by a foremost and “ultimate concern for truth”. John, Paul, Peter, the other Apostles, and many others were early examples of how truth and wisdom humbled them and influenced them become servants like their Master.
It appears that the longer a religion is practiced, the more inflexible it becomes. The classic example of this was, of course, the conflict between Jesus and the Scribes and Pharisees concerning “Jewish traditions”.

It is within this context, that this study provides a new and fresh analytical reevaluation of the Judeo-Christian understanding of the mystery of the “Kingdom of Heaven”. This study includes both the identification and the discussion of the very earliest precepts, understandings, traditions, and writings that were handed down from the “eyewitness generation” in the 1st Century.

To further add to the “mystery of the Kingdom”, some of the very early Christian non-Biblical writings reflected very different perceptions than those commonly believed today. “The Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius Pamphilus” (Original work written circa 335 A.D.), published the belief that not all of the books, which were included within the New Testament Canon, were considered genuine by the early Church. This fact is also very significant to this study yet it is regarded as very disturbing in view of the present Church traditions. Therefore, great care and the best of the modern analytical tools should be employed to verify the validity of such beliefs from antiquity.

Many early Christian teachers contested the authenticity of some of the books. This subject is discussed in greater detail below in the commentary on the works of Eusebius Pamphilus [see Chapter 6, Section (6.2.2)].

In addition, this study would not be complete without a discussion as to why and how the ingrained traditional mind-sets have clouded the modern Spiritual perceptions. The present philosophical assumptions and long standing mind-sets offer little to the present understanding of the prophecies of the Book of Revelation.

Any present religious view or current theory must ultimately be found in harmony with the unquestioned prophecies of the Bible, with reliable historical evidence, and with the proven concepts of scientific understanding. Theories and mind-sets, which fail to evaluate and incorporate the findings of the newly discovered scientific wisdom and archaeological discoveries, cannot logically survive in an environment of ever-increasing academic knowledge and understanding.

As a good example, the classic struggle between the Catholic Church and scientific advancement in regard to Nicolaus Copernicus (1473-1543) and Galileo (1564 -1642), proved that some of the long standing mind-sets and claims of infallibility in the Catholic Church were embarrassingly wrong.

However, as painful as the process was truth ultimately prevailed. Moreover, the events of the historical past can be the object of historical research. But, there is no proven process that can scientifically analyze or predict the “future” nor view the unseen realm of God. Questions on these matters will always remain mysteries [Deut. 29:29] to those yet living.

Biblical concepts such as, faith, hope, the resurrection of those yet living, and other topics still have an inherent air of mystery and might still relate to the future for fulfillment. Debates on these subjects can neither be won nor lost because the premises cannot be conclusively proven either way.

Moreover, some Biblical promises or prophecies can, conceptually, only be achieved after death. There also appears to be a natural tendency of the religiously inclined to look to the future for the explanation and fulfillment of those difficult or obscure topics that cannot be adequately explained or easily understood.
Many difficult Biblical passages and the unfolding of future events still remain as “secret things” [Deut. 29:29]. Conversely, the key to the understanding of the “revealed” mysteries, concerning the “Kingdom of Heaven and the meaning of the coming of the Lord at the destruction of Jerusalem”, have always been contained within the Holy Scriptures. Moreover, some of the obscure passages are conflicting, may contain possible dual meanings, and are very difficult to successfully explain.

On the other hand, there is also an abundance of relevant early secular historical testimony, concerning these things, recorded by early Roman, Jewish, and Christian writers. Many of the more recent theologians also fail to consider this ancient legacy of historical literature in their interpretation of Biblical prophecy.

Thus, the continuing spirit of the “Restoration Movement” will always be needed in order to both preserve and establish 1st Century religious truth. One goal of this study is to present and discuss some of these lost or forgotten writings from the era of the dawn of Christianity.

From personal observations, it is almost impossible for those emotionally driven to lay aside the traditional mind-sets and to seek truth from the innocence of a “childlike mind”. For Christians today, “Divine Truth” can only be found and be established from studies of the Bible itself and from the continuing scientific research of the creation [Psalms 19:1ff]. In matters of religion, “objectivity” and “Spirituality” should not be considered mutually exclusive concepts.

In view of all the knowledge and technology available today, current mind-sets do so little justice to the wisdom of our “Magnificent and Unfathomable Creator”. Albert Einstein was reported to say, “God can only be seen indirectly in the universe”.  

(1.1) Spiritual Orientation: The Duality Principle Manifested in the Lord’s Creation

John 18:36, Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting, that I might not be delivered up to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm."

37 Pilate therefore said to Him, "So You are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say correctly that I am a king [Luke 19:12]. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."

38 Pilate said to Him, "What is truth?" (John 18:36-38)

In this passage, the Roman Governor of Judea, Pontius Pilate, asked the most important philosophical question that has ever been asked in the history of the world. The reason that it was the most important question ever asked was the fact that Pilate asked the only Living Entity in human form that could ever provide the answer to the query, “what is truth”.

It is also interesting to note, that Jesus did not say that His kingdom was not “in the world”, but that it was not “of this world”. John [18:37] further implied that Jesus previously came from heaven to teach mankind of the “Kingdom of Heaven”. The purpose of the Gospel was to convince mankind that the “way” [see Isaiah 40:13 (Matt. 3:3), John 14:26, Acts 9:2, 19:9] into this heavenly kingdom [Heb. 9:8] was through the
Gospel and the Christian Church on earth. This understanding, indeed, is part of the “mystery of the Kingdom of Heaven”.

The dialogue between Pilate and Jesus was especially symbolic and is still meaningful today. Pilate, as the personification of Roman worldly domination, realized that this obscure Jew, who stood bound before him, was different from all other men. Jesus reflected great Spiritual prowess. Being moved, and perhaps even being afraid by the Divine encounter, Pilate refused to have any part of His execution and he also officially washed his hands of the matter.

What Pilate failed to grasp, during this brief encounter with Jesus, was the answer to the powerful philosophical question, “what is truth”. Many, like Pilate, still fail to grasp the importance of the answer, “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting, that I might not be delivered up to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm” (John 18:36). The ultimate fulfillment of Biblical prophecy must not be concerned with this physical realm on the earth in which we now presently live.

(1.1.1) Duality in Conflict: The Golden Thread of Creation

In order for the concepts of this study to be understood, it is important to both identify and define the principles that were spoken of as “mysteries” throughout the Bible. A clue to the solution comes from the words spoken by Jesus to Pilate. The “golden thread”, or one central unity of the Scriptures, is the understanding of a principle that is evident and pervasive from the very first chapter of Genesis to the end of the book of Revelation.

There is much empirical evidence to suggest that the effect of a Divine Force was imprinted on and continues to remain within the entire fabric of the universe since the beginning of creation. This effect is evidenced within mankind as an inherent struggle between opposing “good and evil” forces as the human mind continues to mature and evolve to higher expanding levels of Spiritual awareness.

The author of this study labeled this principle “duality in conflict”. This most fundamental Biblical principle illustrates the signature of the Godhead within the whole physical creation. The understanding of this [“duality in conflict”] principle will help provide the framework for the further understanding of the “Kingdom of Heaven” and the concepts found in the Book of Revelation.

The opposing forces, contrasts, and perspectives are pervasive throughout every aspect and level of the universe. This principle provides the conceptual foundation for what is understood as religion, Spiritual growth, transcendence, the resurrection, and the attainment of eternal life.

The Judeo-Christian writings identify God as the unseen Spiritual creative force [Isa. 43:10, John 1:1ff] or energy that permeates and touches everything within His creation. In the Biblical account, the presence of God within the creation was perceived and manifested to humans as, light, fire, a voice, through the incarnation of His Beloved Son Jesus, the manifestations of the Holy Spirit, and so on.

The most basic cosmic creative force, or principle, from the beginning that manifested either the essence, or the presence of God, was light. This was a favorite
concept found in the similar literature of the Gospel of John and in the writings from Qumran, which were called “The Dead Sea Scrolls” (Dupont-Sommer, 1962).

The remarkable Genesis account refers to the creation of the physical universe. The Gospel of John, conversely, speaks of the unseen Spiritual or philosophical aspects of creation that were hidden until the time of Jesus’ birth and ministry on earth.

Therefore, both the creation of the universe on a grand scale, and the creation of man on an individual level, bear the same common Divine dual imprint [that is, the visible flesh or physical substance in contrast to the unseen Spiritual and eternal essence, see 2 Cor. 4:18]. This continued struggle to perfection and the achievement of eternal life is the message and fulfillment of Biblical prophecy.

All that God created incorporates this “duality principle”. The evidence of this principle of opposing forces or dynamic conflict was manifested in different ways. Such manifestations are: “God and Satan”, “light and darkness”, “good and evil”, “physical (flesh) and Spiritual (soul)”, “male and female”, “life and death”, “hidden and visible”, “higher nature and lower nature”, “the heavenly and earthly kingdoms [types and shadows]”, “eternal and temporal”, “heaven and hell”, “Adam and Jesus” [1 Cor. 15:45], the “Law of Moses and the New Covenant of Christ”, and so on. The essence of life, itself, is driven, shaped and perfected by this ever-increasing understanding of the unseen Spiritual Creator.

Therefore, the Book of Revelation and all other Biblical prophecy, of necessity, must speak of the ultimate culmination of God’s eternal grand scheme of things that transcends this physical universe or physical death. Paul preached both the future attainment and the fulfillment of these things in terms of “faith” and “hope” [see Heb. 6:19, 11:1ff].

The evidence of the “Golden Thread” can be seen in the Scriptures and especially with regard to the “Covenants” that God made with His people. The various “Covenants” spoken of in the Bible will be discussed next in Chapter 2.
CHAPTER TWO
(2.0) THE OLD TESTAMENT COVENANTS

Chapter Two Topic Headings:

(2.1) God’s Covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob
(2.2) The Old Covenant: The Law of Moses (Go there)
(2.3) The Transition from the Old Law to the New Covenant (Go there)
   (2.3.1) The Generation of Unbelief: The Wicked Generation (Go there)
   (2.3.2) The Time of the Gentiles and the Partial Hardening (Go there)
   (2.3.3) The Elect or First-Fruits of Christianity (Go there)
   (2.3.4) The Remnant (Go there)
   (2.3.5) The Harvest and the End of the Age (Go there)
   (2.3.6) The New Heavens and the New Earth (Go there)
   (2.3.7) The Destruction of the Earth by Fire (Go there)
   (2.3.8) The Parallel Destinations of Jerusalem in 586 B. C. and in A.D. 70 (Go there)

(2.1) God’s Covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob

The recognition of the “duality principle”, which was discussed in the previous chapter, will aid in the understanding of the fulfillment of Biblical prophecy. By definition, the fulfillment of all Biblical prophecy must either fall into the categories of an “eternal heavenly” [Spiritual], or a “temporal earthly” [physical] context [see 2 Cor. 4:18]. This principle can be clearly illustrated in the various Covenants that God and His Son made with mankind throughout the ages.

Both “mundane promises” and “eternal blessings” were pronounced upon the children of Abraham. Some of these prophecies even concerned the children of Ishmael [Abraham’s “child of the flesh”] by Hagar. See Gen 16: 1-16, 21:9-20] who was considered the ancestor of the present day Moslems. The Apostle Paul identified the Covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but not the Law of Moses [see Gal. 4:17], as the true “Eternal Covenant” that Jesus, Himself, would fulfill. Notice how Paul carefully explains that the promises made to the Patriarchs were fulfilled in Jesus as the “seed” [Gal 3:16ff] of Abraham in a heavenly Jerusalem [see Gal. 4:26, Heb. 12:22].

It is very important for Christians to understand that the ultimate fulfillment of things can only be achieved after death and only in heaven itself. Paul’s understanding of these heavenly things is illustrated in the New Testament [see Heb. 11:8-19, 12:22ff, 13:14]. As the result, the earthly Jerusalem, after its destruction in A.D. 70, does not appear to be of any logical consequence for Christians today. True believers now seek the “New Jerusalem”, which is in heaven.

From the Jewish point of view, God gave the physical land of Israel to the living descendants [that is, the Jews] of Abraham through Isaac, the child of promise. For the Christian children of Abraham through faith [that includes the believing Jews and the Gentiles], the entrance [John 10:7] into the heavenly Jerusalem will be attained by the resurrection after death. In this way, the seemingly ambiguous prophecies
made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob can now be understood in either a “physical or a Spiritual context”. Consider the following passages:

Gen. 15:6, “Then he [Abraham] believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness ([Rom. 4:3, Gal. 3:6, James 2:23], The New Covenant, through the agency of the Christian Church, and not the Law of Moses, fulfills the Spiritual promises that God made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob].

Gen.17:1, “Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, . . .
2 "And I will establish My covenant between Me and you, and I will multiply you exceedingly." . . .
4 As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. [Note! It is commonly known that the religions of the Jews, the Christians, and the Moslems all claim Abraham as their founder]. . . .
6 And I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and kings [David and Jesus] shall come forth from you.
7 And 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. (Gen.17:1-7)

Gen. 17:20, And as for Ishmael [ancestor of Islam’s Prophet Mohammed], I have heard you; behold, I will bless him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall become the father of twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation.
21 "But My covenant I will establish with Isaac [Christians, Gal. 5:29, Heb. 8:13, 9:15, not through the Law, Gal. 4:24], whom Sarah will bear to you at this season next year." . . .
23 Then Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all the servants who were born in his house and all who were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's household, and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin in the very same day, as God had said to him. [Note! Ishmael was also circumcised].
24 Now Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. [Note! The promise was made before Abraham was circumcised, Rom. 4:10]. (Gen. 17:20-24)

Gen. 21:9, “Now Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, mocking.
10 Therefore she said to Abraham, "Drive out this maid and her son [Ishmael], for the son of this maid shall not be an heir with my son Isaac." [See Gal. 4:24-31].
11 And the matter distressed Abraham greatly because of his son.
12 But God said to Abraham, "Do not be distressed because of the lad and your maid; whatever Sarah tells you, listen to her, for through Isaac your descendants shall be named.
13 "And of the son of the maid I will make a nation also, because he [Ishmael] is your descendant."
17 And God heard the lad crying; and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven, and said to her, "What is the matter with you, Hagar? Do not fear, for God has heard the voice of the lad where he is.

18 "Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him by the hand; for I will make a great nation of him." (Gen. 21:9-18)

Notice how Paul applies the “duality in conflict principle” with reference to the Old and New Covenants. He identifies the Jews, under the Law of Moses who refused to accept Jesus, as the children of Hagar [flesh], who would be cast out [see Matt. 24:21, Luke 19:44, 21:22]:

Gal. 4:21, “Tell me, you who want to be under law, do you not listen to the law?

22 For it is written that Abraham had two sons [Isaac and Ishmael], one by the bondwoman and one by the free woman.

23 But the son by the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and the son by the free woman through the promise [note the flesh and Spirit duality].

24 This is allegorically speaking: for these women are two covenants, one proceeding from Mount Sinai [the Law of Moses] bearing children who are to be slaves; she is Hagar.

25 Now this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children.

26 But the [heavenly] Jerusalem above is free; she is our mother. . . .

28 And you brethren [Christians], like Isaac, are children of promise. [This is a very important point. For the author of Hebrews, the Temple and the literal kingdom of Israel were about to be cast out and disappear, Heb. 8:13].

29 But as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so it is now also [see Acts 8:1].

30 But what does the Scripture say? "CAST OUT THE BONDWOMAN AND HER SON, FOR THE SON OF THE BONDWOMAN SHALL NOT BE AN HEIR WITH THE SON OF THE FREE WOMAN." [Note! When the New Covenant had come, the Old would disappear]. (Gal. 4:21-30)

In the same way, the reference below to Jacob and Esau might also be similarly applied to the two different “fleshly and Spiritual” Covenants:

Rom. 9:10, And not only this, but there was Rebekah also, when she had conceived twins by one man, our father Isaac;

11 for though the twins were not yet born, and had not done anything good or bad, in order that God's purpose according to His choice might stand, not because of works, but because of Him who calls,

12 it was said to her, "THE OLDER WILL SERVE THE YOUNGER [that is, the New Covenant or Christianity]." (Rom. 9:10-12)

There are profound Spiritual meanings concerning the testing of Abraham on Mount Moriah. The Temple in Jerusalem was built on Mount Moriah [see 2 Chron. 3:1] by Solomon the son of David:
Gen. 22:1 Now it came about after these things, that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am."
2 And He said, "Take now your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah [Solomon’s Temple was built on Mt. Moriah, see 2 Chron. 3:1].
8 And Abraham said, "God will provide for Himself [Jesus] the lamb [once for all time, Heb. 9:12] for the burnt offering, my son.
12 And he said, "Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me." [However, God did not spare His own Son, Matt. 26:39, 27:46].
17 indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens, and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies.
18 "And in your seed [Christ and Christians, Gal. 3:16] all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.  (Genesis 22:1-18)

Paul’s teaching of the two Covenants [Gal. 3:16] provides the necessary insight to differentiate between the heavenly and earthly Covenants. The Covenant and promises made to Abraham relate to the kingdom of heaven and a fulfillment through the Church.

Gal. 3:16, Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as referring to many, but rather to one, "And to your seed," that is, Christ.
17 What I am saying is this: the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise.
18 For if the inheritance is based on law, it is no longer based on a promise; but God has granted it to Abraham by means of a promise.  (Gal 3:16-18)

The Law of Moses was given as a temporary Covenant. Moses [see Deut. 18:15ff] declared that there would be a future prophet like himself. The Prophet Jeremiah [31:31ff] also declared that there would be a New Covenant. This passage was quoted in Hebrews [8:8ff]. This is a powerful declaration from the Old Testament that the Jews cannot deny.

Perhaps one of the first perceptions of man’s Spiritual journey from earth to heaven is found in the Genesis account of the vision that Jacob saw as he traveled to Haran. Jesus made a subtle allusion of this to the righteous Nathaniel in the Gospel of John [1:51]:

12 And he had a dream, and behold, a ladder was set on the earth with its top reaching to heaven; and behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it (see Nathaniel, John 1:51).
13 And behold, the LORD stood above it and said, "I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie, I will give it to you and to your descendants. . . .

16 Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely the LORD is in this place, and I did not know it."

17 And he was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." (Genesis 28:10-17)

Jesus, in these next three Gospel passages, spoke of profound meanings from this passage. Clearly the promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are fulfilled in heaven by the “resurrection” after death. This Christian belief anticipates a reward in a Spiritual heavenly Jerusalem that transcends death and physical earthly kingdoms. In Jacob’s dream, he had a perception of the “Eternal Heavenly Kingdom” at Bethel [not Jerusalem] as would Nathaniel [John 1:51]. The key for individual Christians is to have the faith to “see” [John 3:3] the heavenly kingdom. The understanding of this Spiritual perception is very important to this study:

Matt. 8:11, And I say to you, that many shall come from east and west, and recline at the table with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven; [not the Church on earth]

12 but the sons of the kingdom shall be cast out into the outer darkness; in that place [that is, hell] there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Matt. 22:31, But regarding the resurrection of the dead, have you not read that which was spoken to you by God, saying, 32 'I AM THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, AND THE GOD OF ISAAC, AND THE GOD OF JACOB?' He is not the God of the dead but of the living.

In John 1:51, Jesus told Nathanael, “And He said to him, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, you shall see the heavens opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.’”

For Christians, there is no reason to struggle over the earthly land of Israel and the city of Jerusalem. Christians believe in a “resurrection” and an ultimate home with our Lord in the heavenly Jerusalem. However, promises and prophecies, with physical and earthly fulfillment, were made to both the Jews and to the children of Ishmael [that is, the Moslems]. As the result, the conflict over the physical Jerusalem will certainly continue. How God, Himself, will ultimately resolve this physical struggle, between Jews and Moslems, will be very interesting to behold.

The implications and differences of both the heavenly and earthly realms must be clearly understood or this study will have little meaning. There are prophecies concerning both physical earthly kingdoms and a Spiritual heavenly kingdom. It is very important to understand, from the context of the Scriptures, which kingdom is being discussed.

As examples, Enoch [Gen. 5:24, Heb. 11:15] Elijah [2 Kings 2:11], Stephen [Acts 7:55], Paul [2 Cor. 12:2-4], John [Rev. 1:10], and others also claimed Spiritual encounters with the eternal heavenly or Spiritual realm of God.
Consequently, similar to the physical kingdom of Israel, the physical Church on earth and the “Gospel” provide the “way” to heaven [see Isaiah 40:13 (Matt. 3:3), John 14:26, Acts 9:2, 19:9]. The Church, which was founded on Pentecost A.D. 30 in Jerusalem, is the representation [in terms of figures and shadows] of the heavenly Church and the New Jerusalem [see Gal. 4:26, Heb. 12:22-23, 13:14, Rev 21:1-10]. Both the earthly and heavenly aspects of the Church must be clearly understood before the fulfillment of Biblical prophecy can be clearly differentiated. The “Heavenly Spiritual Church” will last forever [see Dan. 2:44, 7:13-14, 2 Cor. 4:18, Heb. 12:22-24, 13:14], the “Church on earth” may not.

(2.2) The Old Covenant: The Law of Moses

John 1:45, Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth" . . .

The preceding discussion has established the fact that the Law of Moses, from Paul’s perception, was a temporary Covenant that would be replaced by the Messiah’s New Covenant. In addition, the “duality principle of types and shadows" can also be clearly identified as the earthly Covenant of Moses was contrasted with the heavenly New Covenant. There are striking parallels between these two Covenants.

The author of the Book of Hebrews eloquently contrasts the difference between these two Covenants and explained how the New Covenant is “better”. The Hebrew writer further explained [“When He said, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear” (Heb. 8:13)].

In view of the time-definite aspects, the Old Covenant would soon disappear when the Temple was destroyed [Lam. 2:9, Heb. 9:8, “The Holy Spirit is signifying this, that the way into the holy place [heaven] has not yet been disclosed, while the outer tabernacle is still standing."]. We know for certain that the Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans in August of A.D. 70.

The testimony of Moses (Deut. 18:15-20) from the Old Testament and the parallel passages from the New Testament, provide great insight into the fulfillment of the Biblical prophecies that are discussed in this study:

Deut. 18:15, The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet [Jesus, from the tribe of Judah] like me [Moses] from among you, from your countrymen [Jews], you shall listen to him. [God, Himself, declared this to the “eyewitness generation”, (Matt. 3:17, 17:5) “While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and behold, a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!"

16 "This is according to all that you asked of the LORD your God in Horeb on the day of the assembly, saying, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, let me not see this great fire anymore, lest I die.' [The voice and the fire indicated God’s presence].

17 "And the LORD said to me, 'They have spoken well. "
18 'I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you [Jesus, Acts 3:22, 7:37], and I will put My words in his mouth [John 1:1, Rev. 19:13], and he shall speak to them all that I command him.
19 'And it shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words which he shall speak in My name, I Myself will require it of him. (Deut. 18:15-19)

This great transition from the Law of Moses to the New Kingdom of the Messiah would finally become complete when Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed for the last time [see Lam. 2:9, Dan. 9:24-27, Heb. 8:13, 9:8, Rev. 11:1-8].

(2.3) The Transition from the Old Law to the New Covenant

One of the earliest insights of the author of this study was the realization that there were striking parallels [duality principle] between the forty year period from Pentecost A.D. 30 to the destruction of Jerusalem as the similar forty years period of the wilderness wanderings [see Num. 14:30-34, Heb. 3:14-18]. Both Moses and Jesus established Covenants, experienced rejection, and had to deal with a “generation of unbelief”. In both instances, the inheritance of the “Promised Land” was delayed until most of the unbelievers died. The fulfillment of all things, relating to the Law of Moses, was fulfilled during this 40 years period of time.

As the result, new Spiritual insight can be gained from the studies of the following topics, “The Generation of Unbelief”, “The Bride of Christ and the Marriage of the Lamb”, “The Time of the Gentiles and the Time-frame of the Partial Hardening”, “The Elect or the First Fruits”, “The Remnant”, “Jesus Coming on the Clouds of Heaven”, and “The Harvest and the End of the Age”. Again, this is the Spiritual message that is pervasive in the Scriptures.

(2.3.1) The Generation of Unbelief: The Wicked Generation

So the LORD’S anger burned against Israel, and He made them wander in the wilderness forty years, until the entire generation of those who had done evil in the sight of the LORD was destroyed. (Num. 32:13)

Not only did Moses speak of his own generation, but he spoke of the “Latter Days” [Acts 2:17] and a future “evil generation” [see Deut. 31:29-32:43]. This song of Moses would serve as a testimony against the children of Israel until the time of Jesus:

Deut 31:29, "For I know that after my death you will act corruptly and turn from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you in the latter days. . . .
30 Then Moses spoke in the hearing of all the assembly of Israel the words of this song, until they were complete: . . . .
32:4 "The Rock"! His work is perfect, For all His ways are just; A God of faithfulness and without injustice, Righteous and upright is He. [Note ! 1 Cor. 10:4-5 “and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ 5 Nevertheless, with most of them God was not well-pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness” (Amos 2:9-12)].
32:5 "They have acted corruptly toward Him, They are not His children, because of their defect; but are a **perverse and crooked generation** [see Amos 2:9-12, Matt. 11:16, 12:39-45, 16:4, 17:7, 23:36, 24:34, Mark 8:12, 38, 9:19, 10:30, Luke 7:32, 9:41, 11:29-32, 50-51, 16:8 and 17:25]. (Deut 31:29-32:5)

Deut. 32:20, Then He said, 'I will hide My face from them, I will see what their end shall be; for they are a perverse generation, sons in whom is no faithfulness. 21 They have made Me jealous with what is not God; they have provoked Me to anger with their idols. So I will make them jealous with those who are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation [Gentiles (Matt 21:43 and Rom. 10:19)], 22 For a fire is kindled in My anger, and burns to the lowest part of Sheol, and consumes the earth with its yield, and sets on fire the foundations of the mountains. . . . 31 Indeed their rock is not like our Rock, even our enemies themselves judge this. 32 For their vine is from the vine of Sodom [see Rev. 11:8], and from the fields of Gomorrah; their grapes are grapes of poison, their clusters, bitter. . . . 35 Vengeance is Mine [see Rom. 12:19, Heb. 10:30], and retribution, in due time their foot will slip; for the day of their calamity is near, and the impending things are hastening upon them.' [Luke 21:22 because these are days of vengeance, in order that all things which are written may be fulfilled]. . . . 40 Indeed, I lift up My hand to heaven [see Dan. 12:7-13, Rev. 10:5-7], and say, as I live forever, . . . 43 Rejoice, O nations, with His people; for He will avenge the blood of His servants ["how long", Rev. 6:10], and will render vengeance on His adversaries, and will atone for His land and His people." 44 Then Moses came and spoke all the **words of this song** in the hearing of the people, he, with Joshua the son of Nun. [Much of this is discussed in the Book of Revelation]. (Deut. 32:20-44)


The Jews of “that generation” crucified the Son of God and some of them even survived to witness their own punishment at the destruction of Jerusalem [Matt. 27:24-25]:

Matt. 27:24, And when Pilate saw that he was accomplishing nothing. . . he took water and washed his hands in front of the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of this Man's blood; see to that yourselves." 25 And all the people answered and said, "His blood be on us and on our children!"

To rule out the possibility of this being misunderstood, Jesus said; [Matt. 16:28] "Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who shall not
taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom." Again, if we believe what this Scripture obviously say, then this time-definite prophecy clearly rules out the possibility of it being accomplished in the future. This appears to be the fulfillment recorded in the Revelation [1:7].

(2.3.2) The Time of the Gentiles and the Partial Hardening


23 Woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days; for there will be great distress upon the land, and wrath to this people (Jews),
24 and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled [see Rom. 11:25, 1 Peter 4:3-7, and Rev. 11:2].


From the Book of Romans we learn; "For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery, lest you be wise in your own estimation, that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in" (Rom 11:25);

Peter taught; "For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles. . . . The end of all things is at hand;" (1 Pet 4:3-7). Paul also testifies to the fulfillment of Matthew 24:14 ["And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all the nations, and then the end (of the Jewish age) shall come]. In his letter to the Colossians, Paul states; “. . . the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister” [Col. 1:23]. Obviously the taking of the “Gospel to the Gentiles” and the grafting them to the vine [Israel] was a prerequisite to the destruction of Jerusalem and to the completion of the Old Covenant [Lam. 2:9, Heb. 8:13]. Finally, the author of the Revelation, wrote:

And leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the nations (Gentiles); and they will tread under foot the holy city [Jerusalem, Luke 19:43] for forty-two months (or 1260 days, 3 1/2 years; and the exact length of time of the Jewish war from 66 to 70 A.D.). . . . And their dead bodies will lie in the streets of the great city [Jerusalem and not Rome], which is mystically called Sodom and Egypt, where their Lord was crucified. (Rev 11:2-8)

Consequently, 40 years passed from the rejection of the Jews at the crucifixion of Jesus in A.D. 30 until the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. All of the obscure time-definite passages, which have been discussed in this section, were satisfactorily fulfilled
within this period. There is no logic in trying to force the “times of the Gentiles” into the future beyond the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

(2.3.3) The Elect or First-Fruits of Christianity

The above discussion of the “times of the Gentiles”, provides a similar basis for the understanding of the terms “the elect and the first-fruits”. The Old Covenant, itself, was nearing its physical end at the time of the writing of the Book of Hebrews (8:13) [“When He said, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear” (Lam. 2:9)].

Paul preached that Christians should die to the Law [Rom. 7:4, “Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, that we might bear fruit for God”]. That Law, for believing Christians, was nailed to the cross.

14 having canceled out the certificate of debt. . . . and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. (Col. 2:14)

Other significant signs that accompanied the crucifixion were the “ rending of the veil of the Temple” and a “resurrection of the saints” (Matt. 27:51-53). Although these signs might appear obscure and unrelated, they may infer a powerful message. The Jewish historian Flavius Josephus, in his description of Herod’s Temple, indicates that the “veil” represented the universe and that on it were the representation of the planets and stars. Thus, the purpose of the “veil” was to separate man from God under the Law of Moses.

Therefore, when Christ died, not only did He nail the Law to His cross but, God tore the veil in the Temple”. The “ rending of the veil” would seem to indicate that “Christians” would now have direct access to God through His “Beloved Son” and not through Temple worship. Moreover, the “raising of the dead” may have been an accompanying sign that the power of death had been overcome in Jesus [see Section (8.2)].

51 And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom, and the earth shook; and the rocks were split, 52 and the tombs were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised [see Eph. 4:8-10]; 53 and coming out of the tombs after His resurrection they entered the holy city and appeared to many. (Matt. 27:51-53)

The Law for Christians was, indeed, nailed to the cross, but the Old Covenant would not officially end until all prophecy was fulfilled and the entire Temple was destroyed [Lam. 2:9, Heb. 9:8]. The Christians that entered the Church [the called out] during this interim forty years period of time, appear to be designated as the “elect” or the “first fruits of this New Covenant” [see, Rom. 8:23, James 1:18, Rev. 14:4]. However, many of the unbelieving hardened Jews continued under the Law of Moses until the
destruction of Jerusalem, when the Old Covenant ended and the Jews were severely punished for their disbelief. Consider this text from Hebrews (9:8-10):

8 The Holy Spirit is signifying this, that the way into the holy place [heaven] has not yet been disclosed, while the outer tabernacle [or holy place, Heb. 9:2, Matt. 24:15, 2 Thess. 2:4] is still standing, [Titus entered the Temple’s Holy Place in August of A.D. 70 as the Temple continued to be burned to the ground, see Josephus (War, Bk VI, Chapter IV, 4-8)].
9 which is a symbol for the present time. Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make the worshiper perfect in conscience,
10 since they relate only to food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until a time of reformation [the destruction of Jerusalem A.D. 70]. (Heb. 9:8-10)

And finally, when the Old Covenant passed away [Lam. 2:9, Heb. 8:13], and the Son of Man, Himself, came in His kingdom (Matt. 16:27-28) then Paul’s teachings would be fulfilled [“... when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away” (1 Cor. 13:10)].

In A.D. 70, Israel, as well as the Temple, was destroyed by the Romans [see Dan. 2:40-45, 7:19-27]. Since that time [Luke 21:31-32], mainly Gentile Christians in the Church have come to dominated the religious world [Matt 21:43, Dan. 2:44, 7:22] just as the prophet Daniel foretold.

If the religious world could understand the Biblical concept of “election”, then there would certainly be no arguments on this subject today.

(2.3.4) The Remnant

The understanding of the “remnant” also appears to be linked to, “the time of the Gentiles”, “the partial hardening”, and “the elect or first-fruits”. Consider Paul’s teaching from the Book of Romans [9:27-33 and 11:5-19]:

29 And just as Isaiah foretold, "EXCEPT THE LORD OF SABAOTH HAD LEFT TO US A POSTERITY, WE WOULD HAVE BECOME AS SODOM, AND WOULD HAVE RESEMBLED GOMORRAH."
30 What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, attained righteousness, even the righteousness which is by faith;
31 but Israel, pursuing a law of righteousness, did not arrive at that law.
32 Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as though it were by works [of the Law]. They stumbled over the stumbling stone [which was Christ],
33 just as it is written, "BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE, AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED." (Rom. 9:27-33)
Rom. 11:5. In the same way then, there has also come to be at the present time a remnant [the Church, believing Jews and grafted in Gentiles.] according to God's gracious choice. . . .
7 What then? That which Israel is seeking for [through the Law of Moses], it has not obtained, but those who were chosen [Christians by faith] obtained it, and the rest [of the Jews] were hardened; . . .
11 I say then, they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? May it never be! But by their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make them jealous [Rom. 11:25]. . . .
17 But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree, . . .
19 You will say then, "Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in." [Rom. 11:5-18]

The forty years period from Pentecost to the destruction of Jerusalem was the period of the grafting in of the Gentiles, beginning with Cornelius, the Centurion [Acts Chapter 10]. As the Gospel was preached, both Jews and Gentiles formed the “true remnant” in the New Covenant: [Heb. 8:13, “When He said, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear” (Lam. 2:9)].

Paul further provided profound insight as he contrasted the difference between Christians and those hardened Jews who wanted to remain under the Law of Moses [see Gal. 4:21-31].

(2.3.5) The Harvest and the End of the Age

Another valuable technique in Scriptural interpretations is to perform “word studies” or to compare how the same Greek or Hebrew words were used in various other passages. In this section, various passages containing the word harvest (therismos, Young, p. 453) are identified:

Matt. 9:36-38 [Luke 10:2] (therismos), “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. . . . send out workers into His harvest”.
Matt. 13:30 (therismos), “allow both [wheat and tares] to grow until the harvest”.
Matt. 13:39 (therismos), “the harvest is the end of the age. . . . the reapers are angels. . . send forth angels to gather out of His kingdom [not the Church but evil and disobedient Jews] all stumbling-blocks and those who commit lawlessness [Zeph. 1:3]. . . . the righteous will shine forth as the sun [Dan. 12:3] in the kingdom of the Father”.
Mark 4:29 (therismos), “when the crop permits. . . . puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come”.
John 4:35-38 (therismos), “But I say unto you. . . . they are white with harvest. . . already, he who reaps is receiving wages”.
Rev. 14:14-20 [Joel 3:13-20] (therismos), “because the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the earth is ripe. . . . the great winepress of the wrath of God. . . . trodden outside the city [Mt. Zion, Rev. 11:8, 14:1, Jerusalem, Joel 3:1-2]”.
It is not difficult to conclude that the harvest began with the preaching of the Gospel [Matt. 9:36-38] during Jesus’ personal ministry, and culminated in the Revelation [14:14-20] during the destruction of Jerusalem, when the reaping or punishment actually began. In a Spiritual sense we can say that the harvest continues today.

Another important word study concerns the word “world, or age”, which was used within the context of the “end of the age” [world, age, indefinite time (aion, Young, p. 1073)]:

Matt. 13:39 (aion) “the harvest is the end of the age”.
Matt. 13:40 (aion) “burned with fire... at the end of the age”.
Matt. 13:49 (aion) “at the end of the age; the angels [Matt. 24:31] shall come forth, and take out the wicked from among the righteous”.
Matt. 24:3 (aion) “the sign of Your coming, and the end of the age”.
Matt. 28:20 (aion) “I will be with you always, even to the end of the age”.
Luke 20:35 (aion) “to attain to that age and the resurrection of the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage”.
Rom. 12:2 (aion) “do not be conformed to this [Jewish] age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind”.
1 Cor. 2:6-8 (aion) “not of this age, nor the rulers of this age, who are passing away... the rulers of this age [Jews]... crucified the Lord of glory”.
1 Cor. 3:18 (aion) “wise in this age [still present]”.
2 Cor. 4:4 (aion) “the god of this age has blinded the minds of the unbelieving”.
Gal. 1:4 (aion) “That He might deliver us out of this present evil age”.
Eph. 1:21 (aion) “not only in this age, but also in the one to come”.
Eph. 6:12 (aion) “age forces of this darkness”.
1 Tim. 6:17 (aion) “those rich in this present age”.
2 Tim. 4:10 (aion) “Demas, having loved this present age [Demas went back to Judaism]”.
Titus 2:12 (aion) “live sensibly, righteously, and godly in the present age”.
Heb. 1:2 (aion) “through whom He made the age”.
Heb. 6:5 (aion) “and have tasted of the good word of God and the powers of the age to come”.
Heb. 11:3 (aion) “By faith we understand that the ages were prepared by the word of God”.

The term “end of the age” [Heb. 8:13 (Lam. 2:9)] does not necessarily imply the end of the literal earth but the end of a period of time [that is, the Jewish Age]. Hence Paul said, “... and those who use the world, as though they did not make full use of it; for the form of this world is passing away [1 Cor. 7:31]. And John made this time-definite statement:

(1 John 2:17) And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever. 18 Children, it is [the] last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have arisen; from this we know that it is [the] last hour.

How can a last hour extend over 1900 years? Thus, the true meaning to yet another obscure time-definite passage may be reconciled. Please also consider the references to “World, ages, dispensations” (aionon, Young, p. 1073):

1 Cor. 2:7 (aionon) “the hidden wisdom, which God predestined before the ages to our glory”.

1 Cor. 10:11 (aionon) “for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come”.
Heb. 9:26 (aionon) “but now once at the consummation [end of the ages]”.


(2.3.6) The New Heavens and the New Earth

The mind-set that came down to us from the 2nd Century is the expectation of a new heaven and a new earth when this literal earth is destroyed by fire. The Christian expectation was derived primarily from 2 Peter [3:7-13], as a fulfillment of Jesus’ earlier prophecy in Matthew [24:35, Luke 21:33 “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away”].

However, the real dilemma, as it impacts Christian doctrine, was that Eusebius in the Third Century states that many of the early Church writers believed that 2 Peter was not written by the Apostle Peter [see the comments on 2 Peter in Section (3.5.20)]. Furthermore, this same teaching is found in the pre-Christian Jewish sectarian Books of 4 Ezra and Enoch [see Sections (6.3) and 6.4) in Chapter 6 respectively]. Thus, there are three most important “hard questions” to ask at this point in this study. First, are the prophecies in 2 Peter, concerning the new heavens and the new earth, inspired? Secondly, was the language used intended to convey a “literal” or a “figurative” meaning? And finally, will God again create a “new heaven and a new earth after the present world is destroyed by fire? The answers to these “difficult” questions have profound impacts on the fulfillment of Biblical prophecy. The author has struggled for the answers to these questions and may not have a satisfactory answer.

In order to answer these questions consider the illustrations from the following Scriptures:

Hebrews [4:1-11] would seem to indicate that all of God’s works were finished “at only one time” from the beginning of creation. Therefore, after the creation process, God rested and there would be “nothing more that ever needed to be created”. Joshua and the children of Israel were not able to enter or attain that “eternal rest” under the Law of Moses, but this ultimate “rest in heaven” was to be fulfilled in connection with the atonement of Jesus and by the “later resurrection from the dead”. It appears that the very purpose of Hades was to hold the dead until the Messiah came in judgment and made “eternal rest” attainable [see Eph 4:8, 1 Peter 3:19-4:7].

In addition, Matthew [25:34] tells us that Christians will “inherit the kingdom prepared [that is, already created but hidden from view, see 2 Cor. 4:18] from the foundation of the world”. Conceptually, it does not appear likely that God will ever need to create anything else. Consequently, there are only things left for the righteous to perceive and inherit that were previously hidden from sight.

The understanding of the “new heavens and the new earth” is derived from the following Scriptures. It is also linked to the “Heavenly Jerusalem” [see Heb. 12:22, 13:14, Rev. 21:1ff]. From Isaiah [65:17-18]:
"For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind.
18 "But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; for behold, I create the heavenly Jerusalem for rejoicing, and her people for gladness". [See Heb. 12:22, 13:14, Rev. 21:1ff].

The reference to the “new heavens and new earth” was associated with the New Jerusalem. The Hebrew writer identified Mount Zion as the city of God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and the general assembly of the Church enrolled in heaven [Heb. 12:22-23] and “For here we do not have a lasting city, but we are seeking the city which is to come” [Heb. 13:14].

Paul in 2 Corinthians [5:17] declared; “Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature [the alternate marginal reading states, “there is the new creation”]; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come”. This verse appears to be alluding to Isaiah 65:17.

In 2 Peter [3:7-13] the promise of the “new heavens and the new earth” would be fulfilled after the world was destroyed by fire. Some Jewish sectarian groups held this exact same view. There is no doubt that some Jewish sectarian groups expected that event to occur during that “wicked eyewitness generation”

Revelation [21:1-10] also spoke of the “new heavens and the new earth” [“the first things have passed away” and “behold, I am making all things new” (Isa. 65:17, 2 Cor. 5:17)].

Jesus, Himself, said “heaven and earth will pass away, but My words shall not pass away” [see Matt. 24:35, Mark 13:31, Luke 21:33]. All of these references from the Gospels were made within the same context as the prophecies concerning the destruction of Jerusalem. It is very difficult to resolve this matter. Whether there are multiple fulfillments, whether the fulfillment is literal or Spiritual may still be hidden (Deut 29:29).

Moreover, the worldwide importance of the giving of the Law of Moses on Mt. Sinai was realized as a “Spiritual impact” in terms of “causing the world to be shaken” [see Hag. 2:6-7, Heb. 12:26-27]. In the same way that the revolutionary teaching of the Law of Moses affected the ancient world, the establishment of the New Covenant would have an even greater Spiritual impact.

The realization of the power of this New Covenant to reshape mankind’s thinking and belief in the world, and not to literally “shake the world”, appears to be the intended meaning. Indeed, the figurative philosophical aspects of the “shaking” was fulfilled in the eyewitness generation, whereas the literal view has not yet been accomplished.

From the above discussion of the “heavenly rest”, it could then be easily inferred that the reference to the “new heavens and new earth” indicated that the Jewish age would shortly end [Zech. 14:10] and the new “Spiritual Age” was about to become a reality for Christians and believing Jews through faith.

In effect, the way into the eternal heavenly kingdom and the “heavenly rest” that was previously created, but was hidden from the view of mortals, was finally revealed in faith to the faithful of the “eyewitness generation” [John 3:3ff]. That eternal realm and
kingdom of God has always been in existence [“the kingdom that has been prepared from the foundation of the world” (Matt. 25:35)].

Many of the early Roman Church theologians taught the same doctrine that is found in the Jewish sectarian writings of the 1st Century. Without any doubt the Roman Church maintained the belief of an imminent end of the literal earth by fire. The Apostle John, from one of his books known to be genuine even states:

1 John 2:17, And the world is passing away. . . .
18 Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have arisen; from this we know that it is the last hour.

The understanding of the term “the world passing away” was provided by Paul. In 1 Corinthians [7:35] he said, “for the form of this world is passing away”. It would appear that the “figurative” application of the “new heavens and the new earth”, in terms of the end of the Old Covenant and Judaism [that is, the end of the age] and the beginning of the New Covenant or Christian era, was Paul’s intended teaching.

As mentioned before, the signature of the Godhead within the creation relates to the “duality [physical and Spiritual] principle”. When this concept is viewed in terms of the earthly [the created physical universe] and the heavenly [eternal] worlds, then this physical world, like the physical body, could one day perish, whereas the “Eternal World” never will. Thus, how the literal universe will eventually end, is still a mystery [Deut. 29:29] that even the modern scientific community has not resolved.

On the other hand, one of the primary beliefs of the Judeo-Christian Religion relates to the earth once being destroyed by a flood and that it will be destroyed once again by fire. This will be discussed at greater length below.

(2.3.7) The Destruction of the Earth by Fire

The Jewish belief in the first “destruction of the world” by water [Noah’s flood, Gen. 6:13ff] and a second destruction by “fire” [that is, like Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19:24, Luke 17:29)] was an ancient tradition that predates Christianity. It is very obvious that many of the Old Testament references to “God’s judgment by fire” were also applied figuratively. Therefore, it is very important to the outcome of this study, to identify and to discuss the context of both the Old and New Testament Scriptures in which such prophecies are found.

It is difficult to determine, with any certainty, the difference between a “literal” or “figurative” fulfillment of the application of fire. Moreover, there is always the possibility of “dual” meanings as in some Old Testament references. The further discussion in this section will attempt to illustrate the difficulty in deciphering this type of Biblical prophecy.

First of all, Flavius Josephus, the 1st Century Jewish historian, reflected the Jewish perception and tradition on this subject from the point of view of a Pharisee [like the Apostle Paul]. The quotation below from Josephus indicates that it was always the common Judeo-Christian belief that the world would be destroyed, once in Noah’s time by the “Flood” and once again at the end of the world by “fire”. Seth, the son
of Adam, was believed to possess great wisdom and understanding, and thus had Divine insight in what was to come:

They [Seth’s children] also were the inventors of that peculiar sort of wisdom which is concerned with the heavenly bodies [astronomy, Psalm 19], and their order. And that their inventions might not be lost before they were sufficiently known, upon Adam’s prediction that the world was to be destroyed at one time by the force of fire, and another time by the violence of a quantity of water, they made two pillars”. . . . Now this remains in the land of Siriad to this day. (Josephus, Antiq. Bk. I, Ch. 2, p. 36)

Of monumental importance to this study is the correct understandings and interpretations of “the earth being burned up” [that is, 2 Peter 3:10] and the “new heavens and the new earth” [2 Peter 3:13]. Moreover, it is important to understand why the peculiar beliefs found in 2 Peter, Jude, and the Revelation are so strikingly similar to the Jewish sectarian Books of 4th Ezra and Enoch. And yet they are very different from the other New Testament books. Please see the discussion of “the new heavens and the new earth” in Section (2.3.6).

Any Christian author in the 20th Century would find it nearly impossible to convince the “heirs of the Restoration Movement” that the Book of 2 Peter, itself, was not written by the Apostle Peter and was, thus, not Divinely Inspired as Eusebius stated in the Third Century. However, this was the exact opinion of many early Christians from the earliest history of the Church. This will be discussed at greater length later in this study in Chapter 6.

Consequently, this also leads perhaps to some of the most important questions posed by this study. “Is the fire ["I have come to cast fire upon the earth;" (Luke 12:49)] in 2 Peter [3:7] ‘literal’, ‘figurative’, or perhaps a ‘dual’ prophecy”? Does God intend, sometime in the future, to destroy either the earth or the entire universe by fire? And will He create still another new heaven and a new earth [Isa. 67:17, 2 Cor. 5:17, 2 Peter 3:13, Rev. 21:1-10]? The contrasting opinions resulting in either a “literal”, “figurative”, or “dual” interpretation will continue to remain hotly debated religious issues among modern theologians.

A review of the pertinent Scriptures below illustrates the possible origins of such interpretations. God’s judgments by fire on the world were applied figuratively on different occasions in Israel’s history. Such Scriptures do not necessarily require the end of the literal world for a fulfillment. Consider the following Scriptures:

Note the Scriptures in which the word “fire” (Hebrew “Ur”, Young, pp. 349-50) are applied:

Psa. 11:6, “Upon the wicked He will rain snares; fire and brimstone and burning wind will be the portion of their cup”.
Psa. 18:8, “Smoke went up out of His nostrils, and fire from His mouth devoured; coals were kindled by it. . .”
12 From the brightness before Him passed His thick clouds, **hailstones and coals of fire**.

13 The LORD also thundered in the heavens, and the Most High uttered His voice, hailstones and **coals of fire**. [This is figurative language to explain the power of the unseen God of Israel].

Psa. 29:7, “The voice of the LORD hews out **flames of fire**”.
Psa. 50:3, “May our God come and not keep silence; **fire devours before Him**.
Psa. 69:2, “As smoke is driven away, so drive them away; **as wax melts before the fire, so let the wicked perish before God**”. [This is an eternal and timeless principle].
Psa. 78:21, “Therefore the LORD heard and was full of wrath, **and a fire was kindled against Jacob**, and anger also mounted against Israel;”
Psa. 79:5, “Wilt Thou be angry forever? Will Thy jealousy burn like fire”?
Psa. 83:13, “O my God, make them like the whirling dust; like chaff before the wind. 14 **Like fire** that burns the forest, and like a **flame that sets the mountains on fire**, [figurative].
Psa. 97:2, “Clouds and thick darkness surround Him. . . .

3 Fire goes before Him, and burns up His adversaries round about. . . .

5 The mountains melted like wax at the presence of the LORD, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth. [This appears to be figurative].

6 The heavens declare His righteousness, and **all the peoples have seen His glory**”. [Note! All people are capable of witnessing the figurative fire or power of God. Paul makes such references in Romans (1:16-23, 14:11) and in Philippians (2:9)].
Psa. 104:4, “He makes the winds His messengers, **flaming fire His ministers**” [This passage is quoted in Hebrews (1:7)].

Isa. 10:16, “Therefore the Lord, the GOD of hosts, will send a wasting disease among his stout warriors; **and under his glory a fire will be kindled like a burning flame**.

17 And the **light of Israel will become a fire and his Holy One a flame**. [This may be a reference to Jesus, Luke 12:49].

Isa. 30:27, “The LORD comes from a remote place; **burning is His anger**, and dense is His smoke; His lips are filled with indignation, and **His tongue is like a consuming fire**;”

Isa. 30:30, “And the LORD will cause His voice of authority to be heard. And the descending of His arm to be seen in fierce anger, **and in the flame of a consuming fire**, in cloudburst, downpour, and hailstones”.

Isa. 33:11, "You have conceived chaff, you will give birth to stubble; **My breath will consume you like a fire**.

12 "And the **peoples will be burned to lime**, like cut thorns which are burned in the fire. . . .

14 Sinners in Zion are terrified; trembling has seized the godless. "Who among us can live with the **consuming fire**? Who among us can live with **continual burning**?" [Again, judgment like fire].
Isa. 64:2, “As fire kindles the brushwood, as fire causes water to boil-- To make Thy name known to Thine adversaries, that the nations may tremble at Thy presence!”

Isa. 66:15, “For behold, the LORD will come in fire and His chariots like the whirlwind, to render His anger with fury, and His rebuke with flames of fire.
16 For the LORD will execute judgment by fire and by His sword on all flesh, and those slain by the LORD will be many. . . .
24 "Then they shall go forth and look on the corpses of the men who have transgressed against Me. For their worm shall not die, and their fire shall not be quenched [in hell, Mark 9:47-48]; And they shall be an abhorrence to all mankind.” [From the commentary in Mark (9:47-48), notice the fulfillment. The evil Jews in Isaiah’s day would be punished in their own time “like fire” but the eternal fulfillment of “fire” is in hell, as Jesus taught. God’s judgment is a continuing process. Similarly, this might be one possible interpretation for 2 Peter 3:7-10).

Fire Continued:

Jer. 4:4, "Circumcise yourselves to the LORD and remove the foreskins of your heart, men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, lest My wrath go forth like fire and burn with none to quench it, because of the evil of your deeds."

Lam. 2:3, “In fierce anger He has cut off all the strength of Israel; He has drawn back His right hand From before the enemy. And He has burned in Jacob like a flaming fire. . . in the tent of the daughter of Zion He has poured out His wrath like fire”. [This application of wrath like “fire” at the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 586 B. C. is a prime example and helps set the precedence for the similar destruction by the Romans in A.D. 70].

Lam. 4:11, “The LORD has accomplished His wrath, He has poured out His fierce anger; and He has kindled a fire in Zion which has consumed its foundations”. [Note the past tense, this had already been accomplished in 586 B. C.].

Ezek. 5:2, "One third you shall burn in the fire at the center of the city, when the days of the siege are completed. Then you shall take one third and strike it with the sword all around the city, and one third you shall scatter to the wind; and I will unsheathe a sword behind them. . . .
4 "And take again some of them and throw them into the fire, and burn them in the fire; from it a fire will spread to all the house of Israel”. [Compare this passage with Revelation (8:7ff) and Matthew (13:40-43, 16:27-28, 24:31). Based on the precedence set here by the prophet Ezekiel, it is not unreasonable to conclude that Jesus was speaking of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in these time-definite passages as well as the eternal destruction in hell].

Ezek. 20:47, “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 shall 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”’. [This is figurative and not relating to the whole earth].
Ezek. 30:8, "And they will know that I am the LORD, when I set a fire in Egypt and all her helpers are broken". [Figurative of Egypt].

Ezek. 38:1, And the word of the LORD came to me saying,
2 "Son of man, set your face toward Gog of the land of Magog [Rev. 20:8ff. . .
19 "And in My zeal and in My blazing wrath I declare that on that day there will surely be a great earthquake in the land of Israel. . .
22 "And with pestilence and with blood I shall enter into judgment with him; and I shall rain on him, and on his troops, and on the many peoples who are with him, a torrential rain, with hailstones, fire, and brimstone.

Ezek. 39:6, "And I shall send fire upon Magog [Rev. 20:8] and those who inhabit the coastlands in safety; and they will know that I am the LORD”.

Joel 2:3, “A fire consumes before them, and behind them a flame burns. . .
5 With a noise as of chariots they leap on the tops of the mountains, like the crackling of a flame of fire consuming the stubble, like a mighty people arranged for battle.

Joel 2:30, "And I will display wonders in the sky and on the earth, blood, fire, and columns of smoke.
31 "The sun will be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and awesome day [Malachi 4:5] of the LORD comes”. [See Matt. 24:29, Acts 2:20].

Amos 7:4, “Thus the Lord GOD showed me, and behold, the Lord GOD was calling to contend with them by fire, and it consumed the great deep and began to consume the farm land.

Micah 1:3, “For behold, the LORD is coming forth from His place. He will come down and tread on the high places of the earth.
4 The mountains will melt under Him, and the valleys will be split, like wax before the fire, like water poured down a steep place. [More figurative fire and physical judgment]. . .

Nahum 1:5, “Mountains quake because of Him, and the hills dissolve; indeed the earth is upheaved by His presence, the world and all the inhabitants in it.
6 Who can stand before His indignation? Who can endure the burning of His anger? His wrath is poured out like fire, and the rocks are broken up by Him. [More figurative applications].

Zeph. 1:18, “Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to deliver them on the day of the LORD’S wrath; and all the earth will be devoured in the fire of His jealousy, for He will make a complete end, indeed a terrifying one, of all the inhabitants of the earth”.

Zeph. 3:8, “Indeed, My decision is to gather nations, to assemble kingdoms, to pour out on them My indignation, all My burning anger; for all the earth will be devoured by the fire of My zeal”.

Zech. 13:9, "And I will bring the third part through the fire, refine them as silver is refined, and test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, and I will answer them; I will say, 'They are My people,' and they will say, 'The LORD is my God.'" [Notice that Zephaniah (3:9ff) declares that after this terrible event that the earth still continues. The final “Remnant” (Zeph. 3:13) is the Christians (Rom. 11:5ff). See the discussion of “The Remnant” in Section (2.3.4)].
In this next passage from Psalms 46, notice the figurative language and how God continually judges the nations and blesses the righteous.

Psa. 46:2, Therefore we will not fear, **though the earth should change, and though the mountains slip into the heart of the sea; . . .**
6 The nations made an uproar, the kingdoms tottered; He raised His voice, the earth melted. (Psa. 46:4-10)

A similar reference is found in Amos 9:5, “And the Lord GOD of hosts, The One who touches the land so that it melts, and all those who dwell in it mourn, and all of it rises up like the Nile and subsides like the Nile of Egypt;”

The next passage from Isaiah [34:8-10] can easily be applied as a **“dual prophecy”** of the destruction of Jerusalem and subsequent fulfillment in either 586 B.C. or A.D. 70. The Scripture might even apply to an ultimate future end of the literal earth.

However, we can easily establish historical facts concerning Israel’s past. It is extremely risky business and very presumptuous to try to predict the future based on the same Scriptures. It is the purpose of this study to relate to past history and not to speculate about the future. The future is still a hidden mystery that has not yet been revealed.

For the LORD has a day of vengeance, a year of recompense for the cause of Zion.
9 And its streams shall be turned into pitch, and its loose earth into brimstone, and its land shall become burning pitch.
10 It shall not be quenched night or day; its smoke shall go up forever [see Rev. 18:18]; from generation to generation it shall be desolate; none shall pass through it forever and ever. (Isa. 34:8-10)

In the above passage from Isaiah, some argue that the fire of God’s wrath was figurative [see, Psalms 21:9, 78:21, 89:46, Isaiah 34:1-10, Jeremiah 21:12, Lam. 2:4, 4:11, Ezek. 22:20-31, Micah 1:1-5, Nahum 1:5-6, Zephaniah 1:1-5, 18, 3:8] and was, thus, fulfilled at the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. This fulfillment would be interpreted in the same way as when the Lord came in judgment [like fire] at the first destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.

The similar New Testament references to “Fire [Greek, *pur*, Young, p. 350]” will be identified and briefly discussed next:

Matt. 3:10, And the axe is already laid at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire [reference to the impending war with the Romans and the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in A.D. 70] . . .
12 "And His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clear His threshing floor; and He will gather His wheat into the barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

Matt. 5:22, “. . . whoever shall say, 'You fool,' shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell”.
Matt. 13:40, Therefore just as the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the [Jewish] age.

41 "The Son of Man will send forth His angels [Matt. 16:27-28], and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. . . .

49 "So it will be at the end of the age; the angels shall come forth, and take out the wicked from among the righteous, and will cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Matt. 18: 8, And if your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; it is better for you to enter life crippled or lame, than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the eternal fire. [The evil ones who die in the war will go to hell].

Matt. 25: 41, "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;"

[Note that hell was already created. Also see the discourse on Hades in Section (6.2.3.4)].

Luke 12: 49, "I have come to cast fire upon the earth; and how I wish it were already kindled!"

Luke 17:29, “but on the day that Lot went out from Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all.

30 "It will be just the same on the day that the Son of Man is revealed.

2 Thess. 1:7, “when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire [Matt. 13:41, 16:27-28], . . .

9 And these will pay the penalty of eternal destruction [in hell], away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,

Heb. 1:7, “And of the angels He says, "WHO MAKES HIS ANGELS WINDS, AND HIS MINISTERS A FLAME OF FIRE [Psa 104:4]."

Heb. 12:29, “for our God is a consuming fire”.

2 Peter 1:7, “But the present heavens and earth by His word are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men”.

Jude 7, “Just as Sodom and Gomorrah. . . as an example, in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire”. [This passage illustrates perfectly the perspective of this study. Jerusalem, like Sodom and Gomorrah would be physically destroyed [see Rev. 11:8]. However, the impact of the physical destruction leads to eternal destruction and separation from God in hell].

Rev. 8:7, And 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 [Ezek. 38:22, Zech. 13:8].

8 And the second angel sounded, and something like a great mountain burning [Jer. 51:24-25] with fire was thrown into the sea; and a third of the sea became blood;

Rev. 9:17, and out of their mouths proceed fire and smoke and brimstone.
Rev. 14:10, 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.**

11 "And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever [just like Sodom and Gomorrah, Isa. 34:10, Jude 7]; and they have no rest day and night [in hell], those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."

Rev. 20:9, 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.**

10 "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 [in hell, Matt. 25:41]. . . .

14 And **death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire.**

15 And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, **he was thrown into the lake of fire**.

Rev. 21:8, **But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death [in hell].**

There does not appear to be any other supporting Scriptures or prophecies, comparable to 2 Peter Chapter 3 that speak of the literal earth being destroyed. **Even the declaration in Micah [(1:3), “For behold, the Lord is coming forth from His place. He will come down and tread on the high places of the earth. 4. The mountains will melt under Him, and the valleys will be split, like wax before the fire”] can easily, within the context of the passage, be related to either the destruction of Zion in 586 B. C. or A.D. 70.**

Therefore, an interpretation that follows the precedence of the figurative language used to announce the destruction of Jerusalem in the Old Testament is almost identical to the prophecy in 2 Peter Chapter 3 that might also be fulfilled similarly at the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

On the other hand, **if the Apostle Peter did write 2 Peter, and if the Apostle Peter did declare by Divine Inspiration that the literal earth was to be destroyed by literal fire, then this prophecy creates more difficult problems and a mystery that may not be resolved this side of the veil of death [Deut 29:29].**

**In view of this “literal scenario”, some postulate the necessity for “two comings [parousias]”. Thus, there would be an interim imminent judgment against the Jews (that is, in A.D. 70), and next there would be a “Final Judgment” of all mankind sometime in the future [see Gen. 8:22].**

In effect, one coming occurred at the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 in order to satisfy the many time-definite references to the coming as near [Matt. 16:27-28, see Sections (4.4.3.2 and 4.4.3.4)]. And another coming must occur at the time that the world will literally be burned up [1 Thess. 4:15-17, see the comments on 1 Corinthians Chapter 15, Section (3.5.7)]. The “two comings” was the scenario and position taken by Foy Wallace (1966) in his commentary on the **Book of Revelation**,
Moreover, even with a cursory perusal of the Book of Enoch, there is little doubt that the prophecies, found in the Book of 2 Peter, reflect the similar expectation [see Section (6.4) in Chapter 6]. The common thread is a similar anticipation of the imminent “end of all things” [1 Peter 4:7] or “end of the world” [1 Cor. 7:31, 1 John 2:17-8] similar to the earlier Jewish sectarian beliefs.

Much of the pre-Christian thought, which is found in both the Books of 4th Ezra, Enoch, and in the “Qumran Texts (Dead Sea Scrolls) actually provides a different parallel interpretation of the same Biblical prophecy and imminent expectation of “the end of things”.

Furthermore, the expectation of the imminent destruction of the world by literal fire within the time frame of the “eyewitness generation” obviously did not happen. The settlement at Qumran was routed by the Romans 10th Legion, their communal buildings were demolished, and they vanished from history with their beliefs unfulfilled.

On the other hand, the prophecies of Jesus [see Matt. 16:27-28, 24:1ff, Luke 19:43-44, and others] were fulfilled by A.D. 70 when “wrath like fire” [see all the above references in this section] was poured out on Jerusalem and the Temple during the Jewish war [A.D. 66-70]. In this way, the integrity of the time-definite aspects of Jesus’ own prophecies were confirmed by both the internal Biblical testimony and by the various secular historical accounts.

Further support for the “figurative fire” view comes from the teachings of the Apostle Paul. Paul provided at least part of the answer [see Section (2.3.6)] to the problem in the passage from 1 Corinthians [7:31, “the form of this world is passing away”]. In order for all of the difficult passages, in both the Old and New Testaments, to be unified, only the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 can satisfy most of the time-definite requirements of the various Scriptural references.

The reference to fire, in 2 Peter Chapter 3, may also be figuratively interpreted in the same way that it was in the Old Testament [see, Psalms 21:9, 78:21, 89:46, Isaiah 34:1-10, Jeremiah 21:12, Lam. 2:4, 4:11, Ezek. 22:20-31, Micah 1:1-5, Nahum 1:5-6, Zephaniah 1:1-5, 18, 3:8]. If this is true, then A.D 70 would represent another judgment of God.

Judgment began with the evil Jews [1 Peter 4:17] at the destruction of Jerusalem. In this way, the time-definite problems can be easily resolved. As the result, the continuity of Peter’s teachings [Acts 3:24, 1 Peter 4:3-17], relating to the “present trials, persecutions, and imminent Jewish war”, are carefully maintained. Jesus taught Peter and the other Apostles these things in Matthew Chapter 24.

Conversely, if this premise is not correct, then the profound dilemma results by not having the world literally destroyed by fire in the 1st Century. Another different view assumes that the Lord changed His mind and thus delayed [2 Peter 3:8] His coming and the resulting destruction of the world. This was the position taken by many early Church theologians. This tradition remained as the basis of the current mind-set and traditions that are held by most of Christendom even to this very day.

In addition, most of Christendom and most of “the heirs of the Restoration Movement”, until fairly recently, similarly rejected the idea of a “coming [parousia]” of the Lord at the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

It is this author’s hope that the abundant historical testimony, provided in Chapter 6 of this study, will help provide a different perspective based on the profuse early
historical record. There should be an academic appreciation for the early historical writings, the opinions, and the assumptions made by the early Church theologians. However, some of there early assumptions appear to be in error.

What will actually happen in the future is still “a great mystery” [Deut. 29:29] that only God, Himself, can answer. However, according to all of the abundant internal and external evidence, it can not be denied that “wrath like fire” was poured out on Jerusalem in both 586 B.C and A.D. 70, thus easily fulfilling the prophecies of Daniel, Matthew Chapter 24 and the Book of Revelation.

In addition, as mentioned before, in the ancient traditions of both the Jews, the Christians, and Islam, each of these bodies of religions have always maintained a belief that the earth, itself, would ultimately be destroyed by fire. Also, Jesus did not contradict this ancient Jewish belief. It would not be consistent to interpret the “Great Flood” and the “destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah” as literal and then assume that all of the references to the “final destruction by fire” are completely figurative.

As a final thought, consider the promise that God made to Noah. There is no doubt that this passage relates to the destruction of the literal earth because of the inherent “wickedness” [see Gen. 6:5, 18:20] of its people. Consequently, does the passage imply that God will not completely destroy the earth again or only that He will not destroy it by another flood? Since the passage “While the earth [still] remains” (Gen. 8:22) implies that the ultimate “final end” or the literal destruction of the earth, in contrast to the literal “Great Flood”, may logically still be in the future.

The “human linear thought process” appears to impel theologians to conclude that the physical universe that was created at one point in time was also designed to have a distinct “final end”. This perception is reinforced by the principle that all living things on the earth experience both a beginning and an end. Perhaps the “cosmologists” or the other academic disciplines will eventually be able to answer this question. In this regard, consider this important passage from the Book of Genesis [8:20-9:17]:

Gen. 8:20, Then Noah built an altar to the LORD,

21 . . . and I will never again destroy every living thing, as I have done.

22 "While the earth remains, seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." [This has not changed since the beginning of creation (see 2 Peter 3:4)]. . . .

9:11 "And I establish My covenant with you; and all flesh shall never again be cut off by the water of the flood, neither shall there again be a flood to destroy the earth." . . .

15 . . . and never again shall the water become a flood to destroy all flesh.

16 "When the bow is in the cloud, then I will look upon it, to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth."

17 And God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant which I have established between Me and all flesh that is on the earth." (Gen. 8:20-9:17)
With the above discussion in mind, it is very important to the outcome of this study for the reader to understand two of the most significant events in Israel’s history. They were the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 586 B.C. and the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70. It is also very significant and prodigious that both Solomon’s Temple and Herod’s Temple in Jerusalem were destroyed on the very same day of the year on both occasions respectively. Flavius Josephus (War, Book VI, Chapter IV, 4-8), the 1st Century Jewish historian, states:

So Titus [son of the Roman Emperor Vespasian] retired into the tower of Antonia, and resolved to storm the temple [2 Thess. 2:4] the next day, early in the morning, with his whole army, and to encamp round about the holy house. But as for that house, God had, for certain, long ago doomed it to the fire; and now that fatal day was come, according to the revolution of ages; it was the tenth day of the month Lous, [Ab, July - August, A.D. 70] upon which it was formerly burnt by the king of Babylon [2 Chron. 36:19, Jer, 52:13, Dan. 9:12]. (p. 822)

The events that occurred at the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. establish a precedent for the interpretation of both Matthew Chapter 24 and the Book of Revelation. There is much evidence to suggest that both of these references relate to the siege of Jerusalem (which ended in A.D. 70) by the Romans.

Two of the best Biblical accounts of the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. are cited. The bolding and comments in the text, within brackets [], were added by the author:

2 Chron. 36:14, Furthermore, all the officials of the priests and the people were very unfaithful following all the abominations of the nations; and they defiled the house [Temple] of the LORD which He had sanctified in Jerusalem. . . .
17 Therefore He brought up against them the king of the Chaldeans [Babylonians] who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion on young man or virgin, old man or infirm; He gave them all into his hand.
18 And all the articles of the house of God. . . he brought them all to Babylon. [Note! There is no mention of the Ark of the Covenant].
19 Then they burned the house of God, and broke down the wall of Jerusalem and burned all its fortified buildings with fire, and destroyed all its valuable articles.
20 And those who had escaped from the sword he carried away to Babylon; and they were servants to him and to his sons until the rule of the kingdom of Persia,
21 to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its sabbaths. All the days of its desolation it kept sabbath until seventy years were complete. (2 Chron. 36:14-21)

Jer. 52:3, For through the anger of the LORD this came about in Jerusalem and Judah until He cast them out from His presence. And Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.
4 Now it came about in the ninth year of his reign, on the tenth day of the tenth month, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he and all his army, against Jerusalem, camped against it, and built a siege wall all around it. [See Luke 19:43-44].
5 So the city [Rev. 11:8] was under siege until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah.
6 On the ninth day of the fourth month the famine was so severe in the city that there was no food for the people of the land. . . .
12 Now on the tenth day of the fifth month, which was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, Nebuzaradan the captain of the bodyguard, who was in the service of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem.
13 And he burned the house of the LORD, the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem; even every large house he burned with fire.
14 So all the army of the Chaldeans who were with the captain of the guard broke down all the walls around Jerusalem [Deut. 28:53, Luke 19:43-44]. . . .
27 Then the king of Babylon struck them down and put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. So Judah was led away into exile from its land. (Jer. 52:3-27)

The Lamentations of Jeremiah, which reflected on the destruction brought by the Babylonians, provide other important clues and links that help interpret other related Biblical prophecies that were associated with the later destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. Much of the figurative language is strikingly similar to allusions in the Book of Revelation. Far a more detailed discussion of the Book of Lamentations, see Section (3.4.4).

The prophet Ezekiel also clearly relates his prophecy to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians. The commentary on Ezekiel in Section (3.4.5) compares the “dual prophecy” allusions with the similar figurative language that is found in the Book of Revelation. For the detailed discussion of Daniel Chapter 9, see Section (3.2).

Daniel Chapter 9 provides one of the most profound links, to Matthew Chapter 24 and especially Revelation [11:1-8], that can be found in the Scriptures. Chapter 9 unmistakably links Daniel’s prophecy to the prophecies of Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Furthermore, it identifies two separate destructions of both Jerusalem and the Holy Temple [see Dan. 9:12, 25-27].

The references to “Messiah”, “abominations” and “desolate” in Daniel [9:25-27], provide the direct connection to Jesus’ own prophecy of the “abomination of desolation of Daniel standing in the holy place” that is found in Matthew [24:15, (2 Thess. 2:4)]. The parallel Gospel account in Luke [21:20] provides the further insight and the literal historical interpretation; “when Jerusalem is surrounded by [Roman] armies, its desolation is at hand”. This historical account is well documented by Eusebius, Josephus, Tacitus, and others in Chapter 6 of this study. For the detailed discussion of Daniel Chapter 9, see Section (3.2).


And finally, there is a great deal of historical evidence to support the hypothesis that the full circle of prophecy was clearly completed. The author of the Revelation speaks of
the impending “great tribulation” [see Dan. 12:1, Matt. 24:21, Rev. 1:9, 7:14] and the destruction of Jerusalem by the hand of the Romans:

Rev.11:1, And there was given me a measuring rod like a staff; and someone said, "Rise and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and those who worship in it.

2 "And 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 [Luke 21:24, Rom. 11:25, 1 Peter 4:3] the holy city for forty-two months. . . .

8 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. (Rev. 11:1-8)

Thus the direct parallel, the figurative language, and the precedent set from the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians is almost identical to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70.

Note that the first words from Flavius Josephus, from the “Preface” to his Book The War of the Jews, verify the predictions of Jesus concerning the “The Great Tribulation” [see Dan. 7:20-25, 12:1, Matt. 24:21, Luke 21:22, Rev. 7:14]:

Whereas the war which the Jews made with the Romans [A.D. 66-70] hath been the greatest [see Matt. 24:21, Dan.9:12, 12:1] of all those, not only that have been in our times, but, in a manner, of those that ever were heard of; both of those wherein cities have fought against cities, or nations against nations; . . . (Josephus, p. 605)

As the study progresses, the next chapter will discuss the “Golden Thread” and the actual core evidence from the Scriptures that point forward to the final destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in A.D. 70.
CHAPTER THREE
(3.0) THE INTERNAL CORE BIBLICAL EVIDENCE

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   (3.5.12) The Book of Colossians (Go there)
Chapter Three Introduction

14 This was to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, saying,
15 "THE LAND OF ZEBULUN AND THE LAND OF NAPHTALI, BY THE
WAY OF THE SEA, BEYOND THE JORDAN, GALILEE OF THE GENTILES--
16 "THE PEOPLE WHO WERE SITTING IN DARKNESS SAW A GREAT
LIGHT, AND TO THOSE WHO WERE SITTING IN THE LAND AND
SHADOW OF DEATH, UPON THEM A LIGHT DAWNED."
17 From that time Jesus began to preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of
heaven is at hand." (Matthew 4:14-17)

This study continues with a commentary on the writings of Moses and the other Old
and New Testament Books. It should become increasingly obvious that Jesus was also
the fulfillment of these prophecies (Acts 3:18), and that He is indeed the (Hebrew)
Messiah or (Greek) Christ. Such topics as: the “Kingdom of God”, the “Coming of the
Lord in Power and Glory”, the “Abomination of Desolation”, the “Destruction of
Jerusalem and the Temple”, and many others are all integrally linked together by
prophecies that span both the Old and New Testaments.

These time-definite prophecies also illustrate the “Golden Thread” that points to a
fulfillment within the natural lifetime of the eyewitnesses of Jesus in the 1st Century. It
became clear to the author, based on the early internal Biblical evidence alone, that the
historical references in the Revelation most logically fit the time frame shortly before the
destruction of Jerusalem [Rev. 11:8] in A.D. 70.

This section provides an overview of the most important internal evidence from
the Scriptures that are linked to these corresponding topics. The overview contains
both Old and New Testament references. It specifically deals with the forward-looking
prophecies of Moses, at the time that the Law was given. It provides the time-definite
foundation for the two destructions of Jerusalem that are mentioned in the Book of
Daniel [9:11-27] and the similar prediction of the other prophets of Israel. This
study also identifies the associated New Testament references.

The composite parallel study of Matthew Chapter 24, Mark Chapter 13 and Luke
Chapter 21 will be discussed in Chapter 4. In this way, the frame work for the coming of
the Messiah [see Acts 3:19-24], the coming of the kingdom, and the final destruction of
Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70, will unfold in a logical and coherent manner.
In order to interpret the Book of Revelation, the continuity of God’s plan for the creation must also be understood. This continuity follows the “Golden Thread” from the beginning to the end of Biblical prophecy. Jesus and the Apostles carefully explained to the Christian audience how the Old Testament was to be understood.

The Old Testament is filled with teachings and prophecies that were a mystery at the time they were first spoken. Jesus and the Apostles expounded on these old mysteries in the New Testament writings. Many of these prophecies already have been fulfilled. And yet, some still lack satisfactory explanations and remain hidden mysteries [Deut. 29:29]. Consider the following passage quoted by Jesus from the Gospel of Matthew:

Matt. 13:34, All these things Jesus spoke to the multitudes in parables, and He was not talking to them without a parable,
35 so that what was spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying,
I WILL OPEN MY MOUTH IN PARABLES; I WILL UTTER THINGS HIDDEN SINCE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD" [Psalms 78:2].
(Matthew 13:34-35)

An individual, diligently studying the Bible with an open mind, can also come to an understanding of some of the “hidden things” that have since been revealed. Fundamental to this understanding is the realization that the Inspired Books of the New Testament is the key that unlocks the prophecies of the Old Testament.

The words from the Revelation, itself, verifies the importance of an understanding of the Old Testament prophets. The following passages were not a fulfillment at the first Pentecost after the resurrection:

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. 10:7, see Acts 3:18).

In Revelation 11:15, the seventh angel speaks and the “World Kingdom”, which was prophesied in Daniel 2:44 and 7:13-22 [see Section (3.2)], was fulfilled. Peter provided the answer in his sermon on that first Pentecost after the resurrection:

Acts 3:18, But the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ should suffer, He has thus fulfilled. . . .
20 and that He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you,
21 whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things [Luke 19:11-27] about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time.
22 "Moses said, 'THE LORD GOD SHALL RAISE UP FOR YOU A PROPHET LIKE ME FROM YOUR BRETHREN; TO HIM YOU SHALL GIVE HEED [Deut 18:15] in everything He says to you.
23 'And it shall be that every soul that does not heed that prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.'
24 "And likewise, all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and his successors onward, also announced these days.” (Acts 3:17-24)
Next, this study will identify, in more detail, the teachings of Moses and the Prophets concerning these things.

(3.1) The Prophecies of Moses to Israel

(3.1.1) The Blessings and the Curses

It is important to understand that God enjoined on Israel both profound “blessings” and “curses” at the giving of the Law of Moses (about 1500 B.C.). From the above commentary on Deuteronomy, Chapter 18, it is obvious that Moses looked to the future and prophesied concerning Jesus [that is, “a prophet like me”, Deut. 18:15] and a New Covenant. Beginning with Chapter 28 below, notice how the “curses” established the historical framework that charts the direction that Israel would take until the coming of the Messiah.

In the author’s opinion, Christendom needs a clearer understanding of the relationship between the Law of Moses and the New Covenant of Jesus. From the view of early Christians who were called the “first fruits or the elect”, Paul taught that the Law was but a shadow [Heb. 10:1] of the things to come and that Jesus nailed that Law to His Cross [Col. 2:14-17]. Most of Christendom understands this teaching.

However, what Christendom fails to understand is that there was a 40 years period of time allotted for “the time of the Gentiles and the partial hardening” [see Section 2.3.2]. Paul’s teachings embraced the concept that the Jews would be hardened [Rom. 11:25], and because of this hardening the Gentiles would be grafted [Rom. 11:19] into the “Kingdom of God”.

Then after the Gospel was preached to the world as a witness [see Matt. 24:14, Acts 9:15, 13:47, Rom. 15:19, Col. 1:23], the Romans [man of sin, 2 Thess 2:4 (Dan 7:8, 9:26, 12:1-11)] would come and destroy the Temple [Heb. 9:2,8]. They would put an end to the Jewish Temple worship forever. This final destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, by the Romans, would mark the final end of the Old Covenant [Lam. 2:9, Heb. 8:13] or the Law of Moses. This would mark the time when the Saints [Gentile Church, Matt. 21:43] would take possession of the “Kingdom” [Dan. 7:22, Luke 21:31-32].

Therefore, both the beginning and the end of the Law of Moses are delineated in Old Testament prophecy. The remainder of this chapter carefully traces the “Golden Thread” from the time of Moses down to the final destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70.

Deuteronomy Chapters 28 through 33 contain the forward-looking prophecies that would be in force until the time of “a Prophet like me” [Deut. 18:15, John 1:21, Acts 3:22, 7:37]. Jesus, Himself, taught, "For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished” (Matt. 5:18). The Law and the Prophets spoke of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, as the fulfillment of these things.

Observe from the Scriptures how, “The Blessings and the Curses” provide the basis of understanding for later Biblical prophecy and the final destruction of Jerusalem:

(Deut. 28:45), So all these curses shall come on you and pursue you and overtake you until you are destroyed, because you would not obey the LORD
your God by keeping His commandments and His statutes which He commanded you . . .
48 therefore you shall serve your enemies whom the LORD shall send against you . . . He will put an iron yoke on your neck until He has destroyed you. [For a list of the nations see Daniel Chapters 2 and 7].
49 "The LORD will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, as the eagle swoops down, a nation whose language you shall not understand, a nation of fierce countenance [the Romans, Daniel 2:40, 7: 7-28]. . . .
50 "And it shall besiege you in all your towns until your high and fortified walls in which you trusted come down throughout your land, and it shall besiege you in all your towns throughout your land which the LORD your God has given you [see Luke 19:43-44].
52 "Then you shall eat the offspring of your own body, the flesh of your sons and daughters [compare 2 Kings 6:24-30 - The Siege of Samaria, Jer. 19:9 and Ezek. 5:10 - the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C., Josephus also records a similar fulfillment in A.D. 70, this will be pointed out in Chapter 6 in the works of Josephus] whom the LORD your God has given you, during the siege and the distress by which your enemy shall oppress you . . .
53 so that he will not give even one of them any of the flesh of his children which he shall eat, since he has nothing else left, during the siege and the distress by which your enemy shall oppress you . . .
55 There is an obvious duality in this prophecy since it can also be applied to the Jews that crucified Jesus. Matthew Chapter 24 declares the fulfillment of all these prophecies when the Temple was destroyed for the last time prior the fulfillment of the New Covenant.

(3.1.2) The Scattering (Dispersion) of God’s People

When Jesus was born, Israel had already experienced many conquests and deportations by foreign powers. The term “dispersion” was well known to those Jews who were scattered to the winds of heaven. The subject of the “dispersion” was also discussed in the New Testament [see James 1:1, John 7:35, 1 Peter 1:1]. However, it was Moses, at the giving of the Law, who first pronounced this judgment for Israel’s disobedience:

Deut. 28:64, Moreover, the LORD will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other end of the earth; and there you shall serve other gods, wood and stone, which you or your fathers have not known.

(3.1.3) The Gathering of God’s People

Not only did Moses foretell the “scattering” of Israel on many occasions, but he also prophesied that they would be “gathered”. The ultimate gathering would be by Jesus, Himself, as recorded in the New Testament references. Consider the following:
Deut. 30:1,  So it shall be when all of these things have come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call them to mind in all nations where the LORD your God has banished you,
2 and you return to the LORD your God and obey Him with all your heart and soul according to all that I command you today, you and your sons,
3 then the LORD your God will restore you from captivity, and have compassion on you, and will gather you again from all the peoples where the LORD your God has scattered you.
4 "If your outcasts are at the ends of the earth, from there the LORD your God will gather [Hebrew, qabats, Young, p. 384] you, and from there He will bring you back. (Deut. 30:1-4)

It is crucial, at this point, to emphasize the importance of this visionary prophecy of Moses, and the resulting fulfillment concerning the “gathering” of Israel, which is cited in the above Scripture. This prophecy does not appear to be fulfilled when Jesus ascended into heaven. The Hebrew word “qabats” (Young, p. 384), translated “to assemble or collect”, can be found in the following passages:

Neh. 1:9 [qabats], . . . those of you who have been scattered were in the most remote part of the heavens, I will gather them from there and will bring them to the place [heaven] where I have chosen to cause My name to dwell.

Isa. 43:5 [qabats], Do not fear, for I am with you; I will bring your offspring from the east, And gather you from the west [Abraham, Matt. 8:11].
6 "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,
7 Everyone who is called by My name, and whom I have created for My glory, whom I have formed, even whom I have made."

Jer. 23:3 [qabats], Then I Myself shall gather the remnant [Church, see the above discussion of the remnant (Section 2.3.4)] of My flock out of all the countries where I have driven them and shall bring them back to their pasture. . . .
4 "I shall also raise up shepherds [Jesus and the Apostles] over them and they will tend them. . . .
5 "Behold, the days are coming," declares the LORD, "When I shall raise up for David a righteous Branch [Jesus]; And He will reign as king and act wisely and do justice and righteousness in the land.
6 "In His [Jesus] days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely; and this is His name [Jesus] . . . 'The LORD our righteousness.' (Jer. 23:3-6)

Jer. 31:8 [qabats], Behold, I am bringing them from the north country, and I will gather them from the remote parts of the earth with child, . . .

Jer. 32:37 [qabats], Behold, I will gather them out of all the lands to which I have driven them in My anger, in My wrath, and in great indignation; and I will bring them back to this place and make them dwell in safety.
38 "And they shall be My people, and I will be their God" [see 1 Cor. 6:16-18].
Ezek. 20:34 [qabats], And I shall bring you out from the peoples and gather you from the lands where you are scattered. . . .
35 and I shall bring you into the wilderness of the peoples [Rev. 12:6-14, 17:3], and there I shall enter into judgment with you face to face. [Note! Judgment of the Jews came on many different occasions].
36 "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.
37 "And I shall make you pass under the rod [of iron], and I shall bring you into the bond of the [New] covenant;" (Ezek. 20:34-37)

Ezek. 39:27 [qabats], When I bring them back from the peoples and gather them from the lands of their enemies, then I shall be sanctified through them in the sight of the many nations [Gentiles through Paul (Acts 13:47)].
28 . . . I made them go into exile among the nations, and then gathered them again to their own land; and I will leave none of them there any longer.
29 . . . I shall have poured out My Spirit [Joel 2:28, Acts 2:16ff] on the house of Israel," declares the Lord GOD.

Micah 2:12 [qabats], I will surely assemble all of you, Jacob, I will surely gather the remnant of Israel. I will put them together like sheep in the fold [John 10:1ff];

Zech. 10:8 [qabats], I will whistle for them to gather them together, for I have redeemed them; and they will be as numerous as they were before.
9 "When I scatter them among the peoples . . .
10 "I will bring them back from the land of Egypt, and gather them from Assyria; and I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon. (Zech. 10:8-10)

Isa. 11:12 [Hebrew “Asaph”, assemble], And He will lift up a standard for the nations, and will assemble the banished ones of Israel, and will gather the dispersed of Judah From the four corners of the earth. Top

The ultimate fulfillment of things [that is, the gathering], which was first identified by Moses, was completed by the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus. Read carefully the Scriptures below and notice the time-definite references:

Matt. 24:31 And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other. [See Mark 13:27].

This next Scripture is of particular interest because, as Justin [Martyr] in his work, “Dialogue with Trypho a Jew” pointed out. “For the prophetic gifts remain with us [Christians], even to the present time. And hence you ought to understand that [the gifts] formerly among your nation [Jews] have been transferred to us” (Roberts & Donaldson, Vol I, p. 240). [Compare with Matt. 21:43].
Consequently, this was one of the last times that a Jew, exclusively under the Law of Moses [apart from Christianity], would utter a prophecy by the Holy Spirit. It would appear that no prophecy, miracle, or Spiritual gift was seen, among the Jews, after the Crucifixion of Jesus.

However, the Jewish Christians and even some Gentiles like Cornelius [Acts 10:44ff], continued to experience Spiritual gifts for a period of time. This fact should be of major concern for Judaism today, and should be regarded as a sign of God’s great displeasure for them having crucified His Son.

John 11:51, Now this he did not say on his own initiative; but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation,
52 and not for the nation only, but that He might also gather together into one the children of God [both Jews and Gentiles] who are scattered abroad.

There is little doubt that the “first gathering” began at the preaching of John the Baptist and Jesus. It was further confirmed by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. The agency of the “gathering”, in the 1st Century as well as now, is through the Church by the preaching of the Gospel [Luke 24:47] of Christ.

(3.1.4) The Gathering of the Nations

Similar to the gathering of the righteous, the Gentile nations would also be gathered [see Deut. 28:47-52 above]. The prophecies listed below, concerning the gathering of the nations, are easily fulfilled in A.D. 70:

Isa. 66:18 [qabats], The time is coming to gather all nations and tongues. And they shall come and see My glory [Matt. 24:31].

Jer. 25:29, For behold, I am beginning to work calamity in this city [Jerusalem] which is called by My name. . . . for I am summoning a sword against all the inhabitants of the earth," declares the LORD of hosts.'
30 . . . 'The LORD will roar from on high, and utter His voice from His holy habitation [1 Thess. 4:16]; He will roar mightily against His fold. He will shout like those who tread the grapes, against all the inhabitants of the earth.
31 'A clamor has come to the end of the earth, because the LORD has a controversy with the nations. He is entering into judgment with all flesh; as for the wicked, He has given them to the sword,' declares the LORD.'
32 Thus says the LORD of hosts, "Behold, evil is going forth from nation to nation [not at one time, see Rev. 10:11], and a great storm [Ezek. 1:4] is being stirred up from the remotest parts of the earth.
33 "And those slain by the LORD on that day shall be from one end of the earth to the other. They shall not be lamented, gathered, or buried; they shall be like dung on the face of the ground [this is still not the “final judgment”]. (Jer. 5:29-33)
Joel 3:2 [qabats], *I will gather all the nations [Babylonians and Romans], and bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat [at Jerusalem].* Then I will enter into judgment with them there on behalf of My people and My inheritance, Israel,

Zeph. 3:82 [asaph], *My decision is to gather nations, to assemble kingdoms, to pour out on them My indignation, all My burning anger; for all the earth will be devoured by the fire of My zeal.* [Note! The figurative fire].

Zech. 12:12 [asaph], *Thus declares the LORD who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him,*

2 "Behold, I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that causes reeling to all the peoples around; and when the siege is against Jerusalem [Luke 19:43-44]. . . .

3 . . . I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples; all who lift it will be severely injured. And all the nations of the earth will be gathered against it.

Zech. 14:2 [asaph], *“For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished*

Matt. 24:15, . . . when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place. . . .

Luke 21:20, But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by [Gentile] armies, then recognize that her desolation is at hand.

Rev. 16:14, 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. 19:19, And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies, assembled to make war against Him who sat upon the horse, and against His army [see Eph. 6:12].

The subject of the thousand years in the Book of Revelation [20:2ff] is perhaps the most difficult Scripture to explain. The only similar reference is Psalms 105:8; *“He has remembered His covenant forever, The word which He commanded to a thousand generations”*. In addition, with the passage of more than 19 centuries since the destruction of Jerusalem, there was no such literal period of time identified in history. Furthermore, the authenticity of the Book of Revelation was contested by some of the early Christians. More on this subject will be discussed later in the commentary on the early historical works of Eusebius Pamphilus (1966). See the more detailed discussion of this subject in the commentary on Revelation Chapter 20 in Section (7.6).

(3.2) The Prophecies of the Book of Daniel

Matt. 24:15, 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), . . .
21 for then there will be a great tribulation [Dan. 12:1, Rev. 7:14], such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall. (Spoken by Jesus, Matt. 24:15-21)

The understanding of the Book of Daniel will become clear only if the events are properly aligned with specific historical events, and correctly applied to either the heavenly or earthly kingdoms. Jesus, Himself, provided the key to the “true meaning” of “the abomination of desolation of Daniel” [9:27 and 12:11] as the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. Paul identified the one “standing in the Holy Place” as “the man of lawlessness, the son of destruction” [2 Thess. 2:3-4]. The Book of 1 Maccabees further links the “abomination of desolation” to the prophecies of Daniel concerning the destruction of Jerusalem. And, Flavius Josephus, the 1st Century Jewish historian, also discussed the same thread that links the Book of Daniel and 1 Maccabees to the destruction of Jerusalem. All of these topics are discussed here in Sections (3.2) and (3.3).

The historical record, discussed later in this study, will identify “the son of destruction” [2 Thess. 2:3-4] as Titus the son of Vespasian, the Roman emperor, as the one who literally entered Herod’s Temple in Jerusalem in August of A.D. 70. [Notice the connection of the word “son”, to the “Prince” (Dan. 9:26)].

The Book of Daniel is very exacting in the delineation of Israel’s consecutive history from the time of Nebuchadnezzar to the destruction of the Temple by the Romans in A.D. 70. Therefore, it is very important to this study to account for the exacting historical references in every chapter. The author will be so bold as to state that there are no prophecies, [unless there are dual hidden meanings] in the Book of Daniel, that go beyond the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

The “Golden Thread” of God’s plan traces a prophecy [8th Century B.C.], made to Hezekiah in Isaiah [39:1-7], to a fulfillment in Daniel Chapter 1:

Isaiah 39:1, At that time Merodach-baladan son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present to Hezekiah, for he heard that he had been sick and had recovered. . . .

6 'Behold, the days are coming when all that is in your house, and all that your fathers have laid up in store to this day shall be carried to Babylon; nothing shall be left,' says the LORD.

7 'And some of your sons [such as Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, Dan. 1:7] who shall issue from you, whom you shall beget, shall be taken away; and they shall become officials in the palace of the king of Babylon."' (Isa. 39:1-7)

This prophecy from Isaiah provides the direct connection to the prophecies of the Book of Daniel.

Dan 1:1, In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. . . .

3 Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, the chief of his officials, to bring in some of the sons of Israel, including some of the royal family and of the nobles,
4 youths in whom was no defect, who were good-looking, showing intelligence in every branch of wisdom, endowed with understanding, and discerning knowledge, and who had ability for serving in the king's court; and he ordered him to teach them the literature and language of the Chaldeans. (Dan. 1:1-4)

There is a great misunderstanding in the Church concerning the “Kingdom” in Daniel Chapter 2. The Restoration preachers, quoted Daniel Chapter 2 and Mark 9:1 as proof that the Church was the “Kingdom of Heaven” that was established exclusively on Pentecost at about A.D. 30. This concept was only partially correct. Like the parable of the “Mustard Seed”, the seed, the Church was planted at Pentecost in about A.D. 30. It would not become the mature “tree”, representing the fullness of the kingdom, until 40 years later in A.D. 70.

However, the teachers of the “Restoration Movement” failed to understand that Daniel 7:22 (“the time arrived when the saints took possession of the kingdom” [Matt. 16:27-28, Luke 21:31]) was fulfilled 40 years later during the Jewish War. Many of the “Restoration Movement” teachers were unaware of the abundant early historical evidence, which would aid in the understanding of the Scriptures. Consequently, the historical references, thus misapplied to the prophecies in Daniel, Matthew 24, and the Revelation, remained very confusing in some religious circles, even to this day.

The time-definite parallel historical references, to the 10th and 11th horns and the war with the Saints [A.D. 70] in Daniel Chapter 7, were not reconciled with Matthew’s [Matt. 16:27-28, “the Son of Man coming in His kingdom”] account.

When these prophecies in Daniel Chapters 2 and 7 are contrasted and properly aligned with the War in A.D. 70, then the corresponding historical record removes all doubt as to the validity of the interpretation. See Josephus’ commentary [Section (6.2.3.2), Antiq. Bk X, Ch. X, 4]. The time-definite prophecies, from Daniel Chapters 2 and 7 as well as a commentary of the intervening chapters of Daniel, will be discussed in order as they appear in the text:

Dan. 2:31, You, O king [Nebuchadnezzar], were looking and behold, there was a single great statue; that statue, which was large and of extraordinary splendor, was standing in front of you, and its appearance was awesome.
32 "The head of that statue was made of fine gold, its breast and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of bronze,
33 its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.
34 "You continued looking until a stone [Jesus, the Rock or Stone, Deut. 32:4, 18, 30] was cut out without hands, and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay, and crushed them.
35 "Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were crushed all at the same time [Fallen, fallen is Babylon, Jer. 51:7-8, Rev. 14:8, 18:2. . . . But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth [see Luke 24:47. Also see 4th Ezra 13:36 in Section (6.3). Ezra interprets the “Zion to come” as “the mountain carved without hands”]. . . .
37 "You, O king [Nebuchadnezzar], are the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, the strength, and the glory; [This kingdom, given to Nebuchadnezzar, was returned to Jesus, Rev. 12:10].

38 . . . You are the head of gold.

39 "And after you there will arise another kingdom [second, Medes and Persians] inferior to you, then another third kingdom of bronze [Greeks], . . .

40 "Then there will be a fourth kingdom [Rome] as strong as iron; inasmuch as iron crushes and shatters all things, so, like iron that breaks in pieces, it will crush and break all these in pieces.

41 "And in that you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, it will be a divided kingdom [Roman civil war, A.D. 69, Dan 7:24]; but it will have in it the toughness of iron, inasmuch as you saw the iron mixed with common clay.

42 ". . . so some of the kingdom will be strong and part of it will be brittle.

43 "And in that you saw the iron mixed with common clay, they will combine with one another in the seed of men [Jer. 31:27]; but they will not adhere to one another, even as iron does not combine with pottery. [Note! Jer. 31:31-34 is quoted in Hebrews 8:8-12, thus the context is A.D. 70 and not Pentecost A.D. 30. This is another time-definite link to A.D. 70 when the Old Covenant was near to disappear]

44 "And in the days of those kings [feet and toes, 11th horn, Dan.7:20, clearly not Pentecost A.D. 30] the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever.

45 "Inasmuch as you saw that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold.” (Dan. 2:31-45)

Daniel Chapter 3 relates to the worship of Nebuchadnezzar’s image on the plain of Dura [Dan 3:1]. There is a distinct similarity and parallel between Daniel 3:7-8 [Nebuchadnezzar] and Revelation 13:7 and 14:8-9 [Caesar, the 4th Kingdom]:

Dan. 3:7, . . . all the peoples, nations and men of every language fell down and worshipped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

Rev. 13:7, And it was given to him [Caesar] 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”.

Rev. 14:8, And another angel . . . 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."

9 And 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 upon his hand”.

It takes little reasoning to conclude that the great image of Daniel Chapter 2 was composed of the four kingdoms that would be smashed by the stone [Jesus] “all at the
same time” [Dan 2:35]. Thus when the last kingdom [Rome] fell, the whole image [Babylon] also fell.

Daniel Chapter 4 reflects the personal fall of Nebuchadnezzar in the figure of chopping down the great tree and its branches [Dan. 4:14]. This figure might give us the necessary insight to understand similar references in the New Testament [see Matt. 3:10, Mark 11:13-14].

Daniel Chapter 5 recounts the end of the Babylonian Empire and the emergence of the Medes and Persians [Dan. 5:28].

In Daniel Chapter 6, the favorite story of Daniel in the lion’s den, is related to the time of king Darius.

The parallel study of Daniel Chapters 2 and 7 is very important. When the texts of Chapters 2 and 7 are carefully compared, it is apparent that the imagery of these prophecies are two different visions, one seen first by Nebuchadnezzar [Dan. 2:1] and later one seen by Daniel, himself [Dan. 7:1]. However, each vision describes the very same fulfillment [see the “Author’s Note” in 4th Ezra Chapter 12 in Section (6.3)]. Both foretell of a kingdom [the Church of Christ] that would be established during the reign of the 4th Kingdom [Romans]. More specifically, the time frame of the feet and toes of the 4th kingdom in Daniel 2:41 corresponds to the 10 kings [see Table 2] in Daniel 7:8 [see Rev. 13:1-7].

THE TWELVE CAESARS

1st Julius Caesar, Afterwards Deified (12 July 100 B.C. - 15 March 44 B.C.)
2nd Augustus, Afterwards Deified (B.C. 27 - A.D. 14)
3rd Tiberius (14 - 37 A.D.)
4th Gaius Caligula (37 - 41 A.D.)
5th Claudius, Afterwards Deified (41 - 54 A.D.)
6th Nero (54 - 68 A.D.) [The Revelation written (early date, five have fallen, one is Rev. 17:10)]
7th Galba (69 A.D.) [1st horn fell, Dan. 7:20]
8th Otho (69 A.D.) [2nd horn fell, Dan. 7:20]
9th Vitellius (69 A.D.) [3rd horn fell, Dan. 7:20]
10th Vespasian, Afterwards Deified (69 - 79 A.D.) [The Great Jewish War ends 70 A.D.]
11th Titus, Afterwards Deified (79 - 81 A.D.) [The 11th, “little horn” waged war, Dan 7:20-21. It was Titus who entered the Temple in August of A.D. 70, 2 Thess. 2:4]
12th Domitian (81 - 96 A.D.) [Book of Revelation (late date)]

[It should be noted here that many of the modern authors of commentaries on the Book of Revelation fail to list the Caesars in the correct order. The 1st Century Roman historians as well as the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus list the 12 Caesars as indicated in this table].

The works of Josephus, Section (6.2.3), Tacitus, Section (6.2.4), Suetonius, Section (6.2.4.2), and “The Epistle of Barnabas” Chapter 4 [see Section (6.6)], which are discussed later in this study, unmistakably link the fulfillment of these things to the Roman Emperor Vespasian and his son, Titus. Vespasian and his son, Titus, were the 10th and 11th Roman Emperors respectively.

Very carefully notice that the saints [the Gentiles, Matt. 21:43] would take possession of the kingdom, not on Pentecost A.D. 30, but during the war in the reign of the 10th and 11th Caesar [Dan. 7:22, 9:26, 12:1]. Then the Son of Man would come with the clouds at the destruction of Jerusalem [see Dan. 7:13, Zech. 14:5, Matt. 24:30, Luke 21:27, Rev. 1:7]. Daniel Chapter 7 evidently sets the precedence for the understanding of Revelation Chapter 13.

Dan 7:1, In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel saw a dream and visions in his mind as he lay on his bed. . .
2 Daniel said, "I was looking in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea. [Compare with Rev. 13:1-7].
3 "And four great beasts were coming up from the sea, different from one another.
4 "The first was like a lion and had the wings of an eagle [Babylonian winged lion]. . .
5 "And behold, another beast, a second one, resembling a bear [Medes and Top Persians]. . .
6 "After this I kept looking, and behold, another one, like a leopard [Greeks, Alexander the Great] which had on its back four wings of a bird; the beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it.
7 "After this I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast [Rome] dreadful and terrifying and extremely strong; and it had large iron teeth [Joel 1:6]. It devoured and crushed, and trampled down the remainder with its feet; and it was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns [see Table 2].
8 "While I was contemplating the horns, behold, another horn, a little one [Titus, see Rev. 13:11], came up among them, and three of the first horns were pulled out by the roots before it [Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, see Table 2 Section (6.2.4.2)]; and behold, this horn possessed eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth uttering great boasts [the man of sin, 2 Thess. 2:4, Rev. 13:5].
9 "I kept looking Until thrones were set up, and the Ancient of Days [God] took His seat; His vesture was like white snow, and the hair of His head like pure wool. His throne was ablaze with flames, its wheels were a burning fire.
10 "A river of fire was flowing and coming out from before Him; thousands upon thousands were attending Him, and myriads upon myriads were standing before Him; the court sat, and the books were opened [a judgment, throne scene see, Deut. 33:2, Heb. 12:22, Rev. 5:11].
11 "Then I kept looking because of the sound of the boastful words which the horn was speaking; I kept looking until the beast was slain, and its body was destroyed and given to the burning fire.
12 "As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but an extension of life was granted to them for an appointed period of time.
"I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming [see, Dan. 7:13, Zech. 14:5, Matt. 24:30, Luke 21:27, Rev. 1:7. Note! The coming with the clouds is concurrent with the destruction of Jerusalem. This fact can not be mistaken], and He came up to the Ancient of Days and was presented before Him.

"And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom [Rev. 12:10], that all the peoples, nations, and men of every language might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which will not pass away; and His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed. [See the “kingdom” in Section (5.1)].

"These great beasts, which are four in number, are four kings who will arise from the earth.

"But the saints of the Highest One will receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, for all ages to come.'

Then I desired to know the exact meaning of the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, with its teeth of iron [Joel 1:6, Rev. 9:8] and its claws of bronze, and which devoured, crushed, and trampled down the remainder with its feet,

and the meaning of the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn which came up, and before which three of them fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth uttering great boasts, and which was larger in appearance than its associates. [See Table 2].

I kept looking, and that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them [at the siege of Jerusalem, Rev. 13:1-7] until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was passed in favor of the saints of the Highest One, and the time arrived when the saints took possession of the kingdom [Matt. 16:27-28, Luke 21:31].

Thus he said: 'The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth, which will be different from all the other kingdoms, and it 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. [See Table 2].

And 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 [see Dan. 12:7-12, 42 months, Rev. 11:2, 13:5, is equal to 1260 days, Rev. 11:3].

But the court will sit for judgment [but not the “final judgment”], and his dominion will be taken away, annihilated and destroyed forever.

Then the sovereignty, the dominion, and the greatness of all the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints [Church] of the Highest One; His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom [in heaven, Rev. 11:15, 12:10], and all the dominions will serve and obey Him. (Dan. 7:1-27)

Daniel 8:8 is interpreted in 1 Maccabees 1:5-7 [see Section (3.3.1) below] to refer to Alexander the Great and the division of his kingdom among his Generals. Josephus [Ant. Bk. X, Ch XI, 7 (pp. 320-321)] makes the same comparison. Both writers identify
Antiochus Epiphanes as the small horn of Daniel (8:9), and his exploits are discussed in the remainder of Chapter 8. This subject is discussed in more detail later in this study.

Daniel Chapter 9 provides great Spiritual insight into the fulfillment of God’s prophecies. Again, God’s “duality principle” is employed in this chapter to identify two specific destructions of Jerusalem. As a result, the record of the first unparalleled destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in 586 B.C., can also be ultimately applied, as a dual prophecy, to the second great destruction in A.D. 70 [see Dan 12:1, Zech. 14: 1-7, Matt. 24:21, Luke 19:43-44, Rev. 11:1-8]. This historical fact must not be overlooked.

This is the only chapter in the whole Bible where both desolations, which Josephus (War, Bk. VI, Ch. IV, 5, p. 822) states prodigiously occurred on the very same day [Jer. 52:12] of the year (10th of Lous [Ab], August), are mentioned in the same text.

Dan. 9:1, In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of Median descent, who was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans--

2 in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, observed in the books the number of the years which was revealed as the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years. . .

11 "Indeed all Israel has transgressed Thy law and turned aside, not obeying Thy voice; so the curse [of Moses, Deut. 28:15, 45-68] has been poured out on us, along with the oath which is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, for we have sinned against Him.

12 "Thus He has confirmed His words which He had spoken against us and against our rulers who ruled us, to bring on us great calamity; for under the whole heaven there has not been done anything like what was done to Jerusalem [compare with Dan 12:1, Matt. 24:21, and Luke 19:43-44].

13 "As it is written in the law of Moses [Deut. 28:45ff], all this calamity [first destruction, 586 B.C. (2 Chron 36:1-23)] has come on us. . . .

16 "O Lord, in accordance with all Thy righteous acts, let now Thine anger and Thy wrath turn away from Thy city Jerusalem, Thy holy mountain [Rev. 11:8, 21:10]; for because of our sins and the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Thy people have become a reproach to all those around us.

17 "So now, our God, listen to the prayer of Thy servant and to his supplications, and for Thy sake, O Lord, let Thy face shine on Thy desolate sanctuary [which was destroyed in 586 B.C. by the Babylonians].

18 "O my God, incline Thine ear and hear! Open Thine eyes and see our desolations [Matt. 24:15] and the city which is called by Thy name. . . .

19 . . . O Lord, listen and take action! For Thine own sake, O my God, do not delay, because Thy city and Thy people are called by Thy name.”

20 Now while I was speaking and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God in behalf of the holy mountain of my God, . . .

22 And he gave me instruction and talked with me, and said, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you insight with understanding. [Please heed the Spiritual message]. . . .

24 "Seventy weeks [periods of 7] 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. [During the siege of A.D. 70 the “Everlasting Covenant” would be revealed, Heb. 8:13 when the Temple (abomination of desolation, Matt. 24:15) fell, Heb. 9:8].

25 "So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince [Herod the Great built the last Temple] there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress [that is, the Jewish War in A.D. 70].

26 "Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince [Titus] who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary [that is, Herod’s Temple, “these great buildings” Mark 13:2 (Matt. 24:3), Dan. 12:1, Matt. 24:15, Luke 21:20, 2 Thess. 2:4, Heb. 9:2, 8, Rev. 11:8]. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.

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 [Matt. 24:15, 2 Thess. 2:4], even until a complete destruction [The Temple has never been rebuilt after the destruction of A.D. 70] one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate." (Dan. 9:8-27)

It is very interesting, in view of the later Roman mind-sets, that Tertullian (Quintus Septimiud Florens Tertullianus, A.D. 145-220), an early Church theologian, correctly interpreted this in his work, “An Answer to the Jews”, the “prophecy of the 70 Weeks of Daniel [9:24]” (Roberts & Donaldson, Vol. III, 1981):

Veapasion [10th horn], in the first year of his empire, subdues the Jews in war; and there are made lii years, vi months. For he reigned xi years. And thus, in the day of the storming [of the Temple], the Jews fulfilled the lxx hebdomads [periods of 7] predicted in Daniel [9:24]. (Roberts & Donaldson, Vol. III, p. 160)  

Daniel Chapter 10 provides a discussion of the period from the third year of Cyrus the Persian [Dan 10:1] to the emergence of the Greeks [Dan. 10:20].

Daniel Chapter 11 recounts the fall of Darius [Dan. 11:1-2], the rise of Alexander’s Greek kingdom [Dan. 11:3-4], and finally the division of Alexander’s empire among his Generals as previously stated in Chapter 8. The king of the south was, of course, Ptolomy, king of Egypt [1 Maccabees 1:10-28, see Section (3.3.1) below]. And, as identified above, Antiochus Epiphanes was the king of the north. The resultant battles in the remainder of Chapter 11 are well documented in 1st Maccabees below and in Josephus [see Section (6.2.3.2), Antiq., Bk XII, Ch. VII, 6-7].

As the prophecies of Daniel continue to unfold, Chapter 12 was later interpreted by Jesus, Himself, to reference the “abomination of desolation” [Matt. 24:15] and the “great tribulation” [Matt. 24:21, Rev. 7:14, see Josephus, War, Preface in Section (6.2.3.3)] also having been fulfilled at the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. The “Scroll of the Rule” [see verse (12) in Section (6.5)] also associates the “tribulation” with the Kittim or Romans:
Dan 12:1, Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress [great tribulation, Matt. 24:21, Rev. 2:22, 7:14] such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued.

2 "And many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt" [see Ezek. 37:9-13, Rev. 11:18, and Section (8.2)]. . . .

4 "But as for you, Daniel, conceal these words and seal up the book until the end of time [Rev 10:6]; many will go back and forth, and knowledge will increase." . . .

6 And one said to the man dressed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, "How long [Rev. 6:10] will it be until the end of these wonders?"

7 And I heard the man dressed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, as he raised his right hand and his left toward heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever [There can be no doubt that the imagery of Rev. 10:5-7 was the fulfillment of this prophecy] that it would be for a time, times, and half a time; and as soon as they finish shattering the power of the holy people [that is, the Jews, Rev. 11:1-8, 13:5-7], all these events will be completed. . . .

9 And he said, "Go your way, Daniel, for these words are concealed and sealed up until the end time. [Note! Rev. 22:10, “do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book for the time is near”]. . . .

11 "And from the time that the regular sacrifice is abolished, and the abomination of desolation [see Dan. 9:26, Matt. 24:15, 2 Thess. 2:4] is set up, there will be 1,290 days.

12 "How blessed is he who keeps waiting and attains to the 1,335 days! . . .

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 [Jewish] age." (Dan. 12:1-13)

The most important facts, to be gained from the study of Daniel, are the associations of the “Lord’s coming with the clouds of heaven” and the “coming of His kingdom” with the war of the Romans [see Dan. 7:13, Zech. 14:5, Matt. 24:30, Luke 21:27, Rev. 1:7]. In addition, the “abomination of desolation” by the Romans [Dan. 9:26, Matt. 24:15, 2 Thess. 2:4], was prophesied by Jesus, Himself, and by the Apostle Paul. That was literally fulfilled at the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

A further discussion of the prophecies of Daniel and the historic testimony of 1 Maccabees, Josephus,Tacitus, Suetonius, and others also support this Jewish interpretation of Biblical prophecy. The Jews understood that the various chapters of Daniel covered the period of time from the Babylonians to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70. It was carefully pointed out, that in this author’s view, there is no prophecy in any of the chapters of the Book of Daniel that prophesies beyond the great war with the Romans in A.D. 70, unless they contain additional hidden meanings. . . .

(3.3) The Book of Daniel and the “Apocrypha”
The First Book of the Maccabees (from the Apocrypha to the Bible), provides additional information that helps decipher the difficult passages in the Old and New Testament Scriptures. It is especially helpful with the Book of Daniel and the Book of Revelation. A concurrent study of the Book of 1st Maccabees and the Book of Daniel (Chapters 8, 9, 11, and 12) produces greater insight into the final historical fulfillment of the "abomination of desolation" (Matt. 24:15, 2 Thess. 2:4) during the siege of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. The continuity of Israel’s history between the Old and New Testaments is presented in the Books of the Maccabees. 1st Maccabees clearly becomes the foundation that provides the key to the understanding of the “past” desolation of the Temple and Jerusalem by foreign powers.

Luke’s [21:20] parallel account of Matthew [24:15], which was written for Gentile readers, plainly states "When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is at hand" (Luke 21:20). The various desolations of Jerusalem, throughout Israel’s history, were iterative direct fulfillment of Moses’ promises [the blessings and the curses, Deut. 28:40-53] that were made early in Israel’s history. This prophecy of Moses provides the thread of continuity for Israel’s history from its beginning to the end of the Jewish age and the Old Covenant [Lam. 2:9, Heb. 8:6-13, 10:9] in A.D. 70. The last fulfillment, from Luke’s record, is also cited here:

Deut. 28:49, The LORD will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, as the eagle swoops down, a nation whose language you shall not understand,

50 a nation of fierce countenance [Assyrians, Babylonians, Medes/Persians, Greeks, and Romans, Daniel, Chapters 2 and 7] who shall have no respect for the old, nor show favor to the young...

52 "And it shall besiege you [destruction of Jerusalem, 586 B.C., 170 B.C., and in A.D. 70] in all your towns until your high and fortified walls in which you trusted come down throughout your land, and it shall besiege you in all your towns throughout your land which the LORD your God has given you.

53 "Then you shall eat the offspring of your own body, the flesh of your sons and of your daughters whom the LORD your God has given you, during the siege and the distress by which your enemy shall oppress you. (Deut. 28:49-53)

Luke 19:43, For the days shall come upon you when your enemies will throw up a bank before you, and surround you, and hem you in on every side,

44 and 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 19:43-44)

Jerusalem was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar about 586 B.C. [see Dan. 9:12, Top 2 Chron. 36:1-23]. The destruction by Antiochus was recorded in 1st Maccabees and occurred in 170 B.C. (Dan. 11:31). The final siege and desolation was accomplished by the Romans (Titus the son of Vespasian [see Table 2] in A.D. 70. This fact was recorded by both Flavius Josephus and Tacitus (1952).

The associated prophecies, concerning the desolation of the Temple by the Romans, are also found in the New Testament (see Matt. 24:15, Luke 21:20, 2 Thess. 2:4, Heb.
9:8, Rev. 11:8, and others). The actual literal historical fulfillment of the A.D. 70
desolation of both Jerusalem and the Temple, are identified in this study in the sections
on, Josephus [Section (6.2.3)], Tacitus [Section (6.2.4.1)], Suetonius [Section (6.2.4.2)],
Eusebius Pamphilus (1966) [Section (6.2.2)], and others.

(3.3.1) The First Book of the Maccabees, Chapter One (Revised Standard Version)

Again, the text itself provides the best commentary. **Observe how the text below
deciphers the obscure chapters [that is, 8, 10, and 11] of the Book of Daniel.**

1. After Alexander [The Great] son of Philip [Dan. 8:8, 11:2-4], the
Macedonian, who came from the land of Kittim [Dan. 11:30], had defeated Darius,
king of the Persians and the Medes, he succeeded him as king. (He had previously
become king of Greece.) 2 He fought many battles, conquered strongholds, and put
to death the kings of the earth. 3 He advanced to the ends of the earth, and plundered
many nations. When the earth became quiet before him, **he was exalted, and his heart was lifted up.** 4 He gathered a very strong army and ruled over countries,
nations, and princes, and they became tributary to him.

5 After this he fell sick and perceived that he was dying. 6 So he summoned his
most honored officers, who had been brought up with him from youth, and divided his kingdom [Dan 11:4] among them while he was still alive. 7 And after Alexander had reigned twelve years, he died.

8 Then his officers began to rule, each in his own place. 9 They all put on
crowns after his death, and so did their sons after them for any years; and they
caused many evils on the earth.

10 From them came forth a sinful root, Antiochus Euphranis, son of
Antiochus the king; he had been a hostage in Rome. He began to reign in the one
hundred and thirty-seventh year [175 B.C.] of the kingdom of the Greeks.

11 In those days lawless men [similar circumstances would happen in the
time of the Romans, Matt. 24:12, 2 Thess. 2:3] came forth from Israel, and misled many [Matt. 24:3-4], saying, "Let us go and make a covenant with the Gentiles
round about us, for since we separated from them many evils have come upon us."
12 This proposal pleased them, 13 and some of the people eagerly went to the king,
He authorized them to observe the ordinances of the Gentiles. 14 So they built a
gymnasium in Jerusalem, according to Gentile custom, 15 and removed the marks
of circumcision, and abandoned the holy covenant. They joined with the Gentiles
and sold themselves to do evil.

16 When Antiochus saw that his kingdom was established, **he determined to become king of the land of Egypt, that he might reign over both kingdoms.** 17 So he invaded Egypt with a strong force, with chariots and elephants and cavalry and with a large fleet. 18 He engaged Ptolemy king of Egypt in battle, and Ptolemy turned and fled before him, and many were wounded and fell. 19 And they captured the fortified cities in the land of Egypt, and he plundered the land of Egypt.

20 After subduing Egypt, Antiochus returned in the one hundred and forty-third
year. He went up against Israel and came to Jerusalem with a strong force. 21 He
arrogantly entered the sanctuary [Titus would do this also in A.D. 70, Matt.
24:15, 2 Thess. 2:4] and took the golden altar, the lampstand for the light, and all the utensils. 22 He took also the table for the bread of the Presence, the cups for drink offerings, the bowls, the golden censers, the curtain, the crowns, and the gold decoration on the front of the temple; he stripped it all off. 23 He took the silver and the gold, and the costly vessels; he took also the hidden treasures which he found. 24 Taking them all, he departed to his own land.

He committed deeds of murder and spoke with great arrogance. 25 Israel mourned deeply in every community, 26 rulers and elders groaned, maidens and young men became faint, the beauty of the women faded. 27 Every bridegroom took up the lament; she who sat in the bridal chamber was mourning. 28 Even the land shook for its inhabitant [see the future figurative application from Haggai 2:6-7, and Heb. 12:26ff], and all the house of Jacob was clothed with shame.

29 Two years later the king sent to the cities of Judah a chief collector of tribute, and he came to Jerusalem with a large force. 30 Decievfully he spoke peaceable words to them, and they believed him; but he suddenly fell upon the city, dealt it a severe blow, and destroyed many people of Israel. 31 He plundered the city, burned it with fire [Deut. 28:40-53], and tore down its houses and its surrounding walls. 32 And they took captive the women and children [another future Top fulfillment in A.D. 70, Zech. 14:2, Luke 21:24], and seized the cattle. 33 Then they fortified the city of David with a great strong wall and strong towers, and it became their citadel. 34 And they stationed there a sinful people, lawless men. These strengthened their position; 35 they stored up arms and food, and collecting the spoils of Jerusalem they stored them there, and became a great snare. 36 It became an ambush against the sanctuary, an evil adversary of Israel continually. 37 On every side of the sanctuary they shed innocent blood; they even defiled the sanctuary. 38 Because of them the residents of Jerusalem fled; she became a dwelling of strangers; she became strange to her offspring, and her children forsook her. 39 Her sanctuary became desolate as a desert; her feasts were turned into mourning, her sabbaths into a reproach, her honor into contempt. 40 Her dishonor now grew as great as her glory; her exaltation was turned into mourning.

41 Then the king wrote to his whole kingdom that all should be one people, 42 and that each should give up his customs. 43 All the Gentiles accepted the command of the king. Many even from Israel gladly adopted his religion; they sacrificed to idols and profaned the sabbath. 44 And the king sent letters by messengers to Jerusalem and the cities of Judah; he directed them to follow customs strange to the land, 45 to forbid burnt offerings and sacrifices and drink offerings in the sanctuary, to profane sabbaths and feasts, to defile the sanctuary and the priests, 46 to build altars and sacred precincts and shrines for idols, to sacrifice swine and unclean animals, 48 and to leave their sons uncircumcised. They were to make themselves abominable by everything unclean and profane, 49 so that they should forget the law and change all the ordinances. 50 "And whoever does not obey the command of the king shall die."

51 In such words he wrote to his whole kingdom. And he appointed inspectors over all the people and commanded the cities of Judah to offer sacrifice, city by city. 52 Many of the people, every one who forsook the law, joined them, and they did evil in the land; 53 they drove Israel into hiding in every place of refuge they had.
54 Now on the fifteenth day of Chislev, in the one hundred and forty-fifth year, they erected a desolating sacrilege upon the altar of burnt offering (Dan 11:31). They also built altars in the surrounding cities of Judah, 55 and burned incense at the doors of the houses and in the streets. 56 The books of the law which they found they tore to pieces and burned with fire. 57 Where the book of the covenant was found in the possession of any one, or if any one adhered to the law, the decree of the king condemned him to death. 58 They kept using violence against Israel, against those found month after month in the cities. 59 And on the twenty-fifth day of the month they offered sacrifice on the altar which was upon the altar of burnt offering. 60 According to the decree, they put to death the women who had their children circumcised, 61 and the families and those who circumcised them; and they hung the infants from their mother's necks.

62 But many in Israel stood firm and were resolved in their hearts not to eat unclean food. 63 They chose to die rather than to be defiled by food or to profane the holy covenant; and they did die. 64 And very great wrath came [Luke 21:23] upon Israel. (1 Macc. 1:1-64)

The text from 1st Maccabees, as it plainly makes reference to the Book of Daniel, clearly provides the Jewish historical interpretation of the “abomination of desolation” that Jesus, Himself, and Paul [see Dan. 9:24ff, Matt. 24:15, 2 Thess. 2:4] prophesied as yet another desolation of the Temple by the Romans. Both of the “desolations” are undeniable historical facts. The testimony from Eusebius (Pamphilus, 1966), see Section (6.2.2), leaves little doubt that the early Christians viewed the war with the Romans as the “great tribulation”. Moreover, Titus’ entry into the Temple, in August of A.D. 70, was believed to be the “abomination of desolation, standing in the Holy Place (Matt. 24:15, 2 Thess. 2:4)”.

(3.4) Other Old Testament Books

Before the other prophecies from the Old Testament are discussed, the “Golden Thread”, or the transition to the fulfillment in the New Testament Scriptures, must first be illustrated. The New Testament writers spoke of these things.

Luke 24:25, And He said to them, "O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!
26 "Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?"
27 And beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.
44 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." [See Acts 3:18].
45, “Then He [Jesus] opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,
46 and He said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day;
47 and that repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.
49 "And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power [the Holy Spirit, Acts 2:1-22] from on high." (Luke 24:24-49)

Acts 18:24, Now a certain Jew named Apollos, an Alexandrian by birth, an eloquent man, came to Ephesus; and he was mighty in the [Old Testament] Scriptures.
25 This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he was speaking and teaching accurately the things concerning Jesus, being acquainted only with the baptism of John;
26 and he began to speak out boldly in the synagogue. But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately. (Acts 18:24-26)

Gal. 3:24, Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, that we may be justified by faith.
25 But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. Top

Matt. 5:18, For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished.

The above Scriptures should be self-explanatory and reveal the importance of mastering the Old Testament as a prerequisite to understanding the role of Jesus and the New Covenant. It must also be realized that there is profound continuity [the “Golden Thread”] that can be followed through both the Old and New Testaments. There was a consistent ancient plan, which was set in motion by God in the beginning. As mentioned above, in the very important passage from the Book of Acts [3:19-24], Peter taught Christians that Moses and all of the prophets, from Samuel onward, all spoke of the days when the Messiah would come and establish “a new kingdom”.

The following is an overview of the remainder of the Old Testament prophets, in consecutive order. They are provided to demonstrate the continuity and “Golden thread” spoken of by Peter.

(3.4.1) The Book of 2nd Samuel

Beginning with Samuel [2 Sam. 7:12-16], the first passage was referenced by Stephen in Acts [7:47]. This relates to Jesus as the son of David:

2 Sam. 7:12, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom.
13 "He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom [in heaven] forever.

(3.4.2) The Book of Isaiah
The Book of Isaiah is a famous and well quoted messianic prophecy. McClintock & Strong, [1981, (Vol. IV), p. 675] assign the prophecies of Isaiah to the period from 756 B.C to 711 B.C. The prophecies of Isaiah therefore precede the destruction of Jerusalem, by Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon in 586 B.C. [Dan. 9:12], by at least 125 years. It precedes the A.D. 70 [see Dan. 9:24-27, 12:1-11, Matt. 24:15, Luke 17:43-44, 21:20] destruction, by the Romans [in the last days, Isa. 2:2], by at least 781 years. It becomes obvious that Isaiah prophesied concerning both events. Isaiah contains a wealth of information. However, only a few references, pertinent to this study, will be cited here for the sake of brevity:

Isa. 2:1, The word which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. [Note! That the texts of Isa. 2:1-4 and Micah 4:1-4 are very similar]

2 Now it will come about that in the last days [Acts 2:17, Joel 2:28-32], the mountain of the house of the LORD will be established [see Heb. 8:1-9:28, 12:22, the New Covenant and the heavenly Jerusalem] as the chief of the mountains, and will be raised above the hills; and all the nations [Gentiles also] will stream to it. 3 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 [Gospel] of the LORD from Jerusalem [see Luke 24:47, Rev. 14:6, 19:13-15]. [This whole passage relates strongly to the story in the Book of Acts]

4 And He will judge between the nations, and will render decisions for many peoples [Rev. 10:11]; 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 [in the heavenly Jerusalem, Heb. 12:22-23, 13:14]. (Isa. 2:1-4)

Compare Isaiah Chapter 4 with Revelation Chapter 21. The ultimate fulfillment is in the heavenly Jerusalem [Heb. 12:22].

Isa. 4:2, In that day the Branch [Jesus, Isa. 11:1] of the LORD will be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth will be the pride and the adornment of the survivors of Israel. [See “The Remnant” (Section 2.3.4)].

3 And it will come about that he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy [see the remnant (Section 2.3.4)]- everyone who is recorded for life in Jerusalem [Rev. 21:27].

4 When the Lord has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and purged the bloodshed of Jerusalem from her midst, by the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning [Note! God’s Spiritual fire, Heb. 1:7, 12:29, 2 Peter 3:12],

5 then the LORD will create over the whole area of Mount Zion and over her assemblies a cloud by day, even smoke, and the brightness of a flaming fire by night; for over all the glory [Rev. 21:11, 23] will be a canopy. (Isa. 4:2-5)

Chapter 11 is another reference to Jesus as the “Branch” in a Spiritual kingdom with an ultimate fulfillment in heaven after death:
Isa. 11:1, “Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse [Acts 13:22-23], and a branch [Jesus] from his roots will bear fruit.

2 And the Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him [Matt. 3:16], the spirit of wisdom and understanding, The spirit of counsel and strength, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

3 And He will delight in the fear of the LORD, and He will not judge by what His eyes see, nor make a decision by what His ears hear; [see the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5:1-12].

4 But with righteousness He will judge the poor, and decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth; and He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth [rod of iron; Psalms 2:9, Rev. 2:27, 12:5, 19:15] and with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked [the man of sin, 2 Thess. 2:8].

5 Also righteousness will be the belt about His loins, and faithfulness the belt about His waist [the Christian armor, Eph. 6:14].

9 They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain [Heb. 13:14], for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. [See Heb. 8:11].

10 Then it will come about in that day that the nations [Gentiles] will resort to the root of Jesse, Who will stand as a signal for the peoples [John 3:14].

11 Then it will happen on that day that the Lord will again recover the second time [Heb. 9:28] with His hand the remnant (Section 2.3.4) of His people, . . .

12 And He will lift up a standard [John 3:14] for the nations [see gathering of the nations, Section (3.1.4)], and will assemble the banished ones of Israel, and will gather [see, gathering Israel, Section (3.1.3)] the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. (Isa. 11:1-12)

Notice, in this next important passage, how the figurative language was used against Babylon. This same kind of harsh figurative language was also spoken against Jerusalem by Jesus in Matthew Chapter 24. [Compare, Fallen, fallen is Babylon, Jer. 51:7-8, Dan. 2:35, Rev. 14:8, 18:2]. Also notice, from the context, that neither the fall of the literal Babylon or Rome as a figure of Babylon would mark the end of the earth, but it would mark the end of the Jewish world [translated “Age”, Dan. 12:13]:

Isa. 13:1, The oracle concerning Babylon which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw. Top
2 Lift up a standard on the bare hill, raise your voice to them, wave the hand that they may enter the doors of the nobles.

3 I have commanded My consecrated ones, I have even called My mighty warriors, My proudly exulting ones, to execute My anger [see Matt. 16:27-28, Heb. 1:7].

4 A sound of tumult on the mountains, like that of many people! A sound of the uproar of kingdoms, of nations gathered together [Joel 1:6ff]? The LORD of hosts is mustering the army for battle.

5 They are coming from a far country from the farthest horizons [Deut. 28:49], the LORD and His instruments of indignation, to destroy the whole land.

6 Wail, for the day of the LORD [not the “final judgment”] is near. . . .

9 Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, cruel, with fury and burning anger, to make the land a desolation; and He will exterminate its sinners from it.
10 For the stars of heaven and their constellations will not flash forth their light; the sun will be dark when it rises, and the moon will not shed its light [Matt. 24:29, Luke 21:21].
11 Thus I will punish the world for its evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; . . .
13 Therefore I shall make the heavens tremble, and the earth will be shaken from its place at the fury of the LORD of hosts in the day of His burning anger [Heb. 12:26-29 (Haggai 2:6), examine the context, none of these passages refer to the end of the world, but relate to judgment and to the giving of a “New Law”]. . . .
15 Anyone who is found will be thrust through, and anyone who is captured will fall by the sword. [Note! Death is the result of war].
16 Their little ones also will be dashed to pieces before their eyes; their houses will be plundered and their wives ravished [Zech. 14:2]. (Isa. 13:1-16)

Chapter 28 speaks against Ephraim. Notice how the language of God’s wrath is similar to the New Testament references indicated.

Isa. 28:2, Behold, the Lord has a strong and mighty agent; as a storm of hail, a tempest of destruction, like a storm of mighty overflowing waters, He has cast it down to the earth with His hand. [Compare with Rev. 16:1-21]. . . .
5 In that day the LORD of hosts will become a beautiful crown and a glorious diadem [Rev. 19:12] to the remnant of His people [see the above discussion of the remnant (Section 2.3.4)]. . . .
16 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a tested stone, a costly cornerstone for the foundation, firmly placed. He who believes in it will not be disturbed. [This is Jesus, see Rom. 9:33, 10:11, 1 Peter 2:6].
17 "And I will make justice the measuring line, and righteousness the level [the imagery of measuring (rod, plumb line) instruments are also used figuratively for those about to be judges or to measure heavenly things. See Isa. 34:11, Ezek. 45:3, 47:18, Amos 7:7-8, Zech. 2:2, 4:10, Rev. 11:1-2, 21:15]; then hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the secret place. Top
18 "6 A spirit of justice for him who sits in judgment. . . .
21 For the LORD will rise up as at Mount Perazim, He will be stirred up as in the valley of Gibeon; to do His task, His unusual task, and to work His work, His extraordinary work. [Note how God had worked in the past].
22 . . . for I have heard from the Lord GOD of hosts, of decisive destruction on all the earth. (Isa. 28:1-22)

Compare the figurative language of judgment, used here, with Matthew Chapter 24:

Isa. 29:1, Woe, O Ariel, Ariel [Jerusalem] the city where David once camped!
2 And I will bring distress to Ariel, and she shall be a city of lamenting and mourning; and she shall be like an Ariel to me.
3 And I will camp against you encircling you, and I will set siege-works against you, and I will raise up battle towers against you. [See Luke 19:43-44, Rev. 20:9, the beloved city]. . . .

6 From the LORD of hosts you will be punished with thunder and earthquake and loud noise, with whirlwind and tempest and the flame of a consuming fire [Rev. 11:13-19, the references here are not to the end of the world]. (Isa. 29:1-6)

Chapter 34 is still another judgment of God, but it is not the end of the world:

Isa. 34:2, For the LORD'S indignation is against all the nations, and His wrath against all their armies; He has utterly destroyed them, He has given them over to slaughter.
3 So their slain will be thrown out, and their corpses will give off their stench, and the mountains will be drenched with their blood.
4 And all the host of heaven will wear away, and the sky will be rolled up like a scroll; all their hosts will also wither away as a leaf withers from the vine, or as one withers from the fig tree. [See, Dan. 8:10, Rev. 12:4].
5 For My sword is satiated in heaven, behold it shall descend for judgment upon Edom, and upon the people whom I have devoted to destruction. . . .
8 For the LORD has a day of vengeance, a year of recompense for the cause of Zion [see Luke 21:22, “days of vengeance”].
9 And its streams shall be turned into pitch, and its loose earth into brimstone, and its land shall become burning pitch.
10 It shall not be quenched night or day; its smoke shall go up forever [Jude 7, Rev. 19:3]; from generation to generation it shall be desolate; none shall pass through it forever and ever. (Isa. 34:1-10)

Chapter 40 is referenced many times by the New Testament writers. This chapter is linked directly to a fulfillment at the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70:

2 "Speak kindly to Jerusalem; and call out to her, that her warfare has ended, that her iniquity has been removed, that she has received of the LORD'S hand double for all her sins." [See Zech. 9:12, Rev. 18:6].
5 Then the glory of the LORD will be revealed [Matt. 16:27-28, 24:30], and all flesh will see it together [Luke 2:31, Rom. 16:26 (Acts 13:47)]. . . .
8 The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever [1 Pet. 1:24, James 1:10]. . . .
10 Behold, the Lord GOD will come with might, with His arm ruling for Him. Behold, His reward is with Him, and His recompense before Him [Zech. 14:5, Matt. 16:27-28, Rev. 22:12].
11 Like a shepherd He will tend His flock, in His arm He will gather the lambs [John 10:11]. . . . He will gently lead the nursing ewes. (Isa. 40:1-11)

Isaiah Chapter 60 provides the foundation for our understanding of the “Spiritual light”. Notice how the New Testament shows the fulfillment in Jesus by the preaching of the Gospel. Matthew [4:15-17] quotes from Isaiah [9:1-2] with reference to a fulfillment when Jesus came and preached that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. In the Gospel of John [1:4-9], Jesus was identified as the light of the world. John [3:19-21] speaks of the light coming into the world. In John [8:12], Jesus said, “I am the light of the world”. In 1 John [1:5-7], “God is light” and true Christians must “walk in the light as He Himself is in the light”.

Other references to “Spiritual light” are also listed [see Luke 2:32, 11:35-35, 12:3, 16:8, John 3:19-21, 8:12, 9:5, 11:10, 12:35, 46, Acts 13:37, 26:18, Rom. 2:19, 13:12, 1 Cor. 4:5, 2 Cor. 4:4-6, 6:14, 11:14, Eph. 3:9, 5:8, Col. 1:12, 1 Thess. 5:5, 1 Tim. 6:16, 2 Tim. 1:10, 1 Peter 2:9, 1 John 2:8-9, Rev. 21:2, and 22:5].

Isa. 60:1, Arise, shine; for your light has come [Matt. 4:15-17], and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.
2 "For behold, darkness will cover the earth, and deep darkness the peoples; but the LORD will rise upon you, and His glory will appear upon you.
3 "And nations will come to your light [Gentiles from Paul’s preaching, Acts 13:47], and kings to the brightness of your rising.
4 "Lift up your eyes round about, and see; they all gather together [see gather the nations, Section (3.1.4.)], they come to you. Your sons will come from afar . . . .
10 "And foreigners [Gentiles, Rev. 21:27] will build up your walls, and their kings will minister to you; for in My wrath I struck you . . . .
11 "And your gates will be open continually [Rev. 21:25]; . . . .
14 . . . "and they will call you the city of the LORD, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel [Heb. 12:22, Rev. 21:10]. . . .
21 "Then all your people will be righteous; they will possess the land forever, the branch [Jesus, Isa. 11:1-2, Acts 13:22-23] of My planting . . . . (Isa. 60:1-21)

Isaiah Chapter 61 is a direct link to the ministry of Jesus. In Luke’s [4:16-29] Gospel, Jesus was in Nazareth when He read from this passage [see bold print, cited below], “To proclaim the favorable year of the Lord” and declared “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing”. Notice that He did not proclaim the day of vengeance [A.D. 70, Luke 19:43-44, 21:22], which followed in the text, until the Jews rejected his teachings. Note that the reference to the “prisoners” may be the dead that Peter, John, and Paul, discussed [1 Peter 3:19, 4:6]. Please see the references in the text below:

Isa. 61:1, The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to captives, and freedom to prisoners [perhaps even the dead, see John 5:29ff, Eph. 4:6 (Psa. 68:18), 1 Peter 3:19, 4:6];
2 To proclaim the favorable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance [Luke 21:22] of our God; to comfort all who mourn, . . .

4 Then they will rebuild the ancient ruins, they will raise up the former devastations, and they will repair the ruined cities, the desolations of many generations.

5 And strangers [Cornelius, Acts 10:45, and other Gentiles Matt. 21:43, Acts 13:46-48 (Paul)] will stand and pasture your flocks, and foreigners will be your farmers and your vinedressers.

6 But you will be called the priests [Royal Priesthood, 1 Peter 2:9-12] of the LORD; you will be spoken of as ministers of our God. . .

8 . . . I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant [Heb. 8:1-13 (Jer. 31:31-34)] with them. (Isa. 61:1-8)

In Isaiah Chapter 64, the language is similar to the reference in Hebrews [12:26-29]. However, there is no doubt that Isaiah was speaking of the destruction of Jerusalem and not the end of the world. When Haggai [2:1-9] is carefully read, and compared to Hebrews [12:18-29] and Exodus [19:9-23], then the first “shaking of the heavens and the earth” referred to Moses at Sinai when the Law was first given. In Hebrews a similar encounter was expected when they would “receive a kingdom which can not be shaken”.

Thus, the impact of the giving of the “Law of Moses” shook the world. In like manner, the impact of “Christianity and the “New Covenant of Christ” reshaped (has shaken) the world since the 1st Century when it was established. Top

Isa. 64:1, Oh, that Thou wouldst rend the heavens and come down, that the mountains might quake at Thy presence-- [Hagg. 2:6, Heb.12:26-29]. . . .

3 When Thou didst awesome things which we did not expect, Thou didst come down, the mountains quaked at Thy presence. . . .

10 Thy holy cities have become a wilderness, Zion has become a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation.

11 Our holy and beautiful house, where our fathers praised Thee, has been burned by fire [586 B.C. and A.D. 70]. (Isa. 64:1-11)

Chapter 65 follows in the context and speaks of a completely new eternal order of things [1 Cor. 7:31, 1 John 2:2:17-18] as the “form” of the old things (Old Covenant) passed away [Heb. 8:13]. This appears to be a figurative Spiritual application. Paul in 1 Corinthians [7:26-31] taught that due to the “present distress” things were changing and “the form of the world [Old Covenant] was passing away”. John taught the same thing in 1 John [2:17-18], “the world is passing away” and furthermore, “it is the last hour”.

It would also appear that Paul and John understood that the fulfillment of Daniel [Chapters 2, 7, 9, and 12] were about to be accomplished during the impending war with the Romans. Notice that the “present distress” already was forming. Paul in Second Corinthians [5:17] taught, “Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature [or there is the new creation]; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come”. Hebrews 12:22-24 teaches:
Heb. 12:22, But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels,  
23 to the general assembly and church of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven. . . .  
24 and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, (Heb. 12:22-24)

It should be understood from Hebrews [9:8] that; “The Holy Spirit is signifying this, that the way into the holy place [heavenly Temple] has not yet been disclosed, while the outer tabernacle is still standing”. The last prerequisite was fulfilled by the destruction of the Temple. Then “a figurative new heaven and a new earth,” representing the New Covenant and the married consummated Church, officially replaced the Old Covenant. This final act represented the fact that the kingdom that God was taken away from the Jews [Matt 21:43 "Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you, and be given to a nation producing the fruit of it”]. Also see the commentary on Revelation Chapter 21 in Section (7.7).

Rev. 21:1, And I saw a new heaven and a new earth [2 Cor. 5:17]; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea.  
2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem [Heb. 12:22], coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband.  
3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among them, . . . (Rev. 21:1-3)  

Now compare the above commentary and reading from the Revelation with the Spiritual and physical things in Hebrews Chapters 8 and 9 with Isaiah Chapter 65:

Isa. 65:13, "Behold, My servants shall eat, but you shall be hungry. Behold, My servants shall drink, but you shall be thirsty. Behold, My servants shall rejoice, but you shall be put to shame. [That is, the evil Jews]. . . .  
15 "And you will leave your name for a curse to My chosen ones, and the Lord GOD will slay you. But My servants will be called by another name [the Sect of the Nazarenes (Acts 24:5) and Christians (at Antioch, Acts 11:26)]. . . .  
17 "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth [see 2 Cor. 5:17, 2 Pet. 3:10-13, Rev. 21:1-4. ( Isa. 65:13-17)"

The last chapter of Isaiah is one of the most fascinating. When it is carefully studied, it may provide the key to the understanding of the two advents of the Messiah and the New Covenant:

Isa. 66:1, "Heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool. Where then is a house you could build for Me? [John 4:20, Acts 7:48-50]. . . .  
2 "For My hand made all these things, thus all these things came into being," declares the LORD. "But to this one I will look, to him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word. [Sermon on the Mount, Matt. 5:ff]. . . .  
5 Hear the word of the LORD, you who tremble at His word: . . . .
6 "A voice of uproar from the city, a voice from the temple, the voice of the LORD who is rendering recompense to His enemies [Matt. 16:27-28].

7 "Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she gave birth to a boy. [This verse is subtle but extremely profound. The Messiah was born, had preached, and died before the final travail (siege) of Zion. He also returned, after the partial hardening (Luke 19:12, 27, 43-44, Rom. 11:25-28), at the travail of Zion (Matt. 24:21) to fulfill the New Covenant, (Matt. 21:43, Heb. 9:28, also see Rev. 12:1-6)].

8 "Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Can a land be born in one day? Can a nation be brought forth all at once? As soon as Zion travailed [Luke 19:43-44, 21:20ff, Dan. 7:22], she also brought forth her sons. [The new Covenant (Heb. 8:13) was complete when the Temple had fallen (Heb. 9:8)] in A.D. 70. Zion was not in travail at Pentecost A.D. 30. Thus, the time frame of the mystery of Isaiah (66:8) finds an exacting fulfillment, just as any true believer might expect from the Word of God.

9 "Shall I bring to the point of birth, and not give delivery. . . .

10 "Be joyful with Jerusalem and rejoice for her, all you who love her [Paul’s Jerusalem above, Gal. 4:26, Heb. 12:22, 13:14]. . . .

11 That you may nurse and be satisfied with her comforting breasts [see Luke 2:25ff, “the consolation of Israel”]. . . .

12 For thus says the LORD, "Behold, I extend peace to her like a river [see John 7:38, Ezek. 47:1, Zech. 14:8, Luke 24:47, Rev. 22:1ff], and the glory of the nations like an overflowing stream; and you shall be nursed, you shall be carried on the hip and fondled on the knees [ultimately, in heaven, Gal. 4:26, Heb. 12:22, 14:14, Rev. 21:1ff].

13 "As one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you; and you shall be comforted in the heavenly Jerusalem." . . .

15 For behold, the LORD will come in fire and His chariots like the whirlwind [Heb. 1:7], To render His anger [Matt. 16:27-28] with fury, and His rebuke with flames of fire [2 Thess. 1:7].

16 For the LORD will execute judgment by fire [2 Peter 3:10ff] and by His sword on all flesh, and those slain by the LORD will be many. [Please read on, this is not yet the end of the world].

17 "Those who sanctify and purify themselves to go to the gardens, following one in the center, who eat swine's flesh, detestable things, and mice, shall come to an end altogether," declares the LORD. [See Ezek. 8:3-18, these were the abominations that provoked the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians].

18 "For I know their works and their thoughts; the time is coming to gather all nations and tongues. And they shall come and see My glory [see Luke 24:47, Rev. 14:6, even after this reference in the Revelation, the earth still continues].

19 "And I will set a sign among them and will send survivors from them to the nations: Tarshish, Put, Lud, Meshech, Rosh, Tubal, and Javan, to the distant coastlands that have neither heard My fame nor seen My glory. And they will declare My glory among the nations. [Note! After A.D. 70 it was primarily the Gentile Church that continued to spread the Gospel to the world (Matt. 21:43).
Therefore, within this context, this “judgment by fire” was the destruction of Jerusalem and not the end of the world.

20 "Then they shall bring all your brethren from all the nations [Gentiles]...
21 "I will also take some of them for priests [1 Peter 2:9] and for Levites,"
22 "For just as the new heavens and the new earth [Rev. 21:1ff] which I make will endure before Me," declares the LORD, "So your offspring and your name will endure.
23 "And it shall be from new moon to new moon and from sabbath to sabbath, all mankind will come to bow down before Me," says the LORD.
24 "Then they shall go forth and look on the corpses of the men [at Jerusalem the “great city” (Jer. 22:8, Rev. 11:1-8)] who have transgressed against Me. For their worm shall not die, and their fire shall not be quenched [“cast into hell”, Mark 9:47-48] and they [“the wicked generation”, see Section (2.3.1)] shall be an abhorrence to all mankind." (Isa. 66:1-24)

(3.4.3) The Book of Jeremiah

The Book of Jeremiah was written later than Isaiah. It deals with the impending destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. by Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon. McClintock and Strong [1981, (Vol. IV), pp. 821-822] place the prophecies of Jeremiah from 628 B.C. to 587 B.C. It is also very interesting that much of the prophetic language in Jeremiah is the same as the prophecies found in the New Testament concerning the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70.

Jer. 1:14,  Then the LORD said to me, "Out of the north [Joel 2:20] the evil will break forth on all the inhabitants of the land [see Deut. 28:49].
15 "For, behold, I am calling all the families of the kingdoms of the north," declares the LORD; "and they will come, and they will set each [see Joel 1:4-6] one his throne at the entrance of the gates of Jerusalem, and against all its walls round about, and against all the cities of Judah.
16 "And I will pronounce My judgments on them concerning all their [see Ezek. 3:3ff] wickedness. (Jer. 1:14-16)


Jer. 7:4,  Do not trust in deceptive words, saying, 'This is the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD.' . . . 7 then I will let you dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers forever and ever. [Israel became a country again in 1948]. . . . 10 then come and stand before Me in this house, which is called by My name. . . . 11 "Has this house, which is called by My name, become a den of robbers [Jesus personally cast them out of the Temple, Matt. 21:12-13, Mark 11:17, Luke 19:46]. (Jer. 7:4-11)
The later discussion of the works of Josephus [Section (6.2.3)] documents the same fulfillment of Jeremiah [19:7-9] in the time of the Romans:

Jer. 19:7, *And I shall make void the counsel of Judah and Jerusalem in this place,* and I shall cause them to fall by the sword before their enemies and by the hand of those who seek their life; and I shall give over their [that is, the “wicked generation”] carcasses as food for the birds of the sky [see Deut. 28:26, Ezek. 39:17ff, Rev. 19:17ff, that is, the “great supper”] and the beasts of the earth.

8 "I shall also make this city [Jerusalem, Rev. 11:8] a desolation and an object of hissing; . . .

9 "And I shall make them eat the flesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters, and they will eat one another’s flesh in the siege [Deut. 28:53, Luke 19:43-44] and in the distress . . . (Jer. 19:7-9)

Chapter 25 is another reference that was fulfilled in both 586 B.C. and A.D. 70:

Jer. 25:11, *And this whole land shall be a desolation and a horror, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.*

12 'Then it will be when seventy years are completed I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation,' declares the LORD, 'for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans; and I will make it an everlasting desolation.

13 'And I will bring upon that land all My words [John 1:1, Rev. 19:13]. . . Top

14 'For many nations and great kings shall make slaves of them, even them; and I will recompense them according to their deeds [Matt. 16:27-28]. . .

15 God of Israel, says to me, "Take this cup of the wine of wrath [Rev. 16:19] from My hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send you, to drink it . . .

29, "For behold, I am beginning to work calamity in this city [Jerusalem] which is called by My name, and shall you be completely free from punishment? You will not be free from punishment; for I am summoning a sword against all the inhabitants of the earth," declares the LORD of hosts.' [The great worldwide Roman civil war of A.D. 69 will be discussed later in the works of Tacitus, Section (6.2.4.1)].

30 "Therefore you shall prophesy against them all these words, and you shall say to them, 'The LORD will roar from on high, and utter His voice from His holy habitation; He will roar mightily against His fold. He will shout like those who tread the grapes [wine press, Rev. 14:19-20, 19:15], against all the inhabitants of the earth.

31 'A clamor has come to the end of the earth, Because the LORD has a controversy with the nations. He is entering into judgment with all flesh; as for the wicked, He has given them to the sword,' declares the LORD." (Jer. 25:29-31)

In Jeremiah Chapter 30, the restored kingdom and the time of “Jacob’s distress”, can similarly be applied [“duality principle”] to Matthew Chapter 24:

Jer. 30:2, *Israel,* 'Write all the words which I have spoken to you in a book.

3 . . .days are coming,' declares the LORD, 'when I will restore the fortunes of My people Israel and Judah.' [Acts 1:6] the LORD says, 'I will also bring them back to the land that I gave to their forefathers, and they shall possess it.' . . .
'Alas! for that day is great, there is none like it; and it is the time of Jacob's distress [the great tribulation, Matt. 24:21, Rev. 7:14]. . . . (Jer. 30:1-7)

A good deal of Jeremiah Chapter 31 was quoted in various places in the New Testament. The passage listed below was quoted in Hebrews [8:8-12] as the Old Covenant was about to disappear:

Jer. 31:31, Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah,
32 not like the covenant [Law of Moses]. . . .
33 "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel. . . . 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. [See 2 Cor. 6:14-18].
34 "And they shall not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the LORD, (Jer. 31:31-34)

The “duality principle” is again exhibited in Chapter 51 when the passage is compared to Revelation [14:8, 18:3]. The identity of the “Babylon”, identified in the Revelation, is very difficult to determine. This subject is discussed, in greater detail, in the commentary of the Book of Revelation [14:8 and 18:3].

Jer. 51:7, Babylon has been a golden cup in the hand of the LORD, intoxicating all the earth. The nations have drunk of her wine; therefore the nations are going mad.
8 Suddenly Babylon has fallen and been broken [Nebuchadnezzar’s image, Dan. 2:44-45]; wail over her! (Jer. 51:7-8)

The parallel non-Biblical account of the siege by the Romans is thoroughly discussed in Section (6.2.3) relating to the works of Flavius Josephus:
The **Lamentations of Jeremiah** must not be overlooked in a study of either Matthew Chapter 24 or the Revelation. There are many direct parallels and much of the “fiery” figurative language, described as “the day of God’s fierce anger”, that relates exclusively to the destruction of Jerusalem in both 586 B.C. and in A.D. 70. It was the Prophet Daniel [Dan 9:12, 26, Matt. 24:15] who declared that Jerusalem and the Temple would be destroyed on these two different occasions.

Lam 1:1,  **How lonely sits the city [Jerusalem] that was full of people! She has become like a widow** who was once **great among the nations! She who was a princess** among the provinces has become a forced laborer!  [Compare with Rev. 18:7ff].
2 She weeps bitterly in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks; she has none to comfort her among all her lovers. All her friends have dealt treacherously with her; they have become her enemies. . . .
5 **Her adversaries have become her masters. . .**
6 And all her majesty has departed from the daughter of Zion; . . .
7 **In the days of her affliction and homelessness** [see Rev. 16:6] Jerusalem **remembers** all her precious things that were from the days of old when her people fell into the hand of the adversary, And no one helped her. The adversaries saw her, they mocked at her ruin.
8 **Jerusalem sinned greatly. . . she has become an unclean thing. All who honored her despise her because they have seen her nakedness** [see Rev. 17:16], . . .
10 The adversary has stretched out his hand over all her precious things, for she has seen the nations enter her sanctuary [Temple, 2 Thess. 2:4], the ones whom Thou didst command that they should not enter into Thy congregation. . . .
12 "Is it nothing to all you who pass this way? Look and see if there is any pain like my pain which was severely dealt out to me, which the LORD inflicted on the day of His fierce anger.  [Note! This destruction of Jerusalem was “a day of fierce anger”. So was the destruction by the Romans in A.D. 70].
13 "From on high He sent fire into my bones [figurative fire], and it prevailed over them; He has spread a net for my feet; He has turned me back; He has made me desolate [Dan. 9:27, Matt. 24:15], faint all day long, . . .
15 . . . the Lord has trodden as in a wine press [see Rev. 14:19-20, 19:15] the virgin daughter of Judah. . . . (Lam. 1:1-15)

There is more “fiery” language in **Chapters 2 and 4** [wrath like fire] and judgment against Jerusalem at 586 B.C., but this was still not the end of the world:

Lam. 2:1,  **How the Lord has covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud** [Note come with a cloud, see Section (4.4.3.5)] in His anger [see Dan, 7:13, Matt. 24:30]! He has cast from heaven to earth the glory of Israel, and has not remembered His footstool in the day of His anger.  [Note the figurative language that is used here]. . . .
3 **In fierce anger** He has cut off all the strength of Israel; He has drawn back His right hand from before the enemy. And **He has burned in Jacob like a flaming fire consuming round about.** [More figurative “fire”].
4 He has bent His bow like an enemy, He has set His right hand like an adversary and slain all that were pleasant to the eye; in the tent of the daughter of Zion He has poured out His wrath like fire. [More figurative “fire”]. . . .  
6 And He has violently treated His tabernacle like a garden booth; He has destroyed His appointed meeting place; the LORD has caused to be forgotten the appointed feast and sabbath in Zion, and He has despised king and priest in the indignation of His anger.  
7 The Lord has rejected His altar, He has abandoned His sanctuary; He has delivered into the hand of the enemy the walls of her palaces. . . .  
8 The LORD determined to destroy the wall of the daughter of Zion. He has stretched out a line, He has not restrained His hand from destroying; and He has caused rampart and wall to lament; they have languished together.  
9 Her gates have sunk into the ground, He has destroyed and broken her bars. Her king and her princes are among the nations; The law is no more [Heb. 8:13]; also, her prophets find no vision from the LORD. . . .  
12 They say to their mothers, "Where is grain and wine [Rev. 6:6ff]?" As they faint like a wounded man in the streets of the city, as their life is poured out on their mothers' bosom.  
13 How shall I admonish you? To what shall I compare you, O daughter of Jerusalem? To what shall I liken you as I comfort you, O virgin daughter of Zion? For your ruin is as vast as the sea; who can heal you?  
14 Your prophets have seen for you false and foolish visions; . . .  
15 All who pass along the way clap their hands in derision at you; they hiss and shake their heads at the daughter of Jerusalem, "Is this the city of which they said, 'The perfection of beauty, a joy to all the earth'?” [See Rev. 18:2ff].  
16 All your enemies have opened their mouths wide against you; they hiss and gnash their teeth. They say, "We have swallowed her up! Surely this is the day for which we waited; we have reached it, we have seen it."  
17 The LORD has done what He purposed; He has accomplished His word which He commanded from days of old [Deut. 28:45ff]. He has thrown down without sparing, and He has caused the enemy to rejoice over you; He has exalted the might of your adversaries. . . .  
19 Our pursuers were swifter than eagles [Deut. 28:49, Luke 17:37, Matt. 24:28] of the sky. . . .  
20 See, O LORD, and look! With whom hast Thou dealt thus? Should women eat their offspring [Deut. 28:53], The little ones who were born healthy? Should priest and prophet be slain in the sanctuary of the Lord?  
21 On the ground in the streets lie young and old, My virgins and my young men have fallen by the sword. Thou hast slain them in the day of Thine anger, Thou hast slaughtered, not sparing [see Rev. 11:1-8].  
22 Thou didst call as in the day of an appointed feast My terrors on every side; and there was no one who escaped or survived in the day of the LORD'S anger. Those whom I bore and reared, My enemy annihilated them. (Lam 1:1-2:22)
Lam. 4:10, The hands of compassionate women boiled their own children [Deut. 28:53]; They became food for them because of the destruction of the daughter of my people.

11 The LORD has accomplished His wrath, He has poured out His fierce anger; and He has kindled a fire in Zion which has consumed its foundations. [More figurative fire].

12 The kings of the earth did not believe, nor did any of the inhabitants of the world, that the adversary and the enemy could enter the gates of Jerusalem. . . .

19 Our pursuers were swifter than the eagles of the sky [see Deut. 28:49, Matt. 24:28, Luke 17:37]. They chased us on the mountains; they waited in ambush for us in the wilderness. . . .

22 The punishment of your iniquity has been completed, O daughter of Zion; He will exile you no longer. But He will punish your iniquity, (Lam. 4:10-22)

(3.4.5) The Book of Ezekiel

The Book of Ezekiel contains apocalyptic language very similar to that of the Book of Revelation. McClintock and Strong [1981, (Vol. III), p. 430] place a date of 594 B.C. as the 30th year in Ezekiel 1:1. This was prior to the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C.

Again the “duality principle” was used when the language to announce the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, was written. It is nearly the same language as that used in the Revelation concerning the Romans:

Ezek. 1:3, The word of the LORD came expressly to Ezekiel the priest, . . .

4 And as I looked, behold, a storm wind was coming from the north [see Deut. 28:49], a great cloud with fire flashing forth continually and a bright light around it, and in its midst something like glowing metal in the midst of the fire.

5 And within it there were figures resembling four living beings [Rev. 5:6]. And this was their appearance: they had human form”. . . .

24 I also heard the sound of their wings like the sound of abundant waters [Rev. 1:15, 19:6] as they went, like the voice of the Almighty, a sound of tumult like the sound of an army camp; whenever they stood still, they dropped their wings. . . .

26 Now above the expanse that was over their heads there was something resembling a throne. . . and on that which resembled a throne, high up, was a figure with the appearance of a man [Rev. 4:6-8]. . . .

28 As the appearance of the rainbow [Rev. 4:3] in the clouds on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the surrounding radiance. Such was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. (Ezek. 1:3-28)

Compare the exact parallel here from Ezekiel Chapter 2 to an account in the Book of Revelation [10:9-11]:

Ezek. 2:8, Open your mouth and eat what I am giving you."

9 Then I looked, behold, a hand was extended to me; and lo, a scroll was in it.
10 When He spread it out before me, it was written on the front and back; and written on it were lamentations, mourning and woe.

3:1 Then He said to me, "Son of man, eat what you find; eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel." [Note! The message was to the house of Israel].
2 So I opened my mouth, and He fed me this scroll.
3 And He said to me, "Son of man, feed your stomach, and fill your body with this scroll which I am giving you." Then I ate it, and it was sweet as honey in my mouth.
4 Then He said to me, "Son of man, go to the house of Israel and speak with My words to them.
5 "For you are not being sent to a people of unintelligible speech or difficult language, but to the house of Israel [Jews]". (Ezek. 2:8-3:5)

The promise of a siege in Ezekiel Chapter 4 was similar to Jesus’ own predictions that would be fulfilled in the 1st Century generation by the Romans.

Ezek. 4:1, Now you son of man, get yourself a brick, place it before you, and inscribe a city on it, Jerusalem.
2 "Then lay siege against it, build a siege wall, raise up a ramp, pitch camps, and place battering rams against it all around. [A.D. 70 was the same, see Luke 19:43-44].
3 "Then get yourself an iron plate and set it up as an iron wall between you and the city, and set your face toward it so that it is under siege, and besiege it. This is a sign to the house of Israel. (Ezek. 4:1-3)

Compare Chapter 5 with the similar references from the Book of Revelation: Top

Ezek. 5:5, Thus says the Lord GOD, "This is Jerusalem [Rev. 11:8]; I have set her at the center of the nations, with lands around her.
6 'But she has rebelled against My ordinances [conflict between Jesus and the Scribes and Pharisees] more wickedly than the nations and against My statutes more than the lands which surround her; for they have rejected My ordinances and have not walked in My statutes.'
7 "Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD, 'Because you have more turmoil than the nations which surround you, and have not walked in My statutes, nor observed My ordinances, nor observed the ordinances of the nations which surround you,'
8 therefore, thus says the Lord GOD, 'Behold, I, even I, am against you, and I will execute judgments among you in the sight of the nations.
9 'And because of all your abominations, I will do among you what I have not done, and the like of which I will never do again.
10 'Therefore, fathers will eat their sons among you [Deut. 28:53], and sons will eat their fathers; for I will execute judgments on you, and scatter all your remnant to every wind.
11 'So as I live,' declares the Lord GOD, 'surely, because you have defiled My sanctuary with all your detestable idols and with all your abominations,
therefore I will also withdraw, and My eye shall have no pity and I will not spare.

12 'One third of you will die by plague or be consumed by famine among you, one third will fall by the sword around you, and one third I will scatter to every wind, and I will unsheathe a sword behind them. [See Zech. 13:8-9, Rev. 8:7].

13 'Thus My anger will be spent, and I will satisfy My wrath on them, and I shall be appeased; then they will know that I, the LORD, have spoken in My zeal when I have spent My wrath upon them. [Wrath to the Jews, Matt. 3:7, Luke 21:23].

14 'Moreover, I will make you a desolation [Matt. 24:15] and a reproach among the nations which surround you, in the sight of all who pass by. [This happened under the Romans also in the Jewish war A.D. 66-70].

15 'So it will be a reproach, a reviling, a warning and an object of horror to the nations who surround you, when I execute judgments against you in anger, wrath, and raging rebukes. I, the LORD, have spoken.

16 'When I send against them the deadly arrows of famine which were for the destruction of those whom I shall send to destroy you, then I shall also intensify the famine upon you, and break the staff of bread. [It was the same in A.D. 70].

17 'Moreover, I will send on you famine and wild beasts, and they will bereave you of children; plague and bloodshed also will pass through you, and I will bring the sword on you. I, the LORD, have spoken.' (Ezek. 5:5-17)

There is more “fiery” figurative language and disaster mentioned in Chapter 7, but this was not the end of the world:

Ezek. 7:1, Moreover, the word of the LORD came to me saying,

2 "And you, son of man, thus says the Lord GOD to the land of Israel, 'An end! The end is coming on the four corners of the land. [Note the context, the language is harsh but does not reflect the end of the world. There is a direct parallel in the Revelation]

3 'Now the end is upon you, and I shall send My anger against you; I shall judge you according to your ways. . . .

5 "Thus says the Lord GOD, 'A disaster, unique disaster, behold it is coming!

6 'An end is coming; the end has come! . . .

7 'Your doom has come to you, O inhabitant of the land. The time has come, the day is near-- tumult rather than joyful shouting on the mountains.

8 'Now I will shortly pour out My wrath on you, and spend My anger against you, judge you according to your ways [Jesus promised the Jews of His day a similar end, Matt. 16:27-28], and bring on you all your abominations. . .

15 'The sword is outside, and the plague and the famine are within. He who is in the field will die by the sword; famine and the plague will also consume those in the city.

16 'Even when their survivors escape, they will be on the mountains [Luke 21:21] like doves of the valleys. (Ezek. 7:1-16)

Chapter 9 is still another direct parallel between 586 B.C. and A.D. 70:
Ezek. 9:1, *"Draw near, O executioners of the city, each with his destroying weapon in his hand."* [See Jer. 51:20]. . . .
3 Then the glory [see Matt. 24:30] of the God of Israel went up from the cherub on which it had been, to the threshold of the temple. And He called to the man clothed in linen at whose loins was the writing case.
4 "Go through the midst of the city, even through the midst of Jerusalem, and *put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and groan over all the abominations which are being committed in its midst."* [See Rev. 7:3, 14:1].
5 But to the others He said in my hearing, "Go through the *city* [Jerusalem, Rev. 11:8] after him and strike; do not let your eye have pity, and do not spare.
6 "Utterly slay old men, young men, maidens, little children, and women, *but do not touch any man on whom is the mark* [similar to the passing of the death angel, Exod. 12:27-29]; and you shall *start from My sanctuary.*"
7 And He said to them, "Defile the temple and fill the courts with the slain [there is much testimony in Josephus concerning A.D. 70]. Go out!" Thus they went out and struck down the people in the city [see Rev. 11:1-8].
8 Then it came about as they were striking and I alone was left, that I fell on my face and cried out saying, "Alas, Lord GOD! *Art Thou destroying the whole remnant of Israel by pouring out Thy wrath on Jerusalem?*" [See the above discussion of the remnant, Section (2.3.4)] . . . .
10 "But as for Me, My eye will have no pity nor shall I spare, but I shall bring their conduct upon their heads" [Matt. 16:27-28].
11 Then behold, the man clothed in linen at whose loins was the writing case reported, saying, "I have done just as Thou hast commanded me." (Ezek. 9:1-11)

It is very interesting that the Jews, prior to the destruction in 586 B.C., had the same perception as they do today. The Jews wanted to put the fulfillment comfortably into the future. However, God assured them that the time was not “far off”. Daniel [12:9] spoke of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans which was still about 600 years into the future; [Dan. 12:9, “And he said, "Go your way, Daniel, for these words are concealed and sealed up until the end time].

The Revelation [10:6, “there shall be a delay no longer” and 22:10, “And he said to me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near] reflects the same direct parallel. In the same way, the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, like the former destruction, was not delayed [Matt. 16:27-28], but it happened before some in that generation died.

Ezek. 12:25, *"It will no longer be delayed, for in your days [Matt. 16:27-28] O rebellious house, I shall speak the word and perform it,"* declares the Lord.
26 Furthermore, the word of the LORD came to me saying,
27 "Son of man, behold, the house of Israel is saying, 'The vision that he sees is for many years from now, and he prophesies of times far off.'
28 "Therefore say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, 'None of My words will be delayed." (Ezek. 12:23-28)
The consistency of God [Heb. 13:8] is further indicated by His judgment in both 586 B.C. and A.D. 70. Compare Ezekiel [14:21, “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!" to the passage from the Revelation [18:8, "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]. Both passages spoke of God’s consistent judgment throughout the ages.

Ezekiel Chapter 16 and the Lamentations of Jeremiah provide the understanding for much of the imagery found in Chapters 17 and 18 of the Book of Revelation. It is very difficult to determine which city was intended. The writer of the Revelation was either speaking of the “great city” as Jerusalem [in figures, see Rev. 11:8, “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.”] or Rome [see Jer. 51:5-11].

The interpretation as to which city was “the great city” [see Rev. 11:8, 16:19, 17:18, 18:10, 18:16, 18:18] must be determined from an analysis of these Scriptures. Jesus was definitely crucified in Jerusalem [Rev. 11:8]. Josephus identified three factions within the city of Jerusalem during the Jewish War [Rev. 16:19]. Rome reigned over the world [Rev. 17:18], but Jerusalem was also “the city of the Great King” [Matt. 5:35 (Psalms 48:2)]. However, it was both Jerusalem [“the city that kills the prophets, Luke 13:33-35 and Matt. 23:37] and Rome that killed a great number of the righteous. Nonetheless, Israel traditionally was the harlot [see Isa. 1:21, Jer. 3:1-8, Hos. 2:1-23, and Micah 1:1-7]. Thus, if the Book of Revelation was written before A.D 70 the “great city” can easily be interpreted as Jerusalem. If the book was written in the A.D 90s, as many believe, then there are serious problems in reconciling the Old Testament prophecies and the historical record.

Ezek.16:2, Son of man, make known to Jerusalem her abominations,
3 Thus says the Lord GOD to Jerusalem, "Your origin and your birth are from the land of the Canaanite, your father was an Amorite and your mother a Hittite. . . .
8 "Then I passed by you and saw you, and behold, you were at the time for love; so I spread My skirt over you and covered your nakedness. I also swore to you and entered into a covenant [the Law of Moses, Deut. 28:1ff, Heb. 8:13] with you so that you became Mine," declares the Lord GOD. . . .
9 "I bathed you with water, washed off your blood, and anointed you with oil.
10 "I also clothed you with embroidered cloth, and put sandals on your feet; and I wrapped you with fine linen and covered you with silk [see Rev. 18:12]. . . .
15 "But you trusted in your beauty and played the harlot [Rev. 17:1-16, Lam. 1:2] because of your fame, and you poured out your harlotries on every passer-by who might be willing. . . .
22 "And besides all your abominations and harlotries you did not remember the days of your youth, when you were naked and bare and squirming in your blood.
23 "Then it came about after all your wickedness ('Woe, woe to you!' declares the Lord GOD), [see the similar “woes” in Rev. 8:13, 11:14, 18:10-19]. . . .
29 "You also multiplied your harlotry with the land of merchants, Chaldea [Babylon], yet even with this you were not satisfied.

30 [Babylon, Medes and Persians, Greeks, and Romans, see Daniel Chapters 2 and 7]. . . .

33 "Men give gifts to all harlots, but you give your gifts to all your lovers to bribe them to come to you from every direction for your harlotries. . . .

37 therefore, behold, I shall gather all your lovers with whom you took pleasure, even all those whom you loved and all those whom you hated. So I shall gather them against you from every direction and expose your nakedness to them that they may see all your nakedness. [Gather the nations, see Isa. 66:18, Jer. 21:4, Joel 3:2, Zeph. 3:8, Zech. 12:3, 14:2] . . . .

41 "And they will burn your houses with fire and execute judgments [2 Kings, 25:9, 2 Chron. 36:19-23, Jer. 52:13] on you. . . . Then I shall stop you from playing the harlot, and you will also no longer pay your lovers. . . .

46 "Your older sister is Samaria, . . . your younger sister is Sodom [Rev. 11:8]. . . .

There is more “wrath” and other “fiery” language against Jerusalem in Chapter 20, but this still does not cause the end of the world:

Ezek. 20:34,  And I shall bring you out from the peoples and gather [Matt. 24:31, Mark 13:27, John 11:52] you from the lands where you are scattered, . . .

35 and I shall bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I shall enter into judgment with you face to face.

36 "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.

37 "And I shall make you pass under the rod, and I shall bring you into the bond of the covenant [Heb. 8:1-13];

38 and I shall purge from you the rebels and those who transgress against Me; I shall 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. . . .

40 "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 shall accept them, and there I shall seek your contributions and the choicest of your gifts, with all your holy things. . . .

47 "Behold, I am about to kindle a fire in you, and it shall 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 [this is the figurative fire of a previous judgment].

48 "And all flesh will see that I, the LORD [God's many judgments have become known to all. Note! God’s judgment is a continuing process], have kindled it; it shall not be quenched." [God would again strike Israel at A.D. 70].

49 Then I said, "Ah Lord GOD! They are saying of me, 'Is he not just speaking parables?'" (Ezek. 20:33-49)
Compare Ezekiel Chapter 24 with Matthew Chapter 24 and Luke chapter 21. The effect of the later dual prophecy by the Romans is obvious.

Ezek. 24:1, And the word of the LORD came to me in the ninth year, in the tenth month, on the tenth of the month, saying,

2 The king of Babylon has laid siege to Jerusalem this very day. . . .

6 'Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD, "Woe to the bloody city [Jerusalem], . . .

8 "That it may cause wrath to come up to take vengeance, I have put her blood on the bare rock, That it may not be covered."

9 'Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD, "Woe to the bloody city [Great City, Jer. 22:8, Rev. 11:8]! I also shall make the pile great. . . .

13 "In your filthiness is lewdness. . . . Yet you are not clean, You will not be cleansed from your filthiness again, until I have spent My wrath on you.

14 "I, the LORD, have spoken; it is coming and I shall act. I shall not relent, and I shall not pity, and I shall not be sorry; according to your ways and according to your deeds I shall judge you," declares the Lord GOD." . . .

21 'Speak to the house of Israel, "Thus says the Lord GOD, 'Behold, I am about to profane My sanctuary [that is, the Temple], the pride of your power, the desire of your eyes, and the delight of your soul; and your sons and your daughters whom you have left behind will fall by the sword. . . . (Ezek. 24:1-21)

The figurative language of judgment was applied in Chapters 31 and 32 to the various nations in the time of Ezekiel:

Ezek. 31:16, 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; . . .

17 "They also went down with it to Sheol to those who were slain by the sword; (Ezek. 31:16-17)

Ezek. 32:7, I will cover the heavens, and darken their stars; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give its light [Joel 2:31, Matt. 24:29].

A close examination of Chapter 34 reveals an interesting connection and reference to Matthew [25:31-41] and the fulfillment discussed by Jesus, Himself. Jesus, as the good Shepherd, came to seek and save the lost [Isa. 40:10-11, Luke 19:10, John 10:6-16]. In Matthew [25:31-41] Jesus spoke of the time that, He would come with the angels in glory [Matt. 16:27-26, before some of "eyewitness" generation had died]. That would be the time of the regeneration [Acts 3:21, Col, 1:11], when Jesus would sit on His throne, and the Apostles would judge the 12 Tribes of Israel [Matt. 19:28]. The prevailing mind-set makes it difficult to understand the fulfillment of these things at A.D. 70. However, look carefully at the context of the things from the prophet Ezekiel. The prophecy was against the leaders of Israel prior to the destruction by Nebuchadnezzar but the ultimate dual fulfillment concerns Jesus and the New Covenant [Heb. 8:1-13]:

Ezek. 34:2, Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds [Isa. 40:10-11, Luke 19:10, John 10:6-16] of Israel. Prophesy and say to those shepherds, 'Thus says the
Lord GOD, "Woe, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flock? ... 
10 "Thus says the Lord GOD, 'Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I shall demand My sheep from them and make them cease from feeding sheep. So the shepherds will not feed themselves anymore, but I shall deliver My flock from their mouth, that they may not be food for them.'" 
11 For thus says the Lord GOD, 'Behold, I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out [Isa. 40:11, John 10:11].
12 "As a shepherd cares for his herd in the day when he is among his scattered sheep, so I will care for My sheep and will deliver them from all the places to which they were scattered on a cloudy and gloomy day.
13 "And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries and bring them to their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the streams, and in all the inhabited places of the land. [John 11:52, “He might also gather together into one the children of God who are scattered abroad”]... 
16 "I will seek the lost [the popular song, “Seeking the Lost”], bring back the scattered, bind up the broken, and strengthen the sick; but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with judgment.
17 "And as for you, My flock, thus says the Lord GOD, 'Behold, I will judge between one sheep and another, between the rams and the male goats. [See Matt. 25:32, Rom. 11:25-28]... .
23 "Then I will set over them one shepherd, My servant David [Jesus], and he will feed them; he will feed them himself and be their shepherd.
24 "And I, the LORD, will be their God, and My servant David will be prince Top [Acts 13:22-39] among them; I, the LORD, have spoken.
25 "And I will make a covenant of peace [Heb. 8:1-13] with them... .
26 And I will cause showers to come down in their season; they will be showers of blessing [another song, “Showers of Blessing”].
27 Then they will know that I am the LORD, when I have broken the bars of their yoke and have delivered them from the hand of those who enslaved them [release from bondage (sin), John 8:33-39]. (Ezek. 34:1-27)

Ezekiel Chapter 37 [Dan 12:1] speaks of a definite resurrection [see Section (8.2)]. The Christian teachings of the “resurrection” and the “heavenly Jerusalem” [Gal. 4:26, Heb. 12:22, 13:14] appear to be the fulfillment of those things spoken of as “eternal or everlasting”. The possibility of a resurrection was emphasized in many New Testament passages [Jesus - 1 Cor. 15:12-26, Lazarus - John 11:23-26, the Saints - Matt. 27:51-53, the captives- Eph. 4:8, and Noah’s generation - 1 Pet. 4:5-7]:

Ezek. 37:9, Then He said to me, "Prophesy to the breath [Genesis 2:7], prophesy, son of man, and say to the breath, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they come to life.'""
10 So I prophesied as He commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they came to life, and stood on their feet, an exceedingly great army.
11 Then He said to me, "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel; behold, they say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope has perished. . . .
12 "Therefore prophesy, and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I will open your graves and cause you to come up out of your graves [John 5:28-29, Rom. 11:15, see Sect (8.2)], My people; and I will bring you into the land of Israel.
13 "Then you will know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves and caused you to come up out of your graves, My people.
14 "And I will put My Spirit within you [Heb. 8:10], and you will come to life, and I will place you on your own land. Then you will know that I, the LORD, have spoken and done it," declares the LORD." . . .
21 "And say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I will take the sons of Israel from among the nations where they have gone, and I will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land [Heb. 12:22];
22 and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king [Jesus, Matt. 27:11] will be king for all of them; and they will no longer be two nations, and they will no longer be divided into two kingdoms. . . .
23 "And they will no longer defile themselves with their idols, or with their detestable things, or with any of their transgressions; but I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them. And they will be My people, and I will be their God [see 2 Cor. 6:16-18].
24 "And My servant David [Jesus] will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd; and they will walk in My ordinances. . . .
25 "And they shall live on the land that I gave to Jacob My servant, in which your fathers lived; and they will live on it, they, and their sons, and their sons' sons, forever; and David [Jesus] My servant shall be their prince forever. . . .
26 "And I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be an everlasting covenant with them [Heb. 8:1-13]. And I will place them and multiply them, and will set My sanctuary [Heb. 9:8-16] in their midst forever.
27 "My dwelling place also will be with them; and I will be their God, and they will be My people [2 Cor. 6:16-18].
28 "And the nations will know that I am the LORD who sanctifies Israel, when My sanctuary [Heb. 9:8-16] is in their midst forever."'" (Ezek. 37:9-28)

The prophecy in Chapter 38 concerns the “last days or latter days” in the days of the Messiah and the times that follow [see Deut. 4:30, 31:29, Isa. 2:2, Jer. 23:20, Micah 4:1, Acts 2:17, 2 Tim. 3:1, James 5:3, and 2 Peter 3:3].

Ezek 38:16, And you will come up against My people Israel like a cloud to cover the land. It will come about in the last days that I shall bring you against My land, in order that the nations may know Me when I shall be sanctified through you before their eyes, O Gog.
17 "Thus says the Lord GOD, "Are you the one of whom I spoke in former days through My servants the prophets of Israel, who prophesied in those days for many years that I would bring you against them? [See Acts 3:24, Rev. 10:7, “when the mystery is finished”].
18 "And it will come about on that day, when Gog comes against the land of Israel," declares the Lord GOD, "that My fury will mount up in My anger.

19 "And in My zeal and in My blazing wrath I declare that on that day there will surely be a great earthquake [Rev. 6:12, 8:5 11:13, 19, 16:18] in the land of Israel.

20 "And the fish of the sea, the birds of the heavens, the beasts of the field, all the creeping things that creep on the earth, and all the men who are on the face of the earth will shake [Hag. 2:6, Heb. 12:26] at My presence; the mountains also will be thrown down, the steep pathways will collapse, and every wall will fall to the ground.

21 "And I shall call for a sword against him on all My mountains," declares the Lord GOD. "Every man's sword will be against his brother.

22 "And with pestilence and with blood I shall enter into judgment with him; and I shall rain on him, and on his troops, and on the many peoples who are with him, a torrential rain, with hailstones, fire, and brimstone [see Rev. 9:17-18, 14:10, 19:20, 20:10, 21:18].

23 "I shall magnify Myself, sanctify Myself, and make Myself known in the sight of many nations; and they will know that I am the LORD."'  (Ezek. 38:16-23)

Note the reference to the "Glory of God" in Chapter 43 [see Section (4.4.3.5), Matt. 24:30] at the first destruction of the Temple in 586 B.C. Daniel 9:12 and 9:24-27 are prophecies concerning the destructions of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. and A.D. 70 [Dan. 7:13-14, Zech. 14:5] respectively. Therefore, it is consistent with the Scriptures that God and His Son, Jesus, would appear in glory in exactly the same way on both occasions:

Ezek. 43:1, Then he led me to the gate, the gate facing toward the east; and behold, the glory of the God [Matt. 24:30] of Israel was coming from the way of the east. And His voice was like the sound of many waters [Rev. 1:15, 14:2, 19:6]; and the earth shone with His glory.

3 And it was like the appearance of the vision which I saw, like the vision which I saw when He came to destroy the city. And the visions were like the vision which I saw by the river Chebar; and I fell on my face. [Note! Glory (Matt. 24:30) came when the city had been destroyed].

4 And the glory of the LORD came into the house by the way of the gate facing toward the east.

5 And the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house [Josephus recounted a similar experience in A.D. 70 see Section (6.2.3)]. . .

7 And He said to me, "Son of man, this is the place of My throne [Heb. 9:8-16] and the place of the soles of My feet, (Ezek. 43:1-7)

When the next reading in Chapter 47 is compared to Joel [3:18], Zechariah [14:8] and Luke [24:47], it is not difficult to conclude that the “river of water” was the Gospel of Jesus and the Holy Spirit [John 7:37-39] that would bring eternal life to the whole world:
Ezek. 47:1, Then he brought me back to the door of the house; and behold, water was flowing from under the threshold of the house toward the east, for the house faced east. And the water was flowing down from under, from the right side of the house, from south of the altar. (Ezek. 47:1)

(3.4.6) The Book of Hosea

The prophecies of Hosea were placed by McClintock and Strong [1981, (Vol. IV), p. 352] from about 784 to 724 B.C., which was well before the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. This book continues to shed light on the prophecies of the “harlot” [Rev. 17:1-16, Lam. 1:2]. Hosea Chapter 2 is similar to the prophecies mentioned in Ezekiel Chapter 16:

Hos. 2:10, And then I will uncover her lewdness in the sight of her lovers, and no one will rescue her out of My hand. . . .
13 "And I will punish her for the days of the Baals when she used to offer sacrifices to them and adorn herself with her earrings and jewelry, and follow her lovers, so that she forgot Me," declares the LORD.
14 "Therefore, behold, I will allure her, bring her into the wilderness [Rev. 12:6], and speak kindly to her. . . .
23 "And I will sow her for Myself in the land. I will also have compassion on her who had not obtained compassion, and I will say to those who were not My people, 'You are My people!' And they will say, 'Thou art my God! [Note! At the time of the writing of Romans, this prophecy was not yet fulfilled, Rom. 9:25-26 (2 Cor. 6:16)]'. (Hos. 2:10-14, 23)

Hosea Chapter 6 [6:11] speaks of a “harvest appointed for you, when I restore the fortunes of My people”. [See the above discussion of “The Harvest and the End of the Age”, Section (2.3.5)]. Israel, the luxuriant vine [Isa. 5:7, (Parable, Matt. 21:33ff.)], would be punished again in A.D. 70:

Hos. 10:8, . . . then they will say to the mountains, "Cover us!" And to the hills, "Fall on us!" [Jesus said the same thing to the daughters of Jerusalem (see Luke 23:27-30, Rev. 6:16) concerning A.D. 70].

(3.4.7) The Book of Joel

The short Book of Joel is dated by McClintock and Strong [1981, (Vol. IV), p. 939] at about 800 B.C. Joel was contemporary with Isaiah and Amos. The Book of Joel is filled with references to the destruction of Jerusalem. It appears that the “four bands of locust” [Joel 1:4] correspond to the four kingdoms identified in Daniel Chapters 2 and 7. The Romans [iron teeth, Dan. 7:7] also fit the criteria in the Book of Revelation [9:7-8]:

Joel 1:4, What the gnawing locust has left, the swarming locust has eaten; and what the swarming locust has left, the creeping locust has eaten; and what the creeping locust has left, the stripping locust has eaten. . . .
6  For a nation has invaded my land, mighty and without number; its teeth are the teeth of a lion [Dan. 7:7, Rome], and it has the fangs of a lioness. (Joel 1:4-6)

Joel Chapter 2 is perhaps the most important chapter in the whole book. Here the “fiery day of the Lord” [see Zeph. 1:15, Amos 5:18, Joel 1:15, Matt. 24:29-31] comes with a trumpet blast. This day represents the destruction of Jerusalem by both the Babylonians and the Romans and does not appear to represent the end of the world:

Joel 2:1, Blow a trumpet [Matt. 24:31 (Isa. 27:13), 1 Cor. 15:52, 1 Thess. 4:16, Rev. 1:10, 4:1, 8:13, 9:14] in Zion, and sound an alarm on My holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the LORD is coming; . . .

2  a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness. As the dawn is spread over the mountains, so there is a great and mighty people; there has never been anything like it [Dan. 9:12, 12:1, Matt. 24:21]. . . .

3  A fire consumes before them, and behind them a flame burns. The land is like the garden of Eden before them, but a desolate wilderness behind them, and nothing at all escapes them.

4  Their appearance is like the appearance of horses [Rev. 9:7, 9, 17, 19]; and like war horses, so they run.

5  With a noise as of chariots they leap on the tops of the mountains, like the crackling of a flame of fire consuming the stubble, like a mighty people arranged for battle. . . .

10  Before them the earth quakes, the heavens tremble, the sun and the moon grow dark, and the stars lose their brightness. [Isa. 13:9-13, Dan. 8:10, Hagg. 2:5-9, Heb. 12:26-29, Rev. 12:4].

11  . . . The day of the LORD is indeed great and very awesome, and who can endure it? (Joel 2:1-11)

The next citation, from Joel [2:28-3:18], was directly quoted by Peter in Acts [2:16ff, (Joel 2:28-32)]. The chronology in Acts Chapter 2 begins at Pentecost [A.D. 30], with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit “in the last days”. The Book of Joel logically ends with the prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans:

Joel 2:28, And it will come about after this that I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; and your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions.

29  “And even on the male and female [Philp’s daughters, Acts 21:8-9] servants I will pour out My Spirit in those days.

30  “And I will display wonders in the sky and on the earth, blood, fire, and columns of smoke.

31  “The sun will be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes [Malachi 4:5].

32  “And it will come about that whoever calls on the name of the LORD will be delivered; for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be those who escape [“flee to the mountains”, Matt. 24:16, Luke 21:21], as the LORD has said, even among the survivors whom the LORD calls. [The “remnant” is the Christians, but the world has not yet ended].

2 I will gather all the nations [see Section (3.1.4)], and bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat. Then I will enter into judgment with them there on behalf of My people and My inheritance, Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations; and they have divided up My land. . . .

9 Proclaim this among the nations: prepare a war [Spiritual warfare, Eph.6:12]; rouse the mighty men! Let all the soldiers draw near, let them come up!

10 Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears; let the weak say, "I am a mighty man." . . .

13 Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe [see the discussion of the harvest above in Section (2.3.5)]. Come, tread, for the wine press [Matt. 21:33, Rev. 14:10-20, 19:15] is full; the vats overflow, for their wickedness is great.

14 Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD is near [Matt. 3:7-12] in the valley of decision.

15 The sun and moon grow dark, and the stars lose their brightness.

16 And the LORD roars from Zion and utters His voice from Jerusalem, and the heavens and the earth tremble. . . .

17 Then you will know that I am the LORD your God, Dwelling in Zion My holy mountain. So Jerusalem will be holy [in heaven Gal. 4:26, Heb. 12:22, 13:14], and strangers will pass through it no more.

18 And it will come about in that day that the mountains will drip with sweet wine, and the hills will flow with milk, and all the brooks of Judah will flow with water; and a spring will go out from the house of the LORD [The Gospel the "Living Waters", Ezek. 47:1, Zech. 14:8, Luke 24:47, John 7:37-39], to water the valley of Shittim. (Joel 2:28-3:18)

(3.4.8) The Book of Amos

The date associated by McClintock and Strong [1981, (Vol. I), p. 205] was the period of about 783 B.C. Again, this was many years before the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. It was written in the days of Uzziah and Jeroboam and recounted some of Israel’s deeds. Amos (2:9-12) speaks of the 40 years of wilderness wanderings. There was the testimony [Amos 3:7 (Rev. 10:7)] that, “Surely the Lord GOD does nothing unless He reveals His secret counsel to His servants the prophets”. There was the declaration; “Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD, "An enemy, even one surrounding the land, will pull down your strength from you and your citadels will be looted" [Amos 3:11 (Deut. 28:49-52)].

Amos [5:6-7] speaks of God’s justice like fire on the house of Israel that would turn justice into wormwood, and thus the day of the Lord [Amos 5:18-20] would come:

Amos 5:6. Seek the LORD that you may live, lest He [God] break forth like a fire, O house of Joseph, and it consume with none to quench it for Bethel,

7 For those who turn justice into wormwood [Deut. 29:18, Prov. 5:4, Jer. 9:15, 23:15, Lam. 3:15,19, Rev. 8:11] and cast righteousness down to the earth." . . .
18 Alas, you who are longing for the day of the LORD, for what purpose will the day of the LORD be to you? It will be darkness and not light;
19 As when a man flees from a lion, and a bear meets him, or goes home, leans his hand against the wall, and a snake bites him.
20 Will not the day of the LORD be darkness instead of light, even gloom with no brightness in it? (Amos 5:6-21)

The reference to a “plumb line” or a “measuring rod” [see the comments on Isa. 28:17] seems to represent God’s impending judgment:

**Amos 7:7,** Thus He showed me, and behold, the Lord was standing by a vertical wall, with a **plumb line in His hand.**
8 And the LORD said to me, "What do you see, Amos?" and I said, "A **plumb line.**" Then the Lord said, "**Behold I am about to put a plumb line in the midst of My people Israel. I will spare them no longer.**" [See Isa. 28:17, 34:11, Ezek. 45:3, 47:18, Amos 7:7-8, Zech. 2:2, 4:10, Rev. 11:1-2, 21:15].
9 "The high places of Isaac will be desolated and the sanctuaries of Israel laid waste. Then shall I rise up against the house of Jeroboam with the sword." (Amos 7:7-9)

**Amos [9:11-12]** was quoted in Acts [15:16-18] by Paul concerning the **kingdom of David, that would include the Gentiles.**

Acts 15:16, **AFTER THESE THINGS I will return, AND I WILL REBUILD THE TABERNACLE OF DAVID WHICH HAS FALLEN, AND I WILL REBUILD ITS RUINS, AND I WILL RESTORE IT,**
17 **IN ORDER THAT THE REST OF MANKIND MAY SEEK THE LORD, AND ALL THE GENTILES WHO ARE CALLED BY MY NAME, . . .**
19 "Therefore it is my judgment that we do not trouble those **who are turning to God from among the Gentiles**". (Acts 15:16-19)

(3.4.9) **The Book of Micah**

McClintock and Strong [1981, (Vol. VI), p. 214] place the extent of the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, from 756 to 697 B.C. This prophecy was also pronounced before the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. and concerns Jerusalem and Samaria. The language concerning the **mountains melting** in this context was obviously figurative.

**Micah 1:1,** The word of the LORD which came to Micah of Moresheth, which **he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem.**
2 Hear, O peoples, all of you; Listen, O earth and all it contains, and let the Lord GOD be a witness against you, the **Lord from His holy temple** [see Heb. 9:11].
3 For behold, the LORD is coming forth from His place. **He will come down and tread on the high places of the earth.**
4 The mountains will melt under Him, and the valleys will be split, like wax before the fire, like water poured down a steep place. [Note! This is figurative language].

5 All this is for the rebellion of Jacob and for the sins of the house of Israel. What is the rebellion of Jacob? Is it not Samaria? What is the high place of Judah? Is it not Jerusalem? (Micah 1:1-5)

In the next passage from Chapter 2, Jesus is surely the Good Shepherd and the door of the sheep [see, John 10:1-16, Isa. 40:11].

Micah 2:12, I will surely assemble all of you, Jacob, I will surely gather the remnant of Israel [see “The Remnant”, Section (2.3.4)]. I will put them together like sheep in the fold; like a flock in the midst of its pasture.

Josephus [Section (6.2.2)] and Jesus in Matthew 24:2 discussed how thoroughly Jerusalem and the Temple would be destroyed in A.D. 70 by the Romans. The literal fulfillment of the things in Chapter 3 are discussed in greater detail later in the writings of Josephus [Section (6.2.3.4)]:

Micah 3:10, Who build Zion with bloodshed and Jerusalem with violent injustice. 11 Her leaders pronounce judgment for a bribe, her priests instruct for a price, and her prophets divine for money. Yet they lean on the LORD saying, "Is not the LORD in our midst? Calamity will not come upon us."

12 Therefore, on account of you, Zion will be plowed as a field, Jerusalem will become a heap of ruins, and the mountain of the temple will become high places of a forest”. [This literally happened in both 586 B.C. and A.D. 70].

This passage from Chapter 4 is almost identical to Isaiah 2:1-4. Notice the references to the “birth pangs” [see Isa. 65:7-8, Matt. 24:8, Mark 13:8, 1 Thess. 5:3] or the “great tribulation”:

Micah 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 [Gal. 4:26, Heb. 9:11ff, 12:22], and the peoples will stream to it. 2 And many nations [Gentiles] will come and say, "Come and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD and to the house of the God of Jacob, that He may teach us about His ways and that we may walk in His paths." For from Zion will go forth the law, even the word of the LORD from Jerusalem [Luke 24:47]. 3 And He will judge between many peoples and render decisions for mighty, distant nations. Then 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 train for war. [Certainly this can only be fulfilled in heaven]. . . . 6 "In that day," declares the LORD, "I will assemble the lame, and gather the outcasts, even those whom I have afflicted."
7 "I will make the lame a remnant, and the outcasts a strong nation, and the LORD will reign over them in Mount Zion [Heb. 12:22, 13:14] from now on and forever.
8 "And as for you, tower of the flock, hill of the daughter of Zion, to you it will come-- even the former dominion will come, the kingdom of the daughter of Jerusalem.
9 "Now, why do you cry out loudly? Is there no king among you, or has your counselor perished, that agony has gripped you like a woman in childbirth? [Isa. 65:7-8, Matt. 24:8, Mark 13:8, 1 Thess. 5:3].
10 "Writhe and labor to give birth, Daughter of Zion, like a woman in childbirth, for now you will go out of the city, dwell in the field, and go to Babylon. There you will be rescued; there the LORD will redeem you from the hand of your enemies.
11 "And now many nations have been assembled against you who say, 'Let her be polluted, and let our eyes gloat over Zion.' . . .
12 "Arise and thresh, daughter of Zion. . . that you may pulverize many peoples, that you may devote to the LORD their unjust gain and their wealth to the Lord of all the earth.  (Micah 4:1-13)

Now notice the New Testament connections to a fulfillment in Jesus in this next passage from Chapter 5:

Micah 5:1, Now muster yourselves in troops, daughter of troops; they have laid siege against us; with a rod they will smite the judge [Jesus] of Israel on the cheek.
2 "But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you One [Jesus was born in Bethlehem] will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity."
3 Therefore, He will give them up until the time when she who is in labor has borne a child. Then the remainder of His brethren will return to the sons of Israel. [“Birth Pangs”, Isa. 65:7-8, Matt. 24:8, Mark 13:8, 1 Thess. 5:3].
4 And He [Jesus] will arise and shepherd His flock in the strength of the LORD, (Micah 5:1-4)

Note the allusions to Jesus in the next passage from Chapter 7:

Micah 7:5, Do not trust in a neighbor; do not have confidence in a friend. From her who lies in your bosom guard your lips.
6 For son treats father contemptuously, daughter rises up against her mother, daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; a man's enemies are the men of his own household. [See Matt. 10:34-36].
7 But as for me, I will watch expectantly for the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation [Luke 2:30]. My God will hear me. (Micah 7:5-7)
McClintock and Strong [1981, (Vol. VI), p. 828], in the discussion of the date of the Book of Nahum, date it somewhere from around 742 to 710 B.C. This prophecy was made against Assyrian the capital of Nineveh many years before the first destruction of Jerusalem. However, God’s judgments and punishments through the ages have remained consistent with the prophecy of Moses in Deuteronomy [28:49-64]. Again, note how this powerful language is consistent with Hebrews [12:26-29] and 2 Peter [3:10-13] in reference to the destruction of Jerusalem:

Nahum 1:1, The oracle of Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite.
2 A jealous and avenging God is the LORD; the LORD is avenging and wrathful. The LORD takes vengeance on His adversaries, and He reserves wrath for His enemies.
3 The LORD is slow to anger and great in power, and the LORD will by no means leave the guilty unpunished. In whirlwind and storm [Ezek. 1:4] is His way, and clouds are the dust beneath His feet. . . .
5 Mountains shake [Heb. 12:26-27 (Hagg. 2:6)] because of Him, and the hills dissolve [2 Peter 3:10ff]; indeed the earth is upheaved by His presence, the world and all the inhabitants in it.
6 Who can stand before His indignation? Who can endure the burning of His anger? His wrath is poured out like fire, and the rocks are broken up by Him. (Nahum 1:1-6)

(3.4.11) The Book of Habakkuk

McClintock and Strong [1981, (Vol. IV), p. 2] date this writing to the time of about 608 B.C., or about 22 years before the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.

Hab. 1:6, For behold, I am raising up the Chaldeans [Babylonians and Romans], that fierce and impetuous people [Deut. 28:49-64] who march throughout the earth to seize dwelling places which are not theirs.
7 "They are dreaded and feared. Their justice and authority originate with themselves.
8 Their horses are swifter than leopards and keener than wolves in the evening. Their horsemen come galloping, their horsemen come from afar; they fly like an eagle swooping down to devour.
9 "All of them come for violence. Their horde of faces moves forward. They collect captives like sand.
10 "They mock at kings, and rulers are a laughing matter to them. They laugh at every fortress, and heap up rubble to capture it. [See Luke 19:43-44].
11 "Then they will sweep through like the wind and pass on. But they will be held guilty, they whose strength is their god."
12 Art Thou not from everlasting, O LORD, my God, my Holy One? We will not die. Thou, O LORD, hast appointed them to judge; and Thou, O Rock, hast established them to correct. (Hab. 1:6-12)

(3.4.12) The Book of Zephaniah
McClintock and Strong [1981, (Vol. X), p. 1082] place the prophecies of Zephaniah between 642 to 611 B.C. The “fiery” language of the “day of the Lord” was much the same as in some of the other prophets. However, it clearly did not mark the end of the literal world. This is still another example that 2 Peter 3:10-13 might possibly also be figurative and reflect the same kind of destruction destined for A.D. 70. Consider the references in the two following passages:

Zeph. 1:1, The word of the LORD which came to Zephaniah son of Cushi . . .
2 "I will completely remove all things from the face of the earth," declares the LORD.
3 "I will remove man and beast; I will remove the birds of the sky and the fish of the sea, and the ruins along with the wicked; and I will cut off man from the face of the earth," declares the LORD . . .
7 For the day of the LORD is near, for the LORD has prepared a sacrifice, He has consecrated His guests [Rev. 19:9].
8 "Then it will come about on the day of the LORD'S sacrifice, that I will punish the princes, the king's sons, and all who clothe themselves with foreign garments.
9 "And I will punish on that day all who leap on the temple threshold, who fill the house of their lord with violence and deceit.
10 "And on that day," declares the LORD, "There will be the sound of a cry from the fish gate, a wail from the Second Quarter [Zech. 14:10], and a loud crash from the hills . . .
12 "And it will come about at that time that I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I will punish the men who are stagnant in spirit . . .
14 Near is the great day of the LORD, near and coming very quickly; listen, the day of the LORD! In it the warrior cries out bitterly.
15 A day of wrath is that day, a day of trouble and distress, a day of destruction and desolation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, [see, Joel 2:2, Amos 5:8].
16 A day of trumpet and battle cry, against the fortified cities and the high Top corner towers.
17 And I will bring distress on men, so that they will walk like the blind, because they have sinned against the LORD; and their blood will be poured out like dust, and their flesh like dung.
18 Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to deliver them on the day of the LORD'S wrath; and all the earth will be devoured in the fire of His jealousy, for He will make a complete end, indeed a terrifying one, of all the inhabitants of the earth [see 2 Peter 3:10-11]. (Zeph. 1:1-18)

Zeph. 3:8, Therefore, wait for Me," declares the LORD, "For the day when I rise up to the prey. Indeed, My decision is to gather nations, to assemble kingdoms, to pour out on them My indignation, all My burning anger; for all the earth will be devoured by the fire [2 Peter 3:10-11] of My zeal . . .
10 "From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia My worshipers [the eunuch, Acts 8:27], My dispersed ones, will bring My offerings . . .
12 "But I will leave among you a humble and lowly people [see the beatitudes, Matt. 5:1-13], and they will take refuge in the name of the LORD.  
13 "The remnant [see Section (2.3.4)] of Israel will do no wrong and tell no lies, nor will a deceitful tongue be found in their mouths; for they shall feed and lie down with no one to make them tremble." (Zeph. 3:8-13)

(3.4.13) The Book of Haggai

McClintock and Strong [1981, (Vol. IV), p. 19] identify the second year of Darius as 520 B.C. The “duality principle” was again employed in Haggai as the “dispersed ones” from the first destruction [586 B.C.] that returned from Babylon. In the reference in Hebrews [12:26], the same passage from Haggai was used to predict the coming of another kingdom and the New Covenant [Heb. 8:1-13]:

Haggai 2:1, ... the word of the LORD came by Haggai the prophet saying,  
2 "Speak now to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua, the high priest, and to the remnant [see Section (2.3.4)] of the people saying,  
3 'Who is left among you who saw this [Solomon's] temple in its former glory? And how do you see it now? Does it not seem to you like nothing in comparison? . . .  
5 'As for the promise which I made you when you came out of Egypt, My Spirit is abiding in your midst; do not fear!'  
6 '... 'Once more in a little while, I am going to shake the heavens and the earth, the sea also and the dry land. [See Heb. 12:26-29].  
7 'And I will shake all the nations; and they will come with the wealth of all nations; and I will fill this house with glory,' says the LORD of hosts. . . .  
9 'The latter glory of this house will be greater than the former,' . . .  
21 "Speak to Zerubbabel governor of Judah saying, 'I am going to shake the heavens and the earth. [Note! This prophecy does not seem to fit the “last judgment”].  
22 'And I will overthrow the thrones of kingdoms and destroy the power of the kingdoms of the nations; and I will overthrow the chariots and their riders, and the horses and their riders will go down, everyone by the sword of another.'

(Hagg. 2:1-22)

(3.4.14) The Book of Zechariah

McClintock and Strong [1981, (Vol. X), p. 1068] place Zechariah at about the same time as Haggai, near 519 B.C., and thus well after the destruction of Jerusalem of 586 B.C. by Nebuchadnezzar. The apocalyptic language in Zechariah, Ezekiel, and Daniel provide much of the basis and background for many passages that appear in the Book of Revelation. All of these four prophetic books reflect the prophecies of Moses [Deut. 28:49-64]. Like Daniel, Zechariah spoke of God’s continuing judgment throughout the history of Israel and he prophesied concerning another destruction of Jerusalem that so far has only occurred in A.D. 70:

Zech 1:1, In the second year [519 B.C.] of Darius, the word of the LORD came to Zechariah the prophet, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo saying,
"The LORD was very angry [see Deut. 28:49-64, Dan. 9:11-12]. . . .
6 "But did not My words and My statutes, which I commanded My servants the prophets, overtake your fathers? . . .
8 I saw at night, and behold, a man was riding on a red horse, and he was standing among the myrtle trees which were in the ravine, with red, sorrel, and white horses behind him. [See the horsemen of Rev. 6:1-8]. . . .
10 "These are those whom the LORD has sent to patrol the earth." [See "watchers or watchmen", Dan. 4:17 Zech. 6:7, Ezek. 3:17, 33:7-9, Isa. 52:8, 56:10, 62:6, Jer. 6:17].
11 So they answered the angel of the LORD who was standing among the myrtle trees, and said, "We have patrolled the earth. . . ."
12 Then the angel of the LORD answered and said, "O LORD of hosts, how long wilt Thou have no compassion for Jerusalem. . . . which Thou hast been indignant these seventy years?" [See 2 Chron. 36:19-23, Jer. 25:11, 29:10]. . . .
16 "Therefore, thus says the LORD, "I will return to Jerusalem with compassion; My house will be built in it." declares the LORD of hosts, "and a measuring line [Rev. 11:2] will be stretched over Jerusalem.'""
17 "Thus says the LORD of hosts, "My cities will again overflow with prosperity, and the LORD will again comfort Zion [Jesus in Luke 2:25] and again choose Jerusalem.'""
18 Then I lifted up my eyes and looked, and behold, there were four horns.
19 So I said to the angel who was speaking with me, "What are these?" And he answered me, "These are the horns [Isa. 54:16] which have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem." [See Daniel Chapters 2 and 7 (Joel 1:4ff)].
20 Then the LORD showed me four craftsmen. [See Jer. 51:20ff]
21 And I said, "What are these coming to do?" And he said, "These are the horns which have scattered Judah, so that no man lifts up his head; but these craftsmen have come to terrify them, to throw down the horns of the nations who have lifted up their horns against the land of Judah in order to scatter it." (Zech 1:1-21)

More New Testament references are linked within this passage from Chapter 2 to the destruction of Jerusalem:

Zech. 2:1, There was a man with a measuring line in his hand [Rev. 11:1-2].
2 So I said, "Where are you going?" And he said to me, "To measure Jerusalem, to see how wide it is and how long it is." . . .
5 'For I,' declares the LORD, 'will be a wall of fire around her, and I will be the glory [Rev. 21:22-27] in her midst.'"
6 "Ho there! Flee from the land of the north," declares the LORD, "for I have dispersed [see Section (3.1.2)] you as the four winds of the heavens." . . .
7 "Ho, Zion! Escape, you who are living with the daughter of Babylon." . . .
10 "Sing for joy and be glad, O daughter of Zion; for behold I am coming and I will dwell in your midst," declares the LORD.
11 "And many nations [Gentiles, Matt. 24:14ff, Col. 1:23] will join themselves to the LORD in that day and will become My people. (Zech. 2:1-11)
Note, in Chapter 3, the Spiritual warfare with Satan and the other New Testament connections [see Genesis 3:1-16, 1 Chron. 21:1-27, Job 1:6-12, 2:1-7, Eph. 6:12, Rev.11:7-10 (Dan. 12:1ff)]:

Zech. 3:1, Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him. [See Eph. 6:12, Rev.11:7-10 (Dan. 12:1ff)].
2 And the LORD said to Satan, "The LORD rebuke you, Satan! Indeed, the LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?" . . .
8 'Now listen, Joshua the high priest, you and your friends who are sitting in front of you--indeed they are men who are a symbol, for behold, I am going to bring in My servant the Branch [Jesus, Isa. 4:2, 11:1, 53:2, Jer. 23:5, 33:15, Zech. 6:12, Acts 13:22-23].
9 'For behold, the stone [1 Peter 2:7ff] that I have set before Joshua; on one stone are seven eyes [Zech. 4:10, Rev. 4:5]. (Zech. 3:1-10)

Compare the illusion to the lampstands in Chapter 4 to the other referenced passages [Rev. 11:3-4 (Jer. 11:16)]:

Zech. 4:2, And he said to me, "What do you see?" And I said, "I see, and behold, a lampstand all of gold with its bowl on the top of it, and its seven lamps on it with seven spouts belonging to each of the lamps which are on the top of it; also two olive trees [Rev. 11:3-4 (Jer. 11:16)] :by it, one on the right side of the bowl and the other on its left side." . . .
6 Then he answered and said to me, "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel saying, 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the LORD of hosts.
7 'What are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become a plain; and he will bring forth the top stone [Jesus, see Dan. 2:45, 1 Peter 2:7-8] with shouts of "Grace, grace [see John 1:17] to it! . . .
10 "For who has despised the day of small things? But these seven will be glad when they see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel-- these are the eyes of the LORD which range to and fro throughout the earth." [See “watchers”, Dan. 4:17 Zech. 6:7, Ezek. 3:17, 33:7-9, Isa. 52:8, 56:10, 62:6, Jer. 6:17] . . .
12 "What are the two olive branches which are beside the two golden pipes, which empty the golden oil from themselves?" . . .
14 Then he said, "These are the two anointed ones [see Rev. 11:3-4], who are standing by the Lord of the whole earth." (Zech. 4:1-14)

Compare the horsemen of Zechariah Chapter 6 with the passage from Revelation [6:2-8]:

Zech. 6:1, 1 ... looked, and behold, four chariots were coming forth from between the two mountains; and the mountains were bronze mountains.
2 With the first chariot were red horses, with the second chariot black horses,
3 with the third chariot white horses, and with the fourth chariot strong dappled horses.
4 Then I spoke and said to the angel who was speaking with me, "What are these?
5 And the angel answered and said to me, "These are the four spirits of heaven, going forth after standing before the Lord of all the earth, . . .
12 "Then say to him, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, "Behold, a man whose name is Branch, for He will branch out from where He is; and He will build the temple of the LORD [Jesus, Isa. 4:2, 11:1, 53:2, Jer. 23:5, 33:15, Acts 13:22-23].
13 "Yes, it is He who will build the temple [John 2:19, Heb. 9:11] of the LORD, and He who will bear the honor and sit and rule on His throne. Thus, He will be a priest on His throne [Heb. 7:11-21 (Psa. 110:4), “According to the order of Melchizedek”], and the counsel of peace will be between the two offices.'"
15 "And those who are far off [Gentiles, Acts 2:39] will come and build the temple of the LORD." (Zech. 6:1-15)

In the passage below from Chapter 7, notice the past judgments of God against Israel:

Zech. 7:5, 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 [2 Chron. 36:21, Jer. 25:11, 29:10], was it actually for Me that you fasted? . . .
12 "And they made their hearts like flint so that they could not hear the law and the words which the LORD of hosts had sent by His Spirit through the former prophets; therefore great wrath came from the LORD of hosts [Dan. 9:11-12] . . .
14 "but I scattered them with a storm wind among all the nations whom they have not known. Thus the land is desolated behind them, so that no one went back and forth, for they made the pleasant land desolate." (Zech. 7:1-14)

Chapter 8 presents more clear references to the Gentiles being added to the kingdom with an ultimate fulfillment in the heavenly kingdom:

Zech. 8:2, Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'I am exceedingly jealous for Zion, yes, with great wrath I am jealous for her.'
3 "Thus says the LORD, 'I will return to Zion and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Then Jerusalem will be called the City of Truth, and the mountain of the LORD of hosts will be called the Holy Mountain' [Heb. 11:16, 12:22, 13:14, Rev. 21:1-4]. . . .
6 "Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'If it is too difficult in the sight of the remnant of this people in those days, will it also be too difficult in My sight?' . . .
7 "Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'Behold, I am going to save My people from the land of the east and from the land of the west [see gathering (3.1.3, 3.1.4)]; and I will bring them back, and they will live in the midst of Jerusalem, and they will be My people and I will be their God [Rom. 9:26, 2 Cor. 6:16] in truth and righteousness.' . . .
12 'For there will be peace for the seed: the vine will yield its fruit, the land will yield its produce, and the heavens will give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to inherit all these things. [See “remnant (2.3.4)”. (Zech. 8:1-12)

Compare Chapter 9 with the New Testament references that are indicated in the text:

Zech. 9:8, But I will camp around My house [Rev. 20:9] because of an army, because of him who passes by and returns; And no oppressor will pass over them. 9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king [Jesus] is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, humble, and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a donkey. [See Matt. 21:1-7]. (Zech. 9:8-9)

In Chapter 12 there are more unmistakable references to Jesus and to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70:

Zech. 12:1, Thus declares the LORD who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him, 2 "Behold, I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that causes reeling to all the peoples around; and when the siege is against Jerusalem [Luke 19:43-44], it will also be against Judah. [See gathering of the nations Section (3.1.4)]. 3 "And it will come about in that day that I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples; all who lift it will be severely injured. And all the nations of the earth will be gathered against it. . . . 7 "The LORD also will save the tents of Judah first [Judah was listed first, Rev. 7:5] in order that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem may not be magnified above Judah. . . . 10 "And I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace [John 1:17] and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced [crucifixion, John 19:37]; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him, like the bitter weeping over a first-born. 11 "In that day there will be great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the plain of Megiddo [battle of Har-Magedon, Rev. 16:16]. (Zech. 12:1-11)

Chapter 13 provides even more interesting New Testament links and clear references to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70:

Zech. 13:1, In that day a fountain will be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for impurity. [See Jer. 2:13, 17:13, Ezek. 47:1, Joel 3:18, John 4:10, 7:37-39, Rev. 22:1-2] . . . 6 "And one will say to him, 'What are these wounds between your arms?' Then he will say,' Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.'
7 "Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, and against the man, My associate,"
Declares the LORD of hosts. "Strike the Shepherd that the sheep may be
scattered [Matt. 26:31]; and I will turn My hand against the little ones.
8 "And it will come about in all the land,"... "That two parts in it will be cut off
and perish; but the third will be left in it. [See Ezek. 5:12, Rev. 8:7, 9:15ff].
9 "And I will bring the third part through the fire, refine them as silver is
refined, and test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, and I will
answer them; I will say, 'They are My people,' and they will say, 'The LORD is
my God!'" [Ezek. 11:20, 2 Cor. 6:16-18]. (Zech. 13:1-9)

Chapter 14 [14:5] of Zechariah and Daniel [7:13-14] make it difficult to
destruction of Jerusalem [see “Coming on the Clouds of Heaven With Power and Great
Glory in Section (4.4.3.5)]. This is by far is one of the most important points to be
made in this study. On this point, the early Roman Church and many Churches of today
remain in error. Most of Christendom still refuses to believe that God and Jesus came
against Jerusalem in judgment at A.D. 70, in the same way as in the other Old Testament

Zech. 14:1, Behold, a day is coming for the LORD when the spoil taken from you
will be divided among you.
2 For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be
captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished [Lam. 5:11], and half of the
city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city.
3 Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on
a day of battle.
4 And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives [Ezek. 11:23, Luke
24:51, Acts 1:1-11] , 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.
5 And 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 [Matt. 16:27-28, 1 Thess. 4:14]!
6 And it will come about in that day that there will be no light; the luminariesTop
will dwindle.
7 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.
8 And it will come about in that day that living waters will flow out of Jerusalem
[Luke 24:47] half of them toward the eastern sea and the other half toward the
western sea; it will be in summer as well as in winter.
9 And the LORD will be king over all the earth [Rev. 11:15, 12:10]; in that day
the LORD will be the only one, and His name [Isaiah 62:2, Acts 11:26, “and the
disciples were first called Christians in Antioch”] the only one.  Top
10 All the land will be changed into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem; but Jerusalem will rise and remain on its site [Rev. 21:1-4] from Benjamin's Gate as far as the place of the First Gate to the Corner Gate. . . .
11 And people will live in it, and there will be no more curse, for Jerusalem [Gal. 4:26, Heb. 12:22] will dwell in security. (Zech. 14:1-11)

(3.4.15) The Book of Malachi


Malachi 3:1, Behold, I am going to send My messenger, and he will clear the way before Me [that is, John the Baptist, Matt. 11:10ff, Mark 1:2 (Isa. 40:3)]. 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." . . .
2 "But who can endure the day of His coming [see “coming” Section (4.4.3.5)]? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap.
3 "And He will sit as a smelter and purifier of silver [1 Cor. 3:13ff.], and He will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver. . . .
5 "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 [James 1:27], and those who turn aside the alien, and do not fear Me," says the LORD of hosts. (Malachi 3:1-5)

Notice the final admonition from the Old Testament and the corresponding links to the New Testament. Of particular interest was the prophecy concerning Elijah, in Chapter 4, that was fulfilled by John the Baptist, see Section (3.4.15.1) below:

Malachi 4:1, For behold, the day is coming, burning like a furnace; and all the arrogant and every evildoer will be chaff; and the day that is coming will set them ablaze," says the LORD of hosts". . .
2 "But for you who fear My name the sun of righteousness [Jesus] will rise with healing in its wings; and you will go forth and skip about like calves from the stall. 3 "And you will tread down the wicked, for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day which I am preparing," says the LORD of hosts.
4 "Remember the law of Moses My servant, even the statutes and ordinances which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel [Deut. 28:49-64].
5 "Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the LORD. [See Matt. 3:7-12].
6 "And he will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, (Malachi 4:1-6)

(3.4.15.1) Elijah and John the Baptist

Malachi Chapter 4 provides a profound transition from the Old Testament to the New Testament. This prophecy was fulfilled in John the Baptist. Malachi [4:5] foretold that God would send “Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the LORD”. One of the most interesting facts concerning Elijah was that he did not die [“and Elijah went up by a whirlwind to heaven” (2 Kings 2:11)], thus leaving an eternal connection to the New Covenant.

There is a reference to Elijah in the New Testament at the “transfiguration of Jesus” [Matt. 17:1ff, Mark 9:1ff, Luke 9:28ff], thus fulfilling the literal requirements of Malachi [4:5].

Matt. 17:3 And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them [Apostles], talking with Him.
4 And Peter answered and said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, I will make three tabernacles here, one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah". (Matt. 17:3-4)

In addition, the Spiritual fulfillment of Malachi [4:6, "And he will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers"] was fulfilled in John the Baptist. The facts, that established the Elijah/John the Baptist connection, are found in the following Old and New Testament Scriptures:

Mark 1:6 And John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist, and his diet was locusts and wild honey.

2 Kings 1:8 And they answered him, "He was a hairy man with a leather girdle bound about his loins." And he said, "It is Elijah the Tishbite".

Luke 1:13, But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your petition has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will give him the name John. . . . 15 "For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and he will drink no wine or liquor; and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, while yet in his mother's womb. 16 "And he will turn back many of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God. 17 "And it is he who will go as a forerunner before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, TO TURN THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS BACK TO THE CHILDREN [Mal. 4:6]. . . so as to make ready a people [that is, Jewish Christians] prepared for the Lord." (Luke 1:13-17)

Luke 1:67, And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying:
68 "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people,"
And has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of David. . . .
As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from of old--
Salvation from our enemies, and from the hand of all who hate us;
To show mercy toward our fathers, and to remember His holy covenant,
The oath which He swore to Abraham our father,
"And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go on before the Lord to prepare His ways [Mal. 3:1];
To give to His people the knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins,
Because of the tender mercy of our God, with which the Sunrise from on high shall visit us,
To shine upon those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death [Isa. 9:1ff], Matt. 4:12ff, to guide our feet into the way of peace."
And the child continued to grow, and to become strong in spirit, and he lived in the deserts until the day of his public appearance to Israel. (Luke 1:67-80)

Matt. 11:7, And as these were going away, Jesus began to speak to the multitudes about John, "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? . . .
"This is the one about whom it is written, 'BEHOLD, I SEND MY MESSENGER BEFORE YOUR FACE, WHO WILL PREPARE YOUR WAY BEFORE YOU' [a direct quotation from Malachi 3:1].
"Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not arisen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.
"And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and violent men take it by force.
"And if you care to accept it, he himself is Elijah, who was to come.
(Matt. 11:7-14)

Therefore, the fulfilled prophecies concerning Elijah were, without question, linked to a fulfillment in John the Baptist and to the transfiguration. These prophecies provide the spiritual connection to the New Covenant and to Jesus, Himself. It is only logical to conclude that the "great and terrible day of the Lord" (Mal. 4:5, Matt. 3:7, and Matt. 3: 10, "the axe is already laid at the root of the trees) was associated with the time definite impending judgment of the Jews by God at the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

A possible solution, to shed light on the correct timing of the "mysterious coming of the Lord", might also be found by the comparison of the story told by Jesus concerning the prophecies of the "coming of Elijah" [Malachi 4:4-6] being fulfilled in John the Baptist [Matt. 11:13-14 and 17:12-13].

If the Jews had known the Scriptures and had listened to the Messiah, they would have understood the significance of the coming of Elijah being fulfilled in the person of
John the Baptist. The great and terrible day of the Lord was a prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem and the evil Jews:

Matt. 3:7, But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?
8 "Therefore bring forth fruit in keeping with repentance;
9 and do not suppose that you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father'; for I say to you, that God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham.
10 "And the axe is already laid at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. [Another time-definite prophecy to be fulfilled during the war with the Romans].
11 "As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit [on Pentecost] and fire [at the destruction of Jerusalem, and ultimately in hell].
12 "And His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clear His threshing floor; and He will gather His wheat into the barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire [in hell]." (Matt. 3:7-12)

This comparison provided the key to the understanding of the Lord’s coming in Matthew 16:27-28. Like the coming of Elijah, the Roman clergy failed to perceive the nature of the Lord’s coming, from the Old Testament prophecies. Once again, the interpretations of the time-definite Old and New Testament prophecies were altered by a mind-set that pushed the fulfillment of these things into the future. Thus out of sequence, the prophecies came to reflect obscure and conflicting meanings that caused great fear for generations, and the stigma of “millennium fever” even today.

It is important to keep in mind at the end of the review of the Old Testament Scriptures to determine if there is more evidence for the fulfillment of the prophecies in the Book of Revelation by A.D. 70 or during the reign of Domitian in the A.D. 90s.

(3.6) The New Testament Scriptures

The previous section identified and discussed some of the most important Old Testament core prophecies that were linked directly to the destruction of Jerusalem in both 586 B.C. by the Babylonians and again in A.D. 70 by the Romans. On both occasions, the Lord “came in judgment against Israel” [see Dan. 7:13-14, Zech. 14:5].

In addition, this chapter identifies and discusses how the New Testament prophecies follow the same “golden thread” woven through the Old Testament. Some of the Old Testament prophecies were fulfilled in various 1st Century historical events, and some may yet require a future fulfillment. However, the continuing emphasis of this study is to identify those prophecies that were fulfilled in A.D. 70 during the Jewish War.

It is very important to remember, that both Pentecost A.D. 30, and the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, were both historical events that occurred well within the natural
lifetimes of that “wicked or eyewitness generation” [Matt. 16:27-28]. A future event called, “the end of time” or the “end of the literal world” certainly was not within the life expectancy of the “eyewitness generation”.

**The 40 years period, similar to a corresponding period in the time of Moses [see the generation of unbelief, Section (2.3.1)], from about A.D. 30 to A.D. 70 was a time of transition from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant.** The book of Hebrews helps provide more historical information to support this view. McClintock and Strong [1981, (Vol. IV), p. 147] place the writing of the Book of Hebrews after Paul’s two year imprisonment [Acts 28:30] about A.D. 63-65.

In addition, Jesus, Himself, declared other prerequisites that had to transpire prior to His “coming” [that is, at the destruction of Jerusalem]. Such things as, “the **falling away**” [Matt. 24:10], “the **time of lawlessness**” [Matt. 24:12, 2 Thess. 2:1], “the **Gospel preached to the whole world**” [Matt. 24:14, Col. 1:23], “the **abomination of desolation**” or “Jerusalem being surrounded by armies” [Matt. 24:15, Luke 21:20], “the **great tribulation**” or “days of vengeance” [Matt. 24:21, Luke 21:22, Rev. 7:14], and “the times of the Gentiles” or “partial hardening” [Luke 21:24, Rom. 11:25ff], all had to transpire first.

Furthermore, Jesus declared; "Truly I say to you, **this generation will not pass away until all these things take place**. 35 Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words shall not pass away” [Matt. 24:33-34 (Mark 13:30-31, Luke 21:31-33)].

The chronology of the events in the New Testament, and the dating of the various books contained therein will always be the subject of a great deal of controversy and debate. However, as a point of general reference, the chronology in Table 1 is taken from a discussion of the Book of Acts by McClintock and Strong (1981, Vol. I, p. 59).

Table 1. Chronology of New Testament Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 30.</td>
<td>The conversion of Paul</td>
<td>Acts 9:1-21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 31.</td>
<td>Matthew written in Hebrew</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 32.</td>
<td>Cornelius converted</td>
<td>Acts 10 and 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 34.</td>
<td>Church at Antioch founded</td>
<td>Acts 11:19-26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 44.</td>
<td>James killed, Peter imprisoned</td>
<td>Acts 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 44.</td>
<td>Paul’s 1st missionary journey</td>
<td>Acts 13 and 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 47.</td>
<td>Paul’s 2nd visit to Jerusalem</td>
<td>Acts 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 49.</td>
<td>1st Thessalonians written</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 50.</td>
<td>2nd Thessalonians written</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 51.</td>
<td>Galatians written</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 54.</td>
<td>1st Corinthians written</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 54.</td>
<td>2nd Corinthians written</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 55.</td>
<td>Romans written</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A.D. 56. Luke written
A.D. 57. Ephesians written
A.D. 57. Colossians written
A.D. 57. Philemon written
A.D. 57. Philippians written
A.D. 58. Hebrews written
A.D. 58. Acts written
A.D. 62. James written
A.D. 62. 1st Timothy written
A.D. 63. Titus written
A.D. 64. Paul’s 2nd imprisonment in Rome
A.D. 64. 2nd Timothy written
A.D. 64. 1st Peter written
A.D. 65. 2nd Peter written
A.D. 65. Mark written
A.D. 66. Jude written
A.D. 90. Gospel of John written
A.D. 92. 1st John written
A.D. 92. 2nd John written
A.D. 92. 3rd John written
A.D. 96. Revelation written

Table 1. (McClintock and Strong, 1981, Vol. I, p. 59)

From this point on in this study, New Testament references, which provide some orientation or evidence of the three events in question [they are, “Pentecost A.D. 30”, “the destruction of the Temple in A.D. 70”, and “the end of the world”], are identified and discussed. The New Testament books are discussed in the order in which they are listed in the modern “Christian Bible”.

(3.5.1) The Book of Matthew

Matthew Chapter 10 is obviously a prophecy that follows the chronology of the Book of Acts. It extends beyond Pentecost A.D. 30, but it had to be fulfilled before all of the people in that “eyewitness generation” died. The prophecies concerning the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans were yet future events:

Matt. 10:16, Behold, I send you [Apostles and especially Paul] out as sheep in the midst of wolves; therefore be shrewd as serpents, and innocent as doves.
17 "But beware of men; for they will deliver you up to the courts, and scourge you in their synagogues; [after Pentecost, Acts 8:1]
18 and you shall even be brought before governors and kings for My sake [Paul, Acts 9:15, 25:12ff, after Pentecost], as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. . . .
20 "It is not you who speak, but it is the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.
21 "And brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents, and cause them to be put to death. . . .
23 "But whenever they persecute you in this city, flee to the next; for truly I say to you, you shall not finish going through the cities of Israel, until the Son of Man [Matt. 16:27-28] comes [only A.D. 70 fits this criteria]. (Matt. 10:16-23)

Consider this important discussion from Matthew [11:1-14], concerning the connection between Elijah and John the Baptist [see the discussion in Section (3.4.15.1)].

Jesus exclusively taught the “lost sheep from the house of Israel” [Matt. 15:24], except for the Canaanite woman [Matt. 15:21-24]. It was only after about A.D. 44 [Acts 10:1ff], that the Gentiles were added to the Church. However, the Gentiles did have a place in God’s eternal plan:

Matt. 12:17, In order that what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, might be fulfilled, saying,
18 "BEHOLD, MY SERVANT WHOM I HAVE CHOSEN; MY BELOVED IN WHOM MY SOUL is WELL-PLEASED; I WILL PUT MY SPIRIT UPON HIM, AND HE SHALL PROCLAIM JUSTICE TO THE GENTILES.
19 "HE WILL NOT QUARREL, NOR CRY OUT; NOR WILL ANYONE HEAR HIS VOICE IN THE STREETS.
20 "A BATTERED REED HE WILL NOT BREAK OFF, AND A SMOLDERING WICK HE WILL NOT PUT OUT, UNTIL HE LEADS JUSTICE TO VICTORY.
21 "AND IN HIS NAME THE GENTILES WILL HOPE [see, Isa, 42:1ff]”.
(Matt. 12:17-21)

The next passage is one of the most important Scriptures in support of this study. The words of Jesus are consistent with the Old Testament prophecies [Isa. 40:10, Dan. 7:13-14, Zech. 14:5] and clearly reflect a fulfillment at A.D. 70. Some of the disciples would even still be alive [John 21:22, 1 Cor. 15:6, 1 Thess. 4:15-17]. See the comments on Matthew 25:31ff:

Matt. 16:27, For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and WILL THEN RECOMPENSE EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS [Isa. 40:10].
28 "Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who shall not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."
(Matt.16:27-28)

The “regeneration” and the “period of restoration of all things” [Matt. 19:28, Acts 3:21] certainly reflected the time when the Old Covenant was to end and the New Covenant would begin [Lam. 2:9, Heb. 8:1-13]. The change would result when the Temple was destroyed [Heb. 9:8ff] in A.D. 70 [Dan. 9:24-27]. See the comments on Matthew [25:31ff]. Note in the next passage that the “regeneration” is tied to “sitting on Jesus’ throne”:

Matt. 19:28, 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
In Chapter 21, there are powerful symbolic implications concerning the withering fig tree and the vineyard. Both fittingly indicate the fall of Israel [also see Isa. 5:1-7 (Matt. 21:33ff) and Rom. 11:17ff and the grafting in of the Gentiles]:

Matt. 21:19, And seeing a lone fig tree by the road, He came to it, and found nothing on it except leaves only; and He said to it, "No longer shall there ever be any fruit from you." And at once the fig tree withered. [See Dan. 4:10ff, like Nebuchadnezzar, the tree representing Israel would perish. John the Baptist said, "the axe is already laid at the root of the trees", Matt. 3:10].
20 And seeing this, the disciples marveled, saying, "How did the fig tree wither at once?" (Matt. 21:18-20)

Matt. 21:33, 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 [Isa. 5:1-7], and rented it out to vine-growers, and went on a journey.
34 "And when the harvest time approached [see “the harvest and the end of the age”, (2.3.5)] he sent his slaves to the vine-growers to receive his produce. . . .
37 "But afterward he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.'
38 "But when the vine-growers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him [the Jews crucified Jesus], and seize his inheritance.'
39 "And they took him, and threw him out of the vineyard, and killed [crucified] him.
40 "Therefore when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vine-growers?"
41 They said to Him, "He will bring those wretches to a wretched end, and will rent out the vineyard to other vine-growers [to Gentiles], who will pay him the Top proceeds at the proper seasons."
42 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' [Psa. 118:22]?
43 "Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you [Jews], and be given to a nation [the Gentiles] producing the fruit of it. [See 1 Peter 2:7ff]. (Matt. 21:33-43)

Chapter 22 is another clear reference to the Jews who killed the Prophets and Jesus.

Matt. 22:1, And Jesus answered and spoke to them again in parables, saying,
2 "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king, who gave a wedding feast for his son. [See Rev. 19:7ff, marriage of the Lamb].
3 "And he sent out his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding feast, and they were unwilling to come. . . .
7 "But the king was enraged and sent his armies, and destroyed those [Jewish] murderers, and set their city [Jerusalem] on fire [Dan. 9:26, Rev. 11:8].
8 "Then he said to his slaves, 'The wedding [marriage of the Lamb, Rev. 19:7ff] is ready, but those [Jews] who were invited were not worthy. . . .
13 "Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into the outer darkness; in that place [hell] there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' " (Matt. 22:1-13)

Chapter 23 was spoken to the Jews of the generation living at that time. It preceded the prophecy in Matthew Chapter 24. Note that the reference to “lawlessness” [2 Thess. 2:3-7] was against the living Jews; [“the axe is already (the process had begun) at the root of the trees,” Matt. 23:28-37]:

Matt. 23:28, Even so you too outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness [Matt. 24:12, 2 Thess. 2:3,7].
29 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! . . .
31 "Consequently you bear witness against yourselves, that you [Jews] are sons of those who murdered the prophets.
32 "Fill up then the measure of the guilt of your fathers.
33 "You serpents, you brood of vipers [John the Baptist stated, “the wrath to come”, Matt. 3:7, “the axe is already at the root of the trees, Matt. 3:10, “He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire”, Matt. 3:12], how shall you escape the sentence of hell?
34 "Therefore, behold, I am sending you prophets and wise men and scribes; some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city, [Acts 8:2]. . . .
36 "Truly I say to you, all these things shall come upon this generation [Matt. 24:34, Luke 21:32].
37 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets [Luke 13:34-35, Rev. 18:24] and stones those who are sent to her! . . .
38 "Behold, your house is being left to you desolate! (Matt. 23:28-37)

Chapter 24: See Section (4.2) for a more detailed parallel study of Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21.

In the next passage from Chapter 25, observe how Matthew previously linked the three passages [Matt. 16:27-28, 19:28, and 25:31-34] together. In order for all three inter-linked passages to be found true as written, only a fulfillment at the destruction of Jerusalem satisfies the time-definite aspects of them all:

Matt. 25:31, But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him [Matt. 16:27-28], then He will sit on His glorious throne [Matt. 19:28, also see Dan 7:13-14, Rev. 11:15, 12:10, Note! This can not be either Pentecost A.D. 30 or in the future, if these Scriptures are to be taken at face value].
32 "And all the **nations will be gathered** [see Section (3.1.4), Joel 3:1-2, Zech. 12:1-3, 14:1-9] before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats [see Ezek. 34:17]; 33 and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. 34 "Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, **inherit the kingdom** [Dan. 7:22, Luke 21:31] prepared for you from the foundation of the world. (Matt. 25:31-34)

**The preaching of the Gospel to the whole world** [Matt. 24:14] was one of the **conditions that had to be met prior to the Lord’s coming.** And, Paul declared that he had accomplished it [Rom. 15:19 (Luke 24:47), Col. 1:23]:

Matt. 28:18, **All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.**  
19 "Go therefore and **make disciples of all the [Gentile] nations,** baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, [See Mark 16:16ff]  
20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the **end of the [Jewish] age**" [see the harvest and the end of the age, Section (2.3.5)]. (Matt. 28:18-20)

(3.5.2) The Book of Mark

**Mark Chapter 1** places the beginning of Jesus’ ministry in Galilee after John the Baptist was taken into custody:

Mark 1:14, **And after John had been taken into custody,** Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God,  
15 and saying, "**The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand;** repent and believe in the gospel." (Mark 1:14-15)

In **Chapter 2**, Jesus is identified as the bridegroom [see marriage of the Lamb, Rev. 19:7ff]:

Mark 2:19, **And Jesus said to them, "While the bridegroom is with them, the attendants of the bridegroom do not fast,** do they? So long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast.  
20 "But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in that day.

Compare the context of Mark [8:34 to 9:13] to Matthew [16:13 to 17:13]. The context certainly does not fit Pentecost A.D. 30:

Mark 8:34, **And He summoned the multitude with His disciples,** and said to them, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me..."
38 "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." [See Matt. 16:27].

Mark 9:1 And He was saying to them, "Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who shall not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power." (Mark 8:34-9:1)

Author’s Note. See Dan. 7:13-14 and Zech. 14:5 and then compare these passages with Matt. 16:28 which states, “until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom”. Therefore, the phrase “the kingdom of God after it has come with power” must be equated to “until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom”. Note! This can not be Pentecost A.D. 30. What came on Pentecost was the “down payment” [see 1 Cor. 13:10-13, 2 Cor. 1:22, Eph. 1:14] of the Holy Spirit Whom Jesus had sent (see John 14:16, 26, 15:26, 16:7, 13, 21:22). Many of the “Restoration Preachers” failed to reconcile this point.

Mark 9:2 (continued) And six days later, Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John, and brought them up to a high mountain by themselves. And He was transfigured before them; . . .

5 And Peter answered and said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles, one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah."

6 For he did not know what to answer; for they became terrified.

7 Then a cloud formed [see Section (4.4.3.5], overshadowing them, and a voice came out of the cloud, "This is My beloved Son, listen to Him!" . . .

11 And they asked Him, saying, "Why is it that the scribes say that Elijah must come first?"

12 And He said to them, "Elijah [Malachi 4:5, Matt. 11:14 is fulfilled in John the Baptist, see Section (3.4.15.1)] does first come and restore [the “regeneration”, Matt. 19:28, the “renewal”, Col. 3:10-11, see the commentary on Acts Chapter 3] all things. . .

13 "But I say to you, that Elijah has indeed come, and they did to him whatever they wished, just as it is written of him." (Mark 8:34-9:13)

Mark [9:42ff] is another passage that reflects the ultimate destiny of mankind in either heaven or hell [gehenna] after death.

Mark 9:47, And if your eye causes you to stumble, cast it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes, to be cast into hell, 48 where THEIR WORM DOES NOT DIE, AND THE FIRE IS NOT QUENCHED [Isa. 66:24].

49 "For everyone will be salted with fire. (Mark 9:47-49)

Mark Chapter 13, see Section (4.2) for a more detailed parallel study of Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21.
(3.5.3) The Book of Luke

With regard to Luke [4:16-21], review the comments on Isaiah Chapter 61. The “day of vengeance” conforms to the “tribulation” or “days of vengeance” in Matthew [24:21] and Luke [21:22] respectively:

Luke 4:16, And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read.
17 And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book, and found the place where it was written,
18 "THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES, AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE DOWNTRODDEN,
19 TO PROCLAIM THE FAVORABLE YEAR OF THE LORD." [Isa 61:1-2]
20 And He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed upon Him.
21 And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." (Luke 4:16-21)

After the struggle on earth, the final reward will be in heaven:

Luke 10:17, And the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name."
18 And He said to them, "I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning. [See Zech. 3:1ff, Eph. 6:12, Rev. 12:10]
19 "Behold, I have given you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall injure you.
20 "Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven [Heb. 12:23]". (Luke 10:17-20)

The studies of the resurrection of the dead and of an ultimate final judgment at the end of this literal world are very deep and difficult subjects that are well beyond the scope of this work [see Section (8.2)]. The focus of this study is to provide proof that, for the early Christians, the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans was a very important 1st Century event. It can be clearly seen in this next passage that Jesus was chastising “that wicked generation” for their unbelief.

Since the judgment of God has always been a continuing process from the beginning, the circumstances and the need for a final judgment will always be hotly debated. However, many of the Scriptures concerning the destruction of Jerusalem in both 586 B.C. and in A.D. 70 have been incorrectly applied to a final judgment. Furthermore, there are too many Scriptures and prophecies that support the fact that the evil Jews of that generation were to be punished in the same way as they were in the previous destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.:
Luke 11:29, He began to say, "This generation is a wicked generation; it seeks for a sign, and yet no sign shall be given to it but the sign of Jonah.
30 "For just as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so shall the Son of Man be to this generation.
31 "The Queen of the South shall rise up with the men of this generation at the judgment and condemn them, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.
32 "The men of Nineveh shall stand up with this generation at the judgment and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, something greater than Jonah is here. . . .
48 "Consequently, you are witnesses and approve the deeds of your fathers; because it was they who killed them, and you build their tombs.
49 "For this reason also the wisdom of God said, 'I will send to them prophets and apostles, and some of them they will kill and some they will persecute,
50 in order that the blood of all the prophets, shed since the foundation of the world, may be charged against this [living] generation,
51 from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who perished between the altar and the house of God; yes, I tell you, it shall be charged against this generation.' (Luke 11:29-51)

In Luke Chapter 12, the unexpected hour of the Lord’s coming was related to the destruction of Jerusalem [see Matt. 24:36, Mark 13:32 (Zech. 12:7). All of these Top references clearly, within the context, relate to the destruction of Jerusalem, also see Acts 1:7].

Luke 12:40, You too, be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour that you do not expect." [See Matt. 24:36, Mark 13:32 (Zech. 12:7)].
41 And Peter said, "Lord, are You addressing this parable to us, or to everyone else as well?" . . .
45 "But if that slave says in his heart, 'My master will be a long time in coming,'
and begins to beat the slaves, both men and women, and to eat and drink and get drunk;
46 the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him, and
at an hour he does not know, and will cut him in pieces [by the Romans], and
assign him a place with the unbelievers [in hell]. . . .
49 "I have come to cast fire upon the earth [Heb. 1:7, Rev. 16:1]; and how I wish it were already kindled! . . .
53 "They will be divided, father against son, and son against father; mother against daughter, and daughter against mother; mother-in-law against daughter-in-law, and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law." [See Matt. 10:21, Micah 7:6]. . . .
56 "You hypocrites! You know how to analyze the appearance of the earth and the sky, but why do you not analyze this present time? (Luke 12:40-56)

Luke Chapter 13 obviously relates to the heavenly kingdom after death:
Luke 13:26, Then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets';
27 and He will say, 'I tell you, I do not know where you are from; DEPART FROM ME, ALL YOU EVILDOERS.'
28 "There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth there when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but yourselves being cast out.
29 "And they will come from east and west, and from north and south, and will recline at the table in the kingdom of God. [See Matt. 8:11-12, 25:31-41. Note the context] . . .
33 "Nevertheless I must journey on today and tomorrow and the next day; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem. [See Rev. 18:24].
34 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, just as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not have it!
35 "Behold, your house is left to you desolate; and I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, 'BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!'" [See Psalms 118:22-26]. (Luke 13:26-35)

Luke Chapter 16 is another testimony of the importance of understanding the Law and the Prophets. It is important to note that John the Baptist preached concerning the Kingdom of God. Also note that already "everyone is forcing his way into it". Consequently, John was speaking of a broader eternal kingdom of God and not just the Church. John the Baptist was part of the Kingdom of God, but John was never in the Church.

Therefore, it is very important to examine the context in which the terms “Kingdom of God” and the “Church” are used. In this, and other instances in the New Testament, the “Church” can not always be equated with the “Eternal Kingdom of God”. The various different kingdoms are discussed in greater detail in Section (5.1). Note carefully the following passage. The Jews were forcing their way into this Kingdom” three years before the Church was to be established.

Luke 16:16, The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John; since then the gospel of the kingdom of God is preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it.
17 "But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one stroke of a letter of the Law to fail. [Even after Pentecost, there were still Old Testament prophecies to be fulfilled].

Luke Chapter 17 is one of the most overlooked Scriptures in the whole New Testament concerning the “Kingdom of God”. Jesus answered the questions “when” [Luke 17:20] and “where” [Luke 17:37] the “Kingdom of God” was coming. Both answers were linked to the destruction of Jerusalem. Please follow the references listed in the text below:
Luke 17:20, Now having been questioned by the Pharisees as to when the kingdom of God was coming [Dan, 7:22, Luke 21:31], He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed; nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or, 'There it is!' For behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst."... 
24 "For just as the lightning, when it flashes out of one part of the sky, shines to the other part of the sky, so will the Son of Man be in His day [Matt. 16:27-28].
25 "But first He must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation.
26 "And just as it happened in the days of Noah, so it shall be also in the days of the Son of Man:
27 they were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. [See Matt. 24:39-43, Dan. 9:26]...
30 "It will be just the same on the day that the Son of Man is revealed [John 14:21-22, Heb. 9:28]... 
37 And answering they said^ to Him, "Where, Lord?" And He said to them, "Where the body is, there also will the vultures [or eagles] be gathered." [See Deut. 28:49, Hos. 8:1, Matt. 24:28]. (Luke 17:20-37)

Luke Chapter 19 is one of the best texts to defend the position that Jesus came in His kingdom [Matt. 16:27-28] at the destruction of Jerusalem. Again, follow the Top references in the text below:

Luke 19:11, And while they were listening to these things, He went on to tell a parable, because He was near Jerusalem, and they supposed that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately [see Acts 1:3-8, the Holy Spirit would come “not many days from now” and John (16:7, "But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper shall not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you"). Jesus, Himself, had no intentions of coming at Pentecost A.D. 30, but He was going to send the Holy Spirit].
12 He said therefore, "A certain nobleman went to a distant country to receive a kingdom for himself, and then return. [Jesus would go to heaven to receive the Kingdom and then He would return (see Dan. 7:13-14)].
13 "And he called ten of his slaves, and gave them ten minas, and said to them, 'Do business with this until I come back.'
14 "But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We [Jews] do not want this man to reign over us.'
15 "And it came about that when he returned, after receiving the kingdom, he ordered that these slaves, to whom he had given the money, be called to him in order that he might know what business they had done. . . .
27 "But these enemies [Jews] of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here [to Jerusalem] and slay them in my presence [at A.D. 70]."... 
41 And when He approached, He saw the city [Jerusalem] and wept over it, 42 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."
43 "For the days shall come upon you when your enemies [the Romans] will throw up a bank [Deut. 28:53] before you, and surround you, and hem you in on every side,
44 and will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another [Matt. 24:2], because you did not recognize the time of your visitation." (Luke 19:11-44)

Chapter 21: See Section (4.2) for a more detailed parallel study of Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21.

Luke Chapter 23 was another prophecy against the Jews in Jerusalem:

Luke 23:27, And there were following Him a great multitude of the people, and of women who were mourning and lamenting Him.
28 But Jesus turning to them said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, stop weeping for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.
29 "For behold, the days are coming when they will say, 'Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never nursed.'
30 "Then they will begin TO SAY TO THE MOUNTAINS, 'FALL ON US,' AND TO THE HILLS, 'COVER US' [Hosea 10:8, Rev. 6:15-16].
31 "For if they do these things in the green tree, what will happen in the dry?" (Luke 23:27-31)

Luke Chapter 24 again reinforces the need to understand the Law and the Prophets:

Luke 24:44, 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." [See Acts 3:24, Rev 10:7].
45 Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,
46 and He said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day;
47 and that repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. [The Gospel, see Ezek. 47:1ff, Joel 3:18, John 7:38, the end of the age will come, Matt. 24:14, Col. 1:23]. (Luke 24:44-47)

(3.5.4) The Book of John

Allegro (1964, pp. 142-143) points out that John’s profuse teachings, contrasting light with darkness, were very similar to the Jewish sectarian teachings found in the “Dead Sea Scrolls”. Consequently, it would not to be difficult to conclude that John, himself, may have formerly been an Essene.

The teachings, of John concerning death [that is, Spiritual and literal death] in Chapter 5, provide some foundation by which Paul’s teaching in First Corinthians Chapter 15 can be understood.

John Chapter 11 is fascinating. Caiaphas, the High Priest, made this prophecy concerning Jesus and the “gathering of the scattered Israel” [see Section (3.1.3)]:

John 11:48, If we let Him go on like this, all men will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation." [See Dan. 7:21ff, 9:24-27].

49 But a certain one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all, nor do you take into account that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation should not perish."

51 Now this he did not say on his own initiative; but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation,

52 and not for the nation only, but that He might also gather together into one the children of God who are scattered abroad. [See Matt. 24:21, also see Section (3.1.3) the gathering of God’s people]. (John 11:48-52)

In John Chapter 12, notice the many references to the Old Testament cited in the text and the connection to other New Testament Scriptures:

John 12:12, On the next day the great multitude who had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, [just before He was crucified]

13 took the branches of the palm trees, and went out to meet Him, and began to cry out, "Hosanna! BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD [Psalms 118:25], even the King of Israel."

14 And Jesus, finding a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written,

15 "FEAR NOT, DAUGHTER OF ZION; BEHOLD, YOUR KING IS COMING, SEATED ON A DONKEY’S COLT." [Zech. 9:9]

16 These things His disciples did not understand at the first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written of Him, and that they had done these things to Him.

17 And so the multitude who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of the tomb, and raised him from the dead, were bearing Him witness, . . .

20 Now there were certain Greeks among those who were going up to worship at the feast;

21 these therefore came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and began to ask him, saying, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus."

22 Philip came and told Andrew; Andrew and Philip came, and they told Jesus.

23 And Jesus answered them, saying, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. [That is, His resurrection after the crucifixion]."

24 "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies [compare with 1 Cor. 15:35ff], it remains by itself alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.

25 "He who loves his life loses it; and he who hates his life in this world shall keep it to life eternal. . . .

31 "Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world shall be cast out.
"And I, if I be lifted up [on the cross and then His resurrection] from the earth, will draw all men to Myself."

But He was saying this to indicate the kind of death by which He was to die. . . .

Jesus therefore said to them, "For a little while longer the light is among you. Walk while you have the light [see 1 John 1:5-7], that darkness may not overtake you; he who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes.

"While you have the light, believe in the light, in order that you may become sons of light." These things Jesus spoke, and He departed and hid Himself from them.

But though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him;

that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke, "LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT? AND TO WHOM HAS THE ARM OF THE LORD BEEN REVEALED?" [Isa. 53:1]

For this cause they could not believe, for Isaiah said again,
"HE HAS BLINDED THEIR EYES, AND HE HARDENED THEIR HEART;
LEST THEY SEE WITH THEIR EYES, AND PERCEIVE WITH THEIR HEART,
AND BE CONVERTED, AND I HEAL THEM." [Note! The “partial Hardening”, Rom. 11:25-32. See the discussion of “The Time of the Gentiles and the Partial Hardening” in Section (2.3.2)].

These things Isaiah said, because he saw His glory, and he spoke of Him. . . .

"I have come as light into the world, that everyone who believes in Me may not remain in darkness.

And if anyone hears My sayings, and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. . . .

"And I know that His commandment is eternal life; therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me." (John 12:12-50)

John Chapters 13 and 14 provide teachings concerning the resurrection and the journey to heaven. Please look carefully at the references cited in the text:

John13:33,  Little children, I am with you a little while longer. You shall seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, I now say to you also, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.'

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

"By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, where are You going?" Jesus answered, "Where I go, you cannot follow Me now; but you shall follow later." [Compare with 1 Cor. 15:23]. (John 13:33-36)

John Chapters 14, 15, and 16 concern the promise of the Holy Spirit:

John 14:1,  Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me.
2 "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. [See the comments on Luke Chapter 19].

3 "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

4 "And you know the way where I am going."

5 Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?"

6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me. [The door of the sheepfold, John 10:6-16]. . . .

15 "And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever;

17 that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you, and will be in you.

18 "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you [later].

19 "After a little while the world will behold Me no more; but you will behold Me; because I live, you shall live also.

20 "In that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.

21 "He who has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me; and he who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him, and will disclose Myself to him."

22 Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, "Lord, what then has happened that You are going to disclose Yourself to us, and not to the world [see Acts 10:40-41]?" . . .

25 "These things I have spoken to you, while abiding with you.

26 "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you [Acts 1:5, 2:17 (Joel 2:28-30)]. (John 14:1-26)

John 15:26, When the Helper comes [at Pentecost, Acts Chapter 2], whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, He will bear witness of Me, . . .

John 16:13, But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. [See 1 Tim. 4:1].

14 "He shall glorify Me; for He shall take of Mine, and shall disclose it to you.

15 "All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said, that He takes of Mine, and will disclose it to you.

16 "A little while, and you will no longer behold Me; and again a little while [Matt. 16:27-28], and you will see Me." [See comments on Luke 19:11ff].

(John 16:13-16)
John Chapter 21 implies that all of the Apostles, except John, would be killed or would die before A.D. 70:

John 21:18, Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were younger, you used to gird yourself, and walk wherever you wished; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will gird you, and bring you where you do not wish to go."
19 Now this He said, signifying by what kind of death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, "Follow Me!"
20 Peter, turning around, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved [John] following them; the one who also had leaned back on His breast at the supper, and said, "Lord, who is the one who betrays You?"
21 Peter therefore seeing him said to Jesus, "Lord, and what about this man [John]?"
22 Jesus said to him, "If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow Me!"
23 This saying therefore went out among the brethren that that disciple would not die; yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but only, "If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you?" (John 21:18-23)

(3.5.5) The Book of Acts

Acts Chapter 1 contains a wealth of information if it is examined carefully and compared with the associated references:

Acts 1:3, To these He also presented Himself alive, after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days, and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God. [Note! From the Passover to Pentecost was 50 (Lev. 23:15-16) days. Jesus died on the Passover (Mark 15:42, Luke 23:54, John 19:14) and He was raised from the dead three days later. He appeared for 40 days after His resurrection or 43 days after the Passover. Thus, from the ascension to Pentecost was about 7 days.].
4 And gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," He said, "you heard of from Me;
5 for John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." [See John 14:16, 26, 15:26, 16:7, 13, 21:22].
6 And so when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?" [The answer was no, see Luke 19:11ff, Jesus must first go to heaven and then return. The Gospel had to be preached to the whole world first (Matt. 24:14, Col. 1:23). The coming of the fullness of the mature kingdom was linked to the destruction of Jerusalem (Dan. 7:22, Luke 21:20,31)].
7 He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority [see Zech 14:7];
but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you [at Pentecost]; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."... [See Col. 1:23]

and they also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven." [See Isa. 40:10, Dan. 7:13-14, Zech. 14:5, Matt. 16:27-28, 24:30, Mark 13:29, Luke 21:27]. (Acts 1:3-11)

Search carefully in Acts Chapter 2, there is no mention of the “Kingdom of Heaven Coming”. However, what did come was the Holy Spirit that Jesus sent [see John 14:16, 26, 15:26, 16:7, 13, 21:22]. The Holy Spirit was a “pledge” or down payment of the “glory” that would follow later [see 1 Cor. 13:10-13, 2 Cor. 1:22, Eph. 1:14]. The “heavenly Church or the New Jerusalem” as the “bride of Christ” [Eph. 5:43] was betrothed at Pentecost A.D. 30. However, the consummation of the marriage of the “heavenly Church or New Jerusalem” [Heb. 12:22-23] more reasonably occurred in A.D. 70 [see, Rev. 19:7, 9, 21:2, 9-10]. In the Christian perspective, it is the “heavenly Jerusalem” that is our “Mother” [Gal. 4:26]:

Acts 2:1. When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. 2 And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent, rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them....

"These men are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only the third hour of the day; but this is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel:

AND IT SHALL BE IN THE LAST DAYS,' God says, 'THAT I WILL POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT UPON ALL MANKIND; AND YOUR SONS AND YOUR DAUGHTERS SHALL PROPHESY, AND YOUR YOUNG MEN SHALL SEE VISIONS, AND YOUR OLD MEN SHALL DREAM DREAMS; EVEN UPON MY BONDSLAVES, BOTH MEN AND WOMEN, I WILL IN THOSE DAYS POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT And they shall prophesy. THE SUN SHALL BE TURNED INTO DARKNESS, AND THE MOON INTO BLOOD, BEFORE THE GREAT AND GLORIOUS DAY OF THE LORD SHALL COME.

Note the connection between Elijah and John the Baptist (Malachi 4:5, Matt. 11:14). “The great and terrible day of the Lord” (Malachi 4:5) was identified by John the Baptist as the destruction of the Jews at A.D. 70 (see Matt. 3:7-12, “the wrath to come”... “the axe is already laid at the root of the trees”... “He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire”)]

24 "And God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power. (Acts 2:1-24)

Acts Chapter 3 provides even more insight into the two advents of Christ. Those things relating to the physical birth, life and suffering of Jesus, on this earth, [Acts 3:18] were fulfilled. This was the first advent. The Second Advent of Christ was connected to the “period of restoration [that is, the regeneration (Matt. 19:28) and the renewal (Col. 3:10-11)] of all things” [Acts 3:21].

Note carefully, the events of Acts Chapter 3 that immediately followed Pentecost. It was the Apostle Peter’s understanding that the “period of restoration”, when Christ would come in His Kingdom (Matt. 16:27-28), was viewed as not yet being fulfilled at that first Pentecost. But it was viewed as being in the future. Peter’s later view of the imminent “coming of the Lord” (Matt. 16:27-28) is similarly reflected in 1 Peter (4:7). However, the “coming of the Lord”, in 2 Peter (3:7-13), has always been interpreted to reflect the end and conflagration of the literal world and not the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. This noticeable change in perspective was the view held by earlier Jewish mystics. This view is recorded in the Book of Enoch.

Furthermore, all of the Prophets, including Moses, from Samuel onward spoke of “the period of restoration”(Acts 3:21). In addition, the Revelation [Rev. 10:7] makes the same testimony. To understand this “mystery” is to understand the Prophets. It is very important for Christians to study and understand the Old Testament. Please follow the cited references in the text below:

Acts 3:13, The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified His servant Jesus, the one whom you delivered up, and disowned in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release Him. . . .
18 "But the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ should suffer, He has thus fulfilled [Isa. Chapter 53].
19 "Repent therefore and return, that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord;
20 and that He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you, [Zech. 14:5, Dan. 7:13-14].
21 whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time.
22 "Moses said, 'THE LORD GOD SHALL RAISE UP FOR YOU A PROPHET LIKE ME FROM YOUR BRETHREN; TO HIM YOU [Jews] SHALL GIVE HEED [Deut, 18:15-20] in everything He says to you. . . .
24 "And likewise, all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and his successors onward, also announced these days.
25 "It is you [Jews] who are the sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, 'AND IN YOUR SEED ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH SHALL BE BLESSED.' [Genesis 22:18]
26 "For you [Jews] first, God raised up His Servant, and sent Him to bless you by turning every one of you from your wicked ways" [see Mal. 4:5-6]. (Acts 3:13-26)
Acts [7:55], ("But being full of the Holy Spirit, he [Stephen] gazed intently into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God").) and Mark [16:19] (Psalms 110:1) provide more Spiritual orientation as to the status of Jesus after Pentecost. The link to Psalms [110:1-4] and the resultant references to other New Testament passages provide additional meaning to the “reign of Christ”, “the day of power”, and the “priesthood after the order of Melchizedek”. Follow the reference in Psalms 110:1-4:

Psa. 110:1, The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at My right hand, Until I make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet" [Matt. 22:44, Acts 2:34, see 1 Cor. 15:23-28, He must reign until the last enemy (death) is abolished].
2 The LORD will stretch forth Thy strong scepter from Zion, saying, "Rule in the midst of Thine enemies."
3 Thy people will volunteer freely in the day of Thy power [there was power (the down payment) at Pentecost (Acts 1:8) and more power and glory (Matt. 24:30) in A.D. 70]; In holy array, from the womb of the dawn. . . .
4 The LORD has sworn and will not change His mind, "Thou art a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek." [See Heb. 7:22ff].

Acts Chapter 9 refers to the call of the Apostle Paul, which paved the way for the massive Gentile acceptance into the kingdom. The “way” or Spiritual roadway first related to John the Baptist, who prepared the “way” in the wilderness [see Isa. 40:3ff (Matt. 3:3ff) and Malachi 3:1 (Matt. 11:10)]. Jesus is the “way the truth and the Life” (John 14:6). Later the concept of the “way” was used to characterize Christianity as the “way of holiness” [see Acts 9:2, 16:17, 18:25-26, 19:9, 23, 24: 14, 22].

Acts 9:1, Now Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest,
2 and asked for letters from him to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, both men and women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.
3 And it came about that as he journeyed, he was approaching Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him; . . .
15 But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he [Paul] is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel;
16 I will show him how much he must suffer for My name's sake." (Acts 9:1-16)

In Acts Chapters 10, 11, and 13:45ff, the prophecies relating to Jesus [Luke 2:30-32 and many others] concerning the addition of Gentiles to the Kingdom of God [Mark 16:15 and others], first began with Cornelius the Roman Centurion. The adding of the Gentiles was a prerequisite for the kingdom coming [see Matt. 24:14, Col. 1:23, also see “The Time of the Gentiles and the Partial Hardening” in Section (2.3.2)]. After the Gentiles were grafted in [Rom. 11:19-28] then [Matt. 21:43], "the kingdom of God would be taken away from you [Jews], and would be given to a nation [Gentiles] producing the fruit of it."
Acts 10:34, And opening his mouth, Peter said: "I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality,
35 but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right, is welcome to Him. . . .
37 you yourselves know the thing which took place throughout all Judea, starting from Galilee, after the baptism which John proclaimed.
38 "You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed by the devil; for God was with Him.
39 "And we are witnesses of all the things He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem. And they also put Him to death by hanging Him on a cross.
40 "God raised Him up on the third day, and granted that He should become visible [see John 14:22],
41 not to all the people, but to witnesses who were chosen beforehand by God, that is, to us, who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead.
42 "And He ordered us to preach to the people, and solemnly to testify that this is the One who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead.
43 "Of Him all the prophets bear witness [Acts 3:24] that through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins."
44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message.
45 And all the circumcised believers who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out upon the Gentiles also.
46 For they were hearing them speaking with tongues and exalting God. Then Peter answered. (Acts 10:34-46)

Acts 11:15, And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, just as He did upon us at the beginning. . . .
18 And 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."
19 So then those who were scattered because of the persecution that arose in connection with Stephen made their way to Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except to Jews alone.
20 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. (Acts 11:15-20) Acts 13:45, But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy, and began contradicting the things spoken by Paul, and were blaspheming.
46 And Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, "It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first; since you repudiate it, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles.
47 "For thus the Lord has commanded us, 'I HAVE PLACED YOU AS A LIGHT FOR THE GENTILES, THAT YOU SHOULD BRING SALVATION TO THE END OF THE EARTH'" [Isa. 49:6].
48 And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.
49 And the word of the Lord was being spread through the whole region.  
(Acts 13:45-48)

The careful study of Acts Chapter 15 is very important to the understanding of the process that transpired during the 40 years period between Pentecost A.D. 30 and the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Note! There was a distinct difference in the way that Jewish and Gentile Christians first worshipped God. The Jews still followed the Law of Moses for many years [see “Christian Worship in the Early Church”, Section (6.2.1)].

Acts 15:12, And they were listening to Barnabas and Paul as they were relating what signs and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles.
13 And after they had stopped speaking, James answered, saying, "Brethren, listen to me.
14 "Simeon has related how God first concerned Himself about taking from among the Gentiles a people for His name. [See Matt. 16:19, Peter was given the “keys to the kingdom of heaven”].
15 "And with this the words of the Prophets agree, just as it is written,
16 'AFTER THESE THINGS I will return, AND I WILL REBUILD THE TABERNACLE OF DAVID WHICH HAS FALLEN, AND I WILL REBUILD ITS RUINS, AND I WILL RESTORE IT, [Note carefully! The reference, here quoted from Amos, relates to the restoring of the kingdom to Israel (see Acts 1:6). This event occurred well after Pentecost A.D. 30].
17 IN ORDER THAT THE REST OF MANKIND MAY SEEK THE LORD [Gentiles], AND ALL THE GENTILES WHO ARE CALLED BY MY NAME,'
18 SAYS THE LORD, WHO MAKES THESE THINGS KNOWN FROM OF OLD [Amos 9:11ff].
19 "Therefore it is my judgment that we do not trouble those who are turning to God from among the Gentiles,
20 but that we write to them that they abstain from things contaminated by idols and from fornication and from what is strangled and from blood (Gen. 9:4, Lev. 17:12). [Note! This was all that had been bound on the Gentile Christians from the Law of Moses].
21 "For Moses from ancient generations has in every city those who preach him, since he is [still] read in the synagogues every Sabbath." (Acts 15:12-21)

(3.5.6) The Book of Romans

Chapter 1 is another reference to the Gentiles:

Rom 1:3, . . . concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh,
4 who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord,
5 through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles, for His name's sake. (Rom 1:1-5)
Chapter 2 logically relates to the destruction of Jerusalem as the “day of wrath and revelation”:

Rom. 2:5, But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath [Matt. 3:7] and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,
6 who WILL RENDER TO EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS: [Isa. 40:10, Matt. 16:27],
7 to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life;
8 but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation.
9 There will be tribulation and distress [Matt. 24:21, Luke 21:22, Rev. 7:14] for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek, . . .
12 For all who have sinned without the Law will also perish without the Law; and all who have sinned under the Law will be judged by the Law; . . .
15 in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts [Heb. 8:10 (Jer. 31:33)], their conscience bearing witness, and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them,
16 on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus. (Rom. 2:5-16)

Chapter 8 provides another valuable reference for this study. The “glory to be revealed” was still in the future, but it was anticipated as being near. Suffering [trials (James 1:2) and the “present distress” (1 Cor. 7:26ff)] was already being experienced:

Rom. 8:18, For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. . . .
22 For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.
23 And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits [see Section (2.3.3)] of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.
24 For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one also hope for what he sees?
25 But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it. (Rom. 8:18-25)

In Chapter 9 follow the references in the text to the Gentiles from the Old Testament:

Rom. 9:20, On the contrary, who are you, O man, who answers back to God? The thing molded will not say to the molder, "Why did you make me like this," will it?
21 Or does not the potter have a right over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for honorable use, and another for common use?
22 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?

23 And He did so in order that He **might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy**, which He prepared beforehand for glory,

24 even us [Christians], whom He also called, not from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles.

25 As He says also in **Hosea**, "I WILL CALL THOSE WHO WERE NOT MY PEOPLE, 'MY PEOPLE,' AND HER WHO WAS NOT BELOVED, 'BELOVED.'"

26 "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" [Hosea 2:23].

27 And **Isaiah** cries out concerning Israel, "THOUGH THE NUMBER OF THE SONS OF ISRAEL BE AS THE SAND OF THE SEA, IT IS THE REMNANT [see the remnant, Section (2.3.4)] THAT WILL BE SAVED [Isa. 10:22];

28 FOR THE LORD WILL EXECUTE HIS WORD UPON THE EARTH, **Top** THOROUGHLY AND QUICKLY."

29 And just as **Isaiah** foretold, "EXCEPT THE LORD OF SABAOTH HAD LEFT TO US A POSTERITY, WE WOULD HAVE BECOME AS SODOM, AND WOULD HAVE RESEMBLED GOMORRAH." [Isa. 1:9]. . .

33 just as it is written, "BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE, AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED" [Isa. 8:14, 1 Peter 2:8]. (Rom. 9:20-33)

In **Chapter 11** the importance of the **Church as the “remnant of Israel”** provides insight as to how God would destroy the wicked Jews and take away their kingdom, yet still include the Gentiles as those grafted into the kingdom [that is, well after Pentecost A.D. 30]:

**Rom. 11:2, God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew.** Or do you not know what the Scripture says in the passage about **Elijah**, how he pleads with God against Israel?

3 "Lord, THEY HAVE KILLED THY PROPHETS, THEY HAVE TORN DOWN THINE ALTARS, AND I ALONE AM LEFT, AND THEY ARE SEEKING MY LIFE."

4 But what is the divine response to him? "I HAVE KEPT for Myself SEVEN THOUSAND MEN WHO HAVE NOT BOWED THE KNEE TO BAAL." [1 Kings 19:18]

5 **In the same way then, there has also come to be at the present time a remnant** [See Section (2.3.4)] according to God's gracious choice.

6 But if it is **by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works**, otherwise grace is no longer grace.

7 What then? That which Israel is seeking for, it has not obtained, but those who were chosen obtained it, and the **rest were hardened**;

8 just as it is written, "GOD GAVE THEM A SPIRIT OF STUPOR, EYES TO SEE NOT AND EARS TO HEAR NOT, DOWN TO THIS VERY DAY." [ Isa. 29:10]
9 And David says, "LET THEIR TABLE BECOME A SNARE AND A TRAP, AND A STUMBLING BLOCK AND A RETRIBUTION TO THEM.
10 "LET THEIR EYES BE DARKENED TO SEE NOT, AND BEND THEIR BACKS FOREVER" [Psa. 69:23].
11 I say then, they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? May it never be! But by their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make them jealous.
12 Now if their transgression be riches for the world and their failure be riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their fulfillment be!
13 But I am speaking to you who are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, . . .
15 For if their rejection be the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead [Ezek. 37:9ff]? . . .
19 You will say then, "Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in."
20 Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. Do not be conceited, but fear;
21 for if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will He spare you. . . .
25 For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery, lest you be wise in your own estimation, that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles has come in [see “The Time of the Gentiles and the Partial Hardening”, Section (2.3.2), Luke 21:24, Rev. 11:2];
26 and thus all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, "THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB."
27 "AND THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM, WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS." [Note! The time that the Covenants had changed was A.D. 70 (Lam. 2:9, Heb. 8:1-13 “ready to disappear”) and not Pentecost A.D. 30. Furthermore, in the historical perspective, the “Holy Place” (Heb. 9:2,8) was to be destroyed soon by the Romans (Dan. 9:24-27, 12:1-11)]. (Rom. 11:1-27)

In Chapter 13, a day of salvation was at hand, or near:

Rom. 13:11, And this do, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed. 12 The night is almost gone, and the day is at hand. Let us therefore lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.

(3.5.7) The Book of First Corinthians

Chapter 7 is also linked to other New Testament passages. Particularly note the “present distress”:

1 Cor. 7:26, I think then that this is good in view of the present distress, that it is good for a man to remain as he is . . .
29 But this I say, brethren, the time has been shortened [see Matt. 24:22], so that from now on those who have wives should be as though they had none; . . .
31 . . . the form of this world is passing away. [See 1 John 2:17-18, “[the] last hour”]. (1 Cor. 7:26 31)
In Chapter 10, note the reference to “the ends of the ages” [see Section (2.3.5)]:

1 Cor. 10:1, For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud [Exod. 14:21], and all passed through the sea; . . .
4 and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ. [See Deut. 32:4, 15, 18, 30, Psalm 78:12-20, John 7:37-39]. . . .
11 Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our [living Christians] instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages [Dan. 12:13] have come.” (1 Cor. 10:1-11)

There are many different arguments, to be made, concerning “the partial will be done away” in Chapter 13. This author is inclined to believe that Paul was referring to the Holy Spirit that was outpoured at Pentecost A.D. 30. This outpouring was the down payment or the pledge [2 Cor. 1:22, 5:5, Eph. 1:14] of the New Covenant. This miraculous measure of the Holy Spirit was to cease when the fullness of the kingdom came in A.D. 70. One can observe from history that this was also about the time that the miraculous Spiritual gifts ended:

1 Cor. 13:9, For we know in part, and we prophesy in part;
  10 but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away. . . .
12 For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part,
  but then I shall know fully just as I also have been fully known.

First Corinthians Chapter 15 is one of the most difficult passages in the entire Bible to either understand or to interpret. Chapter 15 does identify a sequence of events that is traditionally interpreted to conclude with the end of this literal world. The study of the “end of the literal world” or “eschatology”, from the Biblical point of view, is a very complex and difficult subject. In addition, the traditional views always associate “the end” with the “coming of the Lord” [that is, the Greek word, parousia which is translated as: “a presence . . . denotes both an arrival and a consequent presence with” (Vine, 1966, Vol. I, p. 208)].

The correct understanding of the events in Chapter 15 must also be reconciled with other New Testament passages: (see 1 Thess. 4:13 to 5:23, Philippians [3:20-21], Colossians [3:1-11], 2 Timothy [1:10-12], Hebrews [1:3, 2:8-9, 8:1ff, 10:12ff], 1 Peter [3:21-22], 2 Peter [3:4-13], and other similar passages). Some of these passages, themselves, are confusing and appear to conflict with each other.

On the other hand, a careful study of the words translated “coming” in other New Testament Scriptures [please see Section (4.4.3.4)] are also used in passages that clearly demand a fulfillment within the 1st Century.

As the result of these conflicting interpretations, it became inevitable that the “Restoration Movement” theologians would recognize this problem and would postulate various resolutions for the “coming of the Lord”. Conceptually, there are only a few possible logical solutions and only two possible Biblical events that will resolve this problem:
1. First of all, the traditional view insists that everything in Matthew Chapter 24 and in the Revelation are related to the “final judgment”. **The Lord will come exclusively on the “last day” at “the end of the world”**. This was the only view that this author remembered being taught as a child. In order to resolve the time-definite aspects of these prophecies, this view also postulates that the Lord has delayed His coming, as mentioned in 2 Peter [3:8].

2. The next evolutionary level of acceptance was to separate the fulfillment of these same prophecies into two separate events. History and archaeology have produced irrefutable evidences of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. Therefore, the assumption was made that **only part of Matthew Chapter 24 related to A.D. 70. On the other hand, the delayed “coming” [parousia] of the Lord would still coincide with the end of the literal world and a final judgment**. This appears to be the current view held by many who have been affiliated with the Restoration Movement”.

3. Next, there is an emerging view held by recent theologians that maintain **there are two “comings” that were prophesied**. The Lord came in judgment against the Jews in A.D. 70 in the same way that He destroyed the Jews by Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, in 586 B.C. In addition, Jesus will still come again at the end of the world to fulfill everything else. This is the partial or modified **preterist** [that is fulfilled in the past] view.

4. Even fewer recent theologians maintain the view that Biblical prophecy has identified only “one coming” of the Lord. And that “coming” occurred at the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. This is the **preterist** [that is completely fulfilled in the past] view.

5. The only other possibility was that a mortal man, Jesus, made promises to the “eyewitness generation” that He could not fulfill.

Foy E. Wallace, who published “The Book of Revelation” (1966), was one of the more well known Bible scholars in the Church of Christ who emerged as the result of the “Restoration Movement”. He evidently recognized the problems with the earlier assumptions [early in the 20th Century] and attempted to rectify many of those inconsistencies.

Wallace’s work illuminated and expounded on the prophecies of Daniel, Matthew Chapter 24, and the Book of Revelation that had been incorrectly established in the 19th Century. Wallace, therefore, became the champion of the above third view [a coming at both A.D. 70 and at the end of the world].

In time a more objective consciousness began to pervade the heirs of the “Restoration Movement”, this author became aware of other subsequent works that began to emerge in recent decades.

In December of 1976, the author of this study first obtained a copy of “The Spirit of Prophecy” by Max R. King, which was published in 1971.
King next published “The Cross and The Parousia of Christ” in 1987. Both of King’s books champion the fourth view, which relate to an A.D. 70 fulfillment.

Arthur M. Ogden, that author of “The Avenging of the Apostles & Prophets” was published in 1985. This book also reflects a somewhat similar view as that of Foy Wallace (1966).

Effective historical research and the field of Biblical archeology are both well accepted analytical tools to aid in determining what happened in the past. Predicting the future is a task that uninspired mortals fail at most of the time.

For those who do believe in the future fulfillment view a basic assumption is required. That assumption is that God has declared in the Scriptures exactly what will transpire until the end of the literal world.

Therefore, the author of this study is not yet ready to venture an opinion, chiseled in stone, on the “timing” of such difficult topics as the “resurrection” [see Section (8.2)] and a “Final Judgment”. The opinions on these subjects are reserved until more systematic research has been accomplished. This study presents what can be objectively proven about the past and uses extreme caution in asserting what God might do in the future.

In reality, there is still a “Great Mystery” [Deut. 29:29] associated with these topics that may not be decipherable with the information that is presently available. Perhaps it would be better to only point out the alternative possibilities rather than to dogmatically assert in heated confrontations what cannot be proven one way or the other. It is better to encourage “peace” and foster an objective atmosphere of academic research. In this way “truth” might ultimately be found.

Moreover, the different contrasting views on this subject have already been Top adequately presented by Wallace (1966), King (1971 and 1987), and Ogden (1985) in their respective books.

However, there are still some fascinating possibilities, which relate to this study. As identified above, the author of this study is aware of at least two possible different interpretations for 1 Corinthians Chapter 15. The traditional argument assumes that Paul was teaching that when literal physical death was finally conquered, then this event would mark the end of the reign of Christ. This, in turn, would also precipitate the end of this literal world. Papias (A.D. 130-140) [see V, (2) in Section (6.7)] believed Paul was speaking of literal death.

More recent opinions suggest that Paul was making reference to A.D. 70, when the “way into the Holy Place” [Heb. 9:8] had finally been revealed in conjunction with the Lord’s second appearance [Heb. 9:28].

Perhaps the key to the true meaning of Chapter 15 can be found from a study of the word “then” [Greek “eita”, which has been translated by Vine (1966, Vol. IV) and “denotes sequence of time . . . next” (p. 123) in 1 Cor. 15: 24]. The word “then” [Greek “tote” translated, “denoting at that time, is used of concurrent events” (Vine, Vol. IV, p. 123)] was used in 1 Cor. 15:28.

“The Discourse on Hades”, which was written by Flavius Josephus [see Section (6.2.3.4)] about A.D. 95, also provides profound insight into the contemporary beliefs of the Pharisees. Josephus’ understanding of “Hades” is amazingly similar to what was taught in the Scriptures. This understanding of Josephus who, like Paul, was a Pharisee, suggests that “the judgment and the resurrection” were still considered to
be future events. Josephus' understanding of these things, appear to be very similar to Paul's commentary in First Corinthians Chapter 15.

Thus, almost all of the Christian historical writings, which were published after A.D. 70, still viewed the “final coming”, the “resurrection” and the “final judgment” as future events. Moreover, none of the discussion in Josephus’ discourse on “Hades” appears to contradict the teachings of either Jesus or Paul.

In either case, notice that three distinct sequences of events [1 Cor. 15:23-24] are implied by the Greek word “eita” in this text. First, the “resurrection of Jesus” obviously took place about A.D. 30-33. As for the second event, the author of this study takes the position that “a coming [presence, parousia] of the Lord” most certainly occurred at the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 just as the Lord had previously appeared at the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. The third event, called “the end”, occurs when the kingdom or Church on earth, will be delivered up [see 1 Thess. 4:15-17] to the Father.

In the similar First Thessalonians [4:15-17] account, Vine (1966, Vol. IV) identifies the Greek word “epeita”, which is translated as; “is used only of sequence, thereupon, thereafter . . . [in] 1 Thess. 4:17” (p. 124) as the word that would imply a sequence of events. However, after the dead are raised [Dan. 12:1], those who were still alive would be “caught up” to meet them in the clouds and thus would remain with the Lord.

However, such passages as Colossians [3:1-11], 2 Timothy [1:10], and Hebrews [8:13, 9:28] might also imply a Spiritual, rather than a literal, experience. In this way, the events of A.D. 70 still remain a possible alternative [see the discussion on the “Parousia” in Section (4.4.3.4)]. In reality, neither view can be proven, but the testimony from the historical record does favor the “futuristic” interpretation.

The conflicting opinions of contemporary theologians and the obvious errors in the traditional mind-set have left these issues far from being settled. For most of Christendom, the long-standing ingrained beliefs, which are prevalent in these traditional concepts, have such an emotional grasp on Christendom, that they are not often objectively discussed.

On the other hand, each different argument has some merit that should be objectively and respectfully considered. It must be assumed that each Bible student reaches out in an honest attempt to understand his Maker’s Divine Plan. In addition, a theory, or view, that does not rectify all of the Scriptures on any given subject, cannot represent a satisfactory answer. The phrase “I do not know” or “it can not be determined with great certainty” can also reflect great discretion and wisdom.

To reiterate, the purpose of this study is to prove that most of the prophecies in the Book of Daniel, Matthew Chapter 24 and the Revelation all relate to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

Now consider the implications that can be rendered in the text below of Chapter 15:

1 Cor. 15:22, For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive.
23 But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming [Greek, “parousia”, see Section (4.4.3.3)],
24 then [“eita”, next] comes the end, when He delivers up the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power [of the Devil].
For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet.

The last enemy that will be abolished is death. [See John Chapter 5].

For HE HAS PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET. But when He says, "All things are put in subjection," it is evident that He is excepted who put all things in subjection to Him.

And when all things are subjected to Him, then ["tote", at that time] the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, that God may be all in all. . . .

But someone will say, "How are the dead raised [see Ezek. 37:9ff, Dan. 12:2, and section (8.2)]? And with what kind of body do they come?"

You fool! That which you sow does not come to life unless it dies; . . .

So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable body, it is raised an imperishable body;

it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power;

it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. [Living Christians are still in a physical body].

So also it is written, "The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL."

The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.

However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural; then the spiritual. Top

The first man is from the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven. . . .

Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. [See John 3:3-6].

Author’s Note. Notice that there is a difference between the Church on earth, which is composed of mortals, and the “Eternal Kingdom of God” in heaven. Therefore, living Christians remain to be judged. They have not yet inherited the Kingdom of God in heaven although they are presently in the Church on earth. Consequently, mortals still view salvation in terms of “faith”, “hope”, “trust”, and still with a future perspective.

1 Cor. 15:51 (Continued) Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed [see 1 Thess. 4:13-17].

For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality.

But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP in victory. [See Isa. 25:6-8, also see 2 Tim. 1:10-12, figuratively the proof was the resurrection of Jesus. On the other hand, even the best Christians still die].

"O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?"
56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law (Hosea 13:14).
(1 Cor. 15:22-58)

The troubling inference in verse 56 relates to the inherent weakness within the interim Law of Moses. Neither eternal redemption, nor the resurrection from the dead, could be attained under the Law. Therefore, the purpose of Hades (see Section (6.2.3.4) was to provide a place of “waiting” until the Messiah established the New Covenant, made atonement by His own blood, did away with the imperfect Law of Moses, and judged the dead.

Some early Christian beliefs [see Section (6.2.2)] maintained that Jesus raised the dead from Hades at the same time that He was raised from the dead [see Eph. 4:8-10]. The subject of the resurrection is discussed, in greater detail, later in this study and finally in Section (8.2).

(3.5.8) The Book of Second Corinthians

Chapters 4 through 6 somewhat follow the context of First Corinthians Chapter 15. Here Paul was speaking of the Two Covenants [they are, the visible and the invisible realms of God] and life after death. Jesus taught this basic principle to Nicodemus [John 3:1ff]. Again follow the author’s notes within the cited text.

2 Cor. 4:14, Knowing that He who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us [only after death] also with Jesus and will present us with you [see 1 Thess. 4:15-18, 2 Tim. 1:10]. . . .
16 Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man [the fleshy body] is decaying, yet our inner man [the eternal Spiritual essence] is being renewed day by day.
17 For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory [in heaven after death] far beyond all comparison,
18 while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal [see John 3:3, “unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” and 1 Cor. 15:50, “flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God”]. (2 Cor. 4:14-18)

2 Cor. 5:1, For we know that if the earthly tent [our physical bodies and the figure of the Temple at Jerusalem, Heb. 9:8] which is our house is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. [See Heb. 9:11ff].
2 For indeed in this house we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven [when we die and face judgment];
3 inasmuch as we, having put it on, shall not be found naked [in the Spiritual body]
4 For indeed while we are in this tent [physical life], we groan, being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed, but to be clothed, in order that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. [See 1 Cor. 15:54 (Isa. 25:8), 2 Tim. 1:10]
5 Now He who prepared us for this very purpose is God, who gave to us the Spirit as a pledge. [The Holy Spirit, which was poured out on Pentecost, was the visible manifestation and promise in this world of greater things in the unseen eternal realm].

6 Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord-- [Note! We cannot actually see or be with Jesus until we die]. . . .

10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. [Note! The reference here implies that this takes place after death]. . .

17 Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. Top

(2 Cor. 5:1-17, Isa. 65:17)

The Spiritual implications of the “new creature” or “the new creation” in verse 17 are tremendous. A belief in both Jesus and in the works of the Holy Spirit [see John 3:1-6, “Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God”] gives Christians the Spiritual visibility to understand the Spiritual realm of God before death is experienced. Isaiah [40:3 and 43:19] and the fulfillment in John the Baptist [Matt. 3:3] teaches that the “something new” [Isa. 43:19] was the “way” [John 1:23, 14:6, Acts 9:2, 16:17, 18:25-26, 19:9, 24:14,22].

Furthermore, Isaiah 65:16 [see the comments on Isaiah Chapter 65 in Section (3.4.2)] speaks of these things in terms of, “I create a new heavens and a new earth”. The text in 2 Peter [3: 10-13] links this to the “Day of Judgment”. On that day [2 Peter 3:7] the present heavens and earth were to be destroyed. Finally, Revelation [21:1-5] indicates that the fulfillment of these things were to be fulfilled in the heavenly Jerusalem [see Gal. 4:26, Heb.12:22-24].

As odd as it might seem, a strong argument could be made that these references were figurative and relate to “the end of the age” [see Matt. 24:35, 31, Luke 21:33, 1 Cor. 7:31, 1 John 2:17-18, Rev. 22:6,10] with a fulfillment at A.D. 70. See the additional comments on 2 Peter [3:3-16].

2 Cor. 6:1, “And working together with Him, we also urge you not to receive the grace of God in vain--

2 for He says, "AT THE ACCEPTABLE TIME I LISTENED TO YOU, AND ON THE DAY OF SALVATION I HELPED YOU"; behold, now is "THE ACCEPTABLE TIME," behold, now is "THE DAY OF SALVATION" [see Isa. 49:6-13, note the associated reference to Paul (Isa. 49:6 and Acts 13:47)]. . .

14 Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness [Matt. 24:12, 2 Thess. 2:7], or what fellowship has light with darkness?

15 Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever?

16 Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, "I WILL DWELL IN THEM AND WALK
AMONG THEM; AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE (Jer. 31:1, Ezek. 37:27). [Note the 1st Century fulfillment of this prophecy. God would dwell among His people on earth as He had also dwelled in the Temple of Jerusalem].

17 "Therefore, COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATE," [Isa. 52:11, Rev. 18:4] says the Lord. "AND DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN; And I will welcome you.

18 "And I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to Me," [Hos. 1:10, Isa. 43:6, Rom. 8:14] Says the Lord Almighty.” (2 Cor. 6:1-18)

(3.5.9) The Book of Galatians

The Book of Galatians provides a considerable amount of data to aid Christians in their understanding of Spiritual things. At the time of its writing, it was especially important for Gentile Christians to understand the purpose of the Law of Moses in relation to the transition to the New Covenant of Christ. The annotated text below will call attention to these things:

Gal. 1:3, Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ,

4 who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us out of this present evil age [Note! The anticipation was to be led out of the present “evil age”], . . .

6 I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting [the apostasy had already begun, see Matt. 11:6, 24:10, Col. 2:8-23, 2 Thess. 2:7:ff, 1 Tim. 4:1ff, Rev. 2:2ff]. . . for a different gospel;” (Gal. 1:3-6)

Gal. 2:7, But on the contrary, seeing that I [Paul] had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been to the circumcised . . . .

16 nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we may be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified. . .

19 "For through the Law I died to the Law, that I might live to God.

(Gal. 2:7-19)

For the unbelieving Jews, the Old Covenant had not yet ended (Lam. 2:9, Heb. 8:13) and the “partial hardening” [see Section (2.3.2.)] was not yet completed. For the “first fruits” [see Section (2.3.3)] or the Jews who accepted Jesus, their relationship to the Law was different. Christian Jews died to the Law and, therefore, they were released from it [see Rom. 7:2-4]. Jesus the Christ nailed the Law to His Cross [Col. 2:14] and the veil in the Temple was torn [Matt. 27:51] from top to bottom. But, Temple worship [that is, the partial hardening (Rom. 11:25)] for most of the Jews did not end until A.D. 70.

Gal. 3:1, You foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified?
2 This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith? [After Jesus’ crucifixion Judaism, apart from Christianity, apparently produced no more Spiritual gifts. Evidently the High Priest, just before the crucifixion made the last prophecy (John 11:49-52) under the Law of Moses].

3 Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh [that is, by works according to the Law of Moses]? . . .

9 So then those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham [see God’s Covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in Section (2.1)], the believer. . . .

16 Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as referring to many, but rather to one, "And to your seed," that is, Christ.

17 What I am saying is this: the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as tonullify the promise.

Author’s Note. The Law of Moses was not perfect (see Heb. 8:7:ff, Jer. 31:31ff) and it was destined to be changed. Even Moses (Deut. 18:15ff, Acts 3:21-26) understood that Jesus would later establish a different Covenant.

Gal. 3:18 (continued), “For if the inheritance is based on law, it is no longer based on a promise; but God has granted it to Abraham by means of a promise. 19 Why the Law then? It was added because of transgressions, having been ordained through angels by the agency of a mediator, until the seed should come to whom the promise had been made. 20 Now a mediator [Jesus, Heb. 9:15]. . . .

24 Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, that we may be justified by faith. [The message of the Revelation can also be found in the study of the Prophets (Acts 3:24, Rev. 10:7)].

25 But now that faith has come [Col. 2:14], we [Christians, “first fruits”, Section (2.3.3)] are no longer under a tutor. . . .

29 And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise. (Gal. 3:1-29)

Chapter 4 contrasts the Law of Moses with the New Covenant. Jesus was born under the Law at “the fullness of time” [Gal. 4:4]. Christians were urged not to return to the “elemental” or “rudimentary” things of the Law [Gal. 4:9]. Please follow the comments in the text below:

Gal. 4:21, Tell me, you who want to be under law, do you not listen to the law? 22 For it is written that Abraham had two sons [see, “God’s covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob” in Section (2.1)], one by the bondwoman and one by the free woman. 23 But the son by the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and the son by the free woman through the promise.
24 This is allegorically speaking: for these women are two covenants [Heb. 8:1-13], one proceeding from Mount Sinai bearing children who are to be slaves; she is Hagar.

25 . . . Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to the present Jerusalem [at the “end of the age” (Luke 13:34-35)], for she is in slavery with her children.

26 But the Jerusalem above is free [Heb. 11:16, 12:22, 13:6]; she is our mother.

27 For it is written, "REJOICE, BARREN WOMAN WHO DOES NOT BEAR; BREAK FORTH AND SHOUT, YOU WHO ARE NOT IN LABOR; FOR MORE ARE THE CHILDREN OF THE DESOLATE THAN OF THE ONE WHO HAS A HUSBAND" [Isa. 54:1]. [This provides another wonderful example of the “duality principle” and that the “Heavenly Jerusalem” is the ultimate fulfillment of prophecy and the final destination for Christians].

28 And you brethren, like Isaac, are children of promise.

29 But as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit [Matt. 10:17, Acts 8:1ff], so it is now also.


31 So then, brethren, we are not children of a bondwoman, but of the free woman. (Gal. 4:21-31)

(3.5.10) The Book of Ephesians

In the Book of Ephesians, Paul provides a great deal of philosophical information concerning the new heavenly order of things. The traditional mind-sets do not do justice to the profound Divine order of things that Paul discusses in this book. The author will provide comments within the cited text:

Eph. 1:3, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,

4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world [see “The Elect or the First-Fruits of Christianity” in Section (2.3.3.)], that we should be holy and blameless before Him. In love . . . .

9 He made known to us the mystery of His will [Matt. 13:11]. . . .

10 with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things upon the earth. In Him

11 also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will,

12 to the end that we who were the first [that is the first fruits] to hope in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. . . .

17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him. . . .

20 which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, [see 1 Cor. 15:23ff].
21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion [see Dan. 7:14, Rev. 12:10], and every name that is named, not only in this [Jewish] age, but also in the [Christian] one to come.

22 And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, [Note! The “body” is the Church, the “bride” of Christ, and the New Jerusalem (see, Heb. 12:22-23, Rev. 19:7ff, 21:2, 10. Also note that Christ had already begun to reign, but the kingdom on earth or the Church had not yet been delivered up (1 Cor. 15:24)].

23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. (Eph. 1:3-23)

In Chapter 3, Paul continues to elaborate on the sequence of events that must transpire before the fullness of the New Covenant could be realized. Paul claimed that his insight came by a revelation. Jesus previously taught [Matt. 24:14] that the Gospel had to be preached to the whole world, including the Gentiles [those far off, Acts 2:39, Eph. 2:13, see Section (2.3.2)]. Paul [the Apostle to the Gentiles, Acts 13:47, Rom. 11:13] declared that this had already been accomplished [see Rom. 15:19, Col. 1:23]. Thus, the new order of things, which was made known through the Gospel, was about to begin. Follow the text below:

Eph. 3:1, I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles. . . . Top
3 that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery [Deut. 29:29], as I wrote before.
4 And by referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ,
5 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;
6 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 . . .
10 in order that the manifold wisdom of God might now [note “now”] be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places.
11 This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord,” . . .
20, “For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; [Christ had not yet returned (Luke 19:12). Therefore, there was no fulfillment at Pentecost in A.D. 30 (Matt. 16:27-28)].
21 who will transform the body [see 1 Cor. 15:52] of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself. (Eph. 3:1-21)

Chapter 4 provides more interesting information concerning the interaction of Jesus with the dead immediately after His crucifixion. This encounter with the dead in Hades presents some very interesting questions. This encounter must be reconciled with the correct interpretation of the sequence of events such as the “resurrection” [see Section (8.2)] and the “last judgment”.
It is not the purpose of this study to assign only one single specific time frame for either a “resurrection” or “God’s judgment”. The Scriptures may discuss more than one event concerning “resurrection” and the Scriptures do identify many “judgments”. The actual final fulfillment of these things can only be assumed and can only be viewed in faith. Some of the events can not be actually proven this side of death. It is important for the readers to study and reconcile these things for themselves:

Eph. 4:8, WHEN HE ASCENDED ON HIGH, HE LED CAPTIVE A HOST OF CAPTIVES, AND HE GAVE GIFTS TO MEN.” [Psalms 68:18]
9 (Now this expression, "He ascended," what does it mean except that He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth [that is, into Hades]? [See Isaiah 25:8 (1 Cor. 15:54), Ezek. 37:9-14, Dan. 12:1ff, John 5:28ff, 1 Peter 3:19-22. The question here is “who” or “what” was led captive? Also see Matt. 16:27-28, 1 Cor. 15:23ff, 1 Thess. 4:15ff].
10 He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things...
30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.” [The day of redemption had not yet occurred at the time of the writing of this letter]. (Eph. 4:7-30)

The “wrath of God” [Chapter 5] precipitated many similar events of judgment in Israel’s history. Remember, the prophecy made by John the Baptist concerning the Jews [see Matt. 3:7ff, Malachi 4:5] was not yet fulfilled [in A.D. 70] at the time of the writing of Ephesians:

Eph. 5:6. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons [that is, the Jews] of disobedience.

Chapter 6 provides a direct link to the imagery in the Revelation. Follow the references in the text:

Eph. 6:11, “Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. [Note! The Devil was still active].
12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness [Satan], against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. [See Dan. 12:1ff, Rev. 12:7ff].
13 Therefore, take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.
14 Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, [Isa. 11:5]
15 and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE [Isa. 52:7];
16 in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one.
17 And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION [Isa. 59:17], and the sword of the Spirit [Heb. 4:12], which is the word of God. (Eph. 6:11-17)
(3.5.11) The Book of Philippians

The Book of Philippians also yields some interesting information of importance to this study. It makes reference to “the day of Christ” [Philip. 1:6, 10. 2:16]. It speaks of some of those living as being “a crooked and perverse generation” [see Section (2.3.1)]. The Jews [the false circumcision (Eph. 3:2ff)] were still active. Note that “The Lord is near” [Philip. 4:5].

(3.5.12) The Book of Colossians

The Book of Colossians reveals an immense amount of information as Paul explained to Christians why, under Christ, they did not have to follow the Law of Moses. The subject as to whether or not the Gentiles were required to keep the Law of Moses was a hotly debated issue since the “Jerusalem council”, which was recorded in Acts Chapter 15. In addition, many of the Jewish Christians were disturbed with much of Paul’s teaching [see “Christian Worship in the Early Church” in Section (6.2.1)].

However, Paul ardently preached to them that the “shadows” and “figures” of the Law were destined to end with the imminent destruction of Jerusalem [wrath to come, Matt. 3:7ff, Col. 3:6]. It would appear completely out of context if Paul was speaking of the final judgment and not the imminent destruction of Jerusalem [see Table 1 (Heb. 8:1-13, 9:8)]:

Col. 1:5, Because of the hope laid up for you in heaven [Gal. 4:26, Heb. 12:22ff, 13:14], of which you previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel, . . .
12 giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.
13 For He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the [“eternal”] kingdom of His beloved Son [see Section (5.1)].
14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.
15 And He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation.
16 For by Him all things were created [John 1:3ff], both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities-- all things have been created by Him and for Him.
17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.
18 He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead [1 Cor. 15:23]; so that He Himself might come to have first place in everything.
19 For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, . . .
23 if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation [Matt. 24:14] under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister [Acts 13:47]. . .
26 that is, the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations; but has now been manifested to His saints,” . . . (Col. 1:5-26)
When Colossians Chapter 2 is compared to Galatians Chapter 4, the “elementary principles” [Col. 2:8] are, without much doubt, the precepts of the Law of Moses. Furthermore, the Law was a “tutor” [Gal. 3:24] and since the “faith” [Gal. 3:25] had come, there was no further need for the Law of Moses:

Col. 2:8, See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.
9 For in Him all the fullness of Deity [Christ is greater than either Moses or the Law, Deut. 18:18] dwells in bodily form,
10 and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority [see 1 Cor. 15:23ff]; . . .
12 having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith. . . .
14 having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us and which was hostile to us; and He has taken it [that is, the Law of Moses] out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. (Col. 2:8-10)

Compare Colossians [3:1-12] with the comments on First Corinthians Chapter 15. Also compare the reading below with First Thessalonians [4:14-18]. Table 1 indicates that First Thessalonians was one of Paul’s first epistles, which was written about A.D. 49. Colossians was written some years later about A.D. 57. Notice how being “raised up with Christ” after baptism [Col. 2:12, 3:1] was the “figurative application” of being “caught up” [see 1 Thess. 4:16] in what was always assumed to be the “rapture” at the end of the world. If Paul intended to convey that “being caught up” was a figurative application, such as in Hebrews [9:28], then First Thessalonians [4:16] would take on a completely different meaning:

Col. 3:1, If then you have been raised up with Christ [Col. 2:12], keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.
2 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.
3 For you have died [buried in baptism] and your life is hidden with Christ in God.
4 When Christ, who is our life, is revealed [Heb. 9:28], then you also will be revealed with Him in glory [see Rom. 8:18-25]. . . .
6 On account of these things that the wrath of God [Matt. 3:7ff] will come, . . .
10 and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him
11 --a renewal [restoration, Matt. 17:11 (Mal, 4:6), Acts 1:6, 3:21] in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all. [See Gal. 3:27-29, this happens at baptism].
12 And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; . . . (Col. 3:1-12)
The understanding, of the different applications of the word “coming” [parousia, see Section (4.4.3.4)] in this book [1 Thess. 3:13, 4:15, 5:23], is a very difficult task. Modern theologians argue as to whether there is only one “parousia” or if there are at least two. Wallace (1966) taught for years that the Lord came in judgment against Jerusalem in A.D. 70 and that He will yet come again at the “final judgment”. King (1971 and 1987) has taken the position that these things relate only to the “coming” at A.D. 70.

A comparison of First Thessalonians with other similar Scriptures yields a good deal of insight. But the problem can never be conclusively solved. As mentioned before, the past can be analyzed, whereas the future cannot. In addition, it would be an impossible task to identify, from the Scriptures, the major historical events that have occurred from A.D. 70 to this present time. It is an equally difficult task to predict future events. The best advice is still found in Ecclesiastes [1:9, “That which has been is that which will be].

Since First Thessalonians was written early, in about A.D. 49 [see Table 1], the affinity with the disbelieving Jews and their associated persecution of Christians [Acts 8:1] is easily recognized in the text. The persecutions by the Romans would not occur until years later about A.D. 64:

1 Thess. 1:6,  You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much tribulation [Jewish persecution Acts 8:1] with the joy of the Holy Spirit, . . . 
10  and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath to come.” [See, Matt. 3:7, Rom. 2:5-6]. (1 Thess. 1:1-10)

1 Thess. 2:12,  So that you may walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom [of heaven, Heb. 12:22ff] and glory. . . . 
14  For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea, for you also endured the same sufferings at the hands of your own countrymen, even as they did from the Jews, [note the Jewish persecution]. 15  who both killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets [Luke 13:33-35], and drove us out. They are not pleasing to God, but hostile to all men, 
16  hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles that they might be saved; with the result that they always fill up the measure of their sins. But wrath has come upon them [Jews] to the utmost.” (1 Thess. 2:12-16)  

Compare Chapter 4 with the comments on First Corinthians Chapter 15 and the “parousia” [Section (4.4.3.4)].

1 Thess. 4:13,  But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep [the dead, Acts 7:60, 1 Cor. 15:6, see John 5:21-29], that you may not grieve, as do the rest who have no hope.
14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus [see 1 Thess. 3:13. Where would the dead come from? See verse 16 below].
15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, and remain until the coming [parousia] of the Lord, shall not precede [see 2 Tim. 2:18] those who have fallen asleep.
16 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 shall rise first.
17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord. (1 Thess. 4:13-17)

Compare carefully 1 Thess. [4:16-17] with Matt. [24:27-34]. The word “parousia” [see Section (4.4.3.4.)] was used in both texts. It is very difficult to determine whether First Thessalonians [4:15 through 5:23] spoke of the end of the world while Matthew spoke of the destruction of Jerusalem. Moreover, Paul associates his text with the resurrection.

Both texts appear to discuss the same event and seem to indicate the same time-definite reference to “near” [see Section (4.4.3.2)]. If this is true, then the reference to the elect being “caught up” might also be interpreted in a Spiritual sense [see Col. 3:1ff, Heb. 9:28] as the Old Covenant was about to end and the New Covenant was about to begin [Heb. 8:1-13]. This would further define the time [that is, A.D. 70] “when the saints took possession of the kingdom” [Dan. 7:22 (Luke 21:31)]. On the other hand, some will argue that only “two comings” will ultimately solve this problem.

Chapter 5 follows with more Old Testament references concerning the travail of Zion [see Matt. 24:21ff, Luke 21:22ff].

1 Thess. 5:1, Now as to the times and the epochs [note the two significant references the destruction of Jerusalem, Zech. 14:7, Acts 1:7, Matt. 24:36], brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you.
2 For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night.
3 While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come upon them suddenly like birth pangs [see Isa. 66:7ff, Jer. 4:31, Micah 5:3, Rom. 8:22] upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.” (1 Thess. 5:1-3)

(3.5.14) The Book of 2nd Thessalonians

Second Thessalonians was written, perhaps, a year after the first letter. The second letter provides even more information than the first letter concerning the Jewish persecutions and God’s retribution against them. Follow the comments within the text:

2 Thess. 1:4, Therefore, we ourselves speak proudly of you among the churches of God for your perseverance and faith in the midst of all your persecutions and afflictions [Acts 8:1ff] which you endure. . . .
For after all it is only just for God to repay with affliction those [Jews] who afflict you [1 Thess. 2:14-16],
and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, [1 Cor. 3:13ff, Heb. 1:7, before some in that generation die, Matt. 16:27-28]. (2 Thess. 1:4-7)

Chapter 2 provides strong connections, to both Matthew Chapter 24 and to the Book of Daniel [9:24-27], concerning the “abomination of desolation” in the Temple. Eusebius (Pamphilus, 1966, Bk. III, Ch. V, see Section [6.2.2]) states, “the abomination of desolation . . . stood in the temple of God”. “The Epistle of Barnabas” Chapter 4 [see Section (6.6)] also appears to associate Paul’s teaching here to the “time of lawlessness” [Matt. 24:12, 2 Thess. 2:3] and the “last offense”, that is, the time of the 10th Emperor and the war with the Romans. Thus, it would connect the “abomination of desolation”, the “last offense”, the “time of lawlessness”, and the “Man of Sin” to a fulfillment by Titus the son of Vespasian in August of A.D. 70.

2 Thess. 2:1, Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together [see the author’s note on First Thessalonians Chapter 4] to Him,
that you may 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 [Titus the son of Vespasian, see Barnabas 4:1-9],”
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 [Holy Place, Dan. 9:24-27, Matt. 24:15, Heb. 9:2], displaying himself as being God [five Roman Emperors were deified]. (2 Thess. 2:2-4)

There is a powerful implication here in reference to the “day of the Lord”. From 2 Timothy [2:17-18], observe carefully that [Hymenaus and Philetus] believed that the “resurrection” [see Section (8.2)] had already taken place. Furthermore, observe how their understanding of some type of resurrection, as a historical event, was not associated with the “destruction of the world” or in connection with a “final judgment”. This passage adds confusion to the true understanding of the “resurrection”.

Moreover, the terms “apostasy” and “lawlessness” in the text refer to those same prerequisites that must be accomplished according to the Lord’s own prophecies in Matthew [24:10 and 12 respectively]. This sequence is next followed by “the abomination of desolation of Daniel standing in the Holy Place (Heb. 9:2) of the Temple” [see Matt. 24:15ff (Dan. 9:24-27, 12:11)].

Luke’s Gospel speaks of the same event as, “Jerusalem being surrounded by Roman armies” [Luke 21:20] prior to the “coming of the Son of Man” [Matt. 24:27]. Paul explained that some of the prerequisites, which were previously established by Jesus
[in Matthew 24], were not yet complete. **Thus the “final resurrection” [see Eph. 4:8ff] had not yet taken place.**

The reference to the “man of lawlessness” refers to Titus the son of Vespasian. **Titus literally entered the Temple of God in August of A.D. 70** [see Josephus, Section (6.2.2)]. This is sufficient proof that this “day of the Lord” must refer to A.D. 70. Also note, **“the mystery of lawlessness [Matt. 24:12, 2 Thess. 2:7] is [was at that time] already at work”**.

(3.5.15) The Book of 1st Timothy

Paul’s teaching in this letter, dated about A.D. 62 [Table 1], indicates that the fulfillment of these things was getting closer. The struggle that Paul discussed still concerned the Law of Moses and the Judaizing teachers [1 Tim. 1:ff]. The reference to the “latter times and the falling away” [1 Tim. 1:9, 4:1ff, see Matt. 24:10-12] must also relate to the works of the Law and this instruction by Paul closely follows the scenario of those historical events leading up to A.D. 70.

(3.5.16) The Book of 2nd Timothy

This second letter [A.D. 64, (Table 1)] reflects Paul’s sentiments not long before his death. He discussed the **abolishment of death** [see section (8.2)] as a reality [2 Tim. 1:10, see the comments on 1 Cor. Chapter 15]. He was anticipating the day of the Lord [2 Tim. 1:12]. The false teaching concerning the “**view that the resurrection had already taken place**” [2 Tim. 2:18], needed to be addressed and corrected.

The evil men and impostors [2 Tim. 3:13, see Matt. 24:11, Mark 13:22, Luke 21:8] were again part of the **time of lawlessness** and they were part of the prerequisites for the Lord’s coming in A.D. 70.

At the time of the writing of the Book of 2nd Timothy [4:1] the **judgment of the “living and the dead” was viewed as a future event**. And in spite of Paul’s warnings, evidently **Demas returned to the “world” [Greek “age”] of Judaism** [2 Tim. 4:10].

The reference to **the lion’s mouth appears to be an illusion to Nero** [Acts 9:15], but Paul anticipated being brought “safely to His heavenly kingdom” [2 Tim. 4:18].

(3.5.17) The Book of Hebrews

Hebrews was written in A.D. 58 [Table 1], or perhaps even later, but certainly before the Temple was destroyed [see Heb. 9:2, 8]. The book was presumed to be written by Paul [who according to Eusebius died in A.D. 64] from Rome [Heb. 13:24]. **Paul’s assumed authorship was due to the reference to Timothy [Heb. 13:23]**. If someone else had written Hebrews then that person was within Paul’s inner circle and reflected Paul’s understandings of things.

The profuse references to the Old Testament passages provide additional clarification of the “mysteries” spoken of by the Prophets. One of the keys to understanding Hebrews was that the ending of the Old Covenant and the beginning of the New was **expected to be “near”** [Lam. 2:9, Heb. 8:13]. The fulfillment would be realized when the Temple [Holy Place, Heb. 9:2, 8] had fallen at the destruction of the
Jerusalem by the Romans [Dan. 9:26, Matt. 24:15]. This historical connection is very well established and it provides justification for an extremely strong argument.

First of all, compare **Hebrews Chapter 1** with the comments on First Corinthians Chapter 15. Please follow the comments annotated in the cited text:

Heb. 1:2, in these last days [another reference to the last days] God has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made [see John 1:10] the world.

3 And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high; [see Mark 16:19, Acts 7:55, 1 Cor. 15:23-27]. . . .

7 And of the angels He says, "WHO MAKES HIS ANGELS WINDS, AND HIS MINISTERS A FLAME OF FIRE" [Psalms 104:4]. (Heb. 1:2-7)


Therefore, the burning of the Temple in Jerusalem in 586 B.C. (2 Chron. 36:19, Neh. 2:17, Isa. 64:11, Jer. 32:29, 38:23, 39:8, 44:6ff, 52:12-13, Lam. 2:1-4) sets a precedent for the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70. Both events were referenced in Daniel Chapter 9. The destruction in 586 B.C. was alluded to in Dan. 9:12. The second reference concerned the “70 weeks” [Dan. 9:24-27]. Furthermore, compare the reference in Dan 9:12 to Dan. 12:1, Matt. 24:21, and Heb. 9:1-8. Both events were directed by God, Himself, and were designed to be the greatest punishments recorded in the history of the Jews. Josephus [Section (6.2.3)] confirms this fact.

The traditional mind-set has never done justice to Chapter 8, even though the answers of many of the difficult passages were deciphered there. Please follow the comments in the text:

Heb. 8:4, Now if He were on earth He would not be a priest at all, since there are those who offer the gifts according to the Law;

5 who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things [the copies are on earth, the genuine is in heaven] just as Moses was warned by God when he was about to erect the tabernacle; for, "SEE," He says, "THAT YOU MAKE all things ACCORDING TO THE PATTERN WHICH WAS SHOWN YOU ON THE Top MOUNTAIN." [See Exodus 25:40].

6 But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He [Jesus] is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises.

7 For if that first covenant had been faultless [see Galatians Chapter 3, the Law of Moses was a tutor], there would have been no occasion sought for a second.
8  For finding fault with them, He says, "BEHOLD, DAYS ARE COMING, SAYS THE LORD, WHEN I WILL EFFECT A NEW COVENANT WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AND WITH THE HOUSE OF JUDAH" [Jer. 31:31];

Author’s Note. This passage was a powerful argument against the Jews. Even Jeremiah (31:31), an Old Testament Prophet, who was accepted by all Jewish authorities, prophesied that a New Covenant would be established in the future. Moses, himself, also predicted that there would be another Prophet [Jesus, Acts 3:22ff] like himself (Deut. 18:15). The New Testament teaches that this was to be accomplished through Jesus and His Church. As further proof, the Spiritual gifts to Judaism, except those enacted by Christian Jews, had ended at the crucifixion. There are no records of Jewish prophets today.

Heb. 8:9 (continued), “NOT LIKE THE COVENANT WHICH I MADE WITH THEIR FATHERS ON THE DAY WHEN I TOOK THEM BY THE HAND TO LEAD THEM OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT; FOR THEY DID NOT CONTINUE IN MY COVENANT, AND I DID NOT CARE FOR THEM, SAYS THE LORD. 10 "FOR THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE LORD: I WILL PUT MY LAWS INTO THEIR MINDS, AND I WILL WRITE THEM UPON THEIR HEARTS. AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE. 11 "AND THEY SHALL NOT TEACH EVERYONE HIS FELLOW CITIZEN, AND EVERYONE HIS BROTHER, SAYING, 'KNOW THE LORD,' FOR ALL SHALL KNOW ME, FROM THE LEAST TO THE GREATEST OF THEM. 12 "FOR I WILL BE MERCIFUL TO THEIR INIQUITIES, AND I WILL REMEMBER THEIR SINS NO MORE" [Jer. 31:31-34]. 13 When He said, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready [or near, see Section (4.4.3.2)] to disappear [see “The Times of the Gentiles, Section (2.3.2) and “The Harvest and the End of the Age”, Section (2.3.5)]. (Heb. 8:4-13)

Chapter 9 makes allusions to the “outer tabernacle [that is, the Temple], which was still standing [Heb. 9:8]. It is a historical fact that the Temple was destroyed in August of A.D. 70 by the Romans [see Josephus, Section (6.2.3)]. Both the Old and New Testament prophecies spoke of the fall of Jerusalem and the Temple [see Dan. 9:26, 12:1-11, Zech.14:2 ff, Matt. 24:15, Luke 19:43-44, 21:20ff, Rev. 11:1-8]. See the text:

Heb. 9:1, Now even the first covenant had regulations of divine worship and the earthly sanctuary. [This was Herod’s Temple in Jerusalem]. 2 For there was a tabernacle prepared, the outer one, in which were the lampstand and the table and the sacred bread; this is called the holy place. [See Heb. 9:8, Titus the son of Vespasian entered the Temple in August of A.D. 70 while the Temple was burning].
3 And behind the second veil, there was a tabernacle which is called the Holy of Holies, . . .

8 The Holy Spirit is signifying this, that the way into the holy place [the heavenly kingdom] has not yet been disclosed, while the outer tabernacle is still standing, . . .

27 And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment,

28 so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time [the context points to A.D. 70 when the Temple was destroyed at the “end of the Jewish age”. The context does not fit the end of the literal world] for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him. (Heb. 9:1-28)

Chapter 10 continues to express how the New Covenant was better than the Old. Note carefully, at the next imminent coming of Jesus, He would take away the First Covenant and establish the Second. Hebrews was written at least 30 years after Pentecost A.D. 30.

Please do not overlook this fact. Even though, for Christians the Law was nailed to the cross [Col. 2:14], the Law for the disbelieving Jews continued until the end of the “time of the Gentiles” [see Section (2.3.2)]. And, all of the other prerequisites that were identified in Matthew Chapter 24, were thus fulfilled. Note the comments in the text:

Heb. 10:5, Therefore, when He comes into the world, . . .

9 then He said, "BEHOLD, I HAVE COME TO DO THY WILL." He takes away the first in order to establish the second. [This was many years after Pentecost A.D. 30]. . . .

13 waiting from that time onward UNTIL HIS ENEMIES BE MADE A FOOTSTOOL FOR HIS FEET. [See the commentary on 1 Cor. Chapter 15]. . . .

25 not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near. [This was A.D. 70]. . .

30 For we know Him who said, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY." And again, "THE LORD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE (Deut. 32-43)." [Note how this was a reference to Moses’ own prophecy against the Jews. This book of Moses (Deut. 28:49-61) contained the prophecy that God would use evil nations to lay siege against them as a judgment. As pointed out earlier, this happened on many different occasions. The final siege occurred at A.D. 70 (see Dan. 9:24-27, Zech. 14:1ff, Luke 19:43-44, 21:20, Rev. 11:1-8)]. . . .

37 FOR YET IN A VERY LITTLE WHILE, HE WHO IS COMING WILL COME, AND WILL NOT DELAY.

38 BUT MY RIGHTEOUS ONE SHALL LIVE BY FAITH; AND IF HE SHRINKS BACK, MY SOUL HAS NO PLEASURE IN HIM. [This was an obvious reference to Habakkuk (2:3-4). The implication was that the coming of Jesus would be imminent. The earlier fulfillment was the time when God sent
the Chaldeans (Hab. 1:6). The dual meaning here was applied by Paul to the Roman (Dan. 2:40-44, 7:7ff).

39 But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul.” (Heb. 10:5-39)

When the text of Hebrews [Chapter 8:8-19] is compared with Section (2.1), “God’s Covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob”, it should become apparent that the ultimate fulfillment of the “promises” made to the fathers, would be fulfilled in the “Heavenly Kingdom” [see Matt. 11:8, Luke 13:28, Heb. 12:22-23, 13:14].

Chapter 12 continues by contrasting the differences between the Old and New Covenants. The final transition from the Old [obsolete] to the New was drawing near [see Deut. 18:15-19, Heb. 8:1-13 (Jer. 31:31-34)]. The presence of God at Mount Sinai, at the time the Law was first given to Moses, was contrasted to Jesus [as “the mediator of a New Covenant”]. This last fulfillment would be in the heavenly Mount Zion, when the New Covenant was established [Heb. 9:8] at A.D. 70.

The comments and references in the text below support this view:

Heb.12:18, For you have not come to a mountain that may be touched and to a blazing fire, and to darkness and gloom and whirlwind,


Heb. 12:19 (continued) 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 should be spoken to them.

20 For they could not bear the command, "IF EVEN A BEAST TOUCHES THE MOUNTAIN, IT WILL BE STONED."

21 And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, "I AM FULL OF FEAR AND TREMBLING." [See Deut. 9:19]

22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem [Gal. 4:25-26, Rev. 21:1-10], and to myriads of angels [see Deut. 33:2, Dan. 7:10, Jude 14, Rev. 5:11, all in the heavenly Jerusalem],

23 to the general assembly and church of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of righteous men made perfect,

24 and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel.

25 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 shall we escape
who turn away from Him who warns from heaven. [Note the contrast between the earth and heaven].

26 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."

Author’s Note. Read Haggai [2:1-23] and carefully observe the context. This again reflects the “duality principle”. The original prophecy concerned the return of Israel in the time of Haggai and Zerubbabel. The final prophecy of, “The latter Glory of the Temple” was certainly not in reference to Herod’s Temple, but it was figuratively applied to Jesus and to the resurrection of His body [Mark 14:58, John 2:19], to Christians [see 2 Cor. 6:16, 1 Peter 2:5ff], and to the Temple in heaven [Heb. 9:11].

Heb. 12:27 (continued) And this expression, "Yet once more," denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, in order that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. [The context implies the removing of the Old imperfect Covenant and then the establishing of the “New Covenant and Kingdom”. It would be completely out of context to interpret this as the “final judgment”, especially in view of the time-definite references (Heb. 8:13)].

28 Therefore, since we receive a [heavenly] kingdom which cannot be shaken [again a fulfillment at Pentecost A.D. 30 will not satisfy this prophecy. The fullness of the kingdom came at A.D. 70 at the destruction of Jerusalem (Dan. 7:22, 9:24-27, 12:1ff, Luke 21:31)], let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe;

29 for our God is a consuming fire.” (Heb. 12:18-29)

The final testimony, (Heb. 13:14) “For here we do not have a lasting city, but we are seeking the city which is to come” [Gal. 4:26, Rev. 21:1-10], can only be realized in heaven in the “Eternal Heavenly Kingdom” and only after death.

(3.5.18) The Book of James

James was written [about A.D. 62] shortly before the war with the Romans began in A.D. 66. The letter was written to the Jewish Christians who lived in other countries [that is, the dispersion, John 7:35, Acts 2:5-11, 1 Peter 1:1]. The message was to convey that the “various trials” [(James 1:2), “tribulation” (Matt. 24:21, Luke 21:22)] were about to begin.

The important time-definite references, to an imminent “coming” [parousia] and the implication of judgment to be brought at A.D. 70, can be found in Chapter 5:

James 5:7, Be patient, therefore, brethren, until the coming [parousia] of the Lord. . . .

8 You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming [parousia] of the Lord is at hand [near but well after Pentecost A.D. 30-33].
9 Do not complain, brethren, against one another, that you yourselves may **not be judged** [that is, at A.D. 70]; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door.”  
[Note! This similar phrase is found within the context of the destruction of Jerusalem in Mark 13:29, “He is near, right at the door”].  

(3.5.19) The Book of **1st Peter**

First Peter, like the Book of James, was written [about A.D. 64 (Table 1)] to the Jews of the Diaspora [John 7:35, Acts 2:5-11]. Its purpose was to encourage them to accept the impending judgments [the Jewish War (A.D. 66-70)] that God was about to bring upon the world. The Book of First Peter was considered genuine by most of the early Church historical testimony [see Eusebius, Section (6.2.2)]. However, 2nd Peter was not considered genuine by many early Christians. A close comparison of the contents of the two books, ascribed to the Apostle Peter, will help illustrate the origin of this possible disparity. More on this subject is discussed in the commentary on 2nd Peter that follows.

Of great importance to the understanding of First Peter, is the question, “Was Peter discussing God’s judgment in A.D. 70, the ‘end of the literal world’, or both”? Please follow the author’s comments within the annotated text below:

1 Peter 1:4, **To obtain an inheritance** which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, **reserved in heaven for you**, [Note the ultimate fulfillment in heaven].

5 **who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.** [This is another reference to “near” in the “last times”].

6 In this you greatly rejoice, even though **now for a little while**, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials [see James 1:2, as one might expect from Peter’s and James’ close association, the views and terminology of the Book of James and 1 Peter are very similar].

7 that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire [note the persecutions were like fire], may be found to result in praise and glory and honor **at the revelation of Jesus Christ** [Rev. 1:1];

8 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,

9 **obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.**

10 As to this salvation, **the prophets who prophesied of the grace** [Zech. 4:7, John 1:17] **that would come** to you made careful search and inquiry [it is important to understand the Prophets (Acts 3:24)].

11 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.** [See Acts 3:12-24, Rev. 10:7].

12 **It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you** [that is, the “eyewitness’ generation] through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent [John 16:7] from heaven -- things into which angels long to look.
13 Therefore, gird your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace \[John 1:17\] to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. . . .

20 For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world \[see Matt. 21:43\], but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you”. (1 Peter 1:4-20)


Chapter 3 [3:19] provides the interesting connection to Jesus’ preaching to the dead” in “Hades” [see Luke 16:19ff, John 5:28ff, Acts 2:27-31 (Psalms 16:10), Eph. 4:8-10, 1 Peter 4:6, Rev. 1:18, 6:8, 20:13-15, and Josephus’ “discourse on Hades” in Section (6.2.4.2)]. The passage from 1 Peter (3:21-22) is closely linked to First Corinthians Chapter 15.

Chapter 4 provides a reference that enables us to define the latter extent of “The times of the Gentiles” [see Section (2.3.2)]. When “the desire of the Gentiles” [1 Peter 4:3ff (see Luke 21:24, Rom. 11:25, Rev. 11:2)] is properly aligned with a fulfillment in A.D. 70, then the time-definite references to “at hand” becomes coherent. The requirement, to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles [Matt. 24:14], was nearly finished [Rom. 15:19, Col. 1:23] and the war with the Romans was to begin within two years.

Please follow the author’s comments within the context of Chapter 4:

1 Peter 4:3, For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire [time] of the Gentiles ” [Luke 21:24, Rom. 11:25, Rev. 11:2], . . .

5 but they [Gentiles] shall give account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. [Note the reference to an impending judgment].

Author’s Note. Paul’s discourse concerning the Gentiles (Rom. 1:16-2:16) was a close parallel to Peter’s message here. From a historical standpoint, not only were the Jews to be punished in the war with the Romans, but there would also be a worldwide Roman civil war in A.D. 69. Many Gentiles would die and four Roman emperors (Nero, Galba, Otho, and Vitellius) see Table 2, would also perish during this war. This civil war [see Tacitus, Section (6.2.4.1)] was also prophesied in the Scriptures (see “the divided kingdom” in Daniel 2:41 and “subdue three kings” in Daniel 7:24).

The references to “judgment and preaching to the dead” [1 Peter 4:5-6] were interpreted by the early Church fathers as a reference to the “Final Judgment” and the “resurrection” at the end of the world. Most of Christendom has always held this view. Therefore, that possibility will always have to be considered as one of the solutions to the mystery.

However, the time-definite references to “ready to judge” [1 Peter 4:5] and “the end of all things is at hand” [1 Peter 4:7] should raise some objective inquiry and cause scholars to investigate a 1st Century Spiritual fulfillment.
In view of the time-definite references, this author is more inclined to understand that Peter was not discussing the “final judgment” but rather the “coming” [parousia] of the Lord in judgment [1 Peter 4:17] at the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

It must be understood that the Bible, from Genesis to the Book of Revelation, is filled with examples of the “judgments of God”. The very purpose of this study was to emphasize that much of both the Old and New Testament prophecies foretold the destruction of Jerusalem in both 586 B.C. and A.D. 70.

In view of Paul’s “present distress” [1 Cor. 7:26], it is most illogical to assume that James, the Lord’s brother, and Peter would preach to the Jews [James 1:2, 1 Peter 1:1ff] of the “Diaspora” concerning the “end of the literal world”. The circumstances leading to the impending “fiery ordeals” [James 1:2, 1 Peter 1:6, 4:12] that the Jews would face in the “Great War with the Romans” from A.D. 66 to 70 had already begun.

Therefore, the term “the judgment of God” must be interpreted as a continuing process and many separate events from the beginning and not only one exclusive final “Judgment Day”. A 1st Century judgment, in terms of the destruction of the “Jewish System”, that was prophesied by the Lord in Matthew Chapter 24 is a well documented historical fact.

The Great Jewish War was about to begin with Israel (1 Peter 4:17). The question, as to whether or not there will be another final judgment, is certainly not an issue in this study. As mentioned before, “the resurrection” [see Section (8.2)] and “the final judgment” are subjects that raise some very difficult questions and problems that will be reserved for a future study.

1 Peter 4:6 (continued), “For the gospel has for this purpose been preached even to those who are dead [see Luke 16:19ff, John 5:28ff, Acts 2:27-31 (Psalms 16:10), Eph. 4:8-10, Rev. 1:18, 6:8, 20:13-15], that though they are judged in the flesh as men, they may live in the spirit according to the will of God.

7 The end of all things is at hand [see Section (4.4.3.2) “The Coming of the Lord was still near well after Pentecost A.D. 30”, and so was “The Harvest and the End of the Age”, see Section (2.3.5)]. . . .

11 Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever [see Dan. 7:14, Rev. 12:10]. Amen.

12 Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal [2 Thess. 2:7, James 1:2]. . . .

17 For it is time for judgment to begin [that is, the wicked Jews at A.D. 70] 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? (1 Peter 4:4-17)

(3.5.20) The Book of 2nd Peter

The Book of Second Peter is one of the most puzzling and most difficult books in the entire Bible to interpret. There are amazing similarities between 2nd Peter Chapter 2 and the Book of Jude. Both books appear to also be integrally linked to the Jewish sectarian teachings found in the Book of Enoch and in the Dead Sea Scrolls. Furthermore, there is the reference in Jude [14-15], which is almost identical to the
corresponding passage from the Jewish apocryphal “Book of Enoch”. The Christian Epistle of Barnabas similarly quotes from the Book of Enoch.

Dupont-Sommer (1962), in the introduction to The Essene Writings from Qumran, or what is commonly known as “The Dead Sea Scrolls”, identified some of the books that were found within the Qumran library. Included in the library were works from the “Pseudepigrapha” of the Old Testament including the “The Book of Enoch”. The Book of Enoch was believed to be written somewhere between the 4th to the 1st Century B.C. But it appears to be written before and apart from Christianity. Please compare the two texts below:

Jude 14, And about these also Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied, saying, "Behold, the Lord came with many thousands of His holy ones, to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds which they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him." (Jude 14-15)

Enoch I, 9, And behold! He cometh with ten thousands of ‘His’ holy ones To execute judgment upon all [see Deut. 33:1-3, Dan. 7:9ff, Rev. 5:11], And to destroy ‘all’ the ungodly: And to convict all flesh. Of all the works ‘of their ungodliness’ which they have ungodly committed, ‘And of all the hard things which’ ungodly sinners ‘have spoken’ against Him”. (Charles, 1966, p. 32, also see Section [6.4])

“The Book of Enoch” was not considered Inspired by most of the Church fathers, with the exception of Tertullian (McClintock and Strong, 1981, Vol. III, p. 226). It is apparent, that many of the concepts and ideas from “The Book of Enoch” are nearly the same as those found in the Books of 2nd Peter, Jude, and the Revelation.

The doctrine in the Book of 2nd Peter followed the contemporary Jewish mystics’ [perhaps the Essenes of Qumran] belief scenario. This belief presumed the imminent second destruction of the world by fire.

The flood and the evil described in Genesis Chapter 6ff, were the causes of the first destruction of the world. Josephus (Antiq. Bk I, Ch. 2, pp. 35) presents some of the Jewish traditions from the point of view of a 1st Century Pharisee. Note! It has always been the common Jewish belief [which Josephus ascribes to an “oral” prophecy from Adam, himself] that the world would be destroyed once in Noah’s time by the flood and once again by fire [see the note on Enoch Chapter X in Section (6.4)].

This perception, which was also common to 2nd Peter, Jude, the Revelation, the Book of Enoch, and the “Dead Sea scrolls” evidently formed the basis for much of the traditions that were accepted by the early Church theologians in the 2nd Century. However, any serious Bible student of any era should notice the profound differences between the eschatology [that is the things of the end], which is found in First and Second Peter.

The actual historical events and philosophical interpretations from First Peter can easily be literally fulfilled in terms of the similar circumstances as the previous destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, in 586
B.C. This view becomes more apparent from the accounts of the 1st Century historians, Josephus, Tacitus, and Suetonius concerning the war with the Romans. Therefore, there was also the record of still another judgment [see Deut. 28:45-64, Daniel Chapters 2, 7, 9, 12, Matt. Chapter 24, Luke 19:43-44, Rev. 11:1-8] of God in the form of the Great Jewish War that resulted in the destruction of Jerusalem, the Temple and the scattering of the Jews. These events are well known historical facts that are well documented.

On the other hand, the author of 2nd Peter, like the other Jewish sectarian views, expected the literal second destruction of the world by fire. **However, this traditional Jewish sectarian expectation, of the imminent destruction of the world by fire, obviously did not happen in A.D. 70.** The Jewish mystics, who first described these beliefs in the Book of Enoch and the Jews who were awaiting the Messiah at Qumran, all vanished during the war with the Romans. Their beliefs were forgotten until the Top discovery of their writings in 1947.

However, these Jewish sectarian concepts had taken root in Christian theology. Christendom now commonly believes that the destruction of the world and the “final coming [parousia] of the Messiah” was delayed for an indefinite period of time [see 2 Peter 3:4, 7-13]. This perceived Christian scenario also creates a problem that is difficult to reconcile. The belief in the delay [a day is as a thousand years (2 Peter 3:8)] of the “coming [parousia] of the Lord” is the source of much of the debate on the things of the end or “eschatology”.

Furthermore, much of the similar imagery common to the Book of Enoch, 2nd Peter, Jude, and the Revelation is not found in those other Books of the Bible. To illustrate this point, please review the selected passages from the Book of Enoch (Charles, 1966) and the comments in Chapter 6, Section (6.4).

Eusebius (Pamphilus, 1966, BK III, Chap. I, p. 82) informs us that both Peter and Paul died in Rome sometime before Nero’s death in A.D. 68 [see Table 2]. Tertullian [A.D. 145-220] (Roberts & Donaldson, Vol III, 1981, p. 648) also indicates that Paul was beheaded in Rome and that Peter was crucified, at the same time, in Nero’s reign in that first persecution of A.D. 64. McClintock and Strong (1981, Vol. III) state, “The general impression of the fathers is that he [Peter] was an old man [John 21:17-23] at the date of his death in A.D. 64” (p. 5). We also know from “The Annals” of Tacitus (1952, BK. XV, 41-44, pp. 167-168) that Rome was burned on the 19th of July [A.D. 64] and that Nero promptly put the blame on Christians. **This great fire resulted in the first great Roman persecution of Christians:**

Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace. **Christus [Christ], from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hand of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilatus,** and a most mischievous superstition, thus checked for the moment, again broke out not only in Judea, the first source of the evil, but even in Rome. (Tacitus, 1952, p. 168)

Therefore, logic tells us that if the Apostle Peter was the author of Second Peter then it had to be written shortly after the Book of Acts [since the chronology of Acts ends in

Thus, the events of Nero’s persecution in A.D. 64 and the beginning of the “Great Jewish War in A.D. 66 [the “tribulation”, Dan. 12:1, Matt. 24:21] were very close to being fulfilled. For this reason, the war, which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in A.D. 70 [see Dan. 9:24-25, 12:1ff, Matt. 24:15, Luke 19:43-44, 2 Thess. 4:1-9, Rev. 11:1-8], was to begin within only two years after the time 2 Peter was written.

The disparity that immediately becomes evident from reading the Book of 2 Peter is that there was no expected “coming [parousia]” of the Lord in connection with the destruction of Jerusalem [see Matthew Chapter 24]. Instead the doctrine taught in 2 Peter is almost identical to the expectations taught in the Jewish sectarian literature such as the Book of Enoch and the “Dead Sea Scrolls”.

This raises some very interesting questions. Why would Peter, in his second book, overlook the present grave circumstances of the first Christian persecution under Nero and the imminent Jewish War to discuss the distant future?

Moreover, such specific time-definite references as: [1 Peter 1:7], “The end of all things is at hand”), the period of “lawlessness is already at work” [Matt. 24:12, 2 Thess. 2:7], the associated “present trials” [James 1:2, 1 Peter 1:6] and the present “distress” [1 Cor. 7:26] were already current realities.

Furthermore, Peter should have clearly understood that Jesus already had warned him that all of the Apostles, except John [John 21:17-23, “If I want him to remain until I come”] would die before His appearance at A.D. 70. Thus, there was absolutely no reason for Peter to expect the “coming [parousia]” of the Lord and there was no reason for Peter to ask, “Where is the promise of His coming” [2 Peter 3:4] while he, himself, was still alive.

And moreover, why would Peter find the teachings of Paul hard to understand [2 Peter 3:15-16] when they spent their last years together and were executed at the same time in Rome about A.D. 64? In Paul’s teaching “the present distress” and “the form of this world is passing away” [1 Cor. 7:26, 31] provide a good deal of support for the Jewish War point of view.

In view of all that Jesus personally taught Peter [especially at the transfiguration, see 2 Peter 1:16-18], and from Peter’s own teachings concerning the prophets [2 Peter 1:19-21], how could Peter arrive at this completely different scenario? One might answer that he gained insight directly from the “Holy Spirit”. If this were true, then why are the beliefs of 2 Peter the same as the teachings of the Jewish mystics in the Book of Enoch?

In any case, the imminent “coming” of the Lord, and the end of the world by fire was firmly expected by the author of 2 Peter, but that scenario did not happen.

Whereas, the destruction of Jerusalem, the destruction of the Temple, the end Jewish system, and the “end of the age” [see Section (2.3.5)] are all well documented historical facts. These facts support the interpretation of 1 Peter and most of the other Scriptures [see Deut. 28:45-64, Daniel Chapters 2, 7, 9, 12, Matthew Chapter 24, Luke 19:43-44, Rev. 11:1-8], in terms of the great Jewish War from A.D. 66-70.

In addition, there are other references to many of Peter’s teachings from the Book of Acts and from the Gospels. Remember, it was Peter who said in Acts [3:21], “all of the Prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and his successors onward, also announce
these days”. Serious Bible students will find it very difficult to defend the position that any of the Old Testament prophecies identify any specific event beyond A.D. 70.

In order to be completely objective, then both the similarities and the differences must be carefully considered between the content and philosophies discussed in both First and Second Peter. The subjects of the “fallen angels” and “the earth being destroyed by literal fire” are not found in Peter’s other teachings or in those New Testament books. The eternal fire was associated with punishment in the already prepared hell [see Matt. 25:41, Jude 7] after death and judgment.

Compare the actual text below of 2 Peter with the Book of Jude and with the Book of Enoch [Section (6.4)]. There can be little doubt that the author reflects the same teachings as the published Jewish sectarian beliefs.

2 Peter 1:1, Simon Peter. .
11 for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom [not the Church] of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you. [The expectation of the kingdom is still in the future well after Pentecost]. . .
14 knowing that the laying aside of my earthly dwelling is imminent, as also our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me (that is, John 21:17-23).
16 For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty.
17 For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory, "This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased"--
18 and we ourselves heard this utterance made from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. [Note that “majesty” and “glory” were used in reference to the transfiguration. See Section (4.4.3.5)]. . . . (2 Peter 1:1-18)

2 Peter 2:4, For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment [see Jude 6ff, Rev. 20:1ff, and Enoch in Section (6.4)];
5 . . . when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly;
6 and if He condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah [Jude 7] to destruction by reducing them to ashes, having made them an example to those who would live ungodly thereafter; . . .
9 . . . for the day of judgment, . . . (2 Peter 2:4-9)

2 Peter 3:3, . . . that in the last days mockers [Jude 18] will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts,
4 and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation [see Gen. 8:22].". . .
6 through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water.
7 But the present heavens and earth by His word are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. [It should be clear here that the author expected the literal destruction of the world by fire in the same
way that it was destroyed by the flood. This was the Jewish traditional belief. Moreover, that Jewish expectation either did not occur or it was delayed. See the next verse.

8 But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. . . .

10 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.

11 Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way. . . .

12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, on account of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat!

13 But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth [see Matt. 24:35, Luke 21:33, Rev 21:1ff], in which righteousness dwells. . . .

15 and regard the patience of our Lord to be salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote [note that the writings of Paul had already been published] to you, [also note that Paul had already taught that the “form” of the world was passing away (1 Cor. 7:31)],

16 as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand [the author was not certain concerning the future], which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction. (2 Peter 1:1-3:16)

(3.5.21) The First Book of John

As mentioned in the commentary of the Gospel of John, Eusebius (Pamphilus, 1966, Bk III, Chap. XXIV, p. 109) indicates that the Gospel and First John were considered genuine and were written by the Apostle. John’s teachings, contrasting “light and darkness”, are very similar to the Essene phrases found in the “Dead Sea Scrolls” [see Section (6.5)]. The allusion to “light and darkness” continues in this book [1 John 1:5]. Compare Paul’s parallel teachings in the references listed here. In John’s perception, the period of darkness was almost over [1 John 2:8, Rom. 13:12] as the end of the world [form of the world, 1 Cor. 7:31] and the “coming [parousia]” of the Lord [1 John 2:28] were rapidly approaching:

1 John 2:17, And the world is passing away [“form of the world”, 1 Cor. 7:31], and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever.

18 Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist [Paul’s “man of lawlessness”, 2 Thess. 2:3-4] is coming, even now many antichrists have arisen; from this we know that it is the last hour. . . .

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”. . . .

25 And this is the promise which He Himself made to us: eternal life. . . .

28. . . so that when He appears [soon], we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming [parousia]. (1 John 2:17-22)
More important information and clues can be found in **Chapter 3**. The previous passages, from the Gospel of John, spoke of the “**coming**” of the Lord and provide insight as to how Jesus taught that it would be fulfilled. Jesus taught Nicodemus, “unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3ff). It is also very important to consider John’s [5:21-37] account in connection with Chapter 3 below.

The difference between the teachings of both “the **Spiritual and literal deaths**” [John 8:51-58] must be understood in order to perceive the fulfillment. John [13:36] also recorded, “Where I go, you cannot follow Me now, **but you shall follow later**” [that is, to death and resurrection to heaven].

There was the promise of the Holy Spirit that came on Pentecost [John 14:16ff, 16:13ff, Acts 2:1ff]. The important passage from John [14:22] implies a **mystical presence that only believers, but not the world, would see** [“Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, "Lord, what then has happened that You are going to disclose Yourself to us, and not to the world?"]. This Spiritual disclosure fits well into the Spiritual coming Top of Jesus at the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

There is another time-definite reference [John 16:16, “**A little while, and you will no longer, behold Me; and again a little while, and you will see**” (Matt. 16:27-28) Me”]. Finally, the time-definite remarks spoken by Jesus to the Apostle John, himself, firmly establishes an A.D. 70 fulfillment, “**If I want him (John) to remain until I come**” [in A.D. 70] (John 21:22-23).

It is quite obvious that the aging Apostle John, in **Chapter 3** below, had the same expectation as when he actually walked with Jesus almost 40 years earlier.

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1 John 3:1, **See how great a love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God. . .**

2 **Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be.** We know that, when **He appears**, we shall be like Him, because we shall see **Him** just as He is. **[This imminent expected appearance would certainly rule out Pentecost A.D. 30-33 as the fulfillment of Matt. 16:27-28]**. . . .

4 Everyone who practices sin also practices **lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness** [Matt. 24:12, 2 Thess. 2: 3,7] . . .

8 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, that **He might destroy the works of the devil**.

9 **No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed [Gal. 3:16ff] abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God [Spiritual duality]. . .**

14 . . . we have **passed out of death [a Spiritual and figurative resurrection] into life** [John 8:51, 11:25]. . . . He who does not love abides in death. (1 John 3:1-14)

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**Chapter 4** provides similar connections to the things that Jesus taught in the Gospels. The **prediction of false prophets** is recorded in Matthew [24:11]. The time-definite reference to the **anti-Christ** indicates that he **was already in the world** [2 Thess. 2:3].

1 **John 4:1, 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. . . .**
3 and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; and this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world.
4 . . . He who is in you than he who is in the world. (1 John 4:1-4)

Chapter 5 provides even more time-definite orientation before the death of John. We know, from John’s Gospel [12:31, 17:15], that the “evil one” is Satan, and that the final struggle was not yet fought. Paul [Eph. 6:11-13] explained it in terms of the “spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places”.

1 John 5:18, We know that no one who is born of God sins; but He who was born of God keeps him and the evil one does not touch him.
19 . . . we are of God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.
20 And we know that the Son of God has come [that is, in the flesh], and has given us understanding, in order that we might know Him who is true, and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.
(1 John 5:18-20)

(3.5.22) 2nd and 3rd John

There is no significant information, of interest to this study, found in these references.

(3.5.23) The Book Of Jude

The commentary above on 2 Peter previously discussed the amazing similarities between 2 Peter Chapter 2 and the Book of Jude. Both books appear to be integrally linked to the teachings of the pre-Christian Jewish sectarian works as evidenced from the teachings in the Book of Enoch. Furthermore, there was the reference, in Jude 14-15, that is almost identical to the corresponding passage from the apocryphal “Book of Enoch”. Please see the more detailed discussion of the Book of Enoch in Chapter 6, Section (6.4).

Enoch 1, 9, And behold! He cometh with ten thousands of ‘His’ holy ones
To execute judgement upon all, One [see Deut. 33:1-3, Dan. 7:9ff, Rev. 5:11]
And to destroy ‘all’ the ungodly: and to convict all flesh.
Of all the works ‘of their ungodliness’ which they have ungodly committed,
‘And of all the hard things which’ ungodly sinners ‘have spoken’ against Him”.
(Charles, 1966, p. 32, also see Section 6.3)

Jude 1, Jude, a bond-servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to those who are the called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ: . . .
4 For certain persons have crept in unnoticed [see Gal. 1:6, 2 Tim. 3:6, the apostasy had already begun] those who were long beforehand marked [1 Peter 2:8] out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our
God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ [2 Peter 2:1ff]. . .

6 And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day [Genesis Chapter 6, 2 Peter 2: 4ff].

7 Just as Sodom and Gomorrah [2 Peter 2:6ff, Rev. 11:8] and the cities around them. . . are exhibited as an example, in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire. [Note both the physical and eternal fire]. . .

14 And about these also Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied, saying, "Behold, the Lord came with many thousands of His holy ones,

15 to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds which they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him." [This is the above quote from the Book of Enoch]. . .

18 that they were saying to you, "In the last time [2 Peter 3:3, 1 Tim. 4:1, 2 Tim. 3:1ff] there shall be mockers, following after their own ungodly lusts." . . .

21 keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life. . .

24 Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy. (Jude 1-24)

Author’s Note. It is important to understand the Jewish perception of eschatology and the part played by “the fallen angels” [Jude 6]. Eisenman & Wise (1992) discussed the Essene view that the fallen angels were the fathers of the “giants” in Genesis Chapter 6, shortly before the flood in the time of Noah. See the excerpt From the Book of Enoch below:

Enoch VI, 1. And it came to pass when the children of men had multiplied that in those days were born unto them beautiful and comely daughters. 2. And the angels [Gen. 6:1ff], the children of the heaven, saw and lusted after them, and said to one another: ‘Come, let us choose us wives from among the children of men and beget us children’. (p. 34)

Enoch VII, 1. And all the others together with them took unto themselves wives, . . .

2. And they became pregnant, and bare great giants [Nephilim, Gen. 6:4, Num. 13:32-33]. (p. 35)

Enoch X, 1. Then said the Most High, the Holy and Great One spake, and sent Uriel to the son of Lamech, and said to him: 2. ‘ {Go to Noah and} tell him in my name “Hide thyself!”’, and reveal to him the end that is approaching: that the whole earth will be destroyed, and a deluge [the flood, Gen. 6:1ff, 2 Peter 2:5, 3:6] is about to come upon the whole earth, and will destroy all that is on it. 3. And now instruct him that he may escape and his seed may be preserved for all the
generations of the world.’ 4. And again the Lord said to Raphael: ‘Bind Azazel hand and foot, and cast him into the darkness [see 2 Peter 2:4, Jude 6, Rev. 12:9, 20:1-7] and make an opening in the desert, which is in Dudaæl, and cast him therein.

The Book of Revelation will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 7. In the next chapter all of the pieces of this “great puzzle” finally came together as the author began to realize that the above Scriptures were speaking of the destruction of Jerusalem and the “end of the Jewish age” and not “the end of the literal world”.

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CHAPTER FOUR
(4.0) THE FULFILLMENT

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(4.1) The Pieces of the Puzzle Come Together

And Jesus answered and said to them, "See to it that no one misleads you". (Matt. 24:4)

Many years ago, after a period of overwhelming anxiety and entreating the Lord as to what all these “end time prophecies” might actually mean, the reading of this Scripture from Matthew [24:4] proved to be both the key and the catalyst for this study.

In 1968, in a moment of blazing insight, as though Jesus had spoken to him personally, a young “Zealot” put aside the traditional mind-sets that he was taught, and fastened his Spiritual eyes on the Master of the Universe. Like Peter, this author leaped out of the boat, laden with human traditions, and headed directly toward the Lord without ever looking back.

If this perception of a 1st Century fulfillment was valid, then the prophecies of Daniel and the sequels in Matthew Chapter 24 [Mark chapter 13 and Luke Chapter 21] and much of the Book of Revelation [11:1-17] had already been fulfilled. Thus, these prophecies were fulfilled during the “siege of Jerusalem” or certainly before the end of that living “eyewitness generation” [Matt. 10:23, 16:27-28]. Therefore, like David, this author was
compelled to face a “Goliath” or, in this case, those traditions that “defied the Living God” [1 Sam. 17:26].

**The next perplexing problems to be faced were how to proceed and how to prove or verify this Spiritual perception?** The intuitive solution was to pray for wisdom [Matt. 7:7-8, James 1:5-6] and to become immersed in the “Word” itself with an open mind. The study of the Old and New Testament core Scriptures in Chapter 3 was sufficient for the author to orient the fulfillment of Matthew Chapter 24 to the 1st Century destruction of Jerusalem.

(4.2) The Parallel Study of Matthew 24, Luke 21, and Mark 13

The continuity of God’s predetermined plan of creation, or, the “golden thread” from Genesis to the Revelation, is a key to understanding Biblical prophecy. It would be virtually impossible to comprehend Matthew Chapter 24 without first understanding the Book of Daniel and other Old Testament prophecies. **All of the previous Scriptures were identified and discussed, as building blocks, in preparation for the study of Matthew Chapter 24 and the parallel accounts of Mark 13 and Luke 21.**

The prophecies from Daniel Chapters 2, 7, 9, and 12 unlock the meaning of Matthew Chapter 24. The references appear to be linked to a fulfillment in the Book of Revelation Chapter 11. The major event is the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70. The parallel composite prophecies, from the Gospel accounts of the destruction of Jerusalem from Matthew Chapter 24, [Mark 13], and (Luke 21), along with the profuse corresponding references from the Old Testament, were compiled by this author. In this way, when the parallel accounts of the different Gospels are considered together a more accurate interpretation emerges.

The parallel comparison of Scriptures was fundamental to the early analytical research for this study. The accounts from Mark and Luke are shown in italics. The author’s comments are either enclosed within brackets [ ] or are partitioned between horizontal lines and annotated as, “Author’s Note” or “Author’s Comment”.

Matthew 24:1, And **Jesus came out from the temple** and was going away when His disciples came up to point out the temple [it was built by Herod the Great, John 2:20] buildings to Him.

24:2 And He answered and said to them, “Do you not see all these [Mark 13:2, great buildings] things? Truly I say to you, **not one stone here shall be left upon another, which will not be torn down”**.

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**Author’s Note.** It should be carefully noted here, that the Lord said, “these things (buildings)”, “these stones” of Herod’s Temple. This would appear to rule out the possibility of building a future Temple to fulfill these same prophecies. The historical references from Tacitus and Josephus, which are presented later in this study, give ample testimony to the fact that Herod’s Temple (time-definite) was destroyed by fire at the hand of the Romans in August of A.D. 70.
Matt. 24:3 (continued), “And as He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples [Mark 13:3, Peter and James and John and Andrew] came to Him privately, saying, “What will be the sign of Your coming [presence, (Greek parousia), Young, p. 188] and of the end of the [Jewish] age? [Mark 13:4, Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign when all these things are going to be fulfilled?]” (Luke 21:7, Teacher, when therefore will these things be? And what will be the sign when these things are about to take place).

Author’s Comment. Matthew 24:3 (Mark 13:4, Luke 21:7) is one of the most important Scriptures in this study. The traditional assumption, which is found in this verse, was that the disciples asked Jesus two separate questions. Thus, they received two distinct answers concerning the “destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70” and “the Lord’s coming at the end of the world” [see the discussion on “the end of the age” in Section (2.3.5)].

However, in both Mark’s and Luke’s accounts, only one question was asked, and that was concerning the destruction of the Temple, but the answers were identical. Therefore, this might indicate that both the “coming” and the “destruction of Jerusalem” were fulfilled in A.D. 70 during the same historical event.

Furthermore, all of the above supporting data, presented thus far in this study, point to a fulfillment in A.D. 70. At the risk of being redundant to an extreme, the three passages from the Old Testament cited below offer strong proof that a coming [see Section (4.4.3)] of the Lord in Biblical prophecy was to occur during the “great Jewish War that ended in A.D. 70”:

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Isa. 40:5, Then the glory of the LORD will be revealed [Matt. 16:27-28, 24:30], and all flesh will see it together [Luke 2:31, Rom. 16:26 (Acts 13:47)];

Dan. 7:13, I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, and He came up to the Ancient of Days (1 Cor. 15:23-26) and was presented before Him.

Zech. 1:5, Then the LORD, my God, will come, and all the holy with Him! [see Matt. 16:27-28, 1 Thess. 4:14].

Therefore, in order for the Scriptures to remain consistent, the Lord had to appear at the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. This was fulfilled according to the prophecies (they are, Matthew Chapter 24, Mark Chapter 13, Luke Chapter 21, and Revelation Chapter 11). This happened in the exact same way and on the exact same day that God appeared during the destruction of Jerusalem at the time of Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, in 586 B. C. [See Isaiah 29:1-12, Jeremiah 25:9-33, 32:29, 52:12-14, Ezekiel 4:1-2, 24:1-21, Daniel 9:12, and others]. Within this context, the historical testimonies of the Roman writers and Flavius Josephus substantiate this fact.
Matt. 24:4 (continued), “And Jesus answered and said to them, "See to it that no one misleads you".

24:5 "For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' (Luke 21:8, and, the time is at hand; do not go after them) and will mislead many."

24:6 “And you will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars; see that you are not frightened, for those things must take place [after Pentecost A.D. 30-33] (Luke 21:9, take place first), but that is not yet the end [it would take 40 years to complete the cycle] (Luke 21:9, but the end does not follow immediately).

24:7 For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom [that is the Roman and Jewish wars of A.D. 66-70, see Tacitus’ and Josephus’ accounts in Chapter 6 of this study], and in various places there will be (Luke 21:11, plagues and famines; and there will be terrors and great signs from heaven) famines [Acts 11:28] and earthquakes [Acts 16:26, Rev. 11:13].

24:8 But all these things are merely the beginning of birth pangs [of Zion, see Isaiah 66:7-10, Rev 12:2].

24:9 Then (Luke 21:12, before all these things) they will deliver you up to tribulation, and will kill you [only John will survive until the destruction of Jerusalem, John 21:22-23], and you will be hated by all the nations on account of My name [Mark 13:9, for they will deliver you up to the courts, and you will be flogged in the synagogues, and you will stand before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them]. [Much of this prophecy was fulfilled by Peter and Paul in the Book of Acts].

[Mark 13:11, “And when they arrest you and deliver you up, do not be anxious beforehand about what you are to say, but say whatever is given you in that hour; for it is not you who speak, but it is the Holy Spirit. (Luke 21:13-15, It will lead to an opportunity for your testimony. 14 So make up your minds not to prepare beforehand to defend yourselves; 15 for I will give utterance and wisdom which none of your opponents will be able to resist or refute). [Note! If this context is the end of the world, then we should still have miraculous Spiritual gifts].

[Mark 13:11-13, 12 “And brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death . . . 13 but it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved]. (Luke 21:16-19, 16 “But you will be betrayed even by patents and brothers and relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death . . . 18 “Yet not a hair of your head will perish. 19 “By your perseverance you will win your souls]. [The literal fulfillment of the things in this paragraph is discussed in Section (6.2.3) of this study, concerning the works of Josephus].

24:10 “And at that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another

24:11 “And many false prophets will arise [they were there, 1 John 4:1, 2 Thess. 2:9-11, also many are identified in the works of Josephus], and will mislead many.

24:12 “And because of lawlessness [see 2 Thess. 2: 7, “the mystery of lawlessness is already at work:] is increased, most people’s love will grow cold.

24:13 “But the one who endures to the end [of the age], is he who shall be saved.
24:14 “And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world [Paul accomplished this “hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister”, Col. 1:23] for a witness to all the nations, and then the end [of the Jewish age and Old Covenant] shall come.

24:15 “Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel [9:26] the prophet, IN THE HOLY PLACE

Author’s Note. Notice the connection between the “promises of Moses” [Deut. 28:49-61], the “Prince” [Daniel 9:26], the “abomination of desolation” [Matt. 24:15], and the “man of lawlessness” [2 Thess. 2:3-4, 1 John 3:4]. The promise of God’s punishment of Israel, by Gentile armies, goes back to the giving of the Law of Moses. The unbroken historical record from both Jewish history [1 Maccabees (see Chapter 3, Section 3.3.1)] and the early Christian accounts from Eusebius [(1966), Bk. III, Ch. V also in Chapter 6] provide additional support for the interpretation of the final “abomination of desolation” as the war with the Romans. Jesus and the New Testament writers made the same interpretation. The Scriptures linked together here find a fulfillment, by the hand of the Romans, in A.D. 70, just as promised by Jesus:

(2 Thess. 2:3), “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 Caesar, “the prince”, Dan. 9:26] of destruction, 4 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” (2 Thess. 2:3-4).

The Temple (Heb. 9:1-2) remained standing until August of A.D. 70, when it was burned to the ground by the Romans (Heb. 9:8), just as it was previously destroyed on the same day of the year by the Babylonians in 586 B.C.

Matt. 24:15 (continued), “(let the reader understand), [The interpretation of abomination of desolation was easily fulfilled by Jerusalem being surrounded by the Romans] (Luke 21:20, 20 “But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is at hand). [Also see Rev. 11:8].

24:16 then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains [see Chapter 6, Section (6.2.2), (Eusebius Pamphilus, 1966, Bk III, Ch. VII)];

24:17 let him who is on the housetop not go down to get the things out that are in the house;

24:18 and let him who is in the field not turn back to get his cloak.

24:19 “But woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days! (Luke 21:23-28, 23 “Woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days; for there will be great distress upon the land, and wrath to this [Jewish] people, 24 and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled [Rom. 11:25, 1 Peter 4:3-7, Rev. 11:2-8]. 25”And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and upon the earth
dismay among the nations, in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves, 26 men fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shake (Haggai 2:6.)

Author’s Comment. The time-definite references here more logically discuss the change from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant or the end of the Jewish age, and not the end of the world. It should be obvious that the warning to “flee to the mountains” [Matt. 24:16] and the “time of the Gentiles be fulfilled” [Luke 21:24] were in reference to the destruction of Jerusalem. Why would there be a warning to “flee” if this warning applied to the “end of the world” or “Final Judgment”?

The reference to the “powers of the heavens will be shaken” [Luke 21:26] appears to be a parallel to the giving of the Old Law at Mt. Sinai:

(Heb.12: 26) And His voice shook the earth then (at Sinai, Exodus 19:18), but now He has promised, saying, "YET ONCE MORE I WILL SHAKE NOT ONLY THE EARTH, BUT ALSO THE HEAVEN" (Haggai 2:6). 27 And this expression, "Yet once more," denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, in order that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. 28 Therefore, since we receive a kingdom [40 years after Pentecost], which cannot be shaken . . . (Heb. 12: 26-28)

(Heb. 8:13), “When He said, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear”. Christ, “. . . shall appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him” (Heb. 9:28), “then He said, "BEHOLD, I HAVE COME TO DO THY WILL." He takes away the first in order to establish the second” (Heb. 10:9).

Matt. 24:19 (continued), (Luke 21:27) “And then they will see THE SON OF MAN COMING IN A CLOUD with power and great glory. 28 “But when these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”) [Matt 16:28, “Truly I say to you, there are some of those standing here who shall not taste death [die] until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom”].

24:20 “But pray that your flight may not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath [the Sabbath is of no concern to future Christians];

24:21 for then there will be a great tribulation (Luke 21:22, because these are days of vengeance, in order that all things which are written may be fulfilled), such as has not occurred [see Dan 9:12, Dan.12:1, Rev. 7:14] since the beginning of the world [Mark 13:19, the creation which God created] until now, nor ever shall.

24:22 “And unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect [Mark 13:20, elect whom He chose] those days shall be cut short.

24:23 “Then if any one says to you, ‘Behold, here is the Christ’, or ‘There He is’, do not believe him [see Luke 17:20-37].
24:24 “For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect.

24:25 “Behold I have told you in advance [but they would not listen].

24:26 “If therefore they say to you, ‘Behold, He is in the wilderness,’ do not go forth, or ‘Behold He is in the inner rooms,’ do not believe them.

24:27 “For just as lightening comes from the east, and flashes to the west, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be.

24:28 “Wherever the corpse [dying Jerusalem] is, there the vultures [or the eagles of Roman Legions] will gather [at Jerusalem, see Luke 17:37].


24:30 then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory [Rev. 1:7].

24:31 “And He will send forth His angels WITH A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect FROM THE FOUR WINDS, FROM ONE END OF THE SKY TO THE OTHER, [Mark 13:27, FROM THE FARthest END OF THE EARTH, TO THE FARTHEST END OF HEAVEN] [Just as Moses had prophesied, Deut. 30:4].

24:32 “Now learn the parable FROM THE FIG TREE: when its branch has Top already become tender, and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near,

24:33 even so you too, when you see all these things, recognize that He is near, right at the door [see James 5:8-9].

24:34 “Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. (Luke 21:31-36, 31 “Even so you too, when you see these things happening, recognize that the kingdom of God is near. 32 “Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all things take place. 33 “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away [Isaiah 65:17, Luke 21:33, 2 Peter 3:10-13, Rev. 21:1-4]. 34 “Be on guard, that your hearts may not be weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of life, and that day come on you suddenly like a trap: 35 for it will come upon all those who dwell on the face of the earth. 36 “But keep on the alert at all times, praying in order that you may have strength to escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man”).

24:35 “Heaven and earth will pass away [Isaiah 65:17, Luke 21:33, 2 Peter 3:10-13, Rev. 21:1-4], but My words shall not pass away [see Section (2.3.6)].

24:36 (Continued) “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.

Author’s Note. The understanding of Jesus’ own words, in the phrase “Heaven and earth will pass away”, may provide the key for deciphering the other associated prophecies [see Isaiah 65:17, Luke 21:33, 2 Peter 3:10-13, Rev. 21:1-4]. There is no doubt that Jesus made this prophecy within the context of other prophecies concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple.
Again, there are at least two possible interpretations. **First, Jesus might be speaking of a Spiritual change instead of a physical change** in the eternal order of things. This would be fulfilled by the war with the Romans and the coming of Jesus in the New Kingdom.

**Or secondly, Jesus was making reference to a sequence of events that would begin with the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, but the sequence would not end until the reign of the Church was completed at the “Day of Judgment”.** Moreover, Jesus knew that Jerusalem would be destroyed during the lifetime of the “eyewitness generation”. Thus, the implication was that He did not know when the “heavens and the earth” would pass away [that is, the time of the “Final Judgment”]. This may still be part of a mystery [Deut. 29:29].

Still other theologians will argue that the “heavens and the earth” figuratively passed away when the Temple was destroyed. Thus, it would have to be true that Jesus did not know the day or the hour [that is, of the destruction of the Temple], but that He did know that it would be fulfilled within that generation.

See the discussion of “The New Heavens and the New Earth” in Section (2.3.6) and the “Author’s Comment” on The Epistle of Barnabas [21:3] in Chapter 6, Section (6.6).

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24:37 “For the **coming of the Son of man will be just like the days of Noah.**

24:38 “For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, they were marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that NOAH ENTERED THE ARK, [The evil ones of that generation were destroyed].

24:39 and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away, so shall the coming of the Son of man be. [The evil Jews of the eyewitness generation were similarly destroyed in the siege of A.D. 70].

24:40 “Then there shall be two men in the field; one will be taken, and one will be left.

24:41 “Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken, and one will be left.

24:42 “Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming.

24:43 “But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into.

24:44 “For this reason you be ready too; for the **Son of man is coming** [some time after Pentecost] at an hour when you do not think He will.

24:45 “Who then is the faithful and sensible slave whom the master put in charge of his household to give them their food at the proper time?

24:46 “Blessed is the slave whom his master finds so doing when he comes.

24:47 “Truly I say to you, he will be put in charge of all his possessions.

24:48 “But if that evil slave says in his heart, ‘My master is not coming for a long time’,

24:49 and shall begin to beat his fellow slaves and eat and drink with drunkards;

24:50 the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour which he does not know,
24:51 and shall cut him in pieces [by the hand of the Romans] and assign him a place [in hell] with the hypocrites; weeping shall be there and the gnashing of teeth.

The historical testimony found in Chapter 6 of this book provides ample proof that many of these prophecies were literally fulfilled during the war with the Romans from A.D. 66-70. It is a futile exercise if one tries to make these “time definite” things apply to the future.

(4.3) The Date of the New Testament Writings

A careful examination of the internal historical references, found within the Books of the New Testament, indicate narratives that ended prior to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. This can be established from the fact that the prophecies [see Matt. 24, Mark 13, Luke 21, Heb. 9, Rev. 11:1-8, and others], concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, look to the future for fulfillment.

Moreover, the recent archaeological discoveries in our own generation from the library at Qumran produced a “Qumran Scroll Fragment (7Q5) of Mark, which was written on or before 68 A.D.” (“Biblical Validity”, Downloaded 28 Dec. 98). Perhaps other future discoveries will also help validate the pre-A.D. 70 hypothesis. Other findings are included in the discussion of “The Dead Sea Scrolls” in Section (6.5) of this study.

For those who defend the position that the Book of Revelation was written in A.D. 93 or later, one must weigh the internal evidence against the Church traditions. The account from Eusebius (Pamphilus, 1966), concerning the later dating, is discussed later in Chapter 6 of this study. There is always the hope that a future archaeological discovery will confirm the actual dating of the Revelation.

In addition, there is the internal testimony that the Revelation, itself, was written during the time of the 6th Caesar [see Table 2]: "Five have fallen, one is" (Rev. 17:10). The strongest internal evidence is the fact that the destruction of Jerusalem was envisioned to occur in the immediate future (Rev. 11:8). And finally, there is the reference to the prophets being fulfilled with the voice of the 7th angel (Rev. 10:7).

(4.4) Method of Biblical Interpretation

Consider four possible views in the interpretation of Biblical prophecy:

(4.4.1) The Agnostic view

The enemies of Christianity contend that “the man Jesus” was a historical figure who made promises to His own generation that He could not keep. A better Spiritual perception and understanding of the Scriptures and the historical record presented in this study provide just cause for this view to be rejected.

(4.4.2) The Roman Church View
The view that was established by the Roman Church endured for centuries. The early 2nd and 3rd Century Roman theologians looked to the future for the “coming of the Lord”. Thus, that which was called the “Second Advent” [see Acts 3:20-21, Heb. 9:28, Rev. 1:7] and the “coming of the kingdom”, are events that are believed to be fulfilled at the “end of the literal world”. In this view, a coming [parousia] of the Lord to “that eyewitness generation”, in A.D. 70, did not occur.

Consequently, after the last person of “that eyewitness generation” died without having recognized the nature of the Lord’s coming, they, of necessity, must have begun to draw different conclusions. Perhaps the Lord was speaking of something different, or the Lord changed His mind and delayed His coming [see 2 Peter Chapter 3]. This concept has dominated Christian thought since the 2nd Century. Some of the references for this concept are identified later in the discussion of the works of the early Church historian, Eusebius (Pamphilus, 1966).

In addition, the interpretations of Old Testament prophecies, by the Roman Church in the 2nd and 3rd Centuries, were not consistent with the interpretations and expectations of the early Jewish Christians. The powerful Jewish Church in Jerusalem, with its strong influence and ties to Judaism, vanished during the “Great Jewish War” [66-70 A.D.].

As the result, the Roman Church later emerged as the established authority for Christendom. As time passed, the Roman Church began to lose its affinity with the Jewish Christians, it drifted away from the Jewish understanding of the Old Testament prophecies, and it lost the continuity of both Jewish history and prophecy.

Therefore, it is not difficult to conclude that later Judaism would not likely be influenced by Christian doctrine. Judaism apparently does not make a connection between the great Jewish War with the Romans and the “coming of the Messiah”. As the result, the majority of the Jews still look to the future for the final coming of the Messiah.

As of this later 2006 revision to this book, there is a growing movement, especially among Jews in America that do accept Jesus as the Messiah. One such movement is Jewish Voice Ministries International. The author viewed many weekly television programs when he resided in Phoenix, AZ. Their Website is available at http://www.jewishvoice.org/.

This second theory must also be rejected since it contradicts the time-definite passages from Matthew [10:23, 16:27-28]. God and His Son do not change Their minds, ["And also the Glory of Israel will not lie or change His mind; for He is not a man that He should change His mind" (1 Samuel 15:29)]. The author of this study firmly believes that Jesus was present at the destruction of Jerusalem in the same way that God was present at the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. But the Roman Church and many even today, fail to recognize the significance of this historical event. Top

(4.4.3) Restoration Doctrine: “Pentecost”, “The End of the Age”, and “The Coming of the Lord”

Another relatively new fundamentalist view, which is still held by many today, evidently emerged later during the “Restoration Movement”. Essentially, the parallel
passage to Matthew [16:27-28] from Mark [9:1] was used to prove that the “Kingdom, which is the Church, came on Pentecost A.D. 30-33”.

Thus, it was taught that when the Church was established in A.D. 30-33, the outpouring of the Spirit satisfied the time-definite requirements of “the Lord’s coming in His kingdom”. At first view, this assumption appeared to satisfy the time-definite aspects of Jesus’ prophecy. However, upon closer examination, this view can not account for “the angels”, “recompense”, “and the Lord, Himself, coming in His kingdom”.

Wisdom would teach us that the teachers of the “Restoration Movement” were on the right track but they had not arrived at the complete solution to the “mystery of the Kingdom of Heaven”.

All of the above discussions in this study were designed to lay the foundation for the correct understanding of the importance of the “day of Pentecost” and the “coming of the Lord” at the “end of the Jewish age”. These topics are presented in greater depth in the next section.

(4.4.3.1) The Consummation (or End) of the Age and The Marriage of the Lamb

More logically, when the analogy of the Lord’s marriage to the Church [see John 3:29, Eph. 5:24-32] is correctly applied, then the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost is more appropriately understood as the “betrothal”, the “engagement”, or the “pledge” [see 2 Cor. 5:5, Eph. 1:14] of the intended future marriage consummation.

The destruction of Jerusalem again more logically corresponds to the marriage or “consummation [Heb. 9:26] of the age” and the time when the “saints took possession of the kingdom” (see Dan 7:22, 12:13, Luke 21:31). This view is consistent with the mystery of the kingdom that was spoken of in the parables.

The two references quoted here refer to the marriage feast from the Books of Matthew [22:2-14] and the Revelation [19:7-9] respectively.

Matt. 22:2, _The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king [God], who gave a wedding feast [see Isa. 62:4, Ezek. 39:17] for his son [Jesus]._

3 "And he sent out his slaves [the prophets] to call those who had been invited to the wedding feast, and they were unwilling to come

4 "Again he sent out other slaves saying, 'Tell those [Jews, Acts 3:25, Rom. 1:16] who have been invited, . . . .


Rev. 19:7, _Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride [the New Jerusalem/Church, Gal. 4:23-26, Eph. 5:31-31, Heb. 12:22, and Rev. 21:2] has made herself ready.

8 And 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._
9 And 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)

The previous discussion of “The Harvest and the End of the Age”, in Section (2.3.5), should help provide the background information for the discussion of the “Consummation of the Age” in this section. In reality, the A.D. 70 solution provides most of the answers to the difficult passages of Scripture that are not compatible with either a Pentecost or a yet future end of the world scenario. Most of the time-definite parameters point to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

There is much historical evidence, which supports the view of yet another very important 1st Century event within the “eyewitness generation” [see Isaiah 40:10, Daniel 7:13, Zech. 14:5, Luke 21:27-32, Heb. 9:9, 9:28, James 5:8-9, 1 Peter 4:3-17, 1 John 2:17, and Rev. 1:7, 11:15, 12:10].

This other event, still within the lifetime of the “eyewitness generation”, is unmistakably the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Therefore, the 40 years period from A.D. 30 to A.D. 70 has striking parallels to the prophecies of Moses [Deut. 18:15]. In this regard, the first “Restoration view”, with a fulfillment on the day of Pentecost, was only partially correct. What this view failed to do was to resolve many of the other time-definite prophecies that are discussed next.

(4.4.3.2) The Coming of the Lord Was Still “Near” after Pentecost A.D. 30-33

In this regard, the New Testament writers continued to teach an imminent coming of the Lord as "near or about to be" well after that first Pentecost in A.D. 30-33.

Consider the following passages, James the Lord’s brother said, "The Lord is at hand. . . the Judge is standing right at the door" (James 5:8-9). Peter said, "The end of all things is at hand" (1 Pet. 4:7). John said: "it is [the] last hour" (1 John 2:18). The Revelation specifies, "Shortly take place" (Rev. 1:1), "The time is near" (Rev. 1:3), and "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near" (Rev. 22:10).

The argument that any reference to "near" must of necessity refer, exclusively, to Pentecost overlooks the above testimony. What clearly was taught is that the fulfillment of all things "near", which were spoken after Pentecost, was fulfilled in A.D. 70.

Not only was the destruction of Jerusalem very important as an event in time, but it also marked the end of the "period of restoration of all things" (Acts 3:21) as preached by Peter. The terms "period of restoration" (Acts 3:21), the "regeneration" (Matt. 19:28), and the "renewal" (Col. 3:11) all appear to refer to the same event. This period lasted approximately 40 years, or the length of one generation. It was symbolic of the period of wilderness wanderings for the generation of unbelief under Moses and Joshua. In addition, the period of time from Pentecost (A.D. 30) until Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed in August of A.D. 70, by the Romans, was also about 40 years.

The author of this study was personally well aware of this “Pentecost Doctrine” since childhood. The significant historical events, that are so important to the traditional “Pentecost Church/Kingdom” view, are, the "birth of Jesus (4 B. C.)", the "crucifixion
about A.D. 30-33), "the Day of Pentecost (about A.D. 30-33)", and the future "end of the literal world".

The many Biblical references [identified in this study] to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70 and to those related historical events, were almost completely overlooked by the earliest "Restoration" teachers.

Therefore, the "Spiritual coming [signs] of the Lord at the destruction of Jerusalem (A.D. 70)", must also be considered as a distinct possibility and must be added to the list of significant events of great importance to Church history and theology. The significant events that were within the life span of the living "eyewitness generation" must certainly include, "the birth of Christ", "the Crucifixion", "the day of Pentecost", and "the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70".

(4.4.3.3) Matthew 16:27-28 and Mark 9:1; The Son of Man Coming in His Kingdom

As mentioned earlier, the “Restoration” preachers quoted the passage from Mark 9:1 as the proof text for the “Church/Kingdom” having come on Pentecost A.D. 30-33:

And He was saying to them, 'Truly I say to you, there are some of those standing here who shall not taste death until they see the kingdom of God [or the Church] after it has come with power. (Mark 9:1)

The “Restoration” teachers further assumed that the “power” (a translation of the Greek word, “dunamis”, Young, p. 765) that was prophesied in Mark 9:1 was the very same application of the power that was recognized as the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 1:8):

You shall receive power (dunamis, Young, p. 765) when the Holy Spirit [not Christ at His coming] has come upon you. (Acts 1:8)

Such interpretations, from the “Restoration Movement” era, provided the obvious solution to the time-definite aspects [“some standing here”, Mark 9:1ff] of the coming of the kingdom within the lifetime of those living at that time.

Furthermore, as the Restoration assumption continued; “the kingdom [or the Church] had to come with power”, and since the Holy Spirit came with “Power” on Pentecost as recorded in Acts Chapter 2, “then the kingdom had to come at Pentecost” and, therefore; “the Church is the Kingdom”.

The next significant chronological event, in the “Restoration view”, was that the "Second Coming of Christ" would occur only once at the end of this physical world.

As a further proof text, for the “Church/Kingdom” having come exclusively at Pentecost A.D. 30-33, the passage from Colossians [1:13] was used, “For He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom [Church] of His beloved Son”.

It is also very interesting that the proponents of this “Church/Kingdom” view almost never contrast the parallel Gospel account of Mark [8:38 to 9:1] to that of Matthew’s [16:27-28] Gospel.
When the parallel account of Matthew is superimposed onto Mark’s [8:38-9:1] account, a completely different view becomes evident. The text from Matthew is provided in italics and the author’s comments are shown within brackets [ ]:

Mark 8:38, For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this [those who are standing here] adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." [Matt. 16: 27 "For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and WILL THEN RECOMPENSE EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS].

Mark 9:1, And He was saying to them, "Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who shall not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power." [Matt. 16:28 "Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who shall not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom"].

Please note carefully! The “Coming with Power and ‘Glory’” was also prophesied within the context of Jesus’ prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem in Matthew [24:30]:

Matt. 24:30, And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes [Jews] of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY [Dan. 7:13] with power and great glory.

A further study on the subjects of, “the Son of Man coming in His kingdom", “with the angels”, in order to “recompense” the evil ones, is continued below. These passages [see Matt. 16:27-28 and 24:30] are very difficult to fit into a fulfillment in the Book of Acts (Chapter 2) concerning the “power” when, “the Holy Spirit was poured out on the Day of Pentecost”.

But rather, consider the Holy Spirit and the “power” at Pentecost as a down payment or marriage betrothal of the “Power and Glory” that would be consummated by the appearing of Jesus, Himself, later [“Now He who prepared us for this very purpose is God, who gave to us the Spirit as a pledge” (2 Cor. 5:5) and “. . . when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away” (1 Cor.13:10)]. Note! Miraculous gifts ended with the “eyewitness generation” or not many years after the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

A careful comparison of the application of the word “come” (Greek, erchomai, Young, pp. 180-181) within the New Testament, again emphasizes the time-definite aspects of the Lord’s coming. A fulfillment at either Pentecost, or some time in the future, can not logically be defended:

Matt. 10:23 (erchomai), “you shall not finish going through the cities of Israel, until the Son of Man comes”.

(4.4.3.4) Word Studies; “Coming” (Erchomai and Parousia); “Appear” (Optomai)
Matt. 16:27-28 (erchomai), “For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and will then recompense every man according to his deeds. 28 Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who shall not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom”.

Matt. 21:40 (erchomai), “when the owner of the vineyard comes [at the destruction of Jerusalem] what will He do to those [Jewish] vine-growers?”

Matt. 24:30 (erchomai), “the sign of the Son of man will appear in the sky... all of the tribes of the earth will mourn... they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory” [certainly not Pentecost].

Matt. 24:42-44 (erchomai), “you do not know which day your Lord is coming... 44 the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think He will”.

Matt. 25:31 (erchomai), “But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne... 32 and all the nations will be gathered before Him”.

Matt. 26:64 (erchomai), “hereafter you [the Jewish High Priest] shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of heaven”.

Mark 8:38-9:1 (erchomai), “For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels. 9:1... Truly I say to you, there are some of those standing here who shall not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power”.

Luke 17:20-21 (erchomai), “Now having been questioned by the Pharisees as to when the kingdom of God was coming, He answered them and said, ‘The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed’... 21 for behold the kingdom of God is in your midst”.

Luke 18:8 (erchomai), “... shall not God bring about justice for His elect, who cry to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them [Rev 6:10]? I tell you that He will bring about justice for them speedily. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?”

Luke 19:11-44 (erchomai), “He went on to tell a parable, because He was near Jerusalem, and they supposed that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately... 12 a certain nobleman went into a distant country to receive a kingdom for himself, and then return... 15 after receiving the kingdom. ... 27 But these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here [Jerusalem], and slay them in my presence... 41 He saw the city [Rev 11:8] and wept over it. ... 43 For the days shall come when your enemies will throw up a bank before you, and surround you, and hem you in on every side, 44 and level you to the ground and your children within you, and they [Romans] will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation”. [Unmistakably A.D. 70].

Luke 20:10-19 (erchomai), “16 He will come and destroy these vine-growers and will give the vineyard to others.” [God destroyed the Jews and gave the kingdom to the Gentiles. See Matt 21:43].

Another significant Greek word that is translated as “Coming [of Christ]”, a being alongside, or presence, is (parousia, Young, p. 188). Again when the applications of the word (parousia) are viewed in the Scriptures, then the time-definite aspects rule out Pentecost:

Matt. 24:3 (parousia), “what will be the sign of Your coming, and the end of the age?”

Matt. 24:27 (parousia), “For just as the lightening comes from the east, and flashes even to the west, so shall the coming of the Son of man be”.

1 Cor. 15:23 (parousia), “But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ’s at His coming”.
1 Thess. 2:19 (parousia), “in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming?”
1 Thess. 3:13 (parousia), “at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints”.
1 Thess. 4:15 (parousia), “that we who are alive, and remain until the coming of Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep”.
1 Thess. 5:23 (parousia), “without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ”.
2 Thess. 2:1 (parousia), “with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together to Him”.
2 Thess. 2:8-9 (parousia), “And 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. . . 9 the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan”.
James 5:7-9 (parousia), “Be patient, therefore brethren, until the coming of the Lord. . . 8 for the coming of the Lord is at hand. . . 9 the Judge is standing right at the door”.
2 Peter 1:16 (parousia), “when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty”.
2 Peter 3:4 (parousia), “Where is the promise of His coming, for ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation”.
2 Peter 3:12 (parousia), “looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, on account of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat”.
1 John 2:28 (parousia), “And now, little children, abide in Him, so that if He should appear, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His Top coming”.

The word “appear” (Greek, optomai), translated “be seen” (Young, p. 45) was used in the following passages:

Mark 9:4 (optomai), “And Elijah appeared to them along with Moses; and they were talking with Jesus”.
Luke 1:11 (optomai), “And an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing to the right of the altar of incense”.
Luke 9:30 (optomai), “And behold, two men were talking with Him; and they were Moses and Elijah, 31 who, appearing in glory, were speaking of His departure which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem”.
Luke 24:34 (optomai), “saying, "The Lord has really risen, and has appeared to Simon."
Acts 7:2 (optomai), “And he said, "Hear me, brethren and fathers! The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran,”
Acts 7:30 (optomai), "And after forty years had passed, AN ANGEL APPEARED TO HIM IN THE WILDERNESS OF MOUNT Sinai, IN THE FLAME OF A BURNING THORN BUSH”.
Acts 9:17 (optomai), “And Ananias departed and entered the house, and after laying his hands on him said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road by which you were coming,”
Acts 26:15 (optomai), "And I said, 'Who art Thou, Lord?' And the Lord said, 'I am Jesus whom you are persecuting.
16 ‘But arise, and stand on your feet; for this purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you a minister and a witness not only to the things which you have seen, but also to the things in which I will appear to you;’

Heb. 9:28 (optomai), “so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him”.

(4.4.3.5) Jesus Coming on the Clouds of Heaven with Power and Great Glory

Both Old and New Testament passages make reference to the same “glory” of God that has evidently appeared at the destruction of Jerusalem at both 586 B.C and A. D 70:

Ezek.1:26, Now above the expanse that was over their heads there was something resembling a throne, like lapis lazuli in appearance; and on that which resembled a throne, high up, was a figure with the appearance of a man.
27 Then I noticed from the appearance of His loins and upward something like glowing metal that looked like fire all around within it, and from the appearance of His loins and downward I saw something like fire; and there was a radiance around Him.
28 As the appearance of the rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the surrounding radiance. Such was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. And when I saw it, I fell on my face and heard a voice speaking.

Rev. 4:3, And He who was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald in appearance.

Rev. 10:1, And 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;

Ezek. 43:1, Then he led me to the gate, the gate facing toward the east;
2 and behold, the glory of the God of Israel was coming from the way of the east. And His voice was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shone with His glory.
3 And it was like the appearance of the vision which I saw, like the vision which I saw when He came to destroy the city [that is in 586 B. C.]. And the visions were like the vision which I saw by the river Chebar; and I fell on my face.
4 And the glory of the LORD came into the house [Temple] by the way of the gate facing toward the east. [A similar event was recorded by Josephus, see Section (6.2.3.3), during the Jewish war of A.D. 66-70].
5 And the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house. (Ezek. 43:1-5)
Christendom, from the time of the early Roman Church until this very day, find it very difficult to acknowledge any coming of the Lord at the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. However, the two above passages cited from the Book of Ezekiel are Biblical proof that God, and maybe even Jesus, Himself, came in “glory like fire” at the destruction of Jerusalem when the Babylonians sacked the city in 586 B.C. This fact just simply cannot be denied.

In the very same way, the almost identical passages from the Book of Revelation provide great support and justification for the time-definite prophecies, which demand a fulfillment within that “eyewitness generation” and specifically to “some [who were] standing here” (Matt. 16:27-28).

The abundant internal and external historical evidence presented in this study, indicates that the very same thing occurred during the siege [Luke 19:43-44] in A.D. 70, when the Lord, Himself, came and destroyed the city of Jerusalem [see Matt. 22:7, Luke 19:27].

In this section, the reference to “God or Jesus coming on, or with, a cloud” [see Dan. 7:13, Matt. 24:30] will be discussed. For the sake of Biblical continuity, it is very important to understand how God has manifested Himself to mankind Top throughout the ages.

It is important to realize that “clouds”, “light” [to Paul in Acts 9:3], a great voice, and a “pillar of fire”, were all integrally linked to manifestations of God and Jesus. God is an invisible Spirit [see John 4:24, Heb. 11:27] and He can only be recognized by indirect manifestations of His “Power” and “Glory”. Consider the Scriptures and the associated commentary below:

Exodus 19:9, And the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, I shall come to you in a thick cloud, in order that the people may hear when I speak [Matt. 17:5] with you, and may also believe in you forever." Then Moses told the words of the people to the LORD.

10 The LORD also said to Moses, "Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments [Rev. 22:14];

11 and let them be ready for the third day, for on the third day the LORD will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people. (Exodus 19:9-11)

Jesus was resurrected on the third day and appeared to His disciples.

Exodus 40:35, And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud had settled on it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.

36 And throughout all their journeys whenever the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the sons of Israel would set out;

37 but if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not set out until the day when it was taken up.

38 For throughout all their journeys, the cloud of the LORD was on the tabernacle by day, and there was fire in it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel. (Exodus 40:35-38)
From the above passages, it can be safely said, that since God is an unseen Spirit, the “cloud” was a manifestation of His “coming and presence” to Israel. This aspect is an important key to the understanding of the coming of Jesus and the New Covenant.

Deut. 5:22, These words the LORD spoke to all your assembly at the mountain from the midst of the fire, of the cloud and of the thick gloom [Heb. 12:18], with a great voice, and He added no more. And He wrote them on two tablets of stone and gave them to me.

23 "And it came about, when you heard the voice from the midst of the darkness, while the mountain was burning with fire, that you came near to me, all the heads of your tribes and your elders.

24 "And you said, 'Behold, the LORD our God has shown us His glory [Jesus in the New Covenant, Matt. 16:27-28] and His greatness, and we have heard His voice from the midst of the fire; we have seen today that God speaks with man, yet he lives. (Deut. 5:22-24)

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2 Chron. 5:14, So that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the house of God”. [Glory was associated with the cloud].

Isaiah 19:1, The oracle concerning Egypt. Behold, the LORD is riding on a swift cloud, and is about to come to Egypt; the idols of Egypt will tremble at His presence, and the heart of the Egyptians will melt within them. [This is another manifestation of God in a cloud].

Lam. 2:1, How the Lord has covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud in His anger! He has cast from heaven to earth the glory of Israel [in 586 B. C. when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Babylonians], and has not remembered His footstool in the day of His anger”.

This “cloud of anger”, spoken by Jeremiah, was present at the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon in 586 B. C. It would also be present at the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70.

Ezek. 32:7, And when I extinguish you, I will cover the heavens, and darken their stars; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give its light”. [A symbol of God’s presence].

Dan. 7:13, I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, and He came up to the Ancient of Days (1 Cor. 15:23-26) and was presented before Him.

It is logical to conclude, that the precedent of “coming with a cloud”, as recorded in the Law of Moses, also provides a similar foundation under the New Covenant of Jesus. This encounter with God and Jesus in “glory” on the “mount of transfiguration” by the disciples provides some basis for a further understanding of how Jesus would
appear in the future in “power and glory”. Paul saw Jesus as a blinding “light” on the road to Damascus in Acts (9:3):

2 Peter 1:16,  For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty.
17  For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance [voice, Deut. 5:22] as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory, "This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased"--
18 and we ourselves heard this utterance made from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain [at the transfiguration]. (2 Peter 1:16-18)

Matt. 17:5,  While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and behold, a voice out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!" 6 And when the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces and were much afraid. (Matt. 17:5-6)

Luke 21:27,  And they will see THE SON OF MAN COMING IN A CLOUD with power and great glory [like His glory at the transfiguration]. . . .
31 "Even so you, too, when you see these things happening, recognize that the kingdom of God is near.
32 "Truly I say to you, this [eyewitness] generation will not pass away until all things take place. (Luke 21:27-32)

Matt. 24:30, And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory [see Dan. 7:13-28 above in this section].

Matt. 26:64, Jesus said to him, "You have said it yourself; nevertheless I tell you, hereafter you shall see THE SON OF MAN SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF POWER, and COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN. [The high priest would live to see this].

Acts 1:9, And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. . . .
11 and they also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven. (Acts 1:9-11)

1 Thess. 4:14, For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus.
15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, and remain [some standing here, Matt. 16:27-28] until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep.
16 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 shall rise first.
17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up [2 Cor. 12:2-4, Rev. 12:5] together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord. (1 Thess. 4:14-17)

The above reference [1 Thess. 4:14-17] is one of the few passages for which this author has no conclusive interpretation or any other associated Old Testament reference. It is very difficult to determine if the “being ‘caught up’” was intended to be like the Spiritual encounter of Paul [2 Cor. 12:2-4] or as in the Revelation [11:12], which is seemingly alluding to the destruction of Jerusalem A.D. 70.

If a literal common view of “the Rapture” is taken, then this provides the basis for yet another future coming of the Lord. This view was taught by Foy Wallace (1966). However, the context still conflicts with the time-definite passages. Hence, this might still contain a “hidden fulfillment” [Deut. 29:29]. Thus, this passage [1 Thess. 4:14-17] can not be interpreted with any great certainty.

The outcome of this Scripture, whether past or future, will continue to be fiercely debated. Such differing views can be found in the works of Foy E. Wallace (1966), Max R. King (1971), and Arthur Ogden (1985) in their respective commentaries on the Book of Revelation. As the study continues, consider the remaining passages:

Rev. 1:7, BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him, even those [Jews] who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. Even so. Amen.

Rev. 10:1, And 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; . . .

6 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 shall be delay no longer,

7 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 [Acts 3:19-24]. (Rev. 10:1-7)

Rev. 11:12, And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here." And they went up into heaven in the cloud [1 Thess. 4:14-17], and their enemies beheld them. . . .

15 And the seventh angel sounded; and there arose 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. (Rev. 11:12-15)

Rev. 14:14, And 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.

15 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, because the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the earth is ripe" [see Section (2.3.5)].
16 And 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.
15 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, because the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the earth is ripe."
16 And He who sat on the cloud swung His sickle over the earth; and the earth was reaped.
17 And another angel came out of the Temple which is in heaven [Heb. 9:11], and he also had a sharp sickle. (Rev.14:14-17)

In conclusion, there may be some debate as to possible dual meanings and to a future fulfillment of some of the Scriptures cited in this section. But the fact remains that many of these occurrences obviously happened in the past, including “Jesus, Himself coming on the clouds of heaven” (Matt. 16:27-28, 24:30) at the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

Moreover, without further historical evidence and further verification, it is easy to conclude how the opposing views of the interpretation of the Book of Revelation have come about. However, there is incredible historical testimony from Josephus (War, Book VI, Chapter V, 2-4) and Tacitus (1952) concerning the last days of the Temple in A.D. 70. There is sufficient evidence to assume that the original Biblical prophecies, identified in the Book of Revelation, were to be fulfilled at the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. From Josephus:

Thus there was a star resembling a sword, which stood over the city, and a comet, that continued a whole year. Thus also before the Jews' rebellion, and before those commotions which preceded the war, when the people were come in great crowds to the feast of unleavened bread, on the eighth day of the month Xanthicus, [Nisan, Mar.- Apr.] and at the ninth hour of the night so great a light shone round the altar and the holy house, that it appeared to be bright day time; which lasted for half an hour. . . . So these publicly declared that the signal foreshowed the desolation that was coming upon them. Besides these, a few days after that feast, on the one and twentieth day of the month Artemisius, [Jyar, April - May] a certain prodigious and incredible phenomenon appeared: I suppose the account of it would seem to be a fable, were it not related by those that saw it, and were not the events that followed it of so considerable a nature as to deserve such signals; for, before sun-setting, chariots and troops of soldiers in their armor were seen running about among the clouds, and surrounding of cities [see Matt. 16:27-28, 24:30]. . . . But now, what did the most elevate them in undertaking this war, was an ambiguous oracle that was also found in their sacred writings, how, "about that time, one from their country should become governor of the habitable earth [Dan. 2:44]." The Jews took this prediction to belong to themselves in particular, and many of the wise men were thereby deceived in their determination. Now this oracle certainly denoted the government of Vespasian, who was appointed emperor in Judea [the beast from the earth, Rev. 13:7, was Vespasian and his son Titus, the beast with the fatal wound was Nero]. (Josephus, pp. 824-825)

All of Chapter 6, of this study, is provided to bring to light all of the profuse 1 and 2 Century historical testimony concerning these things. The more detailed discussion of the above references and the profuse testimony presented in Chapter 6 supports the A.D. 70 hypothesis as the fulfillment of the “coming of the Lord in glory”.

(4.4.4.) The View of the Apostles, the Jerusalem Church, and Contemporary Jewish History

And finally, the works of the first century Jewish writer, Flavius Josephus, and the contemporary Roman authors, Tacitus and Suetonius, provide the detailed accounts of the Jewish War (A.D. 66-70.) with the Romans. For the Jewish Christians and the Orthodox Jews, this destruction was the result of Old Testament prophecies dating back to the time of Moses [see Deut. 28:49-51, Luke 19:43-44] as the fulfillment of Scripture [see Daniel 9:12, 12:1, Zech. 12:1-3, 14:1-11, Matt. 24:21, and Rev. 7:14].

This war with the Romans was very similar to the war of Jerusalem [that is, in 586 B.C. by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon]. Carefully examine Daniel Chapter 9. This chapter, unmistakably, makes reference to both the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon [Dan. 9:11-13 (2 Chron. 36:1-21)], in 586 B.C., and to the destruction of Jerusalem [Dan. 9:24-27 (Dan. 7:19-27)] by the Romans in A.D. 70.

The Roman theologians failed to perceive the significance of the established historical events that occurred between Pentecost A.D. 30 and the time that the Apostle John died [See John 21:20-24]. The monumental importance of the devastating Jewish War with the Romans, as the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy, had little significance to them in relation to the “coming of the kingdom”.

However, the writings of Josephus, Tacitus and Suetonius, provide profound insights into both the Jewish Christians’ and Judaism’s expectations of a “kingdom” as prophesied by Daniel [Chapters 2 and 7] that would appear at that very same time during the war with the Romans [that is, the 4th kingdom]. This Jewish understanding of these things fits perfectly with what Jesus taught in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and in Luke 21.

This fourth view is the most logical solution for these Biblical prophecies. These prophecies were interpreted by the Jews to reflect a fulfillment within the life span of the “eyewitness generation”.

The Jews were in error on the nature of the “kingdom”, but they were absolutely correct on the historical timing. It was ultimately the disbelieving Romans and Jews, who wrote concerning the destruction of Jerusalem that provided the proof of the Lord’s coming at Jerusalem even though they did not recognized it themselves.

The author’s early studies in 1968 concluded that the time-definite aspects of the individual Biblical passages from both the Old and New Testaments were not being perceived. As the result the correct timing specified in the Scriptures was not understood.
This Roman Church mind-set caused the Scriptures to be viewed as scattered and disjointed pieces of a puzzle on which were written disassociated obscure prophecies. Many of these powerful individual prophecies caused the reader to tremble and fear as he contemplated the power of God. The written warnings, and the many Biblical examples of how, in times past, God poured out His wrath on the ungodly, are indeed, awesome.

However, after a period of much soul searching, being immersed in the “Written Word”, and having entreated the Lord for understanding [Matt. 7:7-8], the Spiritual door opened and all of the pieces of the puzzle began to fit together.

The picture that became clearly visible was “the destruction of Jerusalem” in A.D. 70. Jesus appeared in judgment against Israel at the destruction of Jerusalem [Matt. 24:15-21] by the Romans just as God appeared at the destruction of Jerusalem in the time of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon in Daniel [9:12].

As the study progresses, it is very important to understand the way that the word “Kingdom” is used in both the Old and New Testament Scriptures. Chapter 5 will follow with the identification and discussion of the various “Kingdoms” of the Bible.
CHAPTER FIVE
(5.0) THE KINGDOMS IN THE BIBLE

Chapter Five Topic Headings:

(5.1) The Eternal Heavenly Kingdom and the Earthly Kingdoms Contrasted
(5.2) Other References to the Kingdom (Go there)

(5.1) The Eternal Heavenly Kingdom and the Earthly Kingdoms Contrasted

Luke 16:16, The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John; since then the gospel of the kingdom of God is preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it. [Note that this began with preaching of John the Baptist before the establishment of the Church about three years later].

2 Cor. 4:17, For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. 5:1 For we know that if the earthly tent which is our house is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

The “forcing his way into” [Luke 16:16] this “unseen Kingdom of God [Luke 17:20-21, John 3:3”, 2 Cor. 4:17-5:1, Heb. 12:22-23, 13:14], since the time of John the Baptist, does not appear to be in reference to the “seen” Christian Church on earth, which was established three years later on Pentecost in A.D. 30-33. Nor can this “Eternal Kingdom” be fulfilled in the Old Covenant of Moses. This important perspective should not be ignored.

Evidently it was John the Baptist who was the first to preach the “Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven”. This “first call” of the “Kingdom of Heaven” was proclaimed to only the Jews before the Church was even established. In addition, there does not appear to be any miracles performed by John nor any “Spiritual Gifts” imparted by his baptism [see Acts 18:25-19:8]. And, it must further be assumed that the Jews continued to keep the Law of Moses and continued to worship exclusively on the Sabbath [see Acts 19:6-8]. It might also be theorized that the process of “election” [see Section (2.3.3)] also first began by the preaching of John concerning the gospel of the “Kingdom of Heaven”.

Theologians often overlook this point. The short interim Covenant of the baptism of John” provided an approximate three years of transition, during the ministry of Jesus, from the Law of Moses to the New Covenant of Jesus. When Jesus was crucified He “nailed the Law to His cross” [Col. 2:14] and the New Covenant for the “elect” or the “first fruits” officially came into effect.

This poses some very interesting questions. Did the “baptism of John” fall under the “Old Law”, the “Church”, or the “unseen Kingdom of Heaven”? Top
The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John [Luke 16:16]. John the Baptist died well before the Church was established on Pentecost. The passage from Matthew [11:11, “among those born of women there has not arisen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he”] would appear to be in reference to the superiority of the Christian church. The coming of the “Kingdom” that was fulfilled by the church with its associated “Spiritual Gifts” made the “baptism of John” pale by comparison.

Therefore, it would appear that “the baptism of John” related directly to the “Kingdom of Heaven” [Luke 16:16] that was different from the forthcoming church of Christ. It must also be assumed that those righteous ones who were baptized into John’s baptism and who died prior to the crucifixion were also in and part of the “Kingdom of Heaven”.

Moreover, some of Jesus’ disciples, Apostles, and even Apollos were baptized under John’s baptism before the crucifixion. And there is no record of a need for them to be re-baptized. Thus, it appears that those Jews who were baptized under John’s baptism and before the death of Jesus were not re-baptized. However, the baptism of John does not appear to be valid after the crucifixion [see Acts 18:25-19:8]. Unlike the “baptism of John, the Gospel in the Christian Church would be preached to both Jews and Gentiles.

The “duality principle” again aids in the understanding of the obvious differences between the “the `church’, the `seen’ earthly and the `unseen’ Heavenly Kingdoms”. Sometimes these differences are very difficult for most of Christendom to perceive or to differentiate. The “heavenly kingdom” was "prepared from the foundation of the world" [see Matt. 25:34, Heb. 4:3ff, 12:22-23, 13:14].

The mundane aspects of the “kingdom of God” on earth and the timeline spoken of in Daniel Chapters 2 and 7, spans the history from Nebuchadnezzar [about 580 B. C.] to the Messiah and the 1st Century. Jesus, Himself, taught that this “earthly kingdom”, but not the church, would be taken away from the Jews [Matt. 21:43] and would be given to the Gentiles.

The early Jewish Christian Church [which was first called the sect of the Nazarenes, Acts 24:5] and the later grafted-in Gentiles [Rom. 9:22-33] would become “the Holy Remnant” or the “Church of Christ” [see Section (2.3.4)] that would replace the “Jewish earthly kingdom”, the Law of Moses, and the “baptism of John” [see John 3:26-31].

However, this earthly kingdom [like the parable of the mustard seed, Matt. 13:31ff] was not fully mature until Jesus, Himself, returned [after 40 years, Matt. 16:27-28, Luke 19:12, 21:31-32]. This event culminated during the war with the Romans when the Old Covenant and the Temple worship literally ended [see Lam. 2:9, Heb. 8:13].

Thus, the kingdom was taken away from the Jews [see Dan 2:44, 7:22, 9:24-27, 12:1-13, Matt. 24:1-33, Mark 13:1-30, Luke 21:6-32, and Rev. 11:1-17]. Since the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, it is the Gentiles that became the leaders in Christianity and the “nation” that produced the “fruit in it” [Matt. 21:43ff].

When the Book of Hebrews was written, the time of fulfillment was drawing near, [“When He said, "A new covenant, He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready [or near] to disappear” (Heb. 8:9-13)].
In Paul’s theology, there was no difference between the eternal “kingdom of God”, the “kingdom of Heaven”, and the “kingdom of Christ”. Ephesians 5:5 states, “For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God”. The “everlasting or eternal kingdom” must be the ultimate fulfillment of God’s promises. Thus it was, "...the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world” (Matt. 25:34). This concept provides additional meaning if it is compared to this passage from the Book of Hebrews [4:1-5]:

Heb. 4:1, Therefore, let us fear lest, while a promise remains of entering His rest [that is, the kingdom in heaven], any one of you should seem to have come short of it. . . .
3 For we [Christians] who have believed enter that rest, just as He has said, "AS I SWARE IN MY WRATH, THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST," although His works were finished from the foundation of the world [see Heb. 12:22-23, 13:14].
4 For He has thus said somewhere concerning the seventh day, "AND GOD RESTED ON THE SEVENTH DAY FROM ALL HIS WORKS";
5 and again in this passage, "THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST." (Heb. 4:1-5)

Everything that God and Jesus intended to create [John 1:3ff, Proverbs 8:22ff] for all ages concerning the “Kingdom and the Church” was created “from the foundation of the world”. There is nothing further that ever needs to be created. The “rest” from the above passage in Hebrews was prepared for Israel. However, Israel was rejected because of their lack of faith. The Jews under the Law were not allowed to enter. Jesus also said:

John 14:1, Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me.
2 "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you [in heaven, see Luke 19:12].
3 "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am [in Heaven, Heb. 12:22-23, 13:14], there you may be also.

The house [kingdom] is already in existence. However, some further preparations had to be made. One such final preparation was a war in heaven in order to cast out Satan [see Luke 10:18, 19:12ff, Eph. 6:12, Rev. 12:7-10] prior to the “kingdom coming”:

Rev. 13:10, And 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 [not Pentecost], for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, who accuses them before our God day and night.

(5.2) Other References to the Kingdom
From the preceding discussions a distinction was made between the “earthly” and the “heavenly” kingdoms. The Scriptural context, therefore, has to be carefully examined to determine which kingdom is being referenced.

In view of this distinction, the above discussion of the “Church/Kingdom” concerning the passage from *Colossians [1:13]*, that is, the “domain of darkness”, is now continued, in more depth. The eternal struggle against Satan has greater meaning if the aspect of the kingdom from Matthew 25:34 is considered ["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'].

The church that was established on Pentecost in A.D. 30-33 cannot always be directly equated to the “Kingdom of Heaven”. The church was manifested as part of the “Eternal Kingdom of Heaven” on the day of Pentecost in A.D. 30, but the church, on earth, is certainly not the entire “Eternal Kingdom of Heaven”.

Thus, all of the righteous, from Adam to John the Baptist and those in Hades, must also be included in God’s “Kingdom of Heaven”, but none of them were ever in the New Testament Christian Church on earth.

To further illustrate this point, one could also conclude, by the same logic [that is, if the Church can be equated to the “Kingdom of Heaven”], then the “Kingdom” also came into being during the days of John the Baptist. Matthew [11:12] states; “And from the days of John the Baptist until now the “kingdom of heaven” [Note! This was well before the Church, on earth, was established on Pentecost] suffers violence, and violent men [now] take it by force. The Jews under the “baptism of John” were already “forcing their way into the kingdom” [Luke 16:16].

Therefore, the “kingdom” here more fittingly refers to the “Kingdom of Heaven” and not to the Church of Christ. Obviously, the concept of the “domain of darkness” of Satan was being contrasted to the “Eternal Heavenly Kingdom and Domain of God and Christ”. It was not being contrasted to the Christian Church that had not yet even been established. Note that the Church was three years later established on Pentecost.

From the discussion of the prophecies of Daniel in Section (3.2), it is apparent that the earthly “Church/Kingdom” was to be “set up” [Dan. 2:44, Luke 21:31] and “built” [Matt. 16:18] during the time of the 4th beast or the Romans. The discussion of Daniel Chapter 7 further identifies, “and the time arrived when the saints took possession of the kingdom” [Matt. 16:27-28, Luke 21:31] during the Jewish War [Dan. 7:21] and associated with the reigns of the 10th and 11th Roman emperors [Dan. 7:20-25, also see Section (6.17.1)].

Moreover, as a deeper understanding of the “Kingdom” emerges, consider the information that can be gleaned from the following passages as they appear, in order, in the New Testament:

Matt. 6:10, Thy kingdom come [Dan. 2:44]. Thy will be done, On earth as it is [and always has been] in heaven [Note the duality, or things on earth and in heaven]. . . .

13 'And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.'
Matt. 8: 11, And I say to you, that many shall come from east and west, and recline at the table with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven; 12 but the sons of the kingdom [Jews, Matt. 21:43] shall be cast out into the outer darkness; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. [Abraham was never in the church, but he is most assuredly in the “Kingdom of Heaven”, which is in heaven].

Matt. 12: 25, And knowing their thoughts He said to them, "Any kingdom divided against itself is laid waste; and any city or house divided against itself shall not stand.
26 "And if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then shall his kingdom [that is, the domain of darkness, (Colossians 1:13)] stand? . . .
28 "But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. [Note! This was still before the Church was established on Pentecost].

Matt. 13:52, And He said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has become a disciple of the kingdom of heaven [Note! A scribe, during the ministry of Jesus and under the “baptism of John” before the church was established, could still be a disciple of the “Kingdom of Heaven”. Thus, this kingdom of Heaven (Matt. 21:43) was not in reference to the church] is like a head of a household, who brings forth out of his treasure things new and old."

Matt. 16:18, And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it.
19 "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you shall bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you shall loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven." [Notice the contrast between the Church on earth and the “Kingdom in Heaven”. The Church on earth is a shadow and figure of the “Heavenly Kingdom” (Heb. 12:22ff)].

Matt. 18:17, And if he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax-gatherer. [Notice that Jesus was giving instruction to the “church” before it was established].

Matt. 21:43, Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God [not the Church] will be taken away from you [that is, the evil Jews], and be given to a nation [that is, the church composed of Jews and Gentiles] producing the fruit of it. [Here the kingdom relates to the earthly kingdoms and to the church that were identified in Daniel Chapters 2 and 7. The Law of Moses was replaced by the New Covenant. And Jerusalem and the Temple were, indeed, literally destroyed in A.D. 70].

Matt. 23:13, But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you shut off the kingdom of heaven from men; for you do not enter in yourselves, nor do you
allow those who are entering to go in. [Israel under the “baptism of John the Baptist” also had access to the “Kingdom of Heaven”. However, with the death of Jesus at the crucifixion then the New Covenant came into effect (Heb. 9:16)].

Matt. 26: 29 "But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom." [There is no record of Jesus drinking in the Church on earth after His Ascension. Thus, it must relate to the “Kingdom in Heaven”].

Luke 1:32, He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David [2 Sam. 7:12ff]; 33 and He will reign [in Heaven] over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end [Dan. 2:44].

Luke 10: 9, And heal those in it who are sick, and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.' [The context here does not fit the “baptism of John” or the Christian Church that was not yet established]. 10 'But whatever city you enter and they do not receive you, go out into its streets and say, 11 'Even the dust of your city which clings to our feet, we wipe off in protest against you; yet be sure of this, that the kingdom of God has come near.'

Luke 11: 20, But if I cast out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. [Again, this is not the Church].

Luke 13:28, There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth there when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the [heavenly] kingdom of God, but yourselves being cast out. 29 'And they will come from east and west, and from north and south, and will recline at the table in the [heavenly] kingdom of God. [Again, this can not logically be the Church on earth].

Luke 17:20, Now having been questioned by the Pharisees as to when the kingdom of God was coming, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed [Note! This kingdom is different from the Church, which was established by the visible outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. See Acts Chapter 2]; 21 nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or, 'There it is!' For behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst. [Note! This was said before Christ died and before the Church was established on Pentecost].

Luke 19:11, And while they were listening to these things, He went on to tell a parable, because He was near Jerusalem, and they supposed that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately [that is, at Pentecost].
12 He said therefore, "A certain nobleman went to a distant country [heaven] to receive a kingdom for himself, and then return" (Luke 19:11-12). [This can not be fulfilled at Pentecost, nor can it be the end of the world, see Matt. 16:27-28].

John 17:1, These things Jesus spoke; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify Thy Son, that the Son may glorify Thee, even as Thou gavest Him authority over all mankind, that to all [that is Christians] whom Thou hast given Him, He may give eternal life.

3 "And this is eternal life, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.

4 "I glorified Thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which Thou hast given Me to do.

5 "And now, glorify Thou Me together with Thyself, Father, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was.

6 "I manifested Thy name to the men whom Thou gavest Me out of the world; . . .

11 "And I am no more in the world; and yet they themselves are in the world, and I come to Thee. Holy Father, keep them in Thy name, the name which Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, even as We are. . . .

14 "I have given them Thy word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

15 "I do not ask Thee to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one.

16 "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. . . .

20 "I do not ask in behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; . . .

24 . . . that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me; for Thou didst love Me before the foundation of the world. (John 17:1-24)

John 18:36, Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting, that I might not be delivered up to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm" [see Heb. 12:22-23, 13:14].

Acts 14:22, Strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying, "Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God."

Rom. 8:29, For whom [that is, Christians] He foreknew [Heb. 4:6], He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren [see 1 Cor. 15:23ff]; and whom He predestined, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

1 Cor. 2: 7, but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom, which God predestined before the ages to our glory;
8 the wisdom which none of the rulers of this age has understood; for if they had understood it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory;
9 but just as it is written, "THINGS WHICH EYE HAS NOT SEEN AND EAR HAS NOT HEARD, AND which HAVE NOT ENTERED THE HEART OF MAN, ALL THAT GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM."
10 For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. (1 Cor. 2:7-10)

1 Cor. 6: 9, Or do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?

Gal. 5: 21, . . . envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. [This was spoken years after Pentecost and makes reference to Heaven].

Eph. 3:10, in order that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places [duality, earth and heaven].

Col. 1:18, He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead [1 Cor. 15:20ff]; so that He Himself might come to have first place in everything.

2 Tim. 4:18, The Lord will deliver me from every evil deed, and will bring me safely to His heavenly kingdom; . . .

Heb. 12:22, But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels,
23 to the general assembly and church of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven [duality, heaven and earth], . . .
28 Therefore, since we receive a kingdom [long after Pentecost, Luke 21:31] which cannot be shaken,

Heb. 13:14, For here [that is, on earth] we do not have a lasting city, but we are seeking the city [that is, the heavenly Jerusalem] which is to come.

James 2: 5, Listen, my beloved brethren: did not God choose the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom [of Heaven] which He promised to those who love Him?

2 Peter 1:11, . . . or in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom [of Heaven] of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.

Rev. 11: 15, And the seventh angel sounded; and there arose loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world [in A.D. 70, Dan. 7:22, Luke 21:31] has
become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever."

Rev. 12:10, And 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 [Dan. 7:13-22, Luke 21:31], for the accuser of our brethren [that is, Satan] has been thrown down, who accuses [Zech. 3:1ff] them before our God day and night.


Therefore, there is a great difference between the “Kingdom of God” in heaven [Heb. 12:22ff] and the “Church/Kingdom” on earth. The New Testament Church is part of the Kingdom of Heaven, just as the righteous of the other Biblical dispensations were part of the “Kingdom of Heaven”. Furthermore, the [earthly] “Church/Kingdom” “was” to be delivered up to God [that is, to the eternal kingdom, see 1 Cor. 15:24]:

1 Cor. 15: 23 But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming,
24 then comes the end, when He delivers up the kingdom [the church] to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power. Top

There is, indeed, “great mystery” associated with the “Kingdom of Heaven”. The points made by the Scriptures listed above clearly indicate that, both the kingdom of Israel, and the Church, are earthly shadows and types of kingdoms that provide access to the “Eternal Heavenly Kingdom” after death. Therefore, great care should be taken in determining from the context of Scripture, which kingdom is referenced in the text.

And finally, it is much more logical to assume that Christ was speaking, in Colossians [1:13], of the “Eternal Kingdom of Heaven” and not of the Church that was established on Pentecost.


The kingdom of heaven has always included all of God’s righteous saints throughout the ages. Adam, Abraham, Job, Melchizedek [Heb. 7:1-17], Daniel, John the Baptist, and others are part of the “Kingdom of Heaven”, yet none of them were in the Church, which was founded at Pentecost in Acts 2.

Moreover, the kingdom of heaven has always been in existence [Matt. 25:34], yet from Matthew [16:18-19], we learn that the establishment of the Church was still being viewed as a future event during Jesus’ earthly ministry.

It would appear that the key that unlocks the “mystery of the Kingdom” is the correct interpretation of this pivotal passage from the Gospel of Matthew [16:27-28]:
Matt. 16:27, For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and WILL THEN RECOMPENSE EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS [Isa. 40:10].
28 "Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who shall not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom.

Only one single historical event [that is, the Jewish War from A.D. 66-70] can literally satisfy the time-definite passage [that is, Matt. 16:27-28, also see Matt. 24:30 and Luke 21:31]. The mind-set of today, which associates “the coming of the Lord in glory” [Matt. 24:30] only with the “Final Judgment” [recompense] and the destruction of the world in the future, is in very serious conflict with the time-definite declaration of this passage. For whatever reason, most of Christendom today absolutely refuses to accept this passage at face value.

As an alternative, some claimed that the Lord delayed His coming [2 Peter 3:4ff]. However, the great destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, without question, occurred in A.D. 70. And it was within this context that the Lord promised “His coming in His kingdom” to that “eyewitness generation”. The fulfillment of this passage was clearly associated with that past “eyewitness generation”. It would be extremely difficult to reconcile a past fulfillment [“those who are standing here”] with a mind-set that demands an exclusive fulfillment only in the future at the destruction of the world.

For the author of this study, this became clear evidence that something was gravely in error with the traditional explanation and interpretation of Biblical prophecy. God does not make mistakes, nor is this ignored passage a mistranslation.

Once again, read the words carefully. The passage [Matt. 16:27-28] is either true as it is written, or it is not. One might also ask, if Jesus wanted to assure the “eyewitness generation”, that He, Himself, would come in His kingdom before some of them died, how could He say it more clearly?

Perhaps this is why this passage has so often been ignored and is seldom quoted. It is beyond belief that Christendom refuses to believe what Christ, Himself, declared. If the time-definite elements of this prophecy are true, just as they are written, then the nature of the Lord’s coming at the destruction of Jerusalem is not correctly understood and, thus, it must be very carefully reexamined.

Like Apollos, the proponents of this “Restoration” view were on the right track, but they needed to be taught more perfectly [Acts 18:26] concerning these things. Thus, the destruction of Jerusalem (A.D. 70), as a monumental religious event, must be given its proper place in the theology of Christendom.

The Church at Pentecost was indeed part of the unfolding mystery of the kingdom of God. However, the Church that was established at Pentecost A.D. 30-33, cannot be fully equated to the “kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world”. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost [John 14:26, Acts 2:1ff] also cannot account for the Son of Man, Himself, coming in His kingdom at Pentecost A.D. 30-33, as recorded in Matthew [16:27-28] and Mark [9:1].

Therefore, with everything now in its proper perspective, the interpretations of the time-definite passages fall into a coherent sequence and the entire picture becomes abundantly clear. The disjointed Roman mind-set has caused Christendom to view
these things darkly and to, thus, rationalize away the literal time-definite aspects of the Lord’s own prophecies. It is puzzling that the natures of His coming and of His “Kingdom” have been so misunderstood for so many centuries.

Once again, the literalness of the “Word” was ignored in order to make it conform to the presumed human solution. However, this was not the first time that God’s people drew incorrect conclusions. The blindness of the Jews, because of their traditions, caused them to fail to recognize John the Baptist as Elijah [Matt. 17:12], and to crucify the Lord of Glory.

Although the Scriptures, themselves, provide sufficient proof of the hypothesis of this study, Chapter 6 also supplies an abundant historical testimony of the literal fulfillment of these things. Most of the modern Christians are not aware of the existence of this ancient historical record that is presented in the next chapter.
CHAPTER SIX
(6.0) THE HISTORICAL RECORD

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- Book I, 2-4 (A.D. 69), [Worldwide distress (Rev. 3:10), four Emperors died by the sword within one year (Dan. 7:24)] (Go there)
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- Book II, 1-2 (A.D. 69), [Vespasian's rise to power (Rev. 13:5-12) and Titus had an affair with Bernice (Acts 25:13)] (Go there)
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- Book V, 9-10 (A.D. 70), [The “Abomination of Desolation” in the Holy Place (Matt. 24:15, Dan. 9:26, 11:31, 2 Thess. 2:4)] (Go there)

(6.2.4.2) “The Twelve Caesars” of Gaius Suetonius Tranquillas (Go there)

Table 2. Tranquillus, G. S. (1957). The Twelve Caesars (Go there)

(6.3) 2\textsuperscript{nd} Esdras [4\textsuperscript{th} Ezra] (Go there)
- 4 Ezra Chapter One (Go there)
- 4 Ezra Chapter 2 (Go there)
- 4 Ezra Chapter 3 (Go there)
- 4 Ezra Chapter 4 (Go there)
- 4 Ezra Chapter 5 (Go there)
- 4 Ezra Chapter Chapter 6 (Go there)
- 4 Ezra Chapter 7 (Go there)
- 4 Ezra Chapter 8 (Go there)
- 4 Ezra Chapter 9 (Go there)
4 Ezra Chapter 10 (Go there)
4 Ezra Chapter 11 (Go there)
4 Ezra Chapter 12 (Go there)
4 Ezra Chapter 13 (Go there)
4 Ezra Chapter 14 (Go there)
4 Ezra Chapter 15 (Go there)
4 Ezra Chapter 16 (Go there)

(6.4) The Book of Enoch (Go there)
1-V. Parable of Enoch on the Future Lot of the Wicked and the Righteous
(Go there)
XXXVIII. The Coming Judgment of the Wicked (Go there)
XXXIX. The Abode of the Righteous and of the Elect One: the Praise of the
Blessed (Go there)
XLV - LVII The Lot of the Apostates: the New Heaven and the New Earth
(Go there)
XLVI. The Head of Days and the Son of Man (Go there)
XLVIII. The Fount of Righteousness (Go there)
XLIX. The Resurrection of the Dead, and the Separation by the Judge of
Righteous and the Wicked (Go there)

(6.5) The Dead Sea Scrolls From Qumran (Go there)
Qumran Scroll Fragment (7Q5) of Mark (Go there)
The Rabbinic Council of Jamnia (Go there)
The Scroll of the Rule (Go there)
The Rule Annex (Go there)
The Damascus Document (Go there)
The Scroll of the War Rule (Go there)
The Kittim as the Romans (Go there)

(6.6) The Epistle of Barnabas (Go there)
Chapter 1 (Go there)
Chapter 2 (Go there)
Chapter 4 (Go there)
Chapter 5 (Go there)
Chapter 6 (Go there)
Chapter 7 (Go there)
Chapter 8 (Go there)
Chapter 10 (Go there)
Chapter 11 (Go there)
Chapter 14 (Go there)
Chapter 15 (Go there)
Chapter 16 (Go there)
Chapter 17 (Go there)
Chapter 18 (Go there)
Chapter 19 (Go there)
Chapter 20 (Go there)
Chapter 21 (Go there)

(6.7) The Fragments of Papias (Go there)
Chapter Six Introduction

40 "Therefore when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vine-growers?"
41 They said to Him, "He will bring those wretches [that is, Jews, Isa. 5:1-7] to a wretched end [in A.D. 70], and will rent out the vineyard to other [Gentile] vine-growers, who will pay him the proceeds at the proper seasons."
42 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'?"
43 "Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you [Jews], and be given to a nation [that is, the Gentiles] producing the fruit of it.
44 "And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust." (Matt. 21:40-44)

This is the most important chapter in this study since the actual ancient historical data is presented here. As new discoveries cause the scientific and academic disciplines to change their long held opinions and assumptions, the teaching of the “Restoration Movement” must similarly be updated as better analytical processes and
overlooked historical literature is brought to light. “Restoration” is a continuing process not just one event in time.

The impact of this data must not create just another new or passing “fad” but to return closer to the doctrine of the 1st Century Christianity. Some of these documents date back to the 1st Century. This empirical record provides strong evidence that Christendom over the centuries has drifted away from the original “Doctrine of the 1st Century Christian Church”.

Therefore, the current 20th Century mind-sets and prevailing views must be carefully compared to the Scriptures and to the earliest historical records if the ultimate goal is, indeed, “Restoration”. Gold that is tried by fire always remains unscathed. However, wood, hay, and stubble will be burned up. Subjecting one’s “religious traditions” to analytical processes is the ultimate test of both “faith” and “truth”.

Some modern Christians will find this concept difficult to accept since it is not emotionally pleasant to challenge established “Church Traditions”. However, from the academic standpoint, the historical documents that are identified and discussed in this chapter prove that the beliefs of Christendom have continued to change since the 1st Century.

How people respond to “Truth” truly reflects both their character and their Spiritual evolution. The intent of this study is to help restore 1st Century Christianity based on the historical evidence that is available today. If “tradition” is more important than “truth” then “restoration” is not possible. Both the “Reformation” and the “Restoration” Movements called for an honest response from the Catholic Church. Now that the “tables are turned” what will be the response of the church today?

The emergence of the historical literature from the era of the “eyewitness generation” is of monumental importance in the understanding of Biblical truth. Both the Jewish and the Christians authors of the “eyewitness generation” wrote concerning the fulfillment of the above quotation from Matthew [21:40-44]. The prophecy relating to Judaism was literally fulfilled during the war with the Romans that ended in A.D. 70. From that time onward it was the Gentiles who “produced the fruit in it”.

This chapter provides the translations of the actual early historical writings. These 1st and 2nd Century documents illustrated the importance of the Jewish War that ended in A.D. 70. The argument can be made that these beliefs are not true, but it cannot be argued that they did not exist. These ancient beliefs seem to verify the time-definite aspects of Jesus’ own teachings. For Christians this is profound testimony from antiquity that the Scriptures, which are considered genuine by the early church are impeccably true just as they are written.

These little known or long forgotten non-Biblical writings from the infant church must be considered if the goal of the “Restoration Movement” is to continue to seek “truth” and to restore 1st Century Christianity. In addition, even the more recent archaeological findings such as the “Dead Sea Scrolls” provide an abundance of historical evidence that challenge the validity of traditional mind-sets and help decipher the mystery of the Book of Revelation. Perhaps these recent findings were provided by Providence in order to help Christendom “wake up” and to seek truth.

Thus, the reconciliation of the Scriptures with the newly discovered early documents [“who brings forth out of his treasure things new and old” (Matt. 13:52)] proves, to
the satisfaction of the author of this study, that Christendom has drifted away from its earliest perception and understanding of Biblical prophecy.

(6.1) The Test of the Hypothesis: The Corresponding Secular Historical Record

Today, the real challenge for the intellectually honest Bible student is to formulate an understanding that will satisfy all, and not just a few selected Scriptural references on any given Bible topic. In our own time, the pursuit of “truth” is fostered by both scientific advancement and by the recent great archaeological discoveries.

In view of this, the aim of this entire study is to reexamine and to discuss the primary core Biblical and historical source data of the Christian religion. It is always timely to encourage the continued “Restoration” of New Testament Christianity, as new information becomes available.

As discussed earlier, it appears that scientific advancement was the catalyst that broke the grip of the unfounded religious traditions in the recent centuries. Such was the importance of the scientific endeavors of Copernicus and Galileo as they struggled against the blindness of the Roman papacy. And it is still important today.

However, truth triumphed when the Catholic Church failed in its claim of “infallibility”. The traditions of the Catholic Church were forced to yield to proven scientific wisdom. In the same way, the non-Biblical historical references in this study provide the evidence to support the hypothesis that was made by this author over 33 years ago. The references presented below are established historical facts that are readily accepted by the academic community. For clarity, the hypothesis, which generated this study, is again cited below:

Hypothesis: The 1st Century historical record must produce evidence of a belief of an imminent “New Kingdom” that would also be directly linked to the time-frame of the War with the Romans from A.D. 66-70.

In order to test this hypothesis, the following logical assumption had to be made. An event of this magnitude and importance must surely be recorded within the literature of the historical time-frame” of the “eyewitness generation”.

Thus, this hypothesis would either have to be accepted or be rejected based on the data produced within the findings. A lack of historical evidence would be just cause for the rejection of this hypothesis. In that case, the interpretation of the Book of Revelation would continue to remain with an expected fulfillment exclusively in the future.

Furthermore, if the time-definite aspects of the Biblical prophecies did not conform to the obvious meanings, then the whole prophecy, itself, would logically also have to be rejected as being both obscure and undecipherable.

If the time-definite aspects of Biblical prophecy cannot be proven to be historically true, then the mystery can logically never be solved. In this way, the predictions of the Roman clergy could never be challenged. If the future can never be proven, and the fulfillment of Biblical prophecy is in the future, obviously, no one could ever refute the interpretation. Consequently, for Christendom, this was “business as
usual” for centuries since heretics were severely punished, or at least attempts were made to silence them.

Conversely, the purpose of this study is to investigate the time-definite aspects of the prophecies, and then to search for corresponding historical evidence within the corresponding “eyewitness” time frame. If the time-definite aspects of the prophecies could be directly linked to valid historical references and to early Jewish and Christian beliefs, then this would prove that the interpretations and assumptions of the early Roman Christian theologians were unfounded.

The search began in 1968, and beyond all expectations, the profuse cache of historical testimony was found exactly at the point in history where Jesus, Himself, said that it would be. For the author, this experience seemed as exciting a discovery as when the disciples found Jesus [(John 1:41), “He found first his own brother Simon, and said to him, ‘We have found the Messiah’ (which translated means Christ)].

Therefore, one of the most important fundamental propositions of this study was to question and to reject any human doctrine or mind-set that was in direct conflict with the obvious meaning of the Holy Scriptures.

A review of the most important early non-Biblical works will be presented and discussed in the remainder of this chapter.

(6.2) The Related Works of the Early Historians

(6.2.1) Christian Worship in the Early Church

Acts Chapter 15 is extremely important to the understanding of the infant Jewish church. It is also important to understand how the “grafted in” [Rom. 11:17ff] Gentile converts were to fit into this emerging new-world order of things. The inherited mind-sets make it difficult to accept how the Gentile Christian church actually developed.

First of all, the first Jewish Christians at Jerusalem, and Paul, himself, were identified with the new Jewish “Sect of the Nazarenes” [see Acts 24:5]. Moreover, the church in Jerusalem [that is, the Nazarenes] evidently continued to follow the Law of Moses [Acts 15:5] for many years. Please follow the references in the passages below:

Acts 15:5, But certain ones of the sect of the Pharisees who had believed, stood up, saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them, and to direct them to observe the Law of Moses."

Author’s note. Notice the powerful implication here. This passage would be meaningless unless the believing Pharisees, themselves, were still following the Law and were still keeping the Sabbath.

6 And the apostles and the elders came together to look into this matter.
7 And after there had been much debate, [because it was not easy to decide]. . . .
10 "Now therefore why do you put God to the test by placing upon the neck of the [Gentile] disciples a yoke [that is, the Law of Moses] which neither our fathers nor
we have been able to bear? [The implied immediate solution was that the Jews (Nazarenes) would continue to keep the Law, but the Gentiles were not bound to it].

11 "But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they also are." (Acts 15:5-11)

Other than the references to meeting daily [see Acts 3:46, 6:1, 16:5, 19:9], the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem evidently continued to worship on the Sabbath [see Acts 13:14, 27, 42, 15:21, 16:13, 17:2, 18:4]. In Acts [21:20-26], Paul arrived in Jerusalem and again encountered James. The text implies that the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem were still following the Law, and were still worshipping on the Sabbath. Moreover, they also encouraged Paul to keep the Law. See the textual evidence below:

Acts 21:17, And when we had come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. 18 And now the following day Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present. 19 And after he had greeted them, he began to relate one by one the things which God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. 20 And when they heard it they began glorifying God; and they said to him, "You see, brother, how many thousands [see Rev. 14:3ff] there are among the Jews of those who have believed, and they are all zealous for the Law; [the Jews were still following the Law of Moses]. 21 and they have been told about you [Paul], that you are teaching all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children, nor to walk according to the customs. [Paul was accused of not following the Law of Moses]. 22 "What, then, is to be done? They will certainly hear that you have come. 23 "Therefore do this that we tell you. We have four men who are under a vow; 24 take them and purify yourself along with them, and pay their expenses in order that they may shave their heads; and all will know that there is nothing to the things which they have been told about you, but that you [Paul] yourself also walk orderly, keeping the Law. [James and the Jerusalem elders were apparently keeping the Law. They encouraged Paul to publicly demonstrate the same practice]. 25 "But concerning the Gentiles who have believed, we wrote, having decided that they should abstain from meat sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what is strangled and from fornication." [Note the difference]. (Acts 21:17-25)

The friction caused [that is, in at least A.D. 44-47, see Gal. 2:1] by the difference in the way, that the Jews in Jerusalem and the Jewish and Gentile Christians under Paul’s persuasion, worshipped is also contrasted in the Book of Galatians:

Gal. 2:1, Then after an interval of fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along also. 2 And it was because of a revelation that I went up; and I submitted to them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but I did so in private [in order not to
offend the Jews] to those who were of reputation, for fear that I might be running, or
had run, in vain.
3 But not even Titus who was with me, though he was a Greek, was compelled
to be circumcised. [Gentile Christians did not follow the Law of Moses].
4 But it was because of the false brethren who had sneaked in to spy out our liberty
[that is, not to follow the Old Law] which we have in Christ Jesus, in order to bring
us into bondage [that is, keeping the Old Law]. . . .
7 But on the contrary, seeing that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the
uncircumcised, just as Peter had been to the circumcised
8 (for He who effectually worked for Peter in his apostleship to the circumcised
effectually worked for me also to the Gentiles),
9 and recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James and Cephas and John,
who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of
fellowship, that we might go to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcised. . . .
12 For prior to the coming of certain men from James, he used to eat with the
Gentiles; but when they came, he began to withdraw and hold himself aloof, fearing
the party of the circumcision [who were still keeping the Old Law].
13 And the rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy, with the result that even
Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy.
14 But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I
said to Cephas [Peter] in the presence of all, "If you, being a Jew, live like the
Gentiles and not like the Jews, how is it that you compel the Gentiles to live like
Jews [that is, to keep the Old Law]? . . .
18 "For if I rebuild [that is, teach the Old Law] what I have once destroyed, I
prove myself to be a transgressor.
19 "For through the Law I died to the Law [Paul refused to keep the Old Law
and taught both Jewish and Gentile Christians to do the same], that I might live
to God.
20 "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives
in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God,
who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me.
21 "I do not nullify the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the Law,
then Christ died needlessly." (Gal. 2:1-21)

It can also be implied from Acts [18:25-19:8, circa A.D. 44-47] that some of
John the Baptist’s disciples, including Apollos, were still keeping the Sabbath. In
this passage there still does not appear to be any reference to worship on the first
day of the week.

The first clear Biblical references where the Christian Church definitely began
to worship exclusively on the “Lord’s Day” [Rev. 1:10], or Sunday, the first day of
the week, are recorded in Acts Chapters 19 and 20. The references in Acts [11:28 and
18:2] to Claudius and the famine predicted by Agabus appear, according to Josephus and
Suetonius, to be oriented to about the sixth of Claudius or about A.D. 47. Paul evidently
taught in a Jewish synagogue at Ephesus for the last time in Acts [19:8-11]. When
the Jews in Ephesus became hardened, Paul took the disciples away and then met daily
“in the school of Tyrannus”.

Top
In the next chapter, at Troas [Acts 20:7ff], the record indicates that they met on the first day of the week to break bread. From that time on, the Churches, which were under Paul's influence, evidently continued to meet every first day of the week. This fact can be implied from 1 Corinthians (16:2), [“On the first day of every week let each one of you put aside and save, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come...”].

The powerful influence of the Jerusalem Church began to vanish near the beginning of the Jewish War as the Christians heeded the warning of Jesus [see Matt. 24:15-18, Luke 21:20-21] and fled Jerusalem. Josephus (Antiq. Bk. XX, Ch. IX, 1, p. 588) mentioned that James the Lord's brother was killed by the Jews about A.D. 62. From that time onward, the Roman Church was recognized as the authority for Christian doctrine.

From the above discussion, it should become evident that “the Jewish Christian Church was not born fully grown” on that first Pentecost after the resurrection. The transition from the Law of Moses to the Law of Christ overlapped for about 40 years until A.D. 70. This insight must be considered part of the mystery of “the Kingdom of Heaven”. Because of this, the final transition from the Old Covenant [Lam. 2:9, Heb. 8:1-13, “ready to disappear” when Hebrews was written] to the New Covenant was expected to be imminent. The official end of the Old Covenant was marked by the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple [see Dan. 2:44, 7:20-22, 9:24-27, 12:1-11, Lam. 2:9, Zech. 14:1-10, Matt. 24:15, Luke 21:20ff, 2 Thess. 2:1-9, Heb. 9:1-8, Rev 11:1-8, 15, 12:10].

As further proof of this transition period, the first recorded Christian worship and assemblies, from Acts Chapter 2 and others (Acts 16:5, 17:7), occurred first daily in the Temple, followed by disbanding to individual homes for eating together and for continued fellowship. This practice of meeting daily in the Temple, which could only be entered by Jews alone, was evidently abandoned when the disciples were dispersed (Acts 8:1). The Temple was destroyed by Titus the son of the Roman Emperor Vespasian in August of A.D. 70 (Josephus).

As mentioned above in Acts [20:6-7], the first recorded specific worship of Christians on the first day of the week [about A.D. 55] was also associated with the Lord's Supper on Sunday, the resurrection day [Luke 24:1-30]. It is interesting that Paul remained at Troas for seven days, including one Sabbath, but the record indicates that the Church only assembled on the first day of the week. This fact is an important point in Biblical interpretation.

The establishment of Biblical authority (that is, worship on the first day of the week) is based on what the Apostles taught and practiced. Although Paul was at Troas for seven days, there was no mention of worship on the Sabbath day. If the worship on the Sabbath was mentioned in this Scripture then, of course, there would be an example to continue Sabbath worship.

It is not difficult to conclude that the Holy Spirit, speaking through Luke, the Inspired writer, thought that Sabbath worship had become unimportant, as the transition period from Judaism to the advent of the full-grown Church, was about to end. If Sabbath worship was important to the Holy Spirit, then such teachings could have easily been provided in that passage. However, the reference to Sabbath worship is noticeably absent. But, the worship on the first day of the week was carefully recorded.
The practice of observing the Sabbath was, in time, abandoned by most Jewish Christians, as the result of Paul's teachings (see 2 Cor. 3:7-10, Col. 2:8-23, Heb. 10:25, and others). Paul emphasized that the "New Covenant" was better than the "Old, which was written on stone" and that the Sabbath was only a shadow of good things to come. The writings of early Christian authors, in both the 1st and 2nd Centuries, indicate that the Lord's supper (Lord's table) was observed by the assembled church only on the Lord's Day (Rev. 1:10) or the day of the resurrection. The early Christians then began to honor the first day above the Sabbath or any other day. However, some weak Jewish Christians, for a time, still wanted to keep the Sabbath, and evidently did so, even into the 2nd Century.

The question is frequently asked, "Can Christians assemble on any other day”? The answer is, "of course". The Christians in Acts Chapter 2 and in other references (Acts 16:5 and 17:7) assembled daily. Paul, in Acts [19:8-9], taught in the synagogue, but when the Jews were hardened, he took the disciples and taught daily in the school of Tyrannus. Wednesday, or any other day, is a good day for the church to assemble. However, the Lord's Supper (as testified by the New Testament and early Christian writers) was observed only on the Lord's Day when the Saints assembled for worship.

Consider carefully the following early historical references, from the Epistle of Ignatius, the Epistle of Barnabas, from the works of Justin, and from Pliny the Younger, concerning worship on both the Sabbath and the first day of the week. Clearly, some of the Jewish Christians resisted giving up Sabbath worship until the early part of the 2nd Century.

(6.2.1.1) The Epistle of Ignatius to the Magnesians

Roberts and Donaldson (Vol. I, 1981) indicate, in the introduction to this text, that this bishop of Antioch was condemned before the Emperor Trajan on December 20, 107 A.D., on the charge of being a Christian. After giving his testimony of Jesus, Ignatius was killed by wild animals. This is one of the earliest secular historical records providing evidence that Christians, by this time frame, were worshipping on Sunday, or the first day of the week. This is further evidence that the church, as we know it, was not “established fully grown on Pentecost”, but was in a state of transition up until at least A.D. 70. In addition, this early record indicates that there was pressure from the Jewish teachers, who were trying to persuade Christians (Acts 15:5, Gal 2:14) to keep the Law and to worship on the Sabbath even until A.D. 107:

Let us therefore no longer keep the Sabbath after the Jewish manner, and rejoice in the days of idleness; 'for he that does not work, let him not eat' (2 Thess 3:10). .. But let everyone of you keep the Sabbath after a spiritual manner, rejoicing in meditation on the law, .. After the observance of the Sabbath, let every friend of Christ keep the Lord's Day as a festival, the resurrection day, the queen and chief of all the days [of the week]. Looking forward to this the prophet declared, 'To the end, for the eighth day' on which our life both sprang up again, and the victory over death was obtained in Christ. (Roberts and Donaldson (Vol. I, 1981, p. 63)
(6.2.1.2) The Epistle of Barnabas

This is another very early historical testimony (Roberts & Donaldson, Vol. I, 1981), from a fiery Christian Jew (Barnabas), which was written sometime immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Apparently, in A.D. 70, Sabbath worship was still an issue in the church:

Further, He says to them, ‘Your new moons and your Sabbaths I cannot endure' (Isa 1:13). Ye perceive how He speaks: **Your present Sabbaths are not acceptable to Me**, but that which I have made, [namely this,] when giving rest to all things, I shall make a beginning on the eighth day that is, a beginning of another world. **Wherefore, also we keep the eighth day with joyfulness, the day also on which Jesus rose again from the dead.** (p. 147)

(6.2.1.3) The First Apology of Justin

Roberts & Donaldson (Vol. I, 1981) set the date of Justin Martyr's birth in **114 A.D.** and his martyrdom about **165 A.D.** This 2nd Century example of Christian worship was not significantly different from what Christian fundamentalists practice today:

And on **the day called Sunday**, all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits; then, when the reader has ceased, the president verbally instructs, and exhorts to the imitation of these good things. Then we all rise together and pray, and, as we before said, when our prayer is ended, **bread and wine and water** are brought, and the president in like manner offers prayers and thanksgivings, according to his ability, and the people assent, saying Amen; and there is a distribution to each, and a participation of that over which thanks have been given, and to those who are absent a portion is sent by the deacons. And they who are well to do, and willing, give what each thinks fit; and what is collected is deposited with the president, who succors the orphans and widows, and those who, through sickness or any other cause, are in want, and those who are in bonds, and the strangers sojourning among us, and in word takes care of all who are in need. **But Sunday is the day on which we all hold our common assembly, because it is the first day on which God, having wrought a change in the darkness and matter, made the world; and Jesus Christ our Savior on the same day rose from the dead.** (Roberts & Donaldson (Vol. I, 1981, p. 186)

(6.2.1.4) The Letters of the Younger Pliny

The text below is a letter from Pliny (1963) to the emperor Trajan. It was published in Book Ten of his work. However, the letter itself was first written some years before **A.D. 113**, which was the year of Pliny's death. This very important early Roman historical writing provides non-Biblical evidence of the presence of Christianity in Rome.
Moreover, Christians met weekly to worship, and evidently to observe the Lord's Supper. Additionally, Pliny substantiates that the Romans did, in fact, persecute early Christians:

For the moment this is the line I have taken with all persons brought before me on the charge of being Christians. I have asked them in person if they are Christians, and if they admit it, I repeat the question a second and third time, with a warning of the punishment awaiting them. If they persist, I order them to be led away for execution; ... There have been others similarly fanatical who are Roman citizens. I have entered them on the list of persons to be sent to Rome for trial... They [Christians] also declare that the sum total of their guilt or error amounted to no more than this: **they met regularly before dawn on a fixed day** to chant [sing] verses alternately amongst themselves in honor to Christ as if to a god, and also to bind themselves by oath, not for any criminal purpose, but to abstain from theft, robbery, and adultery, to commit no breach of trust and not to deny a deposit when called upon to restore it. **After this ceremony it had been their custom to disperse and reassemble later to take food [Lord's Supper] of an ordinary, harmless kind;** but they had in fact given up this practice since my edict, issued on your instructions, which banned all political societies. This made me decide it was all the more necessary to extract the truth by torture from two slave-women, whom they call **deaconesses.** I found nothing but a degenerate sort of cult carried to extravagant lengths. (pp. 293-294)

The "fixed day", mentioned by Pliny, indicates that Christian worship was observed weekly [1 Cor 16:2, Heb 10:25]. The specific identification of the “fixed” day of the week may have been withheld on purpose, in order to make it more difficult for the Romans to detect Christians meeting during their worship.

**However, the references, in the Epistles of Ignatius and Barnabas respectively, were clearly written years before Pliny's letter. Moreover, this unquestionably establishes Sunday, the first day of the week, as the designated day of Christian worship.** The Romans were well acquainted with Jewish worship on the Sabbath. Had the "fixed day" been the Sabbath, or if Christians had indeed also worshipped on the Sabbath with the Jews, then there would also have been an established linked to Judaism, and many Jews might have also been questioned.

(6.2.2) The Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius Pamphilus

As the discussion of the history of the early Church continues, “The Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius Pamphilus” (1966, the original work was published circa 335 A.D.) is one of the most important non-biblical Christian historical documents. **Eusebius cites many earlier Christian and historical writers whose religious views and interpretations, of the Scripture, are fundamental to this study.** Table 3 presents the chronological listing of the early Christian writers that are discussed by Eusebius Pamphilus (1966, pp. 474-478). The references will be discussed in the order that they appear in his work. Many of these references are self-explanatory and need little further commentary.
Chronological Table Of Early Christian Writers

A.D. 96, 1st Year of the Emperor Nerva who followed Domitian
A.D. 98, Clement of Rome
A.D. 107, Ignatius dies
A.D. 117, Hegesippus
A.D. 166, Justin’s and Polycarp’s martyrdom
A.D. 180, Clement of Alexandria
A.D. 194, Tertullian writes his Apology
A.D. 205, Origen and Irenaeus die
A.D. 230, Hippolytus of Rome
A.D. 250, Dionysius of Alexandria, his writings from circa A.D. 256 to 295
A.D. 295, The schism of Nepos
A.D. 324, Constantine the sole master of the Roman world
A.D. 325, The Council of Nicea


Book I, Chapter V

Eusebius places the **birth of Christ in the forty-second year of the reign of Augustus and twenty-eight years after the death of Antony and Cleopatra.** The death of Cleopatra terminated the dynasty of the Ptolemies. This event occurred shortly after the battle of Actium. Christ’s birth also occurred during the first census taken by Quirinius governor of Syria [Acts 5:13]. This Quirinius is the one mentioned by Josephus [Antiquities, Book 18].

Book I, Chapter VI (The 70 weeks)

Also concerning the birth of Jesus, this reference linked His birth to a fulfillment of the 70 weeks from Daniel [9:24]. Another amazing interpretation of the **prophecy of 70 weeks** was also presented by Tertullian and can be found in Section (3.2) in the commentary on Daniel Chapter 9.

It may suffice then, to have said this much, in proof of another prophecy of our Savior Jesus Christ. Most clearly indeed does the **book of Daniel**, expressly embracing a number of certain [70] **weeks until the government of Christ**, concerning which we have treated in another work, predict that after the termination of these, the sacred unction amongst the Jews should be totally abolished. And this evidently proved to have been fulfilled at the time of our Savior's birth. (p. 31)

Book I, Chapter XIII (The Dead Raised from Hades)
This chapter is reputed to be an account concerning Agbarus, prince of Edessa a country beyond the Euphrates. He had been sick and sent a letter to Jesus. As the account continues: "After the ascension of Jesus, Judas who is called Thomas sent Thaddeus, the apostle and one of the seventy" (p. 45) to him. This was the message reportedly conveyed from Thaddeus to Agbarus. This is one of the few references from antiquity that speaks of a “resurrection [see Eph. 4:8-9] following the crucifixion:

[H]ow he humbled himself, and died, and lowered his divinity; what things, also he suffered from the Jews; how he was crucified, and descended into hell, (hades,) and burst the bars which had never been broken, and arose again, and also raised with himself the dead that had slept for ages [see Eph. 4:8-9]. And how he descended alone, but ascended with a great multitude to his Father. And how he sitteth at the right hand of God and the Father, with glory and power, in the heavens; and how he is about to come again with glory and power, to judge the living and dead. (p. 47)

Book II, Chapter XI (Thudas)

In this chapter concerning Theudas [Acts 5:36], Eusebius references Josephus [Ant. Bk. XX, Ch. V, p. 590] indicating that Theudas was killed by Fadus while he was procurator of Judea.

Book II, Chapter XV (Rome Is Called Babylon)

Here it is stated that Clement [Sixth Book of Institutions, A.D. 98, see Table 3] makes reference to Rome as Babylon. This, of course, might influence the interpretation of Book of Revelation [14:8, 16:19, 17:5, 18:2, 10, 21]:

But Peter makes mention of Mark in the first epistle, in which he is also said to have composed at the same city of Rome, and he shows this fact, by calling the city by an unusual trope, Babylon; thus 'The church at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you, as also my son Marcus' [1 Pet. 5:13]. (p. 65)

Book II, Chapter XXII (Felix, Festus, and Nero)

In this text, Festus was sent to Judea to succeed Felix. It was Festus who sent Paul and Aristarchus to Rome to stand before Nero. In this time frame it was believed that Paul wrote the Second Epistle to Timothy, and Luke wrote Acts. The reference to the "lion's mouth [2 Tim. 4:17]" was Nero. Paul made his defense and he was then released.

Book II, Chapter XXIII (James Is Killed In A.D. 62)

This is a commentary on the martyrdom of James [who was killed in about A.D. 62], the brother of Jesus, which occurred about the time of the Passover when Festus died in Judea. Eusebius makes reference to the much earlier works of both Clement
[A.D. 98] and Hegesippus [A.D. 117, see Table 3], and quotes from his "Fifth Book of Commentaries":

[H]e [James] was called the Just. . . . Some of the seven sects [of the Jews], therefore, of the people, mentioned by me above in my commentaries, asked him what was the door of Jesus. . . . he answered, 'that He was the Savior'. From which, some believed that Jesus is the Christ. . . . that He was coming to give to everyone according to his works [Matt. 16:27-28]; as many however, as did believe did so on account of James. As there were many therefore of the rulers that believed, there arose a tumult among the Jews, Scribes, Pharisees, say that there was danger, that the people would now expect Jesus as the Messiah. . . . We [Jews] entreat thee to persuade all that are coming to the Feast of the Passover rightly concerning Jesus . . . . Stand therefore upon the wing of the temple [before its destruction in A.D. 70]. . . . declare to us what is the door of Jesus that was crucified. And he answered with a loud voice, why do ye ask me respecting Jesus the Son of Man. He is now sitting in the heavens on the right hand of great Power, and is about to come on the clouds of heaven [Matt. 24:30]. And as many were confirmed, and gloried in the testimony of James. . . . Going up therefore, they cast down the just man. . . . and they were stoning him. . . . one of them, a fuller, beat out the brains of Justus with the club. . . . and they buried him on the spot where his tombstone is still remaining, by the temple. . . . Immediately after this, Vespasian invaded and took Judea. (pp. 76-78)

Book II, Chapter XXV (Paul And Peter Killed)

Here the subject is the persecution under Nero, in which Paul and Peter [A.D. 64] were martyred:

He [Nero] was the first of the emperors that displayed himself as an enemy of piety towards the Deity. This fact is recorded by the Roman Tertulian [A.D. 194, see Table 3: 'Examine your records. There you will find that Nero was the first that persecuted this doctrine, particularly then when after subduing all the East, he exercised his cruelty against all at Rome. Such is the man of whom we boast, as the leader in our punishment'. . . . Thus Nero publicly announcing himself as the chief enemy of God, was led on in his fury to slaughter the apostles. Paul is therefore said to have been beheaded at Rome, and Peter to have been crucified under him. (pp. 79-80)

Book II, Chapter XXVI (Jewish War Begins in 12th of Nero)

The reference here is to Josephus' account of the beginning of the Jewish War, which started about the time that Florus, the procurator, crucified and persecuted the Jews in Jerusalem in the twelfth year of Nero [A.D. 66].
Book III, Chapter III (Book of Second Peter Questioned)

Note this very important testimony. **The Book of 2 Peter is the prime Christian text used to defend the position that the world would be destroyed by fire** [2 Peter 3:7-12].

“As to the writings of Peter, one of his epistles called the first is acknowledged as genuine. . . But that which is called the second, we have not, indeed understood to be embodied with the sacred books. . . The epistles of Paul are fourteen, all well known and beyond doubt. . . that some have set aside the Epistle to the Hebrews, saying, that it was disputed” (p. 83).

Book III, Chapter V (Abomination of Desolation)

This Book [Bk. III, Ch. V, pp. 86-86] identifies important early Christian historical references that link them directly to the works of the 1st Century Jewish Historian, Flavius Josephus, and, thus, to the parallel accounts of the Roman historians.

These are references of firmly established Christian beliefs that date to the very “dawn” of Christianity. The important reference cited below provides the key that links Josephus’ account of the last siege of the Jews [A.D. 66-70] unmistakably to yet another “third” abomination of desolation [see the comments in Sections (3.2, 3.3, and 6.17.1), 1st Maccabees, Section (3.3.1), and Daniel (9:24-27, 12:1-13). Also see, “standing or sitting in the Holy Place” (Matt. 24:15, 2 Thess. 2:4)]. The “First Century” prophecy made by Jesus, Himself [Matt. 24, Mark 13, Luke 21, and others], has, thus, been literally fulfilled:

The whole body, however, of the church at Jerusalem, having been commanded by divine revelation, given to men of approved piety there before the war, removed from the city [Matt. 24:15, Luke 21:21], and dwelt in a certain city beyond the Jordan, called Pella. Here, those that believed in Christ, having removed from Jerusalem, as if holy men had entirely abandoned the royal city itself, and the whole land of Judea; the divine justice for the crimes against Christ and His apostles, finally overtook them, totally destroying the whole generation of these evildoers from the earth. . . the great and incredible distress [Dan. 12:1, Matt. 24:21] that those experienced who took refuge at Jerusalem. . . when finally the abomination of desolation [Dan. 9:26-27, Matt. 24:15], according to the prophetic declaration, stood in the temple of God [2 Thess. 2:4], so celebrated of old, but which was approaching its total downfall and final destruction by fire; all this, I say, any one that wishes may see accurately stated in the history written by Josephus. (Eusebius, Book III, Chapter V, pp. 85-86)

Book III, Chapter VII (The Great Tribulation)

In this very important chapter, the very early Christians believed that the prophecies of Jesus in Matthew Chapter 24, Mark 13, and in Luke 21 were directly fulfilled in
the destruction of Jerusalem in the second year of the emperor Vespasian [A.D. 70].

Note! The Christians believed that the “great tribulation [Dan. 12:1, Matt. 24:21]” was, indeed, the “War with the Romans” that ended in A.D. 70:

To these accounts it may be proper to add the sure predictions of our Savior, in which He foretold these events as follows: `But woe to them that are with child and those that give suck in those days; but pray that your flight be not in the winter, nor on the Sabbath. But there shall be great distress [tribulation, Matt. 24:21], such as not been from the beginning of the world until now, neither may be.'

The historian [Josephus] adding up the whole number of those slain, says, that eleven hundred thousand perished by famine and the sword, and the rest factious and robbers, mutually informing against each other after the capture were put to death... all of this occurred in this manner in the second year of Vespasian, according to the predictions of out Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, by who by His divine power foresaw all of these things as if already present at the time. . . . Afterwards He speaks as if of the people, `For there shall be great distress upon earth, and wrath upon this people, and they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and they shall be carried away captive to all nations, until the times of the nations shall be fulfilled [Note the direct quote from Matt. 24:21].' And again, `When ye shall see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that her desolation has drawn near [Also, note the direct quote from Luke 21:20]' . . . . Providence that had deferred their destruction for forty years after the crimes against Christ. (pp. 92-94)

Although the above passage, from Eusebius, is sufficient proof to support the hypothesis, this study will continue to identify the overwhelming evidence in support of this author’s early perception.

Book III, Chapter VIII (The Coming of The Kingdom)

This reference is another important testimony linking Josephus' [War, Bk. VI, Ch. 5, 3, p. 825] account of the destruction of Jerusalem to the fulfillment of the prophecies of Jesus relating to the “coming of His kingdom [Dan. 2:44, 7:22, Matt. 16:27-28, Luke 21:31]”. Again, note that the implication and interpretation of Daniel (2:44) was applied to A.D. 70, and not to Pentecost in A.D. 33. This was one of the most profound errors of interpretation that was made during the “Restoration Movement”. The obvious result is that the time-definite aspect of the Scriptures and the very words of Jesus, Himself, are still not believed.

On the twenty-first of the month of Artimisium [May] a wonderful specter was seen, which surpasses all belief. . . . For before the setting of the sun there were seen chariots and armed troops on high, wheeling through the clouds [see “come with the clouds” in Section (4.4.3.5)] around the whole region, and surrounding the cities. And at the festival called Pentecost, the priests entering the temple at night. . . to perform the service. . . perceived a motion and noise, and after this a confused voice saying, 'let us go hence' . . . the same historian relates. . . 'that an
oracular passage was found in the sacred writings [Dan. 2:44], declaring that about this time a certain one proceeding from that region would obtain the sovereignty of the world'. . . This prediction, he supposed was fulfilled in Vespasian. . . more justly, therefore, would it referred to Christ, to whom it was said by the Father, `Ask Me, and I will give thee the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession'. Of whom, indeed, at this very time the sound of the holy apostles went throughout all the earth, and their words to the ends of the earth [Matt. 24:14].

(pp. 95-96)

Book III, Chapter XX (Future Resurrection)

Here again, Eusebius quotes from the earlier writings of Hegessippus [A.D. 117, see Table 3] concerning the grandchildren of Judas, the brother of Jesus. Note that in the time of Nerva [A.D. 96, see Table 3], the prevailing Christian beliefs indicated that the “coming” of the Lord and the “resurrection” were still perceived to be in the future. Consequently, it seems apparent that Hegessippus and many other early Christians interpreted the “final coming of the Lord” apart from a fulfillment in A.D. 70. This was also the perception of Foy Wallace (1966).

These were reported as being of the family of David, and were brought to Domitian by the Evocatus. . . When asked also, respecting Christ and His kingdom, what was its nature, and when and where it was to appear, they replied, `that it was not a temporal nor an earthly kingdom, but celestial and angelic; that it would appear at the end of the world, when coming in glory He would judge the quick and dead, and give to everyone according to his works' [Matt. 16:27-28] . . . It was then [1st of Nerva or A.D. 96] also, that the apostle John returned from his banishment in Patmos and took up his abode at Ephesus, according to an ancient tradition of the church. (pp. 102-103)

Book III, Chapter XXVIII (The Date of the Revelation)

When setting the date of the "Book or Revelation", it is very important to carefully ponder this chapter concerning the Apostle John and his works. The passage cited below became one of the primary “traditional” evidences for the later dating (that is, A.D. 93-96) of the Book of Revelation:

In this persecution [under Domitian], it is handed down by tradition, that the apostle and evangelist John, who was yet living, in consequence of his testimony to the divine word, was condemned to dwell on the island of Patmos. Irenaeus [circa A.D. 205, see Table 3], indeed, in his fifth book against the heresies, where he speaks of the calculation formed on the epithet of antichrist, in the above mentioned Revelation of John [Rev. 13:18], speaks in the following manner respecting him: `If, however, it were necessary to proclaim his name, (i.e. Antichrist), openly at the present time, it would have been declared by him who saw the revelation, for is not long since it was seen, but almost in our own generation, at
the close of Domitian's reign... for it happened, according to them, in the fifteenth year of Domitian. (pp. 101-102)

Book III, Chapter XXIV (The order of the Gospels)

Note this very interesting discussion of the origin and dating of the Gospels. Much of the knowledge and common perceptions from the early times of Christianity have been lost to us.

These extracts from Clement [A.D. 98, see Table 3] may here suffice, both for the sake of the history and the benefit of the readers. Let us now also show the undisputed writings of the same apostle. And of these his gospel, so well known in the churches throughout the world, must first of all be acknowledged as genuine. That it is, however, with good reason, placed the fourth in order by the ancients, may be made evident in the following manner. Those inspired and truly pious men, the apostles of our Saviour, as they were most pure in their life, and adorned with every kind of virtue in their minds, but common in their language, relying upon the divine and wonderful energy granted them, they neither knew how, nor attempted to propound the doctrines of their master, with the art and refinement of composition. But employing only the demonstration of the divine Spirit, working with them, and the wonder-working power of Christ, displayed through them, they proclaimed the knowledge of the kingdom of heaven throughout the world. They bestowed but little care upon the study of style, and this they did, because they were aided by a co-operation greater than that of men. Paul, indeed, who was the most able of all in the preparations of style, and who was most powerful in sentiments, committed nothing more to writing than a few very short epistles. And this too, although he had innumerable mysterious matters that he might have communicated, as he had attained even to the view of the third heavens, had been taken up to the very paradise of God, and had been honored to hear the unutterable words there. The other followers of our Lord were also not ignorant of such things, as the twelve apostles, and the seventy, together with the many others; yet of all the disciples, Matthew and John are the only ones that have left us recorded comments, and even they, tradition says, undertook it from necessity. Matthew also having first proclaimed the gospel in Hebrew, when on the point of going also to other nations, committed it to writing in his native tongue, and thus supplied the want of his presence to them, by his writings. But after Mark and Luke had already published their gospels, they say, that John, who during all this time was proclaiming the gospel without writing, at length proceeded to write it on the following occasion. The three gospels previously written, having been distributed among all, and also handed to him, they say that he admitted them, giving his testimony to their truth; but that there was only wanting in the narrative the account of the things done by Christ, among the first of his deeds, and at the commencement of the gospel. And this was the truth. For it is evident that the other three evangelists only wrote the deeds of our Lord for one year after the imprisonment of John the Baptist, and intimated this in the very beginning of their history. For after the fasting of forty days, and the consequent temptation, Matthew
indeed specifies the time of his history, in these words: “But hearing that John was delivered up, he returned from Judea into Galilee.” Mark in like manner writes: “But after John was delivered up, Jesus came into Galilee?” And Luke, before he commenced the deeds of Jesus, in much the same way designates the time saying, “Herod thus added, yet this wickedness above all he had committed, and that he shut up John in prison.” For these reasons the apostle John, it is said, being entreated to undertake it, wrote the account of the time not recorded by the former evangelists, . . . It is probable, therefore, that for these reasons John has passed by in silence the genealogy of our Lord, because it was written by Matthew and Luke, but that he commenced with the doctrine of the divinity, as a part reserved for him, by the divine Spirit, as if for a superior. Let this suffice to be said respecting the gospel of John. The causes that induced Mark to write his, have already been stated. But Luke also in the commencement of his narrative, premises the cause which led him to write, showing that many others, having rashly undertaken to compose a narration of matters that he had already completely ascertained, in order to free us from the uncertain suppositions of others, in his own gospel, he delivered the certain account of those things, that he himself had fully received from his intimacy and stay with Paul, and also, his intercourse with the other apostles. But this may suffice respecting these. At a more proper time we shall endeavour also to state, by a reference to some of the ancient writers, what others have said respecting the sacred books. But besides the gospel of John, his first epistle is acknowledged without dispute, both by those of the present day, and also by the ancients. The other two epistles [2nd and 3rd John], however, are disputed. The opinions respecting the revelation are still greatly divided. But we shall, in due time, give a judgment on this point, also from the testimony of the ancients. (pp. 107-110)

Book III, Chapter XXV
(The Sacred Scriptures Acknowledged as Genuine, and those that are Not)

It must be remembered that the modern assumption, that all of the books of the modern Christian Bible were all Inspired by God, did not originate in antiquity. In fact, the ancients maintained a contrary opinion. Please carefully read the discussion below.

This appears also to be the proper place, to give a summary statement of the books of the New Testament already mentioned. And here, among the first, must be placed the holy quaternion of the gospels; these are followed by “The Acts of the Apostles;” after this must be mentioned the epistles of Paul, which are followed by the acknowledged first Epistle of John, as also the first of Peter, to be admitted in like manner. After these, are to be placed, if proper, the Revelation of John, concerning which we shall offer the different opinions in due time. These, then, are acknowledged as genuine. Among the disputed books, although the are well known and approved by many, is reputed, that called the Epistle of James and Jude. Also the “Second Epistle of Peter,” and those called “The Second and Third John,” whether they are of the evangelist or of other of the same name. Among the spurious must be numbered, both the books called “The Acts of
Paul,” and that called “Pastor,” and “The Revelation of Peter.” Besides these, the books called “The Epistle of Barnabas,” and what are called “Institutions of the Apostles.” Moreover, as I said before, if it should be right, The Revelation of John,” which some, as before said, reject but others rank among the genuine. But there are also some who number among these, the gospel according to the Hebrews, with which those of the Hebrews that have received Christ are particularly delighted. These may be said to be all concerning which there is any dispute. We have, however, necessity subjoined here the catalogue of these also, in order to distinguish those that are true, genuine, and well authenticated writings, from those which are not embodied in the cannon, but likewise disputed, notwithstanding that the are by most ecclesiastical writers. Thus we may have it in our power to know both these books, and those that are adduced by the heretics under the name of the apostles, such, viz., as compose the gospels of Peter, Thomas, and Matthew, and others beside them, or such contain the Acts of the Apostles, by Andrew, and John, and others. (pp. 110-111)

Book III, Chapter XXVIII (Cerinthus the Heresiarch)

Much of our modern perception of “eschatology,” or the “things of the end,” is based on the Book of Revelation. In the following quotation Eusebius discusses the possibility that the Book of Revelation may have been written by Cerinthus. Cerinthus was a heretic that taught grave error concerning the millennium reign of Christ on earth. The validity of the Revelation certainly has a profound impact on the interpretation of Biblical prophecy.

About the same time, we have understood, appeared Cerinthus, the leader of another heresy. Cais, whose words we quoted above, in “The Disputation” attributed to him, writes thus respecting him: “But Cerinthus, by means of revelations which he pretended were written by a great apostle, also falsely pretended to wonderful things, as if they were showed him by angels, asserting, that after the resurrection there would be an earthly kingdom of Christ, and that all flesh, i. e. Men, again inhabiting Jerusalem, would be subject to the desires and pleasures. Being also an enemy to the divine Scriptures, with a view to deceive men, he said that there would be a space of a thousand years for celebrating neptial festivals.” Dionysius [A.D. 250, see Table 3] also, who obtained the episcopate of Alexandria in our day, in the second book, “On Promises,” where he says some things as if received by ancient tradition, makes mention of the same man, in these words: “But it is highly probable that Cerinthus, the same that established the heresy that bears his name, designedly affixed the name [of John] to his own forgery. For one of the doctrines that he taught was that Christ would have an earthly kingdom. . . . But Irenæus [A.D. 205], in his first book against heresies, adds certain false doctrines of the man, that deserves to be recorded, as received by tradition from Polycarp [A.D. 150, see Table 3]. He says that John the apostle once entered a bath to wash; but ascertaining Cerinthus was within, he leaped out of the place, and fled from the door, not enduring to enter under the same roof with him, and exhorted those with him to
do the same, saying, “let us flee, lest the bath fall in, as long as Cerinthus, that enemy of truth. Is within”. (pp. 113-114)

Book III, Chapter XXIX (The Nicoliatsans)

This reference concerns the "Nicoliatsans" which are mentioned in the Revelation [2:6]. Consequently, this reference is clearly to things past and certainly not of the future.

About this time, also, for a very short time, arose the heresy of those called Nicolaites, of which also mention is made in the Revelation of John. These boasted of Nicholas as their founder, one of those deacons who were with Stephen [Acts 6:5] were appointed by the apostles to minister unto the poor. Clement of Alexandria [A.D. 180, see Table 3], in the third book of his Stromata, relates, 'that every one ought to abuse his own flesh'. And thus those that adopted his heresy, following both this example and expression literally, rush headlong into fornication without shame. (pp. 114-115)

Book III, Chapter XXXI (The Last Day)

This next discussion concerns the deaths of both John the Apostle, and Philip. The belief in a future coming of the Lord “at the last day”, is also indicated here.

The time when John died, has also, in some measure, been mentioned, but the place of his burial is shown from the epistle of Polycrates, who was bishop of the church of Ephesus, which epistle he wrote to Victor, bishop of Rome, and at the same time makes mention of him [John] and the apostle Philip, and his daughters thus: 'For in Asia, also, mighty luminaries have fallen asleep, which shall rise again at the last day, at the appearance of the Lord, when He shall come with glory from heaven, and shall gather again all the saints. (p.116)

Book III, Chapter XXXVIII
(The Epistle of Clement, and those that are falsely ascribed to him)

More discussion and speculation is given in this section as to who wrote the Book of Hebrews. Hebrews was commonly ascribed to Paul.

We may mention as an instance what Ignatius [A.D. 107, see Table 3] has said in the epistles we have cited, and Clement [A.D. 98, see Table 3] in that universally received by all, which he wrote in the name of the church at Rome to that of Corinth. In which, after giving many sentiments taken from the Epistle to the Hebrews, and also, literally quoting the words, he most clearly shows that this work is by no means a late production. Whence it is probable that this was also numbered with the other writings of the apostles. For as Paul had addressed the Hebrews in the language of his country; some say that the evangelist Luke, others that Clement, translated the epistle. Which also appears more like the truth, as the epistle of Clement and that to the Hebrews, preserve the same features of style and
phraseology, and because the sentiments in both these works are not very different. (p. 124)

Book VII, Chapter XXIV (Nepos and his Schism)

The discussion in this section relates to a discussion of the millennium and a future judgment.

BESIDES all these the two books on the Promises were prepared by him. The occasion of these was Nepos [A.D. 295, see Table 3], a bishop in Egypt, who taught that the promises to the holy men in the Divine Scriptures should be understood in a more Jewish manner, and that there would be a certain millennium of bodily luxury upon this earth. As he thought that he could establish his private opinion by the Revelation of John, he wrote a book on this subject, entitled Refutation of Allegorists. Dionysius opposes this in his books on the Promises. In the first he gives his own opinion of the dogma; and in the second he treats of the Revelation of John, and mentioning Nepos at the beginning, writes of him in this manner: "But since they bring forward a certain work of Nepos, on which they rely confidently, as if it proved beyond dispute that there will be a reign of Christ upon earth, . . . And while we should praise and approve un-grudgingly what is said aright, we ought to examine and correct what does not seem to have been written soundly. Were he present to state his opinion orally, mere unwritten discussion, persuading and reconciling those who are opposed by question and answer, would be sufficient. But as some think his work very plausible, and as certain teachers regard the law and prophets as of no consequence, and do not follow the Gospels, and treat lightly the apostolic epistles, while they make promises as to the teaching of this work as if it were some great hidden mystery, and do not permit our simpler brethren to have any sublime and lofty thoughts concerning the glorious and truly divine appearing of our Lord, and our resurrection from the dead, and our being gathered together unto him, and made like him, but on the contrary lead them to hope for small and mortal things in the kingdom of God, and for things such as exist now,-- since this is the case, it is necessary that we should dispute with our brother Nepos as if he were present." Farther on he says: "When I was in the district of Arsinoe, where, as you know, this doctrine has prevailed for a long time, so that schisms and apostasies of entire churches have resulted, I called together the presbyters and teachers of the brethren in the villages,--such brethren as wished being also present,--and I exhorted them to make a public examination of this question. . . . And some of the other brethren expressed their gratification at the conference, and at the spirit of conciliation and harmony which all had manifested." (Eusebius Ecclesiastical History, 8 Dec 97)

Not many theologians today challenge the authenticity of the Book of Revelation. However, the validity of this book was disputed from the earliest beginning of the Christian Church. Here, another author, also named John, was presumed to be the
Consequently, any theologian must be very careful not to espouse religious truth based on the contents of this book alone. Carefully consider the following quotation, which discusses its authenticity:

Afterward he [Dionysius of Alexandria, A.D. 295, see Table 3] speaks in this manner of the Apocalypse of John. "Some before us have set aside and rejected the book altogether, criticizing it chapter by chapter, and pronouncing it without sense or argument, and maintaining that the title is fraudulent. For they say that it is not the work of John, nor is it a revelation, because it is covered thickly and densely by a vale of obscurity. And they affirm that none of the apostles, rend none of the saints, nor any one in the Church is its author, but that Cerinthus, who founded the sect which was called after him the Cerinthian, desiring reputable authority for his fiction, prefixed the name. For the doctrine which he taught was this: that the kingdom of Christ will be an earthly one. And as he was himself devoted to the pleasures of the body and altogether sensual in his nature, he dreamed that that kingdom would consist in those things which he desired, namely, in the delights of the belly and of sexual passion; that is to say, in eating and drinking and marrying, and in festivals and sacrifices and the slaying of victims, under the guise of which he thought he could indulge his appetites with a better grace. (2) "But I could not venture to reject the book, as many brethren hold it in high esteem. But I suppose that it is beyond my comprehension, and that there is a certain concealed and more wonderful meaning in every part. For if I do not understand I suspect that a deeper sense lies beneath the words. I do not measure and judge them by my own reason, but leaving the more to faith I regard them as too high for me to grasp. And I do not reject what I cannot comprehend, but rather wonder because I do not understand it." After this he examines the entire Book of Revelation, and having proved that it is impossible to understand it according to the literal sense, proceeds as follows: "Having finished all the prophecy, so to speak, the prophet pronounces those blessed who shall observe it, and also himself. For he says, 'Blessed is he that keepeth the words of the prophecy of this book, and I, John, who saw and heard these things.' (3) Therefore that he was called John, and that this book is the work of one John, I do not deny. And I agree also that it is the work of a holy and inspired man. But I cannot readily admit that he was the apostle, the son of Zebedee, the brother of James, by whom the Gospel of John and the Catholic Epistle (4) were written. For I judge from the character of both, and the forms of expression, and the entire execution of the book, (5) that it is not his. For the evangelist nowhere gives his name, or proclaims himself, either in the Gospel or Epistle. "Farther on he adds: "But John never speaks as if referring to himself, or as if referring to another person. (6) But the author of the Apocalypse introduces himself at the very beginning: 'The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which he gave him to show unto his servants quickly; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John, who bare witness of the word of God and of his Top testimony, even of all things that he saw.' (7) "Then he writes also an epistle: 'John to the seven churches which are in Asia, grace be with you, and peace.' (8) But the evangelist did not prefix his name even to the Catholic Epistle; but without
introduction he begins with the mystery of the divine revelation itself: 'That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes.'

(9) For because of such a revelation the Lord also blessed Peter, saying, 'Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my heavenly Father.' (10) But neither in the reputed second or third epistle of John, though they are very short, does the name John appear; but there is written the anonymous phrase, 'the elder.' (11) But this author did not consider it sufficient to give his name once and to proceed with his work; but he takes it up again: 'I, John, who also am your brother and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and in the patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos for the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus.' (12) And toward the close he speaks thus: 'Blessed is he that keepeth the words of the prophecy of this book, and I, John, who saw and heard these things.'

"But that he who wrote these things was called John must be believed, as he says it; but who he was does not appear. For he did not say, as often in the Gospel, that he was the beloved disciple of the Lord, (14) or the one who lay on his breast, (15) or the brother of James, or the eyewitness and hearer of the Lord. For he would have spoken of these things if he had wished to show himself plainly. But he says none of them; but speaks of himself as our brother and companion, and a witness of Jesus, and blessed because he had seen and heard the revelations. But I am of the opinion that there were many with the same name as the apostle John, who, on account of their love for him, and because they admired and emulated him, and desired to be loved by the Lord as he was, took to themselves the same surname, as many of the children of the faithful are called Paul or Peter. Top

For example, there is also another John, surnamed Mark, mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, (16) whom Barnabas and Paul took with them; of whom also it is said, 'And they had also John as their attendant.' (17) But that it is he who wrote this, I would not say. For it not written that he went with them into Asia, but, 'Now when Paul and his company set sail from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia and John departing from them returned to Jerusalem.' (18) But I think that he was some 16 other one of those in Asia; as they say that there are two monuments in Ephesus, each bearing the name of John. (19) "And from the ideas, and from the words and their arrangement, it may be reasonably conjectured that this one is different from that one. (20) For the Gospel and Epistle agree with each other and begin in the same manner. The one says, 'In the beginning was the Word'; (21) the other, 'That which was from the beginning.' (22) The one: 'And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father'; (23) the other says the same things slightly altered: 'Which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes; which we have looked upon and our hands have handled of the Word of life,--and the life was manifested.' (24) at the beginning, maintaining them, as is evident from what follows, in opposition to those who said that the Lord had not come in the flesh. Wherefore also he carefully adds, 'And we have seen and bear witness, and declare unto you the eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us. That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you also.' (25) He holds to this and does not digress from his subject, but
discusses everything under the same heads and names some of which we will briefly mention.

Anyone who examines carefully will find the phrases, 'the life,' 'the light,' 'turning from darkness,' frequently occurring in both; also continually, 'truth,' 'grace,' 'joy,' 'the flesh and blood of the Lord,' 'the judgment,' 'the forgiveness of sins,' 'the love of God toward us,' the 'commandment that we love one another,' that we should' keep all the commandments'; the 'conviction of the world, of the Devil, of AntiChrist,' the 'promise of the Holy Spirit,' the 'adoption of God,' the 'faith continually required of us,' 'the Father and the Son,' occur everywhere. In fact, it is plainly to be seen that one and the same character marks the Gospel and the Epistle throughout. But the Apocalypse is different from these writings and foreign to them; not touching, nor in the least bordering upon them; almost, so to speak, without even a syllable in common with them. Nay more, the Epistle--for I pass by the Gospel -- does not mention nor does it contain any intimation of the Apocalypse, nor does the Apocalypse of the Epistle. But Paul, in his epistles, gives some indication of his revelations, (26) though he has not written them out by themselves.

"Moreover, it can also be shown that the, diction of the Gospel and Epistle differs from that of the Apocalypse. For they were written not only without error as regards the Greek language, but also with elegance in their expression, in their reasonings, and in their entire structure. They are far indeed from betraying any barbarism or solecism, or any vulgarism whatever. For the writer had, as it seems, both the requisites of discourse,-that is, the gift of knowledge and the gift of expression,--as the Lord had bestowed them both upon him. I do not deny that the other writer saw a revelation and received knowledge and prophecy. I perceive, however, that his dialect and language are not accurate Greek, but that he uses barbarous idioms, and, in some places, solecisms. It is unnecessary to point these out here, for I would not have any one think that I have said these things in a spirit of ridicule, for I have said what I have only with the purpose of showing dearly the difference between the writings. (Eusebius’ Ecclesiastical History, 8 Dec 97)

(6.2.3) The Works of Flavius Josephus

Deut. 28:49, "The LORD will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, as the eagle swoops down, a nation whose language you shall not understand,

50 a nation of fierce countenance [see Dan. 7:7] who shall have no respect for the old, nor show favor to the young, . . .

52 "And it shall besiege you in all your towns until your high and fortified walls in which you trusted come down throughout your land, and it shall besiege you [Luke 19:43-44] in all your towns throughout your land which the LORD your God has given you.

53 "Then you shall eat the offspring of your own body, the flesh of your sons and of your daughters whom the LORD your God has given you, during the siege and the distress by which your enemy shall oppress you.
“The Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius Pamphilus” (1966, Book III, Chapter V, pp. 86-86), which was discussed in the previous Section, identifies important early Christian references that link them directly to the works of Josephus. It was Josephus who recorded in his writings the detail account of the fulfillment of this prophecy of Moses.

As mentioned before, the important reference [Section (6.2.2), Bk. III, Ch. V] below, is cited again for clarity. It provides the key that connects Josephus’ account of the last siege of the Jews [A.D. 66-70], unmistakably, to the “abomination of desolation of Daniel” [standing or sitting (Matt. 24:15, 2 Thess. 2:4) in the Holy Place]. This also was the “1st Century” fulfillment of prophecies made by Jesus, Himself, [see Matt. 24, Mark 13, Luke 21].

The whole body, however, of the church at Jerusalem, having been commanded by divine revelation, given to men of approved piety there before the war, removed from the city, and dwelt in a certain city beyond the Jordan, called Pella. Here, those that believed in Christ, having removed from Jerusalem, as if holy men had entirely abandoned the royal city itself, and the whole land of Judea; the divine justice for the crimes against Christ and His apostles, finally overtook them, totally destroying the whole generation of these evildoers from the earth. . . the great and incredible distress that those experienced who took refuge at Jerusalem. . . when finally the abomination of desolation [Matt. 24:15], according to the prophetic declaration, stood in the temple of God [2 Thess. 2:4], so celebrated of old, but which was approaching its total downfall and final destruction by fire; all this, I say, any one that wishes may see accurately stated in the history written by Josephus. (Eusebius, 1966, Book III, Chapter V, pp. 85-86)

This important historical connection forms much of the foundation for this study. Thus from antiquity, the connections of “the abomination of desolation” (Matt. 24:15), the “tribulation” (Dan. 12:1, Matt. 24:21), and Paul’s “man of sin” [2 Thess. 2:4], were originally directly linked to the “destruction of Jerusalem” in A.D. 70.

Therefore, if the Book of Revelation was written at a date later than A.D. 70 [that is, between A.D. 93-96], then it contains indecipherable mystical meanings. Even the internal testimony of the Book of Revelation (11:1-8) itself, identifies the destruction of Jerusalem as being in the future.

Pertinent references from four of the standard works of Josephus; “The Life of Flavius Josephus”, “The Antiquities of the Jews”, “The War of the Jews” (War), and the “Discourse on Hades”, will be discussed in the following sub-sections.

(6.2.3.1) The Life of Flavius Josephus

There are important facts in this section, concerning the life of Josephus, that are relevant to this study. The chronology of important historical events and the identity of his religious affiliation in the 1st Century with the Pharisees [like the Apostle Paul], and the Priesthood, can be accurately determined. Consider the following references, “Now, I am not only sprung from a sacerdotal [Priest from Levi] family in general. . . I returned
back to the city, being now nineteen years old [in A.D. 56], and began to conduct myself according to the rules of the Pharisees” (pp. 1-2).

The date of his birth can be established from the Antiquities (Bk. XX, Ch. XI, 3): “. . . which is the thirteenth year of the reign of Caesar Domitian [A.D. 93], and the fifty-six [56] year of my own life” (p. 603). His age at other corresponding chronological events can be determined by interpolation. Therefore, it is established that Josephus was born about A.D. 37, seven years after the crucifixion of Jesus. He was 33 years old in A.D. 70 during the siege of Jerusalem.

(6.2.3.2) The Antiquities of the Jews

Preface

A footnote in the preface to “The Antiquities” states; “Those books of the War were published about A.D. 75, and these Antiquities (A.D. 93) about eighteen years later” (p. 29). The chronological perspective of A.D. 75 versus A.D. 93 is also important, especially in setting the date for, and interpreting the events in the Book of Revelation.

Notice how Josephus reflects the understanding of the Pharisees. Paul was a Pharisee and he reflected the same fundamental beliefs. The Pharisees believed that the prophecies of Jeremiah and Ezekiel were dual prophecies of the destruction of Jerusalem in both 586 B.C and in A.D. 70.

Antiquities, Book X, Chapter V, 1. [The Prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel]

Jeremiah the prophet composed an eulogy to lament him, which is extant till this time also. Moreover, this prophet denounced beforehand the sad calamities that were coming upon the city. He also left behind him in writing a description of that destruction of our nation which has lately happened in our days [A.D. 70], and the taking of Babylon [586 B.C.]; nor was he the only prophet who delivered such predictions beforehand to the multitude, but so did Ezekiel also, who was the first person that wrote, and left behind him in writing two books concerning these events. Now these two prophets were priests by birth, but of them Jeremiah dwelt in Jerusalem, from the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah, until the city and temple were utterly destroyed. (p. 305)

The two destruction’s (that is, 586 B.C. and A.D. 70) of Jerusalem, which were well known to the Jews of all ages, were the direct fulfillment of Moses’ promises that were made early in Israel’s history [Deut. 28:40-53, 2 Chron. 36:1-23]. Even the testimony of the Book of Revelation provides another clear link to a fulfillment in A.D. 70:

... 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. 10:7)
2. Now the city was taken on the ninth day of the fourth month, in the eleventh year of the reign of Zedekiah. They were indeed only generals of the king of Babylon, to whom Nebuchadnezzar committed the care of the siege [Deut. 28:52], for he abode himself in the city of Riblah. The names of these generals who ravaged and subdued Jerusalem, if any one desire to know them, were these: Nergal Sharezer, Samgar Nebo, Rabsaris, Sarechim, and Rabmag. And when the city was taken about midnight, and the enemy’s generals were entered into the temple. (p. 310)

Please note, that the first recorded “abomination of desolation” (Matt. 24:15, Luke 19:43-44, 21:20, 2 Thess. 2:4, Rev. 11:1-8) by the Babylonians, clearly sets the precedence for yet another “abomination of desolation” by the Romans in A.D. 70.

Antiquities, Book X, Chapter IX, 3  [The Desolation Under Nebuchadnezzar]

Now the temple was burnt four hundred and seventy years [470], six months, and ten days after it was built. It was then one thousand and sixty-two [1,062] years, six months, and ten days from the departure out of Egypt; and from the deluge to the destruction of the temple, the whole interval was one thousand nine hundred and fifty-seven [1,957] years, six months, and ten days; but from the generation of Adam, until this befell the temple, there were three thousand five hundred and thirteen [3,513] years, six months, and ten days. (pp. 310-311)

Antiquities, Book X, Chapter X, 4  [Josephus’ Commentary Of Daniel 2:31-46]

The head of gold denotes thee, and the kings of Babylon that have been before thee; but the two hands and arms signify this, that your government shall be dissolved by two kings; but another king that shall come from the west, armed with brass, shall destroy that government; and another government, that shall be like unto iron, shall put an end to the power of the former, and shall have dominion over all the earth, on account of the nature of iron, which is stronger than that of gold, of silver, and of brass.” Daniel did also declare the meaning of the stone to the king; but I do not think proper to relate it, since I have only undertaken to describe things past or things present, but not things that are future; yet if any one be so very desirous of knowing truth, as not to wave such points of curiosity, and cannot curb his inclination for understanding the uncertainties of futurity, and whether they will happen or not, let him be diligent in reading the book of Daniel, which he will find among the sacred writings. (p. 315)

Historically, the Romans were associated with iron. The Roman period was called the “Iron Age” (Tranquillus, 1957). This fact is identified later in the discussion of the works of Suetonius (Tranquillus, 1957) in Section (6.2.4) in the biography of “Tiberius”. Evidently, the reference to the “stone” reflected Josephus’ belief that, like the other kingdoms of the Book of Daniel, the Romans, themselves, were destined to fall.

It is evident that the “Stone” was Christ, Who smashed the “image” [Dan. 2:44-45, Rev. 12:10]. His followers [Christians] ultimately caused Imperial Rome to fall and to yield to Christianity by the time of Constantine [about 325 A.D.].
Antiquities, Book X, Ch. XI, 7 [Josephus’ commentary on Daniel (8:1-26), see 1st Maccabees Chapter 1 in Section (3.3), concerning the Romans].

Daniel conversed with God; for he did not only prophesy of future events, as did the other prophets, but he also determined the time of their accomplishment. ... bid him [Daniel] rise, and see what would befall his countrymen after many generations. ... that when he stood up, he was shown a great ram with many horns growing out of his head. ... afterward he saw a very great horn growing out of the head of the he goat [Alexander the Great], and that when it was broken off, four horns grew up. ... out of them arose a another lesser horn. ... and that God showed to him that it should fight against his nation. ... bring the temple worship to confusion, and forbid the sacrifices to be offered for one thousand two hundred and ninety-six days [1296]. ... He said that the ram signified the kingdoms of the Medes and Persians. ... that the he goat signified that one should come and reign from the Greeks. ... and that springing up of four horns. ... And indeed it so came to pass, that our nation suffered these things under Antiochus Epiphanes, according to Daniel’s vision, and what he wrote many years before they came to pass. In the very same manner Daniel also wrote concerning the Roman government and that our country should be made desolate by them [Matt. 24:15]. (pp. 320-321)

The above citation clearly references Daniel Chapter 8. In the mind of Josephus, the similar circumstances of defiling of temple [that is, the abomination of desolation] by Antiochus Epiphanes would also occur under the Romans. For further information, see the author’s comments on the Book of Daniel [Section (3.2)] and the First Book of the Maccabees [Section (3.3.1).]

Antiquities, Book XI, Chapter VIII, 5 [Further commentary on Alexander the Great, is found in Daniel (Chapter 8) and in 1st Maccabees, see Section (3.3.1).]

And when he [Alexander the Great] went up into the temple, he offered sacrifice to God, according to the high priest’s direction, and magnificently treated both the high priest and the priests. And when the Book of Daniel [8:5-8] was showed him, wherein Daniel declared that one of the Greeks should destroy the empire of the Persians, he supposed that himself was the person intended. And as he was then glad, he dismissed the multitude for the present; but the next day he called them to him, and bid them ask what favors they pleased of him; whereupon the high priest desired that they might enjoy the laws of their forefathers, and might pay no tribute on the seventh year. He granted all they desired. (p. 345)

Antiquities, Book XII, Chapter I, 1 [A Further commentary on Alexander the Great, see Daniel 8:8-11, 20-22, and 1st Maccabees 1:1-10 Section (3.3.1)]

Now when Alexander, king of Macedon, had put an end to the dominion of the Persians, and had settled the affairs in Judea after the forementioned manner, he ended his life. And as his government fell among many [Daniel 8:8-11, 20-22],
Antigonus obtained Asia, Seleucus Babylon; and of the other nations which were
there, Lysimachus governed the Hellespont, and Cassander possessed Macedonia; as
did Ptolemy the son of Lagus seize upon Egypt. (p. 346)

Antiquities, Book XII, Chapter V, 2-5 [Josephus’ Commentary on Daniel Chapter 11,
Kings of the North and South as well as the mysterious Kittim (that is, the Romans)]

2. Now Antiochus. . . resolved to make an expedition against Egypt. . . but he
was driven not only from Alexandria, but out of all Egypt, by the declaration of the
Romans [Kittim, Dan. 11:30], who charged him to let that country alone. . . .

King Antiochus returning out of Egypt, for fear of the Romans, made an expedition
against the city of Jerusalem; and when he was there, in the hundred and forty-third
year of the kingdom of the Seleuciedae. . . in the hundred and fifty-third Olympiad.
that king came to Jerusalem, and, pretending peace, he got possession of the city by
treachery; . . . and on account of the riches that lay in the temple. . . he ventured to
break the league he had made. . . he left the temple bare. . . and did not abstain from
even the veils, which were made of fine linen and scarlet. He also emptied it of its
secret treasures. . . he forbade them to offer those daily sacrifices which they used
to offer to God, according to the law. . . . And when the king has built an idol altar
upon God’s altar, he slew swine upon it. . . . He also compelled them to forsake the
worship. . . . He commanded them not to circumcise their sons. (pp. 362-363)

Refer also to Section (3.3) on the Apocrypha in this study. In addition, review the
cited text of “The First Book of the Maccabees” [Section 3.3.1] and notice the historical
connections to Antiochus Epiphanes and another “abomination of desolation” of that
period.

Antiquities, Book XII, Chapter, 6-7 [Daniel (11:31), The Abomination of Desolation]

So on the five and twentieth day of the month Casleu. . . the lighted the lamps. . .
these things were done on the very same day on which their Devine worship had
fallen of. . . after three years time. . . . This [abomination of] desolation happened
to the temple in the hundred forty and fifth year. . . on the hundred fifty and third
olympiad. . . . And this desolation came to pass according to the prophecy of
Daniel [11:31], which was given four hundred and eight years before; for he
declared that the Macedonians would dissolve that worship for some time. . . . And
from that time to this we celebrate this festival and call it the Lights. (p. 367)

Antiquities, Book XIV, Chapter IV, 2-4 [The Siege of the Temple Under Pompey about
63 B.C.]

Pompey pitched his camp. . . on the north wall part of the temple. . . a bank [Deut.
28:52, Luke 19:43ff] was raised, day by day, with a great labor while the Romans
cut down materials for it from the places round about. . . he battered the temple with
the stones that were thrown against it. . . for also the city was taken on the third
month. . . upon the hundred and seventy-ninth olympiad. . . and no small enormities
were committed about the temple itself, which, in former ages, had been inaccessible, and seen by none; for Pompey went into it [Titus A.D. 70, 2 Thess. 2:4] and a few of those that were with him also, and saw all that which it was unlawful for any other men to see but only for the high priest. (pp. 413-414)

This is yet another event in Israel’s history that helps set the precedence for the understanding of the “abomination of desolation” [Matt. 24:15, Luke 19:43-44, 21:20, 2 Thess. 2:4, Rev. 11:1-8].

Antiquities, Book XIV, Chapter XI, 1 [Julius Caesar is Slain]

“But Caesar was slain by Cassius and Brutus in the senate-house, after he had retained the government three years and six months [44 B.C.]” (p. 428).

Antiquities, Book XVIII, Chapter VI, 10 [Caius was the 4th Emperor]

“10. So when Tiberius has at this time appointed Caius to be his successor... Now Caius was the fourth [4th Emperor, Rev. 17:10, see Table 2 (Section 6.2.4.2)].... as soon as he heard of Tiberius’s death... and said, in the Hebrew tongue, the Lion is dead” (p. 547)

Antiquities, Book XX, Chapter VIII, 1-10 [Note the impostors and false prophets (Matt. 24:11, Luke 17:20-23) that were prophesied by Jesus]

1. Now Claudius Caesar died... 4... For in the first year of the reign of Nero... 5. Now as for the affairs of the Jews, they grew worse and worse continually, for the country was filled with robbers and imposters [Matt. 24:11], who deluded the multitudes... 6... And now these imposters and deceivers persuaded the multitudes to follow them into the wilderness [Matt. 24:11, Luke 17: 20-23], and pretended that they would exhibit manifest wonders and signs, that they should be performed by the providence of God... Moreover, there came out of Egypt about this time to Jerusalem one that said he was a prophet, and advised the multitude of the common people to go along with him to the Mount of Olives... He said further... how, at his command, the walls of Jerusalem would fall down... 9. Now when Porcius Festus was sent as successor to Felix by Nero... So Festus sent forces, both horsemen and footmen, to fall upon those that had been seduced by a certain imposter, who promised them deliverance and freedom from the miseries they were under. (pp. 595-597)

The quotation above, from Josephus, provides even more foundation for the fulfillment of Matthew Chapter 24, during the war with the Romans.

Antiquities, Book XX, Chapter XI, 1 [The Jewish War began in A.D. 66]

“Now this war began in the second year of the government of Florus, and the twelfth year of the reign of Nero [that is, in A.D. 66]” (p. 602).
A careful calculation will reveal that, like the previous wars with the Gentiles, the war with the Romans also had lasted 3 and 1/2 years [Dan. 12:11, Rev. 11:2-3]. From Table 2 [Section 6.2.4.2] we know that Nero reigned about 14 years, from A.D. 54 to 68. Consequently, the war began in A.D. 66, during the reign of Nero [the 6th Caesar, Rev. 17:10]. It ended under the reign of Vespasian and Titus [the 10th and 11th emperors respectively, Dan. 7:19-22]. Since Nero died in A.D. 68, the internal evidence must conclude that the Book of Revelation was definitely written before A.D. 68. This is another powerful testimony for the fulfillment in A.D. 70.

(6.2.3.3) The War of The Jews

Many of the references in this section are presented without this author’s commentary. The references within brackets [ ] provide the author’s reference to the corresponding Biblical texts. All of the historical references support the A.D. 70 hypothesis and are directly linked to the Jewish War. More commentary than this would be redundant.


“Whereas the war which the Jews made with the Romans [A.D. 66-70] hath been the greatest [Matt. 24:21, Dan.9:12, 12:1] of all those, not only that have been in our times, but, in a manner, of those that ever were heard of; both of those wherein cities have fought against cities, or nations against nations; . . . (p. 604)”.

War, Book IV, Chapter VI, 3 [The Time of Lawlessness, Matt. 24:12, 2 Thess. 2:7]:

But these Zealots came at last to that degree of barbarity, as not to bestow a burial either on those slain in the city, or on those that lay along the roads; but as if they made an agreement to cancel both the laws of their country and the laws of nature, and, at the same time they would defiled men with their wicked actions, they would pollute the Divinity itself also. . . . These men, therefore, trampled upon all of the laws of men and laughed at the laws of God; and for the oracles of the prophets, they ridiculed them as tricks of jugglers. . . . for there was a certain oracle of those men, that the city, should be taken and the sanctuary burnt, by right of war, when the sedition should invade the Jews, and their own hand should pollute the temple of God. Now while these Zealots did not [quite] disbelieve these predictions, they made themselves the instruments of their accomplishment. (p. 758)

War, Book V, Chapter XIII, 6, p. 806 [Jewish Lawlessness]

And here I cannot but speak my mind, and what the concern I am under dictates to me, and it is this: I suppose, that had not the Romans made any longer delay in coming against these villains, that the city would either have been swallowed up by the ground opening upon them, or been overflowed by water, or else been destroyed
by such thunder as the country of Sodom perished by for it had brought forth a
generation of men much more atheistical than were those that suffered such
punishments; for their madness it was that all the people came to be destroyed. 
(p. 806)

Book VI, Chapter II, 1 [The Daily Sacrifice Fails, see Dan 9:27]

“... on that very day, which was the seventeenth day of Panemus, [Tamuz], the
sacrifice called “the Daily Sacrifice” had failed, and had not been offered to God, for
want of men to offer it” (p. 812).

From the footnote on p. 812 in reference to the above quotation:

This was a remarkable day indeed. . . when according to Daniel's prediction, six
hundred and six years before, the Romans “in a half a week caused the sacrifice and
oblation to cease,” Dan ix. 27. For from the month of February, A.D. 66, about
which time Vespasian entered the war, to this very time, was just three years
and a half. (p. 812).

War, Book VI, Chapter IV, 4-8 [Titus Burns the Temple, Dan. 9:26 and enters the
Holy Place, Matt. 24:15, 2 Thess. 2:4]:

So Titus retired into the tower of Antonia, and resolved to storm the temple the
next day, early in the morning, with his whole army, and to encamp round about the
holy house. But as for that house, God had, for certain, long ago doomed it to the
fire; and now that fatal day was come, according to the revolution of ages; it was
the tenth day of the month Lous, [Ab, July - August, A.D. 70] upon which it was
formerly burnt by the king of Babylon [2 Chron. 34:19, Jer, 52:13, Dan. 9:12] . . .
. . he set fire to a golden window, through which there was a passage to the rooms
that were round about the holy house, on the north side of it. As the flames went
upward, the Jews made a great clamor, such as so mighty an affliction required,
and ran together to prevent it; and now they spared not their lives any longer, nor
suffered any thing to restrain their force, since that holy house was perishing, for
whose sake it was that they kept such a guard about it. . . . And now a certain person
came running to Titus, and told him of this fire, as he was resting himself in his
tent after the 1st battle; whereupon he rose up in great haste, and, as he was, ran to
the holy house [2 Thess. 2:4], in order to have a stop put to the fire. . . . 6 . . . now
round about the altar lay dead bodies heaped one upon another [Rev. 11:1-8],
as at the steps going up to it ran a great quantity of their blood, whither also the
dead bodies that were slain above [on the altar] fell down. And now, since Caesar
was no way able to restrain the enthusiastic fury of the soldiers, and the fire
proceeded on more and more, he [Titus] went into the holy place of the temple
[Matt. 24:15, 2 Thess. 2:4, Heb. 9:2] with his commanders, and saw it, with what
was in it, which he found to be far superior to what the relations of foreigners
contained, and not inferior to what we ourselves boasted of and believed about it. . . .
However, one cannot but wonder at the accuracy of this period thereto relating; for
the same month and day were now observed, as I said before, wherein the holy house was burnt formerly by the Babylonians. Now the number of years that passed from its first foundation which was laid by king Solomon, till this its destruction, which happened in the second year of the reign of Vespasian [A.D. 70], are collected to be one thousand one hundred and thirty, besides seven months and fifteen days; and from the second building of it, which was done by Haggai, in the second year of Cyrus the king, till its destruction under Vespasian, there were six hundred and thirty-nine years and forty-five days. (pp. 822-823)

War, Book VI, Chapter V, 2-4 [False prophets, Matt. 24:11 and signs in heaven, Matt. 24:27-33]:

But before Caesar had determined any thing about these people, or given the commanders any orders relating to them, the soldiers were in such a rage, that they set that cloister on fire; by which means it came to pass that some of these were destroyed by throwing themselves down headlong, and some were burnt in the cloisters themselves. Nor did one of them escape with his life. A false prophet [Matt. 24:11] was the occasion of these people's destruction, who had made a public proclamation in the city that very day, that God commanded them to get upon the temple, and that there they should receive miraculous signs of their deliverance. Now there was then a great number of false prophets suborned by the tyrants to impose on the people, who denounced this to them, that they should wait for deliverance from God; and this was in order to keep them from deserting, and that they might be buoyed up above fear and care by such hopes. . . . Thus were the miserable people persuaded by these deceivers, and such as belied God himself; while they did not attend nor give credit to the signs that were so evident, and did so plainly foretell their future desolation, but like men infatuated, without regard the denunciations that God made to them. Thus there was a star resembling a sword, which stood over the city, and a comet, that continued a whole year. Thus also before the Jews' rebellion, and before those commotions which preceded the war, when the people were come in great crowds to the feast of unleavened bread, on the eighth day of the month Xanthicus, [Nisan, Mar.- Apr.] and at the ninth hour of the night so great a light shone round the altar and the holy house, that it appeared to be bright day time; which lasted for half an hour. This light seemed to be a good sign to the unskillful, but was so interpreted by the sacred scribes, as to portend those events that followed immediately upon it. . . . Moreover, the eastern gate of the inner [court of the] temple, which was of brass, and vastly heavy, and had been with difficulty shut by twenty men, and rested upon a basis armed with iron, and had bolts fastened very deep into the firm floor, which was there made of one entire stone, was seen to be opened of its own accord about the sixth hour of the night. Now those that kept watch in the temple came hereupon running to the captain of the temple, and told him of it; who then came up thither, and not without great difficulty was able to shut the gate again. This also appeared to the vulgar to be a very happy prodigy, as if God did thereby open them the gate of happiness. But the men of learning understood it, that the security of their holy house was dissolved of its own accord, and that the gate was opened of the advantage of their enemies.
So these publicly declared that the signal foreshowed the desolation that was coming upon them. Besides these, a few days after that feast, on the one and twentieth day of the month Artemisius, [Jyar, April - May] a certain prodigious and incredible phenomenon appeared: I suppose the account of it would seem to be a fable, were it not related by those that saw it, and were not the events that followed it of so considerable a nature as to deserve such signals; for, before sun-setting, chariots and troops of soldiers in their armor were seen running about among the clouds, and surrounding of cities [Matt. 16:27-28, 24:30]. Moreover, at that feast which we call Pentecost, as the priests were going by night into the inner [court of the] temple, as their custom was, to perform their sacred ministrations, they said that, in the first place, they felt a quaking, and heard a great noise, and after that they heard a sound as of a great multitude, saying, "Let us remove hence." But what is still more terrible, that there was one Jesus, the son of Ananus, a plebeian and a husbandman, who, four years before the war began, and at a time when the city was in very great peace and prosperity, came to that feast whereon it is our custom for every one to make tabernacles to God in the temple, began on a sudden to cry aloud, "A voice from the east, a voice from the west, a voice from the four winds, a voice against Jerusalem and the holy house, a voice against the bridegrooms and the brides, and a voice against this whole people!" This was his cry, as he went about by day and by night, in all the lanes of the city. . . . Hereupon our rulers, supposing, as the case proved to be, that this was a sort of divine fury in the man, brought him to the Roman procurator, where he was whipped till his bones were laid bare; yet he did not make any supplication for himself, nor shed any tears, but turning his voice to the most lamentable tone possible, at every stroke of the whip his answer was, "Woe, woe to Jerusalem!" And when Albinus (for he was then our procurator) asked him, Who he was? and whence he came? and why he uttered such words? he made no manner of reply to what he said, but still did not leave off his melancholy ditty, till Albinus took him to be a madman, and dismissed him. . . . he continued this ditty for seven years and five months, without growing hoarse, or being tired therewith, until the very time that he saw his presage in earnest fulfilled in our siege, when it ceased; for as he was going round upon the wall, he cried out with his utmost force, "Woe, woe to the city again, and to the people, and to the holy house!" And just as he added at the last, "Woe, woe to myself also!" there came a stone out of one of the engines, and smote him, and killed him immediately; and as he was uttering the same presages he gave up the ghost. Now if any one consider these things, he will find that God takes care of mankind, and by all ways possible foreshows to our race what is for their preservation; but that men perish by those miseries which they madly and voluntarily bring upon themselves; for the Jews, by demolishing the tower of Antonia, had made their temple four-square, while at the same time they had it written in their sacred oracles, "That then should their city be taken, as well as their holy house, when once their temple should become four-square." But now, what did the most elevate them in undertaking this war, was an ambiguous oracle that was also found in their sacred writings, how, "about that time, one from their country should become governor of the habitable earth [Dan. 2:44]." The Jews took this prediction to belong to themselves in particular, and many of the wise men were thereby deceived in their determination.
Now this oracle certainly denoted the government of Vespasian, who was appointed emperor in Judea [the beast from the earth, Rev. 13:7, was Vespasian and his son Titus, the beast with the fatal wound was Nero]. However, it is not possible for men to avoid fate, although they see it beforehand. But these men interpreted some of these signals according to their own pleasure, and some of them they utterly despised, until their madness was demonstrated, both by the taking of their city and their own destruction. (pp. 824-825)

War, Book VI, Chapter VI, 1-3 [Body is Where the Eagles are Gathered Luke 17:37, Matt. 24:28]:

And now the Romans, upon the flight of the seditious into the city, and upon the burning of the holy house itself, and of all the buildings [Matt. 24:1-2, Mark 13:1-2, Luke 21:5-6] round about it, brought their ensigns [eagles] to the temple, and set them over against its eastern gate; and there did they offer sacrifices to them, and there did they make Titus imperator, with the greatest acclamations of joy. And now all the soldiers had such vast quantities of the spoils which they had gotten by plunder, that in Syria a pound weight of gold was sold for half its former value. . . . So Titus charged his soldiers to restrain their rage, and to let their darts alone, and appointed an interpreter between them, which was a sign that he was the conqueror, and first began the discourse, and said, "I hope you, sirs, are now satiated with the miseries of your country, who have not had any just notions, either of our great power, or of your own great weakness, but have, like madmen, after a violent and inconsiderate manner, made such attempts, as have brought your people your city, and your holy house to destruction. . . . I suppose, therefore that you might despise the slothfulness of Nero. . . . At this time my father came into this country, not with a design to punish you for what you had done under Cestius, but to admonish you; for had he come to overthrow your nation, he had run directly to your fountain-head, and had immediately laid this city waste; whereas he went and burnt Galilee and the neighboring parts, and thereby gave you time for repentance; which instance of humanity you took for an argument of his weakness, and nourished up our impudence by our mildness. When Nero was gone out of the world, you did as the wickedest wretches would have done, and encouraged yourselves to act against us by our civil dissensions [A.D. 69], and abused that time, when both I and my father were gone away to Egypt, to make preparations for this war. Nor were you ashamed to raise disturbances against us when we were made emperors [Rev. 13:11], and this while you had experienced how mild we had been, when we were no more than generals of the army. But when the government was devolved upon us, and all other people did thereupon lie quiet, and even foreign nations sent embassies, and congratulated our access to the government, then did you Jews show yourselves to be our enemies. You sent embassies to those of your nation that are beyond Euphrates to assist you in your raising disturbances; new walls were built by you round your city, sedition arose, and one tyrant contended against another, and a civil war broke out among you; such indeed as became none but so wicked a people as you are. . . . When I came near your temple, I again departed from the laws of war, and exhorted you to spare your own sanctuary, and to preserve
Yet have you still despised every one of my proposals, and have set fire to your holy house with your own hands. . . . Are not your people dead? is not your holy house gone? is not your city in my power? and are not your own very lives in my hands? . . . So he gave orders to the soldiers both to burn and to plunder the city [Zech. 14:2]; who did nothing indeed that day; but on the next day they set fire to the repository of the archives, to Acra, to the council-house, and to the place called Ophias; at which time the fire proceeded as far as the palace of queen Helena, which was in the middle of Acra; the lanes also were burnt down, as were also those houses that were full of the dead bodies of such as were destroyed by famine. (pp. 826-828)

War, Book VI, Chapter IX, 3-4 [Destined for Captivity, Jer. 15:2, Matt. 26:52, Rev. 13:10]:

Now the number of those that were carried captive during this whole war was collected to be ninety-seven thousand; as was the number of those that perished during the whole siege eleven hundred thousand, . . . Now this vast multitude is indeed collected out of remote places, but the entire nation was now shut up by fate as in prison, and the Roman army encompassed the city when it was crowded with inhabitants. Accordingly, the multitude of those that therein perished exceeded all the destruction’s that either men or God ever brought upon the world [see Dan. 9:12, 12:1, Matt. 24:21-22]. . . . And now the Romans set fire to the extreme parts of the city, and burnt them down, and entirely demolished its walls [Micah 3:12, Zech. 12:1-3, 14:1-15]. (p. 832)

(6.2.3.4) An Extract Out Of Josephus' Discourse To The Greeks Concerning Hades

The complete text of this very important discourse (last modified October 25, 1996) was downloaded from the Internet from the Christian Classics Ethereal Library server, at Wheaton College [(Available) http://ccel.wheaton.edu/j/josephus/hades.htm]. The text below is bolded and annotated, by the author of this study, to reflect the similarities found in the parable of “Lazarus and the rich man” [Luke 16:19ff], other parables, and the teachings of Paul, who like Josephus, was also a Pharisee.

It is presumed that this discourse on “Hades” was written after the “Antiquities” of Josephus, which was believed to be written about 93 A.D., during the reign of Domitian. It is, therefore, difficult to determine if this discourse reflected the doctrine of the Pharisees. Perhaps it was influenced by earlier Christian teachings.

1. NOW as to Hades, wherein the souls of the of the good things they see, and rejoice in the righteous and unrighteous are detained, it is necessary to speak of it. Hades is a place in the world [Jesus went there, Matt. 12:40 (that is, Paradise in Hades, Luke 23:43, not heaven, John 21:17) Pit and Sheol (Job 33:18, Prov. 1:12, Isa. 14:15-19, 38:18, Ezek. 31:14), nether world (Ezek. 32:18), Rev. 9:1ff, 20:1ff] not regularly finished; a subterranean region, wherein the light of this world does not shine; from which circumstance, that in this region the light does not shine [Job 17:14, Psa. 88:3-6], it cannot be but there must be in it perpetual
darkness [Matt. 8:12, 22:13, 25:30]. This region is allotted as a place of custody for souls, in which angels are appointed as guardians [Jude 6, 2 Peter 2:4ff, Rev. 20:1ff] to them, who distribute to them temporary punishments, agreeable to every one's behavior and manners.

2. In this region there is a certain place set apart, as a lake of unquenchable fire [see Matt. 13:42, 25:32-46, Rev. 20:14], whereinto we suppose no one hath hitherto been cast; but it is prepared for a day afore-determined by God, in which one righteous sentence shall deservedly be passed upon all men [note one judgment]; when the unjust, and those that have been disobedient to God, and have given honor to such idols as have been the vain operations of the hands of men as to God himself, shall be adjudged to this everlasting punishment [Matt. 25:46], as having been the causes of defilement; while the just shall obtain an incorruptible and never-fading kingdom [1 Peter 1:4]. These are now indeed confined in Hades, but not in the same place wherein the unjust are confined.

3. For there is one descent into this region, at whose gate [Matt. 16:18] we believe there stands an archangel with an host; which gate when those pass through that are conducted down by the angels appointed over souls, they do not go the same way; but the just are guided to the right hand [Matt. 25:34], and are led with hymns, sung by the angels appointed over that place, unto a region of light, in which the just have dwelt from the beginning of the world; not constrained by necessity, but ever enjoying the prospect of the good things they see, and rejoice in the expectation of those new enjoyments which will be peculiar to every one of them, and esteeming those things beyond what we have here; with whom there is no place of toil, no burning heat, no piercing cold, nor are any briers there; but the countenance of the and of the just, which they see, always smiles them, while they wait for that rest [Heb. 4:1ff] and eternal new life in heaven [ Isa. 60:1-22, 65:17, Gal. 4:26, Heb. 12:22ff, 13:14, Rev. 21:1ff], which is to succeed this region. This place we call The Bosom of Abraham [Luke 16:23, 24:43].

4. But as to the unjust, they are dragged by force to the left hand [Matt. 25:41] by the angels [Matt. 25:31] allotted for punishment, no longer going with a goodwill, but as prisoners driven by violence; to whom are sent the angels appointed over them to reproach them and threaten them with their terrible looks, and to thrust them still downwards. Now those angels that are set over these souls drag them into the neighborhood of hell [see Matt. 5:22, 10:28, 18:9, 23:33, Mark 9:43-49 (Isa. 66:24), Luke 12:5, James 3:6. 2 Peter 2:4] itself; who, when they are hard by it, continually hear the noise of it, and do not stand clear of the hot vapor itself; but when they have a near view of this spectacle, as of a terrible and exceeding great prospect of fire, they are struck with a fearful expectation of a future judgment [Matt. 25:41ff, Rev. 20:14], and in effect punished thereby: and not only so, but where they see the place [or choir] of the fathers and of the just, even hereby are they punished; for a chaos deep and large is fixed between them [Luke 16:26]; insomuch that a just man that hath compassion upon them cannot be admitted, nor can one that is unjust, if he were bold enough to attempt it, pass over it.
5. This is the discourse concerning Hades, wherein the souls of all men are confined until a proper season, which God hath determined, when he will make a resurrection of all men from the dead [John 6:40, 1 Thess. 1:16ff, 2 Thess. 2:1-13, 1 Cor. 15:20-57. Also note, that this was written well after the destruction of Jerusalem, thus the expectation of the resurrection was still in the future.], not procuring a transmigration of souls from one body to another, but raising again those very bodies, which you Greeks, seeing to be dissolved, do not believe [their resurrection]. But learn not to disbelieve it; for while you believe that the soul is created, and yet is made immortal by God [Gen. 2:7], according to the doctrine of Plato, and this in time, be not incredulous; but believe that God is able, when he hath raised to life that body which was made as a compound of the same elements, to make it immortal; for it must never be said of God, that he is able to do some things, and unable to do others. We [Pharisees, Acts 23:6-8] have therefore believed that the body will be raised again; for although it be dissolved, it is not perished; for the earth receives its remains, and preserves them; and while they are like seed, and are mixed among the more fruitful soil, they flourish, and what is sown is indeed sown bare grain [John 12:24, 1 Cor. 15:37], but at the mighty sound [1 Thess. 4:16ff] of God the Creator, it will sprout up, and be raised in a clothed and glorious condition [1 Cor. 15:38ff], though not before it has been dissolved, and mixed [with the earth]. So that we have not rashly believed the resurrection of the body; for although it be dissolved for a time on account of the original transgression [1 Cor. 15:21ff], it exists still, and is cast into the earth as into a potter's furnace, in order to be formed again, not in order to rise again such as it was before, but in a state of purity, and so as never to be destroyed any more. And to every body shall its own soul be restored. And when it hath clothed itself with that body [1 Cor. 15:53ff], it will not be subject to misery, but, being itself pure, it will continue with its pure body, and rejoice with it, with which it having walked righteously now in this world, and never having had it as a snare, it will receive it again with great gladness. But as for the unjust, they will receive their bodies not changed, not freed from diseases or distempers, nor made glorious, but with the same diseases wherein they died; and such as they were in their unbelief, the same shall they be when they shall be faithfully judged.

6. For all men, the just as well as the unjust, shall be brought before God the word [John 1:1, Rom. 14:10, 2 Cor. 5:10, Rev. 19:13ff] for to him hath the Father committed all judgment: and he, in order to fulfill the will of his Father, shall come as Judge, whom we call Christ [John 5:22ff, 6:39ff]. For Minos and Rhadamanthus are not the judges, as you Greeks do suppose, but he whom God and the Father hath glorified: CONCERNING WHOM WE HAVE ELSEWHERE GIVEN A MORE PARTICULAR ACCOUNT, FOR THE SAKE OF those who SEEK AFTER TRUTH. This person, exercising the righteous judgment of the Father towards all men, hath prepared a just sentence for every one, according to his works; at whose judgment-seat [Rom. 14:10, 2 Cor. 5:10] when all men, and angels [1 Cor. 6:3], and demons shall stand, they will send forth one voice, and say, JUST IS THY JUDGMENT [note, the judgment was viewed to be in the
the rejoinder to which will bring a just sentence upon both parties, by giving justly to those that have done well an everlasting fruition; but allotting to the lovers of wicked works eternal punishment. To these belong the unquenchable fire, and that without end, and a certain fiery worm, never dying [Mark 9:47-50, Isa. 66:24], and not destroying the body, but continuing its eruption out of the body with never-ceasing grief: neither will sleep give ease to these men, nor will the night afford them comfort; death will not free them from their punishment, nor will the interceding prayers of their kindred profit them; for the just are no longer seen by them, nor are they thought worthy of remembrance. But the just shall remember only their righteous actions, whereby they have attained the heavenly kingdom, in which there is no sleep, no sorrow, no corruption, no care, no night, no day measured by time [Rev. 21:4], no sun driven in his course along the circle of heaven by necessity, and measuring out the bounds and conversions of the seasons, for the better illumination of the life of men; no moon decreasing and increasing, or introducing a variety of seasons, nor will she then moisten the earth; no burning sun, no Bear turning round [the pole], no Orion to rise, no wandering of innumerable stars. The earth will not then be difficult to be passed over, nor will it be hard to find out the court of paradise [new heaven and a new earth, Rev. 21:1ff], nor will there be any fearful roaring of the sea, forbidding the passengers to walk on it; even that will be made easily passable to the just [Rev. 21:1], though it will not be void of moisture. Heaven will not then be uninhabitable by men, and it will not be impossible to discover the way of ascending thither [Gen. 28:12ff]. The earth [Note the connection to the earth. The origin of this sectarian belief was definitely Jewish (Rev. 20:1-8, 21:1ff). However, it does appear to conflict with what Paul had taught (Gal. 4:26, Heb. 12:22, 13:14), that is, after death and the resurrection, the righteous would live exclusively in heaven. Some modern Christian sectarian groups still believe that they will live on the earth after the judgment and resurrection] will not be uncultivated, nor require too much labor of men, but will bring forth its fruits of its own accord, and will be well adorned with them. There will be no more generations of wild beasts, nor will the substance of the rest of the animals shoot out any more; for it will not produce men, but the number of the righteous will continue, and never fail, together with righteous angels, and spirits [of God], and with his word, as a choir of righteous men and women that never grow old, and continue in an incorruptible state [1 Cor. 15:52ff], singing hymns [Rev. 5:9, 14:3ff] to God, who hath advanced them to that happiness, by the means of a regular institution of life; with whom the whole creation also will lift up a perpetual hymn [see Rev. 5:9, 14:3] from corruption, to incorruption [1 Cor. 15:53ff], as glorified by a splendid and pure spirit. It will not then be restrained by a bond of necessity, but with a lively freedom shall offer up a voluntary hymn, and shall praise him that made them, together with the angels, and spirits, and men now freed from all bondage [Rom. 7:14].

7. And now, if you Gentiles will be persuaded by these motives, and leave your vain imaginations about your pedigrees, and gaining of riches, and philosophy, and will not spend your time about subtleties of words, and thereby lead your minds into error, and if you will apply your ears to the hearing of the inspired prophets, the
interpreters both of God and of his word, and will believe in God, you shall both be partakers of these things, and obtain the good things that are to come [1 Cor. 3:22, Heb. 9:11, 10:1]; you shall see the ascent unto the immense heaven plainly, and that kingdom which is there [Philip. 3:20-21, Heb. 12:22ff]. For what God hath now concealed in silence [will be then made manifest,] what neither eye hath seen, nor ear hath heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for them that love him [see 1 Cor. 2:9, Isa. 64:4].

8. In whatsoever ways I shall find you [2 Cor. 12:20ff], in them shall I judge you entirely: so cries the END of all things. And he who hath at first lived a virtuous life, but towards the latter end falls into vice, these labors by him before endured shall be altogether vain and unprofitable, even as in a play, brought to an ill catastrophe. Whosoever shall have lived wickedly and luxuriously may repent; however, there will be need of much time to conquer an evil habit, and even after repentance his whole life must be guarded with great care and diligence, after the manner of a body, which, after it hath been a long time afflicted with a distemper, requires a stricter diet and method of living; for though it may be possible, perhaps, to break off the chain of our irregular affections at once, yet our amendment cannot be secured without the grace of God, the prayers of good men, the help of the brethren, and our own sincere repentance and constant care. It is a good thing not to sin at all; it is also good, having sinned, to repent; as it is best to have health always, but it is a good thing to recover from a distemper. To God be glory and dominion for ever and ever Amen.

This discourse on “Hades” which, without question, was written well after the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, is one of the strongest arguments against the “final resurrection” [see section (8.2)] and the “final judgment” having taken place in A.D. 70. Furthermore, Josephus’ understanding of “Hades” and the “end of all things” was almost identical to the teachings of Jesus and the Apostle Paul.

From Josephus, we learn that he believed that the purpose of the Jewish War was to establish the “New Kingdom” that was prophesied in the Book of Daniel [2:44, 7:14ff]. However, Josephus did not associate the “resurrection” and the “judgment” with this event. The “resurrection” and the “judgment”, in his view, and in the opinion of the early Christian writers after A.D. 70, were still to be fulfilled in the future.

In addition, the author of this study was not able to find any ancient record, which acknowledged a “Spiritually perceived resurrection and judgment” that can be clearly associated with the events of the Jewish War with the Romans.

If there was a belief in an unseen “Spiritual judgment and resurrection” by early Christians in A.D. 70, then that belief is conspicuously absent from the early Christian and Jewish writings. For a discussion of the similar Jewish sectarian beliefs see, “2nd Esdras” [Section (6.3)], “The Book of Enoch” [Section (6.4)], “The Dead Sea Scrolls” [Section (6.5)], and “The Fragments of Papias” [Section (6.7)].

Whatever actually occurred, or will later occur in the unseen Spiritual realm [Eph. 6:12] after A.D. 70, still remains hidden from the eyes [John 3:3-6, 1 Cor. 15:50ff] of the living. Moreover, there has been no millennium reign on earth thus
far in the history of the Church. Thus, the theological beliefs and historical testimony of Josephus, the Pharisee, support the view of Wallace (1966).

(6.2.4) The First Century Works of Cornelius Tacitus and Suetonius Tranquillas

The 1st Century Roman writers, Tacitus who published “The Annals and the Histories” and Suetonius, who penned “The Twelve Caesars”, provide parallel Roman accounts of the works of Josephus. These writings directly relate to the history of the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. In much the same way that a parallel study of the Gospels of Matthew and Luke relate to Jewish and Gentile perceptions respectively, this same perspective can be contrasted between the writings of the Jewish author, Flavius Josephus, and the contemporary Roman accounts. This comparison provides further insight into the contemporary historical scene of the 1st Century.

(6.2.4.1) “The Annals and the Histories” of Cornelius Tacitus

(6.2.4.1.1) The Annals

Book XIV, 9 (A.D. 59-62), [Nero kills his mother].

So far our accounts agree, that Nero gazed on his mother after her death and praised her beauty, some have related, while others deny it. Her body was burnt that same night on a dining couch, with a mean funeral; ... Many years before Agrippina [Nero's mother] had anticipated this end for herself and had spurned the thought. For when she consulted the astrologers about Nero, they replied that he would be emperor and kill his mother. "Let him kill her" she said, "provided he is emperor" (p. 143).

Book XV, 39-40 (A.D. 62-65), [Rome burns in A.D. 64]

[At] the very time when the city was in flames, the emperor appeared on a private stage and sang of the destruction of Troy, comparing present misfortunes with the calamities of antiquity.

40. At last, after five days, an end was put to the conflagration at the foot of the Esquiline hill, ... Some persons observed that the beginning of this conflagration was on the 19th of July [64], the day on which the Senones captured and fired Rome. (p. 167)

Bk. XV, 44 (A.D. 62-65), [The first Christian persecution was in Nero’s reign]:

Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace. Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the time of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilate, and a most mischievous superstition, thus checked for the moment, again broke out not only in Judea, the first source of evil, but even in Rome, where all things hideous and shameful from every
port of the world find their center and become popular. Accordingly, an arrest was first made of all who pleaded guilty; then, upon their information, an immense multitude [Rev. 7:9-14, 14:1] was convicted, not so much of the crime of firing the city, as of hatred against mankind. Mockery of every sort was added to their deaths. Covered with the skins of beasts, they were torn by dogs and perished, or were nailed to crosses, or were doomed to the flames and burnt, to serve as a nightly illumination, when daylight had expired. (p.168)

(6.2.4.1.2) The Histories

Book I, 2-4 (A.D. 69), [Worldwide distress (Rev. 3:10), four Emperors died by the sword within one year (Dan. 7:24)]:

2. I am entering on the history of a period rich in disasters, frightful in its wars, torn by civil strife, and even in peace full of horrors. Four emperors perished by the sword [Dan 7:24]. There were three civil wars; there more with foreign enemies; there were often wars that had both characteristics at once. There was success in the East, and disaster in the West. . . . [T]he armies of Parthia were all but set in by the cheat of a counterfeit Nero [Rev. 13:12]. Now too Italy was prostrated by disasters either novel, or that recurred only after a long succession of ages; cities in Campania's richest plains were swallowed up and overwhelmed; Rome was wasted by conflagrations, . . . Besides the manifold vicissitudes of human affairs, there were prodigies in heaven and earth, the warning voices of the thunder, and other intimations of the future, auspicious or gloomy, doubtful or not to be mistaken. Never surely did more terrible calamities of the Roman People, or evidence more conclusive, prove that the Gods take thought for our happiness, but only our punishment [Matt. 24:6ff]. (pp. 189-190)

Book I, 10 (A.D. 69), [Vespasian sent Judea by Nero, (see Rev. 13:5-12)]:

Flavius Vespasian, a general of Nero's appointment, was carrying on the war in Judea with three legions, and he had no wish or feeling adverse to Galba. He had in fact sent his son Titus or acknowledge his authority and bespeak his favor, as in its proper place I shall relate. As for the hidden decrees of fate, the omens and the oracles that marked out Vespasian and his sons [Titus and Dometian] for the imperial power, we believe in them only after his success. (p. 191)

Book II, 1-2 (A.D. 69), [Vespasian's rise to power (Rev. 13:5-12) and Titus had an affair with Bernice (Acts 25:13)]:

In a distant part of the world fortune was now preparing the origin and rise of a new dynasty, whose varied destinies brought happiness or misery on the State, prosperity or destruction on the Princes of its line. Titus Vespasian had been sent from Judea by his father while Galba still lived, and alleged as a reason for his journeys the homage due to the Emperor, . . . The advanced years and childless condition of the Emperor [Galba] furnished matter for such gossip, and the country
never can refrain from naming many persons until one be chosen. The report gained the more credit from the genius of Titus himself, equal it was to the most exalted fortune, from the mingled beauty and majesty of his countenance, from the prosperous fortunes of Vespasian, from the prophetic responses of oracles, and even from accidental which, in the general disposition to belief, were accepted as omens. . . . These and like thoughts made between hope and fear; but hope triumphed. Some supposed that he retraced his steps for the love of Queen Berenice [Acts 25:13], nor was his young heart averse to her charms but his affection occasioned no hindrance to action. (p. 214)

Book II, 4 (A.D. 69), [The Jewish War (Luke 19:41-44)]:

Titus rejoined his father, and was received as a mighty pledge of success but the wavering minds of the provincial and the troops. Vaspasian had all but completed the Jewish war, and only the siege of Jerusalem now remained, an operation, the difficulty and arduousness of which was due, rather to the character of its mountain citadel and the perverse obstinacy of the national superstition, than to any sufficient means of enduring extremities left to the besiege [Luke 19:43-44]. (p. 215)

Book II, 8-9 (A.D.69), [The Death Stroke Healed (Rev. 13:12)]:

About this time Achaia and Asia Minor were terrified by a false report that Nero was at hand. Various rumors were current about his death; and so there were many who pretended and believed that he was still alive [Rev. 13:12]. . . . Thence the alarm spread far and wide, and many roused themselves at the well-known name, eager for change, and detesting the present state of things. The report was daily gaining credit when an accident put and end to it. . . . The body, in which the eyes, the hair, and the savage countenance, were remarkable features, was conveyed to Asia, and thence to Rome. (p. 216)

Book II, 79 (A.D. 69), [The Beast From the Earth (Rev. 13:1-13)]:

With purposes no longer doubtful they parted, Mucianus for Antioch, Vespasian for Caesarea. These cities are the capitals of Syria and Judea respectively. The initiative in transferring the Empire to Vespasian was taken at Alexandria under the prompt direction of Tiberius Alexander, who on the 1st of July [69] made the legions swear allegiance to him. That day was after celebrated as the first of his reign, though the army of Judea on July 3rd took the oath to Vespasian in person with such eager alacrity that they would not wait for the return of his son Titus, who was then on his way back from Syria, acting as the medium between Mucianus and his father for the communication of their plans. (p. 235)

Book IV, 1-3 (A.D. 70), [The Roman Civil War ends (Dan. 2:41)]:

Top
When Vitellius was dead, the war had indeed come to an end, but the peace had yet to begin. Sword in hand, throughout the capital, the conquerors hunted down with merciless hatred. The streets were choked with carnage, the squares and temples reeked with blood, for men were massacred everywhere as chance through them in the way. . . . Everywhere were lamentations, and wailing, and all the miseries of a captured city, till the license of the Vitellianist and Othoianist soldiery, once so odious, was remembered with regret. . . . At Rome the Senate, delighted and full of confident hope, decreed to Vespasian all the honors customarily bestowed on the Emperors. And indeed the civil war, which, beginning in Gaul and Spain, and afterwards drawing into the struggle first Germany and then Illyricum, had traversed Egypt, Judea, and Syria, every province, and every army, this war, now that the whole earth [Matt. 24:6] was, as it were, purged from guilt, seemed to have reached its close. (pp. 266-267)

Book V, 1 (A.D. 70), [Gather the nations (Joel 3:1-17, Dan. 9:26, 12:1, Zech. 12:1-3, 14:1-9) like Nebuchadnezzar had done (2 Chron. 36:19-21, Ezek. 39:21)]:

Early in this year Titus Caesar, who had been selected by his father to complete the subjugation of Judea, and who had gained distinction as a soldier while both were still subjects, began to rise in power and reputation, as armies and provinces emulated each other in their attachment to him. . . . He found in Judea three legions, the 5th, the 10th, and the 15th, all old troops of Vespasian's. To these he added the 12th from Syria, and some men belonging to the 18th and 3rd, whom he had withdrawn from Alexandria. This force was accompanied by twenty cohorts of allied troops and eight squadrons of cavalry, by the two kings Agrippa and Sohemus, by the auxiliary forces of king Antiochus, by a strong contingent of Arabs, who hated the Jews with the usual hatred of neighbors, and, lastly, by many persons brought from the capital and from Italy by private hopes of securing the yet unengaged affections of the Prince [Dan. 9:26]. With this force Titus entered the enemy's territory, preserving strict order on his march, reconnoitering every spot, and always ready to give battle. At last he encamped near Jerusalem [Luke 21:20].

Book V, 9-10 (A.D. 70), [The “Abomination of Desolation” in the Holy Place (Matt. 24:15, Dan. 9:26, 11:31, 2 Thess. 2:4)]:

Cneius Pompeius [B. C. 63] was the first of out countrymen to subdue the Jews. Availing himself of the right of conquest, he entered the temple. Thus it is commonly known that the place stood empty with no similitude of gods within, and that the shrine had nothing to reveal [no Ark?]. The wall of Jerusalem were destroyed, the temple was left standing. After these provinces had fallen, in the course of our civil wars, into the hands of Marcus Antonius [Mark Anthony] Pacorus, king of the Parthians, seized Judea. He was slain by Publius Ventidius, and the Parthians were driven back over the Euphrates. Caius Sosius reduced the Jews to subjugation. The royal power, which had been bestowed by Antony by Herod [the Great], was augmented by the victorious Augustus. On Herod's death, one Simon,
without waiting for the approbation of the Emperor, usurped the title of king. He was punished by Quintilius Varus then governor of Syria, and the nation with its liberties curtailed, was divided into three provinces under the sons of Herod. Under Tiberius all was quiet. But when the Jews were ordered by Caligula to set up his statue in the temple, they preferred the alternative of war. The death of the Emperor put an end to the disturbance. The kings were either dead, or reduced to insignificance, when Claudius entrusted the province of Judea to the Roman Knights or to his own freedmen, one of whom, Antonius Felix [Acts 23:24], indulging in every kind of barbarity and lust, exercised the power of a king in the spirit of a slave. He married Drusilla [Acts 24:24], the granddaughter of Antony and Cleopatra, and so was the grand son-in-law, as Claudius was the grandson, of Antony.

Yet the endurance of the Jews lasted till Gnossius Florus was procurator. In his time the war broke out. Cestius Gallus, legate of Syria, who attempted to crush it, had to fight several battles, generally with ill success. Cestius dying, either in the course of nature, or from vexation. Vespasian was sent by Nero [Rev. 13:11ff], and by help of his good fortune, his high reputation, and his excellent subordinates, succeeded wherein the space of two summers in occupying with his victorious army the whole level country and all the cities, except Jerusalem. The following year [A.D. 69] had been wholly taken up with civil strife, and had passed, as far as the Jews were concerned, in inaction. Peace having been established in Italy, foreign affairs were once more remembered. Our indignation was heightened by the circumstances that the Jews alone had not submitted. At the same time it was held to be more expedient, in reference to the possible results and contingencies of the new reign, that Titus should remain with the army.

Accordingly he pitched his camp, as I have related, before the walls of Jerusalem, and displayed his legions in order of battle (Matt. 24:28, Luke 17:37). (p. 297)

After the search for historical literature began in 1968, the reference below was the very first non-Biblical historical evidence that was found in support of the A.D. 70 fulfillment of Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21. “The Histories” of Tacitus (Book V, 12-13) [see “Come with the clouds”, Section 4.4.3.5, and (Dan. 7:13, Matt. 24:30, Rev. 1:7)]:

After the capture of the city [of Jerusalem] by Pompey, experience and apprehension taught them much. Availing themselves of the sordid policy of the Claudian era to purchase the right of fortification [Dan. 9:25], they raised in the time of peace such walls as were suited for war. Their numbers were increased by the vast rabble collected from the overthrow of the other cities. All of the most obstinate rebels had escaped into the place, and perpetual situations were the consequence. There were three generals and as many armies. Simon held the outer and larger circuit of walls. John, also called Bargioras, occupied the middle of the city. Eleazar had fortified the temple. John and Simon were strong in numbers and equipment, Eleazar in position. There were continual skirmishes, surprises, and incendiary fires, and a vast quantity of corn was burnt. Before long John sent emissaries, who under pretense of sacrificing, slaughtered Eleazar and his partisans, and gained possession
of the temple. The city was thus divided between two factions, till, as the Romans approached, war with the foreigner brought about a reconciliation.

13. Prodigies had occurred, which this nation, prone to superstition, but hating all religious rites, did not deem it lawful to expiate by offering and sacrifice. There had been seen hosts joining battle in the skies, the fiery gleam of arms, the temple illuminated by a sudden radiance [see Ezek. 1:28, 11:23, Zech. 14:4] from the clouds [Matt. 16:27-28, 24:30-31, Rev. 1:7, Dan. 7:13]. The doors of the inner shrine were suddenly thrown open, and a voice of more than mortal tone was heard to cry the Gods were departing. At the same instant there was a mighty stir as of departure. Some few put a fearful meaning on these events, but in most there was a firm persuasion, that in the ancient records of the priests was contained a prediction of how at this very time the East was to grow powerful, and rulers, coming from Judea, were to acquire universal empire [see Dan. 2:44, 7:22, Luke 21:31]. These mysterious prophecies had pointed to Vespasian and Titus [Rev13:11], but the common people, with the usual blindness of ambition, had interpreted these mighty destinies of themselves, and could not be brought even by disasters to believe the truth. I have heard that the total number of the besieged, of every age and sexes, amounted to six hundred thousand [Rev. 11:8]. All who were able to bear arms, and a number, more than proportionate to the population, had courage to do so. Men and women showed equal resolution, and life seemed more terrible than death, if they were forced to leave their country. Such was the city and nation; and Titus Caesar, seeing that the position forbade an assault or any of the more rapid operations of war, determined to proceed by earthworks and covered approaches [Luke 19:43-44]. The legions had their respective duties assigned to them, and there was a cessation from the fighting, till the inventions, used in ancient warfare, or devised by modern ingenuity for the reduction of cities, were constructed.

(p. 298)

(6.2.4.2) “The Twelve Caesars” of Gaius Suetonius Tranquillas

From the "Forward" of "The Twelve Caesars", Graves (1957), the translator of this work indicates that Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus was probably born in 69 A.D., which was the "Famous year of the four Emperors" [Dan. 7:24]. His father was a Roman Knight, and Pliny the Younger was a close friend. He later became chief secretary to the Emperor Hadrian (117-38 A.D.). He probably had direct access to historical information and archives. He wrote several books, but "The Twelve Caesars" is the only one that survived.

This work of Suetonius is important to this study because it lists the Caesars in the same order that the Romans and the Jews listed them in the 1st Century. In this sequence, the Biblical references (Dan. 7:19-27, Rev. 17:9-18) are properly aligned with the actual history of the time. In addition, there are other historical references that also agree with the Biblical record. Table 2 provides a list of the Caesars as they appear in the Table of Contents of his book.

See next page
The Twelve Caesars

1st Julius Caesar, Afterwards Deified (12 July 100 B.C. - 15 March 44 B.C.)
2nd Augustus, Afterwards Deified (B.C. 27 - A.D. 14)
3rd Tiberius (14 - 37 A.D.)
4th Gaius Caligula (37 - 41 A.D.)
5th Claudius, Afterwards Deified (41 - 54 A.D.)
6th Nero (54 - 68 A.D.) [The Revelation written (early date, five have fallen, one is Rev. 17:10)]
7th Galba (69 A.D.) [1st horn fell, Dan. 7:20]
8th Otho (69 A.D.) [2nd horn fell, Dan. 7:20]
9th Vitellius (69 A.D.) [3rd horn fell, Dan. 7:20]
10th Vespasian, Afterwards Deified (69 - 79 A.D.) [The Great Jewish War ends 70 A.D.]
11th Titus, Afterwards Deified (79 - 81 A.D.) [The 11th, “little horn” waged war, Dan 7:20-21]
12th Domitian (81 - 96 A.D.) [Book of Revelation (late date)]


In the biography of Vespasian [Afterwards Deified], Suetonius (Tranquillus, 1957), without being aware of it, may have confirmed the fulfillment of Biblical history when he recorded the following:

The Flavians, admittedly an obscure family, none of whose members had ever enjoyed high office, at last brought stable government to the Empire; they had found it drifting uneasily through a year of revolution [A.D. 69] in their course of which three successive emperors lost their lives by violence [Dan. 7:24]. We have no cause to be ashamed of the Flavian record, though it is generally admitted that Domitian's cruelty and greed justified his assassination. . . . Vespasian was born on 17 November 9 A.D., . . . during the consulship of Quintus Sulpicius Camerinus and Gaius Poppaens Sabinus, and five years before the death of Augustus. (p. 274)

An ancient superstition was current in the East, that out of Judea would come the rulers of the world [Dan. 2:44]. This prediction, as it later proved, referred to two Roman Emperors, Vespasian and his son Titus [Rev. 13:11]; but the rebellious Jews, who read it as referring to themselves, murdered their Procurator, routed the Governor-general of Syria when he came to restore order, and captured an Eagle. To crush this uprising the Romans needed a strong army under an energetic commander, who could be trusted not to abuse his plenary powers. The choice fell on Vespasian. He had given signal proof of energy and nothing, it seemed, need be feared from a man of such modest antecedents. Two legions, with eight cavalry
divisions and ten supernumerary battalions, were therefore dispatched to join the forces already in Judea; and Vespasian took his elder son, Titus, to serve on his staff. No sooner had they reached Judea than he impressed the neighboring provinces by his prompt tightening up of discipline and his audacious conduct in battle after battle. During the assault on one enemy city he was wounded on the knee by a stone and caught several arrows on his shield.

When Nero and Galba were both dead and Vitellius was disputing the purple with Otho, Vespasian began to remember his Imperial ambitions. (p. 276)

In Judea, Vespasian consulted the God of Carmel and was given a promise that he would never be disappointed in what he planned or desired, however lofty his ambitions. Also, a distinguished Jewish prisoner of Vespasian's, Josephus by name, insisted that he would soon be released by the very man who now had put him in fetters, and who would then be Emperor. (p. 277)

(6.3) 2nd Esdras [4th Ezra]

15 Now while the people were in a state of expectation and all were wondering in their hearts about John, as to whether he might be the Christ,
16 John answered and said to them all, "As for me, I baptize you with water; but One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.
17 "And His winnowing fork is in His hand to thoroughly clear His threshing floor, and to gather the wheat into His barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." (Luke 3:15-17)

We know from Luke (3:1) that the historical time frame, of this 1st Century Jewish "state of expectation" [Luke 3:15], was the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar, or about A.D. 29-30. The historical perceptions found within 4th Ezra illustrate the Jewish expectation just prior to the birth of Jesus. Other parallel Jewish sectarian expectations from that era can also be found in the Book of Enoch [see Section (6.4)] and in the "Dead Sea Scrolls" [see Section (6.5)]. These works are discussed, immediately following this commentary on 4th Ezra.

The language and the historical perspective of the apocryphal Book of 4th Ezra, which was also called 2nd Esdras, is very akin to the expectations found in the Jewish books of Ezekiel and Daniel, and in the New Testament Book of Revelation. This apocalyptic type literature began to emerge after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 586 B.C., and continued to be published into the 1st Century.

The evidence seems to clearly indicate that the early Christian Jews [see Matt. 24:15, Luke 21:20, Heb. 8:8-13, 9:1-8, Rev. 11:1-8] and Josephus (Antiq., Bk. X, Ch. V, 1) viewed the war with the Romans as the fulfillment of prophecy. In their perception, the impending destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple [Dan. 9:25-27] in A.D. 70 were the fulfillment of the prophecies of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and the other prophets.
The destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple by the Babylonians in 586 B.C. precipitated a profound change in the Jewish religion. This was also carried over into Christian theology. It appears that the traditional 1st Century Jewish understanding of the fulfillment of the Books of Ezekiel and Daniel were correct. 1st Century Judaism was well aware that the Old Testament contained prophesies of two separate destructions of Jerusalem.

The Jewish apocalyptic literature was inseparably associated and linked with the 656 year period from the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon in 586 B.C. [see Dan. 9:12, Jer. 52:4-13], to the second destruction by the Romans in A.D. 70 [see Dan. 7:19-27, 9:24-27]. Daniel prophesied concerning this period of time that spanned the four great kingdoms [that is, the Babylonians, the Medes and Persians, the Greeks, and the Romans]. According to Daniel, those four kingdoms would continually conquer Israel and Jerusalem until the coming of the Messiah in the last days.

Thus, the beginning and the ending of this apocalyptic period were characterized by the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple. The destruction by the 4th kingdom in A.D. 70 [see Dan. 7:22, 9:24-27, 12:7], brought the traditional Temple worship to an end [Matt. 24:3ff]. It was an established 1st Century belief, that during the time of the Romans [that is, the 4th Kingdom, Dan 2:44], the Messiah would establish an “Eternal Kingdom” [see Dan. 7:22, Matt. 16:27-28, Luke 21:31].

At that time, the city and the Temple would be destroyed, which was the final “abomination of desolation” (see Dan. 9:24-27, Matt. 24:15, Luke 21:20, 2 Thess. 2:4). The last destruction was the result of the Jews rejecting the Messiah [that is, after the Messiah was cut off (see Matt. 23:36ff, Dan. 9:25)].

In addition, the latter prophecy, concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, was not accomplished on Pentecost, A.D. 30-33. But, it would be accomplished about 40 years later. This event would still be well within the “eyewitness” generation [Matt.16:27-28].

However, Christendom, somewhere along the way, seemed to lose this perception and instead assigned various other obscure and futuristic interpretations to the Books of Daniel, Matthew Chapter 24, and the Revelation. These prophecies, from the historical perspective, were understood in terms of the second destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in A.D. 70.

Thus through the centuries, some of the self-serving notions or expectations of Christendom failed to materialize. Moreover, many generations, since A.D. 70, expected the fulfillment of these end time prophecies within their own living generation. Those living today, in the beginning of the third millennium, still have the very same type of future expectation. However, Christendom continues to ignore the time-definite aspects of the Biblical prophecy.

Finally, the historical record, discussed in Chapter 6 of this study, should help define the fulfillment of the common expectation of the “eyewitness generation”, that was referenced above in Luke [3:15-17]. Although 4th Ezra was not accepted into the “Canon of Scripture”, there is no doubt that much of the language and concepts used within the writing were very similar to New Testament Scriptures, which were always considered to be genuine.

The Book of 2nd Esdras [4th Ezra], which is discussed later in this section, provides additional historical evidence that may help decipher the Book of Revelation. Some of
the imagery, which is found in the Revelation, was also common to the earlier Book of 4th Ezra. It is fairly certain that 4th Ezra was written in pre-Christian times and was of Jewish origin. McClintock & Strong (Vol. III, 1981) state:

The quotations from it [4th Ezra] in the epistle of St. Barnabas (ch. xii with 2 Ezra v, 3) and in Clemens Alexandrinus [A.D. 180, see table 3] (Strom. iii, 16), showing beyond doubt that the book was well known at the commencement of the Christian era, and must therefore have been written some time before to have such general currency and acceptance. . . . We therefore safely assign it to about B. C. 50.

References from the text of 4th Ezra are cited and discussed next. They demonstrate that similar passages and language are found in the Scriptures, and that they were already present in Judaism before the Christian era, and certainly existed before the Book of Revelation was written. The text below was downloaded from the Internet (Second Esdras (RSV), Downloaded, October 18th, 1998).

In the first place, 4th Ezra claims to be written during the reign of Artaxerxes, king of the Persians. Thus, the perspective of this book laments the recent past destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians (that is, in 586 B. C.). It also predicts the future destruction of Babylon in Chapters 15 and 16. The text from 4th Ezra is amazingly similar to the imagery found in some of the New Testament books and especially in Chapters 17 through 19 of the Book of Revelation. Thus, the Jewish expectation from the Book of 4th Ezra may have influenced the understanding of the “Babylon” which was mentioned in the Book of Revelation. Please follow the notes and comments within the annotated text of 4th Ezra:

4 Ezra Chapter One


[31] When you offer oblations to me, I will turn my face from you; for I have rejected your feast days, and new moons, and circumcisions of the flesh.

[32] I sent to you my servants the prophets [parable, Matt. 22:1ff], but you have taken and slain them and torn their bodies in pieces [it was Jerusalem that had killed the prophets (Matt. 23:37, Luke 13:34)]; their blood I will require [of the wicked generation, Matt. 23:36ff] of you, says the Lord.

[33] "Thus says the Lord Almighty: Your house [that is, Jews] is desolate [see Matt. 23:38]; I will drive you out [in A.D. 70] as the wind drives straw [Luke 13:35]; . . .
[35] I will give your houses to a people that will come [Gentiles, Matt. 21:43], who without having heard me will believe [John 20:29, Acts 2:39, Eph. 2:13]. Those to whom I have shown no signs will do what I have commanded.

[36] They have seen no prophets, yet will recall their former state [this is still true today].

[37] I call to witness the gratitude of the people [the future Gentile Church] that is to come, whose children rejoice with gladness; though they do not see me with bodily eyes, yet with the spirit they will believe the things I have said [John 20:29].

[38] "And now, father, look with pride and see the people coming from the east; to them I will give as leaders Abraham [Matt. 8:11], Isaac, and Jacob and Hosea and Amos and Micah and Joel and Obadiah and Jonah

[39] and Nahum and Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi, who is also called the messenger of the Lord.

It is obvious, from Chapter 1, that the wickedness of the Jews, themselves, was the reason that Israel would be forsaken again in A.D. 70, and that a New Covenant with the Gentiles [that is, the Christians] would soon come into being [Heb. 8:13]. This concept is very profound since this book was pre-Christian in origin. Yet, it also reflects some of the language and concepts that would later be found within the Inspired texts of the New Testament.


One of the fundamental arguments made against the “early” dating of the Revelation [that is, before A.D. 70] was that the Roman Church traditions indicated that it was written during the reign of Domitian [or, after the destruction of the Temple by the Romans]. Consequently, the Roman Church concluded that the figurative language of the Revelation must refer to the “end of the world” in the future.

However, 4th Ezra was written before the Christian era. Moreover, it was written over a hundred years prior to the destruction of Jerusalem. And yet, the almost identical figurative language to that of the Revelation, was taught by the 1st Century Jews to apply to the impending war with the Romans. Thus, the Jewish perception was literally fulfilled, but the Christian expectation continues to change with the passing of each successive generation.

Consequently, it is important to consider the possibility that the Revelation was actually written before A.D. 70. It is evident that earlier similar figurative language to that of the Book of Revelation came from earlier sources in traditional Judaism. Fourth Ezra, and the associated Book of Daniel, interpreted the fulfillment of these things in terms of another destruction of Jerusalem.

However, if the Roman Church tradition is true, and if the Revelation was written after A.D. 70, then the Roman Church did, in fact, change the interpretation of these original prophecies to conform to different perceptions that are still unfilled.
[1] "Thus says the Lord: I brought this people [Jews] out of bondage, and I gave them commandments through my servants the prophets; but they would not listen to them, and made my counsels void.
[2] The mother [Gal. 3:24ff] who bore them says to them, 'Go, my children, because I am a widow and forsaken [Jerusalem was destroyed by the Babylonians].
[4] But now what can I do for you? For I am a widow and forsaken [Isa. 47:8, Lam. 1:1, Rev. 18:7]. Go, my children, and ask for mercy from the Lord.'
[5] I call upon you, father, as a witness in addition to the mother of the children, because they [Jews] would not keep my covenant, . . .
[7] Let them be scattered among the nations [Deut. 28:64ff], let their names be blotted out from the earth, because they have despised my covenant [that is, the Law of Moses].
[8] "Woe to you, Assyria, who conceal the unrighteous in your midst! O wicked nation, remember what I did to Sodom and Gomorrah, whose land lies in lumps of pitch and heaps of ashes. So will I do to those who have not listened to me, says the Lord Almighty."
[10] Thus says the Lord to Ezra: 'Tell my people that I will give them the kingdom of Jerusalem, which I was going to give to Israel.
[11] Moreover, I will take back to myself their glory, and will give to these others [Gentiles, Acts 13:47] the everlasting habitations [Matt. 21:43], which I had prepared for Israel.
[13] Ask and you will receive; pray that your days may be few, that they may be shortened [Matt. 24:22]. The kingdom is already prepared for you [Matt. 24:34]; watch! . . .
[16] And I will raise up the dead from their places, and will bring them out from their tombs [see Ezekiel chapter 37, John 5:21-29], because I recognize my name in them.
[17] Do not fear, mother of sons [Gal. 4:26], for I have chosen you, says the Lord.
[18] I will send you help, my servants Isaiah and Jeremiah [Heb. 8:6ff]. According to their counsel I have consecrated and prepared for you twelve trees [Rev. 22:2] loaded with various fruits, . . .
[23] When you find any who are dead, commit them to the grave and mark it, and I will give you the first place in my resurrection [John 11:24-25].
[24] Pause and be quiet, my people, because your rest [Heb. 4:1ff] will come. . . .
[27] Do not be anxious, for when the day of tribulation [see Matt. 25:21, Rev. 7:14] and anguish comes, others shall weep and be sorrowful, but you shall rejoice and have abundance. . . .
[29] My hands will cover you, that your sons may not see Gehenna [John 8:51].
[30] Rejoice, O mother, with your sons, because I will deliver you, says the Lord.
[31] Remember your sons that sleep, because I will bring them out of the hiding places of the earth [Ezek 38:12ff, Dan. 12:2], and will show mercy [Rom. 11:30ff] to them; for I am merciful, says the Lord Almighty.
Embrace your children until I come, and proclaim mercy to them [Rom. 11:30ff]; because my springs [Zech. 13:1ff, John 7:38] run over, and my grace [Zech. 4:7, John 1:17] will not fail."

I, Ezra, received a command from the Lord on Mount Horeb to go to Israel. When I came to them they rejected me and refused the Lord's commandment.

Therefore I say to you, O nations that hear and understand, "Await your shepherd [Micah 5:2, Matt. 2:6]; he will give you everlasting rest [Dan. 12:13, Heb. 4:1ff], because he who will come at the end of the age is close at hand [Dan. 12:6ff, Matt. 24:3]. [Like the other time-definite prophecies in the New Testament, the end of the age was viewed as being near].

Be ready for the rewards of the kingdom, because the eternal light will shine upon you [Matt. 4:14-17] for evermore.


Receive what the Lord has entrusted to you and be joyful, giving thanks to him who has called you to heavenly kingdoms [Gal. 4:26, Heb. 12:22-24, 13:14].

Rise and stand, and see at the feast of the Lord [Rev. 19:17] the number of those who have been sealed.

Those who have departed from the shadow of this age have received glorious garments from the Lord.

Take again your full number, O Zion, and conclude the list of your people who are clothed in white [Rev. 7:13-14, 14:1-5, 19:14], who have fulfilled the law of the Lord.

The number of your children, whom you desired, is full; . .

I, Ezra, saw on Mount Zion a great multitude, which I could not number [see Rev. 14:1-5], and they all were praising the Lord with songs.

In their midst was a young man of great stature, taller than any of the others, and on the head of each of them he placed a crown [Rev. 19:12-16], but he was more exalted than they. And I was held spellbound.

Then I asked an angel, "Who are these, my lord?"

He answered and said to me, "These are they who have put off mortal clothing and have put on the immortal [see 1 Cor. 15:53], and they have confessed the name of God; now they are being crowned, and receive palms [Rev. 7:9]."

Then I said to the angel, "Who is that young man who places crowns on them and puts palms in their hands?"

He answered and said to me, "He is the Son of God, whom they confessed in the world [Matt 10:32]."

The historical perspective of this chapter concerns the coming of the Messiah and the establishment of the “New Kingdom” within the 1st Century. Note that these teachings were present among the Jews in Israel, even before Jesus was born.
because I saw the desolation of Zion [Jer. 52:4-13, Dan 9:12] and the wealth of those who lived in Babylon. . . .

But again, in its time thou didst bring the flood [Gen. 6:13ff] upon the inhabitants of the world and destroy them.

And the same fate befell them: as death came upon Adam [Gen. 2:6, 1 Cor. 15:21ff], so the flood upon them.

But thou didst leave one of them, Noah with his household, and all the righteous who have descended from him.

"When those who dwelt on earth began to multiply, they produced children and peoples and many nations, and again they began to be more ungodly than were their ancestors.

And when they were committing iniquity before thee, thou didst choose for thyself one of them, whose name was Abraham;

and thou didst love him, and to him only didst thou reveal the end of the times, secretly by night.

Thou didst make with him an everlasting covenant [Gal. 3:14ff], . . .

Paul spoke profusely about the covenant with Abraham in his letter to the Galatians. The promises to Abraham were fulfilled through Christ in the New Covenant.

4 Ezra Chapter 4

Then the angel that had been sent to me, whose name was Uriel, answered and said to me, "Your understanding has utterly failed regarding this world, and do you think you can comprehend the way of the Most High?" . . .

He answered me and said, "If you are alive, you will see, and if you live long, you will often marvel, because the age [Matt. 24:3] is hastening swiftly to its end.

For it will not be able to bring the things that have been promised to the righteous in their appointed times, because this age is full of sadness and infirmities. . . .

"Go and ask a woman who is with child if, when her nine months have been completed, her womb can keep the child within her any longer."

And I said, "No, lord, it cannot." And he said to me, "In Hades [see Section 6.2.3.4] the chambers of the souls are like the womb.

For just as a woman who is in travail makes haste to escape the pangs of birth. . . .

Then I prayed and said, "Do you think that I shall live until those days? Or who will be alive in those days?"

He answered me and said, "Concerning the signs about which you ask me, I can tell you in part; but I was not sent to tell you concerning your life, for I do not know.

Again, the context implies that the "end of the Jewish age" [Matt. 24:3], and the second destruction of Jerusalem [Dan. 9:25-26] in A.D. 70, were believed to be near.

4 Ezra Chapter 5
“Now concerning the signs: behold, the days are coming when those who dwell on earth shall be seized with great terror, and the way of truth shall be hidden, and the land shall be barren of faith [Luke 18:8].

And unrighteousness shall be increased beyond what you yourself see, and beyond what you heard of formerly.

And the land which you now see ruling shall be waste and untrodden, and men shall see it desolate [see Matt. 23:38].

But if the Most High grants that you live, you shall see it thrown into confusion after the third period; and the sun shall suddenly shine forth at night, and the moon during the day.

Blood shall drip from wood, and the stone shall utter its voice; the peoples shall be troubled, and the stars shall fall [Matt. 24:29]. . .

Jesus prophesied that many signs would precede the destruction of Jerusalem [see Matt. 24:3, Mark 13:4, Luke 21:7].

And I answered and said, "What will be the dividing of the times? Or when will be the end of the first age [Matt. 24:3] and the beginning of the age that follows?"

He said to me, "From Abraham to Isaac, because from him were born Jacob and Esau, for Jacob's hand held Esau's heel from the beginning. [See Gal. 4:21-31, Isaac and Ishmael].

For Esau [Obad. 1:18ff, Malachi 1:2ff, Rom. 9:13, Heb. 11:20, 12:16] is the end of this age, and Jacob is the beginning of the age that follows.

For the beginning of a man is his hand, and the end of a man is his heel; between the heel and the hand seek for nothing else, Ezra!" . . .

And it said, "Behold, the days are coming, and it shall be that when I [Jesus in the flesh during His ministry, John 1:13ff] draw near to visit the inhabitants of the earth,

[19] and when I require from the doers of iniquity [Matt. 7:23] the penalty of their iniquity, and when the humiliation of Zion is complete [Dan 12:7, Zech. 12:2, 14:2, Matt. 23:36ff, Luke 1:43-44, 21:20], [note the connection to the future destruction of Jerusalem that was very similar to what Jesus taught in Matthew (24:3ff)].

[20] and when the seal is placed upon the age [Matt. 24:3] which is about to pass away, then I will show these signs: the books shall be opened [Dan. 7:10, 12:1] before the firmament, and all shall see it together. . .

The writer of Hebrews clearly indicated that the dividing of the times would coincide with the end of the Law of Moses and the beginning of the New Covenant. That would be when the Temple was destroyed for the last time in A.D. 70 [See Dan. 9:25-27, Heb. 8:13, 9:8].
[28] For my son the Messiah shall be revealed [2 Thess. 1:7] with those who are with him, and those who remain shall rejoice four hundred years. [This Jewish belief was clearly in error. There was no such literal period of time].
[29] And after these years my son the Messiah shall die, and all who draw human breath.
[30] And the world shall be turned back to primeval silence for seven days, as it was at the first beginnings; so that no one shall be left. [This expectation has not been realized].
[31] And after seven days the world, which is not yet awake, shall be roused, and that which is corruptible [see Paul’s discussion in 1 Cor. 15:50ff] shall perish.
[32] And the earth shall give up [Dan. 12:2] those who are asleep in it, and the dust those who dwell silently in it; and the chambers shall give up the souls which have been committed to them. [See the discourse on Hades in Section (6.2.4.2)].
[33] And the Most High shall be revealed upon the seat of judgment [Dan. 7:9]. . . .
[34] but only judgment shall remain, truth shall stand, and faithfulness shall grow strong.
[36] Then the pit of torment [see Rev. 20:1ff] shall appear, and opposite it shall be the place of rest; and the furnace of hell [Rev. 20:14] shall be disclosed, . . .
[37] And now I see that the world to come [Heb. 2:5] will bring delight to few, but torments to many. . . .
[38] For this reason the Most High has made not one world but two [Heb. 2:5ff]. . . .

Author’s Note. The belief in the two worlds helps provide the understanding as to how this Jewish sectarian concept of the end of all things would actually be brought about. This view is not significantly different from what was taught by Jesus and the New Testament writers concerning the “Heavenly Kingdom” [see Gal. 4:26, Heb. 2:5, 11:16ff, 12:22ff, 13:14, Rev. 21:1ff].

[66] For it is much better with them than with us; for they do not look for a judgment, nor do they know of any torment or salvation promised to them after death [Rev. 2:10]. . . .
[69] And if we were not to come into judgment after death [John 5:24ff], perhaps it would have been better for us."
[70] He answered me and said, "When the Most High made the world and Adam and all who have come from him, he first prepared [Matt. 25:41, Rom. 9:22, 2 Peter 3:7, Jude 6, Rev. 20:1ff] the judgment and the things that pertain to the judgment. . . .
[74] For how long the time is that the Most High has been patient [2 Peter 3:8] with those who inhabit the world, and not for their sake, but because of the times which he has foreordained!"
[75] I answered and said, "If I have found favor in thy sight, O Lord, show this also to thy servant: whether after death, as soon as every one of us yields up his soul, we shall be kept in rest until those times come when thou wilt renew [Acts 3:21, Col. 3:11] the creation, or whether we shall be tormented at once?" [The very same question is a concern to modern theologians today also]. . . .

[78] Now, **concerning death, the teaching is:** When the decisive decree has gone forth from the Most High that a man shall die, as the spirit leaves the body to return again to him who gave it [Eccl. 12:7], first of all it adores the glory [every knee shall bow, Rom. 14:11, Philip. 2:10] of the Most High.

[79] And if it is one of those who have shown scorn and have not kept the way of the Most High, and who have despised his law, and who have hated those who fear God such spirits shall not enter into habitations, but shall immediately wander about in torments, ever grieving and sad, in seven ways. [Compare this with Josephus’ discourse on Hades in Section (6.2.3.4)].

[80] The first way, because they have scorned the law of the Most High.
[81] The second way, because they cannot now make a good repentance that they may live.
[82] The third way, they shall see the reward laid up for those who have trusted the covenants of the Most High.
[83] The fourth way, they shall consider the torment laid up for themselves in the last days.
[84] The fifth way, they shall see how the habitations of the others are guarded by angels in profound quiet. [See the discourse on Hades in Section (6.2.3.4)].
[85] The sixth way, they shall see how some of them will pass over into torments.
[86] The seventh way, which is worse than all the ways that have been mentioned, because they shall utterly waste away in confusion and be consumed with shame, and shall wither with fear at seeing the glory of the Most High before whom they sinned while they were alive, and before whom they are to be judged in the last times.

[88] "Now this is the order of those who have kept the ways of the Most High, when they shall be separated from their mortal body.
[89] During the time that they lived in it, they laboriously served the Most High, and withstood danger every hour, that they might keep the law of the Lawgiver perfectly.

[90] Therefore this is the teaching concerning them:
[91] First of all, they shall see with great joy the glory of him who receives them, for they shall have rest in seven orders.
[92] The first order, because they have striven with great effort to overcome the evil thought which was formed with them, that it might not lead them astray from life into death.
[93] The second order, because they see the perplexity in which the souls of the ungodly wander, and the punishment that awaits them.
[94] The third order, they see the witness which he who formed them bears concerning them, that while they were alive they kept the law which was given them in trust.
[95] The fourth order, they understand the rest which they now enjoy, being gathered into their chambers and guarded by angels in profound quiet, and the glory which awaits them in the last days. [See the discourse on Hades in Section (6.2.3.4)].

[96] The fifth order, they rejoice that they have now escaped what is corruptible, and shall inherit what is to come [1 Cor. 15:50ff]; and besides they see the straits and toil from which they have been delivered, and the spacious liberty which they are to receive and enjoy in immortality.

[97] The sixth order, when it is shown to them how their face is to shine [Dan. 12:3, Matt. 13:43] like the sun, and how they are to be made like the light of the stars, being incorruptible from then on [see 1 Cor. 15:53ff].

[98] The seventh order, which is greater than all that have been mentioned, because they shall rejoice with boldness, and shall be confident without confusion, and shall be glad without fear, for they hasten to behold the face of him whom they served in life and from whom they are to receive their reward when glorified.

[99] This is the order of the souls of the righteous, as henceforth is announced; and the aforesaid are the ways of torment which those who would not give heed shall suffer hereafter."

[104] He answered me and said, "Since you have found favor in my sight, I will show you this also. The day of judgment is decisive and displays to all the seal of truth. Just as now a father does not send his son, or a son his father, or a master his servant, or a friend his dearest friend, to be ill or sleep or eat or be healed in his stead, so no one shall ever pray for another on that day, neither shall any one lay a burden on another; for then every one shall bear his own righteousness and unrighteousness." . . .

[105] It is evident, from the New Testament references within this chapter, how much of this text is very similar to what Paul wrote in his letters. See the commentary on 1st Corinthians Chapter 15 in Section (3.5.7).

4 Ezra Chapter 8

[1] He answered me and said, "The Most High made this world for the sake of many, but the world to come for the sake of few [Matt. 7:14]."

[2] But I tell you a parable, Ezra. Just as, when you ask the earth, it will tell you that it provides very much clay from which earthenware is made, but only a little dust from which gold comes; so is the course of the present world.

[3] Many have been created, but few shall be saved [Matt. 7:14]." . . .

[18] and I have heard of the swiftness of the judgment that is to come.
[19] Therefore hear my voice, and understand my words, and I will speak before thee." The beginning of the words of Ezra's prayer, before he was taken up. He said:

[20] "O Lord who inhabitest eternity [Isa. 43:10], whose eyes are exalted and whose upper chambers are in the air [2 Cor. 12:2], . . .

[23] whose look dries up the depths and whose indignation makes the mountains melt away, and whose truth is established for ever . . .

[41] "For just as the farmer sows many seeds upon the ground and plants a multitude of seedlings, and yet not all that have been sown will come up in due season, and not all that were planted will take root; so also those who have been sown [parable of the sower (Matt. 13:18ff)] in the world will not all be saved." . . .

[50] For many miseries will affect those who inhabit the world in the last times [Acts. 2:17, 2 Tim. 3:1, Heb. 1:2, James 5:3, 2 Peter 3:3], because they have walked in great pride. . . .

[52] because it is for you that paradise is opened, the tree of life is planted, the age to come is prepared [Matt. 25:34], plenty is provided, a city [Rev. 21:2] is built, rest [Heb. 4:1ff] is appointed. . . .

[53] The root of evil is sealed up from you, illness is banished from you, and death is hidden; hell has fled and corruption has been forgotten;

[54] sorrows have passed away, and in the end the treasure of immortality [1 Cor. 15:53ff] is made manifest . . .

[61] Therefore my judgment is now drawing near; . . .


4 Ezra Chapter 9

[1] He answered me and said, "Measure carefully in your mind, and when you see that a certain part of the predicted signs are past,

[2] then you will know that it is the very time when the Most High is about to visit the world which he has made.

[3] So when there shall appear in the world earthquakes, tumult of peoples, intrigues of nations, wavering of leaders, confusion of princes [see Matt 24:1ff, many of these things were literally accomplished from A.D. 66 to 70].

[4] then you will know that it was of these that the Most High spoke from the days that were of old, from the beginning. . . .

[13] Therefore, do not continue to be curious as to how the ungodly will be punished; but inquire how the righteous will be saved, those to whom the age belongs and for whose sake the age was made." . . .

[15] "I said before, and I say now, and will say it again: there are more who perish than those who will be saved [Matt. 7:14], . . .

[18] For there was a time in this age when I was preparing for those who now exist, before the world was made [Matt. 25:34] for them to dwell in, . . .

[43] And she said to me, "Your servant was barren and had no child, though I lived with my husband thirty years . . ."
[45] And after thirty years God heard your handmaid, and looked upon my low estate, and considered my distress, and **gave me a son.** And I rejoiced greatly over him, I and my husband and all my neighbors; and we gave great glory to the Mighty One.

[46] And I brought him up with much care.

[47] So when he grew up and I came to take a wife for him, **I set a day for the marriage feast** [Matt. 22:2ff, Rev. 19:9].

4 Ezra Chapter 10

[1] "But it happened that when my son entered his wedding chamber, he fell down and died. . . .

[7] For Zion, the mother of us all [Gal. 4:26], is in deep grief and great affliction. . . .

[20] "Do not say that, but let yourself be persuaded because of the **troubles of Zion,** and be consoled because of the sorrow of Jerusalem.

[21] For you see that our sanctuary has been laid waste, our altar thrown down, our temple destroyed [Jer. 52:4-13, Dan. 9:12]; . . .

[26] behold, she suddenly uttered a loud and fearful cry, so that the earth shook [that is, at the giving of the Law of Moses and the New Covenant represented by the New Jerusalem, see Heb. 12:26, Haggai 2:6. Isa. 65:17, Zech. 14:10, Rev. 21:1ff] at the sound.

[27] And I looked, and behold, the woman was no longer visible to me, but there was an **established city** [that is, Zion or the New Jerusalem, Isa. 65:17, Zech. 14:10, Gal. 4:26, Heb. 12:22, Rev. 21:1ff], and a place of huge **foundations** [Rev. 21:14ff] showed itself. Then I was afraid, and cried with a loud voice and said, . . .

[38] He answered me and said, "Listen to me and I will inform you. . . for the Most High has **revealed many secrets to you.**

[39] For he has seen your righteous conduct, that you have sorrowed continually for your people, and **mourned greatly over Zion.**

[40] **This therefore is the meaning of the vision. . . .**

[42] but you do not now see the form of a woman, but an established city [that is, Jerusalem] has appeared to you --

[43] and as for her telling you about the **misfortune of her son** [Rev. 12:13], this is the interpretation:

[44] **This woman whom you saw, whom you now behold as an established city, is Zion.**

[45] And as for her telling you that she was barren for thirty years, it is because there were three thousand years in the world before any offering was offered in it.

[46] And after three thousand years Solomon **built the city,** and offered offerings; then it was that the barren **woman bore a son** [Rev. 12:13].

[47] And as for her telling you that she brought him up with much care that was the period of residence in Jerusalem.
And as for her saying to you, 'When my son entered his wedding chamber he died,' and that misfortune had overtaken her, that was the destruction which befell Jerusalem [that is, in 586 B.C.].

And behold, you saw her likeness, how she mourned for her son, and you began to console her for what had happened.

For now the Most High, seeing that you are sincerely grieved and profoundly distressed for her, has shown you the brilliance of her glory, and the loveliness of her beauty.

It is also very interesting that both Jerusalem and the Temple were to be rebuilt after the destruction by Nebuchadnezzar. Jerusalem and the Temple were to undergo one more iteration of destruction at the hands of the 4th kingdom [that is, the Romans, Dan. 7:19-22, 9:24-27, 12:7ff, Matt. 24:15, Luke 19:43-44, 21:20].


4 Ezra Chapter 11

[1] On the second night I had a dream, and behold, there came up from the sea an eagle that had twelve feathered wings and three heads.
[2] And I looked, and behold, he spread his wings over all the earth, and all the winds of heaven blew upon him, and the clouds were gathered about him. . . .

This chapter apparently links the prophecies of 4th Ezra to the earlier prophecies of the Book of Daniel [see Section (6.17.1)]. Thus, the Jewish sectarian interpretation, of the events of the last days, was directly linked to the interpretations from the prophet Daniel. Notice that the Roman Church applied these things to the end of the world. However, the testimony of the actual Jewish history, the teachings of Paul [see 2 Thess. 2:4] and the more important testimony of Jesus, Himself, [see Matt. 24:15, Luke 19:43-44, 21:20] clearly demand a fulfillment of these things during the War with the Romans.

4 Ezra Chapter 12

[1] While the lion was saying these words to the eagle, I looked,
[2] . . . the remaining head disappeared. And the two wings that had gone over to it arose and set themselves up to reign, and their reign was brief and full of tumult.
[3] And I looked, and behold, they also disappeared, and the whole body of the eagle was burned, and the earth was exceedingly terrified. . . .
[8] strengthen me and show me, thy servant, the interpretation and meaning of this terrifying vision, that thou mayest fully comfort my soul.
[9] For thou hast judged me worthy to be shown the end of the times and the last events of the times."

[10] He said to me, "This is the interpretation of this vision which you have seen:
[11] The eagle which you saw coming up from the sea is the fourth kingdom which appeared in a vision to your brother Daniel.

Author’s Note. Please observe carefully how verse 11 provides the link to the Romans from the prophecies of the Book of Daniel (Dan. 7:1ff, Rev. 13:1ff), and to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 (Dan. 12:1ff). There was no doubt that the Jewish writer of 4th Ezra [see Section (6.17.1)] was making reference to the earlier prophecies of Daniel and that he believed that these things were to be fulfilled in the impending last days. This same impending perspective will be discussed later in Section 6.5 the “Dead Sea Scrolls from Qumran”.

Thus, the completion of the humiliation of Zion or Jerusalem [Dan. 12:7] by the 4th beast of Daniel would mark the dividing of the times or end of the Jewish Age [Matt. 24:3] in A.D. 70. These Jewish sectarian teachings or legends are very similar to the imagery in the Book of Revelation. Moreover, this pervasive Jewish understanding was present in Israel for at least 100 years prior to the writing of the Book of Revelation. It was within this pervasive Jewish understanding of things that John the Baptist and Jesus provided further enlightenment.

This study continues to point out that a great deal of the prophecies found in the Book of Revelation were previously identified in either the Old Testament or were similar to Jewish sectarian writings. In the author’s opinion, the abundant Jewish evidence provides more support for the early dating of the Book of Revelation concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and not an interpretation dealing with the fall of Rome.

Christendom made a grave error by drifting away from the Jewish historical legacy. The Jewish Christian understanding of things [that is, the Law as a “tutor”(Gal. 3:24)] related to A.D. 70. However, the Roman Church came up with other, different future interpretations based on the same Scriptures [that is, Daniel, Matthew Chapter 24, and the Book of Revelation].

The historical evidence presented in this study should make it abundantly clear that the time-definite aspects of the Jewish expectation were literally fulfilled during the great Jewish War that ended in A.D. 70. But, on the other hand, the perceived interpretation of Biblical prophecy by Christendom continued to remain in an incoherent state of constant change since A.D. 70. Christian theologians, for the most part, still refuse to reconcile the time-definite aspects of Biblical prophecy.

Chapter [12:13, continued], Behold, the days are coming when a kingdom shall arise on earth, and it shall be more terrifying [the Romans, Dan. 2:40, 7:19, Joel 1:6, 2:1-11, Zech. 14:1-11] than all the kingdoms that have been before it.

[14] And twelve kings [Caesar] shall reign in it, one after another.

[15] But the second [Augustus, see Table 2, reigned about 41 years] that is, to reign shall hold sway for a longer time than any other of the twelve.

[16] This is the interpretation of the twelve wings which you saw.
As for your hearing a voice that spoke, coming not from the eagle's heads but from the midst of his body, this is the interpretation:

In the midst of the time of that kingdom great struggles shall arise, and it shall be in danger of falling [Roman civil war of A.D. 69, Dan. 2:41, 7:20ff]; nevertheless it shall not fall then, but shall regain its former power.

As for your seeing eight little wings clinging to his wings, this is the interpretation:

Eight kings shall arise in it, whose times shall be short and their years swift; and two of them shall perish when the middle of its time draws near; and four shall be kept for the time when its end approaches; but two shall be kept until the end.

As for your seeing three heads at rest, this is the interpretation:

In its last days the Most High will raise up three kings [see Section (6.17.1)], and they shall renew many things in it, and shall rule the earth and its inhabitants more oppressively than all who were before them; therefore they are called the heads of the eagle.

For it is they who shall sum up his wickedness [Jesus’ “abomination of desolation of Daniel”, Matt. 24:15, Paul’s “man of lawlessness”, 2 Thess. 2:4-7 and John’s “anti-Christ”, 1 John 2:17-18], and perform his last actions.

As for your seeing that the large head disappeared, one of the kings shall die in his bed, but in agonies. [Vespasian (the 10th Caesar) died in his bed of a fever. Titus (the oldest son of Vespasian and the 11th Caesar) also died of a fever in the same country house where his father, Vespasian, died. However, Domitian (the 12th Caesar and the youngest son of Vespasian), was murdered (Tranquillus, 1957)].

But as for the two who remained, the sword shall devour them.

For the sword of one shall devour him who was with him; but he also shall fall by the sword in the last days. [Thus, the prophecies, concerning the Caesars, were not fulfilled exactly as expected, yet some were amazingly close].

As for your seeing two little wings passing over to the head which was on the right side,

this is the interpretation: It is these whom the Most High has kept for the eagle's end; this was the reign which was brief and full of tumult [Dan. 7:17-27], as you have seen.

"And as for the lion whom you saw rousing up out of the forest and roaring and speaking to the eagle and reproving him for his unrighteousness, and as for all his words that you have heard,

this is the Messiah whom the Most High has kept until the end of days [Dan 2:44, Luke 19:11-12, 43-44], who will arise from the posterity of David [Jesus], and will come and speak [Rev. 19:13-19] to them; he will denounce them for their ungodliness and for their wickedness, and will cast up before them their contemptuous dealings.

For first he will set them living before his judgment seat [Rom. 14:10, 2 Cor. 5:10], and when he has reproved them, then he will destroy them.

But he will deliver in mercy the remnant of my people [see Section (2.3.4)], those who have been saved throughout my borders, and he will make them joyful
until the end comes, the day of judgment, of which I spoke to you at the beginning. [The end is the “Day of Judgment” (see 1 Cor. 15:24), also see Matt. 10:22, 24:13, 1 Cor. 1:8].

35] This is the dream that you saw, and this is its interpretation. . . .

[44] Therefore if you forsake us, how much better it would have been for us if we also had been consumed in the burning of Zion! . . .

[48] As for me, I have neither forsaken you nor withdrawn from you; but I have come to this place to pray on account of the desolation of Zion [Dan. 9:12], and to seek mercy on account of the humiliation of our sanctuary [2 Chron. 36:19ff, Jer. 52:12ff].

4 Ezra Chapter 13

[1] After seven days I dreamed a dream in the night;
[2] and behold, a wind arose from the sea and stirred up all its waves.
[3] And I looked, and behold, this wind made something like the figure of a man come up out of the heart of the sea. And I looked, and behold, that man flew with the clouds of heaven [see Dan 7:13]; and wherever he turned his face to look, everything under his gaze trembled,
[4] and whenever his voice issued from his mouth, all who heard his voice melted as wax melts [Psa. 68:2, 97:5] when it feels the fire.
[5] After this I looked, and behold, an innumerable multitude of men were gathered together from the four winds [Deut. 30:3-4, Jer. 49:36, Ezek. 37:9, Zech. 2:6, Matt. 24:31, Rev. 7:1] of heaven to make war against the man who came up out of the sea [see Rev. 19:13-21].
[6] And I looked, and behold, he carved out for himself a great mountain [Dan. 2:45, Psa. 2:6, Isa. 11:9, 27:13, Dan. 9:16, 11:45, Zech. 8:3], and flew up upon it.
[7] And I tried to see the region or place from which the mountain was carved, but I could not.
[8] After this I looked, and behold, all who had gathered together against him [Rev. 19:19], to wage war with him, were much afraid, yet dared to fight.
[9] And behold, when he saw the onrush of the approaching multitude, he neither lifted his hand nor held a spear or any weapon of war;
[10] but I saw only how he sent forth from his mouth [see Rev. 19:15] as it were a stream of fire, and from his lips a flaming breath, and from his tongue he shot forth a storm of sparks.
[11] All these were mingled together, the stream of fire [1 Cor. 3:13, 2 Thess. 1:7, Heb. 1:7] and the flaming breath and the great storm, and fell on the onrushing multitude which was prepared to fight, and burned them all up, so that suddenly nothing was seen of the innumerable multitude but only the dust of ashes and the smell of smoke. When I saw it, I was amazed. . . .
[25] This is the interpretation of the vision: As for your seeing a man come up from the heart of the sea,

[26] this is he whom the Most High has been keeping for many ages, who will himself deliver his creation [see Isa. 65:16, 2 Cor. 5:17, Rev. 21:1-4]; and he will direct those who are left. [See Rev. 19:13ff].
[27] And as for your seeing wind and fire and a storm coming out of his mouth, [28] and as for his not holding a spear or weapon of war, yet destroying the onrushing multitude which came to conquer him, this is the interpretation: [29] Behold, the days are coming when the Most High will deliver those who are on the earth. [30] And bewilderment of mind shall come over those who dwell on the earth. [31] And they shall plan to make war against one another, city against city, place against place, people against people, and kingdom against kingdom [Matt. 24:7ff]. [32] And when these things come to pass and the signs occur which I showed you before, then my Son will be revealed [Luke 17:30], whom you saw as a man coming up from the sea. [33] And when all the nations hear his voice [John 10:3, Heb. 3:7, 4:7], every man shall leave his own land and the warfare that they have against one another; [34] and an innumerable multitude shall be gathered together, as you saw, desiring to come and conquer him. [See Rev. 19:19]. [35] But he shall stand on the top of Mount Zion [Heb. 12:22, Rev 14:1ff]. [36] And Zion will come and be made manifest to all people, prepared and built, as you saw the mountain carved out without hands [see Dan. 2:45, Zech 14:10, Rev. 21:1ff].

There are strong similarities between the language from this chapter in Ezra and the references in the Book of Revelation. However, in the Jewish perception of things, the prophecies and fulfillment were associated with the destruction of Jerusalem, and not some other future event.
"Behold," says the Lord, "I bring evils upon the world, the sword and famine [Isa. 14:30, 51:19, Jer. 14:12ff, Ezek. 6:11ff, Amos 8:11] and death and destruction. . . .

"I will be silent no longer concerning their ungodly deeds which they impiously commit, neither will I tolerate their wicked practices. Behold, innocent and righteous blood cries out to me, and the souls of the righteous cry out continually [Rev. 6:10]. . . .

A man shall have no pity upon his neighbors [Micah 7:6, Matt: 10:35ff], but shall make an assault upon their houses with the sword, and plunder their goods, because of hunger for bread and because of great tribulation [Matt. 24:21, Rev. 7:14].

"Behold," says God, "I call together all the kings of the earth to fear me, from the rising sun and from the south, from the east and from Lebanon; to turn and repay what they have given them.

Just as they have done to my elect until this day, so I will do, and will repay into their bosom." Thus says the Lord God:

"My right hand will not spare the sinners, and my sword will not cease from those who shed innocent blood on earth."

And a fire will go forth from his wrath, and will consume the foundations of the earth, and the sinners, like straw that is kindled.

"Woe to those who sin and do not observe my commandments," says the Lord; "I will not spare them. Depart, you faithless children! Do not pollute my sanctuary.". . .

For now calamities have come upon the whole earth, and you shall remain in them; for God will not deliver you, because you have sinned against him. . . .

And from the land of the Assyrians an enemy in ambush shall beset them and destroy one of them, and fear and trembling shall come upon their army, and indecision upon their kings.

Behold, clouds from the east, and from the north to the south; and their appearance is very threatening, full of wrath and storm [Ezek. 1:4, 13:13].

They shall dash against one another and shall pour out a heavy tempest upon the earth, and their own tempest; and there shall be blood from the sword as high as a horse's belly [see Rev. 14:20],

and a man's thigh and a camel's hock.

And there shall be fear and great trembling upon the earth; and those who see that wrath shall be horror-stricken, and they shall be seized with trembling.

And, after that, heavy storm clouds shall be stirred up from the south, and from the north [Ezek. 1:4], and another part from the west.

And the winds from the east shall prevail over the cloud that was raised in wrath, and shall dispel it; and the tempest that was to cause destruction by the east wind shall be driven violently toward the south and west.

And great and mighty clouds, full of wrath and tempest, shall rise, to destroy all the earth and its inhabitants, and shall pour out upon every high and lofty place a terrible tempest,
[41] fire and hail and flying swords and floods of water, that all the fields and all the streams may be filled with the abundance of those waters.

[42] And they shall destroy cities and walls, mountains and hills, trees of the forests, and grass of the meadows, and their grain. [See Joel 1:4ff, the destruction by the nations].

[43] And they shall go on steadily to Babylon, and shall destroy her

[44] They shall come to her and surround her; they shall pour out the tempest and all its wrath upon her; then the dust and smoke [Rev. 18:9] shall go up to heaven, and all who are about her shall wail over her [see Jer. 51:24ff].

Author’s Note. Compare this chapter with Chapters 50 and 51 of the Book of Jeremiah and with Chapters 17 through 19 of the Book of Revelation. There seems to be a direct parallel that might indicate how the Jewish sectarian beliefs are similar to the teachings of the Book of Revelation. The passages from Jeremiah relate to the fall of Babylon after the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C., in the same way that it does in the Book of 4th Ezra. The writer of the Book of Revelation, in Chapters 17 through 19, may have made the same parallel comparison to the predicted fall of the mystical Babylon, or Rome [1 Peter 5:13] after the similar destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. In any case, Rome, like Babylon was ultimately destroyed.

[15:47] woe to you, miserable wretch! For you have made yourself like her; you have decked out your daughters in harlotry [compare this to the harlot Israel (Lam. 1:2, 19, Ezek. 16:1-63] to please and glory in your lovers, who have always lusted after you. [This text follows closely to Revelation Chapters 17 through 19].

[48] You have imitated that hateful harlot in all her deeds and devices; therefore God says,

[49] "I will send evils upon you, widowhood [Rev. 18:7ff], poverty, famine, sword, and pestilence, to lay waste your houses and bring you to destruction and death. . . .

[51] You shall be weakened like a wretched woman who is beaten and wounded, so that you cannot receive your mighty lovers [Rev. 17:2ff].

[52] Would I have dealt with you so violently," says the Lord,

[53] "If you had not always killed my chosen people [Rev. 18:24]. . . .

[55] The reward of a harlot is in your bosom, therefore you shall receive your recompense.

[56] As you will do to my chosen people," says the Lord, "so God will do to you, and will hand you over to adversities. . . .

[58] And those who are in the mountains and highlands shall perish of hunger, and they shall eat their own flesh in hunger for bread and drink their own blood in thirst for water.

[59] Unhappy above all others, you shall come and suffer fresh afflictions.

[60] And as they pass they shall wreck the hateful city, and shall destroy a part of your land and abolish a portion of your glory, as they return from devastated Babylon.
[61] And you shall be broken down by them like stubble, and they shall be like fire to you.
[62] And they shall devour you and your cities, your land and your mountains [Jer. 51:24-25]; they shall burn with fire all your forests and your fruitful trees.

4 Ezra Chapter 16

[1] Woe to you, Babylon and Asia! Woe to you, Egypt and Syria! . . .
[4] A fire has been sent upon you, and who is there to quench it? . . .
[15] The fire is kindled, and shall not be put out until it consumes the foundations of the earth [see Jeremiah Chapters 50 and 51]. . .

The Book of Revelation appears to follow an almost identical parallel interpretation as in the Book of 4th Ezra. The author of 4th Ezra and Jeremiah [50:1-51:64] lamented the earlier destruction of Jerusalem and the later fall of Babylon. If this precedence was followed, then the author of the Book of Revelation discussed the second destruction of Jerusalem [that is, A.D. 70] and the future punishment of Rome [as a figure of Babylon (1 Peter 5:13, Rev. 14:8, 18:2)]. In this way the time-definite aspect of the prophecies of the Revelation, itself, remain coherent.

(6.4) The Book of Enoch

The Book of Enoch is another example of Jewish apocalyptic literature that was known by the early Church fathers. Like the Book of 4th Ezra, the Book of Enoch contains many of the common Jewish perceptions that formed the background of common beliefs into which John the Baptist and Jesus preached the Gospel. It was within this environment that Christianity was first nurtured.

The Book of Enoch, like 4th Ezra, evidently predates the beginning of Christianity. McClintock and Strong (Vol. III, 1981) state, “Notwithstanding the quotation in Jude, and the wide circulation of the book itself, the apocalypse of Enoch was uniformly and distinctly separated from the canonical Scriptures. Tertullian [A.D. 194, see Table 3] alone maintained its authority” (p. 226). Dupont-Sommer (1962), in the Introduction to The Essene Writings from Qumran, or what is commonly known as “The Dead Sea Scrolls”, discussed some of the books found within the Qumran library. Included in the library were works from the “Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament, including the “The Book of Enoch”. In addition, Dupont-Sommer provides the following important information:

The Biblical manuscripts are of prime importance. It should be remembered that it was not until A.D. 90, during the Rabbinic Council of Jamnia, that the text of the Hebrew Bible began to be officially established. . . . These Biblical manuscripts were used by the Jewish community settled at Qumran and obviously date from before the dispersion of its members during the Jewish War. . . . This mystic sect [Essenes] originated and flourished during the two centuries preceding the capture of Jerusalem by Titus and the destruction of the second Temple in A.D. 70. (pp. 8-12)
Eisenman & Wise (1992) provide even more recent information concerning “The Book of Enoch” and “the fallen angels” in their book The Dead Sea Scrolls Uncovered:

**Enoch was a figure of great interest in the period of the scrolls,** in part because of the mysterious way the Bible refers to him in Genesis 5:24; . . . Apparently, therefore Enoch did not die, and was taken alive into heaven. A substantial [amount of] literature grew up around this figure, of which part was gathered into the book known as First (or, Ethiopic) Enoch. The Book of Giants was another literary work concerned with Enoch. Widely read (after translation into the appropriate language) in the Roman empire . . . The ‘giants’ were believed to be the offspring of fallen angels (the Nephilim; also called Watchers) and human women. The story of the giants derives from Genesis 6. (p. 95)

The Book of Enoch is important because much of the imagery and Biblical interpretations found in this pre-Christian work are also very similar to many of the passages found in 2nd Peter, Jude and the Revelation. And the imagery found in the Book of Enoch is virtually the same as passages found in the Books of Jude, 2nd Peter and the Revelation.

This leads to an important question that must be asked at this point. The question is not if these three New Testament books are genuine; but rather, is the source material from the Book of Enoch, itself, genuine? Without any doubt, this pre-Christian work, which was widely circulated among the Jewish mystics, represented a different, but parallel interpretation of “the things of the end”.

To further illustrate the connection with 2nd Peter, Jude and the Revelation, selected passages from the Book of Enoch (Charles, 1966) are provided below. It is very important to compare the teachings of Jesus and the other Inspired writers with the perceptions found in the Book of Enoch. The author’s comments within the text will be enclosed in brackets [ ]. The bolding found within the text was also provided for additional emphasis:

I-V. **Parable of Enoch on the Future Lot of the Wicked and the Righteous.** (Charles, 1966)

1. The words of the blessing of Enoch, wherewith he blessed the elect “and” righteous, who will be living in the day of tribulation [see Dan. 12:1ff, Matt. 24:21, also see Section (6.2.2)] (Eusebius, Book III, Chapter V, pp. 85-86). There can be no doubt, that in early Christian beliefs, that the tribulation or great distress was the war with the Romans (A.D. 66-70)], when all the wicked “and godless” are to be removed. 2. And he took up his parable and said—Enoch a righteous man, whose eyes were opened by God, saw the vision of the Holy One [see Deut. 33:1-3, Dan. 7:9ff, Rev. 5:11] in the heavens, ‘which’ the angels showed me, and from them I heard everything, and from them I understood as I saw, but not for this generation, but for a remote one which is for to come. 3. Concerning the elect [see Section (2.3.3)] I said, and took up my parable concerning them: The Holy Great One will come forth from His dwelling,
4. **And the eternal God will tread upon the earth**, (even) on Mount Sinai, 
   {And appear from His camp}
   **And appear in the strength of His might from the heaven ‘of heavens’**.

5. And all shall be smitten with fear,
   And the **Watchers** shall quake,
   And great fear and trembling shall seize them unto the ends of the earth.

6. And the **high mountains shall be shaken**,
   **And the high hills shall be made low,**
   And shall melt like wax before the flame [Psalms 68:2, 97:5, Micah 1:1-7]

7. **And the earth shall be ‘wholly’ rent in sunder,**
   **And all that is upon the earth shall perish** [see 2 Peter 3:5-13], **Top**
   And there shall be a judgment upon all (men).

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**Author’s Note.** The obvious outcome and correct understanding of verses 6 and 7 as well as the similar references in 2 Peter [3:5-13] depend on how the verses, are interpreted. A conclusion must be drawn to determine if either a literal destruction of the earth by fire or an alternative figurative and Spiritual fulfillment was intended. In any case, the belief speaks of profound changes that would usher in “the new age” with wrath like fire.

The belief in the imminent violent destruction of the literal earth by literal fire, which was held by the Jewish mystics, did not occur as expected in the 1st Century. Those non-Christian Jewish sects and communities perished and vanished from history. Were it not for the “Dead Sea Scrolls”, the Essene opinions and Biblical interpretations would be lost forever.

Perhaps it was these Jewish mystics, who influenced the writing of 2nd Peter, Jude, and the Revelation. The Book of Enoch was rejected by almost all of the early Christians, and the sequels in 2 Peter, Jude and the Book of Revelation were also rejected by many early Christians. **In any case, the world did not perish as expected.**

On the other hand, Eusebius and other early Christians understood that these imminent prophecies related to the destruction of Jerusalem, and not to the end of the literal world. In addition, the time-definite figurative application, held by Jesus, Paul, John, and others, does find a fulfillment within that living “eyewitness” generation in A.D. 70 (Matt. 16:27-28).

Whether these things can relate as “dual prophecies” to a yet future “end of the world by fire”, is very difficult to determine. No doubt, this subject will continue to generate controversy. **Top**

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8. But with the righteous He will make peace,
   **And will protect the elect** [see “Elect” and “Remnant”, Sections (2.3.3 and 2.3.4)],
   And mercy shall be upon them.
   And they shall all belong to God,
   And they shall be prospered,
   And they shall ‘all’ be blessed.
   ‘And He will help them all’,
And light shall appear unto them [Jesus and the Gospel, Matt. 5:14-17 (Isa. 9:2ff)],
‘And He will make peace with them’.

9. And behold! He cometh with ten thousands of ‘His’ holy ones
To execute judgement upon all, One [see Deut. 33:1-3, Dan. 7:9ff, Rev. 5:11]
And to destroy ‘all’ the ungodly:
And to convict all flesh
Of all the works ‘of their ungodliness’ which they have ungodly committed,
‘And of all the hard things which’ ungodly sinners ‘have spoken’ against Him.
(p. 32)

Author’s Note. Note the similarity between the text from the above verse 9 and
Jude 14-15:

Jude 14, “And about these also Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam,
prophesied, saying, ”Behold, the Lord came with many thousands of His holy ones,
15 to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds
which they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly
sinners have spoken against Him."

Enoch VI, 1. And it came to pass when the children of men had multiplied that
in those days were born unto them beautiful and comely daughters. 2. And the
angels [Gen. 6:1ff], the children of the heaven, saw and lusted after them,
and said to one another: ‘Come, let us choose us wives from among the children of men
and beget us children’. (p. 34)

Enoch VII, 1. And all the others together with them took unto themselves
wives, . . .
2. And they became pregnant, and bare great giants [Nephilim, Gen. 6:4, Num.
13:32-33]. (p. 35)

Enoch X, 1. Then said the Most High, the Holy and Great One spake, and sent
Uriel to the son of Lamech, and said to him: 2. ‘ {Go to Noah and} tell him in my
name “Hide thyself!”’, and reveal to him the end that is approaching: that the whole
earth will be destroyed, and a deluge [the flood, Gen. 6:1ff, 2 Peter 2:5, 3:6] is
about to come upon the whole earth, and will destroy all that is on it. 3. And
now instruct him that he may escape and his seed may be preserved for all the
generations of the world.’ 4. And again the Lord said to Raphael: ‘Bind Azazel
hand and foot, and cast him into the darkness [see 2 Peter 2:4, Jude 6, Rev.
12:9, 20:1-7] and make an opening in the desert, which is in Dudael, and cast him
therein.

Author’s Note. It is important to understand the Jewish perception of eschatology
and the part played by “the fallen angels”. In the comments above, Eisenman & Wise
(1992) discussed the Essene view that the **fallen angels were the fathers of the “giants” in Genesis Chapter 6**, shortly before the flood in the time of Noah.

In addition, Josephus (Antiq. Bk. I, C. 2, pp. 35-36) wrote of some of the Jewish traditions from the point of view of a 1st Century Pharisee. **Note! It has always been the common Judeo-Christian belief that the world would be destroyed once in Noah’s time by the flood and once again at the end of the world, by fire.** Seth, the son of Adam, was believed to possess great wisdom and understanding, and thus he had Divine insight into what was to come:

They [Seth’s children] also were the inventors of that peculiar sort of wisdom which is concerned with the heavenly bodies [astronomy, Psalm 19], and their order. And that their inventions might not be lost before they were sufficiently known, upon **Adam’s prediction that the world was to be destroyed at one time by the force of fire**, and another time by the violence of a quantity of water, they made two pillars”. . . Now this remains in the land of Siriad to this day. (Josephus, Antiq. Bk. I, Ch. 2, p. 36).

Now the posterity of Seth continued to esteem God as the Lord of the universe, and to have an entire regard to virtue, for **seven generations** [Enoch, Jude 14] . . . . **For many angels of God accompanied with women, and begat sons that proved unjust**, and despisers of all that was good, on account of the confidence they had in their own strength; for tradition is, that these men resembled the acts of those whom the Grecians call giants. But Noah was very uneasy at what they did; and being displeased with their conduct. . . Now God loved this man [Noah] . . . but determined to destroy the whole race of mankind. (Josephus, Antiq. Bk. I, Ch. 3, p. 36)

Enoch X, 5 (continued). **And place upon him rough and jagged rocks, and cover him with darkness, and let him abide there forever**, and cover his face that he may not see light. 6. And on the day of the great judgment he shall be cast into the fire [Rev. 20:10]. 7. And heal the earth which the angels have corrupted, and proclaim the healing of the earth, that they may heal the plague, and that the children of men may not perish through all the secret things that the Watchers have disclosed and have taught their sons. (pp. 31-38)

Enoch X, 11. And the Lord said to Michael: ‘**Go, bind Semjaza and his associates who have united themselves with women** so as to have defiled themselves with them in all uncleanness. 12. And, when their sons have slain one another, and they have seen the destruction of their beloved ones, bind them fast for seventy generations in the valleys of the earth, **till the day of their judgment that is for ever and ever is consummated**. 13. In those days they shall be led to the abyss of fire: <and> to the torment and the prison in which they shall be confined forever. 14. And whosoever shall be condemned and destroyed will from thenceforth to be bound together with them [Matt. 25:41, Rev. 20:10] to the end of all generations. (pp. 37-38)
XL. The Coming Judgment of the Wicked

1. The first Parable
   When the congregation of the righteous shall appear, [See Matt. 25:31-41]
   And sinners shall be judged for their sins,
   And shall be driven from the face of the earth,

2. And when the **Righteous One [Jesus] shall appear** [Heb. 9:28] before the eyes of the righteous,
   Whose elect works hang upon the Lord of Spirits,
   And **light shall appear to the righteous [Matt. 4:16] and the elect who dwell on the earth**, where then will be the dwelling of the sinners, [see Dan. 12:3]
   And where the resting-place of those who have denied the Lord of Spirits?
   **It had been good for them if they had not yet been born** [Matt. 24:26].

3. **When the secrets of the righteous shall be revealed and the sinners judged,**
   [Rom. 2:16, 1 Cor. 14:25] And the godless driven from the presence of the righteous elect,

4. **From that time those that possess the earth** shall no longer be powerful and exalted: and they shall not be able to behold the face of the holy,
   For the Lord of Spirits has caused His **light to appear** [Jesus, Matt. 4:14-17]
   (Isa. 9:2ff] on the face of the holy, righteous and elect.

   **Author’s Note.** From this and the above passages [X, 13-14], notice carefully, that in this judgment the sinners would be punished and would be driven from the earth. The Righteous One [that is, Jesus] would appear. The wicked angels and wicked men would be cast into the abyss, but the earth, itself, would not be completely destroyed. The world would continue as it did after God’s judgment at the time of the flood.
   From the next passage [XXXIX, 1] below, the holy children would descend similarly from heaven [1 Thess. 4:14-17]. In Enoch [XLV] the “Holy One” [Jesus] would sit on His throne and the earth would be transformed. However, in the Jewish view of things, the earth would still continue.
   All of these concepts, which can be found in “The Book of Enoch”, are very important to the interpretation of 2 Peter, Jude, and the Revelation.

5. Then shall the kings and the mighty perish
   And be given into the hands of the righteous and holy.

6. And thenceforward none shall seek themselves mercy from the Lord of Spirits:
   For their life is at an end. (pp. 56-57)


1. And it shall come to pass **in those days that elect and holy children will descend from the high heaven** [see 1 Thess. 4:14-17], and their seed will become one with the children of men.

2. And in those days Enoch received **books of zeal and wrath**, and books of disquiet and expulsion.
And mercy shall not be accorded to them, saith the Lord of the Spirits.

3. And in those days a whirlwind carried me off from the earth, and set me down at the end of the heavens.

4. And there I saw another vision, the dwelling places of the holy, and the resting-places of the righteous.

5. Here mine eyes saw their dwelling with His righteous angels, and their resting-places with the holy.
   And the petitioned and interceded and prayed for the children of men,
   And righteousness flowed before them as water,
   And mercy like dew upon the earth:
   Thus it is amongst them for ever and ever.

6a. And in that place mine eyes saw the Elect One of righteousness and of faith,
   And righteousness shall prevail in his days, and the righteous and the elect shall be without number before him forever and ever.

7a. And I saw his dwelling-place under the wings of the Lord of the Spirits.
   All the righteous and elect before Him shall be strong as fiery lights,
   And shall try their works,
   And their places of rest shall be innumerable.

12. Those who sleep not bless Thee: they stand before Thy glory and bless and extol, saying: 'Holy, holy, holy [Rev. 4:8 (Isa. 6:3)], is the Lord of Spirits: He filleth the earth with spirits'.

13. And here my eyes saw all those who sleep not: they stand before Him and bless and say: 'Blessed be Thou, and blessed be the name of the Lord for ever and ever'.

14. And my face changed; for I could no longer behold. (pp. 57-59)

XL. 1. And after that I saw all the secrets of the heavens, and how the kingdom is divided, and how the actions of men are weighed in the balance.

2. And there I saw the mansions of the elect [John 14:2] and the mansions of the holy, and mine eyes saw there all the sinners being driven from thence which deny the name of the Lord of Spirits, and being dragged off [cast out, Matt. 25:30ff]: and they could not abide because of the punishment which proceeds from the Lord of spirits. (p. 60)

XLV - LVII The Lot of the Apostates: the New Heaven and the New Earth

XLV. 1. And this is the Second Parable concerning those who deny the name of the dwelling of the holy ones and the Lord of the Spirits.

2. And into the heaven they shall not ascend, and on the earth they shall not come: such shall be the lot of sinners who have denied the name of the Lord of Spirits, who are thus preserved for the day of suffering and tribulation [Dan. 12:1, Matt. 24:21].

3. On that day Mine Elect One shall sit on the throne of glory [see Matt. 16:27-28, 19:28, 25:31-41, Rev. 11:15, 12:10]. And shall try their works, and their places of rest shall be innumerable.
And their souls shall grow strong within them when they see Mine elect ones, And those who have called upon My glorious name:

4. Then I will cause **Mine Elect One to dwell among them.** And I will transform the heaven and make it an eternal blessing and light, And I will transform the earth [1 Cor. 7:31] and make it a blessing: [see the new heaven and new earth, Isa. 65:17, 2 Cor. 5:17, 2 Peter 3:10-13, Rev 21:1-10] And I will cause Mine elect ones to dwell upon it: But the sinners and evil-doers shall not set foot thereon. (pp. 62-63)

**XLVI. The Head of Days and the Son of Man.**

1. And there I saw One, who had a head of days, And His head was like wool [God, see Dan. 7:9, Rev. 1:14] . . .
2. And I asked the angel who went with me and showed me all the hidden things, concerning that **Son of Man** [Dan. 7:13, Matt. 10:23, 12:40; 13:41, 16:27-28, 17:9, 18:11, 24:37, 24:44, Acts 7:56, Heb. 2:6, Rev. 1:13, 14:14], who he was, whence he was, (and) why he went with the Head of Days [Dan. 7:9]?
3. And he answered and said unto me: This is the **Son of Man** who hath righteousness, With whom dwelleth righteousness, And who revealeth all the treasures of that hidden, [1 Cor. 1:24, Col. 2:2-3] Because the Lord of Spirits hath chosen him, And whose lot hath pre-eminence [Heb. 1:1ff] before the Lord of Spirits in uprightness forever.
4. And this **Son of Man** whom thou hast seen Shall rise up the kings and the mighty from their seats. (pp. 63-64)

**L. The Fount of Righteousness**

1. And in that place I saw the **fountain** [the Spirit and words of Jesus, John 7:38, Ezek. 47:1ff, Zech 14:8, Luke 24:47] of righteousness, Which was inexhaustible: And around it were many **fountains of wisdom:** And all the thirsty drank from them, And were filled with wisdom, And their dwellings were with the righteous and holy and elect.
2. And at that hour that the Son of Man was named In the presence of the Lord of Spirits, And his name before the Head of Days.
3. Yea, before the sun and the signs were created, [see Proverbs Chapter 8] Before the stars of the heaven were made, His name [Jesus the Word of God, John 1:1ff, Rev, 19:13] was named before the Lord of Spirits.
4. He shall be a staff to the righteous whereon to stay themselves and not fall, *And he shall be the light of the Gentiles [Jesus, Luke 2:32 (Isa. 42:6, 49:6)]*
And the hope of those who are troubled of heart.

5. All who dwell on earth shall fall down and worship before him, 
And will praise and bless and celebrate with song the Lord of Spirits.

6. And for this reason hath he been chosen and hidden before Him, 
Before the creation of the world and for evermore.

7. And the wisdom of the Lord of Spirits hath revealed him to the holy and 
righteous; (p.66) 

LI. The Resurrection of the Dead, and the Separation by the Judge of Righteous 
and the Wicked.

1. And in those days shall the earth also give back [Ezek 37:12, Dan. 12:1-2] 
that which has been entrusted to it, 
And Sheol also shall give back that which it has received, [See Rev. 20:13] 
And hell shall give back that which it owes. 
For in those days the Elect One shall arise, 
2. And he shall choose the righteous and holy from among them: 
For the day has drawn nigh that they should be saved. 
3. And the Elect One shall in those days sit on My throne [Matt. 16:27-29, 
19:28, 25:31-41], 
And his mouth shall pour forth all the secrets of wisdom and counsel: 
For the Lord of Spirits hath given (them) to him and hath glorified him. (p. 69) 

Like the Book of 4th Ezra, the imagery from the pre-Christian Jewish Book of 
Enoch is also very similar to the writings of 2nd Peter, Jude, and the Revelation. The 
similar figurative language and Jewish imagery was present in Israel over 100 years 
before A.D. 70. Thus, this type of language is certainly not unique to the Book of 
Revelation. (p.69) 

(6.5) The Dead Sea Scrolls From Qumran

The Qumran writings are commonly known as the “Dead Sea Scrolls”. The were 
found by “the Bedouin Muhammad ed Dib... while looking for lost sheep in the cliff 
near Qumran in the spring of 1947” (Dupont-Sommer, [1962], p. 1). A quantity of 
authentic Jewish scrolls were revealed that had been carefully hidden in about A.D. 68, 
shortly before the sack of Jerusalem by the Romans (Dupont-Sommer, 1962). 

The information contained in these writings, continue to profoundly support the 
early dating of the Book of Revelation. These writings provide important additional 
verification that the Qumran community was contemporary with Jesus and the Apostles. 
This community was expecting an imminent fulfillment of God’s judgment. Their 
beliefs and religious expectations were similar to the interpretations found in 1st 
Maccabees, 4th Ezra, the Book of Enoch, and in the prophecies of Daniel. 

The debate, concerning the early dating of the New Testament writings, was 
heightened by the finding of a fragment of the Christian Gospel of Mark at Qumran. The 
recently released information identifies a “Qumran Scroll Fragment (7Q5) of Mark 
written on or before 68 AD” (“Biblical Validity”, Downloaded 28 Dec. 98). If this is
true, then this document is a copy of the oldest known text from the New Testament. **This Gospel obviously predates the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.**

The Qumran documents are examples of the oldest known Jewish manuscripts that include a cache of ten complete scrolls and fragments of about 600 other books. Some of the writings appear to be developed exclusively by the Qumran inhabitants. These include, “The Scroll of the Rule”, “The Rule Annexe”, “The Damascus Document”, and “The Scroll of the War Rule”.

Fragments of all of the Old Testament books, except Esther, were included in their library. Dupont-Sommer (1962) also points out, “[t]he biblical manuscripts are of prime importance. It should be remembered, that it was not until A.D. 90, during the Rabbinic Council of Jamnia, that the Hebrew Bible began to be officially established” (p. 8).

Consequently, the many other books in their library included works from the Apocrypha and from what is called the “Pseudepigrapha” or early religious writings that were not accepted as being genuine. The Book of Enoch was also found in the Qumran library. Although the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha may not be Divinely Inspired, the individual writings reflect the religious perceptions and interpretations from that historical time frame (Dupont-Sommer, 1962).

The belief that the Qumran community was of Essene origin was primarily established from the ancient writings of Philo of Alexandria, Flavius Josephus, the Jewish Historian, Pliny the Elder, a Roman writer, and Hippolytus of Rome (Dupont-Sommer, 1962). A few of the most important references from the works of each of these early historians will be briefly discussed in order to verify this fact and to establish the proper historical time frame of these writings.

In reference to Philo of Alexandria, Mc Clintock and Strong (Vol. XIII, 1981, p. 110) indicate that “he [Philo] was probably about sixty years old [in A.D. 40]. If this is true, then he was born about B. C. 20 and he was contemporary with all of the important events of the New Testament”. The references from Philo’s writing (Quod omnis probus liber sit) provide the following insight concerning the Essenes. A glimpse of their beliefs and Biblical interpretations are cited here:

Nor is Palestinian Syria, which is occupied by a considerable part of the very populous nation of the Jews, barren of virtue. Certain among them, to the number of over four thousand, are called Essaeans; although this word is not, strictly speaking Greek, I think it may be related to the word ‘holiness’ .

One of them then takes up the books and reads, and another from among the more learned steps forward and explains whatever is not easy to understand in these books. Most of the time, and in accordance with an ancient method of inquiry, **instruction is given by means of symbols.** . Of their love of God they give a thousand examples by constant and unceasing purity throughout the whole of life, by the rejection of oaths [Matt. 5:33--37], and the rejection of falsehood, and by their belief that the Deity is the cause of all good, but of no evil. (Dupont-Sommer, 1962, pp. 21-23)
In Philo’s “Apologia pro Judaea” he states, “they [Essenes] banned marriage and at the same time as they ordered the practice of perfect continence” (Dupont-Sommer, 1962, p. 25).

Dupont-Sommer, (1962) quotes from the “The Jewish War” of Flavius Josephus, which was written between A.D. 70 and 79.

Indeed there exist among the Jews three schools of philosophy: the Pharisees [Paul, Acts 23:6] belong to the first, the Sadducees to the second, and to the third belong men who intend to cultivate a particular saintly life, called Essenes [possibly John the Beloved Apostle was one]. . . . [they] being always clothed in white [Rev. 3:4, 19:14] garments. . . . The war against the Romans [A.D. 66-70] fully revealed their souls. During it their limbs were twisted and broken, burned and shattered; they were subjected to every instrument of torture to compel them either to blaspheme against the Lawgiver or to eat forbidden food. But they refused to do either, or even to flatter their butchers or weep. (pp. 27-33)

Dupont-Sommer’s (1962) further commentary of Pliny the Elder, who died in A.D. 79, provides more information. Pliny identified Qumran, nearby Engedi, and the fortress of Mesada, all of which are in close proximity, and all are on the West Bank of the Dead Sea, as Essene communities. Therefore, from the above discussions, it can be safely assumed that the Qumran library was of Essene origin.

The archaeological evidence appears to indicate that Qumran was inhabited from the end of the 2nd Century B.C., to the time of the great Jewish War (Dupont-Sommer, 1962). If this is true, then these writings portray the Essenes’ imminent expectation of the coming of the Messiah, which would usher in the end of the age. Their slightly different religious interpretations of Biblical prophecy appear somewhat before, yet significantly in parallel with, the similar Christian beliefs. The Essene view lends more credibility to the early dating of the Book of Revelation, and to a literal fulfillment within the “eyewitness” generation.

Hippolytus of Rome (about A.D. 230) reported that the Essenes believed “in [the] resurrection, [a] final judgment, and the destruction of the world by fire at the end of time” (Dupont-Sommer, 1962, p. 53). These beliefs are very similar to the views presented in the Book of Enoch and in 2 Peter Chapter 3. Of course, the literal destruction of the world, which was anticipated by the community, did not occur in the 1st Century.

A survey of “The Scroll of the Rule” (Dupont-Sommer, 1962) identifies strikingly similar language to that which is found in the Gospel of John, the Book of 1 John, and other New Testament references. There are amazing similarities between the language and the symbolism of “light and darkness” [see John 1:4-9, 3:19-21, 5:35, 8:12, 9:5, 11:9-10, 12:35-36, 1 John 1:5-7, 2:8-10] that are found in both the Essenes’ writings and in the writings of the Apostle John. It would not be difficult to conclude that John, himself, may have been an Essene.

Allegro (1966) makes the comparison to John’s writings in his discussion of the “Dead Sea Scrolls” in the late 1950’s and early 1960’s.
Let us first return to the basic **doctrine of the Two Spirits**. This is one of the favorite themes of Judaeo-Christian writings. Indeed, one section of the very early *Didache* or “Teaching of the Twelve Apostles”, dealing with “The Two Ways”, could almost be a literal translation of this part of the Qumran *Manual of Discipline*. In the New Testament **the richest source of comparison is certainly in the writings of St. John**. In his first Epistle there is hardly a paragraph which does not contain some reference to the opposition of Light and Darkness, of Truth and Error (a legitimate translation of “awon”, ‘perversion’, at root, anything twisted [1 John 1:5-7, quoted in the text]. . . . a favorite Qumran phrase. . . . It is a fact that the Qumran library has profoundly affected the study of the *Johannine* writings and many long-held conceptions have had to be radically revised. **No longer can John be regarded as the most Hellenistic of the Evangelists; his ‘gnosticism’ and the whole framework of his thought is seen now to spring directly from a Jewish sectarianism rooted in Palestinian soil, and his material recognized as founded in the early layers of Gospel traditions.** (pp. 142-143)

The “Dead Sea Scrolls” provide credible evidence that it was Essene doctrine, and not the later Gnostic beliefs that influenced John’s writing. Therefore, it is more reasonable to assume that all of John’s writings were written before A.D. 70. This was certainly well in advance of A.D. 93-96, during the reign of the Emperor Domitian, the date that the Roman Church claimed the Book of Revelation was written.

The cited passages from “The Scroll of the Rule” (Dupont-Sommer, 1962) help illustrate the similarities to the teachings of the Apostle John.

. . . . in the Covenant of **Grace** [John 1:17]. . . . the time of the dominion of Belial [John 14:30, 1 John 5:19]. . . . and teach all the **sons of light** [John 12:35-36, 1st John 2:8]. . . . the visitation [of God]. . . . And He allotted unto man **two Spirits** that he should walk in them until the time of His **Visitation** [Luke 19:44, 1 Peter 2:12]; they are the spirits of (19) of truth and perversity. The origin of **Truth is in a fountain of light**; and the origin of Perversity is from the **fountain of darkness**. (20) Dominion over all the sons of righteousness is in the hand of the Prince of light. All dominion over the sons of perversity is in the hand of the **angel of (21) darkness** [2 Cor. 11:14, Eph. 6:12]; they walk in the ways of darkness. . . . the **everlasting Pit** [Rev. 9:2-3] by the **furious wrath of the God** of vengeance. . . . destruction by the **fire of the regions of darkness**. . . . until the final end, the time of **Renewal** [Col. 3:11]. . . . in order to lay a **foundation of truth** [Jesus, John 14:6] for Israel, for the Community [Essenes] of the everlasting Covenant. . . . And when these things come to pass for the Community in Israel (13) at these appointed times, they shall be separated from the midst of the habitation of perverse men to go into the desert to **prepare the way** [for Christianity this was the role of John the Baptist, Mal. 4:5, Matt. 3:1-3, 11:7-14] of ’Him’ (14) as it is written, In the wilderness prepare the way of . . . . **Make straight in the desert a highway for our God** [Isa. 40:3]. . . . And they shall be governed by the first ordinances in which the members of the Community began their instruction, (11) until the coming of the **Prophet** [Deut.18:15, John 1:21, Acts 3:22-24] and the Anointed of Aaron and Israel. (pp. 73-96)
The “Rule Annexe” (Dupont-Sommer, 1962) cites the Essene perception of the arrival of the Messiah:

(11) [Concerning the meeting of the renown [called] to assembly for the Council of the Community when [Adonai] will have begotten (12) the Messiah [Luke 2:11, John 4:42] among them. . . . And afterwards, [the Messiah of Israel] shall enter]; and the chiefs (15) of [the tribes of Israel] shall sit before [H]im, each according to his rank, according to their [position]. . . . And [when] they gather for the Community ta[ble], [or to drink w]ine, and arrange the (18) Community table [and mix] the wine to drink, let no man [stretch out] his hand over the first-fruits (19) of bread and [wine] before [Note the similarity to the “Lord’s Supper”] the Priest; for [it is he who] shall bless the first-fruits of bread (20) and [w]ine, and shall] first [stretch out] his hand over the bread. And after[wards], the Messiah of Israel shall [str]etch out his hands (21) over the bread. (p. 108)

The “Damascus Document” provides even more historical orientation into the Essene perceptions of the fulfillment of Biblical prophecy. Compare this with the Christian perception:

(3) For because of the unfaithfulness of those who abandoned Him He hid His face from Israel and its Sanctuary (4) and delivered them up to the sword. But remembering the Covenant of the Patriarchs, He left a remnant [Rom. 9:28] (5) to Israel and did not deliver them to destruction. And in the time of wrath, three hundred and and (6) ninety years [Ezek. 4:5] after He had delivered them into Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon [586 B. C. - 390 = 196 B. C. or near the beginning of the Maccabean period], (7) He visited them, and caused a root of planting to spring from Israel and Aaron to possess (8) His land. . . . And in those years (13) Belial shall be unleashed against Israel [Rev. 11:7]; as God said by the hand of the prophet Isaiah [27:17] son of (14) Amoz, Terror and pit and snare are upon thee, O inhabitants of the land. . . . (10) that they may walk in them during all the time of wickedness, and without which they shall not succeed until the coming (11) of the Teacher of Righteousness at the end of days. . . . (6) that they will live for a thousand generations [Deut. 7:9, Rev. 20:2-4]. . . . The books of the Law are the hut (sukkath) (16) of the king; as He said, I will raise up the hut of David which has fallen [Amos 9:11, Luke interprets this as referring to Jesus, Acts 15:15-19]. . . . (7) when the word shall come that is written. . . {as He said} by the hand of Zechariah [13:7], Awake O sword against (8) my shepherd, and against the man who is my companion, oracle of God! Strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered [Jesus at the Crucifixion, Matt, 26:31], (9) but I will turn my hand to the little ones. Now those who heed Him are the poor of the flock; (10) they will be saved at the time of Visitation; when the Anointed of Aaron and Israel comes, as it came to pass at the time of the first visitation [Note! The first visitation was the war with Babylonians in 586 B. C., Ezek. 9:4-8. Therefore, the second visitation would be the war with the Romans in A.D. 70]; as He said (12) by the hand of Ezekiel [9:4], A mark shall be put on the forehead of those who sigh and groan
[the same circumstances were expected in A.D. 70, Rev. 13:16, 14:9], ... Now from the day when the Unique Teacher was taken, until the overthrow of all fighting men who turned back (15) with the man of lies, (there shall pass) about forty years. [It is amazing that from the crucifixion of Jesus to the destruction of the temple was about 40 years]. (pp. 121-140)

The “Scroll of the War Rule” provides additional insight into the Essenes’ interpretations and expectations of the end of all things. The cited Scriptural references provide Jesus’ commentary on the actual fulfillment. The contrasting Christian and Essene views are similar in some ways, yet completely different in others:

And after this war (4) the [nations] shall go up from there [and the king] of the Kittim [shall enter] Egypt [the Romans, Dan. 11:30]. And in his time he shall set out, the prey to violent fury, to battle against the kings of the North [Dan. 11:40], and his anger shall (seek) to destroy and wipe out the horn (5) of [his] e[nemies]. This shall be the time of salvation for all men of his lot and of final destruction for all the lot of Belial. And there shall be (6) immense confusion [for] the sons of Japheth and Assur shall fall without help from any man, and the dominion of the Kittim shall vanish that wickedness may be crushed without remnant and without any survivor (7) for [all the sons]s of darkness. ... And on the day when the Kittim fall (there shall be) battle and rude slaughter before the God (10) of Israel; for this is the day appointed by Him from former times for the war of destruction of the sons of darkness. On this (day) shall approach for tremendous slaughter the congregation of the gods and the assembly (11) of men. On the Day of Misfortune the sons of light and the lot of darkness shall battle together for the Power of God amid the tumult of a vast multitude and the cries of gods and men. And it shall be a time (12) of distress [for all] the people redeemed by [God] and among all their afflictions there will have been nothing equal it [Jesus taught that this would happen at the siege of Jerusalem (see Dan. 12:1, Matt. 24:15-21, Luke 19:43-44, 21:20)] from the beginning until its end (in) final redemption. And on the day when they shall battle against the Kittim. (pp. 170-171)

The identity of the Kittim, as the Romans, which was previously discussed in Section (3.3, Daniel) and in Section (3.3.1, 1 Maccabees), appears to be consistent with the Essene beliefs. Allegro’s (1966) opinion is cited below:

... the archaeological evidence provides a historical framework for the Qumran Sect with a beginning in or soon after the reign of John Hyrcanus (135-104 B. C.), and a violent end shortly before the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. ... Thus the Roman forces, whose unassailable might made such an impression on their countrymen when they swept through the country in the first century B. C., were referred to as the Kittim, a word originally applied in the Bible to the inhabitants of Cyprus. ... The community believed, as presumably the teacher had himself said, that their leader had received a special commission from God to gather certain of the Jerusalem priests together and to take them into the desert [Luke 17:20-37], as a closely nit community of the faithful, there to remain, pure and

LaSor (1972), in his discussion of the dating of the scrolls, mentions carbon 14 dating procedures on the various scrolls. The linguistic studies of the texts, and the results of coins found at Qumran, all verify the same general period of occupation from about 140 B.C to A.D. 68.

LaSor’s (1972) opinions also indicate that in the Qumran community’s view, the end of the age was very near.

The more recent work of Eisenman & Wise (1992) provides an opinion of a similar historical orientation from the first century B.C. to the first century A.D. True to the conclusions of earlier authors, “the ‘Kittim’ in the War Scroll have been interpreted by most to refer to the Romans” (p. 27). An additional reference to the Romans or Kittim is found in their book:

The ‘Kittim’ are specifically referred to. It is generally conceded that, as in the Book of Daniel, the Kittim refer to the Romans (Dan. 11:30), though in 1 Macc. 1:1 the expression is applied to Alexander the Great’s forces. (p. 40)

The historical importance of the Essene writings, as eyewitness accounts, of the time frame that saw the emergence of Christianity, cannot be overemphasized. A more detailed discussion of the Essene writings may be the subject of some future study. However, even the brief overview presented here is sufficient to lend great support to the early dating and the literal fulfillment of what was always considered obscure Biblical prophecies.

The Essene writings provide an important second opinion that the prophecies found in Matthew Chapter 24, in the Book of Daniel, and in the Book of Revelation were oriented to a literal historical fulfillment during the Jewish War with the Romans from A.D. 66 to 70. The prophecies of Jesus were made about 40 years before the destruction of Jerusalem.

(6.6) The Epistle of Barnabas

In his introduction to “The Epistle of Barnabas”, Lightfoot (1891) makes the following remarks:

Who then was the writer of this Epistle? At the close of the second century Clement of Alexandria quotes it frequently, and ascribes it to the ‘apostle’, or the ‘Prophet Barnabas’, identifying the author with ‘Barnabas’ who himself also preached with the apostle’ (i.e. St. Paul) in the ministry to the Gentiles.’ Yet elsewhere he does not hesitate to criticize the work, and clearly therefore did not regard it as final and authoritative. A few years later, Origin cites the Epistle with the introductory words, it is written in the catholic (i.e. general) Epistle of Barnabas’. 
The earliest notices however are confined to the Alexandrian fathers, and the presumption is that it was written in Alexandria itself.

It will be observed that the writer nowhere claims to be the Apostle Barnabas; indeed his language is such as to suggest that he was wholly unconnected with the Apostles. . . . The Epistle was certainly written after the first destruction of Jerusalem under Titus, to which it alludes; but, had it been composed after the war under Hadrian ending in the second devastation, it hardly have failed to refer to that event. . . . For these reasons we should probably place the date of the so-called Epistle of Barnabas between A.D. 70 - 79. (pp. 133-134)

The Epistle of Barnabas is a very important early Christian historical document. The epistle views the destruction of Jerusalem as an event in the immediate past and, yet, the Christian author still expected the “end of all things” in the immediate future. Also, there is no mention of any living Apostles [see John 21:18-23]. In addition, the commonly believed prophetic scenarios of both the Jewish sectarian groups and the Christians, of that time frame, were not fulfilled in the manner that was anticipated. Thus, it appears that the Christian theologians, immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, were in a state of confusion as they struggled to fathom the message of the “end time prophecies”.

As the result of the war with the Romans, the Essenes vanished from history, but the Christians survived. However, the author of the Epistle of Barnabas posed the same question as the author of the Book of 2 Peter [3:4], “Where is the promise of His coming”. From that time onward, the answer to this question has strained the reasoning capacity of Christian theologians down to this very day.

There are three possible answers to this question. First, skeptics argue that Jesus could not fulfill His promises. Secondly, the author of the Epistle of Barnabas, Foy Wallace (1966), and others assumed that some things were fulfilled with the destruction of Jerusalem and some prophecy, of necessity, must be fulfilled later at the “end of the world”. And thirdly, some Christian groups, like the ancient Egyptian Coptic Church, and the recent work of Max King (1971 and 1987), build a case for the Spiritual fulfillment of these things in the 1st Century in A.D. 70.

The justification for this third view is based ultimately on a great deal of “faith”. If Jesus said that it was going to happen within the lifetime of the “eyewitness generation” [see Matt. 16:27-28], then it happened whether or not the early Church recognized it or not. Regardless, it will be difficult to resolve this issue to the satisfaction of everyone. What will actually happen in the future is one of God’s mysteries [Deut. 29:29].

The evidence within the Epistle of Barnabas indicates that the 1st Century Spiritual gifts were still active. Therefore, if Jesus had intended for all Biblical prophecy, the “resurrection”, and the “Day of Judgment” to all be fulfilled in A.D. 70, then the actual fulfillment of these things was, and is, a very well kept secret from all past and present living Christians.

Conversely, the devout Christian author of the Epistle of Barnabas was forced to accept the empirical fact that some prophecies were fulfilled in A.D. 70 and some would be fulfilled later. From a logical point of view, it would be very unsound to conclude otherwise. The historical evidence from the Epistle of Barnabas and from
the other early literature cited in this study, overwhelmingly, support the second view.

Please consider the wealth of historical evidence that is pervasive throughout the Epistle of Barnabas. From the previous discussion of the Essene writings from Qumran, it is fairly certain that the “Dead Sea Scrolls” were written prior to A.D. 68. Thus, they were written before the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple. On the other hand, the Epistle of Barnabas was written shortly after A.D. 70. Both the Jewish and the Christian expectations were very similar.

The epistle specifically makes reference to the destruction of the Temple [that is, in August of A.D. 70]. In addition, there is the specific reference in the epistle to “the last offense” from the Book of Daniel. This orient the epistle to the time frame of the 10th Emperor Vespasian who ruled from A.D. 69-79 [see Table 2]. Hence, the narrative in the Epistle of Barnabas reflects the “eyewitness perspective” of a very informed devout Christian Jew right after the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple.

The Epistle of Barnabas appears to follow the same historical continuity as the Essene writings (that is, in reference to the war with the Romans). Barnabas, similarly, makes references to both the Book of Enoch and to the Book of Daniel.

However, as puzzling as it might seem, the Epistle of Barnabas still projects an air of mystery and uncertainty as to how and when the coming of the Lord [Matt. 16:27-28] and the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven [see Luke 17:20-37, 19:11-27, 43-44, 21:20-31] would actually take place.

To add to the mystery, the early Roman Church does not appear to accept a Spiritual fulfillment of the “coming of the Lord” in connection with the destruction of Jerusalem and the Holy Temple. Thus, the seeds were planted which spawned the current tradition that demands a more spectacular literal and final end of all things sometime in the future.

Thus, the coming of the Lord, the great Day of Judgment, the resurrection, and the punishment of the “evil one”, were not visibly fulfilled in A.D. 70. Thus, they are still viewed as future events. However, the author of the Epistle of Barnabas expected these things to be accomplished during the reign of the 10th Emperor [Dan. 7:20-22, Luke 21:20-31]. This was the exact historic timing that Jesus, Himself, preached in Luke [21:20-31].

To further add to the confusion, Christendom has not produced any early Christian document that takes the position that the, “Day of Judgment”, the “resurrection”, and the “coming of the Lord” were all fulfilled with the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. The author of the Epistle of Barnabas ardently believed that all of these things would be fulfilled during the reign of Vespasian the 10th Emperor.

However, Barnabas was forced to accept the fact that not everything that was imminently expected was fulfilled. After carefully pondering the expectations found in the text of the Epistle of Barnabas, there are two possible conclusions.

First, the most reasonable conclusion, which is reflected in the epistle, is that some things relate to the war with the Romans and some things [that is, the “resurrection”, Final Judgment”, and the destruction of the earth] relate to the future.

And secondly, the least likely conclusion assumes that all of these things have already occurred during the war with the Romans that ended in A.D. 70. If this view is
true, then all of the Christian writers, who left historical literature from Barnabas onward, were certainly not aware of it. Therefore, for this view to ever be fully accepted, the following questions must be satisfactorily answered. “Why was the fulfillment of the ‘resurrection’ and the ‘Final Judgment’ not recognized immediately after A.D. 70”, when Spiritual gifts were still present? And, “Why would God leave this knowledge hidden to be discovered in the 20th Century? Until such a document is found, it will be next to impossible to convince Christians to take that leap of faith. It is also inconceivable to assume that the living remnant of the “eyewitness generation”, who lived to witness the destruction of the Temple left no record if they believed that the “resurrection” and the “Final Judgment had already taken place.

As the result, the traditional Roman Church interpretation of Matthew Chapter 24, the Book of Daniel, the Book of 2 Peter (3:7-13), the Book of Jude, and the Revelation, of necessity, places the “final judgment” and the “resurrection” in the future. That future event would result in the literal destruction of the world by fire. It is also very interesting that, nearly every generation since the writing of the Epistle of Barnabas until now, believed it was the “last generation. Even today this same view is widely held, especially in light of the dawn of a new millennium. What seems to escape the notice of the irrational, however, is the fact that the millennium was timed from the birth of Jesus. Christ was born before Herod the Great died [Matt. 2:13-15] in March of 4 B.C. to 1 B.C. Thus, of course, the new millennium has actually already begun.

Since then the first edition of this book was written in 1999, that attack on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001 (911) by Moslem terrorists have produced a new imminent expectation of the fulfillment of end time prophecies. The recent wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have added to the end time fervor. The teachers of the “Restoration Movement”, in their zeal to reconcile some of the time definite problems, assigned the fulfillment of the events, that would transpire during the “eyewitness period”, to Pentecost of A.D. 30-33. Then, the remaining events were assigned to the end of the world. For a time, this appeared to satisfy the problem. In the 20th Century, the pioneer Foy Wallace (1966) challenged that opinion by bringing to light the realization that there was an abundance of historical evidence that demanded the fulfillment of many of these time-definite prophecies, not at Pentecost, but forty years later, at the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70.

And furthermore, the profuse specific time-definite passages that are presented in this study are easily linked to the destruction of Jerusalem. This view seriously challenges many of the earlier Roman Church traditions. However, an air of mystery still lingers and a certain degree of uncertainty still persists as to how the mysteries of the future will actually unfold.

Moreover, the information found in the Epistle of Barnabas does prove to be rich in historical information and is very important in dating the Book of Revelation. As in the discussion of the other early historical writings, the comments by the author of this study are enclosed in brackets [ ] or are annotated as “author’s note” between horizontal lines. The bolding of some of the passages in the text are added for additional emphasis. Many different translations of “The Epistle of Barnabas” are readily
available on the Internet. The same translation as the electronic text cited below is translated by J.B. Lightfoot, (1990) and was downloaded from (ATHENA DATA PRODUCTS /Barnabas, [http://iclnet93.iclnet.org/pub/resources/christian-history.html#fathers]).

Perhaps a more detailed discussion of the Epistle of Barnabas will be the subject of some future study. The intent here is to illustrate the time-definite historical continuity between the Epistle of Barnabas and the internal evidence found within the Book of Revelation. Please follow the references cited in the annotated text below.

Chapter 1:1 I bid you greeting, sons and daughters, in the name of the Lord that loved us, in peace.

1:2 Seeing that the ordinances of God are great and rich unto you, I rejoice with an exceeding great and overflowing joy at your blessed and glorious spirits; so innate is the grace of the spiritual gift that ye have received.

1:3 Wherefore also I the more congratulate myself hoping to be saved, for that I truly see the Spirit poured out among you from the riches of the fount of the Lord. So greatly did the much-desired sight of you astonish me respecting you.

1:4 Being therefore persuaded of this, and being conscious with myself that having said much among you I know that the Lord journeyed with me on the way of righteousness [see Isa. 40:3, Matt. 3:3, John 1:19-25, Acts 18:25, 19:9, 23, 22:4], and am wholly constrained also myself to this, to love you more than my own soul (for great faith and love dwelleth in you through the hope of the life which is His)--considering this therefore, that,

1:5 if it shall be my care to communicate to you some portion of that which I received, it shall turn to my reward for having ministered to such spirits, I was eager to send you a trifle, that along with your faith ye might have your knowledge also perfect.

1:6 Well then, there are three ordinances of the Lord; the hope of life, which is the beginning and end of our faith; and righteousness, which is the beginning and end of judgment; love shown in gladness and exultation [1 Cor. 13:1ff], the testimony of works of righteousness.

1:7 For the Lord made known to us by His prophets things past and present, giving us likewise the firstfruits [that is, the “eyewitness generation”, see Sect. (2.3.3)] of the taste of things future. And seeing each of these things severally coming to pass, according as He spake, we ought to offer a richer and higher offering to the fear of Him. But I, not as though I were a teacher, but as one of yourselves, will show forth a few things, whereby ye shall be gladdened in the present circumstances [distress that is, the War with the Romans, 1 Cor. 7:26].

Chapter 2:1 Seeing then that the days are evil, and that the Active One [Satan or Caesar] himself has the authority [see John 14:30, 1 John 5:19], we ought to give heed to ourselves and to seek out the ordinances of the Lord.

2:2 The aids of our faith then are fear and patience, and our allies are long-suffering and self-restraint.
2:3 While these abide in a pure spirit in matters relating to the Lord, wisdom, understanding, science, knowledge rejoice with them.

2:4 For He hath made manifest to us by **all the prophets that He wanteth neither sacrifices nor whole burnt offerings nor oblations, saying at one time;**

2:5 What to Me is the multitude of your sacrifices, saith the Lord I am full of whole burnt-offerings, and the fat of lambs and the blood of bulls and of goats desire not, not though ye should come to be seen of Me or who required these things at your hands? Ye shall continue **no more to tread My court [the Temple was now gone].**

If ye bring fine flour, it is in vain; incense is an abomination to Me; your new moons and your Sabbaths I cannot away with . . . .

Chapter 4:1, It behooves us therefore to investigate deeply **concerning the present,** and to search out the things which have power to save us. Let us therefore flee altogether from all the **works of lawlessness [see Matt. 24:12, 2 Thess, 2:3 - “already at work”],** lest the works of lawlessness overpower us; and let us **loathe the error of the present time,** that we may be loved for that which is to come.

4:2 Let us give no relaxation to our soul that it should have liberty to consort with sinners and wicked men, lest haply we be made like unto them.

4:3 The **last offence is at hand,** concerning which the scripture speaketh, as Enoch saith. For to this end the Master hath **cut the seasons and the days short [Matt. 24:22],** that His beloved might hasten and come to **His inheritance [that is, the Kingdom, Luke 19:11, 21:27-31].**

4:4 And the prophet also speaketh on this wise; **Ten reigns shall reign upon the earth,** and after them shall arise another king, who shall bring low three of the kings under one.

4:5 In like manner Daniel speaketh concerning the same; And I saw the **fourth beast** to be wicked and strong and more intractable than all the beasts of the earth, and how there arose from him ten horns, and from these a **little horn [Dan. 7:20]** and excrescence, and how that it abased under one three of the great horns. . . .

Author’s Note! The author of the Epistle of Barnabas links both the historical interpretation of the Book of Enoch and the Book of Daniel to the war with the Romans. This is the exact same historical orientation found in the Essene writings and in Jesus’ [Luke 19:43-44, 20:16, 21:20] own prophecies.

When the epistle is compared to the Book of Revelation (18:10 - “five have fallen one is (Nero)”) and the anticipated destruction of Jerusalem (Rev. 11: 1-8, “and their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city. . . where their Lord was crucified”), the Revelation can not logically be dated past A.D. 68 (which was the year that Nero died). When assigning the date of the Revelation to any other historical period, the historical continuity is completely lost.

4:9 (continued) But though I would fain write many things, not as a teacher, but as becometh one who loveth you not to fall short of that which we possess, I was anxious to write to you, being your devoted slave. Wherefore let us take **heed in these last days.** For the whole time of our faith shall profit us nothing, unless we
now, in the season of lawlessness and in the offenses [2 Thess. 2:7] that shall be, as becometh sons of God, offer resistance, that the Black One may not effect an entrance.

4:10 Let us flee from all vanity, let us entirely hate the works of the evil way. Do not entering in privily stand apart by yourselves, as if ye were already justified, but assemble yourselves together and consult concerning the common welfare.

4:11 For the scripture saith; Woe unto them that are wise for themselves, and understanding in their own sight. Let us become spiritual, let us become a temple [see 1 Cor. 3:16, Eph. 2:21, Heb. 9:11, Rev. 3:12] perfect unto God. As far as in us lies, let us exercise ourselves in the fear of God, [and] let us strive to keep His commandments, that we may rejoice in His ordinances.

4:12 The Lord judgeth the world without respect of persons [Acts 10:34]; each man shall receive according to his deeds [see Matt. 16:27-28]. If he be good, his righteousness shall go before him in the way [Rev. 14:13]; if he be evil, the recompense of his evil-doing is before him; lest perchance, 4:13 if we relax as men that are called, we should slumber over our sins, and the prince of evil receive power against us and thrust us out from the kingdom of the Lord.

4:14 Moreover understand this also, my brothers. When ye see that after so many signs and wonders wrought in Israel, even then they were abandoned, let us give heed, lest haply we be found, as the scripture saith, many are called but few are chosen.

Chapter 5:1 For to this end the Lord endured to deliver His flesh unto corruption, that by the remission of sins we might be cleansed, which cleansing is through the blood of His sprinkling.

5:2 For the scripture concerning Him containeth some things relating to Israel, and some things relating to us. . . .

5:4 Now the scripture saith; Not unjustly is the net spread for the birds. He meaneth this that a man shall justly perish, who having the knowledge of the way of righteousness forceth himself into the way of darkness [similar to Essene phrases].

5:5 There is yet this also, my brethren; if the Lord endured to suffer for our souls, though He was Lord of the whole world, unto whom God said from the foundation of the world, Let us make man after our image [Gen. 1:26] and likeness, how then did He endure to suffer at the hand of men?

5:6 Understand ye. The prophets, receiving grace from Him, prophesied concerning Him. But He Himself endured that He might destroy death and show forth the resurrection of the dead, for that He must needs be manifested in the flesh;

5:7 that at the same time He might redeem the promise made to the fathers, and by preparing the new people for Himself might show, while He was on earth, that having brought about the resurrection He will Himself exercise judgment. . . .

5:12 To this end therefore He endured. For God saith of the wounds of His flesh that they came from them; When they shall smite their own shepherd, then shall the sheep of the flock be lost.
5:13 But He Himself desired so to suffer; for it was necessary for Him to suffer on a tree. For He that prophesied said concerning Him, Spare My soul from the sword; and, Pierce My flesh with nails, for the congregations of evil-doers have risen up against Me.

5:14 And again He saith; Behold I have given My back to stripes, and My cheeks to smittings, and My face did I set as a hard rock.

Chapter 6:1 When then He gave the commandment, what saith He? Who is he that disputeth with Me? Let him oppose Me. Or who is he that goeth to law with Me? Let him draw nigh unto the servant of the Lord,

6:2 Woe unto you, for ye all shall wax old as a garment, and the moth shall consume you. And again the prophet saith, seeing that as a hard stone He was ordained for crushing; Behold I will put into the fountains of Zion a stone very precious, elect, a chief corner-stone [Matt. 21:42, Eph. 2:20, 1 Peter 2:5], honorable.

6:3 Then again what saith He; And whosoever shall set his hope on Him, shall live forever. Is our hope then set upon a stone? Far be it. But it is because the Lord hath set His flesh in strength. For He saith; And He set Me as a hard rock.

6:4 And the prophet saith again; The stone which the builders rejected [1 Peter 2:7], this became the head and the corner. And again He saith; This is the great and wonderful day, which the Lord made.

6:5 I write to you the more simply, that ye may understand, I who am the offscouring of your love. . . .

6:11 Forasmuch then as He renewed [Col. 3:11] us in the remission of sins, He made us to be a new type [new creation, 2 Cor. 5:17], so that we should have the soul of children, as if He were recreating us [2 Cor. 5:17].

6:12 For the scripture saith concerning us, how He saith to the Son; Let us make man after our image and after our likeness, and let them rule over the beasts of the earth and the fowls of the heaven and the fishes of the sea. And the Lord said when He saw the fair creation of us men; increase and multiply and fill the earth. These words refer to the Son.

6:13 Again I will shew thee how the Lord speaketh concerning us. He made a second creation [see Isa. 65:16, 2 Cor. 5:17, Rev. 21:1ff] at the last; and the Lord saith; Behold I make the last things as the first. In reference to this then the prophet preached; Enter into a land flowing with milk and honey, and be lords over it.

6:14 Behold then we have been created anew [note the Spiritual and figurative implication found here. Judaism was ending and Christianity was emerging as the representation of the Kingdom of God on earth. The literal earth did not end (1 Cor. 7:31, 1 John 2:17ff)], as He saith again in another prophet; Behold, saith the Lord, I will take out from these, that is to say, from those whom the Spirit of the Lord foresaw, their stony hearts, and will put into them hearts of flesh; for He Himself was to be manifested in the flesh and to dwell in us.

6:15 For a holy temple unto the Lord [Heb. 9:11ff], my brethren, is the abode of our heart.

6:16 For the Lord saith again; For wherein shall I appear unto the Lord my God and be glorified? I will make confession unto Thee in the assembly of my brethren, and I will sing unto Thee in the midst of the assembly of the saints. We therefore are they
whom He brought into the good land [notice the perception that Christians were now inheriting the New Covenant and were expecting to rule on the earth in the place of the Jews].

6:17 What then is the milk and the honey Because the child is first kept alive by honey, and then by milk. So in like manner we also, being kept alive by our faith in the promise and by the word, shall live and be lords of the earth.

6:18 Now we have already said above; And let them increase and multiply and rule over the fishes. But who is he that is able [now] to rule over beasts and fishes and fowls of the heaven; for we ought to perceive that to rule implieth power, so that one should give orders and have dominion.

6:19 If then this cometh not to pass now, assuredly He spake to us for the hereafter, when we ourselves shall be made perfect so that we may become heirs of the covenant of the Lord.

Author’s Note! The interpretation of this verse (6:19) might provide the basis for either a dual prophecy or a yet future fulfillment of the coming of the Lord, the Day of Judgment, and the resurrection of the dead. The destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple occurred in the recent past. The ancient writer’s perspective was that the Coming of the Lord, the final judgment, and the final resurrection were imminently expected but had not yet happened.

It is impossible to determine what will actually unfold in the future. That is still a great mystery. Thus, some will argue that all things were fulfilled exclusively at the destruction of Jerusalem. And others, like the author of this epistle, will still look to the future for a final end. That has always been a mystery that mankind has not been able to solve.

Chapter 7:1 Understand therefore, children of gladness, that the good Lord manifested all things to us beforehand, that we might know to whom we ought in all things to render thanksgiving and praise.

7:2 If then the Son of God, being Lord and future Judge of quick and dead [note the future perspective], suffered that His wound might give us life, let us believe that the Son of God could not suffer except for our sakes. 7:3 But moreover when crucified He had vinegar and gall given Him to drink. Hear how on this matter the priests of the temple have revealed. Seeing that there is a commandment in scripture, Whatsoever shall not observe the fast shall surely die, the Lord commanded, because He was in His own person about to offer the vessel of His Spirit a sacrifice for our sins, that the type also which was given in Isaac who was offered upon the alter should be fulfilled.

7:4 What then saith He in the prophet? And let them eat of the goat that is offered at the fast for all their sins. Attend carefully; And let all the priests alone eat the entrails unwashed with vinegar. 7:5 Wherefore? Since ye are to give Me, who am to offer My flesh for the sins of My new people, gall with vinegar to drink, eat ye alone, while the people fasteth and waileth in sackcloth and ashes; that He might shew that He must suffer at their hands.
7:6 Attend ye to the commandments which He gave. Take two goats, fair and alike, and offer them, and let the priest take the one for a whole burnt offering for sins.

7:7 But the other one--what must they do with it? Accursed, saith He, is the one. **Give heed how the type of Jesus is revealed.**

7:8 And do ye all spit upon it and goad it, and place scarlet wool about its head, and so let it be cast into the wilderness. And when it is so done, he that taketh the goat into the wilderness leaddeth it, and taketh off the wool, and putteth it upon the branch which is called Rachia, the same whereof we are wont to eat the shoots when we find them in the country. Of this briar alone is the fruit thus sweet.

7:9 What then meaneth this? Give heed. The one at the alter, and the other accursed. And moreover the accursed one crowned. For they shall see Him in that day wearing the long scarlet robe about His flesh, and shall say, Is not this He, Whom once we crucified and set at nought and spat upon; verily this was He, Who then said that He was the Son of God.

7:10 For how is He like the goat? For this reason it says the goats shall be fair and alike, that, **when they shall see Him coming** then, they may be astonished at the likeness of the goat. Therefore behold the type of Jesus that was to suffer.

Chapter 8:1 But what think ye meaneth the type, where the commandment is given to Israel that those men, whose sins are full grown, offer an heifer and slaughter and burn it, and then that the children take up the ashes, and cast them into vessels, and twist the scarlet wool on a tree (see here again is the type of the cross and the scarlet wool), and the hyssop, and that this done the children should sprinkle the people one by one, that they may be purified from their sins?

8:2 Understand ye how in all plainness it is spoken unto you; the calf is Jesus, the men that offer it, being sinners, are they that offered Him for the slaughter. After this it is no more men (who offer); the glory is no more for sinners.

8:3 The children who sprinkle are they that preached unto us the forgiveness of sins and the purification of our heart, they to whom, being twelve in number for a testimony unto the tribes (for there are twelve tribes of Israel), He gave authority over the Gospel, that they should preach it.

8:4 But wherefore are the children that sprinkle three in number? For a testimony unto Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, because these are mighty before God.

8:5 Then there is the placing the wool on the tree. **This means that the kingdom of Jesus is on the cross, and that they who set their hope on Him shall live forever** [see John 8:51].

8:6 And why is there the wool and the hyssop at the same time? **Because in His kingdom there shall be evil and foul days, in which we shall be saved; for he who suffers pain in the flesh is healed through the foulness of the hyssop.**
8:7 Now to us indeed it is manifest that these things so befell for this reason, but to them they were dark [Jews], because they heard not the voice of the Lord.

Chapter 10:11 . . . . Because the righteous man both walketh in this world, and at the same time looketh for the holy world to come [this sentiment is still believed by modern true believers, Heb. 11:10-16, 12:22ff, 13:14]. Ye see how wise a lawgiver Moses was.

10:12 But whence should they perceive or understand these things? Howbeit we having justly perceived the commandments tell them as the Lord willed. To this end He circumcised our ears and hearts, that we might understand these things.

Chapter 11:1 But let us enquire whether the Lord took care to signify before hand concerning the water and the cross. Now concerning the water it is written in reference to Israel, how that they would not receive the baptism which bringeth remission of sins, but would build for themselves. . . .

11:11 This He saith, because we go down into the water laden with sins and filth, and rise up from it bearing fruit in the heart, resting our fear and hope on Jesus in the spirit. And whosoever shall eat of these shall live forever; He meaneth this; whosoever, saith He, shall hear these things spoken and shall believe, shall live forever. . . .

Chapter 14:1 Yea verily, but as regards the covenant which He swear to the fathers to give it to the people let us see whether He hath actually given it. He hath given it, but they themselves were not found worthy to receive it by reason of their sins. . . .

14:4 Moses received them, but they themselves were not found worthy. But how did we receive them? Mark this. Moses received them being a servant, but the Lord himself gave them to us to be the people of His inheritance, having endured patiently for our sakes.

14:5 But He was made manifest, in order that at the same time they might be perfected in their sins, and we might receive the covenant through Him who inherited it, even the Lord Jesus, who was prepared beforehand hereunto, that appearing in person He might redeem out of darkness our hearts which had already been paid over unto death and delivered up to the iniquity of error, and thus establish the covenant in us through the word [domain of darkness, Col. 1:13].

14:6 For it is written how the Father chargeth Him to deliver us from darkness, and to prepare a holy people for Himself [Isa. 9:1ff, Matt. 4:14-17].

14:7 Therefore saith the prophet; I the Lord thy God called thee in righteousness, and I will lay hold of thy hand and will strengthen thee, and I have given thee to be a covenant of the race, a light to the Gentiles, to open the eyes of the blind, and to bring forth them that are bound from their fetters, and them that sit in darkness from their prison house. We perceive then whence we were ransomed.

14:8 Again the prophet saith; Behold I have set Thee to be a light unto the Gentiles, that Thou shouldst be for salvation unto the ends of the earth [Acts 13:47]; thus saith the Lord that ransomed thee, even God.
14:9 Again the prophet saith; The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, wherefore He anointed Me to preach good tidings to the humble; He hath sent Me to heal them that are broken-hearted, to preach release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord and the day of recompense, to comfort all that mourn [Luke 4:18-19].

Chapter 15:1 Moreover concerning the Sabbath likewise it is written in the Ten Words, in which He spake to Moses face to face on Mount Sinai; and ye shall hallow the Sabbath of the Lord with pure hands and with a pure heart.
15:2 And in another place He saith; If my sons observe the Sabbath then I will bestow My mercy upon them.
15:3 Of the Sabbath He speaketh in the beginning of the creation; and God made the works of His hands in six days, and He ended on the seventh day, and rested on it, and He hallowed it [Gen. 2:2ff].
15:4 Give heed, children, what this meaneth; He ended in six days. He meaneth this, that in six thousand years the Lord shall bring all things to an end; for the day with Him signifieth a thousand years [see 2 Peter 3:8]; and this He himself beareth me witness, saying; Behold, the day of the Lord shall be as a thousand years. Therefore, children, in six days, that is in six thousand years, everything shall come to an end [This was a very interesting perception. It is very difficult to decipher as to when the author expected the 6000 years to end. However, it was still viewed to be in the future. Compare this with Rev. 20:2-14. It would appear that there is no literal historical time frame to reconcile either expectation].
15:5 And He rested on the seventh day. this He meaneth; when His Son shall come, and shall abolish the time of the Lawless One, and shall judge the ungodly, and shall change the sun and the moon and the stars, then shall he truly rest on the seventh day [this expectation was likewise viewed to be in the future].
15:6 Yea and furthermore He saith; Thou shalt hallow it with pure hands and with a pure heart. If therefore a man is able now to hallow the day which God hallowed, though he be pure in heart, we have gone utterly astray.
15:7 But if after all then and not till then shall we truly rest and hallow it, when we shall ourselves be able to do so after being justified and receiving the promise, when iniquity is no more and all things have been made new by the Lord, we shall be able to hallow it then, because we ourselves shall have been hallowed first [still viewed to be in the future].
15:8 Finally He saith to them; Your new moons and your Sabbaths I cannot away with. Ye see what is His meaning; it is not your present Sabbaths that are acceptable [unto Me], but the Sabbath which I have made, in the which, when I have set all things at rest, I will make the beginning of the eighth day which is the beginning of another world.
15:9 Wherefore also we keep the eighth day for rejoicing, in the which also Jesus rose from the dead, and having been manifested ascended into the heavens [the first definite reference to worship on Sunday or the first day of the week was in Acts (20:7ff)].
Chapter 16:1 Moreover I will tell you likewise concerning the temple, how these wretched men being led astray set their hope on the building, and not on their God that made them, as being a house of God.

16:2 For like the Gentiles almost they consecrated Him in the temple. But what saith the Lord abolishing the temple? Learn ye. Who hath measured the heaven with a span, or hath measured the earth with his hand? Have not I, saith the Lord? The heaven is My throne and the earth the footstool of My feet. What manner of house will ye build for Me? Or what shall be my resting place [Isa. 66:1ff]? Ye perceive that their hope is vain.

16:3 Furthermore He saith again; Behold they [the Romans] that pulled down this temple [August of A.D. 70] themselves shall build it.

16:4 So it cometh to pass; for because they went to war [that is, with the Romans] it was pulled down by their enemies. Now also the very servants of their enemies shall build it up.

16:5 Again, it was revealed how the city and the temple and the people of Israel should be betrayed. For the scripture saith; And it shall be in the last days [note the destruction of the Temple was in the last days], that the Lord shall deliver up the sheep of the pasture and the fold and the tower thereof to destruction. And it came to pass as the Lord spake [Luke 19:43-44, 21:20ff].

16:6 But let us enquire whether there be any temple [Heb. 9:11ff] of God. There is; in the place where he himself undertakes to make and finish it. For it is written And it shall come to pass, when the week [Dan. 9:27] is being accomplished, the temple of God shall be built [it is very interesting that the writer speaks of another Spiritual Temple to be built after the destruction of A.D. 70. Compare this interpretation of Daniel (9:24-27) with the opinion of Tertullian, who held that these things were in reference to A.D. 70. See the comments on Daniel Chapter 9 in Section (3.3)] gloriously in the name of the Lord. 16:7 I find then that there is a temple, How then shall it be built in the name of the Lord? Understand ye. Before we believed on God, the abode of our heart was corrupt and weak, a temple truly built by hands; for it was full of idolatry and was a house of demons, because we did whatsoever was contrary to God.

16:8 But it shall be built in the name of the Lord. Give heed then that the temple of the Lord may be built gloriously.

16:9 How? Understand ye. By receiving the remission of our sins and hoping on the Name we became new, created [2 Cor. 5:17] afresh from the beginning. Wherefore God dwelleth truly in our habitation within us. How? The word of his faith, the calling of his promise, the wisdom of the ordinances, the commandments of the teaching, He Himself prophesying in us, He Himself dwelling in us, opening for us who had been in bondage unto death the door of the temple, which is the mouth, and giving us repentance leadeth us to the incorruptible temple.

16:10 For he that desireth to be saved looketh not to the man, but to Him that dwelleth and speaketh in him, being amazed at this that he has never at any time heard these words from the mouth of the speaker, nor himself ever desired to hear them. This is the spiritual temple built up to the Lord.
Chapter 17:1 So far as it was possible with all simplicity to declare it unto you, my soul hopeth that I have not omitted anything [of the matters pertaining unto salvation and so failed in my desire].
17:2 For if I should write to you concerning things immediate or future, ye would not understand them, because they are put in parables. So much then for this.

Chapter 18:1 But let us pass on to another lesson and teaching. There are two ways of teaching and of power, the one of light and the other of darkness; and there is a great difference between the two ways. For on the one are stationed the light giving angels of God, on the other the angels of Satan [more similar phrases as those found in the Essene writings].
18:2 And the one is the Lord from all eternity and unto all eternity, whereas the other is Lord of the season of iniquity that now is [2 Thess. 2:3ff].

Chapter 19:1 This then is the way of light, if anyone desiring to travel on the way to his appointed place would be zealous in his works. The knowledge then which is given to us whereby we may walk therein is as follows.
19:2 Thou shalt love Him that made thee, thou shalt fear Him that created thee, thou shalt glorify Him that redeemed thee from death; thou shalt be simple in heart and rich in spirit; thou shalt not cleave to those who walk the way of death; thou shalt hate everything that is not pleasing to God; thou shalt hate all hypocrisy; thou shalt never forsake the commandments of the Lord... Top
19:10 Thou shalt remember the day of judgment night and day, and thou shalt seek out day by day the persons of the saints, either laboring by word and going to exhort them and meditating how thou mayest save souls by thy word, or thou shalt work with thy hands for a ransom for thy sins. 19:11 Thou shalt not hesitate to give, neither shalt thou murmur when giving, but thou shalt know who is the good paymaster of thy reward. Thou shalt keep those things which thou hast received, neither adding to them nor taking away from them. Thou shalt utterly hate the Evil One. Thou shalt judge righteously.
19:12 Thou shalt not make a schism, but thou shalt pacify them that contend by bringing them together. Thou shalt confess thy sins. Thou shalt not betake thyself to prayer with an evil conscience. This is the way of light. Top

Chapter 20:1 But the way of the Black One is crooked and full of a curse. For it is a way of eternal death with punishment wherein are the things that destroy men's souls [compare with Gal. 5:18ff]—idolatry, boldness, exhalation of power, hypocrisy, doubleness of heart, adultery, murder, plundering, pride, transgression, treachery, malice, stubbornness, witchcraft, magic, covetousness, absence of the fear of God;...

Chapter 21:1 It is good therefore to learn the ordinances of the Lord, as many as have been written above, and to walk in them. For he that doeth these things shall be glorified in the kingdom of God; whereas he that chooseth their opposites shall
perish together with his works. For this cause is the resurrection, for this the recompense.

21:2 I entreat those of you who are in a higher station, if ye will receive any counsel of good advice from me, keep amongst you those to whom ye may do good. Fail not.

21:3 The day is at hand, in which everything shall be destroyed together with the Evil One. The Lord is at hand and his reward

**Author’s Comments.** This same imminent expectation of the destruction of the world was also found in the Essene writings, 2 Peter Chapter 3 (1 Peter 4:7), and in the Book of Enoch. The end of the physical world, of course, did not occur. How and why both Jewish and Christian sectarian groups arrived at this expectation is still a great mystery.

In order to reconcile this obvious problem, either the Lord delayed His coming, as suggested in 2 Peter (3:10) or some Christians were influenced by false Jewish sectarian doctrine. Other theologians might argue that Jesus had no intention of destroying the earth in the 1st Century. **In any case, it would be very presumptuous of Christians to think they could predict the final Day of Judgment anyway.**

Moreover, the Day of Judgment was and still is only known to God [Matt. 24:36, "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone]. There may be a subtle hidden meaning in this verse. The context of Matthew Chapter 24 is the destruction of Jerusalem. Jesus both knew and prophesied that this would happen during the lifetime of the “eyewitness generation”.

However, “that day” [that is, the future Day of Judgment (Matt. 24:36)], Jesus did not and could not know. Thus far in history, it is an empirical fact that all of God’s children, from the Essenes onward, who have tried to predict the end of the literal world and the final Day of Judgment, have absolutely failed. Top

See the author’s comments on Matthew [24:36] in Section (4.2).

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21:4 Again and again I entreat you; be good lawgivers one to another; continue faithful counselors to yourselves; take away from you all hypocrisy.

21:5 And may God, who is Lord of the whole world, give you wisdom, judgment, learning, knowledge of His ordinances, patience.

21:6 And be ye taught of God, seeking diligently what the Lord requireth of you, and act that ye may be found in the day of judgment.

21:7 But if you have any remembrance of good, call me to mind when ye practice these things these things, that both my desire and my watchfulness may lead to some good result. I entreat you asking it as a favor.

21:8 So long as the good vessel (of the body) is with you, be lacking in none of these things, but search them out constantly, and fulfill every commandment; for they deserve it.

21:9 For this reason I was the more eager to write to you so far as I was able, that I might give you joy. Fare ye well, children of love and peace. The Lord of glory and of every grace be with your spirit. Top
Again, the abundant historical testimony from the Epistle of Barnabas supports the position of Wallace (1966). Although many things did occur in A.D. 70, the imminent expectation of the “resurrection” and the “final judgment” were not visibly fulfilled, nor was a Spiritual fulfillment of these things perceived by the early Christians. Therefore, the logical conclusion supports the “two comings” hypothesis. If a Spiritual fulfillment did occur then it certainly was not recognized by the “eyewitness generation” immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. The revealed things can be known while future things still remain a mystery [Deut 29:29].

(6.7) The Fragments of Papias

The Fragments of Papias are very important early Christian documents that help form the basis for the later dating (A.D. 93-96) of the Book of Revelation. Papias of Hierapolis was evidently born between A.D. 60 to 70. His “Exposition of Oracles of the Lord” was written about A.D. 130-140. What we know of Papias’ works are references and quotations from later Church writers such as, Eusebius, Irenaeus, Origin, and others (Lightfoot, 1891).

Eusebius, in his commentary of “The Writings of Papias”, makes mention of the earlier works of Irenaeus, who had indicated that there were two tombs at Ephesus that bore the name John. One belonged to John the Apostle, and the other was the final resting-place of John the presbyter.

. . . that there are two tombs in Ephesus, and that both are called John’s even to this day; which is particularly necessary to observe, For it is probable that the second, if it be not allowed that it was the first, saw the revelation ascribed to John. (Pamphilus, (1966, Bk. III, Ch. XXXIX, pp. 125-126) Top

The quotations below illustrate the source of the tradition of the early Roman Church. It promoted the tradition that was accepted by many in Christendom, even to this day. This document (The Fragments of Papias, last modified September 27, 1996) was accessed from the Internet and downloaded from the Christian Classics Ethereal Library server, at Wheaton College:

I. FROM THE EXPOSITION OF THE ORACLES OF THE LORD

[THE writings of Papias in common circulation are five in number, and these are called an Exposition of the Oracles of the Lord. Irenaeus [A.D. 205] makes mention of these as the only works written by him, in the following words: "Now testimony is borne to these things in writing by Papias, an ancient man, who was a hearer of John, and a friend of Polycarp [died in A.D. 166], in the fourth of his books; for five books were composed by him." Thus wrote Irenaeus. Moreover, Papias himself, in the introduction to his books, makes it manifest that he was not himself a hearer and eyewitness of the holy apostles [that is, he did not know the Apostle John]; but he tells us that he received the truths of our religion (2) from those who were [acquainted] with them [the apostles] in the following words]:
But I shall not be unwilling to put down, along with my interpretations, (3) whatsoever instructions I received with care at any time from the elders, and stored up with care in my memory, assuring you at the same time of their truth. For I did not, like the multitude, take pleasure in those who spoke much, but in those who taught the truth; nor in those who related strange commandments, (4) but in those who rehearsed the commandments given by the Lord to faith, (5) and proceeding from truth itself. If, then, any one who had attended on the elders came, I asked minutely after their sayings,—what Andrew or Peter said, or what was said by Philip, or by Thomas, or by James, or by John, or by Matthew, or by any other of the Lord's disciples: which things (6) Aristion and the presbyter John, the disciples of the Lord, say. For I imagined that what was to be got from books was not so profitable to me as what came from the living and abiding voice.

IV, (12) Top

[As the elders who saw John the disciple of the Lord remembered that they had heard from him how the Lord taught in regard to those times, and said]: "The days will come in which vines shall grow, having each ten thousand branches, and in each branch ten thousand twigs, and in each true twig ten thousand shoots, and in every one of the shoots ten thousand clusters, and on every one of the clusters ten thousand grapes, and every grape when pressed will give five-and-twenty metretes of wine. And when any one of the saints shall lay hold of a cluster, another shall cry out, 'I am a better cluster, take me; bless the Lord through me.' In like manner, [He said] that a grain of wheat would produce ten thousand ears, and that every ear would have ten thousand grains, and every grain would yield ten pounds of clear, pure, fine flour; and that apples, and seeds, and grass would produce in similar proportions; and that all animals, feeding then only on the productions of the earth, would become peaceable and harmonious, and be in perfect subjection to man."(1) [Testimony is borne to these things in writing by Papias, an ancient man, who was a hearer of John and a friend of Polycarp, in the fourth of his books; for five books were composed by him. And he added, saying, "Now these things are credible to believers. And Judas the traitor," says he, "not believing, and asking, 'How shall such growths be accomplished by the Lord?' the Lord said, 'They shall see who shall come to them.' These, then, are the times mentioned by the prophet Isaiah: 'And the wolf shall lie, down with the lamb,' etc. (Isa. xi. 6 ff.)"

As the presbyters say, then (3) those who are deemed worthy of an abode in heaven shall go there, others shall enjoy the delights of Paradise, and others shall possess the splendour of the city; (4) for everywhere the Saviour will be seen, according as they shall be worthy who see Him. But that there is this distinction between the habitation of those who produce an hundredfold, and that of those who produce sixty-fold, and that of those who produce thirty-fold; for the first will be taken up into the heavens, the second class will dwell in Paradise, and the last will inhabit the city; and that on this account the Lord said, "In my Father's house are many mansions: "(5) for all things belong to God, who supplies all with a suitable dwelling-place, even as His word says, that a share is given to all by the
Father, according as each one is or shall be worthy. And this is the couch in which they shall recline who feast, being invited to the wedding. The presbyters, the disciples of the apostles, say that this is the gradation and arrangement of those who are saved, and that they advance through steps of this nature; and that, moreover, they ascend through the Spirit to the Son, and through the Son to the Father; and that in due time the Son will yield up His work to the Father, even as it is said by the apostle, "For He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." (8) For in the times of the kingdom the just man who is on the earth shall forget to die [see 1 Cor. 15:54ff]. "But when He saith all things are put under Him, it is manifest that He is excepted which did put all things under Him. And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all."

VI.(10)

[Papias, who is now mentioned by us, affirms that he received the sayings of the apostles from those who accompanied them, and he moreover asserts that he heard in person Aristion and the presbyter John. (11) Accordingly he mentions them frequently by name, and in his writings gives their traditions. Our notice of these circumstances may not be without its use. It may also be worth while to add to the statements of Papias already given, other passages of his in which he relates some miraculous deeds, stating that he acquired the knowledge of them from tradition. The residence of the Apostle Philip with his daughters in Hierapolis has been mentioned above. We must now point out how Papias, who lived at the same time, relates that he had received a wonderful narrative from the daughters of Philip. For he relates that a dead man was raised to life in his day. (12) He also mentions another miracle relating to Justus, surnamed Barsabas, how he swallowed a deadly poison, and received no harm, on account of the grace of the Lord. The same person, moreover, has set down other things as coming to him from unwritten tradition, amongst these some strange parables and instructions of the Saviour, and some other things of a more fabulous nature. (13) Amongst these he says that there will be a millennium after the resurrection from the dead, when the personal reign of Christ will be established on this earth. He moreover hands down, in his own writing, other narratives given by the previously mentioned Aristion of the Lord's sayings, and the traditions of the presbyter John. For information on these points, we can merely refer our readers to the books themselves; but now, to the extracts already made, we shall add, as being a matter of primary importance, a tradition regarding Mark who wrote the Gospel, which he [Papias] has given in the following words]: And the presbyter said this. Mark having become the interpreter of Peter, wrote down accurately whatsoever he remembered. It was not, however, in exact order that he related the sayings or deeds of Christ. For he neither heard the Lord nor accompanied Him. But afterwards, as I said, he accompanied Peter, who accommodated his instructions to the necessities of his hearers, but with no intention of giving a regular narrative of the Lord's sayings. Wherefore Mark made no mistake in thus writing some things as he remembered them. For of one thing he
took especial care, not to omit anything he had heard, and not to put anything fictitious into the statements. [This is what is related by Papias regarding Mark; but with regard to Matthew he has made the following statements: Matthew put together the oracles [of the Lord] in the Hebrew language, and each one interpreted them as best he could. [The same person uses proofs from the First Epistle of John, and from the Epistle of Peter in like manner. And he also gives another story of a woman (1) who was accused of many sins before the Lord, which is to be found in the Gospel according to the Hebrews.]

VII, (2)

Papias thus speaks, word for word: To some of them [angels] He gave dominion over the arrangement of the world [see the Book of Enoch], and He commissioned them to exercise their dominion well. And he says, immediately after this: but it happened that their arrangement came to nothing.

VIII, (4)

With regard to the inspiration of the book (Revelation), we deem it superfluous to add another word; for the blessed Gregory Theologus and Cyril, and even men of still older date, Papias, Irenaeus, Methodius, and Hippolytus, bore entirely satisfactory testimony to it.

IX, (5)

Taking occasion from Papias of Hierapolis, the illustrious, a disciple of the apostle who leaned on the bosom of Christ, and Clemens, and Pantaenus the priest of [the Church] of the Alexandrians, and the wise Ammonius, the ancient and first expositors, who agreed with each other, who understood the work of the six days as referring to Christ and the whole Church. (Downloaded from the Christian Classics Ethereal Library server, at Wheaton College)

There are some general conclusions that can be made from the writings of Papias. First, John the Presbyter, and not John the Apostle, was believed to be the likely author of the Book of Revelation. Therefore, the belief in the 1000 years’ reign, which was always considered false by the Church, was not a belief fostered by the Apostle John. This implies that the Revelation was viewed as being non-Inspired. This further illustrates that the debate concerning a millennium reign of Christ on earth goes back to at least the Second Century A.D.

(6.8) The Gospel of Thomas

The Gospel of Thomas is another very early non-Inspired Christian document. It was known by Eusebius (Pamphilus, 1966, Bk. III, Ch. XXV, pp. 110-111 (see Section 6.2.2) and the Roman Church well before 325 A.D. Eusebius lists this book as a product of some of the early heretics. Brill (1959) states:
The manuscript, now preserved in the Coptic Museum of Old Cairo, has been collated there, in October 1956, by three of us. It belongs to one of the thirteen volumes which together form the **Gnostic library found, about 1945, in the neighborhood of Nag-Hamadi (Upper Egypt);** this volume is Codex III of our classification. . . We are dealing here with a translation or an adaptation in Sahidic Coptic of a work the primitive text of which must have been **produced in Greek about 140 A.D.,** and which was based on even more ancient sources. (p. vi)

The Gospel of Thomas, though not considered genuine by the Roman Church, does reflect a different fulfillment of the “coming of the Kingdom of Heaven”. This view appears to be more closely akin to the Spiritual teachings of Jesus in Luke 17: 20-21:

Luke 17:20, Now having been questioned by the Pharisees as to when the kingdom of God was coming, He answered them and said, "**The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed;**
21 nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or, 'There it is!' **For behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst."**

The text of the Gospel of Thomas was readily available on the Internet: [http://homepages.anglianet.co.uk/johnm/thomas.html](http://homepages.anglianet.co.uk/johnm/thomas.html). Consider a few of the references in the text that provide a different 2nd Century Spiritual view of the fulfillment of the teachings of Jesus concerning the Kingdom of God:

(3) Jesus said, "If those who lead you say to you, 'See, the Kingdom is in the sky,' 'then the birds of the sky will precede you. 'If they say to you, 'It is in the sea,' 'then the fish will precede you. Rather, the Kingdom is inside of you [see Luke 17:20-37], and 'it is outside of you. When you come to ' know yourselves, then you will become known, and you will realize that it is you who are 'the sons of the living Father. But if ' you will not know yourselves, you dwell in poverty and it is you who are that poverty." . . .

(5) Jesus said, ' "Recognize what is in your sight, and that which is hidden from you will become plain 'to you. For there is nothing hidden which will ' not become manifest." . . .

(11) Jesus said, "**This heaven will 'pass away, and the one above it will pass away. The dead are not alive, and the living ' will not die.** In the days when you consumed what is dead, you made it what is alive. ' When you come to dwell in the light, ' what will you do? On the day when you ' were one you became two. But when ' you become two, what will you do?"

(12) The disciples said to Jesus, ' "We know that You will depart from us. Who is to be our leader?"
Jesus said to them, ' "Wherever you are, you are to ' go to James the righteous, for whose sake heaven and earth came into being." . . .
(16) Jesus said, ' "Men think, perhaps, that it is peace which I have come to cast ' upon the world. ' They do not know that it is dissension, which I have come to cast upon the earth: fire, sword, and war. For there will be five in a house: three will be against two, and two against three, the father against the son, and the son against the father. And they will stand solitary." . . .

(18) The disciples said to Jesus, "Tell us how our end will be." Jesus said, "Have you discovered, then, the beginning, that you look for 'the end? For where the beginning is there will the end be. Blessed is he who will take his place in the beginning; he will know the end and will not experience death." . . .

(20) The disciples said to Jesus, "Tell us what the Kingdom of Heaven is ' like." He said to them, "It is like a mustard seed, the smallest of all seeds. But when it 'falls on tilled soil, it produces a great plant and becomes ' a shelter for birds of the sky." . . .

(24) His disciples said to Him, "Show us the place where You are, since it is necessary for us ' to seek it." He said to them, "Whoever has ' ears, let him hear. There is light within a man of light, ' and he (or: it) lights up the whole world. If he (or: it) does not shine, he (or: it) is darkness." . . . Top

(27) <Jesus said,> "If you do not fast ' as regards the world, you will not find the Kingdom. ' If you do not observe the Sabbath as a Sabbath, you will not see the Father.""

(28) Jesus said, "I took My place in the midst of the world, ' and appeared to them in flesh. ' I found all of them intoxicated; I found One of them thirsty. And My soul became afflicted for the sons of men, because they are blind in their hearts and do not have sight; for empty they came into the world, ' and empty too they seek to leave the world. ' But for the moment they are intoxicated. When they shake off their wine, then they will repent." Jesus said, "If the flesh came into being because of spirit, it is a wonder. But if spirit came into being because of the body, ' it is a wonder of wonders. Indeed, I am amazed at how this great wealth made its home in this poverty." Jesus said, "Where there are three gods, ' they are gods. Where there are two or one, I am with him." . . . Top

(46) Jesus said, "Among those born of women, from Adam until John 'the Baptist, there is no one so superior to John the Baptist that his eyes should not be lowered (before him). Yet I have said, whichever one of you comes to be a child will be acquainted with the Kingdom' and will become superior to John." . . .
(51) His disciples said to Him, "When will the repose of the dead come about, and when will the new world come?" He said to them, "What you look forward to has already come, but you do not recognize it."

Author’s Note. Paul taught that the resurrection had not yet occurred in 2 Timothy [2:18]. Paul wrote this shortly before A.D. 64, the year when tradition indicates that Paul and Peter both died. However, in Paul’s teachings, in 1st Thessalonians [4:15-17] and in 2 Thessalonians [2:1-9], a different argument could be made. During the destruction of Jerusalem, when Titus literally entered the Temple [“takes his seat in the Temple of God”] (verse 4), a resurrection [Ezek. 37:9ff, Dan. 12:2] of some kind, was indeed expected by the “eyewitness generation” in connection with the great tribulation.

The beliefs of Hymenaeus and Alexander (2 Tim. 2:18) and the beliefs of the early Coptic Church, certainly make the argument for an unseen or Spiritual resurrection more plausible. Based on the historical evidence, it would be very difficult to prove whether Paul was referring to the end of the literal world or to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. The pervading assumption is that no resurrection of any kind has ever occurred.

(52) His disciples said to Him, "Twenty-four prophets spoke in Israel, and all of them spoke in You."
He said to them, "You have omitted the one living in your presence and have spoken (only) of the dead."

53) His disciples said to Him, "Is circumcision beneficial or not?" He said to them, "If it were beneficial, their father would beget them already circumcised from their mother. Rather, the true circumcision in spirit has become completely profitable." . . . Top

(57) Jesus said, "The Kingdom of the Father is like a man who had [good] seed. His enemy came by night and sowed weeds among the good seed. The man did not allow them to pull up the weeds; he said to them, 'I am afraid that you will go intending to pull up the weeds and pull up the wheat along with them.' For on the day of the harvest the weeds will be plainly visible, and they will be pulled up and burned." . . . Top

(71) Jesus said, "I shall destroy [this] house, and no one will be able to rebuild it." . . .

(77) Jesus said, "It is I who am the light which is above them all. It is I who am the All. From Me did the All come forth, and unto Me did the All 'extend. Split a piece of wood, and I' am there. Lift up the stone, and you will find Me there." . . .

(82) Jesus said, "He who is near Me is near the fire, and he who is far ' from Me is far from the Kingdom." . . .
(88) Jesus said, 'The angels' and the prophets will come to you and 'give to you those things you (already) have. And you too, give them those things which you have,' and say to yourselves, 'When will they come and take what is theirs?'. . .

(92) Jesus said, "Seek and you will find. Yet, what 'you asked Me about in former times and which I did not 'tell you then, now 'I do desire to tell, but you do not inquire after it." . . .

(111) Jesus said, "The heavens and the earth will be rolled up 'in your presence. And the one who lives from the Living One will not see death." Does not Jesus 'say, "Whoever finds himself is superior to the world"?

(112) Jesus said, "Woe to the flesh that depends on the soul; woe to the soul that depends on the flesh."

(113) His disciples said to Him, ' "When will the Kingdom come?"

"It will not come by waiting for it. It will not be a matter of saying 'Here it is' or 'There it is.' Rather, the Kingdom of the Father is spread out upon the earth, and men do not see it [John 3:3]." (Mann, Downloaded December, 1998).

The contrasting perceptions of the coming of the Kingdom reflected by both the Roman and Coptic Churches are also representative of the present debate among modern theologians. In respect to all of the profuse imminent time-definite prophecies made to the “eyewitness generation” found in the New Testament, a real dilemma emerged in Christendom shortly after the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

The expected fulfillment of these events did not occur as anticipated. Therefore, this poses the question; "did the kingdom and the Lord come when the Jews were destroyed by the Romans [see Daniel 2:44, 7:13-14, 9:24-27, 12:1, Luke 17:20-37,19:11-27, 43-44, 21:20-31]?” The resulting Roman Church conclusion was that, "no it did not. Rather, it was assumed that Christ delayed both His coming and the destruction of the earth [see 2 Peter 3:7-13]."

On the other hand, some of those who were considered heretics, believed that the time-definite references were indeed correct. Thus, both the Lord’s coming and the associated coming of the Kingdom could be perceived by the righteous with Spiritual eyes [see Luke 17:20-37, John 3:3].

The differences of opinions contained in these very ancient opposing beliefs continue to be zealously debated among the heirs of the “Restoration Movement”. As mentioned before, the works of Wallace (1966), King (1971 & 1987), Ogden (1985), and the author of this study are all representative of some of the most recent theories.

Each theory and opinion attempts to reconcile the obvious time-definite Scriptural references that were made to the “eyewitness generation” in connection with the Jewish War from A.D. 66-70. And, by contrast, there are also apparently conflicting passages that could seemingly only be applied to some future final judgment and to the end of the literal world.

Therefore, the controversy continues among the various camps. Either all things were Spiritually fulfilled exclusively by the war of A.D. 70, or the Book of Revelation
and some of the other Bible prophecies also predict the end of the literal earth and another coming of the Lord at some time in the future. These two explanations appear to be the only logical conclusions that can be drawn.

In addition, some of the books, of the New Testament, which are presently used as proof texts [that is, the Books of Jude, 2 Peter, and the Revelation] were not considered genuine by some of the ancient Christians. It would be easy to assume that some of the Christians in antiquity realized that these questionable New Testament writings were drawing their imagery from the Books of Enoch, 4th Ezra, and other Jewish sectarian works.

Some of the ancient Christians might even have considered the possibility that perhaps some of them were forgeries pinned by heretics who were heavily influenced by the doctrine of Jewish mystics such as the Essenes. These conflicting views add to the confusion and would certainly weigh heavily on the outcome of prophecy when a truthful and objective solution is sought.

Apparently, the proponents of the “Restoration Movement” did not include a detailed analysis of all of the available historical documents as they attempted to restore 1st Century Christianity. As the result, some of the “Restoration Doctrine” emerged based upon assumptions that clearly conflict with some of the very earliest of the Christian beliefs. These beliefs were preserved in the historic record, and some were recently brought to light by archaeological discoveries.

The Roman Church, after the Council of Nicea in 325 A.D., decreed which books were considered to be genuine. These, and other opposing views, will be discussed at greater length in Chapter 7 of this study.

(6.9) The First 600 Years After The Messiah

This study would not be complete without at least a brief discussion and overview of the major religious chronological events from A.D. 70 to the present time, as it relates to the city of Jerusalem. Some theologians maintain that some of the Biblical prophecy was still unfulfilled after A.D. 70. If this is true, then the fulfillment of at least some of the major historical events over the last 1900 years should also be aligned with Biblical prophecy.

Therefore, some of the most important historical events since A.D. 70 include, the turn of two millenniums and the rise of Islam with its domination of the Temple Mount for centuries. In addition, the great Holocaust of World War II appeared to reach Biblical proportions. Again, part of the recent debate concerns whether the fulfillment Biblical of prophecy was fully completed by A.D. 70 when the city of Jerusalem and the Holy Temple were destroyed.

In a recent theory there is the claim that the Temple must be rebuilt before the final judgment can occur. Consider the discussion below concerning the history of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount from A.D. 70 to the present.

Tacitus (1952), the Roman historian states concerning the destruction of the Temple in A.D. 70, [The Histories, 1952, Bk. V, 12-13, p. 298, “The doors of the inner shrine were suddenly thrown open, and a voice of more than mortal tone was heard to cry the Gods were departing”]. Flavius Josephus similarly wrote in reference to the same event, [Bk. VI, Ch. 5, “let us go hence”]. Josephus made specific mention that it was
commonly believed that the presence of God departed from the Temple during the war with the Romans. This point is very significant in Judeo-Christian theology.

This leads to a very significant point that affects the beliefs of recent theological doctrine. Although Jesus nailed the Law to His cross [Col. 2:14], the Glory of God did not depart the Temple on Pentecost, A.D. 30-33, as might be expected. Conversely, history records that the Godhead [that is, “Us”, Gen. 1:26] actually departed the Temple for the last time during the war with the Romans. Again, this fact provides powerful support for the A.D. 70 hypothesis.

It will be pointed out below, in the further discussion of Jewish history that the Glory of God has not been revealed on the Temple Mount to either Jews or Christians after A.D. 70. This fact is both profound and extremely significant to the fulfillment of Biblical prophecy. This is a powerful indication God’s blessing upon the Christians, and His rejection of the Jews. Even apart from Christianity, the Jews must accept the fact that God destroyed their Temple because of their disobedience. Thus, the Jews who crucified the Messiah, were rejected by God and were cast off [Deut. 18:15-19, Luke 19:37, 43-44, Matt. 24:21]. Thus far in history, a Jewish Temple has never been and may never be rebuilt on the ancient site.

McClintock & Strong (Vol. IV, 1981) provide the historical record that continues after destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans:

Up to A.D. 131 the Jews remained tolerably quiet, although apparently awaiting any favorable opportunity of shaking off the Roman yoke. . . . [The Jews] broke into open rebellion under the notorious Barchochebas, who claimed to be the Messiah. His success was at first great, but he was crushed before the tremendous power of the Romans. . . This was in A.D. 135, from which period the final dispersion of the Jews has often been dated. The Romans finished the city according to their first intention. It was made a Roman colony, inhabited wholly by foreigners [Isa. 60:10], the Jews being forbidden to approach it on pain of death: a temple to Jupiter Capitolinus was erected on Mount Mariah, and the old name of Jerusalem was sought to be supplanted by the emperor Aelius Hadrainus and Jupiter Capitolinus. By this name was the city known until the time of Constantine. . . From the rebuilding by Hadrian the history of Jerusalem is almost blank till the time of Constantine, when its history, as a place of extreme solicitude and interest to the Christian Church, properly begins. Pilgrimages to the Holy City now became common and popular. Such a pilgrimage was undertaken by in A.D. 326 by the emperor’s mother Helena, then in the eightieth year of her age, who built churches on the alleged site of the Nativity at Bethlehem, and the resurrection on the Mount of Olives. (p. 841)

The Roman emperor repealed the edict, which excluded the Jews from Jerusalem in about A.D. 362. Consequently, an attempt was made by the Jews to rebuild the Temple then. However, the Providence of God seemingly prevented the rebuilding of the Jewish Temple even to this day:

When the nephew of Constantine, the emperor Julian abandoned Christianity for the old Paganism, he endeavored, as a matter of policy, to conciliate the Jews. He
allowed them free access to the city, and permitted them to rebuild their Temple. They accordingly began to lay the foundation in A.D. 362; but the speedy death of the emperor probably occasioned that abandonment of the attempt which contemporary writers ascribe to supernatural hindrances. (McClintock & Strong, Vol. IV, 1981, p. 842)

It appears that Jerusalem remained under the control of various bickering Christian factions until A.D. 614. In A.D. 614, the Persian, Chosros II, took Jerusalem by storm; but, the peace was restored the next year. However, about this time, history was preparing for the rise of Islam and the domination of Jerusalem by the Arabs (McClintock & Strong, Vol. IV, 1981, p. 842).

(6.10) The Rise of Islam and the Arab Domination of Israel (A.D. 636 to A.D. 1099)

Mohammed, the Holy Prophet of Islam, was born in 571 A.D. “The first revelation [was reportedly received] in the cave at Mt. Hira... The Holy Prophet is commissioned as the Messenger of God [in 610 A.D.]” (“A Brief Chronology of Muslim History”, Downloaded 20 Nov 98). In 613 A.D., the general public was invited to embrace the teachings of Islam. The Prophet Mohammed died in A.D. 632.

The period of Arab rule over Jerusalem was set from about A.D. 636 to 1099. One of the Arab structures on the Temple Mount, called the “Dome of the Rock” is also called the Mosque of Omar. It was constructed over the ancient site of the Jewish Temple in A.D. 691. The present structure was rebuilt many years later in the Middle Ages (“The History of Israel”, 1998).

(6.11) The End of the First Millennium and the Crusader Period

McClintock & Strong (Vol. II, 1981) provide some of the necessary primary dates and other details of the various Christian campaigns against the Moslems, who occupied the city of Jerusalem since A.D. 636:

Under the Fatimides of Egypt, who conquered Syria about 980 A.D., the position of both of the native Christian residents and of the pilgrims became less favorable; but the conquest of 1078, and the subjugation of the country by the brutal hordes of the Seljuk Turks from the Caucasus, rendered it intolerable. The news of their atrocities produced a deep sensation over the whole of Christendom, and kindled a general desire for the liberation of the Holy Land from the hands of the infidels. The popes encouraged this movement to the best of their ability... In 1073, the Greek emperor, Manuel VII, sent to supplicate the assistance of the great pope, Gregory VII, against the Turks... Gregory cordially responded, but circumstances prevented him from carrying out the vast expedition which he entertained into execution. (Vol. II, p. 593)

Jerusalem remained in possession of the Arabians, and was occasionally visited by Christian pilgrims from Europe till towards the year 1,000, when a general
belief that the second coming of the [Saviour] was near at hand drew pilgrims in unwonted crowds to the Holy Land, and created an impulse for pilgrimages thither which ceased not to act after the first exciting cause had been forgotten. The Moslem government, in order to derive some profit from the enthusiasm, imposed the tribute of a piece of gold as the price of entrance into the holy city. The sight of such large numbers, of the holy place in the hands of the infidels, the extraction of tribute, and the insults to which the pilgrims, often of the highest rank, were exposed from the Moslem rabble, excited an extraordinary ferment in Europe, and led to those remarkable expeditions for recovering the Holy Sepulchre from the Mahammedans which under the name of the Crusades, will always fill a most important and curious chapter in the history of the world. (McClintock & Strong, Vol. IV, 1981, p. 842)

The 1st Crusade (A.D. 1096-1099) was mobilized by the pope and a man called Peter the Hermit. This was accomplished as the result of two councils held in May and November of 1095. The 1st Crusade actually began in May of 1096. Walter the Penniless, a Burgundian gentleman, led an army of approximately 20,000 inexperienced soldiers. This army was later cut to pieces in Bulgaria (McClintock & Strong, Vol. II, 1981).

Peter the Hermit led another army, which was comprised of 40,000 soldiers and camp followers. This army was severely defeated by the Turks at Nice, which was the capital of Bithynia. A third attempt by the priest Gottschalk and 15,000 Germans was routed in Hungary. A larger army of 200,000 and led by counts and dukes, successively captured Nice [June 24, 1097], Antioch [June 3, 1098], and Jerusalem, itself [in July 15, 1098] (McClintock & Strong, Vol. II, 1981).

In the 2nd Crusade (1147), the Christians under the leadership of Louis VII of France and Conrad III of Germany led a combined army of 1,200,000 fighting men. The Turks destroyed Conrad’s troops at a location near Iconium. The army of Louis perished in the mountains of Pisidia. Both Christian armies were routed and returned home (McClintock & Strong, Vol. II, 1981).

In the 3rd Crusade (1189-1192), Salah-Eddin, a Kurdish chief, recaptured Jerusalem in 1187. This resulted in a combined expedition led by Frederick I of Germany, Philippe Auguste of France, and Richard the Lionhearted of England. This campaign ended in a treaty (McClintock & Strong, Vol. II, 1981).

The 4th Crusade (1203) was supported by pope Innocent III but this expedition also yielded little (McClintock & Strong, Vol. II, 1981).

The 5th Crusade (1228-1229), the 6th (1248), and the 7th (1270) Crusades were the final ones. By 1291, Palestine was again in the uncontested hands of the Saracens. A total of approximately 2 million Christians perished during the Christian Crusades to free Jerusalem from the Moslems (McClintock & Strong, Vol. II, 1981).

The Roman Church fought many battles against the Byzantine Church, Islam, and other Church factions. In addition, the various Roman Popes could not permanently wrest Jerusalem from the Arab grip. These facts would give just cause to question whether the Roman Church was the true “Kingdom of God” and was accomplishing God’s will. Such bellicose actions were a far cry from the kingdom that was spoken of in the parables of Jesus and in the Sermon on the Mount.
These mundane disasters might have led enlightened people to conclude that the leadership of the **popes was not infallible**" [that is, the Roman Church was not the true “Kingdom of God”, nor was it accomplishing the true will of God]. As mentioned before, the Roman Church’s later debacle in the matter with Copernicus (1473-1543) and Galileo (1564-1642) certainly removed any doubt about the Roman Church’s claim of infallibility.

Thus, the 1st millennium ended and the 2nd millennium began. The years continued without the “coming of the Lord” nor the liberation of the Holy Land. Such disappointments of the Roman Church, with its increased blatant corruption and gross violations of immorality set the stage for the inevitable “Reformation Movement of the 16th Century”.

(6.12) The “Reformation” of the 16th Century and the “Restoration” of the 19th Century

It is important to make mention of the Christian “Reformation” and Restoration movements, before the discussion of the chronology of the Moslem domination of Jerusalem continues. **It was the doctrine of the “Reformation Movement” that disintegrated the mundane power of the Roman Church.** Also, once the bonds of the Roman Church were broken, many Christian denominations continued to emerge within Christendom.

It appears that Martin Luther’s antagonism was directed against the papal theocracy and that his original desire was to restore the purer form of the Church of the early Middle Ages (Bainton, 1952). “On the eve of All Saints’ in the year 1517, when indulgences were again proclaimed in Wittenberg, Luther posted, on the door of the Castle Church ninety five propositions for debate, popularly called the Ninety-five Thesis” (Bainton, p. 38)

In response, Luther received an answer that reflected the attitude and power of the Roman Church at that time:  

**Whoever does not accept the doctrine of the Roman church and the Roman pontiff as the infallible rule of faith, from which the sacred Scripture derives strength and authority, is a heretic.** (Bainton, 1952, p. 41)

As the result, the breach between Luther and the Roman Church became a gap that could never be bridged. And thus, the **Protestant Reformation** began in Europe. In Luther’s view the pope was the anti-Christ (Bainton, 1952).

Other theologians, who were contemporary with Luther, also began preaching their new beliefs. These preachers included; Ulrich Zwingli (1519), and the Anabaptist preachers, who were the forerunners of the Mennonites and Hutterites. John Calvin and the doctrine of Calvinism emerged during mid-century. Many of these new religious groups viewed themselves as the “true elect” in the Kingdom of God that would triumph over the papal anti-Christ. **Therefore, it was commonly believed that the final judgment of God was imminent** (Bainton, 1952).

Moreover, another iteration of a different belief in the imminent end of the literal world was set in motion. And, of course, that expected event did not occur within that generation. Again, the expectation of Luther’s living generation
eventually dissolved with the passing of time. And, their interpretation of Biblical prophecy was also proven false.

To add to the confusion, the author of this study was taught another theory in the 1950’s. It was based upon the concept that, if the 1260 days [Rev. 11:2-3] quoted in the Book of Revelation were added to 325 A.D. [that is, the date of the council of Nicea], then the result was the date of 1585. Many Christian fundamentalists, in that era of the 1950’s, were still clinging to some of the “Reformation Doctrine”. Thus, this break with the Roman Church was associated with a fulfillment of the prophecies of Daniel [7:25, 12:11].

In addition, this great struggle was identified in the Book of Revelation, and was envisioned by some of the Restoration preachers as the conflict with the Catholic Church. However, a closer examination reveals that this interpretation appears to be one more unfounded interpolation of Scripture. This theory was later abandoned.

It is interesting to note that there are some amazing parallels between the history of Israel and the history of Christianity. Approximately 1500 years passed from the time of Moses to the establishment of the Church. From the establishment of the Church to the beginning of the “Reformation Movement” [which emerged about 1519] also was about 1500 years.

Both eras embraced an almost identical period of time. In addition, each of the similar periods of time ended in a state of apostasy, which was characterized by dogmatic traditions. Jesus preached His fiery sermons against the Jewish leaders for their unfounded human traditions and their Spiritual corruption. He even drove the moneychangers out of the Temple. This same pitfall would later occur in the Roman Church.

In the same way, the Roman Church officials had evolved to a similar level of decadence that rivaled the mundane power of the 1st Century Jewish leaders. There must be some lesson to be learned concerning this historical parallel. Even from the most ancient Old Testament times, God’s people could not seem to remain on the “straight and narrow” for very long periods of time. Perhaps this historical fact illustrates the “dualism” inferred from the Scriptures. Therefore, the fiery challenge of the religious traditions from the reforming religious zealots, must, of necessity, continue to remain as a vital Spiritual purging and cleansing action within Christendom.

Like the previous example of Judaism in the 1st Century, the credibility of the evolved traditions and doctrine of the Roman Church could not stand the test of “truth”. Moreover, the Spiritually minded zealots, from Martin Luther onward, would look beyond the Roman Church’s corrupt hierarchy and would continue to seek truth based upon the pure idealistic teachings of the Scriptures themselves.

The thrust of the later “Restoration Movement” was not concerned with the reforming of the Roman Church. Rather, this noble endeavor was envisioned as a movement “to get back to the Bible” and to completely restore 1st Century Christianity.

The main proponents of the “Restoration Movement” were; Thomas Campbell (1763-1854), his son Alexander Campbell (1778-1866), and Barton W. Stone (1772-1844). This movement claims its beginning in Lexington, Kentucky in 1832. This first meeting eventually spawned such groups as the Disciples of Christ, the Christian
Church, and the Churches of Christ. Barton Stone and Alexander Campbell became beloved friends on that first encounter. They formed an association that rejected all human creeds as evil and they adopted the Bible as the only worthy creed for Christians to believe and practice.

The teachings from Acts Chapter 2, concerning the establishment of the Church at Pentecost, was of primary interest. This led to the now dominant “Restoration” doctrine that the “Kingdom of God is the Church”. Thus, the “Kingdom” was also believed to be established on the day of Pentecost in A.D. 30-33 by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and by the preaching of the first Gospel sermon by the Apostle Peter (Hayden, 1909).

The “Reformation” and the “Restoration” movements began in Europe in the 16th Century, and they initiated what is now commonly known as the “Protestant Era”. All of these new “Christian groups” found great opportunity and experienced rapid expansion in America, especially during the 19th Century. It would appear that Providence was setting the stage for a Spiritual rebirth on a different continent.

It was the “Reformers” and the “Restorers”, who paved the way for the now powerful Spiritual force within America. The descendant’s of this movement are now a rich and influential force “to be reckoned with in the world order of things”. God has abundantly blessed these lovers of “Truth”. America is now considered the champion of “religious freedom”, scientific and academic advancement, the pursuit of truth, and the promoter of world peace, especially in Israel.

The love of truth must never yield to dogma or the pursuit of mundane power. If this happens, then the same end will be inevitable for us. Unless great care is taken right now, then these religious groups and the U. S. Government might similarly be destined to crumble from within, just like the examples of Rome and the Roman Church. In addition, it would appear that “the only thing that we learn from history is that we do not learn from history”. The struggle against Satan is apparently ongoing.

(6.13) The Moslem Domination of Jerusalem From 1291 To 1917

As the discussion of the history of Islam continues, it was the Mamuk (Mameluke) Sultans who ruled Jerusalem from 1291 to 1516. The Turkish Sultan Selim captured Jerusalem in 1517. From that time onward, Jerusalem remained part of the Ottoman Empire until 1917 (McClimtock & Strong, Vol. IV, 1981). It was during the time frame of the Ottoman rule that the Christian “Reformation” and “Restoration” movements experienced their beginnings in Europe and their rise to world influence in America.

(6.14) Modern Jerusalem

The city of Jerusalem remained under British control from 1918 until May 14, 1948. During this time frame, the Holocaust during World War II brought some of the greatest carnage and atrocities that the Jews have endured during their entire history (“The History of Israel”, 1998). The Holocaust, itself, might cause both Jews and Christians to ponder “what was the message from God,” and how do such events fit into the fulfillment of Biblical prophecy. The events of recent history can not be ignored and must also be reconciled with our understanding of God’s own will.
Then, finally, after almost 2000 years, Israel became an independent Jewish state on May 14, 1948. The 50th anniversary of Israel was observed in 1998 ("The History of Israel", 1998). However, even through the various wars of the last five decades, the Temple Mount, which contains the Moslem’s Dome of the Rock and the Al-Aqsa Mosque, continues to remained under the control of Moslem policemen and hence under the control of Islam.

Consequently, if Jesus was born no later than 4 B. C. to 1 B. C., then the 3rd millennium has already actually begun. Again, the expected end of the world did not occur. The Messiah did not arrive to rule over Israel and the Moslems did not lose control of the Temple Mount. The Christians are certainly not in control of the land of Israel. Thus, no discernible Biblical prophecy seems to relate to the present circumstances of the city of Jerusalem.

And thus, the site of the Jewish Temple still remains covered by the Moslem Dome of the Rock. Again, the expected fulfillment of prophecy [that is, "millennium fever"] appears to be unfounded as the living generation has already witnessed the transition into the 3rd Millennium.

Before we proceed further with speculations concerning the future, it is very important for Christians and Jews to thoroughly understand the Moslem religion and the related great importance of the city of Jerusalem to Islam. Dr. Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi, lecturer in Arabic and Islamic studies (University of Stirling), provides the interesting history and the fundamental beliefs of Islam that can be found on the Internet:

The history of this blessed city of Jerusalem is an ancient history whose roots go back into the depths of time. Its land is one of humanity's oldest homelands, both in prehistoric times and in successive historic ages. In addition, it has witnessed numerous civilizations that arose in it. God chose it above all other parts of the Earth. It was, for example, one of the oldest places in the world in which there was monotheism and divine messages were revealed. Noble prophets and messengers of God walked on its soil. Gabriel came down to it from Heaven bringing the divine commands to give to the people through these messengers and prophets. On its soil they preached the monotheistic faith. Feelings often run high over Jerusalem. It has always been and will continue to be a major concern for: Jews, Christians and Muslims. The history of Jerusalem has suffered distortion, falsification and alteration. Most of our historical researches, specifically those related to the history of Jerusalem before the Islamic conquest, are limited to biblical and orientalist studies. (Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi, Top Downloaded 20 Nov 98)

(6.15) The Meaning of Jerusalem to Islam

Jerusalem is regarded as a distinctive - if not the most distinctive - place on the Earth that differs it from any other places. This is because God has set it apart from all other places on Earth, specially honoring and glorying it. God has mobilized the souls, feelings and emotions of believers, attached their hearts to Jerusalem and made them yearn towards it. Jerusalem has been linked to the Muslims' faith, and it has come to represent a living image in their minds and
conception as a result of the numerous verses that were revealed about it in the Holy Quran, and because of the frequency with which the Prophet Muhammad spoke about it, enumerating its virtues and special features. (Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi, Downloaded 20 Nov 98)

Blessedness, here, as scholars have stated, is both physical and moral. Physical blessedness is represented - for example - in its exceptional strategic geographical location, the variety of its geographical features, and its numerous fruits. Its moral blessedness is represented - for example - in the fact that angels descended there and that the prophets preached and were buried there. It is the country where noble prophets as Jesus, David and Solomon were born, grew up and had their missions, or to which other prophets migrated, like Abraham and Lot, or where they were buried, as in the cases of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph and Moses. It is the country where the Prophet Muhammad prayed with the other prophets, as their Imam in Al-Aqsa Mosque on the night of his night journey and ascension, as Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal related in his Musnad, quoting Ibn 'Abbas. It is also the place where angels descended. Gabriel used to descend there from Heaven bringing divine instruction to God's prophets and messengers, so they would preach to humanity. Other angels used to descend there as messengers to carry out a specific task. For example, the Holy Quran states: "Has the story reached thee, of the honoured guests of Abraham? Behold, they entered his presence, and said: Peace! He said: Peace! Unknown people. Then he turned quickly to his household, brought out a fatted calf, and placed it before them. He said, will ye not eat? He conceived a fear of them. They said, fear not, and they gave him glad tidings of a son endowed with knowledge...". (51: 24-28) (Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi, Downloaded 20 Nov 98)

It has also been called the holy land because of the Islamic holy places that it contains, like Al-Aqsa Mosque, which Islam regards as one of only three places desirable to visit. Al- Bukhari and Muslim, in their Sahih collections of the Prophet's traditions, quoted Abu Hurayra as saying that God's Messenger said: "Set out deliberately on a journey only to three mosques: this mosque of mine (in Madina), the Sacred Mosque (in Makka), and Al-Aqsa Mosque." (Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi, Downloaded 20 Nov 98)

The Land of the Night Journey and the Ascension (Al-Isra' and Al-Mi'raj)

The Prophet Muhammad traveled to Jerusalem by night from Makka (the Sacred mosque), and ascended from there to the highest heavens. Jerusalem was the [centre] point for his earthly journey (the night journey) and the heavenly one (the ascension). It was the place where his night journey ended and his ascension began. As the Holy Quran states:

- 1. "Glory to who did take His Servant for a Journey by night from the Sacred Mosque to the Farthest Mosque whose precincts We did bless". (17: 1)
- 2. During the ascension, in which the Prophet saw Gabriel in his original form, "For indeed he saw him at a second descent, near the Lote-tree of the utmost boundary. Near it is the Garden of Abode. Behold, the Lote-tree was shrouded
with while shrouds. (His) sight never swerved, nor did it go wrong! For truly did he see, of the signs of his Lord, the Greatest!". (53: 13-18) (Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi. Downloaded 20 Nov 98)

The Center for the Future Islamic Khilafa

Jerusalem is the [centre] and [headquarter] for the future Islamic Khilafa (Caliphate) at the time when sufferings and strife intensify at the end of time. On this subject, the Prophet Muhammad stated:

- 1. Imam Ahmad quoted Ma'qal Ibn Yasar as saying that the Prophet had stated: "Tyranny will not be long in appearing after I am gone. Whatever tyranny appears, a like amount of justice will go, until people are born under tyranny who have never known anything else. Then God will bring justice, and whatever justice comes, a like amount of tyranny will go, until people are born under justice who have never known anything else." (12) (Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi, Downloaded 20 Nov 98) Top

The Land where the Dead Will be Raised and Gathered

This terminology can be found in many of the Prophet Muhammad's sayings, including:

- 1. Imam Ahmad in his Masnad quoted Maymuna daughter of Sa'd, a client of God's Messenger, as having said, "O Prophet, give us a pronouncement (fatwa) about Jerusalem." "The land where they will be raised and gathered," he answered. (17)

- 2. The Holy Quran says: "And listen the Day when the Caller will call out from a place quite near". (50: 41) Commentators say that the nearby place from which the Israfil will blow his trumpet is the rock in Jerusalem. In this land people will be gathered on the Day of Judgement, according to theological scholars.

To sum up, the Muslims' devotion to Jerusalem is not a result of earthly or colonialist aims, or a material desire to expand their rule and domination, nor is it based on false racist nationalist claims. It is this combination of special moral qualities that constitutes the main and fundamental reasons and the motivation for Muslims to be extremely concerned for Jerusalem, and to work to save and preserve it throughout the ages. (Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi, Downloaded 20 Nov 98) Top

In addition, the author of this study has gained a great deal of personal insight into both the Moslem history and their religion from the four years that he resided in Iran, from 1971 through 1976, in connection with the civil aerospace industry. He made two tours to Israel and Jerusalem, and has personally read the Koran and discussed the history and religion of Islam with his Moslem friends.

Perhaps some general conclusions can be drawn from the history of Jerusalem. The struggles of the Crusades by A.D. 1291, extended well beyond the beginning of the 2nd
millennium. Jerusalem was besieged many times by both Christians and Moslems. But, none of these struggles precipitated the expected end of the world or the expected coming of the Messiah.

However, the descendants of Ishmael [that is, the Moslems], the son of the Patriarch Abraham, have controlled the Temple Mount from 1291 until this very day. If the prophecy of Daniel [that is, the 1260 days] were applied as in Ezekiel [4:5] as a year for each day, then some might argue that the anti-Christ was the Moslem occupation of Jerusalem. However, as more centuries passed, even that theory had to be abandoned. As strange as it might seem, the author of this study is inclined to believe that the continued Moslem domination of the Temple Mount must, of necessity, be in accordance with God’s will. The continued “dualism” found throughout Israel’s history is evidenced here also.

From the Christian perspective of Paul’s allegory (Gal. 4:24-31), both Isaac, the child of promise [that is, the child of the Spirit] and Ishmael, the son of the slave, Hagar [the child of the flesh] buried their father, Abraham, at Hebron in the cave of Machpelah (Gen. 25:9). Christians believe that Abraham is still alive (Matt. 22:32, Luke 16:22-25) and that they will be united with him (Luke 13:28-29) after they are raised from the dead. By contrast, since the destruction of the Temple in A.D. 70, the New Jerusalem and the Eternal Temple in heaven, and not the Temple Mount in Israel, are the ultimate concerns of Christians.

The Moslems, on the other hand, are the direct descendants of Abraham, through Hagar. The Moslems have guarded the Temple Mount for centuries. An Islamic structure [that is, the Dome of the Rock] covers the site of the ancient Jewish Holy of Holies of Herod’s Temple. Islam also has preserved and protected the bones of the Patriarchs in Hebron since the Middle Ages.

It should become obvious that the providence of God has prevented the Jews from building another Temple in Jerusalem, and perhaps especially since that 1st Century Jewish generation rejected the Messiah. Jesus, Himself, prophesied of both the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple. Even Christians were not able to permanently hold the City of Jerusalem.

The beginning of the 2nd millennium in the time of the Crusades of the Middle Ages, and the Holocaust of World War II, were major events that many perceived would provoke the coming of the Lord and the final judgment. However, as the beginning of the 2nd and 3rd millenniums were ushered in, none of the expectations of those respective living generations were realized.

Some modern sectarian groups maintain that the “times of the Gentiles” [see Section (2.3.2)] has not yet been fulfilled. They maintain that a Jewish Temple will eventually be built on the ancient site.

The rebuilding of another Jewish Temple is very unlikely. In order for a Temple to be constructed, many acts of God and virtual miracles must first take place. Jews lost their tribal identity. Therefore, God would have to intervene and identify Levites to build and to serve in the Temple. And, of even of more mundane relevance, the Moslem Dome of the Rock would have to be demolished.

The demolition of the Dome of the Rock, by Jews, would unite all of Islam against Israel in the greatest Moslem holy war of all time. It would appear that this may be the reason why Israel has left the Temple Mount in the hands of Islam.
Orthodox Jews still will not venture onto the Temple Mount area in Jerusalem for fear of inadvertently transgressing the Temple’s Holy of Holies. Thus, Jews pray only at the Temple’s “Western Wall” [that is, the “Wailing Wall”]. Only by the direct intervention by God, Himself, or the complete disintegration of Islam, will a Jewish Temple ever be rebuilt on that ancient site.

(6.16) Summary of Historical Literature

The ancient historical references that have been discussed above in this chapter are sufficient evidence for the acceptance of the hypothesis that was stated early in this study. Therefore, the earliest insight of the author of this study, concerning the fulfillment of the Book of Daniel and Matthew Chapter 24 in A.D. 70, was also validated.

In addition, two of the primary goals of this study were to both associate and align the early Christian beliefs with the secular historical record of that same time period. The secular historical record provides the primary thrust and evidences in support of the hypothesis of this study. However, even with convincing proof it is, indeed, a formidable task to change the “traditions and mind-sets” of long established beliefs.

Moreover, the advancement and acquisition of new historical and scientific information has already brought about profound changes in the theology of Christendom. Furthermore, it has been the traditions, of both the Jews who opposed Jesus and the early Roman Church, and not the Scriptures that are in error. Top

All of the foundation, thus far in this study, was carefully laid to promote the understanding and the proper historical orientation of the Book of Revelation. Consequently, a summary and review of the major historical evidence, from Chapter 6, is presented here prior to the discussion of the Book of Revelation.

First of all, “The Epistle of Ignatius to the Magnesians” and “The Epistle of Barnabas” provide both 1st and 2nd Century testimony that the “Jewish Christians still wanted to worship on the Sabbath” for many years after that first Pentecost. Therefore, in the Church, for Jewish Christians, Sabbath worship was still an issue up until the early 2nd Century. This provides further evidence to support the view, that the ancient Jewish Christians did not perceive that the “fullness of the ‘the Kingdom of Heaven’ [see Matt. 16:27-28, Luke 21:31, Heb. 8:13. 1 John 2:17-18] came on Pentecost [A.D. 30-33]”. Worshipping exclusively on Sundays, or the first day of the week, was apparently established years later by Paul [Acts 20:7].

Consequently, there is a historical model inferred from the Scriptures that does appear to remove the obscurity from the establishment of the chronological events in Church history. In this view, the “Church is presented as the bride of Christ” (Eph. 5:22-32). Thus, Pentecost (A.D. 30-33) represents the betrothal or engagement, and the pledge of the intended marriage that was sealed by the “outpouring of the Holy Spirit” [see Acts 2:1ff, 1 Cor. 10-12, 2 Cor. 1:22]. Top

The “marriage of the Lamb” (Rev. 19:7), which resulted in the “consummation” or the “fullness of the Kingdom of Heaven”, and “the end of the Jewish age”, occurred 40 years later. The “consummation” is linked directly with the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 [see Dan. 12:1-13, Matt. 24:14-34, Luke 19:12-27, 21:20-32, Heb. 9:26]. The traditional mind-set places the “marriage of the Lamb” at the end of the literal world, thus violating the time-definite aspects of the Biblical prophecies.
The citations of early Christians, [Section (6.2.2)] found in “The Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius Phampilus” (1966), provide some of the most convincing evidence in support of the early dating of the Book of Revelation. The Jewish War began in the 12th year (A.D. 66) of Nero’s reign (Bk II, Ch. XXVI). The “great distress or tribulation” (Rev. 7:14) and the “abomination of desolation” were both associated with the war with the Romans that ended in A.D. 70 (Bk. III, Ch. V & VII).

Nero was the first Roman emperor that persecuted Christians. Both Paul and Peter apparently died in that first persecution in about A.D. 64 (Bk. II, Ch. XXV). Therefore, no genuine letter of either Peter or Paul was written later than their deaths in A.D. 64.

“The Works of Flavius Josephus” [Section (6.2.3)] provides even more convincing proof in support of the early dating. The Jewish War was the greatest war (Matt. 24:21, Dan. 9:12, 12:1) that had ever taken place up until that time (War, Preface, p. 605). Titus (the prince), the son of the emperor Vespasian, burned the Temple (Dan. 9:26) and entered the “Holy Place” [see Matt. 24:15, 2 Thess. 2:4] (War, Bk. VI, Ch. IV, 4-8). And, in addition, there were great signs [Matt. 24:3, 30] in heaven (War, Bk. VI, Ch. V, 2-4).

In Josephus’ perception, the “coming of the expected Kingdom” was the kingdom prophesied in the Book of Daniel, and it was associated with the Jewish War. This fact is of great importance to this study. Thus, in Josephus’ view, this prophecy was fulfilled within the time frame of the Jewish war.

But now, what did the most elevate them in undertaking this war, was an ambiguous oracle that was also found in their sacred writings, how, “about that time, one from their country should become governor of the habitable earth [Dan. 2:44].” (War, Bk. VI, Ch. V, 2-4, p. 824-825)

Josephus’ discourse on “Hades” provides one of the best arguments in support of the common belief that a “final resurrection” and a “Final Judgment” were not associated with the war that ended in A.D. 70.

The first century works of Cornelius Tacitus and Suetonius Tranquillas [Section (6.2.4)] provide the Roman sequels to Josephus’ account of the Jewish war. This further validates the early dating of the book of Revelation.

The contributions of Tacitus include the following: Rome was burned on the 19th of July A.D. 64, Nero blamed the fire on the Christians, and the first Christian persecution immediately followed [Section (6.2.4.1.1), Annals, Bk. XV, 39-40, 44]. Tacitus began his “Histories” with a discussion of the major events of A.D. 69 [“Four emperors perished by the sword (Dan 7:24). . . . There was success in the East, and disaster in the West. . . . The armies of Parthia were all but set in by the cheat of a counterfeit, Nero (‘death stroke healed’, Rev. 13:12)”] (Bk. I, 2-4, pp. 189-190). The “Beast from the earth” (Rev. 13:1-13) easily finds a literal historical fulfillment in Vespasian and Titus [Bk. II, 79 (A.D. 69)].

Like the citation from Josephus, Tacitus also mentioned the belief in the emergence of the “New Kingdom” at that very same time frame. Top
... in the ancient records of there priests was contained a prediction of how at this very time the East was to grow powerful, and rulers, coming from Judea, were to acquire universal empire [Dan. 2:44, 7:22, Luke 21:31]. These mysterious prophecies had pointed to Vespasian and Titus [Rev.13:11]. (Histories, Bk. V, 12-13, p. 298)

Suetonius [Section (6.2.4.2)] again mentioned the Jewish belief in a “New Kingdom” [“An ancient superstition was current in the East, that out of Judea would come the rulers of the world (Dan. 2:44). This prediction, as it later proved, referred to two Roman Emperors, Vespasian and his son, Titus (Rev. 13:11)""] (p. 276).

Suetonius [Table 2, Section (6.2.4.2)] listed Nero as the sixth emperor [“five have fallen, one is”, Rev. 17:10]. Vespasian and Titus were listed as the 10th and 11th emperors respectively (Dan. 7:20-22).

The book of 4th Ezra (2nd Esdras) adds even more continuity and credibility to the early view. This book provides more understanding of the Jewish expectation, which was linked to the Book of Daniel and to the similar imagery of the Revelation. The Book of Revelation appears to follow an almost identical parallel to the Book of 4th Ezra. The author of 4th Ezra and the Prophet, Jeremiah [50:1-51:64], both lamented the earlier destruction of Jerusalem and prophesied the later fall of Babylon. Top

If this same precedence was followed, then the author of the Book of Revelation similarly predicted the second destruction of Jerusalem [that is, A.D. 70] and the future punishment of Rome [that is, as a figure of Babylon (1 Peter 5:13, Rev. 14:8, 18:2)]. In this way the time-definite aspect of the prophecies of the Revelation remain understandable.

The Book of Enoch provides additional unity in the understanding of the Books of 2 Peter, Jude and the Revelation. Both the similarities of doctrine found in these books to the beliefs found in the Book of Enoch, as well as the direct quotation found in Jude and references in the Epistle of Barnabas, provide an important link to the first century Christian teachings. Even the Roman Tertullian [A.D. 194] maintained its authority.

Fragments of the Book of Enoch were also discovered among the Qumran writings. The common theme found in 2nd Peter Chapter 3, the book of Enoch, and in the Essene writings was the belief in, and an expectation of, the imminent destruction of the world by fire.

The Dead Sea Scrolls have, perhaps, provided the greatest evidence for the early dating of the Book of Revelation. The similarity of the Essene writings to the works of the Apostle John provides the most convincing proof of the early dating of the Book of Revelation. The discovery of the Essene writings in 1947 caused the later Greek Gnostic theory to be abandoned. Thus, the later dating [that is, A.D. 93-96] of the Book of Revelation, which was premised on the perceived later Gnostic influence, has been forever rejected. Top

The Epistle of Barnabas [A.D. 70-79] and the later Fragments of Papias [A.D. 130-140], without question, form the historical basis for either the early or later dating of the Book of Revelation. The historical narrative of the Epistle of Barnabas falls within the reign of the 10th emperor Vespasian. On the other hand, Papias’ narrative provides the primary basis for the later date during the reign of Domitian.
The Gospel of Thomas [A.D. 140] reflects a contrasting Spiritual view of a fulfillment that could easily be realized within the time frame of the “eyewitness generation”.

And finally, the historical overview from A.D. 70 to the present, reflects the remainder of the over 2000 year history of Christendom since the birth of Jesus. The important events include; the Crusades, the rise of Islam, the “Reformation” and “Restoration” movements, the Holocaust, and the establishment of the modern Jewish State of Israel.

However, none of these events precipitated the coming of the Messiah or the end of the world. Thus, all of the different perceptions and the different beliefs concerning the “Anti-Christ”, the “abomination of desolation”, and “the end of all things”, prove themselves wrong by lacking an associated Scriptural fulfillment.

In the author’s opinion, the historical evidence for a fulfillment during the reign of Domitian pales in comparison to the host of cited 1st Century historical evidences, which supports a fulfillment during the Jewish War that ended in A.D. 70.

(6.17) The Paradigm of Prophecy

There is one final key analytical task that must be accomplished prior to the discussion of the Book of Revelation. The confusion, fear, and intimidation, that was embodied in the nearly 2000 years of “tradition”, has clouded the focus of Christendom in regard to the proper understanding of Biblical eschatology, or the things of the end. The main tenants of this view, are that, the “coming of the Lord”, the “general resurrection”, the “destruction of the earth by fire”, and the “Final Judgment” will all occur only at one time somewhere in the future.

If this prevailing belief were true, then all of the time-definite Scriptures found in these Inspired writings should also reflect that same mind-set. However, they do not. Therefore as the spirit of the “Restoration Movement” continues, a paradigm must be reestablished that will accommodate all of the Scriptures as well as those historical facts and events that can proven to be true.

In 1968 the author of this study was simply baffled that the early “Restoration Movement” scholars had failed to perceive or to detect the parallels between the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple by the Babylonians in 586 B.C. and the Romans in A.D. 70. Foy Wallace, Homer Hailey, and others brought this fact to light in the first half of the 20th Century.

Thus the works of Wallace, Hailey and the others, who came before, provide the insights for this study to continue in the search for truth. It is the intent, thus far in this study, to prove that the Jewish, the Roman, and the Christian writers of the 1st Century have given ample testimony to support much of the fulfillment of prophecy concurrently with the war with the Romans that ended in A.D. 70.

This study has also discussed the two recent prevailing theories [they are, “only one coming at A.D. 70” or “two, one at A.D. 70 and one at the end of the world”] that attempt to unlock the mystery of the “end time prophecies”. Both views accept the fact that the Lord did come, or was present at, the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in A.D. 70 as He had previously appeared in 586 B.C. These opinions only appear to seriously conflict, however, on what will take place in the future.
The conflicting opinions that have been presented in the recent past remain in intangible “philosophical and theoretical deadlock”. Thus, the physical data, which was presented above in this chapter, might provide enough proof to break this deadlock. Whatever view is ultimately accepted must be based on the meanings derived from the following New Testament Scriptures. Some of them are very hard to comprehend [see 2 Peter 3:16].

In this regard, a review of some of the most important time-definite Scriptures will be presented here, prior to the discussion of the Book of Revelation. In addition, one general assumption has to be made in order to accommodate the only two possible alternative interpretations of Biblical prophecy.

The fulfillment of each of the following Scriptures must coincide with either the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 or with the “end of the literal world”. There are really no other logical or viable alternatives. Consider the following Scriptures:

"But whenever they persecute you in this city, flee to the next; for truly I say to you, you shall not finish going through the cities of Israel, until the Son of Man comes” (Matt. 10:23). [This could only literally be accomplished at A.D. 70].

"For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and WILL THEN RECOMPENSE EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS. 28 “Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who shall not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom” (Matt.16:27-28). [This could only be literally accomplished by A.D. 70].

Matt. 19:28, 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". [This one is not time-definite and could be applied to either event].

1 Thess. 4:13, But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve, as do the rest who have no hope.
14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus.
15 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, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. Top
16 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 shall rise first.
17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord. [Most theologians argue that this can only be accomplished at the end of the world since the Roman Church traditions have never acknowledged a visible coming and visible resurrection associated with the destruction of Jerusalem. See 2 Thess. 2:1-4, 1 John 2:17-18].
**2 Thess. 2:1,** Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our **gathering together** to Him,
2 that you may 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.**
3 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,**
4 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.**
[This Scripture, however, infers a “coming” and the “gathering” at the time that Titus entered the Temple (1 John 2:17-18) in A.D. 70].  (2 Thess. 2:2-4)

**2 Peter 3:7,** But the **present heavens and earth by His word are being reserved for fire,** kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.
10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which **the heavens will pass away with a roar** [see Matt. 24:36-36, only God know when “that day” will occur] and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the **earth and its works will be burned up.**  (2 Peter 3:7-10)

The Jewish sectarian groups maintained this exact literal anticipation of the **imminent destruction of the world.**  **That destruction did not occur.**  However, if the Book of 2 Peter was written by the Apostle Peter, then **the fulfillment must be interpreted as either figuratively fulfilled in A.D. 70 or it could be literally fulfilled in the future.**  In reality, nothing can be conclusively proven from this passage.

**1 John 2:17,** And **the world is passing away,** and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever.
18 Children, it is the **last hour;** and just as you heard that **antichrist is coming,** even now **many antichrists have arisen;** from this we know that it is the last hour.

This passage from the Apostle John is better explained by using the date of A.D. 70 (Titus caused the “abomination of desolation”, Dan. 9:26-27, Matt. 24:15, 2 Thess. 2:4).  **Moreover, the anti-Christ, according to the published Roman Church tradition, appeared during the reign of Domitian.**  **The date of A.D. 70 will satisfy and unify “most” of the time-definite aspects of the above Scriptures.**  Most of the Scriptures, as well as most of the early historical writings that were discussed in this chapter **anticipated the end of the world during the “eyewitness generation”.**  However, the expected fulfillment never materialized.

As the result, the Roman Church, in effect, created a **new paradigm** of prophecy by believing that the Lord delayed His coming [2 Peter 3:4].

Moreover, the author of the Epistle of Barnabas expected the “end of all things” **at that time during the reign of Vespasian, but it did not occur.**  If the Book of Revelation was written during the reign of Domitian, then the “end of all things” **would have to be completed later than A.D. 96.**

And subsequently, **almost every generation since that time has incorrectly associated the anti-Christ and the “end of all things” with the significant events and**
with the public figures within their own lifetime. This view has been perpetuated for almost nineteen centuries, but it cannot be right.

Perhaps it was the result of the apostasy of the Roman Church and the providence of God, just as in the time of King Josiah [2 Kings 22:8], that fostered the search for truth that had been lost for so long. As the result, the “Restoration Movement” provoked the righteous to once again ignore tradition and to try to understand the words of the Scriptures, just as they were written.

Moreover, the recent explosion of information and archaeological discoveries continue to provide better analytical methods that aid in the understanding of the history and the writings of the early Christian Church. This fresh look at the Scriptures, along with the massive historical evidence, continues to direct the paradigms of prophecy back to a fulfillment within the “eyewitness generation”.

Consequently, we know, without question, that the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple occurred on the same day in August in both 586 B.C and in A.D. 70. Obviously, the expected fulfillment regarding the destruction of Jerusalem is a well-documented historical fact.

However, the expected “end of the literal world” [Gen. 8:22] has not yet occurred. In view of all of the above internal and external evidences presented in this study, it is reasonable to conclude from the early Jewish and Christian writings, that much of the fulfillment of Biblical prophecy was accomplished during the Jewish War with the Romans.

From the abundant historical evidence presented in this chapter, the conclusion can easily be drawn that a “Divine Presence”[see Matt. 24:30, Luke 19:27, 43-44] appeared during the Jewish War of A.D. 70 as He had appeared during the destruction of Jerusalem under Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon in 586 B.C. This leads to the final conclusions and assumptions concerning the interpretation of the Book of Revelation.

The traditional Roman Church view supports the later date and assumes that the Revelation was written during the reign of Domitian. This view seeks a fulfillment in the later fall of Rome.

Another view assumes that there are two distinct “comings” of the Lord. One occurred in A.D. 70, and the other will occur at the end of the literal world. Thus, in this view, all of the time-definite passages can still be satisfied.

On the other hand, another distinct view assumes that there is but “one coming of the Lord” and that one occurred in A.D. 70. Thus, the conflicting difficult passages must be assigned “Spiritual” and “figurative” interpretations. And, the passages that are associated with “flaming fire” [2 Thess.1:7] and the earth being burned up [2 Peter 3:10-13] are interpreted figuratively as God’s wrath like fire [see Isa. 1:7, 13:13, 34:8-10, 66:24, Jer. 5:14,12:7-14, 21:10, 23:29, Lam. 1:13, 2:1-4, 4:11, Joel 2:10, Micah 1:1-7, Nahum 1:5-6, Zeph. 1:18, 3:1-8, Haggai 2:6-9, Zech. 14:1-11].

This type of figurative language can be found in the Old Testament prophets, many of which are within the context of a destruction of Jerusalem in either 586 B.C. or in A.D. 70. Most opponents to this view, however, find the future most unsettling and lacking in an ultimate fulfillment and final climax.

Moreover, some of the prophecies in the Books of the New Testament appear to conflict with the others. The New Testament Books of Jude, 2 Peter, and the Revelation all reflect the Jewish sectarian beliefs that are found in the library of
Qumran and especially in the Book of Enoch. The ancient testimony of Eusebius (Pamphilus, 1966) declared that many early Christians also believed that these three books were not genuine.

Thus, as difficult as it might be for some modern Christians to accept, the conflicting testimony from the dawn of Christendom would suggest that some of the writings might not be genuine. The Roman Church established the “cannon” in the Council of Nicea in A.D. 325. Therefore, only the doctrine that is found in those genuine Scriptures can be safely believed. The literal world was not burned up nor has there been a 1000 years reign.

Moreover, there is no way to verify the assumed Spiritual fulfillment of things in the past. The unseen things that might have happened in the past or the things that will still occur in the future, God has chosen not to reveal to the living. Assumptions that are made without verifiable evidence are at best just “educated guesses”. Some might be right but they also might be wrong.

In addition, “the future is still a mystery that continues to unfold with time”. Only God knows what will happen in the future. It would be a very difficult task to predict the actual past history of the world from A.D. 70 to the present day based on Biblical prophecy. In addition, the ingrained Judeo-Christian belief in the destruction of the earth by fire, which was attributed to Adam, is very difficult to ignore.

The testimony from Flavius Josephus speaks of Adam as having prophesied of two destructions of the world. One occurred as the result of Noah’s flood. Another destruction would be caused by fire. Apparently, these Jewish legends were not contradicted by either the teachings of Jesus or by the Apostles.

And, the most baffling thing of all, the early Roman Church failed to recognize the coming of Jesus at the destruction of Jerusalem, just as the Jews failed to recognize John the Baptist as fulfillment of Elijah [see Malachi 4:5, Matt. 11:14, 17:11-12].

As the result, the historical and scientific research that was presented in this study can only validate and verify the fulfillment of things that are past or the “revealed things”. The future still can not be predicted with any certainty. Those who have tried to predict the end of the world over the last 1900 years have all ended in failure.

However, the time definite aspects of prophecy and the abundant historical testimony still demand a fulfillment of much of these Biblical prophecies during the war with the Romans that ended in A.D. 70. Moreover, an alternative fulfillment [that is, the traditional Roman Church view maintained by the later dating of the Book of Revelation in A.D. 93-96] of these things, within the historically insignificant reign of Domitian, is most unlikely.

So what is the final answer? “There is no answer”. The future is still a “great mystery”. The best “perception and proof” comes from the Epistle of Barnabas, which was written shortly after the “critical period” of the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70:

Barn. 6:19, If then this cometh not to pass now, assuredly He spake to us for the hereafter, when we ourselves shall be made perfect so that we may become heirs of the covenant of the Lord.
The “logical” conclusion, therefore, based on all of the empirical evidence, must support “a dual paradigm of prophecy”. “Some things were definitely related to A.D. 70 and some things failed to occur at that time as “eyewitness generation” had anticipated. Thus, the expected final “end of all things” [Gen. 8:22] failed to occur in the 1st Century. This empirical fact was very confusing to Barnabas and the author of 2 Peter [see 2 Peter 3:4, 16] and it is still very confusing to Christian theologians today. But it might end the “deadlock”.

Again there are the two before mentioned possibilities. Either Christ delayed His coming or God had never intended for the literal earth to be destroyed concurrently with the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Thus, in actuality the destruction in A.D. 70 virtually maintained the same circumstances as when God had destroyed Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 586 B.C. Top

Thus, Barnabas and modern theologians are forced to conclude that the unfulfilled “final end” must somehow be connected to another separate event that is still anticipated to occur sometime in the future. This was the testimony of a devout Christian in the “eyewitness generation” immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. This is perhaps still the best solution for theologians today.

Therefore, the sentiments of the author of this study are expressed by the words of Moses:

Deut. 29:29, The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever, that we may observe all the words of this law.

This study was designed to identify and to discuss the “revealed things” that were fulfilled in A.D. 70. The actual circumstances concerning the “Final End” and the “resurrection of the dead” are still “secret things” that only God knows. “As long as the earth remains” [Gen. 8:22] mankind will still continue to ponder “how” and “when” it might end. Top

Matt. 24:35, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words shall not pass away.
36 "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone”.

(6.17.1) The Historical Model from the “Eyewitness Generation”

Based on both the internal evidence from Chapter 3 and the external historical evidence that was discussed in this chapter, the author of this study proposes the following theoretical model that could unify the prophecies from the Book of Daniel, Matthew Chapter 24, and the Book of Revelation. The conclusions listed below are assumptions made by the author of this study:

1. The historical perspective of the New Testament suggests that “The Gospel and the Book of 1 John” were written prior to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 [see Section (4.3)]. The “coming [Greek “parousia”, see Section
(4.4.3.4)], which was associated with the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple [2 Thess. 2:8-9] was viewed [1 John 2:28] as a future event. In addition, John was told by Jesus [John 21:22-23] that he would not die until this event transpired [that is, in A.D. 70].

2. The abundant historical testimony that has been carefully documented in this chapter indicates that all of the following references could easily find a literal fulfillment during the Jewish War between A.D. 66-70:

   a. The “Apostasy or the period of lawlessness” [see 1 Macc. 1:11, Matt. 24:12, 2 Thess. 2:1ff, 1 John 3:4, Barn. 4:1-9, Josephus, War, Bk. IV, Ch VI, 3, p. 758, see Section (6.2.3.3)].

   b. “The man of sin or lawlessness” [Ezek. 5:6-7, see the discussion on 2 Thess. 2:1ff in Section (3.5.14)]. This was literally fulfilled by Titus the son of the 10th Roman Emperor Vespasian [also see Josephus, War, Bk. VI, Ch. IV, 4-8].

   c. The abomination of desolation” [see Dan. 9:24-27, Matt. 24:15, Rev. 11:1-8, also see Josephus, War, Bk. VI, Ch. IV, 4-8].

   d. “Jerusalem being surrounded by armies” [see Luke 19:43-44, 21:20, Rev. 1:1-8]. This was fulfilled by the Romans. Jerusalem and the Temple were literally destroyed in A.D. 70.

   e. “The great tribulation” [see Dan. 12:1, Matt. 24:21, Rev. 7:14, also see Josephus, War, Preface].


   g. “The signs of heaven” [Matt. 24:30, see Josephus, War, Bk. VI, Ch. V, 2].

   h. The 10th and 11th horn of the 4th beast and the references in Daniel [7:20-25, 9:24-27, 12:1ff] were fulfilled during the Jewish War in A.D. 66-70. The Epistle of Barnabas [4:1-9] links the “season and works of lawlessness”, “the last offense”, “the ten reigns”, and the prophecy of Daniel [7:20ff] all with a fulfillment during the reign of the Emperor Vespasian.

Top Therefore, all of the prerequisites that Jesus, Himself, declared in Matthew Chapter 24, that must take place first, were literally accomplished by August of A.D. 70. Thus, “the falling away” [Matt. 24:10], “the time of lawlessness” [Matt. 24:12, 2 Thess. 2:], “the Gospel preached to the whole world” [Matt. 24:14, Col. 1:23], “the abomination of desolation in Daniel the Holy Place” [Matt. 24:15], “Jerusalem being surrounded by armies” [Matt. 24:15, Luke 21:20], “the great tribulation” or “days of vengeance” [Dan. 12:1, Matt. 24:21, Luke 21:22, Rev. 7:14], “the times of the Gentiles” [Luke 21:24, 1 Peter 4:3, Rev. 11:2], and the partial hardening” [Luke 21:24, Rom. 11:25ff] have all been documented in this study.

In addition, the Epistle of Barnabas provides a significant “Christian benchmark” as a comparison to the historical time frame of the Book of Revelation. The epistle [see Barn. 4:1-9 in Section (6.6)] makes specific references to the Book of Enoch, to the Book of 4th Ezra 5:3 [McClintock & Strong , Vol. III, 1981, p. 296, see Section (6.3)], and to the Book of Daniel.
The Epistle of Barnabas [4:1-9] further identifies the reign of the 10th king [Dan. 7:20], the “last offense”, and the “season of lawlessness” [Matt. 24:12, 2 Thess. 2:1ff] with the war with the Romans and the destruction of the Temple. The destruction of the Temple was identified as a recent past event [see Barn. 16:3-7] that was also associated with the prophecies of Daniel [that is, Dan. 9:24-27].

Moreover, as discussed in Section (6.4), the Book of Enoch, like 4th Ezra, evidently predate the beginning of Christianity. McClintock and Strong (Vol. III, 1981) state, “Notwithstanding the quotation in Jude, and the wide circulation of the book itself, the apocalypse of Enoch was uniformly and distinctly separated from the canonical Scriptures. Tertullian [A.D. 200-250] alone maintained its authority” (p. 226). It was Tertullian who associated the fulfillment of the prophecy of the “70 Weeks of Daniel” [9:24-27] specifically and by name with Vespasian. Top

Vespasian, in the first year of his empire, subdues the Jews in war. . . . And thus, in the day of the storming of the temple. . . . fulfilled the lxx [70] hebdomads [that is, the periods of seven] predicted in Daniel. (Roberts & Donaldson, Vol. III, p. 160)

The above discussion is sufficient proof to indicate that many early Christians were both aware of and were influenced by the Jewish sectarian doctrine of the “eyewitness generation”. In this regard, it can easily be inferred that the Books of Jude, 2 Peter, and the Revelation all contain doctrine similar to the contents of the Book of Enoch.

And finally, the doctrine in the Epistle of Barnabas and the reference from Tertullian [A.D. 194, see Table 3] confirm the intuitive position that that was taught by Foy Wallace (1966). The “last offense”, “the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple”, and “the 10th reign”, fulfilled the prophecies of Daniel. However, the “Final Judgment”, the “resurrection”, and the “final coming of the Lord” failed to occur in A.D. 70, and, thus, were assumed to be future events. Consequently, this was a well established belief from A.D. 70 to 250 [that is, from the 1st through the 3rd Centuries].

Therefore, the comparison of the Epistle of Barnabas with the Book of Revelation supports the validity of the “earlier dating” hypothesis of the Revelation that is linked to the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in A.D. 70.

And finally, it is the A.D. 70 scenario that is the valid scenario proposed by the author of this study. A more detailed comparison of the contents of the Epistle of Barnabas will be discussed in the commentary of the Book of Revelation in the next chapter of this study. Top

Now that all of the ancient historical evidence has been identified and a valid historical model has been hypothesized and documented with abundant historical evidence, the next chapter will proceed with the formidable task of deciphering the Book of Revelation.

2006 Postscript

The attack of the World Trade Center on September 11, 2006 has set in motion another iteration of the belief that our own living generation will witness the end of the
In the author’s opinion, the attack by radical Islamic activists was an attack on America as the “Great Satan” mainly because of our support of Israel. It appears that this conflict is part of the continued struggle that has been going on between Christianity and Islam for centuries. Whether this has any relationship with the fulfillment of Biblical prophecy is still a mystery [Deut. 29:29].

Both Christianity and Islam believe they are God’s chosen people and each believe that they will be saved by their respective Messiahs. However, the concept of the Christian and Islamic Messiahs are radically different. From the Jewish and Christian historical perspective God has always punished his people who have drifted into apostasy and unbelief. And in many ways America has rejected the guidance and protection of God and may indeed have become the “Great Satan”.

In addition, consider again the principles taught by Paul in the Book of Galatians [4:21–31]:

Gal. 4:21, Tell me, you who want to be under law, do you not listen to the law?
22 For it is written that Abraham had two sons [see, “God’s covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob” in Section (2.1)], one by the bondwoman and one by the free woman.
23 But the son by the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and the son by the free woman through the promise.
24 This is allegorically speaking: for these women are two covenants [Heb. 8:1-13], one proceeding from Mount Sinai bearing children who are to be slaves; she is Hagar.
25 . . . Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to the present Jerusalem [at the “end of the age” (Luke 13:34-35)], for she is in slavery with her children.
26 But the Jerusalem above is free [Heb. 11:16, 12:22, 13:6]; she is our mother.
27 For it is written, "REJOICE, BARREN WOMAN WHO DOES NOT BEAR; BREAK FORTH AND SHOUT, YOU WHO ARE NOT IN LABOR; FOR MORE ARE THE CHILDREN OF THE DESOLATE THAN OF THE ONE WHO HAS A HUSBAND" [Isa. 54:1]. [This provides another wonderful example of the “duality principle” and that the “Heavenly Jerusalem” is the ultimate fulfillment of prophecy and the final destination for Christians].
28 And you brethren, like Isaac, are children of promise.
29 But as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit [Matt. 10:17, Acts 8:1ff], so it is now also.
31 So then, brethren, we are not children of a bondwoman, but of the free woman. (Gal. 4:21-31)

This again relates to the “Duality Principle”. The Jerusalem above is the final destination of true believers and the righteous are taught to endure adversity in order to achieve it. It is the ungodly and children of the flesh who fight over the earthly Jerusalem.
Thus, will this iteration of apostasy and turmoil precipitate the end of the world within our own generation or bring about the end to Israel? Probably not. However, the best advice is still found in Ecclesiastes [1:9, “That which has been is that which will be]. If God permits the world to continue it will be because of the righteous true believers. The Biblical principles established in the “long ago” still apply today.

Even the Church that is associated with the “Restoration Movement” is falling into apostasy. The Church as it fails to keep God’s word is resorting back to the man-made doctrines that were rejected at the beginning of the Restoration Movement. God’s people have always had a choice. It all goes back the principles of the “Blessings and the curses” that were taught by Moses [Deut. 28:45ff]. Perhaps the deciding factor in our own generation “is for good men to do nothing”. The words of Hoshea [4:6] still apply. “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge. . . .”
CHAPTER SEVEN
(7.0) THE BOOK OF REVELATION

Chapter Seven Topic Headings:
(7.1) The Historical Background (Go there)

Chronological Table 2 of Early Christian Writers (Go there)
(7.1.1) The Later Dating (A.D. 93-96) of the Book of Revelation (Go there)
(7.1.2) The Early Date (Before A.D. 69) of the Book of Revelation (Go there)
(7.1.3) The Internal Historical Orientation of the Book of Revelation (Go there)

The Twelve Caesars, Table 3 (Go there)
(7.2) Revelation Chapters 1 – 5 (Go there)
(7.3) Revelation Chapters 6 – 10 (Go there)
(7.4) Revelation Chapters 11 – 15 (Go there)
(7.5) Revelation Chapters 16 – 19 (Go there)
(7.6) Revelation Chapter 20: The Binding of Satan and the 1000 Years’ Reign (Go there)
(7.7) Revelation Chapters 21 and 22: The Fulfillment in the Heavenly Zion (Go there)

(7.1) The Historical Background

John 3:1, Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews;
2 this man came to Him by night, and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."
3 Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."
4 Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?"
5 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. (John 3:1-5)

In the author’s view, the two most important questions to be answered concerning the Book of Revelation are: 1. “Who wrote it”? and 2. “When was it written”? The answers to these two questions have a profound impact on the interpretation and the fulfillment of Biblical prophecy.

Christendom has traditionally ridiculed the traditions of the Jews because Jewish traditions had evolved into rituals and practices based on the human perception that failed to keep the intent of the Law and because the Jews perception failed to recognize Jesus as the Messiah. Except for the fairly recent Messianic Jewish movement, Judaism still looks to the future for the coming of a Messiah other than Jesus of Nazareth.

As difficult as it might be to accept, Christendom, through the centuries, may have fallen into that very same pitfall of human tradition and failing to understand the true meaning of Biblical prophecy as it is actually written in the Old and New Testaments.
The time-definite aspects of such passages as Matthew [16:27-28, 24:1ff, Luke 21:1ff, and Mark 13:1ff] and many others as well as the secular historical record, continue to be overlooked in order to maintain the future fulfillment mindset of the Book of Revelation.

Some of the theologians of the early Roman Church evidently failed to grasp the concept of an unseen “Spiritual Kingdom of God” and the meaning of the events that took place in the Jewish war that ended in A.D. 70. Therefore, the Roman Church did not fully understand the “coming of the Kingdom”. The same was true concerning the 1st Century Jews who failed to recognize “John the Baptist” as the fulfillment of the prophecies concerning Elijah [see Malachi 4:4, Matt. 11:14, Mark 9:1-13, Luke 1:17] and Jesus as the Messiah. Traditional perceptions are hard to overcome.

Being “born again” and the “Kingdom” that Jesus established are “Spiritual” experiences. There is no country in the world since A.D. 70 that can be called the “Kingdom” as it was under the Law of Moses in Israel. Thus the Kingdom that was taken away from the Jews (Matt. 21:43) is now realized through the Church as a world-wide “Spiritual Kingdom” that is “Not of this World” (John 18:36). Thus, the “Kingdom of Heaven” was prepared before the foundation of the world (Matt. 25:34). Christians in the earthly Church will be delivered up to the “Heavenly Kingdom” as the final “Spiritual” destination.

For the most part, Christendom has failed to realize that Jesus taught a doctrine of a “Spiritual Kingdom” [Luke 17:20ff]. That Spiritual realm can only be seen by “Spiritual eyes” [for examples see, Jacob (Gen. 28:12-17), Elisha (2 Kings 2:1-11, 6:17), Stephen (Acts 7:55ff) and Paul (Acts 9:1-8)]. The ultimate fulfillment of this kingdom can only be inherited after death by the believers who are themselves, Spiritual [John 3:3].

In retrospect, perhaps among the greatest failings of the Roman Church were that it did not fully understand the mystery of the Kingdom of Heaven, nor did it understand “when” and “how” it was to be fulfilled on earth. It appears that the Catholic Church, after 1500 years of the evolution of traditions, lapsed into apostasy and the very same pitfalls of wealth, power, human traditions and extreme moral decadence that rivaled the Jews [the wicked generation] that Jesus personally drove out of the Temple in Jerusalem. At least the “Restoration” preachers recognized this problem and placed the establishment of the Messiah’s Kingdom within the time-frame of the “eyewitness generation” (Matt.16:27-28) on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Jesus.

Therefore, the purpose of everything discussed thus far in this study has been to methodically and carefully present Scriptural and historical background information for deciphering the Book of Revelation. From the author’s perception, the logical conclusion, from all of the historical research and Biblical prophecy presented thus far, suggests a fulfillment primarily within the context and time-frame of the great Jewish War with the Romans from A.D. 66-70.

Of great importance to the outcome of this study are the dating, the authorship of the Revelation. The “who” that wrote it has a profound impact upon the authenticity and Inspiration of the Book of Revelation.
Perhaps the best introduction to the Book of Revelation is to review the related historical testimony, which was recorded about 325 A.D. This literature, which is found in “The Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius Pamphilus”, is over 1600 years old. A commentary on this work is included in Chapter 6, Section (6.2.2) of this study. The importance of the works of Eusebius is that his writings referenced much earlier writers [see Table 3 from Section (6.2.2) and again inserted below], and thus much earlier Christian writings and beliefs.

Eusebius [Pamphilus, 1966, Section (6.2.2), (Book III, Chapter XXVIII)] makes reference to Irenaeus [A.D. 205] who suggested that the Revelation was written in the 15th year of the reign of Domitian, which is the strongest argument for the later dating of the Revelation. This, of course, forms the primary material and tradition in support of the later date [that is, A.D. 93-96] of the Book of Revelation.

### Chronological Table of Early Christian Writers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 96</td>
<td>1st Year of the Emperor Nerva who followed Domitian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 98</td>
<td>Clement of Rome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 107</td>
<td>Ignatius dies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 117</td>
<td>Hegesippus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 166</td>
<td>Justin’s and Polycarp’s martyrdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 180</td>
<td>Clement of Alexandria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 194</td>
<td>Tertullian writes his Apology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 205</td>
<td>Origen and Irenaeus die</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 230</td>
<td>Hippolytus of Rome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 250</td>
<td>Dionysius of Alexandria, his writings from circa A.D. 256 to 295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 295</td>
<td>The schism of Nepos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 324</td>
<td>Constantine the sole master of the Roman world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 325</td>
<td>The Council of Nicea</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Pamphilus, The Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius Pamphilus (1966, pp. 474 - 478)

In Book III, Chapter XXIV and in Book III, Chapter XXV there are more references that state that the authenticity of the Book of Revelation was in question by early Christians. Clement of Rome, as early as about A.D. 98, discussed how many disputed the validity of the Book of Revelation.

Book III, Chapter XXVIII and Book III, Chapter XXXIX provide lengthy discussions as to the identity of the possible authors of the Revelation. Ancient opinions as to the authorship of this book ranged from Cerinthus the heretic, to another John the elder, and to the Apostle John, himself. The Apostle John was believed by the ancients to be the unquestioned author of only the Gospel and the Book of 1st John (Pamphilus, 1966).
Eusebius’ work (Pamphilus, 1966), in Book VII, Chapter XXV, entitled “The Apocalypse of John”, provides the most pertinent information that the Revelation was probably not written by the Apostle John. And, moreover, that the Revelation was either very difficult or impossible to understand in a “literal sense”.

This perception may become a “stumbling block” and be very difficult for modern “Christian fundamentalists” to accept. The current beliefs, that all of the New Testament Books were “Inspired” and were written by the Apostles who’s name were included in the titles, did not emerge until many centuries after the Church was established. The documented fact remains that many of the earliest Christians did not believe that the Book of Revelation was written by the Apostle John.

Thus, in the interest of “academic and objective honesty”, the opposing views should also be identified and rationally discussed. If the Apostle John did not write this book, then many of the doctrinal beliefs, which are unique to 2 Peter, Jude and the Revelation can be easily reconciled as the influence of the contemporary Jewish sectarian doctrine [see Chapter 6, Section (6.17.1)]. On the other hand, if the Revelation was written by the Apostle John after the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 [see Rev. 11:1-8], then the book is still fraught with problems that are not easily explained.

Therefore, the authorship, the genuineness, the time frame, and the correct perception of either a “literal or a figurative interpretation” greatly impact the fulfillment of the prophecies found in the Book of Revelation. Thus, the interpretation hinges upon both its authenticity and the date that the book was actually written. It must be remembered that Eusebius (Pamphilus, 1966, Bk. III, Ch. XVIII) brought to light the ancient belief that the anti-Christ already had been revealed in the 15th year (that is, A.D. 96) of the 12th Roman Emperor Domitian.

If this is true, then the author of the Revelation expected “the end of all things” to occur during the second Christian persecution in the reign of Domitian. Conversely, this interpretation conflicts with the view that was held by the author of the Epistle of Barnabas [see Chapter 6, Section (6.6)].

Although the Epistle of Barnabas was not considered Inspired, it is a very early Christian historical document that was believed to be written shortly after the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. The Christian author expected the “last offense” to occur during the reign of Vespasian, who was the 10th Roman Emperor [see Dan. 7:20ff and Sections (3.2) and (6.6)]. Moreover, the profuse historical evidence, which was presented in Chapter 6 of this study, supports the “early date” theory. But it would tend to reject the “later date” theory in the reign of Domitian [that is, the 12th Emperor].

In either case, none of the very earliest Christian beliefs placed the fulfillment of the prophecies in the Revelation beyond the reign of the Emperor Domitian. This fact seems to have been forgotten by the Christian theologians throughout the centuries. Theologians, through the centuries, invariably continued to place the “appearance of the Anti-Christ” [see 1 John 2:18, 22, 4:3] farther and farther into the future.

Therefore in the author’s opinion, the most important task is to correctly identify the historical time frame to which the prophecies were intended to apply.

(7.1.1) The Later Dating (A.D. 93-96) of the Book of Revelation
The proponents of the later date theory (that is, A.D. 93-96) defend the position that the book was written more than 20 to 26 years after the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Therefore, they conclude that the book alludes to the Christian persecution that occurred during the reign of the 12th Emperor, Domitian. This traditional view, of course, completely overlooks any reference to the war with the Romans in A.D. 70 (Rev. 11:1-8); and, instead, is oriented to some other Spiritual struggle of the Church. This view draws heavily from the traditions and assumptions of the early Roman Church.

This same kind of interpretation was reflected by Homer Hailey (1979) and by Jim McGuiggan (1978) in their respective books. They interpret the struggle in the Revelation as a battle between Rome and the Church. Hailey sets the date of the Revelation between A.D. 91-96. Hailey’s scholarly view is based, primarily, upon the traditional historical references of the early Roman Church [they are, Justin Martyr (A.D. 110-165), Irenaeus (A.D. 120-202), Clement of Alexandria (A.D. 153-217), Tertullian (A.D. 145-220), Origen (A.D. 185-236), Hippolytus (A.D. 170-236) and others. See Table 2 above].

On a very personal note, the author of this study was acquainted with Homer Hailey in the late 1960’s, and was the beneficiary of the wisdom and understanding of this learned and Godly man. He always will be held in the highest personal esteem by the author of this study. He was still with us when the first revision of this study was published in 1999 but he has since passed on a few years later.

However, the insight and historical basis for this study, which was developed in the 30 years since that first encounter with Homer Hailey, are primarily based on much research and older historical data. The references in this study predate Hailey’s sources, in some instances, by as much as 200 years. This analytical study was based upon the historical research of the much older Jewish, Roman, and early Christian historical writings. These works include the Book of Enoch, 2nd Esdras, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the contemporary writing of Flavius Josephus, Cornelius Tacitus, Suetonius Tranquillas, the Epistle of Barnabas, and others. These works were introduced, quoted, and discussed in Chapter 6 of this study.

Moreover, Jim McGuiggan (1978) states, “I believe the book to have been written in the later years of Vespasian, the ninth Roman emperor” (p. 10). In addition he states, “The seven kings mentioned are Augustus, Tiberius, Gaius (Caligula), Claudius, Nero, Vespasian, Titus. The first five had fallen [Rev. 17:10] when John wrote the epistle. Vespasian was the ruler” (p. 247).

The incorrect modern delineation of the Roman rulers is a common error that is made in many commentaries on the Book of Revelation. However, this listing does not agree with the listing of the historians in the 1st Century. Both Josephus and Suetonius list the twelve Caesars as referenced in Table 2 above.

In reality, Vespasian was known by the 1st Century historians Josephus and Tacitus to be the 10th emperor. More importantly, Suetonius Tranquillas (1957) [author of The Twelve Caesars, see Table 2] lists Vespasian as the 10th Roman emperor (A.D. 69-79) [Dan. 7:20]. Therefore, the four emperors, Nero, Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, all died within the one year civil war [Dan. 2:41, 7:20] period, which was called “the year of the four emperors”. Suetonius’ listing illustrates the more accurate ancient delineation of the Roman rulers and it supports more succinctly the narrative of Daniel Chapter 7.
Thus, Vespasian’s sons, Titus (A.D. 79-81) and Domitian (A.D. 81-96) were listed as the eleventh and twelfth emperors respectively. It is a historic fact that it was Titus, the prince [11th emperor], who entered the Temple in Jerusalem [see Dan. 9:26-27, Matt. 24:15, 2 Thess. 2:4]. Titus was present when the “great city” [Jerusalem, Jer. 22:8, Rev. 11:8] was literally burned to the ground.

In addition, a footnote in Josephus (p. 836) mentions that it was shortly after the burning of the Temple in A.D. 70, that the foundations of Jerusalem were literally dug up [“Zion will be plowed like a field”, Micah 3:12, Jer. 26:18]. Most of these references were discussed in Chapter 6 of this study.

From a different perspective, some Christian sectarian groups throughout the centuries, and even today, argue that the New Testament is a stand-alone mystical document, and that the Old Testament prophecies have no connection or bearing on its interpretation or future fulfillment. Thus, when the expected coming of the Lord was not recognized during the Jewish War with the Romans then, of necessity, another different theological explanation and paradigm was adopted. One such conclusion was that the Lord had delayed His coming [see 2 Peter 3:1-10]. Therefore, the Book of Revelation must, of necessity, relate to things yet future when the Lord will come back to establish the Kingdom, execute the “Final Judgment”, “raise the dead” and then “destroy the earth by fire”. This conclusion and tradition has held sway in Christendom for many centuries.

The historical time frame of the traditional later date (that is, A.D. 93-96) was also very carefully researched for many years by the author of this study. That view must be subsequently rejected because it does not follow the historical continuity of the Old Testament Scriptures and the other early Church historical data.

Moreover, the views of the Roman Church run contrary to the established 1st Century Jewish perceptions of things, which are similar to the concepts that are found in the Book of Revelation. The expectations identified in the Dead Sea Scrolls and the exacting time frame of the Epistle of Barnabas [see Section (6.17.1)] have also been overlooked. And, most importantly, this view totally disregarded the historical impact of Jesus’ own prophecies (see Matt. 16:27-28, Chapter 24, Luke Chapter 21, and Mark Chapter 13).

In addition, the internal historical references in the Revelation fail to align with any other discernible period of history after A.D. 70. It does not appear reasonable that the fulfillment in the Book of Revelation would run contrary to the profuse contemporary Jewish and Christian perceptions. If the Revelation is a stand-alone prediction of future events, then it truly is not decipherable.

There is still another possibility to be considered. If the Revelation was actually written during the reign of Domitian, then the “final end” was anticipated to follow during the Christian persecution that occurred during his reign. Theoretically, this belief might still place the “coming of the Lord” [Matt. 16:27-28, Rev. 1:7] barely within the extent of the “eyewitness generation”. This alternative is, of course, pure speculation. However, this view still fails to reconcile the reference to the destruction of Jerusalem [see Rev. 11:1-8], which would have already occurred.

However, the imminently expected “final end of the world” ultimately did not come about in A.D. 70, or during the reigns of either Vespasian or Domitian, and it did not occur at A.D. 1000 [that is, the 1st Millennium milestone]. As the result, almost every generation since the “eyewitness generation” has subsequently believed that
the “final end” and the “coming of the Lord” would occur during their own living generation. These resulting continuously changing views should both alert and alarm modern theologians.

Therefore, since A.D. 70, many different major religious struggles over the last 1900 years were incorrectly associated with differently presumed anti-Christ’s. Each of those political or religious leaders since the time of Domitian, such as Mohammed, the Pope, and even Adolph Hitler, that were identified as the anti-Christ, invariably proved to be wrong.

Such inconsistencies led the author of this study to pursue further historical research. Recent archaeological discoveries have produced ancient historical texts such as the Dead Sea Scrolls and others that shed much new light on this ancient subject. The recent discoveries provide profuse new evidence that shatters many of the long-standing “traditions” and “sacrosanct opinions”. Again, the primary focus and guiding insight for this study came from the Lord, Himself:

Luke 21:31, “See to it that no one misleads you”, (Matt. 24:4) and “But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation [the great city”, Jer. 22:8, Rev. 11:8] is at hand”. Even so you too, when you see these things happening, recognize that the kingdom of God is near. 32 ‘truly I say to you, this generation [‘Some standing here’, Matt. 16:27-28] will not pass away until all things take place.

Therefore, based upon all of the ancient historical evidence and testimony, it is not likely that John the Apostle wrote the Book of Revelation. There are few similarities between the Revelation and the Gospel and the Book of 1 John. The Gospel and 1 John were books believed by the early Church to have been written by the Apostle John. If the Book of Revelation was written after A.D. 70, then its prophecies appear both incoherent and abstract from the earlier Jewish and Christian teachings [see Section (6.17.1)].

Moreover, if the prophecies of the Revelation were written after A.D. 70, they are not consistent with the earlier expectations, which are found within the parallel Gospels. Even the writings of the Jewish mystics and the Christian Epistle of Barnabas [see Section (6.17.1)] are clearly oriented to the war with the Romans that ended in A.D. 70.

By contrast, the author of the Revelation was making reference to the obvious prophecies from Daniel, which appear to be literally fulfilled by A.D. 70. Perhaps this is why the Revelation has for so long been viewed as so illusive, so confusing and so controversial. In addition, there is this “most earth shaking opinion” of all from antiquity, that the Revelation might even be a self-serving clever forgery of Cerinthus, the heretic (Pamphilus, 1966).

Thus, it would be very difficult to make the genuine prophecies of the Book of Daniel, the teachings of Jesus, and the understanding of the Apostles conform to the period of the reign of Domitian or to any other future period in history.

In addition, there are the close ties of the doctrine reflected in the Revelation to the known Jewish sectarian beliefs. It is well known that the Book of Enoch and the Dead Sea Scrolls, which were written before A.D. 70, were oriented to the desolation of Jerusalem and to the “wicked generation”, and not to the fall of Rome.
This makes it very difficult to associate the Jewish expectation to the fall of Rome instead of Jerusalem. Perhaps the author of the Revelation was even re-applying the earlier expectations that were anticipated against Jerusalem to be applied later to Rome. In any case, the actual historical record is more closely aligned with a fulfillment in A.D. 70.

John was certainly one of the most Spiritually evolved of all of the Apostles. His teachings were clearly oriented to the similar expectations of the Essenes, which, in turn, were oriented to the Jewish War with the Romans. How could the Apostle John find such a contrary fulfillment in the historically insignificant reign of Domitian?

And, not only this, the reference to the 1000 years’ earthly reign of the Messiah reeks of the Jewish sectarian doctrine found in the Book of Enoch and in the “Dead Sea Scrolls”. The historical orientation of these other contemporary Jewish writings certainly refer to the destruction of Jerusalem, and not to the city of Rome. Thus, it was Jerusalem and certainly not Rome that was actually completely destroyed in the 1st Century.

Moreover, the Roman Church has always regarded the belief in the “millennium reign” as a heresy (Pamphilus, 1966). In actuality, there certainly is no historical evidence to support an actual fulfillment of such a belief. Christianity is approaching its 2000th birthday without the literal fulfillment of this Jewish sectarian belief.

(7.1.2) The Early Date (Before A.D. 69) of the Book of Revelation

At first glance, the internal evidence found within the Book of Revelation suggests an origin prior to A.D. 70. Thus, the Revelation would follow the historical continuity of the prophecies of the Book of Daniel and the Gospels of Matthew (24:1ff), Mark (13:1ff), and Luke (21:1ff).

Who wrote the Revelation is still in question. The Apostle John might still have been alive [see John 21:19-23] in A.D. 70. Although the references to the Emperors (Rev. 17:10ff) are similar to the prophecies of Daniel [Chapter 7], there are still some slight differences.

The early date theory is obviously in much better harmony with the Holy Scriptures and with the Jewish expectations. Also, the Book of Revelation’s internal historical orientation [that is, Nero, the 6th Emperor, Rev. 17:10] logically predates the Epistle of Barnabas [see Section (6.6)], which was believed to be written between A.D. 69-79, and thus, during the reign of [Vespasian] the 10th Emperor.

The Revelation appears to be inseparably linked to the same contemporary imminent expectations that are found in the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Book of Enoch. None of the Dead Sea Scrolls appear to date past A.D. 68. The early date is much better aligned with the known genuine prophecies of Jesus and the Apostles. In addition, the internal historical references in the Revelation appear to be oriented with the time frame of the mid-A.D. 60s and to the Jewish War.

However, whether the book was actually written prior to A.D. 70 or whether it was written in retrospect during the reign of Domitian is, in actuality, very difficult to determine. As Eusebius pointed out, there is also the possibility that the Revelation was propagated by Cerinthus (Pamphilus, 1966). Thus, great caution should be
employed before basing Christian doctrine solely on the highly controversial Book of Revelation.

(7.1.3) The Internal Historical Orientation of the Book of Revelation

Before this study proceeds further with a more detailed commentary of the Book of Revelation, it is also important to identify some of the internal evidences within the Book of Revelation, itself, that support the dating of this book.

It has already been discussed how Eusebius (Pamphilus, 1966) stated that the earliest Christians believed that the “great tribulation” was the war with the Romans. The reference, to the “great tribulation (Rev. 7:14)” [see Dan. 9:12, 12:1, Matt.24:21] satisfies the requirements of the three and a half years war [Rev. 11:1-8] that ends with the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 [“the great city. . . where also their Lord was crucified” (Rev. 11:8)]. The listing of the kings “five have fallen (Claudius), one is” (Nero), A.D. 54-68, Rev. 17:10, see Dan. 7:19ff] is sufficient to identify the historical date within the period of the reign of Nero. See Table 2 below.

THE TWELVE CAESARS

1\textsuperscript{st} Julius Caesar, Afterwards Deified (12 July 100 B. C. - 15 March 44 B. C.)  
2 Augustus, Afterwards Deified (B. C. 27 - A.D. 14)  
3\textsuperscript{rd} Tiberius (14 - 37 A.D.)  
4\textsuperscript{th} Gaius Caligula (37 - 41 A.D.)  
5\textsuperscript{th} Claudius, Afterwards Deified (41 - 54 A.D.)  
6\textsuperscript{th} Nero (54 - 68 A.D.) [The Revelation written (early date, five have fallen, one is Rev. 17:10)]  
7\textsuperscript{th} Galba (69 A.D.) [1\textsuperscript{st} horn fell, Dan. 7:20]  
8\textsuperscript{th} Otho (69 A.D.) [2 horn fell, Dan. 7:20]  
9\textsuperscript{th} Vitellius (69 A.D.) [3\textsuperscript{rd} horn fell, Dan. 7:20]  
10\textsuperscript{th} Vespasian, Afterwards Deified (69 - 79 A.D.) [The Great Jewish War ends 70 A.D.]  
11\textsuperscript{th} Titus, Afterwards Deified (79 - 81 A.D.) [The 11\textsuperscript{th}, “little horn” waged war, Dan 7:20-21]. (See 2 Thess. 2:4, “takes his seat in the temple of God). [Titus entered the Temple in Jerusalem in August of A.D.70 just before it was burned to the ground].  
12\textsuperscript{th} Domitian (81 - 96 A.D.) [Book of Revelation (late date)]. (Domitian was not Deified [see 2 Thess. 2:4] and he did not enter the Temple in Jerusalem).


Thus, the interpretation of the Book of Revelation is better satisfied in terms of the great Jewish War from A.D. 66 to 70, than with the later reign of Domitian. If these observations are correct, then the prophecies of the Revelation logically must predate A.D. 68, which was the year that Nero (the 6\textsuperscript{th} Caesar, Rev. 17:10) died.

In addition, the Book of Revelation appears to follow an almost identical parallel to the Book of 4\textsuperscript{th} Ezra [see Chapter 6, Section (6.3)]. The author of 4\textsuperscript{th} Ezra and the
prophet Jeremiah [50:1-51:64] lamented the earlier destruction of Jerusalem [that is, 586 B. C.] and spoke of the later fall of Babylon. If this same precedent was followed in the 1st Century, then the author of the Book of Revelation was predicting the second destruction of Jerusalem [that is, A.D. 70] and the future punishment of Rome [as a figure of Babylon (see 1 Peter 5:13, Rev. 14:8, 18:2)].

In any case based on both the internal historical evidence and the later traditions of the Roman Church, the only possible extremes for the writing of the Book of Revelation must range exclusively within a period of 42 years. The beginning of the period must be established as A.D. 54, which was the first year of Nero’s reign [6th Emperor, Rev. 17:10]. The end of the period is set at A.D. 96, which is the traditional date of authorship that was maintained by the early Roman Church traditions.

In addition, an analysis of the pertinent known significant historical events that occurred during this period [that is, between A.D. 54-96] would logically provide some empirical insight as to the possible date of fulfillment. The previously discussed historical works of Josephus, Eusebius, Tacitus, and Suetonius Tranquillas recorded the primary dates of such significant events.

First of all, within this target period there was the first Christian persecution in A.D. 64 under Nero. In A.D. 64, Peter and Paul were slain shortly after Rome was burned. The Jewish War began in Nero’s reign in A.D. 66. The war was initiated by Vespasian [he was the future 10th Emperor]. Vespasian was Nero's General at the time, leading the war against Israel. The great Roman civil war broke out in A.D. 69. This civil war marked the only time in Roman history, up until the 5th Century, that Rome was a divided kingdom [see Dan. 2:41]. [See Chapter 6 of this study for the actual historical references].

And moreover, it was Titus [who later became the 11th emperor], the son [the prince, Dan. 9:26ff] of Vespasian, who was the Emperor Vespasian’s General that ended the war in A.D. 70. It was Titus who destroyed the Temple and the city of Jerusalem [see Dan. 9:24-27, Matt. 24:15, Luke 21:20, Rev. 11:8, also see Chapter 6 of this study].

In addition, Titus was the very last Gentile ruler [that is, the “abomination of desolation”] to ever set foot in the Temple at Jerusalem, itself [see Matt. 24:15, 2 Thess. 2:4]. And, by contrast, if the author of the Revelation was expecting the imminent destruction of Rome as the “great city”, then it certainly did not occur anywhere near that historical time frame of the 1st Century and within the “eyewitness generation” [Matt. 16:27-28].

As the study proceeds, it is very difficult and very confusing to try to follow the logic and the intent of the prophecies of the Revelation from Chapter 14 through the remainder of the book. The correct determination of the true identity of the “great city” [Rev. 11:8, 16:19, 17:18, 18:10, 16, 18, 19, 20] is not that simple. However, the phrase, “fallen, fallen is Babylon” [Rev. 14:8, 18:2] may be the key in selecting the date of the Book of Revelation.

It is a very complex task to determine whether the “great city” and “BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH (Rev. 17:5)” was intended to apply to Jerusalem [Jer. 22:8, Rev. 11:8] or Rome [Dan. 4:30, 1 Peter 5:13]. The further elaboration of this problem is
discussed in greater detail in the commentaries of the texts in which these phrases appear. If the city was Jerusalem, then an early date before A.D. 70 must be concluded. If Rome was intended, then the later traditional date is more probable.

In addition, the possible writers (that is, John the Apostle, John the Presbyter, or Cerinthus the heretic) of the Book of Revelation were identified by Eusebius (Pamphilus 1966, Bk. VII, Ch. XXV) in his discussion of “The Apocalypse of John”. If the Revelation was written after A.D. 70, then the author would logically expect all of the figurative language and Biblical prophecy to point forward to an imminent fall of Rome within the “eyewitness generation”. This, of course, did not happen.

The central historical theme and unity of Jewish history and prophecy can be found within the Book of Daniel. Nebuchadnezzar’s vision in Daniel Chapter 2 and Daniel’s own parallel vision, recorded in Chapter 7, intuitively provide the insight into the world order of things as taught by Jesus and the Apostles. The prophecies spoken by Daniel, which were later confirmed by Jesus [Matt. 24:15], reflect the true Top understanding to which the prophecies of the Book of Revelation must ultimately yield.

In this respect, the four beasts, which were identified in Daniel Chapter 7 were the four ancient world kingdoms [they were, the Babylonians, the Medes and Persians, the Greeks, and the Romans that comprised Nebuchadnezzar’s great image (see Dan. 2:31ff)]. These kingdoms ruled over the Jews from 586 B.C. to after A.D. 70. During the latter time [that is, the feet and toes, Dan. 2:41] of the 4th beast [that is, Rome], that kingdom would become “a divided kingdom” [that fits very well with the corresponding Roman civil war of A.D. 69 (Dan. 2:41, 7:24)]. Top

The reign of the 10th horn [that is, Vespasian’s reign from A.D. 69-79] corresponds perfectly to the time of the “last offense” of the Epistle of Barnabas [4:3-5, Barnabas [see Section (6.6)]. Thus, the image would be smashed [“Fallen, fallen is Babylon”, Jer. 51:7-8, Rev. 14:8, 18:2] by the “Stone”, which represents Christ [see Rom. 9:33, 1 Peter 2:7-8]. Then, the [Church] saints [that is, primarily Gentiles] would take possession of the kingdom” (see Dan. 7:22, Matt. 16:27-28, 21:43, Luke 21:31-32).

Since Jerusalem, the Temple, 1st Century Temple worship, and the “Jerusalem Church”, were destroyed, then A.D. 70 marked the true shifting of power to the Gentile Church. This is another powerful historical fact in support of this hypothesis. The Jewish Church in Jerusalem vanished during the war with the Romans. This prophetically took place about 40 years [that is, after the death of the generation of unbelief, which was similar to the time of Moses and Joshua] after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit [Acts Chapter 2] on Pentecost A.D. 30-33.

However, it would take another 250 years [until 325 A.D.] before this process would be complete and pagan Rome would fully accept Christianity as the state religion. The city of Rome, itself, would not literally fall again until about the year A.D. 455. The Vandals sacked the city in that year (McClintock & Strong, Vol. X, 1981).

In A.D. 70, the great harlot [that is, Israel and Jerusalem, Ezek.16:1ff] and the Jewish Temple were literally destroyed and burned by the Romans. The “abomination of desolation [Titus, the son (Prince, Dan. 9:26) of the Emperor Vespasian” (Dan. 9:24-27, 12:7, 2 Thess. 2:4)], which was prophesied by Jesus, Himself, and the Apostle Paul, literally entered the Temple in Jerusalem [“Therefore
when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet standing in THE HOLY PLACE” (Matt. 24:15).

The Apostle Paul later taught that the “man of lawlessness (2 Thess. 2:3)” would “take his seat in the temple of God” (2 Thess. 2:4). The Apostle John also wrote, “Children it is the last hour; just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have arisen; from this we know it is the last hour” (1 John 2:18). Therefore, there is certainly no apparent reason to look to the future for another anti-Christ.

It is an established historical fact that after the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, the Jerusalem Church vanished from history, and that it was the Gentile (Roman) Church which began to “fill the [whole] earth with fruit” (Dan. 2:35 and Matt. 21:43). The “mustard seed” [see Matt. 13:31, Mark 4:31, Luke 13:19], which was planted at Pentecost [Acts 2:1ff] continued to grow. Pagan Rome began its decline. And, by the time of the Emperor Constantine, Christianity had conquered Rome.

A different form of Christianity than what was taught in the 1st Century then became established as the official state religion. It was Constantine who convened the Council of Nicea in A.D. 325. This council, in effect, formed the basis for the power of the unified Catholic Church and the Papal hierarchy (McClintock & Strong, Vol. II, 1981. p. 487).

Thus, from the first Pentecost after the “resurrection of Jesus”, the redeemed [elect, and first fruits] in the Church of Christ, became the citizens of an unseen Spiritual Kingdom of Heaven [Philip. 3:20] that replaced the physical kingdom of Israel [Matt. 21:43]. That Eternal Kingdom [Heb. 12:22-23], praise the Lord, will indeed continue forever and ever (Dan. 2:34-44).

As mentioned above, in the commentary of 1st Corinthians Chapter 15, this study does not include a complete verse-by-verse commentary of all of the text of the Book of Revelation. The contrasting views relating to the possible fulfillment of these events, for the time being, have been adequately presented by Homer Hailey (1979), Jim McGuiggan (1978), Foy Wallace (1966), Max King (1971 and 1987), Arthur Ogden (1985), and many others.

However, the one unquestioned unity and single theme common among Wallace, King, Ogden, and the author of this study is that, without question, much of the Book of Revelation was fulfilled during the “Great Jewish War” with the Romans from A.D. 66-70.

In view of the above discussion, the main purposes of this study are to provide to modern Christianity the actual abundant external historical evidences, and to incorporate that literature within this single volume. These historical references verify the actual fulfillment of Biblical prophecy. Thus, the logical conclusion of this study demands a fulfillment of most of these prophecies within an A.D. 66-70 time frame.

A powerful case for the fulfillment in A.D. 70 is based on the following data. The primary source must always be those Scriptures, which are unquestionably known to be genuine. The Book of Daniel and Matthew Chapter 24, as well as the historical facts presented in Eusebius, Tacitus, Josephus, the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Book of Enoch, the Epistle of Barnabas, the Gospel of Thomas and others are all aligned with the Jewish
War with the Romans. All of these ancient sources solidly support the A.D. 70 hypothesis.

This forgotten ancient historical evidence, most assuredly, will affect the modern Church in the same way that Galileo and Copernicus affected the Roman Church. The evidence represents strong support for the hypothesis of this study. These facts are much too overwhelming to ignore any longer. Ultimate truth will always eventually triumph. However, one of “truth’s” most difficult tasks is to release the grip of “human tradition” and “ingrained mindsets”. The search for truth must always be the goal of education and research. The “Restoration” of Biblical truth is an ongoing process and not one single event.

It is also true that the Books of Jude, 2nd Peter, and the Revelation all contain concepts and ideas similar to the Jewish sectarian beliefs, which were found within the Qumran library.

This may be the reason why many of the early Christians considered the Revelation as spurious. Other early Christians believed that the author of the Revelation was John the Presbyter. A discussion and commentary of some of the most important references in the individual chapters of the Revelation that are of particular interest to this study will follow.

The purpose of the following detailed commentary of the text of the Book of Revelation is to illustrate the Revelation’s strong connection to the Book of Daniel, to the other Old Testament prophecies, and to the pre-Christian Jewish sectarian writings. The fulfillment of these prophecies was discussed in Jesus’ teachings in Matthew Chapter 24.

Jesus’ teachings correspond perfectly to the historical links found in the Apocrypha of the Bible, to the teachings of the Dead Sea Scrolls and to the Book of Enoch. They conform to the exacting time frame of the Epistle of Barnabas [see Chapter 6, Section (6.6)], to the writings of Eusebius, Josephus, Tacitus, Suetonius Tranquillas and to the other early historical records. All of the previously discussed Biblical and non-Biblical materials provide the many time-definite references that establish the historical links to the period of the Jewish War from A.D. 66-70.

The question that this study can not answer is what was fulfilled in the unseen Spiritual realm [see Eph. 6:12] during the war with the Romans that ended in A.D. 70. This study also can not provide answers to what will actually happen in the future [Deut. 29:29].

Questions concerning a “1st Century resurrection” [see Ezek. 37:9ff, Dan. 12:2, Eph 4:8, 1 Peter 3:19, 4:6], as to whether or not “Hades” was emptied, the “final resurrection”, the “Day of Judgment” and the “final coming of the Lord” are all hidden from the sight of the living and, thus, remain “secret things”. Conversely, the historical record, or the “revealed things” in this study, overwhelmingly support the A.D. 70 hypothesis.

(7.2) Revelation Chapters 1 - 5

The passage from Revelation Chapter 1 indicates a 1st Century fulfillment. Whether the Book of Revelation was written before, or after, A.D. 70, there can be no doubt that the writer of the Revelation expected an imminent “coming of the
Lord” [Matt. 16:27-28]. However, the only historical support for a “coming [parousia, see Section (4.4.3.4)] of the Lord” within the period of the possible authorship of the Book of Revelation [that is, from A.D. 54 to 96] is, of course, A.D. 70 [see Section (4.4.3)]:

Rev 1:1, The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must shortly take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John. . . .
3 Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things, which are written in it; for the time is near.
4 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;
5 and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the first-born 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,
6 and He has made us to be a kingdom, priests [1 Peter 2:9] to His God and Father; to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.
7 BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS [Matt. 16:27-28, 24:30], and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him [Jews]; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. Even so. Amen.
8 "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."
9 I, John, your brother and fellow partaker in the [great] tribulation [see Dan. 9:12, 12:1, Matt. 24:21, Rev. 7:14] and kingdom and perseverance which are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos, because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.
10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day. . . .
11 saying, "Write in a book what you see, and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea." (Rev. 1:1-11)

The serious Bible student should recognize the obvious absence of Colossae and Hierapolis (Col. 1:2, 4:13) from the list of the seven Churches of Asia. Presently, there is only scanty evidence to resolve this problem. The 1st Century Roman writer, Tacitus (1952) pointed out, “One of the famous cities of Asia, Laodicea, was that same year [A.D. 62] overthrown by an earthquake, and without any relief from us, recovered itself by its own resources” (Annals, Bk XIV, p. 148).

Due to the close proximity of Laodicea, Colossae and Hierapolis might also have been destroyed in A.D. 62, or the Christian population might have abandoned these cities for other reasons. In any case, there is no mention of the Churches in Colossae and Hierapolis in the Revelation.

The historical perspective for the events listed in Chapter 2, concerning the "Nicolaitans", overwhelmingly favor the early date. Clement of Alexandria [A.D. 180, see Table 2] was quoted by Eusebius (Pamphilus, 1966) and stated that Nicholas, the proselyte from Antioch [Acts 6:5] was believed to be one of the seven deacons very
early in Church history. In addition, the persecution of the Christians [also see Rev. 3:9ff] by the Jews (Acts 8:1ff) was much more likely before the Jewish War. Before the war, the Jews were still powerful. But, after the war when Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed and the powerful Sanhedrin court was abolished, the Jews had no place to bring their captives, as Paul had previously done [see Acts 9:2].

Rev. 2:1, 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 lampstands, says this: . . .
6 'Yet this you do have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans [Section (6.2.2), Eusebius, Book III, Chapter XXIX, identifies Nicholas (one of the deacons in Acts 6:5) as the author of this heresy], which I also hate.
7 To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.' . . .
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 [note the connection to Jewish persecution at Smyrna, see Acts 8:1]. (Rev. 2:1-9) Top

Chapter 3 makes reference to other known genuine New Testament references. Notice how the passages and the accompanying references are all time-definite and are linked in the context to an imminent coming of the Lord.

Rev. 3:3, If therefore you will not wake up, I will come like a thief [see Matt. 24:43, Luke 12:33, 1 Thess. 5:2, 2 Peter 3:10, Rev. 16:15], and you will not know at what hour I will come upon you. . . .
7 "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: He who is holy, who is true, who has the key of David [Matt. 16:19ff] . . . .
9 I will cause those of the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews, and are not, but lie-- behold, I will make them to come and bow down at your feet. . . .
10 . . . 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 upon the earth. [Note that this would be worldwide in scope. The worldwide Roman civil war of A.D. 69 was such an event. See Section (6.2.4.1.2), Tacitus, (1952), “Histories”, Bk. I, 2-4].
11 'I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, in order that no one take your crown.
12 'He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God [Heb. 9:11ff], and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem [Zech. 14:2-11, Gal. 4:25ff, Heb. 12:22ff], which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name.
13 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'
14 "And 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: . . . (Rev. 3:1-14)
In Chapter 4 it is easy to find many of the previously discussed similarities found in Ezekiel Chapter 1 [see Section 3.4.5]. There is also the direct quotation in verse 8 from Isaiah [6:3], “Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord God, the Almighty”. Both of the Old Testament references concern previous physical judgments of God against the Jews. In Ezekiel the same figurative language was used to announce the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon [586 B.C.], as does the Revelation to announce the destruction by the Romans. This direct parallel, concerning the language used to announce the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C., is a powerful argument in support of the A.D. 70 hypothesis.

In addition, in Chapter 4 [Rev. 4:10-11] it is reasonable to conclude that twelve of the elders, who sat on the thrones, were the Apostles, themselves [see Matt. 19:28].

Chapter 5 verse 1 follows the similar parallel from Ezekiel [2:8-10] as a sealed book of judgments against the Jews prior to the first destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. The kingdom [Rev. 5:10] is, no doubt, the mature universal Church of Christ and includes both Jews and Gentiles [1 Peter 2:9-12] shortly before the expected day of visitation.

The expectation [Rev. 5:10] was that Christians “would reign upon the earth” [1 Peter 2:9-12]. Consequently, it is more logical to view this passage in terms of the context of the destruction of Jerusalem [see Dan. 7:22, Matt. 16:27-28, Luke 19:11, 27, 43-44, 21:31, Rev. 21:1-5] at the end of the Jewish age [that is, in A.D. 70]. The traditional interpretation of the end of the literal world does not fit the context here.

(7.3) Revelation Chapters 6 - 10

A few things can be gleaned from Chapter 6. When the text [that is, Deut. 28:45-61] is compared to Chapter 6, references are made to the literal fulfillment of Moses’ prophecy. The reference [Rev. 6:6, “A quart of wheat for a denarius”] is an obvious similar reference to the ancient siege of Samaria [2 Kings 7:1ff]. Here the author implies according to the words of Moses, that Jerusalem would, and literally did, experience the exact same circumstances during the siege by the Romans.

In the siege of Samaria and the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 586 B.C., the Jews ate their children. In the siege by the Romans in A.D. 70, the Jews, were also driven by hunger to literally eat their children [see Deut. 28:53, 2 Kings 6:24ff, Jer. 19:7ff, Ezek. 5:5ff, and Josephus (War, Bk. VI, Ch. III, 4)]. The reference to Josephus was previously discussed in Section (6.2.3) of this study.


Rev. 6:15, And 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;
16 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 [see Luke 23:27-31, Hos. 10:8];
17 for the great day of their wrath has come [that is, like Jerusalem before in 586 B.C., Lam. 2:1-4]; and who is able to stand?" (Rev. 6:15-17)
The sealing of the righteous Jews from the different tribes in Chapter 7 is better explained by the A.D. 70 view. The parallel account in Ezekiel [37:9ff, see John 5:25-30] and Jesus’ teachings on the “resurrection” link all of these references to each other. It is also interesting to note [Rev. 7:5] that “Judah”, according to Zechariah [12:7], **would be saved or sealed first**. This, in effect, links the prophecy of Zechariah [12:2-7, 14:1-11] to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

There is a very similar reference to those clothed in **“white robes on Mt. Zion”** [Rev. 7:9, 14:1-5, 19:14 and in 4th Ezra [2:40-48].

The often overlooked **“great tribulation” (Rev. 7:14, see Enoch 1:1ff)** in verse 14 is one of the strongest evidences for the A.D. 70 hypothesis. It provides a definite link to both Daniel’s [9:12, 12:1] and Jesus’ own prophecies in Matthew [24:21] concerning the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

And of great important to this study, the early Christians, themselves, also believed that this “great and incredible distress” was associated with the “abomination of desolation” that occurred during the war of the Jews with the Romans. The early Christians associated this belief with the writings of the historian, **Josephus**. See Section (6.2.2) [Eusebius Pamphilus, 1966, Bk III, Ch. V].

If the same interpretation is applied to the reference in Chapter 8:7-12 [“and a third of the earth was burned up”] and in Rev. 9:15-18 as it was in Ezekiel [5:12] and in Zechariah [13:8], then all of these references easily relate to a destruction of Jerusalem.

Chapter 9 is very difficult to decipher with any certainty. However, there are a few possible references that might be linked to the Old Testament. **The “star fallen from heaven” (Rev. 9:1)** appears to refer to Isaiah [14:12 (see Luke 10:18)]. It was traditionally applied to the fall of Satan.

**“The seal of God on their foreheads” (Rev. 9:4)** is similar to the passage from Ezekiel [9:4-8], which is another clear reference to God pouring out His wrath on Jerusalem.

It is also interesting to note that the **actual siege of Jerusalem by the Romans lasted “five months”** [Rev. 9:5].

The reference to **“locusts” (Rev. 9:7) and “the teeth of lions” (Rev. 9:8)** appears to gain their imagery from Joel [1:4-6 and 1:15] in which conquering nations bring destruction in terms of **“the day of the Lord is near” (Joel 1:15)**.

And, of course, **“the angel of the abyss” (Rev. 9:11)** is apparently linked to the Book of Jude [6ff] and to 2 Peter [2:4ff], which is further linked to the teachings of the pre-Christian **“Book of Enoch”** [see Section (6.4)].

**“The three plagues” [which are fire, smoke, and brimstone (Rev. 9:18)]** were part of God’s continuing judgment [see Deut. 29:23-25, Psa. 11:6, Isa. 34:8-10]. They were not limited to one single occasion, nor did the plagues mentioned here [Rev. 9:20] cause a “final end”.

**Chapter 10** lends great support for the A.D. 70 scenario since the connection to all of the Old Testament prophets and especially to Daniel are firmly established. Please follow the author’s notes in this text:
Rev. 10:1, And 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;
2 and he had in his hand a little book [see Dan. 7:10, 12:4-11, the book to be opened at the “end time”] which was open. And he placed his right foot on the sea and his left on the land; . . .
5 And the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land lifted up his right hand to heaven [see Deut. 32:40 and Dan. 12:7],
6 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 shall be delay no longer, [Note! Dan. 12:9, “Go your way Daniel, for these words are concealed and sealed up until the end time”. What was sealed in Daniel’s time was now to be revealed. The “abomination of desolation” (see Dan. 9:27, Matt. 24:15, 2 Thess. 2:4) was easily literally fulfilled by Titus at the siege of Jerusalem in August of A.D. 70].
7 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. [The Apostle Peter’s teaching after the first Pentecost (Acts 3:24, “all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and his successors onward, also announced these days”) clearly links the fulfillment of prophecy to the “coming of the Lord (Matt. 16:27-28) in the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70”].
8 And the voice which I heard from heaven, I heard again speaking with me, and saying, "Go, take the book which is open in the hand of the angel who stands on the sea and on the land."
9 And I went to the angel, telling him to give me the little book. And he said to me, "Take it, and eat it; and it will make your stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey." [Compare this verse with the account of Ezekiel (2:8-3:3) which relates to the Jews just prior to the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B. C. by the Babylonians. Both prophecies are almost exactly the same].
10 And I took the little book out of the angel's hand and ate it, and it was in my mouth sweet as honey; and when I had eaten it, my stomach was made bitter [Ezek. 3:3].
11 They said to me, "You must prophesy again concerning many peoples and nations and tongues and kings. [Note! This is still not a final end]. (Rev. 10:1-11)
Rev. 11:1, And there was given me a measuring rod like a staff; and someone said, "Rise and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and those who worship in it. [A review of Ezekiel (40:3-43:27) and Amos (7:8-9) indicates how the command to “rise and measure” was clearly a prelude to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 586 B.C. This type of language was used in other judgments in Israel’s history. The same application appears here before the destruction of Herod’s Temple by the Romans].

2 "And 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. [See the comments on, “The time of the Gentiles” in Section (2.3.2)].

3 "And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for twelve hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth." [Daniel (7:27, 9:24-27, 12:11) provides the insight for the three and a half year period of the “tribulation” (Dan 12:1, Matt. 24:21) that would end with the “abomination of desolation” (Dan. 9:12, 12:11, Matt. 24:15)].

4 These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth. [See Zech. 4:4-15, “the two anointed ones”. The reference to “grace, grace” (Zech. 4:7), can be interpreted as the administration of Jesus (John 1:17-17)].

7 And 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. [It would appear that the author of the Revelation is following the continuity of the Book of Daniel. If this is so, then the beasts in the imagery of the Book of Daniel (2:31-45 and 7:3-27) are the Gentile nations (that is, from the Babylonians to the Romans). Pagan Rome (that is, Nero, Vespasian, and his son, Titus), whose allegiance is, of course, to the “Devil”, makes the war against both Jews and Christians (Dan, 7:21-22). All of this is perfectly aligned with early secular history].

8 And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city [Jer. 22:8] which mystically is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified.

9 And 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.

Authors Note. From the Book of Lamentations, the “cause-and-effect” precedent set at the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonian’s, clearly provides the understanding for this passage in the Revelation. See the discussions on the references to the Book of Lamentations in Sections (2.3.8) and (3.4.4). The “great city” in this passage clearly is Jerusalem (Jer. 22:8, Luke 13:33-35) where Jesus was crucified.

The gathering of all the nations against Jerusalem was prophesied by Zechariah (12:1-6, 13:8-9, 14:1-10) after the first destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians. Therefore, Zechariah’s prophecy is perfectly aligned with the war with the Romans [see Rev. 11:1-8]. In addition, note the quotation from Josephus:
Manneus, the son of Lazarus came running to Titus at this very time, and told him that there had been carried out through that gate, which was entrusted to his care, no fewer than a hundred and fifteen thousand eight hundred and eighty eight dead bodies, in the interval between the fourteenth day of the month Xanthicus [Nisan] when the Romans pitched their camp by the city and the first day of the month of Panemus [Tamus]. This was itself a prodigious multitude. . . . though all their burial was but this, to bring them away, and cast them out of the city [see Rev. 11:1-8] . . . and that no fewer than six hundred thousand were thrown out at the gates, though still the number of the rest could not be discovered; and told him further, that when they were no longer able to carry out the dead bodies of the poor, they laid their corpses on heaps in the very large houses, and shut them up therein; as also that a medium of wheat was sold for a talent [see Rev. 6:6 and 2 Kings 7:16ff]. . . . (War, Bk. V, Ch. XIII, 7, pp. 806-807)

Rev. 11:11 Continued, And after the three and a half days [like previous judgments, see Hos. 6:2, 11] the breath of life from God came into them, and they stood on their feet. . . .

12 And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here." And they went up into heaven in the cloud [1 Thess. 4:16-17], and their enemies beheld them. [There is no historical record to support a literal 1st Century fulfillment of an event of this nature. The passage from 2nd Thessalonians (4:15-17), when contrasted with the time-definite aspects of Matthew (16:27-28), makes this prophecy very difficult to solve. The encounter must either be interpreted as Spiritually fulfilled in A.D. 70, similar to Paul’s experience (2 Cor. 12:2); or alternatively, the problem can also be solved by still another future “coming of the Lord”, as postulated by Foy Wallace (1966) and others].

13 And in that hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell; and seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven. [Some Old Testament passages (see 1 Kings 19:11-12, Isa. 29:5-8, and Ezek. 38:19) might indicate that such language is figurative and describes the power of God that is wielded, especially, as the nations “wage war against Mount Zion” (Isa. 29:8)]. . . .

15 And the seventh angel sounded; and there arose 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 [Dan. 7:22, “until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was passed in favor of the saints of the Highest One, and the time arrived when the saints took possession of the kingdom (Matt. 16:27-28, Luke 21:31)]."

Author’s Note. The “kingdom” referenced here obviously refers to “the mature Christian Church in A.D. 70. This event is clearly neither Pentecost A.D. 30, nor the end of the literal world. In accordance with the time-definite references (see Dan. 7:22, Matt. 16:27-28, Luke 21:31), this event could occur at the later destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. The historical evidence further indicates that the fulfillment of
the prophet Daniel (2:44, 7:3-27) was in the time frame of the last or the “4th beast”. This is a clear reference to the Romans.

This verse also provides an important link and reference to the Old Testament prophets. Remember, when the seventh angel sounds, then “the mystery of God is finished, as He preached to His servants the prophets” (Rev. 10:7). This, in turn, is linked to Peter’s sermon (Acts 3:24, “all of the prophets... also announce these days”). Therefore, the interpretation here, of necessity, must also be found in harmony with all of the Old Testament prophets.

Rev. 11:16 And the twenty-four elders, who sit on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshipped God, [Note! All of the Apostles, save John (John 21:20-23), must have died prior to A.D. 70. Hence, 12 of the Apostles might be among the 24 elders (Matt. 19:28)].

17 saying, "We give Thee thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who art and who wast, because Thou hast taken Thy great power and hast begun to reign [see Dan. 7:14-22].

18 "And the nations were enangled, and Thy wrath came, and the time came for the dead to be judged [(Dan. 12:2), see the commentary on the resurrection in the discussion of Rev. 15:2ff below and in Section (8.2)], and the time to give their reward to Thy bond-servants the prophets and to the saints and to those who fear Thy name, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth."

19 And the temple of God [see Heb. 9:11ff] 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. 11:1-19)
4:30-31, Micah 5:3, also note that Jesus ascended to heaven before the final travail of Zion, Isa. 66:6-24].

3 And another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon [Isa. 27:1, 51:9, Dan. 7:7, Zech. 3:1, 12:1, Rev. 19:20] having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven diadems.

4 And his tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven, and threw them to the earth [similar to Dan. 8:10]. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child.

5 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 [Isa. 11:4, 49:2, 66:6-8, Mark 16:19, Acts 1:9, 7:55, 2 Thess. 2:8, Rev. 19:13-20].

6 And the woman fled into the wilderness [Ezek. 20:35, Hos. 2:14] where she had a place prepared by God, so that there she might be nourished for one thousand two hundred and sixty days. [Note that the Jewish War lasted three and a half years, 1260 days (Rev 11:2), or “a time, times and half a time” (see Dan. 12:7, Rev. 12:14)].

7 And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. And the dragon and his angels waged war [Dan. 10:13, 21,12:1ff]. . .

9 And the great dragon was thrown down [Isa. 14:12, Eph. 6:12, Luke 10:18], 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.

10 And 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** [Note! The kingdom that was given to Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 2:37) was taken back and given to Jesus (Dan, 2:44, 7:14) when the stone smashed Nebuchadnezzar’s image on the feet and toes (representing the Romans, Dan. 2:45, 7:26)], for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down [that is, Satan, Zech. 3:1ff]. . .

12 "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** [‘days cut short’, Matt. 24:22]." (Rev 12:1-12)

The source of the imagery for Chapter 13 is clearly from **Daniel [7:3ff]**, which is also similar to the locust of Joel [1:4-6]. The imagery is also very similar to 4th **Ezra [12:1-48]**. This corresponds to the various Gentile nations from Babylon to Rome [Dan. 2:31ff]. The **historical references in this chapter fit very well into the world events of A.D. 69.** Again, please follow the annotation in the various verses, within brackets, in the text below.

Rev. 13:3, And 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; [In a previous discussion of Tacitus (see “The Histories”, Bk. II, 8-9, Sect. 6.2.4.1.2), he mentioned that the story was circulated in A.D. 69 that Nero had returned to life. Thus, this historical record further provides support for the hypothesis of this study] . . .
5 And there was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies; and authority to act for forty-two months [forty-two months equals 1260 days, which was the actual length of the Jewish War (Rev. 11:2, Dan. 12:7ff)] was given to him. . . .

7 And it was given to him to make war with the saints [Dan. 7:21] and to overcome them; and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him [Dan. 2:38, 7:17ff]. . . .

11 And I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he [Vespasian was Nero’s General] spoke as a dragon.

Author’s Note. Tacitus (see “The Histories”, Bk. II, 79, p. 216) further states that Vespasian, who commanded the legions in Egypt, Jerusalem, and Syria, was declared Emperor by his troops in Egypt [that is, the beast from the earth and not from the sea] in A.D. 69, after the death of Nero in A.D. 68. This marked the time of the Roman civil war, or “period of the four emperors”. It is also very interesting, concerning the “two horns”, that both Vespasian and his eldest son, Titus (Vespasian’s General in Judea) were both called Caesar at the same time during Vespasian’s reign. These are more powerful historical facts in support of the early date of the Revelation.

I [Titus] and my father were gone to Egypt, to make preparations for this war. Nor were you ashamed to raise disturbances against us when we were made emperors. . . . But when the government was devolved upon us. . . . (Josephus, War, Bk VI, Ch. VI, 1-3, pp. 827)

Rev. 13:12 (Continued). And he [Vespasian] exercises all the authority of the first beast [he was sent by Nero to conduct the Jewish War] in his presence. And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship [enforce the rule of Rome] the first beast [Nero], whose fatal wound was healed. . . .

14 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 [“with the help of his scribe, Epaphroditus, he (Nero) stabbed himself in the throat and was already half dead when a cavalry officer entered” (Suetonius Tranquillas, 1957, p. 238)] and has come to life. . . .

18 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 [666]. (Rev. 13:3-18)

Suetonius Tranquillas (1957), in his 1st Century biography of Nero, reports that the verse below [ancient Roman graffiti] was posted on a city wall in Rome during Nero’s reign:

Count the numerical values
Of the letters in Nero’s name,
And in `murdered his own mother’:
You will find their sum the same. (pp. 231-232)

The footnote to this verse indicates that, “Numerals were express by letters; and in Greek the letters of Nero’s name, when converted to numerals, had the aggregate value of 1005” (Suetonius Tranquillas, p. 232).

Moreover, Wallace (1966) suggests that when the corresponding Hebrew letters were substituted instead of Greek, the sum of 666 emerges:

The proof of the numerical meaning of the Hebrew letters is available in the Hebrew alphabet, and they are not difficult to decipher. In the order of the official title of Nero Caesar it would be as follows numerically: 50-200-6-50-100-60-20 = 666. (p. 302)

King (1971) similarly states that the use of Hebrew numerals for “Neron Kesar” would equate to 666:

Had a Gentile tried the name of Nero in Greek letters the number would have been 50+5+100+800+50 = 1005, and the name Neron Kaiser would have totaled to 1337. Hence, by putting the solution in Hebrew, there was less chance of a Gentile enemy discovering the beast’s identity. (King, 1971, p. 318)  

In addition, Ogden (1985) completes the consensus that the beast was Nero:

According to many prominent authorities, the number of the beast (13:18) identifies Nero Caesar. . . . The number is 666, and Neron Caesar (his name correctly spelled) computes the magic number. If the n is dropped, as it most often is, then the number computes to only 616, the precise number, according to Irenaeus [175 A.D.]. (p. 13)

In any case, this ancient Roman historical reference from Suetonius (Tranquillas, 1957) validates the fact of the common practice, during Nero’s reign, of converting names into numbers. This is truly a significant historical fact that adds greatly to the A.D. 70 hypothesis.

With regard to Chapter 14, it is very interesting that the 144,000 are from among the “first fruits” [Rev. 14:4, also see Section (2.3.3)] and are from the various tribes of Israel. The previous commentary of the pre-Christian Book of 4th Ezra or 2 Esdras [2:42ff and 13:1-36] in Section (6.3) identifies those on Mt. Zion as Jews at the final humiliation of Zion. This is another significant historical fact in support of the hypothesis.

Similarly, they would logically be symbolically representative of the believing Jews [Acts 21:20, “how many thousands there are among the Jews of those who have believed”], 12,000 from each of the 12 different tribes. They would be gathered during the 40 years period [that is, the “eyewitness generation”] from the crucifixion to the final destruction of Jerusalem. Thus, it would be very difficult to defend the position of some other distant future fulfillment relating to the Jews.
As discussed in the above introductory remarks on the Book of Revelation in this chapter, the unity of Chapter 14 and those chapters following must be reconciled to the imagery of Daniel Chapters 2 and 7. Therefore, the phrase, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great [Dan. 4:30, “Is this not Babylon the great”, also see Isa. 21:9] was possibly fulfilled when the “Stone, or Christ” [Dan. 2:34, 45] smashed Nebuchadnessar’s image on its feet [Dan. 2:34]. The other possible alternative is the reference to the fall of Jerusalem, which was being referred to as a mystical Babylon.

The Roman civil war of A.D. 69 immediately followed in the sequence of Daniel’s prophecies. This fulfillment further precipitated the death of four emperors [Dan. 7:20-27] and the “time arrived when the [Gentile Church, Matt. 21:43-44, 22:7] saints took possession of the kingdom” [Dan. 7:22, Luke 21:20, 31-32]. This is certainly no abstract coincidence. There is a very interesting perspective in verse 13:

Rev. 14:13, 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, "that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow with them.

It would appear that the writer of the Revelation was perceptive of a change that was taking place that was certainly not considered to be the end of the literal world. The process of death would obviously continue, however, there would be a marked change from what had previously occurred under the Law of Moses [see 1 Cor. 15:56]. This verse is better explained by the understanding of the concept of the transition from the end of the Jewish age to the coming or the beginning of the “fullness” or “consummation” of the mature “Kingdom of Christ”. The seed was planted and the process began at Pentecost 40 years earlier.

The references in verses 14 and 15 to the “harvest” [“...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” (Rev. 14:14)], is also better explained within the context of the Lord punishing the unbelieving Jews at the destruction of Jerusalem. After this, the Saints were primarily gathered from among the Gentiles from that time forward into the “Spiritual Kingdom of God and Christ”.

The “harvest” [see Section (2.3.5), Joel 3:13-21, Matt. 9:37, Mark 4:29, John 4:35] first began among the Jews during the “eyewitness” period of the “elect”. This process began with Jesus’ teachings during His personal ministry. However, the real thrust that would gather the throngs from the nations of the Gentiles began in earnest following the destruction of Jerusalem (Joel 3:13-21). The interpretation of the harvest as being the “Final Judgment” does not fit the context of this chapter.

“The wine press of the wrath of God” (verses 19-20) [see Isa. 63:1ff, Lam. 1:15, “The Lord has trodden as in a wine press the virgin daughter of Judah”] can equally be applied to both Jerusalem in A.D. 70 [see 4th Ezra Chapter 15] and to the Roman civil war of A.D. 69.

The time frame of Chapter 15 is consistent with the reign of Nero [verse 2, “number of his name” (Rev 13:18)]. According to Eusebius (Pamphilus, 1966). This occurred after the first Christian persecution of A.D. 64 that claimed the lives of
Peter, Paul, and many other early Christians [that is, those “standing on the sea of glass”].

The Scriptural and historical references to the “resurrection” [see Section (8.2)] are both conflicting and very confusing. Some references appear to be oriented to the destruction of Jerusalem while others seem to point to what is understood as the “Final Judgment”.

An argument could be made from the inference that those [including Paul, Peter, Stephen, and others] who were “standing on the sea of glass” [Rev. 15:2] were already viewed as being “raised from the dead”. In this vision they were already standing in the presence of God and not in Hades, but clearly the world had not yet ended. Much of this is speculation and cannot be determined for sure.

Moreover, it is very difficult to grasp the concept of the “first and the last resurrection” [Rev. 20:4-14]. If there are more than one resurrections, when did or when will they occur? This reference [that is, Rev. 15:2] might be what the writer envisioned as the “first resurrection” [see 1 Cor. 15:23-24, Rev. 20:4ff]. This event would occur before the final end or “second death” [Rev. 20:5-14]. If this were true, then the interpretation of 1st Corinthians [15:23-24] might still imply a future “Final Judgment”:

1 Cor. 15:23, But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits [A.D. 30, three days after the crucifixion. Also see Eph. 4:8-10], after that those [that is, the elect from the “eyewitness generation”] who are Christ's at His coming [that is, in A.D. 70],
24 then [Greek eita (next in sequence, Young, p. 973)] comes the [“final resurrection” and the “Final Judgment”] end, when He delivers up the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power.

The subject of the “resurrection” is discussed at greater length in Section (8.2) and in the commentary of Revelation Chapter 20 below. The resurrection is a very difficult topic to understand (Deut. 29:29).

The text of the “song of Moses” (Rev. 15:3-4) might be in reference to the prophetic Old Testament song (that is, Deut. 31:30-32:43). This song was definitely Messianic in nature and apparently looked forward to the ultimate destruction of the Jews in A.D. 70. The phrase, “For their vine is of Sodom, and from the fields of Gommorah” (Deut. 32:32) is certainly in reference to the Jews and is distinctly similar to the “great city [Jerusalem], which is mystically called Sodom and Egypt” (Rev. 11:8). Jerusalem may also be referred to as Babylon (Rev. 18:2).

The phrase [“the temple of the tabernacle of testimony in heaven was opened” (Rev. 15:5)] can be explained by Paul, or the writer of Hebrews. This event could only occur after the Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed [“The way into the holy place has not yet been disclosed, while the outer tabernacle is still standing” (Heb. 9:8)]. Hebrews [9:1-2] specifically identifies the “Outer Tabernacle” as the Temple. Thus, “the time of reformation” (see Heb. 9:10 [Gal. 3:28, Col. 3:11]) may easily be identified as the end of the “Jewish Age or consummation” (Dan. 12:13).

The war with the Romans could be identified as a “violent Divine act of retribution from Jesus, Himself” [see Luke 19:27, 43-44]. Therefore, God made it clear that the
fullness of the mature Church of Jesus had arrived. The Church would now triumph over Judaism and later it would conquer Rome, itself.

It becomes obvious that God used the Romans, as He had previously used the Babylonians [see Jer. 51:20ff], to destroy Jerusalem (Rom. 11:25-28). In turn, Babylon, or Rome, itself, would also fall [Jer. 51:25], but that process would take centuries. However, the Roman civil war of A.D. 69 was also a precursor of God’s wrath on Rome.

(7.5) Revelation Chapters 16 - 19

These Chapters of the Revelation bare a profound similarity to 4th Ezra, Chapters 15 and 16 [see Section (6.3)] and to Jeremiah [50:1-51:64]. Both Ezra and Jeremiah lamented the earlier destruction [that is, 586 B. C.] of Jerusalem and the later fall of Babylon. If the author of the Revelation followed this same precedent, then he similarly spoke of the second destruction of Jerusalem [that is, A.D. 70] as a past event and he anticipated the future punishment of Rome [as a figure of Babylon (1 Peter 5:13, Rev. 14:8, 18:2)]. This view would be consistent with the later dating of the Revelation.

The references in Chapter 16 to the “Euphrates and the kings from east” (verse 12) is also very consistent with the approach of the Romans with their legions from both Syria and from the sea (Rev. 13:1ff). [The recent war in Iraq (2006) has caused many of our generation to expect the prophecies of the Revelation to be imminently fulfilled]. Again, this does not appear likely and does not fit the criteria of the prophecies of the Revelation. What will be is always a mystery (Deut. 29:29).

The “great day of God” and the reference to the gathering at “Har-Megedon” (verse 14-16) is similar to the language of Joel [3:1ff], Zechariah [12:11], and the gathering of the nations at the “valley of Jehoshaphat,” which is outside of Jerusalem. Har-Magedon was a defensive fortification that was built by Solomon (1 Kings 4:12) to protect the attack route to Jerusalem. The nations who came by sea (Dan. 7:3, Rev. 13:1) would pass by Megiddo on their way to Jerusalem. There are many other references [see Matt. 24:43-44, 1 Thess. 5:2, 2 Peter 3:10] to the Lord “coming like a thief” (verse 15).

The reference to the, “great city [Jerusalem, Jer. 22:8, Rev 11:8] was split into three parts [Ezek. 5:5-12, Zech. 13:8-9], and the cities of the nations [including Rome in A.D. 69] fell”, is found in verse 19. “And Babylon the great [Dan. 4:30] was remembered before God, to give her a cup of the wine [Jer. 51:7-8] of His fierce wrath” (verse 19).

Furthermore, Josephus [“And thus that sedition had been divided into three factions, was now reduced to two” (War, Bk. V, Ch. III, p. 779)] mentions that there were three Jewish factions fighting among themselves for the control of Jerusalem about the time of April, A.D. 70.

As for Chapter 17, the “great harlot” (verse 1) and the “MOTHER OF HARLOTS” (Rev. 17:5) was most logically Jerusalem [see Isa. 1:21, Jer. 3:1-11, Ezek. 16:15-41, 23:30ff, Hos. 4:10ff]. The “scarlet beast” (verse 3) with the seven heads [or hills] and ten horns [or kings (Dan. 7:20-22)] is most logically Rome.
The identification of the kings, or Roman Emperors (verses 10-12) must therefore conform to the established historical list in Table 3 (see Section 6.2.4.2). Therefore, Claudius was the fifth emperor, Nero was the sixth, Vespasian was the tenth, Titus was the eleventh and Domitian was the twelfth [see Section (6.17.1)].

In verses 16-18, the “beast” [Rome] destroyed the “harlot or woman ” [that is, Jerusalem, the great city, (Jer. 22:8, Rev. 11:8)] and burned her with fire [see Matt. 13:40-42, Luke 19:27]. Rome, itself, would not again be subject to destruction and conflagration until centuries later.

The context of Chapter 18 continues to follow the destruction of the city of Jerusalem by the Romans. In verse 4 there is a warning similar to one found in Luke [21:20]. The reference in verse 6 to Jerusalem [that is, to “pay her back double”] can also be found in the Old Testament [see Isa. 40:1].

The text of verses 18:8-10 is very confusing. The “great city” (Jerusalem, Rev. 11:8, 4 Ezra 2:4) was now also identified with Babylon (Rev. 18:10, 21). Again, it is very difficult to determine if the writer of the Revelation was predicting the fall of Jerusalem or of Rome. Perhaps the true identity of this “Babylon” can be determined from the various cargo listed in verses 11-18.

A good case could be argued that this Babylon was a mystical reference (Rev. 11:8) to Jerusalem and that many of the goods listed were similar to those listed in 1 Kings [10:10-22]. The reference in verse 24 [“And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints and of all who have been slain on the earth” (Rev. 19:28)], gives satisfactory explanations to identify the city as Jerusalem [see Matt. 23:33-39, Luke 13:34-35]. The time frame was well within the “eyewitness generation” [Matt. 23:36].

The continuity concerning the “great city” as Jerusalem continues into Chapter 19. God judged the “great harlot” Jerusalem and, “Her smoke rises up forever and ever” (Rev. 19:3). The famous passage from Isaiah [34:8-10] is one of the best references in support of this view:

The phrase “marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready” (Rev. 19:7) finds its origin from the prophecy of Isaiah [62:1-5]. Jesus taught the parable of the wedding feast in Matthew [22:1-14]. This teaching infers the destruction of the unbelieving Jews and the city of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 [“But the king was enraged and sent his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and set their city (Jerusalem, Luke 19:27, 43-44, 20:16) on fire” (Matt. 22:7)].

The Church (Eph. 6:27-32) has always been considered the “new bride of Christ” that replaced the adulterous harlot Israel that God put away. Thus, the fulfillment of the “parable of the wedding feast” represents God’s rejection of the Jews [Matt. 21:43] and the destruction of Jerusalem [Luke 19:27]. It was the Gentiles who were primarily gathered after the fall of Jerusalem.

There can be no mistake in verses 11 through 16 that these things refer to Jesus as “The Word of God” (Rev. 19:13, John 1:1). Thus, the quotation, “from His mouth comes a sharp sword” (Rev. 19:15). His word is the sword of the Spirit [“and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (Eph. 6:7). “He will rule them with a rod of iron” (Psalms 2:9). And He is the “KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS” (Rev. 19:16, 1 Tim. 6:15).

The “great supper [that is, the “wedding feast”, Isa. 62:1-5, Matt. 22:1-14] of God” (Rev. 19:17ff) appears to be almost identical to the imagery found in Ezekiel
[39:17ff (Deut. 28:26)], and it surely represented the destruction of wicked Jews, and not the Romans. The prophecy in Ezekiel was made during the time of the first destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. by the Babylonians. It would also appear logical that the writer of the Revelation was making the same comparison to the war with the Romans.

(7.6) Revelation Chapter 20: The Binding of Satan and the 1000 Years’ Reign

In the author’s view, Chapter 20 is the most controversial and the most difficult chapter in the Revelation to explain. The best empirical defense against such a literal earthly 1000 years reign is that after nearly 2000 year such a reign on earth still has not occurred. Moreover, the imagery discussed in this chapter was not unique or limited to the Book of Revelation. The topics, in one form or another, previously appeared in other older Jewish sectarian writings. This connection to other Jewish sectarian beliefs and doctrines may be the reason that many early Christians believed that the Book of Revelation was not written by the Apostle John.

The teachings found in the Revelation were very similar to the Jewish sectarian beliefs, which were found in Israel well before A.D. 68. The origin of these beliefs was certainly not attributed to the later Greek Gnostics as the traditional mind-set would have us believe.

The imagery of the “binding of Satan” can be closely associated with the Jewish Book of Enoch, which was discussed in Chapter 6. The associated reference to the binding of wicked angels [Rev. 20:13] at the time of the flood in Genesis [6:1ff] was a favorite topic of the Jewish mystics at Qumran. The record of these beliefs was preserved in the “Dead Sea Scrolls” and in the Book of Enoch. Consider the two following passages:

Enoch X:4. And again the Lord said to Raphael: ‘Bind Azazel hand and foot, and cast him into the darkness [see 2 Peter 2:4, Jude 6, Rev. 12:9, 20:1-7] and make an opening in the desert, which is in Dudael, and cast him therein”.
5. And place upon him rough and jagged rocks, and cover him with darkness, and let him abide there forever, and cover his face that he may not see light. 6. And on the day of the great judgment he shall be cast into the fire [see Rev. 20:10].

Enoch XVIII: ... 16. And He [God] was wroth with them, and bound them till the time when their guilt should be consummated (even) for ten thousand years. XIX. I. and Uriel said to me: `Here shall stand the angels who have connected themselves with women [Gen. 6:4], and their spirits, assuming many different forms [that is, the demons mentioned in the New Testament], are defiling mankind, and lead them astray into sacrificing to demons [as gods], (here shall they stand), till the day of the great judgment in which they shall be judged till they are made an end of. (Enoch, XVIII, 16 - XIX, 1, pp. 45-46)
Eusebius (Pamphilus, 1966, Bk. III, Ch. XXXIX), in his discussion of the writings of Papias, appears to provide the key that might also help solve the mystery of the millennium:

The same historian also gives other accounts, which he says he adds as received by him from unwritten tradition, likewise certain strange parables of our Lord, and of his doctrine and some matter rather too fabulous. In these he says there would be a certain millennium after the resurrection, and that there would be a corporeal reign of Christ on this very earth; which things he appears to have imagined, as if they were authorized by the apostolic narrations, not understanding correctly those matters which they propounded mystically in their interpretations. (p. 126)

The concepts of the “1000 years’ reign, the resurrection, and the Final Judgment” (Rev. 20:4-7) can be similarly related to another Jewish sectarian writing that expected a 400 year period. This is found in 4th Ezra (2 Esdras) 7:28-39.

However, a review of 4th Ezra [in Chapter 6 of this study] will also confirm that this expectation of judgment was believed to be in connection with the fall of Jerusalem and not the fall of Rome.

Therefore, it would not be difficult to assume that the Jewish sectarian beliefs of an earthly reign of the Messiah had also influenced some early Christians and may have even influenced the author of the Revelation. If this is true then the author of the Revelation was probably not the Apostle John.

However, in the genuine writings of John the Apostle, some passages add to the confusion and might possibly have spawned the beliefs of Hymenaeus and Philetus (2 Tim. 2:18) as well as the early Coptic Church, concerning a past “Spiritual resurrection” [see John 5:24-29, 8:51, 11:24-26].

These passages from the Gospel of John might also have helped foster the belief of the “two deaths” and the “two resurrections” that are found in the Revelation [20:4-15]

In addition, the Roman Church has always rejected the idea of an earthly millennium reign. And, furthermore, since the almost 2000 years that have now passed since the ascension of Jesus into heaven (Acts 1:9), there apparently has been no record or promise of Christ actually reigning on the earth again.

Therefore, Jesus appeared to Paul (Acts 9:3) from heaven. The “sign of the Son of Man would appear in the sky” (Matt. 24:30) at the destruction of Jerusalem. Paul preached of a gathering in heaven [“caught up together to meet the Lord in the clouds” (1 Thess. 4:17)]. All of these passages should illustrate the point that there will not likely be such an earthly reign of Christ upon the earth.

However, there is abundant evidence that Christ intended to make Himself visible by “Spiritual signs” from heaven at the destruction of the city of Jerusalem [see Matt. 24:30, Mark 13:26, Luke 17:20-37, 19:11-27, 43-44, 21:20-32, Heb. 8:13, James 5:8-9, 1 Peter 4:3-17]. Christ would thus rule from that time forward, forever in heaven, not on earth [see Dan 2:44-45, 7:13-14, 12:1-13]. However long the Lord chooses to permit this physical earth to continue [Gen. 8:22] has no effect on the “Eternal Kingdom of God and Christ in Heaven”.
The search for other Biblical or sectarian references concerning the “two resurrections”, mentioned in the Revelation [20:5ff], has proven to be almost fruitless. Perhaps the best argument that could be made in favor of “two resurrections” might be inferred from Ephesians [4:8-10] and 1 Peter [3:19-4:7]. Eusebius (Pamphilus, 1966, Bk. I, Ch. XIII) alludes to what reportedly was the account of Agbarus, prince of Edessa. He said concerning Jesus: [“how he was crucified, and descended into hell, (hades,) and burst the bars which had never been broken, and arose again, and also raised with himself the dead that had slept for ages” (Eph. 4:8-9)]. Thus, at least some early Christians believed that Ephesians [4:8] was the fulfillment of some type of a “first resurrection”.

1 Peter [3:19-4:7] also implies that Jesus preached immediately after His crucifixion to the dead who died as the result of the flood of Noah, which was the first world judgment of God. Thus, God released the captives from their prison. It is also very interesting that Hymenaeus and Philetus [2 Tim. 2:18] believed that a resurrection had already taken place. However, Paul assured them that Christ had not come, but His coming would precede the “resurrection” [see 1 Thess. 4:1-17].

Another pertinent reference and point that could be made is from the Revelation [14:13] itself. In that verse, there appears to be a perceived change in the relationship of those who would die in the future. Some theologians argue that the “final resurrection” occurred exclusively in A.D. 70, and since that time everyone goes directly to his reward or punishment immediately after death. However, other writings such as Josephus’ discourse on “Hades” [Section (6.2.3.4)] still look to the future for the “final resurrection”.

It would be difficult to determine whether or not Paul believed that a “resurrection” would be accomplished concurrently with the destruction of Jerusalem [Dan. 12:2, 2 Thess. 2:1-4]. The other alternative was that it could only be fulfilled with a future literal end and destruction of the earth by fire [2 Thess. 1:7, 2 Peter 3:10]. Either opinion is, indeed, difficult, or nearly impossible to prove conclusively one way or the other. Consider the following passage from his Book of Philippians:

Philip. 3:10, that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; Top

11 in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. Top

12 Not that I have already obtained it, or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. Top

13 Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, . . .

20 For our citizenship is in heaven [not in an earthly kingdom], from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; Top

21 who will transform the body [1 Cor. 15:51ff] of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself. (Philip. 3:10-21)

If Paul, the Pharisee, was making reference to the shared belief of Josephus [that is, the discourse on Hades, Section (6.2.3.4)] who was also a Pharisee, then
Paul’s implication from 1st Corinthians [Chapter 15] was that a “Final Judgment” and a “final resurrection” would also mark the end of this literal earth. This belief is consistent with the Jewish legends and oral prophecies attributed to Adam. This belief has always been fundamental to the Judeo-Christian ethic.

Moreover, no visible resurrection of the dead, other than those who were raised by direct miracles of Jesus, the Apostles, or the Old Testament prophets, and those raised immediately following the Christ’s resurrection [Matt. 27:52] has ever been reported by the Roman Church.

Thus, a past unseen “Spiritually perceived resurrection”, such as the belief of the Coptic Church and Hymenaeus and Philetus (2 Tim. 2:18) can only be assumed. There does not appear to be any other supporting historical evidence.

On the other hand, the ancient Jewish beliefs [some even ascribed to Adam], that the literal world would ultimately be destroyed by fire, provide conflicting inputs. Paul’s teaching indicates that Jesus would reign [in heaven, Mark 14:62, Acts 7:55-56] until death had been overcome [1 Cor. 15:26ff].

This teaching still leaves enough doubt for the majority of Christendom to believe that a “final resurrection” and a “Final Judgment” must still occur in the future. Had the earth literally been “burned up” at A.D. 70 as commonly anticipated, then the solution would be conclusive. However, empirically it must be assumed that in spite of what the sectarian groups had firmly believed, God had other plans. For a final discussion of the “resurrection” see Section (8.2).

Moreover, the brief discussion of the resurrection here and the concepts discussed above in the Gospel of Thomas, make it very difficult to reconcile this problem. This study should illustrate the point that all of the past and all of the present traditional mind-sets have failed to provide the satisfactory answer that will unify “all” of the Scriptures and traditions regarding this subject. There is no known historical solution that will satisfy everyone. Some things, apparently, will continue to remain “true mysteries” [Deut. 29:29].

Thus, the view proposed by Wallace (1966), and others like-minded, infer that the “consummation of the Jewish Age [that is, A.D. 70] and the end of this literal world”, are both marked by a distinct coming [parousia] of the Lord in judgment. Conversely, the view that maintains that there can be only “one coming [parousia] of the Lord in judgment” in A.D. 70 is contrary to the Judeo-Christian ethic and most of the historical Jewish literature.

The logical, yet not perfect, conclusion based on common sense, the profuse historical testimony and the 2000 years of Roman Church traditions, dictate that the masses in Christendom will eventually only accept the Wallace view (1966), or the “dual scenario”. Unless the Lord, Himself, intervenes, or more historical evidence is uncovered, Christendom will only ultimately accept the “dual paradigm” as the prevalent doctrine sometime in the early part of the “3rd Millennium”.

Thus, in either view, assumptions still have to be made to arrive at the theorized conclusions. All future events and all other possible alternatives are, therefore, in reality, “hidden mysteries” [Deut. 29:29].

In the author’s opinion, there should certainly be no “test of faith” by demanding that Christendom choose only one opinion to the exclusion of other possible alternatives.
Wisdom should teach us that some things must remain mysteries that still can not be conclusively answered at the present time (Deut. 29:29). Furthermore, a theory, that does not provide closure to the created physical universe, will be rejected by the academic community. Even though each human soul was created to live forever, each physical body still dies. Similarly, the physical creation has always been assumed by the Judeo-Christian ethic to have an ultimate final end by fire.

If salvation were based on a clear and concise understanding of all of the obscure Scriptural passages, then it would not be possible for anyone to be saved. An example of one such obscure passage concerns “Gog and Magog”. The reference to the war of “Gog and Magog and the gathering at the camp of the saints” [Rev. 20: 8-9] was a prophecy that the Prophet Ezekiel [38:1-39:29] made during the time of the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C., by the Babylonians. However, this prophecy was for the “last days” [see Ezek. 38:16, Dan. 2:28]. Thus, there are two possible interpretations. Either Gog and Magog were the Romans or Kittim [Dan. 11:30] that were identified in the literature of the Jewish mystics, or there will still have to be some future eschatological battle that will be fought in the land of Israel. However, all of the Jewish historical references and time-definite prophecies clearly point to A.D. 70 as the logical fulfillment that is associated with the fall of Nebuchadnezzar’s image [Dan. 2:28-44].

Conversely, the reference to the “fire coming down from heaven” [Gen. 19:24, Rev. 20:9] and “the dead being judged” [Rev. 20:12-15] again leads to the argument as to whether the prophecies were “figurative imagery” or were “dual prophecies” that were intended to be taken literally.

Revelation Chapters 21 and 22: The Fulfillment in the Heavenly Zion

The background imagery from Ezekiel [37:1-48:35] appears to be the key to the understanding of the “new heaven and the new earth” in Revelation Chapter 21. The prophecies in the Book of Ezekiel are very difficult to understand. However, the prophecies of Ezekiel are time-definite and like the Book of Daniel Chapter 9, the prophecies identify the destruction of Jerusalem by both the Babylonians and the Romans (Josephus).

4th Ezra [7:28-84, 112-113] provides similar imagery and a doctrine of “two created worlds”. The Book of Enoch [XLV:4-5, pp. 62-63] speaks of transforming the heaven and earth. And, the Epistle of Barnabas [6:11-19] identifies a “second creation” as relating to Christians [see Isa. 65:17, 2 Cor. 5:17 and Section (2.3.6)].

Moreover, the Temple [Ezek. 45:1-6, Heb. 8:8-15] and the new city ["The city shall be 18,000 cubits round about; and the name of the city from that day shall be, 'The LORD is there.'" (Ezek. 48:35), Gal. 4:26, Heb. 12:22, 13:14] must be none other than the fulfillment within the “new heavens and the new earth”. No such literal Jewish Temple has ever been built on this earth. However, many including the Messianic Jews believe that a 3rd Temple will be built in Jerusalem.

The Apostle Paul, himself, has also provided insight into this Old Testament mystery of the “new heavens and a new earth”, which was found in the Prophet Isaiah [65:17]. Chapter 65 follows in the context and speaks of a complete new eternal order of
things [see 1 Cor. 7:31, 1 John 2:2:17-18] as the “form” of the old things (Old
Covenant) passed away [Heb. 8:13]. This appears to be a figurative Spiritual
application. Paul, in 1st Corinthians [7:26-31] taught that due to the “present distress”
things were changing and “the form of the world [Old Covenant] is passing away”.
John taught the same in 1 John [2:17-18, “the world is passing away” and, furthermore,
“it is the last hour”].

It would also appear that Paul and John understood that the fulfillment of Daniel
Chapters 2, 7, 9, and 12 were about to be accomplished during the impending war with
the Romans. Notice that the “present distress” was already forming. Paul, in 2nd
Corinthians [5:17] taught, “Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature [or,
there is the new creation]; the old things passed away; behold, new things have
come” [see Heb. 12:22-23].

It should also be understood from Hebrews [9:8] that; “The Holy Spirit is signifying
this, that the way into the holy place [heavenly Temple] has not yet been disclosed,
while the outer tabernacle is still standing”. Once this concept is understood, and all
of the other prerequisites have been satisfied including the destruction of the Temple,
then the fulfillment of all prophecy falls into place (Acts 3:18ff).

Thus, “a new heaven and a new earth” represents the New Covenant and the
married consummated Church. The Christian Church replaced the Old Covenant and
represents the kingdom that God took away from the Jews [Matt 21:43, "Therefore I say
to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you, and be given to a nation
producing the fruit of it”]. Please follow the references in the annotated text [Rev.
21:1-6] below:

Rev. 21:1, “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth [2 Cor. 5:17]; for the first
heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea.
2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem [Zech. 14:1-10, Heb. 12:22], coming
down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband.
3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God
is among men [see Acts 7:43, 15:16, Heb. 8:1-2], and He shall dwell among them,
and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among them, [Ezek. 37:24-
28].
4 And He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be any
death [1 Cor. 15:54]; there shall no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the
first things have passed away."
5 And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new" [2
Cor. 5:17]. And He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true." Top
6 And 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 [John
7:38] without cost. (Rev. 21:1-6)

Now compare the above commentary and reading from the Revelation with the
Spiritual and physical things in Hebrews Chapters 8 and 9, with Isaiah Chapter 65;13-17,
and with Paul’s commentary from 2 Corinthians [5:1ff].
Author's Note. The Spiritual implication of the “new creature” or the “new creation” in this passage is tremendous. The belief in Jesus and the works of the Holy Spirit [see John 3:1-6, “Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God”] have given Christians the Spiritual visibility to understand the Spiritual realm of God before they die. Isaiah [40:3 and 43:19], and the fulfillment in John the Baptist [Matt. 3:3], teach that the “something new” [Isa. 43:19] was the “Way” [see John 1:23, 14:6, Acts 9:2, 16:17, 18:25-26, 19:9, 24:14,22]. Furthermore, Isaiah [65:17] speaks of these things in terms of, “I create a new heaven and a new earth”. 2 Peter [3:10-13] associates these events with “the Day of Judgment” [2 Peter 3:7] when the present heaven and earth are destroyed. Finally, Revelation [21:1-5] indicates that the ultimate fulfillment of these things is in the heavenly Jerusalem [see Gal. 4:26, Heb.12:22-24].

It should be remembered that the Spiritual Kingdom has already “been prepared since the foundation of the world” [see Matt. 25:34, Eph. 1:4, Heb. 4:3, 9:26, 1 Peter 1:20]. Therefore, the specific event that clearly marked the rejection of the Jews and the emergence of the consummated [Heb. 9:26] Kingdom of Christ, was the destruction of the Temple in August of A.D. 70. “The Holy Spirit is signifying this, that the way into the holy place [heaven] has not yet been disclosed, while the outer tabernacle is still standing” (Heb. 9:8).

Thus, it might be better to interpret the vision of the “new heaven and new earth” (Isa. 65:17, 2 Cor. 5:17, Rev. 21:1) as the Spiritual realization of the things, which remained hidden from unbelievers. However, the ultimate fulfillment can only be enjoyed in heaven, after the death of each righteous believer.

Rev 21:7 "He who overcomes shall inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son [Christians on earth are the new temple of God, see 2 Cor. 6:16-18, Ezek. 37:27].
8 "But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."
9 And 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 shall show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb."
10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem [Zech. 14:10, Gal. 4:26, Heb. 12:22], coming down out of heaven from God,
11 having the glory of God. Her brilliance was like a very costly stone, as a stone of crystal-clear jasper.
12 It had a great and high wall, with twelve gates [see Ezek. 40:6ff], and at the gates twelve angels; and names were written on them, which are those of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel [see Ezek. 48:1ff].
13 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.
14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundation stones, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.
15 And the one who spoke with me had a gold measuring rod [Ezek. 40:5] to measure the city, and its gates and its wall.
16 And the city [Heb. 13:14, Ezek. 48:30-35] is laid out as a square, and its length is as great as the width; and he measured the city with the rod [Ezek. 40:5], fifteen hundred miles; its length and width and height are equal.
17 And he measured its wall, seventy-two yards, according to human measurements, which are also angelic measurements.
18 And the material of the wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass.
19 The foundation stones [see the stones of Solomon’s Temple, 1 Chron. 29:1ff, and of Spiritual Zion, Isa. 54:11-17] 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;
20 the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst.
21 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.
22 And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God, the Almighty, and the Lamb, are its temple [see Heb. 9:11-15].
23 And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb.
24 And the nations shall walk by its light, and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it.
25 And in the daytime (for there shall be no night there) its gates shall never be closed;
26 and they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it; [Spiritual Zion, see Isa. 60:1-2, 10-11, 14, Ezek. 48:35, “The Lord is there”].
27 . . . names are written in the Lamb's book of life [Dan. 7:10]. (Rev. 21:1-27)

Revelation Chapter 22 continues with the heavenly vision. Much of the imagery is from the Old Testament. The “river of the water of life” (verse 1) can be explained as the “Gospel of Jesus and the Holy Spirit” (see John 7:37-39, Luke 24:47) that was being preached to the whole world as the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy [that is, Ezek. 47:1ff, Joel 3:18, Zech.14:8].

The “tree of life” [see Gen. 2:9, 3:22-23, Prov. 3:18, 11:30; 13:12, 15:4, Rev. 2:7], in verse 2, is the personification of those things that lead to healing, eternal life, and ultimate truth [John 8:32].

The “curse” in verse 3 appears to be in reference to “physical death” as the result of Adam’s sin” [see Gen. 2:17, 1 Cor. 15:21ff] that has been, or will be, overcome [1 Cor. 15:54, Isa 25:8] by the blood of Jesus. This physical death was also symbolic of the Law of Moses [see Isa. 24:6, 65:15, 1 Cor. 15:56], which was replaced by the Law of Christ [1 Cor. 15:22].
Verse 6 is another time-definite testimony. Jesus “sent His angel to show to His bond-servants the things which must shortly take place”. 

Verse 8 identifies the writer as John. The previous discussion from Eusebius (Pamphilus, 1966) indicated that John the Presbyter was the most likely author of the Revelation.

The reference in verse 10 ["Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near"] must be considered in light of Daniel [12:9]. The command had been decreed 600 years earlier to seal up the words for fulfillment at the “end time”. The context from Daniel [12:1-13] is associated with the appearance of the “abomination of desolation” [see Matt. 24:15, 2 Thess. 2:4] at the final destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple (Dan. 9:24-27) in A.D. 70. Thus, the “shattering the power of the holy people” [that is, the Jews by the Romans] would finally be complete. Please follow the text below as the words from Revelation are completed with the imminent expectation of the “coming of Jesus”:

Rev. 21:10, And he said to me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near [Dan. 12:9]. . . . 

12 "Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done. [See Isa. 40:10, Matt. 16:27-28].

13 "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."

14 Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city [the heavenly Jerusalem]. . . .

16 "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things for the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright morning star."

17 And 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.

18 I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God shall add to him the plagues, which are written in this book;

19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book.

20 He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming quickly." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. . . . (Rev. 21:10-20)

The Book of Revelation ends as it began. The author expected the end of all things to be imminent [that is, at either A.D. 70 or no later than the reign of Domitian in A.D. 96]. The final comments and general conclusions drawn in this study will be reviewed and discussed next in Chapter 8.