

The Appearing of Christ

Exposing the traditional rapture

When we hold a hope which is not ours we hold vanity and vexation of spirit

Brian R Kelson ©April 2008

Dear Reader,

We are both like my book *The Appearing*, a work in progress, and my prayer is that this humble effort will inspire you to an even deeper study of God's Word rightly divided. Maybe it will help you as you witness to these things.

As you know, the hope given us by God is nothing vaporous or veiled but we do need to distinguish between things that differ (Phils.1:10 MKJV). There will be some challenges to orthodoxy as we consider this subject from a different view point, particularly the Acts 28 perspective. Should you pursue these examinations it could well be that even more insights regarding His purposes for today will be yours through the grace of our God.

I am obliged to warn you I don't have all the answers. Perhaps the Lord will bring some details to light through your researches as a Berean.

May the Father of Glory grant you more of the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him as you search and see if these things are so.

Kind regards in Christ our Lord and Head,

Brian R Kelson

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Introduction to First Edition

Paul wrote in his last letter, his second to Timothy, that his ministry was being discarded;

[This you know, that all those in Asia have turned away from me, of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes. 2Ti 1:15](#)

Asia included the Ephesians and the Colossians and on the surface it might suggest that there was a massive turning away from Christ. This is not the case. They had turned away from Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles, the one sent to them by Christ.

At the time of writing, Paul would be aware of the persecutions against Christians, particularly by Nero, and was more than likely to die in the same tide of hate. Christians had not turned away from Christ. Many were to die for their faith in Him but within a few centuries from the close of the New Testament era, the church fathers were, for the most part, void of Pauline doctrine. These dark ages for the Christian community lasted nearly 900 years.

The reformation was not the result of anyone reading the Gospels; the reformation came about because Paul was rediscovered. Justification by faith without works resurfaced and the power of the formalized church had diminished.

The literal return of Christ was another doctrine which faded into obscurity and only resurfaced in the years after the reformation. Early in the nineteenth century the “rapture” concept took shape and has become the flagship of most eschatological thinking. This traditional doctrine in all its variations must be exposed for what it is, a masterstroke of deception.

The orthodox rapture theory constantly holds Christians in a false state of heightened expectancy as the faithful look for, and pass, yet another due by date proclaimed by yet another zealous Christian individual or group who claim to have had some “word of knowledge” or “prophecy” about it.

When Paul wrote to the Colossians he said this:

[since indeed you are continuing in the faith, having been firmly established and steadfast, and are not being shifted away from the hope \[or, confident expectation\] of the Gospel which you heard, the one having been preached in all the creation under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a servant. Col 1:23 ALT.](#)

Paul's confidence here is that the Colossian had not been moved away from the hope of the gospel which was entrusted to Him by Christ. The hope of Ephesians and Colossians is not the hope of the Gospels or 1Thess.4 written in the Acts period.

When the Christian community moved away from Paul in his later ministry, they moved away from the hope for us today.

The widely accepted "rapture" is not the appearing of Christ. This denominational rapture is a sad and sorry testimony to Christianity's failure to study Paul carefully according to those Bible study principles so clearly given us.

My prayer is that this book will stimulate honest thinking in the matter of the hope before the Church which is His Body only found in the post Acts epistles of Paul.

Introduction to Second Edition

Christianity's decline into Legalism

Many evangelical Christians are surprised at the growth of the Messianic "Judaism" congregations both here in the United States of America and worldwide. However, a moment of quiet reflection on the history of Christian theology would see such developments as a natural progression.

Records suggest that as early as A.D. 160 Justin Martyr saw the "church" as "the true spiritual Israel" and allegory, spiritualization and replacement theology have underpinned Christianity's understanding of itself ever since.

Replacement theology, whether in its wider or restricted view, proclaims that the "church" has either replaced Israel, or is the means whereby God is fulfilling all His divine purposes outlined in the Old Testament Scriptures. Replacement theology transfers all and anything of Israel and eisotetically reads "the church" into most if not all passages of Scripture relating to that nation.

Most of the faithful consider themselves New Covenant believers and many churches have priests, temples, mercy seats, altars, water baptisms, tithing and worship which is centered around the Passover/Communion Table and the promises made to Israel's fathers.

At time of writing the Messianics are one of the fastest growing denominations, and in the light of the transference concepts promoted over two millennia, the fertile theological ground for them to flourish has long been available. Indeed, we could applaud the Messianics as being hyper evangelicals, taking replacement theology to its logical conclusion.

No doubt we are seeing a return to the bondage of works and the complete Judaizing of Christianity as this slide into legalism deepens.

How is it that the gangrene of replacement theology infected the Christian community so swiftly and is now pandemic and ultimately manifested in the Messianic movements? The answer is a simple one, our predecessors ignored Paul and failed to follow the New Testament events according to the Old Testament pattern. We, following in their footsteps, have likewise ignored Paul and the Old Testament patterns dispensationally.

Instead of seeing the Old Testament patterns as typifying the restoration of Israel's kingdom and the reign of Christ on the earth, we have metamorphosed these facts as being the church which is His Body in type. This has resulted in dispensational confusion. By this replacement eisegesis we have nurtured the principles upon which the Messianics flourish.

This book hopes to restore the Old Testament pattern in its correct setting and magnify the present dispensation, which up until Acts 28 was hidden in God. The Mystery, revealed to Paul alone, is that which the Father would have all Christians know, Col.1:27.

No attempt has been made to spell out every detail in this unfolding; in many places we have painted with a broad brush. It is our prayer that the reader will find the joy of the Word of God by searching every reference in its context to see if these things are so.

May this enlarged edition facilitate a wider understanding of this mystery; the dispensation of the grace of God in which we live and the current hope of it.

Brian R Kelson
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Chapter one

Genesis and Revelation

In beginning God created the heavens and the earth. [Gen 1:1](#)

Replacement theology blinds Christians to dispensational truth and is responsible for the growing divisions within Christendom. Replacement theology is so pandemic it is now the default and faulty foundation by which some zealous believers struggle into yet another new denomination. Many sing with gusto, "All the precious gems of God's promises in the Book are ours--every chapter, every verse, every line are ours to claim, to love and to cherish". This falsehood makes much of the Word of God of none effect.

The validity for the confusing claim that the Old Testament was for the Jews and the New Testament is for us is swiftly established by the insertion of blank pages between Malachi and Matthew.

It is easy to find our church in Matthew if we fail to see Matthew as a continuation of the Old Testament purposes of God for the world through Israel. There was no change between Malachi and Matthew; Christ did not come to start the church but to confirm the promises made to the father's, Roms.15:8. These promises have nothing to do with us who have been raised and seated in the heavenly places, Eph.2. The Gospels, the Book of Acts and the New Testament books in Acts will never be understood dispensationally if we see them in isolation and not as the unfolding of the Old Testament patterns, promise and prophecy. The Old Testament patterns have nothing to do dispensationally with the church which is His Body.

Paul wrote all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable making us wise to salvation but in 2Tim.2:15 we are told to rightly divide the Word of Truth lest we be ashamed and reprobate in that day. All the New Testament is for us, but not all the New Testament is about us and regrettably most expositions find the church which is His Body on every page, including Revelation.

Let us begin at the beginning.

Genesis and Revelation are the book ends of God's Word; The Book. They are the opening and closing accounts of the struggle between good and evil, the Son of God and the Serpent. They are rich in compliments but we must be careful. These two books have one common dispensational setting and that is the earth and the new earth. In Genesis, sin entered the world and in Revelation sin will be removed from the world. People and the Lord dwelt together on the former earth and will dwell together again on the New Earth.

Genesis begins our Heavenly Father's account of His redemptive plan for the earth. In Genesis, God, man and the animals co-existed peacefully on the earth in a garden. Sin and death eradicated by the Lord Christ as the great sin offering is anticipated in Genesis 3 & 4 but this does not authorize any change of purpose and place. Redemption through the Lord's shed blood is as vital for

those who will inherit the earth as it is for us who inherit the above heavens. Genesis is not a springboard from which the earthly redemptive purpose gradually elevates to the heavenly one.

When we rise from the earth in Genesis to the church going to heaven in Revelation, we have read into those Scriptures dispensational truths which are not there.

Certainly Revelation records things happening in heaven, but this does not authorize any inclusion of our calling in them. Genesis and Revelation are not about Christians today who have been raised and seated with the Savior in the heavenly places, but they contain redemptive truths which are common for every fatherhood, Eph.3:15.

We shall focus on the dispensational themes of these two books and how most of the Bible is an unfolding; a revelation of redemption for people on the earth and eventually the new earth. We will show the Gospels and Acts for what they are, a continuation of the earthly purpose which began in Genesis.

We will eventually arrive at Acts 28, the dispensational boundary after which God revealed His redemptive purpose for the heavenly places which previously had been hidden in God. This purpose cannot be found in Genesis, Revelation, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John or Acts or the New Testament books written during Acts.

In the following complementary lists, I have highlighted some of the great dispensational themes found in Genesis and Revelation. The fundamental or continuing element, namely the Lamb as the Sin Offering is essential for this earthly purpose for without His offering for sin and sins, no one would dwell with Him in Paradise on the New Earth. All these elements are eventually featured and developed in the nation of Israel and her redemption.

A chart in the following chapter also highlights these links showing the redemptive purpose from Earth to New Earth, not from earth to heaven. Genesis and Revelation are for our learning but not about us dispensationally.

Genesis- The Beginning

1:1 Original Creation
Heaven & Earth
Earth

1:2 Holy Spirit, abyss

1:3 Light

1:5 Darkness, night

1:14- Sun, moon, stars
Earth's government

1:27 Man in God's image

2:2 Seventh Day

2:9-10, 15:18
River, Euphrates
Tree of Life

2:18- Adam & Bride
24 (Bride for Abraham's son)

3:8 Lord and people in
Paradise (on earth)

3:1-15 Serpent, rebellion
End foretold

3:15 Seed of the Woman
Two seeds
Satan

15:4 Seed of Abraham

3:16 Children thru
(15:13) suffering - travail

21:9-10, 37:19-24
Seed/Heir, rejected/suffering

3:17 Curse

3:19 Sin and death, the world

3:21, 4:4, 7 Lamb, Sin offering

3:21 Covering of skins

3:24 Lord dwelling
between cherubim

Revelation-The Ending

21:5 New Creation

21:1-2 New Heaven, New

9:1, 11:7 Holy Spirit, abyss

22:5 Light

22:5 No night there

6:13, Sun, moon, stars,
8:12, 16:8 Earth's judgment

13 Image of the Beast

1:10 The Day of the Lord

9:14, 16:22, 22:1-2
River, Euphrates
Tree of Life

21:2,9 Last Adam & Bride
19 (Bride City for The Son)

2:7 Lord & people in
Paradise (on new earth)

12:9,14 Serpent, rebellion
20:2,10 End realized

1:13 Son of Man
13 One empowered by

2:18 Son of God

12:1-3 Children thru
suffering - travail

11:15, 19:16
The Heir enters earthly
inheritance

22:3 Curse removed

20:14, 21:4 Sin & death
removed

21:22 Lamb, no Temple

19:8 Linen clothes,
righteousness

4:6 Lord dwelling
between cherubim

26:5	The Law	12:17, 14:12, 22:14	Commandments
3:24	Fire (sword) First death	20:14	Lake of Fire Second death
6-9	Flood destroys evil	12	Satan's flood to destroy elect
9:13-15	Rainbow, reminder Covenant with earth	4:3	Rainbow, remembrance
		10:1	Covenant with earth
10:8-9	Nimrod = we will revolt	13-18	The Beast, rebellion
10:10	Babylon	14:8	Babylon revived & fallen
37:9	Sun, moon stars - Israel	12	Sun, moon, stars - Israel

In the next chapter we find in Israel's typical deliverance the great bridge between Genesis and Revelation; the steps the Lord takes to bring to fruition all that was anticipated in Genesis.

Chapter two

Israel, the Lord's inheritance, connecting Genesis & Revelation

Three important characters stand forth in the opening chapters of Genesis; Adam, Noah and Abraham.

Adam and Noah were instructed to be fruitful and multiply and replenish/fill the earth Gen.1:28, 9:1. After the flood and in defiance of the Lord's command, Nimrod was a mighty enslaver of men and people congregated in a city. At Babel the Lord scattered people with varying languages and cultures and during the 239 years of Peleg, the continents drifted into their present locations Gen.10:18-19, 1Ch.1:19.

Immediately following this division of people into nations in their lands the earthly redemptive purpose threads through one man and his seed in one central land.

Abraham was called into the Land of Promise and it is said to him and of Israel the following;

And Jehovah said to Abram, Go out of your country, and from your kindred, and from your father's house into a land that I will show you. And I will make you a great nation. And I will bless you and make your name great. And you shall be a blessing. And I will bless those that bless you and curse the one who curses you. And in you shall all families of the earth be blessed. [Gen 12:1-3](#)

When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the sons of Israel. For Jehovah's portion is His people. Jacob is the lot of His inheritance. [Deu 32:8-9](#) (Ps.135:5)

For you *are* a holy people to Jehovah your God. Jehovah your God has chosen you to be a special people to Himself above all people that are upon the face of the earth. Jehovah did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because you were more in number than any people, for you *were* the fewest of all people. But because Jehovah loved you, and because He would keep the oath which He had sworn to your fathers, Jehovah has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you out of the house of slaves, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. [Deu 7:6-8](#) See also Ex.19:5-6, 1Kings 8:53

Israel is the Lord's inheritance on the earth, as He walked in a garden with people originally, so He will dwell in His Land which will become as Eden. Not only so, but His Word will go out from there to the world for all people. Isaiah 51:1-6 is rich in these connecting dispensational themes. It links Abraham back to Eden and the earthly redemptive purpose begun there. Later in Isaiah 65:17, 66:22 the Lord looks on to the New Heaven and New Earth. What a connection! Here is a section;

For Jehovah shall comfort Zion; He will comfort all her waste places; and He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of Jehovah. Joy and gladness shall be found in it, thanksgiving and the voice of melody.

Listen to Me, My people; and give ear to Me, O My nation; for a law shall go out from Me, and I will make My judgment to rest for a light of peoples.

My righteousness is near; My salvation has gone out, and My arms shall judge peoples; the coastlands shall wait on Me, and on My arm they shall trust. [Isa 51:3-5](#)

Israel, the Land and the People, is the center from which the circumference of this earthly redemptive purpose will unfold; the great redemptive link tying Genesis and Revelation. When Israel is redeemed, then in her the Lord will reign as King of Kings and she will manifest His righteousness and glory to the world among whom she was once a reproach. Then the scattered Gentiles will know of the Lord and many will rejoice with Israel in the Lord their God;

Rejoice, O, nations, with His people; for He will avenge the blood of His servants, and will render vengeance to His foes and will be merciful to His land, to His people. [Deu 32:43](#)

And again,

Sing to Jehovah, all the earth. Show forth from day to day His salvation. Declare His glory among the heathen, His marvelous works among all nations. [1Ch 16:23-24](#) ([Ps.22:27](#))

And again,

Therefore I will give thanks to You, O Jehovah, among the nations, and sing praises to Your name, magnifying the salvations to His king, and working mercy to His anointed, to David, and to his seed forevermore. [Psa 18:49-50](#)

And again,

O let the nations be glad and sing for joy; for You shall judge the peoples righteously and govern the nations on earth. [Selah. Psa 67:4](#)

And again;

The Word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall be, in the last days the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow into it. And many people shall go and say, Come, and let us go to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob. And He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths. For out of Zion shall go out the Law, and the Word of Jehovah from Jerusalem. And He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. O house of Jacob, come and let us walk in the light of Jehovah. [Isa 2:1-5](#)

And again,

And the suckling child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea. And in that day there shall be the Root of Jesse standing for a banner of the people; to Him the nations shall seek; and His resting place shall be glorious. And He shall lift up a banner for the nations, and shall gather the outcasts of Israel and gather together the scattered ones of Judah from the four corners of the earth. [Isa 11:8-10,12](#)

And again;

And He said, It is but a little thing that You should be My servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to bring back the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You for a light to the nations, to be My salvation to the end of the earth. [Isa 49:6](#)

See also, [Ex.15:17-18](#), [1Kings8:43](#), [Ps.22:27](#), [18:49-50](#), [24:1](#), [Is.11:10](#), [42:11](#), [55:4](#), [60:3-10](#), [Amos.9:9-15](#) and [Matt.8:11](#) et al.

The earthly purpose from Genesis 1 is that the Savior should shine forth as a light for Israel and the world. The fact that Gentiles were saved during Acts is no reasons to see the church which is His body beginning. The salvation Jew and Gentiles in those prophetic passages above is not the salvation of today for the heavenly places despite the fact the shed blood is essential in both salvation purposes.

While Adam and Noah had many offspring Abraham and Sarah had one child which came through the miracle of the Lord Gen.15:4, 17:16, 18:14. The seed of the woman is now also the seed of Abraham and in Isaac we see this earthly redemption secured by the shed blood of the substitute. Isaac was the heir of the Promised Land, not heaven and when Abraham offered Isaac, the son he loved, this certainly anticipated the offering of the Lord on the cross as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world but the redemption was all earthly and never anticipates the heavenly purpose. Isaac foreshadows Christ as the Savior who is the Heir of the Promised Land and the world, Ex.15:17 and Ps.2:6-8.

When the Lord promised an inheritance for Abraham's seed, it was a land divided into two portions; the wider land from Euphrates to the River of Egypt, but also the inner portion, the Land of Canaan;

In the same day Jehovah made a covenant with Abram, saying, I have given this land to your seed, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates, Gen 15:18-21

And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your seed after you in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God to you and to your seed after you. And I will give the land to you in which you are a stranger, and to your seed after you, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession. And I will be their God. Gen 17:7-8

Notice the Seed was given all the land but the divine presence was in the central portion which alone was given to Abraham and his Seed. Many prophecies of restoration and redemption for Israel focus on this inner portion which will be made like Eden. Perhaps the wider portions of the Land might be "outer darkness". Genesis begins with a garden on the earth, the land of Israel will be like that garden on the earth, and in Revelation we find that garden fully restored on the earth. Certainly the Lord will reign in Zion on the mountains whereupon He suffered and in the New Jerusalem on the New Earth his glory will be manifested.

In Genesis 15 we find a prophetic statement about Abraham's seed. The seed is in servitude but then re-gathered back into the Promised Land and glorified with great substance;

And He said to Abram, You must surely know that your seed shall be a stranger in a land not theirs, and shall serve them. And they shall afflict them four hundred years. And also I will judge that nation whom they shall serve. And afterward they shall come out with great substance. And you shall go to your fathers in peace. ... in the fourth generation they shall come here again, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full. Gen 15:13-16

In Genesis 15:3 we have the Festive Exodus deliverance program in a nutshell and the Feasts step out the deliverance of Israel historically but they prophecy a future deliverance for Israel and salvation going out to all the world. The Feasts do not predict the church which is His Body going to heavenly places.

This specific festive prophetic pattern of the Exodus begins to be fulfilled as the Gospels and Acts unfold. If we read the Gospels and Acts without reference to this earthly redemptive pattern we end up with total confusion. Reading the church which is His Body into the Feasts and Matthew, Mark, Luke and John is dispensational confusion of the worst kind.

Messiah is also Abraham's seed and Scripture reveals this inseparable bond between the nation of Israel and the Jehovah their Messiah;

But Jehovah has taken you and brought you out from the iron furnace, out of Egypt, to be to Him a people of inheritance, as you are today. [Deu 4:20](#)

The land shall not be sold forever; for the land is Mine. For you are strangers and pilgrims with Me. [Lev 25:23](#)

For Jehovah's portion is His people. Jacob is the lot of His inheritance. [Deu 32: 9](#)

See also Deut.9:29, Amos 3:1-2.

We find therefore in the prophecy of Gen.15:13-18 and in the Feasts, the pathway from suffering to glory in the Promised Land for both the Nation of Israel and Messiah their High Priest King. In this pathway of restoration, sin and death which entered the world in Genesis, is eradicated for all people, so while the Feasts show redemption they do not foreshadow Christians today; the church which is His body being raised to the heavenly places.

Let us now connect some threads widening the character set to include Isaac and Joseph which, along with Adam, show forth earthly dominion in the Seed Heir.

Adam stands at the top of the page as a type of Messiah [Roms.5:14](#). Adam anticipates the One in whom dominion over the earth will be restored and the location of His dominion is later identified as the inheritance promised to Abraham's Seed. Genesis and Exodus are inseparable as to dispensational purpose for the earth.

Isaac, the Heir of the Land, is another figure of the greater Heir and he suffers on Moriah and was raised from the dead in a figure [Hebs.11:19](#). The Heir who is to have dominion on the earth is also the Lamb to suffer then reign in the Promised Land. We must rightly divide Scripture, and Isaac's suffering certainly shows how redemption comes, but it is for redemption on the earth, not in heaven. We must separate the continuing truths from the non-continuing truths and this we have monumentally failed to do as a movement. As soon as we see the shed blood of the Savior we see the church which is His body and unwittingly undermine the faithfulness of God.

Joseph, another picture of the Heir, is rejected and "killed" by his brethren and when they recognize him the second time he says this;

And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive. Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them. [Gen 50:19-21](#)

Messiah will be recognized the second time, as was Joseph and Moses. When He returns to the earth in power and glory He will nurture, protect and abundantly provide for his brethren, like Joseph. When He returns in power He will deliver and give the Law in the second covenant as Moses delivered and gave the Law in the first.

In the lives of Adam, Isaac and Joseph we see redemption through the shed blood but the salvation anticipated is not ours in the heavenly places. The

Salvation in view thus far is earthly; the deliverance of Israel and her nourishment under the dominion and reign of the Heir. When this is accomplished then redemption goes forth to the nations scattered around her.

Genesis opens with creation and peace in Paradise but sin and death enter to mar God's creation. Genesis brings to light the shed blood in type and concludes with a coffin in Egypt. While this is for us, containing continuing or fundamental redemptive truths, none of it is about us, the Church which is His Body.

When the Lord told Abraham his seed would "come out with great substance" the details of that deliverance would unfold in the Exodus and the Scriptures which followed it. But those details were not only about the Nation, but also depict the Heir who would be rejected, shed His blood, save, sanctify and nourish Israel for service in the Promised Land. Exodus does not show our church going to heaven.

The Feasts provide the historic details of Israel's typical salvation under Moses but they also provide the prophetic details of her greater deliverance under the One Moses said was coming, Deut.18:15, 18. Included in the process of Israel's greater deliverance, all that was lost in Genesis will be restored as recorded in Revelation.

The Feasts given to Israel are the great bridge between Genesis and Revelation. They show forth redemption through the blood for people on the earth, they are not in any way a picture of Christians today going to heaven.

A chart linking Genesis through Israel's salvation to the accomplishment of that earthly (and new earthly) redemptive purpose as given in Revelation will be found in chapter 3.

Chapter three

Israel's deliverance; The Feasts tying Genesis and Revelation

We now begin an exciting journey with the children of Israel which is the pattern fulfilled in the Gospels and Acts and which would have come to fruition as Revelation records.

The Lord brings them out with an outstretched arm and with fearful might, and with miracles and with wonders. Israel was brought forth from bondage with great substance just as the Lord had promised their father Abraham.

The Exodus is an historical fact but where we fail is to totally miss its prophetic message. The Exodus as unfolded in Passover, Unleavened Bread, Weeks (Pentecost), Trumpets, the Day of Atonement and Tabernacles/Booths, is Israel's salvation journey not the journey of the church which is His Body. The Exodus foreshadows God's future dealings with the church Israel, not believers today. It was Israel in type, it is Israel in fulfillment.

This age old problem of seeing the church which is His Body in Old Testament typology comes about because of the blood. Every step of Israel's deliverance shows forth in some way Christ, His shed blood, resurrection, access and abundant provision and seeing these essential truths for all churches, we glibly dismiss the dispensational setting. All the Promises and the divine purposes for the world through Israel are lost and so we transfer all the dispensational figures of the Exodus to our completely different calling today.

Christ and His shed blood, resurrection and provision are essential for Israel's future glory as well as ours, but the future glory of the church Israel and the church which is His Body are completely different. Simply because Christ and His vicarious offering and the blessed consequences thereof are pictured in the Exodus does not mean the Exodus is about us today. In Exodus, Christ as the High Priest King Deliverer is clearly foreshadowed and these locations and titles are not associated with our heavenly calling. There are continuing truths in the Exodus but many discontinuing truths, namely the truths about Israel and the Promised Land and these have been constantly overlooked, ignored or transferred. What a mess we have made of God's Word by misplacement.

Here follows a simple chart of the Feasts as found in Lev.23 and which chart is also available here <http://www.acts28.net/chartsappearing.html>

Leviticus 23

The Feasts given to ISRAEL

23:1-2 Moses to Israel. MY FEASTS Proclaim

23:3 **The Sabbath (of Rest).** (The weekly reminder)
7th day. Holy assembly. In your dwellings. No work.

23:4 FEASTS of JEHOVAH. In their season

1.23:5 * **PASSOVER.** (10th) 14th day. 1st month, evening. Lamb. Ex.12

2. 23:6-8 * **UNLEAVENED BREAD.** 7 days. 1st (15th) day, 7th (21st) Holy assemblies. No work. **8**
[Firstfruits] 16th day 1st month Wave offering grain/sheaf, when in land.

3. 23:15-21 * **WEEKS.** (Pentecost) (:21) 7x7sabbaths+1day = **50.** Assembly. No work.
[Firstfruits] 2 loaves with Leaven 7 lambs, 1 bull & 2 rams

23:22 Harvest sharing for the poor and the stranger (alien =gentile) Stranger.
Num. 1:51, 3:10:38. The corners of the field. Gentiles blessed of Israel, (Roms.15:27)

4. 23:23-25 **TRUMPETS.** 1st day. 7th month. Sabbath, trumpet blasts. No work. Assembly. Offering.
(harvest)

5. 23:26-32 **ATONEMENT.** 10th day 7th month. Sabbath. Assembly. No work. (or destroyed)
Afflict /deny (humility, repentance) or cut off. Is.53. Lev.16. H.Priest,
Holiest of all. Scapegoat. National cleaning.
Lev.25 Jubile trumpet. 7x7 yrs+1year =**50.** Liberty, Restoration

6. 23:33-36 * **TABERNACLES.** 15th day, 7th month. 1st-8th days assemblies. No Work. **8**
(harvest) Offerings. No Work.

23:37-38 The FEASTS of the LORD with offerings

7. 23:39-43 **BOOTHES.** 15th day, 7th month (after harvest) 1st-8th sabbaths.
Celebrate, celebrate. (No Offering mentioned). Israelites build booths

23:43 Moses declared (to Israel) the FEASTS of the LORD

Christ and His cross seen in Exodus and the Feasts, does not authorize anyone to see the church which is His body in them. For centuries we have glibly inserted our calling into the Exodus typology and thus deepened confusion and promoted replacement theology on which the modern Messianic movements flourish.

This brief survey of the Feasts is just that, a brief overview. We begin with a structure which emphasizes the relationship of them all but especially the joining of Pentecost and Trumpets. A more comprehensive chart of the feasts can be found here www.bibleunderstanding.com/appearing.htm

A simplified structure of the Feasts is now essential to capture the deliverance of the Nation of Israel from Egypt into the Promised Land. The Feasts are not simply holy days, they commemorate Israel's steps of deliverance and the power and purpose of the Lord in that deliverance. This structure ties Pentecost and Trumpets as the central pairing since they are tied together in type as we shall see.

Passover Ex.12, Lev.23

Unleavened Bread (First Fruit) Ex.12, Lev.23

Pentecost (First Fruit) Ex.19, Lev.23

Trumpets Ex.19, Num.13-14, Joshua 6

Atonement (Jubilee Trumpet) Lev.16, 23

Tabernacles/Booths Joshua 5:12, Lev.23

These steps of deliverance must be understood in the context of the Genesis Revelation redemptive theme. Who could not miss the Lord and cherubim in Genesis and Revelation without thinking of the cherubim in Israel's Tabernacle. Who could not miss the river Euphrates in Genesis and Revelation and the border of the Promised Land. The Feasts link Genesis and Revelation not the church which is His Body with the heavenly places.

The chart following shows this earthly purpose pattern, linking the early chapters of Genesis through Israel's exodus to Revelation. This purpose was unfolding through the Gospels up until Acts 28 at which point the nation of Israel was set aside for a time and this earthly purpose postponed. We live in the dispensation of the grace of God which is not anticipated in these Scriptures.

This chart captures an overview of the redemptive purposes unfolding from Genesis all the way to Revelation. But at Acts 28, these purposes were put on hold; postponed not discarded or replaced. We fit as it were, in a parenthetical dispensation between the time Israel was cast aside and the future when God will resume His purposes for and through her. We will talk more about this later.

This chart is available as a pdf on this link
<http://www.acts28.net/chartsappearing.html>

Genesis



OLD TESTAMENT pattern, the bridge showing how all is restored on the earth



Revelation

The Feasts represent the steps the Lord took to deliver Israel from bondage to the Promised Land of milk and honey. They prophesy the future steps the Lord will take to deliver Israel into a glorious Land, Is:51:3. Through these steps the enemy, sin and death will be removed and the restoration of things lost will be found on the new earth.

The Feasts reveal the earthly purposes made possible by redemption through His blood, they do not typify salvation of Christians today going to heaven

- a** 1:1 Creation Heaven & Earth
- b** 1:2 Holy Spirit, abyss
- c** 1:3 Light,
- d** 1:5 Darkness, night
- e** 1:14- Sun, moon, stars earth's govt.
- f** 1:27 Man in God's image
- g** 2:2 7th Day-dominion
- h** 2:9-10 River, Euphrates Tree of Life
- i** 2:18-24 Adam & Bride
- j** 24 Bride for Abraham's son
- k** 3:8 Lord and people in Paradise on earth
- k** 3:1-15 Serpent, Rebellion End foretold
- l** 3:15 Seed of the Woman Two seeds
- m** 15:4 Seed of Abraham
- n** 3:16 Children thru
- n** 15:13 suffering – travail
- n** 21:9-10, 37:19-24 Seed/Heir, rejected/suffering
- o** 3:17 Curse
- p** 3:19 Sin and death, world
- q** 3:21, 4:4, 7 Lamb, Sin offering
- r** 3:21 Covering of skins
- s** 3:24 Lord dwelling between cherubim
- t** 26:5 The Law
- u** 3:24 Fire (sword) First death
- v** 6-9 Flood destroys evil
- w** 9:1-3-15 Rainbow, reminder Covenant with earth
- x** 10:8-9 Nimrod = we will revolt
- y** 10:10 Babylon
- z** 37:9 Sun, moon stars - Israel

Abraham-seed suffering, inheritance, Land (Euphrates) Gen. 15, 17
Abraham's journey was from the outer Promised Land to the inner. Cp. Matt.8:12

Sabbath. Gen.2:2, Ex.16

Passover Ex.12 gods of Egypt judged meal given. Israel made ready for deliverance

Unleavened Bread Ex.12 Land Lev.23:10
firstfruit (Christ's resurrection seen)
deliverance from grave seen

Pentecost Ex.19, 24:9-10 The Lord descends, gifts given. **firstfruit** supernatural gifts, Ex.28, 31, Numb.11

Lev.23:22 Harvest is shared with poor and GENTILES
Num.1:51, 3:10, :38. Gentiles partake of Israel's blessings

Trumpets (possible at Numb.13-14) Israel rescued gathered into Promised Land. Christ's dominion.
Harvest resurrection seen. Joshua 3-6

Day of Atonement Israel cleansed. Lev.16, Joseph's brothers recognize the true Joseph. Zech.12, 13:6

Tabernacles/Booths Wonderful provision for Israel.
Is.51:3, 55. The nations come up to worship the Lord in Zion.
Ps.2:6, 9:11.Micah 4:2. Rivers, Ex.17, Is.41:18, 43:19, Ez.47
Israel made like Eden, Is.51:3.

The Seed, suffering before deliverance & glory in the Land on earth (& new earth),
the seed of the woman is Christ but also Israel, Messiah, Israel & the world in this purpose

- a** 21:5 Creation
- b** 21:1-2 New Heaven & Earth
- c** 21:7 Holy Spirit, abyss
- d** 22:5 Light,
- e** 22:5 No night there
- f** 22:5 Sun, moon, stars, 6:13
- g** 22:5 Earth's judgment, 8:12, 16:8
- h** 13 Image of the Beast,
- i** 13 Day of the Lord-dominion
- j** 1:6, 10 River (Euphrates) 22:1, 9:14
- k** 22:2 Tree of Life
- l** 21:2, 9 Last Adam & Bride
- m** 21:2 the bride's a city, New Jerusalem
- n** 2:7 Lord and people in
- o** 2:7 Paradise, new earth
- p** 12:9, 14 Serpent, Rebellion
- q** 20:2, 10 End realized
- r** 13 Son of Man 1:13, 14:14
- s** 13 one empowered by Satan
- t** 13 Children thru 12:1-3
- u** 11:15, 19:16 suffering – travail
- v** 22:3 Heir enters earthly inheritance
- w** 22:3 Curse removed
- x** 20:14, 21:4 Sin, death removed
- y** 21:22 Lamb, no need of Temple
- z** 21:22 Linen clothes, righteousness
- a** 19:8 Lord dwelling
- b** 4:6 between cherubim
- c** 14:12, 22:14 Commandments
- d** 20:14 Lake of Fire
- e** 20:14 second death
- f** 12 Satan's flood to destroy elect
- g** 12 Rainbow, remembrance
- h** 4:3 Covenant with earth
- i** 10:1 The Beast, rebellion
- j** 13-18 Babylon revived & fallen
- k** 14:8 Sun, moon, stars – Israel
- l** 12 z

Genesis, Israel and Revelation are about companies of redeemed on the earth. Most of the New Testament is not ABOUT us. Paul's post-Acts letters are ABOUT us today.

The reader is invited to explore all the complimentary pairings on the chart a through z, in Genesis and Revelation. These same themes unfold in the typical salvation of Israel tying the earthly purpose started in Genesis through Israel to Revelation.

Israel is the channel through which the earthly redemptive purposes of Genesis will be accomplished. Revelation is the culmination of Israel's history and the bringing in of all that Genesis anticipated and examining these links might bring the same conviction to our readers. Not all references are given for each element, this is only your launch for an exciting Scripture research.

e/z. The Sun, Moon and Stars. Genesis through Israel to Revelation.

In Gen.1:14-18 these were placed to distinguish day and night, to govern, to be for signs, seasons and days. Israel is the sign people and the sun, moon and stars can be found in Israel's history and prophecy thus linking the earthly Genesis and Revelation redemptive purpose through that nation.

- e1.** Gen.37:9 Shows that the Heir will rule and govern in the Promised Land. Adam typified dominion and in Israel it will be, see Isaiah 11.
- e2.** Joshua 10:12-13 describes the Sun standing still for the benefit of Israel. See also 2Kings 20:9-11.
- e3.** Is.13:10-13 prophecies of the day when the Heir comes. Then the sun, moon and stars are shaken, but His reign in power and glory is also linked with these, see Psa.72:5, 17, 74:16, 89:36, Is.24:23, 30:18-26, 38:8, 60:19-20, Eze.32:7-8, Joe.2:10, Joe.2:31, Joe.3:15, Amo.8:9-10, Hab.3:11, Zep.1:15-16, Matt.24:29, Mar.13:24, Luk.21:25 & 1Cor.15:41.
- e4.** Jer. 31:31-36 Looks forward to the Day when the Lord makes a New Covenant with both houses of Israel and the sun moon and stars are a testimony to the Lord's faithfulness for her. See also Is.65:17-18, 66:22.

The sun, moon and stars are linked from Genesis, through the nation of Israel to Revelation showing unity of this earthly redemptive purpose.

g. The Sabbath. Genesis through Israel to Revelation

If Christians could acknowledge the Sabbath as belonging with church Israel and not the church which is His Body what walls of division would crumble. It is said in the book of Hebrews that there remains a rest for the people of God and that rest is not our rest in the heavenly places, for the people of God does not always refer to us.

The seventh number is so inseparably linked with Israel, the Lord's inheritance, that it leaps of the pages.

In Genesis the Lord ceased from His labors on the seventh day and blessed it and the Sabbath is not enjoined upon any people until Israel is typically delivered. Abraham did not observe the Sabbath though he walked according to God's Law, Gen.26:5.

- g1.** Ex.16. The Lord appears to Israel in a cloud and provides for them despite their murmurings and the first instruction to Israel regarding the seventh day is given. In this incident in Israel's typical salvation we see the Lord in glory providing for His people Israel, the people of God.
- g2.** Gen.2:2, Ex.20:8-11 and Lev.23:3. The Sabbath is specifically given to Israel in the Law and the Feasts. The weekly Sabbath which is linked back to Genesis, stands atop of the annual Festive calendar as an encapsulation of all the Feasts typify. The weekly Sabbath looks to Israel resting with blessings under Messiah, it does not foreshadow Christians today enjoying blessings in the above heavens. The Sabbath and the other festive Sabbaths were to be enjoyed by Israel in their dwellings Lev.23:3, 14, 21, 31. They were not to be observed today by Gentiles in their dwellings. The Sabbath was blessed by God and foresees Israel's blessings on the earth, in their Land under their Lord who gave the Sabbaths specifically to them and will dwell among them, see Ex.24:16.
- g3.** Ex.16:29, 31:13-17. The weekly Sabbath was given to Israel as a sign and a covenant to remind them that the Lord sanctified them. The Sabbath is not a sign or covenant between God and the Church which is His Body. Again the references back to Genesis are another great link tying Genesis Israel and Revelation together.
- g4.** Ps.8, 92, Is.66:23, Matt.12:8. The Lord is the Lord of the Sabbath day looking onto to His reign of glory on the earth. The enemy is stilled (Ps.8:2 shabath elsewhere rested) and all enemies subdued during His reign. The Sabbath looks to this Day of the Lord as in Is.2, 13, 34:8, Ez.30:3, Joel 2:11, 31, Amos 5:18, Zep.1:7, 2:2-3, Mal.4:5, 1Thess.5:2-3 and of course, Revelation.

Here is a list of sevens tied to Israel, all relating prophetically to the reign of Messiah on the earth and all that entails;

1. 7th day. The weekly Sabbath.
2. 7 weeks. Weeks or Pentecost, 7 sabbaths shall be complete, Lev.23:15.
3. 7 months. The Feasts span 7 months. 7th month a Sabbath, Lev.23:24,
4. 7 years. In the seventh year a Sabbath (of one year). Lev.25:2-5.
5. 7x7 years. Seven x seven years, Jubilee. Lev.25:8-10.
6. 7 x 70 years. Seventy weeks are determined for Israel and Jerusalem, not the church His Body, Dan.9:24-27.
Was it 490 ammi years Abraham to Exodus?
Was it 490 ammi years from Exodus to the Dedication of the Temple?
Was it 490 ammi years from the Temple to decree of Cyrus?
(See The [Divine Names and Titles](#) by Dr E.W. Bullinger)

The Seventh day of Genesis is developed through Israel and reaches its climax in Revelation. The weekly Sabbath ties Genesis, Israel and Revelation all of which is about this earthly redemptive purpose.

h. River, Euphrates, Tree of Life. Genesis through Israel to Revelation.

- h1.** Eden was watered with a river divided and when Moses struck the Rock in Exodus 17:1-7 rivers flowed in the desert and the Lord's people drank living waters. This is all prophetic and looks to the Day when Israel's Messiah will removed Israel's water scarcity and their Land will be filled with waters which flow and are divided, Zech.14:8. See each of these references Ps.46:4, 78:16, 20, Is.35:6, 41:18, 43:20, Jer.31:9. But especially Joel 3:18, Ez.47:1-12 and eventually Rev.22:1-2. Does Zech.13:1 speak of water baptism for Israel in that Day? Certainly water baptism belongs to Israel and the earthly redemptive purpose. Moses striking Christ the Rock has nothing dispensationally to do with our calling today.
- h2.** The Euphrates of Genesis is also the Eastern border of the Promised Land, Gen.15:18, Deut.1:7, 11:24 and Rev.9:14. Another dispensational component tying Genesis, and Revelation through Israel.
- h3.** The Tree of Life, guarded in Genesis but available in Revelation, bears 12 fruits, one for each month and 12 is the number of Israel. Only the leaves will be for the healing of the Nations. We have the healing of the wilderness and the Dead Sea in Ex.47 and Is.35:1 by the waters which flow from Messiah's throne and outwards but see Ez.47:12 which certainly anticipates Revelation 22:1-2.

i. Adam and Isaac's Bride. Genesis through Israel to Revelation.

It is axiom in replacement theology that believers today are the Bride of Christ and many a zealous expositor will refer to the story of Isaac and Rebecca as typical of Christ and His church today. This does not fit the pattern, Israel was God's wife.

- i1. The Bride, the Lamb's wife is a city called the New Jerusalem, Rev.21:1-5, and such plainness of speech demands plainness of exegesis. The Bride anticipated in Genesis and Isaac and foreseen by Abraham, Hebs.11:8-10, is a city replacing Jerusalem which now is. Reading Rev.21:10 onwards we cannot escape the Jewish nature of this Bride. The vision of this City descending to the New Earth was from a high mountain as in Ez.40. However, Is.54 is the stepping stone from Genesis through the restored Jerusalem to the New in Revelation. In this prophecy Jehovah clearly speaks of being a husband to Israel, see also Is.54:5, 62:4-5, Jer.2:2, 3:14, 31:32, Ez.16:8, Ez.23:4 and Hosea. Husband and Bride relationship belong to the earthly redemptive purpose, not the heavenly one and we shall consider 2Cor.11 later. We are the Church which is His Body and Christ is our Head. Believers today are not the Bride of Christ and may never enter the Streets of Gold.

All that is wiped away at the time this great City descends is seen in prophecies regarding Israel, compare Rev.21:4 with Is.25:8, 30:19, 35:10, 60:20, 61:3, 65:18-19, Jer.31:13.

m. Children through suffering, travail. Genesis through Israel to Revelation.

The pains of childbirth are not only the result of the fall, but look to suffering the child will endure before glory. Israel's Messiah and Israel are both the seed of Eve and Abraham and will be brought into salvation through much suffering.

- m1. Travail, or birth pains are prevalent in prophecy regarding the Day of the Lord and Israel's final and greater deliverance which culminates in the Revelation. Consider, Is.13:6-11, 26:13-21, Jer.6:22-27, 30:3-9 and Hos.13:9-14,

r. Covering of Skins. Genesis through Israel to Revelation.

The Atonement, redemption through the shed blood, is that which enables man and God to dwell together again, ultimately with no Temple, Rev.21:22. Israel's tabernacle was covered with the skins of animals Ex.26, under which the Lord dwelt between cherubim on the mercy seat. Animal skins were used to cover Adam and Eve tying the atonement seen in Genesis through Israel's typical atonement to Revelation. On the day Adam sinned, a substitute died in his place anticipating the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, essential for the earthly redemptive purpose.

s. The Lord dwelling between cherubim. Genesis through Israel to Revelation.

Genesis 4 contains much that is suggestive and prophetic. We see its redemptive themes developed in Israel services to the Lord.

- s1. In Gen.4:3 offerings were brought in the process of time which is later developed in the Tabernacle services and offerings given to Israel.
- s2. In Gen.4:7 Cain was told that a sin offering was lying at the door, the door was later part of the Tabernacle. The later affects and laws of the Sin Offering can be found in Ex.29:14, 36, 30:10 and see sin and sin offering in Lev.4-6, 14, 16.
- s3. Cherubim are tabernacled (Deut.12:11) at the East of the Garden and some have rendered Gen.3:24 like this "And he dwelt between the cherubim at the East of the Garden of Eden and a fierce fire, or Shekinah, unfolding itself to preserve the way of the tree of life." (Jamieson, Faussett and Brown Commentary). The Lord dwelling between cherubim and Seraphim relates to the earthly redemptive purposes. See Ex.25:22, Ps.80:1, 99:1, Is.6, Ez.1 and consider Ez.28:11-.

u. Fire (sword) & first death. Genesis through Israel to Revelation.

Fire is associated with the Lord's presence on the earth; His holiness and His purging and removal of evil.

- u1. The Lord's presence on the earth is in Israel's Tabernacle/Temple where fire is widely featured in the offerings. The fire of Genesis is seen in Israel's typical salvation where evil doers are purged from among the people with fire. The fire of Genesis and in Israel anticipates the Valley of Hinnom; the hell which is a valley beside Zion and will be the place of those who sin against the Lord when he reigns on earth, Is.66. Is this valley the Lake of Fire of Revelation (the second death) into which evil doers, death and hell (the grave) are eventually cast. See Gen.19:24, Ex.3:2, 9:23, 13:21, 19:18, 24:17, 40:34 (Is.4), Lev.9:24, 10:2, Num.11:1-2, 16:35, Deut.4:2, 16:35 et.al.

u2. Fire purging in the suffering before glory process.

The Lord often spoke to Israel in His anger and promised a future fiery purging of them as well as their enemies. This was anticipated in the events in Israel's typical salvation as shown in u1. One prophecy which looks to a yet future purging by fire is found in Isaiah 10-11 all of this consistent with Jehovah's claim that He is a consuming fire, see also Ps.50:3, Is.66:15, Nah.1:5-6 and Dan.7:9

It is our prayer the reader pursues those many other links we have not examined for greater joy in the consistency of God's Word. However, the thread weaving from Genesis to Revelation is clearly seen in Israel and the Lord's salvation for her.

Chapter four

Israel's deliverance in the Feasts. The bridge; the pattern, the template for the Gospels and Acts

The Lord delivered Israel into the Promised Land by steps or stages and these are remembered in the Feasts. The Feasts prophesy a greater deliverance for Israel under a greater Deliverer than Moses. Here are those steps showing the Lord's faithfulness in Israel's deliverance.

Passover. Israel preserved by the blood under gentile dominion, the gentiles experiencing the Lord's wrath and the gods of their world judged.

Unleavened Bread. (First fruit of resurrection). Israel begin their journey of deliverance, separated to the Lord by the blood into their Land.

Pentecost. (First fruit) Israel see the Lord in His glory, the Law given; the Old Covenant, supernatural gifts given to individuals within that nation to prepare them for service.

Trumpets. (Harvest of resurrection) The Lord of Glory on the earth in Israel's Tabernacle. The Lord of all the earth. All Gentile domination forever removed.

Atonement. Israel's national cleansing. The High Priest (King), Israel's sins removed.

Tabernacles/Booths. Israel's abundant provision under Messiah as they reflect on His faithfulness.

Since these steps of deliverance are very well known, we focus our attention on Pentecost and Trumpets. We shall see how they are closely tied together in time they were in type and the condition that increased the time between them.

The Gospels record the fulfillment of Passover and the first fruit of Unleavened Bread and the next events were Pentecost, fulfilled in Acts 2, and Trumpets. Trumpets is featured in the letters of Paul written during the Acts period but is totally absent from the letters written after. Trumpets with its "rapture" was imminent all through the book of Acts which covered a period of about 40 years, but Trumpets was postponed when Israel was nationally placed to one side for a season at Acts 28.

The Book of Acts becomes clear to us when we grasp the time relationships of these two Feasts, Pentecost and Trumpets, which featured in Israel's typical deliverance.

The Exodus from Egypt into the Promised Land is not a journey of Israel's faithfulness, indeed Stephen gives the unhappy picture in his discourse as recorded in Acts 7:38-43. Israel murmured and complained, looked back to the flesh pots of Egypt and constantly doubted, but the Lord was faithful to himself. Here are plain statements as to why the Lord brought Israel into the Promised Land;

When Jehovah your God shall bring you into the land where you go to possess it, and has cast out many nations before you... You shall make no covenant with them nor show mercy to them. For you are a holy people to Jehovah your God. Jehovah your God has chosen you to be a special people to Himself above all people that are upon the face of the earth.

Jehovah did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because you were more in number than any people, for you *were* the fewest of all people. But because Jehovah loved you, and because He would keep the oath which He had sworn to your fathers, Jehovah has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you out of the house of slaves, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

Therefore, know that Jehovah your God, He *is* God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy with them that love Him and keep His commandments, to a thousand generations. Deu 7:1-2, 6-9

These statements about the Lord's faithfulness and love for Israel exclude any loose transference of these things belonging to the church Israel over to our church which is His Body. Transferring typology from the original group to another doesn't extol God's faithfulness, it denies it.

Here are more statements as to why God brought Israel into the Land;

Did people ever hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire as you have heard and live? Or has God gone forth to take a nation for Himself from the midst of a nation, by trials, by signs, and by wonders, and by war, and by a mighty hand, and by a stretched out arm, and by great terrors, according to all that Jehovah your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes?

And because He loved your fathers, therefore He chose their seed after them, and brought you out in His sight with His mighty power out of Egypt, in order to drive out from before you nations greater and mightier than you, to bring you in, to give you their land for an inheritance, as *it is* this day. Deu 4:33-34

Do not speak in your heart, after Jehovah your God has cast them out from before you, saying: For my righteousness, Jehovah has brought me in to possess this land. But for the wickedness of these nations, Jehovah your God drives them out from before you. Not for your righteousness, or for the uprightness of your heart, do you go to possess their land. But for the wickedness of these nations Jehovah your God drives them out from before you, so that He may perform the Word which Jehovah swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Therefore, understand that Jehovah your God does not give you this good land, to possess it, for your righteousness. For you *are* a stiff-necked people.

Deu 9:4-6

But you, Israel, *are* My servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham, My friend; whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called you from its sides. And I said to you, You *are* My servant; I have chosen you, and not cast you away. Do not fear; for I *am* with you; be not dismayed; for I *am* your God. I will make you strong; yes, I will help you; yes, I will uphold you with the right hand of My righteousness. Isa 41:8-10

As I live, says the Lord Jehovah, surely with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out, I will reign over you. And you shall know that I *am* Jehovah when I have worked with you for My name's sake, not according to your wicked ways nor according to your corrupt doings, O house of Israel, says the Lord Jehovah. Eze 20:33, 44
See also, Gen.22:16-18, 1Sam.12:22, Ps.44:3, 105:42, Is.43:1-5, Jer.31, Zep.3:14-20.

Both in the past, and in the future, God clearly states that He saves Israel into the Promised Land not because of their righteousness or faithfulness, but according to his righteousness and faithfulness. Is it any wonder Paul wrote these words during Acts when the Jews were persecuting the Lord's disciples; What then *is* the superiority of the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision? Much in every way! First of all, that they were entrusted with the oracles of God. For what if some did not believe? Surely their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of God? Certainly not! Rom 3:1-4 EMTV

Israel found grace, God loved, chose and delivered them, not because of who they were or what they did, but because of his own faithfulness to the unconditional promises He had made. Yes, some died under his judgment but He said he would never permanently cast off his people, so it is near contradiction to say the types involved Israel but foreshadow our "church". The types of Israel show the future for Israel and when we teach otherwise we teach replacement theology which denies God's faithfulness.

The faithful God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob brought Israel out from bondage and Passover and Unleavened Bread were seen. He guided them directly to Mount Sinai the location of which is not critical to the story. Here at the Mountain the Feast of Pentecost and Trumpets is tied together and the "rapture" is typified. I have inserted quotations marks around the word rapture to imply that the traditional concept of it is outside the word of truth rightly divided.

Pentecost is recorded in Exodus 19 and it would be very helpful if the reader paused and read the chapter.

Israel dwelt around this mountain while the High Priest's garments, the Tabernacle and its vessels. These were made by those who had received supernatural gifts, Ex.28, 31. Certainly the giving of supernatural gifts upon a remnant in Israel (see also Num.11) took place at the typical Pentecost but these are not the aspects of the feasts brought forth in Ex.19.

We know that once the Lord brought Israel to Mount Sinai, there were a number of ascents and descents by Moses over a 40 day period of time but here is a brief list of the significant features of Pentecost as recorded in Ex.19.

1. Ex.19:1, the third month, the time of Pentecost. Fifty days from Egypt.
2. Ex.19:3-6, Israel, unique to the Lord above all nations, a Kingdom of Priests. Pentecost is not about the church which is His Body. When we read in the New Testament about a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a kingdom of priests we are not reading about the church which is His Body. Mixing relationships is not correctly handling the Word of Truth. It was Israel in Ex.19 and Pentecost is Israel in the New Testament.

3. Ex.19:8. Israel enter the covenant by agreeing to obey. The Law is not the Old Covenant. The Law is central to the Old and New Covenants as a reading of Jeremiah 31 will show. When the New testament says we are not under the Law, this does not mean the Law has been abolished, it means we are not under the all guilty verdict of the Law.

4. Ex.19:9. The Lord comes in a cloud so Israel will believe Moses, and in fulfillment Messiah. When the Lord returns at Trumpets Israel will have been manipulated and exploited and misled by false prophets and false Messiahs that they will only recognize the One they see sitting at the right hand of Power and Coming in the clouds, see Matt.26:64. They shall look upon Jehovah, the One they pierced, Zech.12:10.

5. Ex.19:10-25. The Lord descends to the mountain in the sight of all the people (every eye shall see Him). The people and the priests must sanctify themselves. He descends at a Trumpet blast, a voice is heard, there are earthquakes, thunders, lightning, thick smoke and fire. It would be so profitable if the reader would underline the common words that tie Ex.19 with 1Thess.4, 1Cor.15, Matt.24 and Revelation. How anyone can read this chapter of the Exodus and believe that the Old Testament was about the church Israel and the New is entirely about the church which is His Body is beyond comprehension and a testimony to how subtly and thoroughly the enemy has hoodwinked those who claim to practice sound hermeneutics.

There are two meetings in this trumpet/"rapture" type of Ex.19 and 24. The nation of Israel meet the Lord at the base of the mountain when He comes at the Trumpet blast. They heard His voice, but a remnant is honored, they go up into the clouds to meet (1Thess.4) the Lord, see also Ex.24:9-10.

Because this typology is so important, we shall revisit it later in the book when we examine 1Thess.4

Here is a chart showing this great anticipation of the Lord's coming back to Israel at the last Trumpet and the fulfillment of the Ex.19 prophesy which includes the "rapture". Would to God every Christian knew the OT rapture.

A copy of this chart available at <http://www.acts28.net/chartsappearing.html>

Pentecost, Trumpets & "rapture", do not picture "the church"

Pentecost to Mighty signs and wonders – supernatural gifts for Priests garments & Tabernacle
divine blessing, judgments, wicked cut off, provision, visions, ministry of angels. **Trumpets**

At

Pentecost Trumpets

The Deliverer descends out of heaven
to His throne in the Holiest of All
in a cloud on the Mercy Seat
Ex.40:34-35, Lev.16:2, 13

angels Deut.33:2
voice Ex.19:5, 9, 19
clouds Ex.19:9
trumpet Ex.19:13, 16, 19

Ex.19 & 24:9-10
The "Rapture"?

a MEETING
in the clouds
honor

3 days Ex.19:11
covenant Ex.19:8, 24:3, 7

fire Ex.19:18
earthquake Ex.19:18
lightning Ex.19:16
thunder Ex.19:16
smoke Ex.19:18
darkness Deut.4:11-12

Mt Sinai

a MEETING in the land.
Israel gathered to the Lord
out from foreign lands. Ex.12-19
less honor
EVERY EYE SEES Ex.19:11

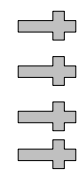


remnant caught up to MEET the One
Descending out of heaven
Gifts off deliverer
onto remnant
at Tabernacle
to bear the rule
Numb.11

Trumpets
conditional
Trumpets
unconditional

40 year
postponement
is not a change
of purpose

The Acts period
in the pattern



The 4 blood offerings
of Lev. = Acceptance,
fellowship,
sin and sins removed,
identification, substitution
effective on the Day of Atonement

Kadesh-barnea-Trumpets possible
National rebellion (this generation Deut.1:35)
defeat without the Lord, remnant kept alive to Trumpets

Trumpets follows the observance of Passover, Josh.5

Joshua looks up to the Captain of the Lord's Hosts, Josh.5:14-15
7th day, 7th Trumpets, shout, at last the Kingdom is entered, Joshua 6

The King & His Kingdom
both out of Heaven
on the earth,
in the inner portion
of Promised Land

Israel repentance, cleansing by their High Priest
and His better sacrifice, celebration
exaltation, Covenant operating, Jubilee
Joseph recognized the second time

Israel abundant provision. Messiah
You prepare a table for me

EGYPT Gentile dominion



Redemption of the FIRSTBORN, Israel is God's Firstborn on the earth,
Darkness, gods, judgment Ex.12:12, suffering, shed blood, deliverance

MEAL eaten in readiness- when in the LAND Ex.12:25. Until He comes
Israel baptized into Moss by sea and cloud, after shed blood

Manna, The Sabbath, The Lord's glory in a cloud, Ex.16

Passover
Deliverance
Unleavened Bread
separation
First Fruit
Christ in Resurrection

50 days
From Passover to
The Lord's coming

Pentecost
The coming Kingdom
preparation,
anticipation
First Fruit
Gifts on the remnant

11 days
From Passover to
The Lord's coming
at Trumpets. Deut.1:2

Faithless Israel turned back
11 day march becomes 40 years

Trumpets
harvest
resurrection

Atonement
all Israel saved

Tabernacles Booths
Harvest of gifts,
provision

Abraham rejoiced to see the Lord's day Jn.8:56

In the opening plan of God for Israel, Pentecost is mostly about the Lord's coming to that nation at Trumpets. Pentecost and Trumpets are tied together in time. Let us further see exactly how close they are in type by turning to Deuteronomy;

These are the words which Moses spoke to all Israel beyond Jordan in the wilderness, in the plain opposite the Red Sea, between Paran and Tophel and Laban and Hazeroth and Dizahab, eleven days from Horeb by way of Mount Seir to Kadesh-barnea. Deu 1:1-2

It is clearly written that from the Mount where the Lord descended and gave the Law, it was but 11 days journey and a suggestion is opinioned that the 12th day Israel could have entered the Kingdom at Trumpets had they been faithful. In other words, it was the Lord's plan that the deliverance was to be rapid and united, but because of Israel's lack of faith, a 40 year intervening period transpired.

The Lord's purposes are immutable, unconditional as to fact but can be conditional according to human factors. The reader is invited to read Numbers 13-14 where in a short period of time, Israel were brought to the southern border of their Promised Land. Go up and possess was the order but faithless Israel wanted to stone those who believed the Lord. Did this lack of faith mean that God promptly changed His will? The Answer to that is and emphatic no! But when we see Israel crucifying and rejecting their Messiah and then stoning those who proclaim the gospel to them during the book of Acts and promptly decide to alter God's purposes we confuse the Scriptures and the faithful.

At Kadesh-barnea there was no change in plan, just a change in direction and Israel wandered for 40 years in the wilderness. Yet Trumpets was the next salvation event and the ancient remnant lived through those 40 years and entered the Kingdom with Joshua. Likewise during Acts a remnant was looking to live and remain to the coming of the Lord. As Israel was turned away from Kadesh-barnea the Lord declared;

But truly, as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of Jehovah. Num 14:21

When Israel rejected their Messiah in the Gospels and Acts this great determinate counsel of God stood, no change eventuates for the earth will be filled with His glory, see Romans 1:16-17, Habakkuk 2:4, 14, Romans 15:12 and Isaiah 11:1, 9.

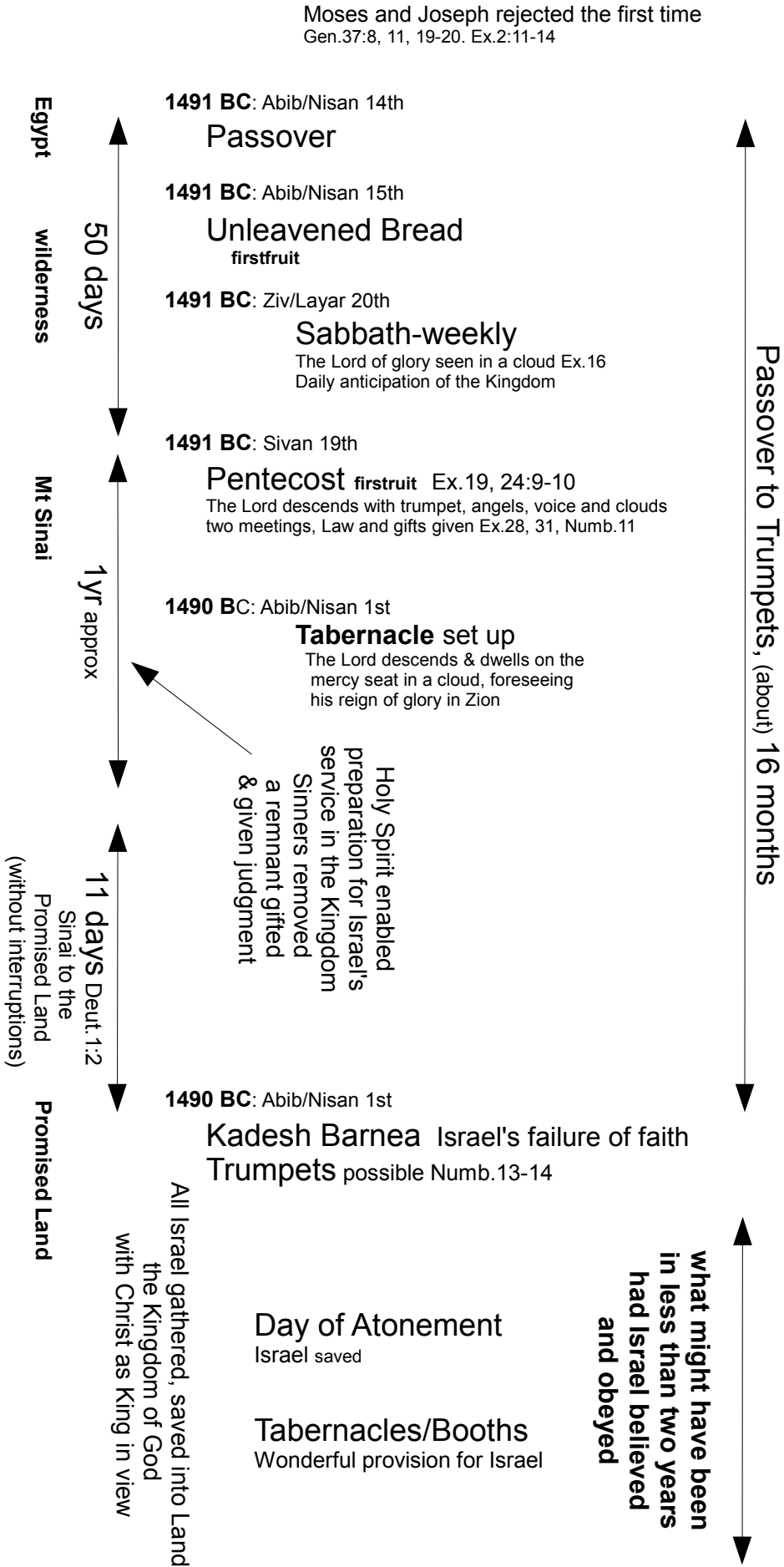
Two charts follow showing the complete deliverance of Israel as encapsulated in the Feasts. What could have been had Israel been faithful (cp Acts 3:17-26), and what still happened despite a 40 year postponement.

One thing is essential for any clear understanding of the New Testament, these charts do not show the steps to lift our "church" from earth to heaven. They show how quickly the Kingdom could have come had Israel been faithful at Kadesh-barnea and what resulted because they were not. Larger versions of these charts available here <http://www.acts28.net/chartsappearing.html>

These dates show the time possible for Israel's deliverance out of Egypt into the Promised Land

God's purposes are immutable, but the timing can be conditional when Israel's faith is the trigger

* dates taken from the Companion Bible App 50 E.W.Bullinger



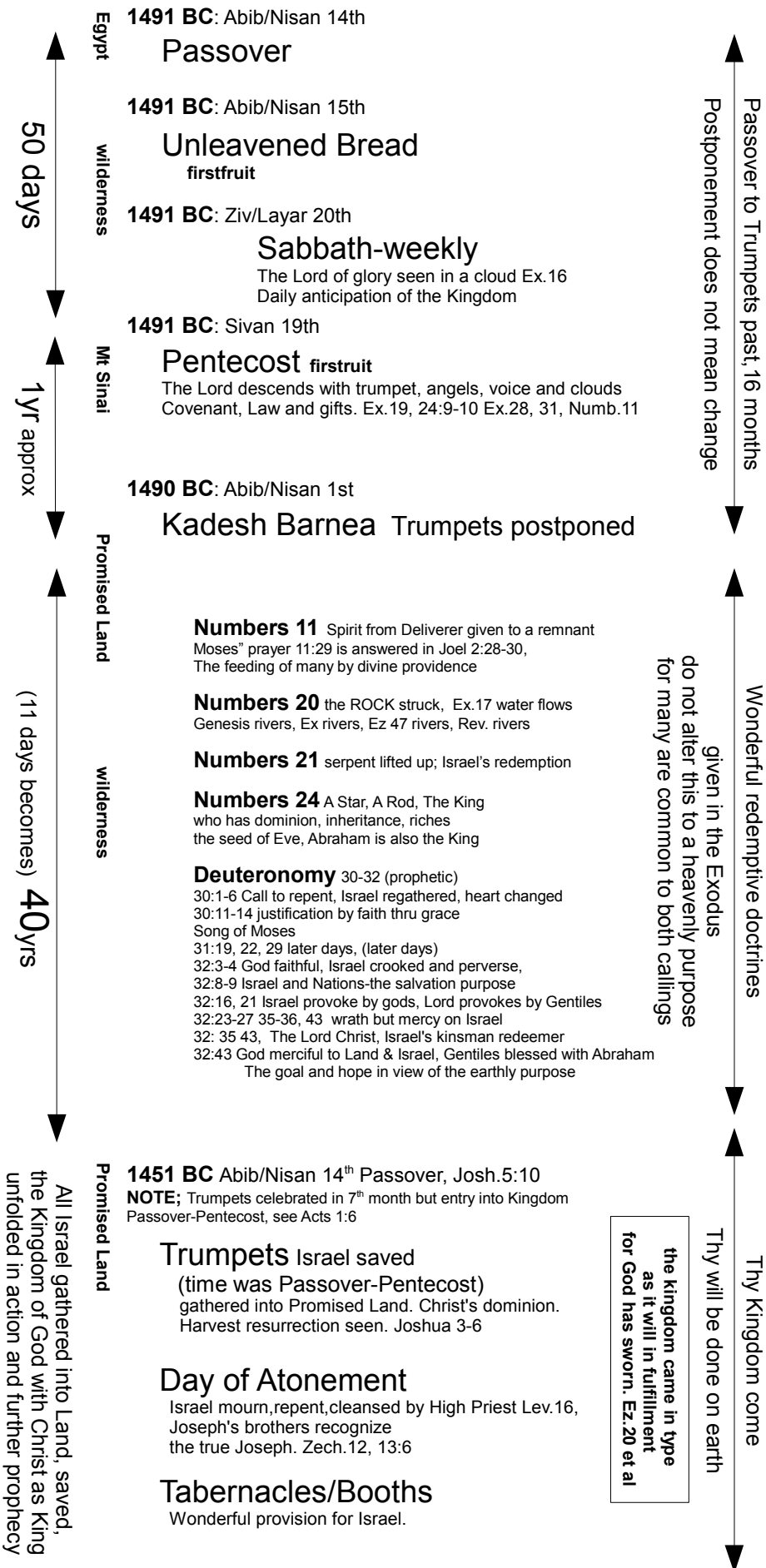
Moses and Joseph rejected the first time
Gen.37:8, 11, 19-20. Ex.2:11-14

This is the Gospels and Acts in dispensation and doctrine. We must interpret the Gospels and Acts according to this pattern
The Gentiles are included and thus their blessing with Israel during the Gospels and Acts is anticipated in these festive steps of deliverance

These dates show the actual time for Israel's deliverance out of Egypt into the Promised Land

God's purposes are immutable and will come to pass despite Israel's lack of faith

*dates taken from the Companion Bible App. 50 E.W. Bullinger



This is the Gospels and Acts in dispensation and doctrine. Christ did not come to "start our church" in the Gospels and Acts
The Gentiles are included and thus their blessing with Israel during the Gospels and Acts is anticipated in these festive steps of deliverance

* alternative dates might be valid but our emphasis is on the timing of the Exodus from deliverance out to deliverance in

Not one dispensational ounce of these Feasts as outlined on the previous three charts has anything to do with believers today. We are the church which is His Body over whom Christ is the Head. The Feasts which were about Israel and the earth in the Old Testament continue to be about the same people and the same earthly purpose for most of the New.

Up until Acts 28, the purposes of God are entirely earthly and new earthly. The redemption from a Paradise lost to the new Paradise with the New Jerusalem the Bride the Lamb's wife included. The nation of Israel was cast aside at Acts 28 and the Feasts and the earthly salvation they taught were postponed.

The following charts show the objective of this book. To clearly outline the Old Testament Pattern unfolding in the New up until Acts 28. The first shows how the believers up until Acts 28 were looking for the hope of the promises made to the Fathers, none other things than the Prophets and Moses did say should come. The second chart shows the present parenthetical dispensation sitting between what was fulfilled as recorded in the Gospels and Acts and what is yet to be completed in the postponed Festive redemptive program.

The clear dispensational differences around the Acts 28 divide, especially seen in Paul's letters, are often referred to as contradictions. Many long and twisted explanations have been offered over the years but the conflicts are not so when seen as truths for different dispensations. When God changes things we need to mark the changes. These apparent contradictions dissipate when we understand the great NT dispensational divide of Acts 28. Paul's letters written prior to Acts 28 are dispensationally identical to the Genesis through Israel to Revelation salvation plan. Those letters written after Acts 28 are the only Scriptures which contain the dispensational truths for today; that above heavenly purpose which was hid in God from Genesis 1 to Acts 28.

Not all the NT or all of Paul is about us today. Testing things differing is not an option for the unashamed workman.

Larger versions of these charts available here
<http://www.acts28.net/chartsappearing.html>

Old Testament. Gen.3:15, 12:1-3, 15, 17, 22, 2Sam.7 MESSIAH Son of Man, Abraham, Joseph-Benjamin, David, God. **THE EARTH**

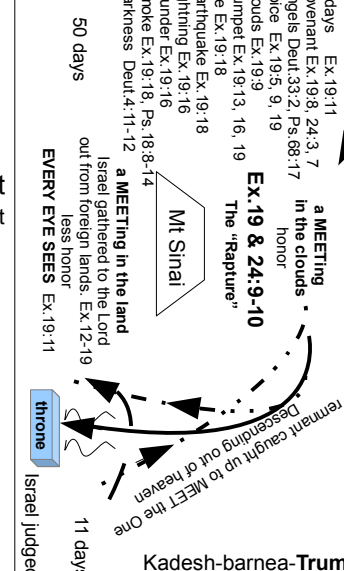
Creation, Sun Moon, Stars = Signs, Israel

At Pentecost, Trumpets

The Deliverer descends out of heaven to His throne in the Holiest of All in a cloud on the Mercy Seat Ex.40:34-35, Lev.16:2, 13

Darkness, gods, judgment Ex.12:12 suffering – shed blood
MEAL eaten in readiness- deliverance
Water baptism of identification 1Cor.10:1-4

Egypt
Gentile dominion



Kadesh-barnea-Trumpets possible

Numbers 11 Spirit gifts (powers of coming age) from deliverer to remnant to bear Israel Ex.28:1-3, 31:1-7 gifts for priests & tabernacle food provision as well, Joel 2

Numbers 20 the ROCK, Ex.17, Ez.47 suffering, water, Spirit, remnant

Numbers 21 brass serpent suffg, lifted up, life, remnant

Numbers 24 Star, Rod dominion, inheritance, riches

Deuteronomy
Deut.9, not by Israel's righteousness
Is.45:21-25, 53:

30:1-Scattered Israel to repent, then blessing
Justification by faith proclaimed to Jews among the Gentiles
30:16-21 Song of Moses-a testimony against Israel (:18 dispersed)
31:15 the Lord reveals Himself
31:26 the Law a witness against Israel
32:8-9 Jew first, Lord among Israel
32:16, 21 provocation, Gentiles to provoke Israel
32:23- tribulation and wrath on Israel
32:43 Glory after suffering, Gentiles blessed with Israel

Jordan-Jericho-Trumpets realized

Joshua Kingdoms fall, possessed
Pentecost, 2nd circ., resurrection typical

Israel repentance, cleansing, celebration exaltation, Covenant, Jubilee

Israel abundant provision. Messiah
You prepare a table for me

The Kingdom (out) of Heaven typical

Prophecy, (The 7th Day)

Ps.21-24, 72, 89
Is.2-4, 6, 11, 13:6-9, 27:13, 34:8, Jer.30-31, Joel 2, Amos.5:18-20, 25 (Acts 7)
Zeph.1, 2:3, 3:8, Zech.2,14, Mal.4

New Heavens & New Earth promised. Is.65-66

Passover
Unleavened Bread
First Fruit

Pentecost
First Fruit

Mighty signs and wonders – supernatural gifts on individuals – divine judgments
Less than two years if Israel had faith
Suffering before glory

Trumpets
harvest

Atonement
all Israel saved

Tabernacles
Booths
harvest

We will not understand the Gospels and Acts if we do not understand the pattern of the OT

New Testament. Gen.3:15, 12:1-3, 15, 17, 22, 2Sam.7 MESSIAH Son of Man, Abraham, Joseph-Benjamin, David, God.

THE EARTH, NEW EARTH

New Creation, Sun Moon, Stars = Signs, Israel

Kadesh-barnea
rebellion (this generation)
the Lord seen, transfiguration
glory anticipated, remnant

Darkness, Satan's judgment
suffering (before glory)
The 5 blood offerings of Ex. & Lev.
Deliverance, Acceptance, fellowship,
removal of sin and sins for all callings

Messiah ascends clouds

ACTS 2 Trumpets possible

Acts 13 (Is.6) judgment
Israel stumbles partially blind, faithful remnant includes Gentiles to provoke Israel
Acts 13, 6 OT quotes

Galatians
the blessings of Abraham
Jews & Gentiles Heirs of the covenants of Promise
Gal., 10 OT quotes

Thessalonians
Feasts Temple desolation
Thess., 0 OT quotes but it is the Day of the Lord

Corinthians, the ROCK
first fruit, water, Spirit, **Feasts**
Cor., 30+ OT quotes

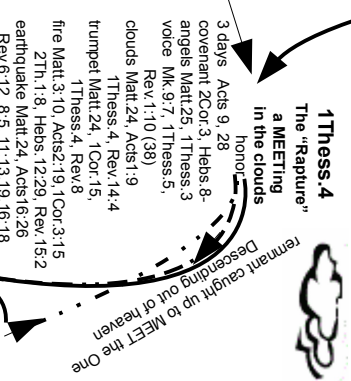
Hebrews
in a very little while, Mt Zion, the New Jerusalem
Hebs., 40+ OT quotes

Romans (Is.6)
first fruit, Remnant, Song of Moses
creation in birth pangs
waiting for liberty of Heirs of God
Roms., 70+ OT quotes

Deut.9, not by Israel's rightness
Roms.3, 9-11, 2Pet.3 Day will come

Acts 28 Things still hidden in God

PTO for chart 2. The Feasts OT-NT 2



Prophecy unfolding

T.L. Jesus Kingdoms fall, possessed, Rev.

Israel recognition, repentance, cleansing, liberty
Jubilee, inheritance

Israel celebration, exaltation, restoration
Emmanuel, provision, blessing
New Covenant on heart
Your table prepared for me

The Kingdom (out) of Heaven
literal, on the earth

New Heavens & New Earth
The New Jerusalem Rev.21-22

Gospels
Isaiah 6 x 2

62 week of Daniels 70
MEAL eaten until
50 days
Mt of Olives

Passover
Unleavened Bread

First Fruit

Pentecost
First Fruit

40 years Deut.8 Promises made to the Fathers
Redeemed Israel judged, wicked cut off, purging

Dan.2,7, the ROCK smashes fullness of Gentile dominion Jerusalem (inner) Promised Land Divine Dominion

Mighty signs and wonders – supernatural gifts on individuals – divine judgments
70-82 = 8 x 7 years of Daniel = 56 years (if Israel had repented, Acts 3:1-26)

“we shall not all die - we who are alive and remain” - end of the ages
the “we” of 1Cor.15 and 1Thess.4 does not include believers today
the resurrections of Cor. & Thess. are not to heaven but the earth
Acts is a continuation, not a beginning, not a transition, it was the end of the ages

Trumpets
harvest

Atonement
all Israel saved

Tabernacles
Booths
harvest

Israel gathered

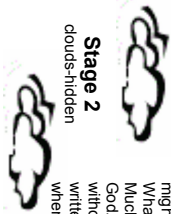
Israel gathered

Brian R Keison ©Apr1008 brianacts28@gmail.com www.Acts28.net

The Mystery- Post Acts 28 Paul alone

Stage 3
seated at God's right,
in the heavenly places-hidden

Not for your righteousness, or for the uprightness of your heart, do you go to possess their land. But for the wickedness of these nations Jehovah your God drives them out from before you, so that He may perform the Word which Jehovah swore to your fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Therefore, understand that Jehovah your God does not give you this good land, to possess it, for your righteousness. For you are a stiff-necked people. Deu 9:5-6 Remember Your servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Do not look to the stubbornness of this people, nor to their wickedness, nor to their sin. Yet they are Your people and Your inheritance which You brought out by Your mighty power and by Your stretched-out arm. Deu 9:27-29, 15:55 What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way, chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God. For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar, as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged. Rom 3:1-4, 11:25-36, 2Pet.3



Stage 2
clouds-hidden

Acts 13 (Is.6) judgment
Israel stumbles partially blind, faithful remnant includes Gentiles to provoke Israel

Galatians
the blessings of Abraham
Jews & Gentiles Heirs of the covenants of Promise

Thessalonians
Feasts, Temple desolation

Corinthians, the ROCK
first fruit, water, Spirit, **Feasts**

Hebrews
in a very little while, Mt Zion, the New Jerusalem

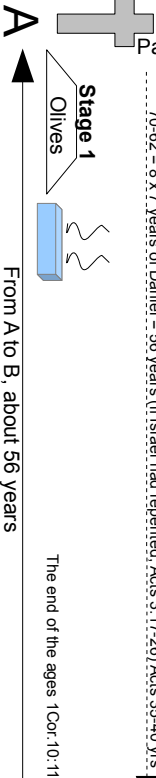
Romans (Is.6)
first fruit, Remnant, Song of Moses
creation in birth pangs
waiting for liberty of Heirs of God

Crecento
of OT quotes
by Paul includes

"We shall not all die - we who are alive and remain"
the "we" of 1Cor.15 and 1Thess.4 does not include believers today the resurrections of Cor. & Thess. are not to heaven but the earth
Acts is a continuation, not a beginning, not a transition, it was the end of the ages
The Hope of Israel, the Promises made to the Fathers.
And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made to our fathers by God, to which I promise our twelve tribes hope to attain, serving God fervently night and day. For the sake of this hope, King Agrippa, I am accused by the Jews. Act 26:6-7
... King Agrippa, I did not disobey the heavenly vision... having obtained help from God, I stand until this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying no other things than those which the prophets and Moses said was going to happen... Act 26:19, 22-23

Deut.8

Mighty signs and wonders - supernatural gifts on individuals - divine judgments
70-62 = 8 x 7 years of Daniel = 56 years (if Israel had repented, Acts 3:17-26) Acts 35-40 yrs



Passover
Unleavened Bread
First Fruit
Pentecost
First Fruit

From A to B, about 56 years

National rebellion (this generation Deut.1:35 Lk.11:50, Acts 2:40)
defeat without the Lord BUT, He takes them into the Kingdom
by His faithfulness, **remnant** preserved

Titus, Romans
destroy Temple

Our Hope
The Head seated at God's right The Body seated together
in the heavenly places,
when He appears,
we appear WITH HIM

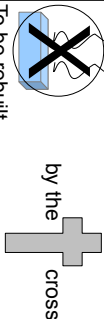
Unseachable, hidden in God, creation
Eph.3:8 Of this gospel I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effectual working of His power.
Eph.3:8 This grace is given to me (who am less than the least of all saints) to preach the gospel of the unseachable riches of Christ among the nations,
Eph.3:9 and to bring to light what is the fellowship of the mystery which from eternity has been hidden in God,
who created all things by Jesus Christ;

Ephesians
Philippians
Colossians
1&2 Timothy
Titus, Philemon

Unique dispensational features

Eph.1:3 Every blessing spiritual
Eph.1:4 Chosen in Him-before
Eph.1:5 Placed as Sons (heirs)
Eph.1:9 Mystery of His will
Eph.1:11 Inheritance
Eph.1:19 Head, raised and seated
Eph.2:6 Body raised and seated
Eph.2:11 NEW CREATION
abolition of dogmas
Eph.3:1 Paul the Prisoner
The Mystery of Christ
Eph.4:3 Unities, gifts
Eph.6 Warfare
Phils.3:11 "out-resurrection" possible
Col.3:1-4 Appear with Him.

Col.3:1-4 Appear with Him.

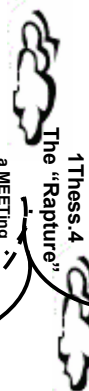


To be rebuilt
The Church which is His Body is not a remnant, virgin or a bride
very few OT quotes
No Temple

Nearly two day (2000yr) parenthesis
Not the end of the ages

Stage 1
phaneroo, epiphaneia
The Lord appears seated at God's right

Lord's descent
no time difference
The kingdom now includes heavenly places and the earth.
The Lord heads up all spheres
Eph.1:10, 3:15



Stage 2
parousia
those meeting are to rule the world, angels
Numb. 11

The "Rapture"
a MEETING in the clouds
honor
3 days Acts 9, 28
covenant 2Cor.3, Hebs. 8-
angels Matt.25, 1Thess.3
voice Mk.9:7, 1Thess.5,
Rev.1:10 (38)
clouds Matt.24, Acts1:9
1Thess.4, Rev.14:4
trumpet Matt.24, 1Cor.15,
1Thess.4, Rev.8
fire Matt.3:10, Acts2:19, 1Cor.3:15
2Th.1:8, Hebs.12:29, Rev.15:2
earthquake Matt.24, Acts16:26
Rev.6:12, 8:5, 11:13, 19:16-18
lightning Matt.24:27, Rev.4:5, 11:19
thunder Rev.16:18
smoke Acts 2:19, Rev.15:8
(Is.6:4, Ex.40:34)
darkness Matt.27:45, Acts2:20, Rev.16:10

In the future, God will resume His purposes for Israel

Antichrist
Peace
1Thess.5:3,
Matt.24:8, 13:6-13
image
Tribulation
B
2Thess.2

Sudden destruction
3.5yrs
3.5yrs

Stage 3
parousia-throne
gathering of Israel
Olive

The end of the ages resumed 1Cor.10:11
16-21 yrs
the Book of Revelation

Trumpets
harvest
Atonement
all Israel saved
Tabernacles
Booths
harvest

a MEETING in the land
surviving and dispersed Israel
gathered to the Lord
Matt.24
less honor
EVERY EYE SEES Matt.24, Rev.1:7

if Israel had repented, Acts 3:17-26, these years would have unfolded 2000 yrs ago (1Cor.11:26 until He may have come)

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Chapter five

The letters of Paul

The apostle Paul is the only one identified as the Apostle of the Gentiles or Nations and as such his words are the Word of Christ and vital for us today. [For this cause, I, Paul, am the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you nations, Eph 3:1](#)

Discussion abounds as to the authorship of Hebrews but I believe it is to be included in the letters of Paul making a total of fourteen (14). Many have tried to date these letters but the most important thing for us is their content.

Remember, Paul tells us we must distinguish things that differ and rightly divide the Word of Truth (Phils.1:9-10 & 2Tim.2:15). If we ignore these Bible study rules we will be ashamed and unapproved. These rules must be applied to Paul's writings as being the words of truth.

There are teachings in our Apostle which do not change and can be found in all his writings such as, Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures and we should all strive to run the race with patience. See 1Cor.15:3-4, Gal.1:3-4, Eph.1:7, Heb.10:4, 12, Acts 13:39 & Titus 3:7. But there are some blatant differences in our Apostle's letters and these we should note very carefully.

During the period covered by the book of Acts Paul was proclaiming our Lord Christ Jesus as the One in whom forgiveness of sins and righteousness could be found but at the same time he was presenting the Lord as Israel's coming Messiah. The soon coming Kingdom on the earth was the expectation before believers at that time.

After the book of Acts closed, Paul wrote of forgiveness of sins and righteousness in the Saviour but now, the Lord is seated at the Father's right as the Head of the church which is His body and we, members of that calling are the fullness of Him who fills all in all. We have been raised and seated with Him there and in that Day will appear with Him there.

Here is a chart showing the two groups of Paul's letters. These are not date stamped by the Holy Spirit but they are stamped with a completely different purpose by the Holy Spirit and may He bring enlightenment to the Word for those who study to show themselves approved. Copy of this chart available here <http://www.acts28.net/chartsappearing.html>

Acts 28 The great dispensational boundary

Paul's Ministries either side of this great change

Acts 28:25-28 Israel was nationally put to one side for a time. The salvation of God was then sent to the Nations independent of Israel.
 Post Acts 28 a new dispensation was given to Paul alone. Eph.3:1-10. Col.1:23-29 and 2Tim.1:8-12.

test things differing (Phils.1:9-10) in these two groups of letters

<p>During and up to Acts 28 the dispensational purposes of God relate to the earth and the NJ.</p> <p>At Acts 28 these purposes were put to one side with Israel until a future date. During Acts time Christ is Savior, King and Bridegroom, the believers are a prophetic remnant, chaste virgins, blessed with Abraham and to judge the world.</p>	<p>Paul's Acts period statement about his ministry and the letters which harmonize with it. Acts 26:6-7, 22.</p> <p>"witnessing ..saying no other things than those which the prophets and Moses said was going to happen"</p> <p>Galatians 1&2 Thessalonians 1&2 Corinthians Hebrews Romans</p> <p>Approx. 190 OT quotes Jewish themes and hope, Feasts</p> <p>Acts 28-Israel set aside for a time</p>	<p>We live on this side of Acts 28</p> <p>Paul's post Acts period statement about his ministry and the letters which harmonize with it. Eph.3:7-9.</p> <p>.. the unsearchable riches of Christ... the dispensation of the mystery which .. has been hidden in God....</p> <p>Ephesians Philippians Colossians Titus, Philemon 1&2 Timothy</p> <p>Approx. 8 OT quotes, non Jewish themes, new hope, no Feasts</p> <p>The Gospels, Acts, the letters of James, Peter, John, Jude and Revelation show nothing dispensationally of our calling today</p>	<p>After Acts 28 the dispensational purposes of God changed and relate to the heavenly places where Christ sits at God's right hand. This dispensation of Grace is parenthetical. We do not replace Israel, we are the church which is His Body, seated in the above heavens, some might reign with Him there. Christ is Savior, and the Head.</p>
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The Gospels, Acts, the letters of James, Peter, John, Jude and Revelation fit here

The great dispensational boundary is made clear by rightly dividing the Word of Truth; by testing things that differ: Phils.1:9-10, 2Tim.2:15. Most Christians are dispensationalists and draw a line between the purposes of God for the earth through Israel and the present age of grace involving us Gentiles. Some draw it between Malachi and Matthew, in the Gospels, at the cross or at Acts 2, 9 or 13. But it must be drawn at Acts 28. Please enjoy the dispensational differences in Paul's two groups of letters which fall either side of Acts 28. Some eternal truths, like redemption through His blood, remain on both sides; they are common.

Let us consider the book of Romans as an example of an Acts period epistle.

It is widely acknowledged that the book of Romans was written late in the Acts period (about Acts 20) and in that book we notice these differences. The reader might like to consider the wonderfully fundamental passages of Romans 1:16-17 and 3:1-2, 9-23, then compare the hope of the Acts period as found in Romans 15:4-13.

This hope in Romans includes the destruction of Israel's enemies and the reign of Christ out of Jerusalem as found in Deut.32, Psalm 18 and Isaiah 11. We are as assuredly forgiven and made righteous in Christ today as were the believers of the Acts period but we are certainly not looking for the Kingdom of God on the earth today as they were during that time. The hope of Romans is earthly and millennial.

If Romans was written at about the time of Acts 20, then we note carefully Paul's word spoken after the writing of that book in Acts 26;

And I said, Who are you, lord? And He said, I am Jesus whom you persecute. But rise and stand on your feet, for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of what you saw, and in what I shall appear to you; delivering you from the people and the nations, to whom I now send you in order to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light, and from the authority of Satan to God, so that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me. After this, king Agrippa, I did not disobey the heavenly vision. Then having obtained help from God, I stand until this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying no other things than those which the prophets and Moses said was going to happen; whether the Christ was liable to suffer, whether first by a resurrection of the dead He was going to proclaim light to the people and to the nations. [Act 26:15-23](#)

Please consider these passages also; Acts 24:14, 25:8, 26: 6-7,27-28, 28:17, 20, 23. Paul's teaching during the Acts period was according to Old Testament teaching, prophecy and purpose and the Feasts are prominent.

The popular misconception that Israel was put aside at either the cross or Pentecost is a clear contradiction of Paul as found in these passages;

But to Israel He says, "All day long I have stretched forth My hands to a disobeying and gainsaying people." I say then, Did not God put away His people? Let it not be said! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of *the* tribe of Benjamin. God did not thrust out His people whom He foreknew. [Rom 10:21-11:2](#)

Paul's testimony in the Acts period was not offensive to the nation of Israel. Paul worshipped the God of his father's believing all things written in the Law and in the Prophets. Paul declares that he and the 12 tribes were waiting for the hope of the promise made to their Fathers which is the Kingdom on the earth. Paul tells us that his preaching only included that which the Law and the Prophets said was going to happen. The following letters are perfectly in harmony with these claims;

[Galatians](#), [1&2Corinthians](#), [1&2 Thessalonians](#), [Hebrews](#) and [Romans](#).

These letters are full of the Acts period teachings of Paul and were written before Israel was "let go" at Acts 28:25.

There is not one shred of evidence that these letters show a gradual reduction of Old Testament references. In total there are 360 plus references in these 7 Acts letters and in Romans, the last written during Acts, there are 70 plus. Some claim that Paul had a progressive revelation and this is supported by Paul's gradual reduction of OT usage in these Acts period epistles. The statistics do not support such a concept.

Galatians (written early in Acts ministry): references.	About 8 O.T.
1Corinthians (written mid Acts ministry): references.	About 15 O.T.
2Corinthians (written mid Acts ministry): references.	About 16 O.T.
Hebrews (written later Acts ministry): references.	About 30 O.T.
Romans (written last in Acts ministry): references.	About 70 O.T.

In these Acts period ministry letters Paul the number of O.T. references increases towards the end of the book. These figures are contrary to the progressive revelation theory. He quotes the Old Testament incessantly and in Romans alone he uses the phrase "as it is written" 14 times. Romans also contains around 70 Old Testament quotes leaving us in no doubt that Paul's Acts period ministry was precisely as he said it was, the purposes and doctrines found in the OT Scriptures.

Paul's seven letters written during Acts describe the imminent return of the Lord, expected in the lifetime of the Acts period believers. Please consider these passages; Romans 13:11-12, 16:20, 1Cor.1:7-8, 7:29-31, 10:11 (ends of the ages), 15:51 ("we" includes Paul as also in 1Thess.4:15), Hebrews 10:35-37 and Acts 14:22.

Here is a helpful link about some of [the prophecy found in Romans](#).

Paul's Acts period ministry is neither overlapping nor progressive as suggested by some who do not clearly see the differences in Paul's two groups of letters. A cursory reading of Acts will show that Paul went to the Jew first and only when they rejected the message did Paul turn to the local Gentiles. Paul's Acts period ministry was to the Jews among the nations north and west of Israel. His missionary journeys are traditionally seen as spreading the gospel to the world, but really, this is not the case. The book of Acts is a record of God providing Israel with another opportunity to accept their Messiah.

On arriving at Rome Paul calls the chief of the (dispersed) Jews and proclaims the Lord Jesus as their Messiah out of "both the Law of Moses and from the Prophets, from morning till evening", Acts 28:23.

Instead of responding to this wonderful message, these Jews in Rome were like the majority of their countrymen; some believed, some didn't and they argued among themselves, there was disharmony;

And some indeed believed the things that were said, others did not believe. And disagreeing with one another, they were let go. Act 28:24-25

The words "let go" translate the same verb in the original which is first found in the New Testament in a marriage context;

But Joseph, her husband to be, being just, and not willing to make her a public example, he purposed to put her away secretly. Mat 1:19

Let us see these English words in Acts 28;

And disagreeing with one another, they were put away, Act 28:25

In Acts 28:25-27 Paul pronounces the prophet Isaiah chapter 6, a condemnation prophecy which was against the nation of Israel, not just the few Jews in Rome. Then God through Paul declares that the salvation of God is sent to the Nations (Gentiles);

Therefore be it known to you that the salvation of God is sent to the nations, and they will hear. Act 28:28

At the end of the book of Acts the Nation of Israel was put aside and God's offer to restore Israel as a great and mighty nation under Christ was withdrawn. His purposes for the earth through Israel were put aside until a future date. The hope of their great kingdom on the earth was postponed, the imminent return of the Lord was put aside and Israel's advantages were put aside with them. We shall see more of this later.

After Israel was put aside at Acts 28, the Lord revealed to Paul the present set of conditions or economy which has continued to this day. Forgiveness of sins, righteousness by faith, sanctification and eternal life as God's gift remained the blessed portion of the children of God, however, instead of an earthly kingdom in view; the second group of letters of Paul point our hearts and minds to the heavenly places where Christ is seated at God's right hand. See Ephesians 2:4-7 and Colossians 3:1-4.

This present dispensation given to us through Paul was never part of Old

Testament revelation as clearly declared by Paul in these passages:

This grace is given to me (who am less than the least of all saints) to preach the gospel of the unsearchable riches of Christ among the nations, and to bring to light what is the fellowship of the mystery which from eternity has been hidden in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ; Eph 3:8-9

of which I became a minister, according to the administration of God given to me for you, to fulfill the Word of God; the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints. Col 1:25-26

These later seven (7) letters of Paul fall naturally into a group manifesting the elements of this wonderful new administration coupled with a scarcity of Old Testament references. These are;

Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Titus, Philemon, 1&2Timothy

These letters proclaim the wonderful inheritance for the newly revealed calling which is the Church which is His Body and are significantly different to the Acts period group in that they are limited to about eight (8) Old Testament quotes. If in fact our present economy was hidden in God then Paul cannot use the OT as a means of affirming the ministry given to Him about it.

The first group was written during the Acts period when Israel remained as God's people and the Gentiles were blessed with faithful Abraham.

The second group was written after Israel was set aside and is about the present dispensation of the grace of God in which all believers are blessed in Christ alone in the heavenly places where Christ is seated at God's right hand.

My prayer is that my readers will consider these things and study very carefully the content of the letters of our Apostle Paul. The failure to distinguish things differing in Paul is the very basis of the rapture error.

Chapter six

Acts in relation to time

A great blinding tradition which holds sway in the Christian community world-wide is that Pentecost of Acts 2 was the beginning of the “church”. It follows that the book of Acts was the beginnings of the “church age”.

This tradition is so firmly held that perhaps some will be shocked when we show that the period covered by the book of Acts is not the beginning of any new age, in fact quite the opposite, the events of the entire book of Acts were events that took place during the ends of the ages. At Acts 28 those end times were postponed.

Acts 2 was the fulfillment of a Feast given to Israel and is part of an unfolding of God’s purposes for the world through the establishment of that great nation He promised unconditionally to Abraham (Gen.12:1-3). That great nation of Israel will be restored when Christ comes again to the earth and it is this return and restoration of the Kingdom the faithful expected during the Acts period.

The following Scriptures declare that the Gospel and Acts period was the ends of the ages. A variety of New Testament writers clearly state that, when they wrote, an ending was in view not a new beginning as is popularly thought.

Hebrews 9:26 declares that our Lord appeared in the “end of the world ... to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself” (KJV). Modern versions bring the clarity of this word “world” to our eyes by translating the verse thus:

else must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once at the end of the ages hath he been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.
Heb 9:26

The Lord ministered during the ends of the ages, not the beginning of any “new church age”. Please read Heb.1:2 as well.

In Hebrews chapter 10:37 we read that the return of the Lord was anticipated in a very little while:

For "yet a little while, and He who shall come will come and will not delay." (MKJV)
For "in a very little while the one who is coming will return and will not delay; (ISV).
Heb 10:37

John in his first letter chapter 2 verse18, was inspired to say twice that it was the “last time” but the original word is “hour” and again, some modern versions bring this truth to light;

Little children, it is the last hour. Just as you heard that an antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have appeared. This is how we know it is the last hour. (ISV). 1Jo 2:18

James wrote that the coming of the Lord was near, a truth very relevant to the “end of the ages”.

You also be patient, establish your hearts, for the coming of your Lord draws near. Do not grudge against one another, brothers, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge stands before the door. Jam 5:8-9

Peter writes in the same vein (1P.1:20) and likewise assures his readers that the “end of all things has drawn near”.

But the end of all things has drawn near. Therefore be of sound mind, and be sensible to prayers. MKJV

The end of everything is near; so be sensible and clear-headed for the sake of your prayers. (ISV). 1Pe 4:7

During those times the Apostle Paul wrote these things:

I thank my God always on your behalf for the grace of God given you in Jesus Christ, that in everything you are enriched by Him, in all speech and in all knowledge; even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you; so that you come behind in no gift, waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. He shall also confirm you to the end, 1Co 1:4-8

Paul wrote confidently to the Corinthians that they, not you and I today, would be confirmed to the end. The confirmation was the abundance of gifts which were theirs at that time. In this context “the end” is the revelation (as in the book of the same name) of the Lord Jesus Christ as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. The world order changes when the kingdoms of the world become His.

The end Paul referred to was not the end of their lives, since he wrote that not all of them were going to die in 15:51. Paul and the Corinthians at that time would be confirmed to that coming of the Lord which had drawn near, and was in a very little while. This was the hope of the Acts period, the imminent return of the Lord.

In this same letter we read these words by our Apostle:

And all these things happened to them as examples; and it is written for our warning on whom the ends of the world have come.

Now all these things happened to those people as examples, and they were written for our instruction, to whom the ends of the ages have come. (EMTV). 1Co 10:11

Upon Paul and the Corinthians the ends of the ages had arrived. At that time an ending was in view, not a beginning of a “new church age”.

In the seventh chapter of 1 Corinthians we read Paul’s advice regarding marriage and his preference for the single option. Paul was writing at the ends of the ages, and the Lord’s return was very imminent:

Then I think this is good, because of the present necessity; that it is good for a man to be so. Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be free. Are you loosed from a wife? Do not seek a wife. But if you do marry, you did not sin; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. But such shall have trouble in the flesh, but I spare you. But this I say, brothers, The time is short. It remains that both those who have wives should be as not having one. And they who weep are as though they did not weep. And they who rejoice are as though they did not rejoice. And they who buy are as though they did not possess. And they who use this world are as not abusing it, for the fashion of this world is passing away.

1Co 7:26-31

Another modern version translates this last verse in an interesting way:

and those who use the things in the world as though they were not dependent on them. For the world in its present form is passing away. ISV 1Co 7:31

It is fascinating to read Paul saying “the time is short”, and those who had wives be as though they had none, the form of this world is passing away. “The present necessity” could well be understood by his exhortation of Acts 14:22 and a comparative reading of Matthew 24. When Paul wrote Corinthians it was the end of the world.

These Scriptures become understandable when we accept the Word of God which plainly shows that at that time it was the end of the ages, not the beginning of anything.

It goes without saying that the world as it was then has continued unto this day, Paul and the Corinthians died. Something happened to change the status of “the ends of the ages” and the expected return of the Lord from those days to our time. What happened?

The answer is simple. The hope and "ends of the ages" of the Acts period were postponed at the end of the book of Acts when the nation of Israel was put aside for a time. Then the Lord descended and revealed to Paul alone the present dispensation of the grace of God which is a parenthesis. In the future, the divine purposes for Israel will be resumed and those "ends of the ages" will come to pass.

Please examine the chart on page 125, which shows this expectation during Acts when our calling today was unknown. The dispensation in operation today and its unique hope was not revealed to Paul until after the Acts period closed. Thus when we read the Acts and the letters written during that time, we must be very careful not to include ourselves.

Chapter seven

Background to Acts

So what happened and when did it happen? What was it that brought about a change in the time status from the ends of the ages to the beginnings of the present administration or set of conditions in which we live today?

To answer this question it will help us to know exactly what the glory was that was expected during the gospels and Acts period.

When John the Baptist appeared he proclaimed the following message to Israel: In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand. For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make His paths straight." [Mat 3:1-3](#)

Notice that John proclaimed the "kingdom of heaven". This kingdom originating out of heaven, proclaimed by John had drawn near. Also notice the link between the kingdom of heaven and the words "prepare the way of the Lord" written in Isaiah 40.

Please read all of Isaiah 40 where the words of the prophet give us understanding of that Kingdom on the earth with its origins in and by heaven meant to John's listeners. Here is an extract:

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak lovingly to the heart of Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is done, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she has received of Jehovah's hand double for all her sins. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the crooked places shall be made level, and the rough places smooth; and the glory of Jehovah shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of Jehovah has spoken. [Isa 40:1-5](#)

Behold, the Lord Jehovah will come with a strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him; behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him. He shall feed His flock like a shepherd; He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those with young. [Isa 40:10-11](#)

It is He who sits on the circle of the earth, and its people are like grasshoppers; who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them out like a tent to dwell in; who brings the rulers to nothing; He makes the judges of the earth as vanity. Yes, they shall not be planted; yes, they shall not be sown. Yes, their stump shall not take root in the earth. And He shall also blow on them, and they shall wither, and the tempest shall take them away like stubble. [Isa 40:22-24](#)

Isaiah 40 is a prophecy about the glory of Israel under their Messiah. It has nothing to do with us today. It is about the Lord who is more powerful than all the nations of the earth and it speaks of the geophysical changes that will take place when the Lord comes to His people Israel "and feeds His flock like a shepherd, (and) .. gather the lambs with His arm," please compare Ez.34. Isaiah 40 is Israel's re-gathering and blessing under our Lord's rule out of Zion. For a greater understanding read all of Psalm 72 and 89:

Once I have sworn by My holiness that I will not lie to David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before Me. It shall be established forever like the moon, and like a faithful witness in the heavens. Selah. [Psa 89:35-37](#)

Remember the angel's words to Mary at our Saviour's birth:

And behold! You shall conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call His name JESUS. He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Highest. And the Lord God shall give Him the throne of His father David. And He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end. [Luk 1:31-33](#)

His reign over the house of Jacob forever is the Kingdom of Heaven, which is out of, or originating from heaven. Neither the Lord nor His Kingdom on the earth were "of this world", see John 8:23, 18:36 and Psalm 89:29. This reign of Christ as King of Kings and Lord of Lords was the expectation of the gospels and Acts period. This was the glory that was expected at the ends of the ages.

Our Savior spoke clearly of His reign on the earth and His coming in great glory with all the holy angels to rule righteously;

And immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun shall be darkened and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from the heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then the sign of the Son of Man shall appear in the heavens. And then all the tribes of the earth shall mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of the heaven with power and great glory. And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather His elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other. [Mat 24:29-31](#)

And again here:

But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He shall sit on the throne of His glory. And all nations shall be gathered before Him. And He shall separate them from one another, as a shepherd divides the sheep from the goats. [Mat 25:31-32](#)

Read also Joel 3 and Zeph.3.

And again here:

But Jesus was silent. And the high priest answered and said to Him, I adjure you by the living God that you tell us whether you are the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus said to him, You said it. I tell you more. From this time you shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of the heavens. [Mat 26:63-64](#)

The Lord made a great promise to the twelve that in the days of the Kingdom they would sit upon 12 thrones judging the 12 tribes of Israel see Matt.19:23-30.

Some believe the Kingdom of Heaven is a "spiritual" one, which is in the heart of believers. They turn to Luke 17 to support this error. When our Lord was asked by His enemies when the Kingdom of God would come, He answered;

And being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered and said, The kingdom of God does not come with observation. Nor shall they say, Lo here! or, behold, there! For behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst. [Luk 17:20-21](#)

He told them the Kingdom of God did not come because they observed the law and tithed mint and cumin (Matt.23:23). He told them plainly the Kingdom of God was in their midst. He was the King of the Jews standing among them.

Accept Him and the Kingdom of God would come. He had clearly proclaimed His Messiahship to Israel by those powerful credentials which the prophets said He would show (Acts 2:22 and Isaiah 35) but of course, these and the call for their repentance, they refused.

All Israel knew of this Kingdom of Heaven on the earth which was clearly spoken about in the Old Testament and was pictured in the wonderful typical

redemption of Israel. Israel was delivered from Gentile dominion (Pharaoh) and brought into the Promised Land, the very place Christ will rule out of Zion.

After our Lord's death burial and resurrection He spoke to the two on the road to Emmaus who had hoped that Jesus of Nazareth was about to redeem Israel (Lk.24:21). The Savior, Israel's King, did not deny this redemption of Israel, on the contrary, He assured them all later in the chapter that all that the prophets had spoken about would be fulfilled. This included the coming in of the Kingdom;

And He said to them, O fools and slow of heart to believe all things that the prophets spoke! Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory? And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. [Luk 24:25-27](#)

And He said to them, These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and in the Prophets and in the Psalms about Me. And He opened their mind to understand the Scriptures. [Luk 24:44-45](#)

The disciples did not understand the sufferings before the glory. They had certainly understood the coming glory. They understood when the Lord proclaimed that the Kingdom of Heaven had drawn near, Matt.4:17, but when He spoke about the suffering He would endure they were confused. This aspect of Our Lord's ministry was hidden from the disciples. They did not understand about His crucifixion, death, burial and resurrection. See Lk.9:45 and 18:31-34 then consider 1Cor.2:6-9.

The Kingdom of Heaven is one of righteousness. Firstly, sin and sins had to be dealt with according to all the types, shadows and prophecies of the Old Testament. Before Israel was brought into their Land of glory they were redeemed by the blood of the (suffering) Passover Lamb. As the Lord said, "all things that the prophets spoke" had to be fulfilled.

Once the disciples had their minds opened to understand the Scriptures regarding the Lord's suffering then they were full of joy knowing that the glory was to follow. Acts 1 tells us that the Lord taught them for 40 days concerning the Kingdom of God after which they had one question only;

Then, indeed, these coming together, they asked Him, saying, Lord, do You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel? [Act 1:6](#)

In Acts 1:4 and Luke 24:45-49, the Lord spoke of the Promise of the Father, the power from on high, the Holy Spirit's gifts. The Old Testament clearly prophesied about the pouring out of the Spirit upon Israel and in most of those contexts the restoration of Israel as a great and mighty nation was in view. Please consider the following references, Ex.34:8-10, Is.32:1, 13-18, 44:1-6, 59:20-60:10, Joel2 and Ez.39:22-29. No wonder the disciples asked the obvious question regarding Israel's restoration.

These disciples knew nothing of any "church" starting and they returned to Jerusalem with great joy after He ascended (Lk.24:51-53).

On the Day of Pentecost, with his mind opened to understand the Scriptures, and after 40 days instruction by the risen Lord, this is what Peter proclaimed to Israel;

Men, Israelites, hear these words. Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by powerful works, and wonders and miracles, which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know, this One given to you by the before-determined counsel and foreknowledge of God, you have taken and by lawless hands, crucifying Him, you put Him to death; whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it. For David speaks concerning Him, "I foresaw the Lord always before me, because He is at my right hand, that I should not be moved. Therefore my heart rejoiced and my tongue was glad; and also My flesh shall rest in hope, because You will not leave My soul in Hades, nor will You allow Your holy One to see corruption. You revealed to Me the ways of life. You will fill Me with joy with Your countenance." Men, brothers, it is permitted to say to you with plainness as to the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He would raise up Christ to sit upon his throne, seeing this beforehand, he spoke of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor would His flesh see corruption, God raised up this Jesus, of which we all are witnesses. Therefore being exalted to the right of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured out this which you now see and hear. For David has not ascended into the heavens, but he says himself, "The LORD said to my Lord, Sit at My right hand until I place Your enemies as a footstool to Your feet." Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God made this same Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ. [Act 2:22-36](#)

This is not the Church which is His Body, this is Israel. Peter pointed the Israelites to the great Kingdom of Heaven the prophets spoke about. Jesus of Nazareth had been raised to sit upon David's throne on the earth, ruling Israel and the nations.

In Acts 3:17-21 Peter clearly tells the Israelites that they should repent and turn back to God and He would send the Lord Jesus back to them.

And now, brothers, I know that you did *it* through ignorance, as also your rulers *did*. But those things which God before had shown by the mouth of all His prophets, *that* Christ should suffer, He fulfilled in this manner. Therefore repent and convert so that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from *the* presence of the Lord. And He shall send Jesus Christ, who before was proclaimed to you, whom Heaven truly needs to receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by *the* mouth of His holy prophets since the world began. [Act 3:17-21](#)

1 Thess.4 must be understood in this context, that the imminent return of the Lord was not a vain hope but expected in their lifetimes:

And while they were looking intently into the heaven, He having gone, even behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them, who also said, Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into the heaven? This same Jesus who is taken up from you into Heaven, will come in the way you have seen Him going into Heaven. [Act 1:10-11](#)

The Kingdom of Heaven which had drawn near in the gospels was still near and on offer right through the book of Acts until the last chapter. For about 40 years God held out His hands to the disobedient and contradicting nation of Israel (Roms.10:21). Just as at Kadesh-barnea, Israel were faithless but God was faithful and there was no change in the earthly and new earthly purposes the Old testament Scriptures had plainly declared.

Chapter eight

Paul in Acts, his Gospel of Acts 13

Pentecost is not the beginning of anything. The Acts period, according to our apostle Paul and other NT Scriptures, was the “ends of the ages”.

The Acts period was another opportunity for Israel to repent and accept their Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth. Had they done so, God would have sent the Lord Jesus back to them. This return of the Lord to Israel was the expectation of that time.

What did Paul teach in his Acts ministry regarding the Kingdom of Heaven, the soon coming glory to follow the ends of the ages? What was the hope during those “ends of the ages” according to Paul?

Paul leaves us in no doubt as to his ministry and hope during the Acts period. He states it so clearly it is strange there is much confusion regarding it. Turn to Acts 13 for Paul’s Acts period gospel. Acts 13 is a point at which, sadly, many feel the present “Church” age began and in my view this is equally as confusing as starting the “Church” at Acts 2.

Notice a miracle of great significance is performed at the hand of Paul in this chapter.

And when they had gone through the island to Paphos, they found a certain conjurer, a false prophet, a Jew whose name was Bar-jesus; who was with the proconsul of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man. He called for Barnabas and Saul and asked to hear the Word of God. But Elymas the conjurer (for so his name is, if translated) withstood them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith. Then Saul (who is also Paul), filled with the Holy Spirit, set his eyes on him and said, O son of the Devil, full of all deceit and all craftiness, enemy of all righteousness, will you not stop perverting the right ways of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is on you. And you shall be blind, not seeing the sun for a while. And immediately a mist and a darkness fell on him, and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand. [Act 13:6-11](#)

Paul and Barnabas were trying to share the good news with a Gentile. A Jew, the son of Joshua, a false prophet (Matt.24:11), was withstanding this message. This event represents the growing attitude of the unbelieving Israelites.

The nation had rejected the message in Jerusalem and had crucified Christ, threatened and imprisoned the apostles and stoned Stephen (events up to Acts 7). Here the attitude of opposition is repeated.

There are some who claim (Mid-Acts especially), that Israel was cast aside at Acts 7 and hoping to affirm this theory they turn to 1Thess.2:16. They assume that since God’s wrath was to the uttermost, then surely He cast Israel aside when Thessalonians was written. This ignores Roms.10:21-11:5 but also ignores the plain fact that all the issues which filled up their sins had not been fulfilled at Acts 7. [I have an article, "wrath to the uttermost" showing this falsehood here.](#)

The message then spread throughout the Land of Israel and Gentiles were included at the ministry of Peter (Acts 10-11). This area of witness ended with rejection as well. Herod had James killed with the sword and Peter was imprisoned again (events up to Acts 12).

With such opposition from the people who should have rejoiced at the news of their Messiah being ready to return and bless them, what would God do? A divine judgment fell upon bar-Jesus. He was struck partially blind and needed someone to lead him by the hand, just like Paul in Acts 9.

Israel was not cast aside at the Cross, Acts 2 and Acts 9 or here in Acts 13. Israel nationally were struck with partial blindness and because of their stumbling, salvation was given to Gentiles to provoke Israel to jealousy. God tells us plainly that He struck Israel with partial blindness as an act of mercy. Here are some passages from Romans, written by Paul about Acts 20. These passages show the dispensational setting from Acts 13 to the end of the book. These dispensational things are not in operation today but they were back then;

And so I ask, "They have not stumbled so as to fall, have they?" Of course not! On the contrary, because of their stumbling, salvation has come to the gentiles to make the Jews jealous. ISV I am speaking to you gentiles. Because I am an apostle to the gentiles, I am glorifying my ministry in the hope that I can make my people jealous and save some of them. And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and became a sharer of the root and the fatness of the olive tree with them, do not boast against the branches. But if you boast, it is not you that bears the root, but the root bears you. For I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers, lest you should be wise within yourselves; that blindness in part has happened to Israel, until the fullness of the nations has come in.

And so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, "There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is My covenant with them, when I have taken away their sins."

Indeed as regards the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes. But as regards the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. For the free gifts and calling of God are without repentance. For as you also then disbelieved God, but now have been shown mercy through their disbelief, even so these also have not believed now, so that through your mercy they may also obtain mercy. [Rom 11:11, 13-31](#)

Gentiles are not saved today because Israel has stumbled. Gentiles are not saved today to make Israel jealous. Gentiles are not grafted into Israel today to enjoy their fatness (Roms.15:27).

Notice the partial blindness back then was an act of mercy and was only "for a while" until the Deliverer comes out of Zion. These were the dispensational settings manifested by the miracle of judgment on Elymas in Acts 13.

This partial blindness and stumbling condition was the lot of Israel up to the end of the book of Acts. We must acknowledge that this sorry state did not mean the nation had been cast off (Roms.10:21-11:2).

The following is Paul's gospel in the synagogue at Antioch Pisidia. Here we find an encapsulation of his gospel the features of which abound in those letters written during the Acts.

[And after the reading of the Law and the Prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent to them, saying, Men, brothers, if you have any word of comfort for the people, speak. And rising up and signaling with his hand, Paul said, Men, Israelites, and those fearing God,](#)

listen. The God of this people Israel chose our fathers and exalted the people in their residency in the land of Egypt, and He brought them out of it with a high arm. [Act 13:15-17](#)

Notice the Law and the Prophets sets the context as in Luke 24 and Acts 2. Paul's own claim in Acts 26:22 shows that the O.T. is the basis of all Paul's preaching to the end of Acts. Paul begins with the typical redemption of Israel which pictures Israel's greater redemption, the hope in view during the Acts period. Paul's gospel preached to both Israelites and Gentiles, like Peter's, points his listeners to King David:

[And when He had removed him, He raised up David to them to be their king; to whom He also witnessed and said, I have found David the son of Jesse to be a man after My own heart, who shall fulfill all My will. Of this man's seed God has raised to Israel, according to His promise, a Savior, Jesus; \[Act 13:22-23\]\(#\)](#)

Paul declares that Christ had been raised "to Israel" according to the oath God made to David. Christ is not among the Gentiles at this point. This is the Kingdom setting Paul is unfolding here which is exactly the same hope Peter preached in Acts 2. The interested reader might like to compare Acts 2 with Acts 13 point by point and notice the common elements; the gospels are practically identical. Peter and Paul both preach that the Lord Jesus is the Messiah raised to sit on David's throne.

How plain is Scripture do we need? Paul boldly declares that the salvation, the gospel he was proclaiming to both Jew and Gentile at that time was the promise made to the Fathers;

[And we preach the gospel to you, the promise made to the fathers, \[Act 13:32\]\(#\)](#)

The dispensational setting of today is not based upon any promise made to Israel's Fathers.

[... I became a minister, according to the administration of God given to me for you, to fulfill \(complete\) the Word of God; the mystery which has been hidden \(away\) from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints. \[Col 1:25-26\]\(#\)](#)

In Acts 13 Paul is very specific that the promise made to the Fathers is "this salvation" he was preaching at that time. What exactly was "this salvation" Paul was proclaiming and how was it related to the OT promises? Let Paul himself explain;

[Men, brothers, sons of the race of Abraham, and whoever among you fears God, the Word of this salvation is sent to you. \[Act 13:26\]\(#\)](#)

[And we preach the gospel to you, the promise made to the fathers, this God has fulfilled to us their children, raising up Jesus, as also it is written in the second Psalm, "You are My Son, this day I have begotten You." And that He raised Him up from the dead, no more to return to corruption, He spoke in this way: "I will give you the holy promises of David." Therefore he also says in another psalm, "You shall not allow Your Holy One to see corruption." \[Act 13:32-35\]\(#\)](#)

Like Peter before him, Paul assures his listeners that Christ, the seed of David, had been raised to Israel to sit upon David's throne. This is the gospel Paul preached in Acts 13; this is the salvation in view.

How can we ignore the O.T. quotes Paul uses to explain his gospel? The very Scriptures Paul turns to will confirm that the dispensational setting of the gospel he presented was all Old Testament. Here is the list;

[Acts 13:33](#) = [Ps.2:7](#), which Psalm is about Christ sitting on the holy hill of Zion and ruling the world. Please read all this Psalm.

[Acts 13:34](#) = [Isaiah 55](#), a prophecy calling Israel to turn back to God and the restoration which would follow. Please read all this chapter of Isaiah.

[Acts 13:35](#) = [Psalm 16](#), which Psalm Peter uses in Acts 2:27. This Psalm speaks about the inheritance in the presence of the Lord. This is not about an inheritance in heaven. Please read Psalm 16.

These Old Testament prophecies of hope for Israel constitute Paul's gospel of the Acts period.

Paul assures them in Acts 13:38-39 that this same One who is to sit upon David's throne is the One in whom forgiveness of sins and righteousness apart from the works of the law is found. Please compare Roms.3:20-4:8.

There is no conflict of dispensational setting here. The promises made to the Fathers included forgiveness of sins and righteousness. These great passages of the Kingdom on the earth are not the hope before us today though it is blessedly true that we have forgiveness and righteousness by faith in the same Saviour.

The fact that Paul concludes his gospel with such eternal truths does not mean that Peter did not know about them or the Church which is His Body began. Abraham and David experienced forgiveness of sins and righteousness by faith reckoned but they are not members of the Church which is His Body but will be part of the great Kingdom of heaven on the earth. Righteousness by faith through grace was never the Mystery of Ephesians hidden in God and away from ages and generations.

The unbelieving Jews in Antioch were filled with envy (jealousy) when they saw the crowds (Acts 13:45). Jealousy was to stimulate them to a response but like bar-Jesus they tried to pervert the right ways of the Lord and Paul gives them a warning:

[Therefore beware lest that come on you which is spoken of in the Prophets: "Behold, you despisers, and marvel, and perish; for I work a work in your days, a work which you shall in no way believe, though a man declare it to you." Act 13:40-41](#)

What was the warning in Acts 13:40-41 and how did it agree and confirm the dispensational setting of the Acts period?

Once again we see Paul using the O.T. as the basis of his gospel. The prophetic passage he used as his warning was certainly not that Israel would be cast aside and the new dispensation of today would begin. Nor was it a prophecy that Israel was to be dragged into the Church which is His Body. The prophecy Paul uses is foreign to such a view. Please read Habakkuk 1 noting verse 5.

Habakkuk 1:5 is a warning about a northern army storming through the land of Israel. This is the very setting of end of the ages when unrepentant Israel will experience the tribulation. The believing Jews and Gentiles of the Acts period, the remnant of prophecy (Roms.9:22-29), would be preserved through this tribulation as per Joel 2:32 et.al. Paul uses prophecy to warn the Jews of the tribulation.

Some feel that the “Church age” started in Acts 13 because Paul turned to the Gentiles after the Israelites rejected the message.

But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy and contradicted those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. But speaking boldly, Paul and Barnabas said, It was necessary for the Word of God to be spoken to you first. But since indeed you put it far from you and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the nations. For so the Lord has commanded us, saying, "I have set You to be a light of the nations, for salvation to the end of the earth." Act 13:45-47

The turning to the Gentiles in Acts 13 was only local as Acts 14:1, 17:1-2 shows. Right through Acts Paul went to the Jew first, save on a few occasions. That these Gentiles were to be saved was never “hidden in God” even Peter knew this, see Acts 3:25-26. Paul’s authority to include the Gentiles, like all his ministry of the Acts period (Acts 26:22), was based on the Old Testament Scriptures.

The O.T. Scripture Paul used as his authority to turn to the Gentiles in Acts 13 is Isaiah 49:6. Please note that twice Paul has referred to Isaiah in Acts 13 and the next verse in Isaiah 49 says this;

So says Jehovah, the Redeemer of Israel, His Holy One, to Him whom man despises, to Him whom the nation hates, the servant of rulers: Kings shall see and arise, rulers also shall worship, because of Jehovah who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, and He shall choose You. Isa 49:7

The setting of Isaiah 49 is the certainty of God’s purpose for Israel (see Romans 11:29) and the Kingdom on the earth not a prophetic passage about us today. Paul’s use of Isaiah in Acts 13 is a great antidote against those who claim the Church which is His Body started there. If Paul was given a progressive revelation about us today then it really started way back in Isaiah, a nonsensical view.

The reader should compare Acts 13:47 with the context of Isaiah 49:6 which prophecy is about Israel’s re-gathering and glory under Messiah. This was the context and authority for Paul to turn to the Gentiles. A reading of Isaiah 49:5, Acts 13:47 and Romans 11:11 in relation to the Gentiles being saved during Acts show wonderful consistency in the Word of Truth and Paul’s writings of the Acts.

Here are some other verses from Isaiah 49;

and said to Me, You are My servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified. Isa 49:3
And now, says Jehovah who formed Me from the womb to be His servant, to bring Jacob again to Him, Though Israel is not gathered, yet I shall be glorious in the eyes of Jehovah, and My God shall be My strength. Isa 49:5

Israel was partially blind and stumbling during Acts and Gentiles were saved because of that with the intent to stimulate the Olive tree Israel to fruit bearing: And so I ask, "They have not stumbled so as to fall, have they?" Of course not! On the contrary, because of their stumbling, salvation has come to the gentiles to make the Jews jealous. (ISV). [Rom 11:11](#)

This Gentile inclusion of the Acts period is precisely the setting of Isaiah 49, "to bring Jacob again to Him". Paul's apostleship of that time was to the same end (Roms.11:13-14) and I am certain Paul found a personal touch between his own claim in Galatians 1:15 with Isaiah who spoke of one being "formed..from the womb" (Is.49:5).

Isaiah 49 is a glorious prophecy of Israel's restoration and this is the basis, the authority for Paul to turn to the Gentiles in Acts 13. It requires a spiritual jackhammer of immense proportions to stretch Isaiah 49 to mean the entering in of a new dispensation.

Israel had "stumbled at that stumbling stone", see Acts 13:6-11, Romans 9:31-33 and 11:7-10, but they remained God's people (Roms.11:1-2). Israel had not been cast aside in Romans. The Kingdom under their Messiah was the expectation of Paul until the end of the book of Acts.

Before leaving Acts 13 for now, please consider this verse;
[But shaking the dust of their feet off on them, they came into Iconium. Act 13:51](#)

I am certain my reader will remember Matthew chapter 10 and the setting there. Please turn your Bibles to these verses; Matt.10:5-8, 11-15, 23. While Paul's ministry included the Gentiles during Acts, it remains that the dispensational setting is in harmony with Matthew 10 and the hope found there.

Paul's gospel of Act 13 is identical in dispensational setting as Peter's of Acts 2. Both men proclaim that the Lord was raised to Israel to sit on David's throne. The Lord's imminent return to establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven on the earth is the hope of the Acts period and gives clearer meaning to 1Thess.4 than the modern abuse of the passage to teach it as some silent snatching away of all believers back into heaven.

The book of Romans was written towards the end of Acts and in it Paul writes that the time was short just as he had in Corinthians:

[This also, knowing the time, that it is already time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand; therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Rom 13:11-12](#)

[And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen. Rom 16:20](#)

I hardly think Romans was written at the beginning of any new "Church age" do you? And what a powerful link back to Genesis. So what was the hope of Romans?

The hope of Romans was all the Old Testament Kingdom as Paul proclaims in these verses. Please note the hope is found in “the things written before” not something freshly revealed which was previously hidden:

For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, so that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. And I say, Jesus Christ has become a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers, and that the nations might glorify God for His mercy, as it is written, "For this cause I will confess to You in the nations, and I will praise Your name."

And again He says, "Rejoice, O nations, with His people."

And again, "Praise the Lord, all the nations, and praise Him, all the peoples."

And again Isaiah says, "There shall be a root of Jesse, and He who shall rise to reign over the nations, in Him shall the nations trust."

And may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Spirit. [Rom 15:4-13](#)

Here is the OT list of quotes Paul uses to affirm the “patience and comfort of the Scriptures” so far as the hope at that time was concerned;

[Roms.15:9](#) = [Psalm 18:49](#) (2Samuel 22:50). This Psalm speaks of the seed of David and deliverance from Israel’s enemies.

[Roms.15:10](#) = [Deut.32:43](#), (see also Ps. 67:3-4, 68:32). The Song of Moses, also found in the book of Revelation, also speaks of Israel’s redemption.

[Roms.15:11](#) = [Ps.117:1](#).

[Roms.15:12](#) = [Isaiah 11:1](#), please read all of Isaiah 11 which is a plain prophecy about peace and dominion being restored in “my holy mountain”.

Every reader should read all these Old Testament Scriptures and note the context. In so doing it shall be wonderfully clear that the hope of Romans was the hope taught by the Lord in the gospels and by Peter in Acts 2, the soon coming Kingdom on the earth. The hope of Romans is not our hope today.

Again, if Paul was given a progressive revelation, then He started way back in the song of Moses in Deuteronomy and not one right divider would consider the Church which is His Body starting with Moses. If Romans was one of the last letters of Paul during Acts then he hasn’t “progressed” as some are want to suggest. In fact contrary to such teaching, he has retraced from the Psalms and Isaiah in Acts 13 way back to Moses in Romans.

With the earth so clearly in view in Romans we can now read these passages in Galatians 3 and note the consistency in Paul’s testimony during the Acts period; Even as Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. Therefore know that those of faith, these are the sons of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the nations through faith, preached the gospel before to Abraham, saying, "In you shall all nations be blessed." So then those of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. [Gal 3:6-9](#)

For if the inheritance is of Law, it is no more of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by way of promise. [Gal 3:18](#)

For as many as were baptized into Christ, you put on Christ. There (in Christ) cannot be Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is no male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promise. [Gal 3:27-29](#)

Notice verse 8? The Scriptures foreseeing righteousness for the Gentiles as embedded in Genesis 12. Righteousness for the Gentiles was never The Mystery “hidden in God” of Ephesians. Peter also uses Gen.12 in Acts 3:25-26. The reader should not miss this link of Righteousness by faith with that great nation God promised Abraham his seed would become. Being a son of Abraham and God means being an heir of Abraham and God, and in this context the inheritance is the earth given by promise.

All Paul’s ministry during the Acts was found in the Old Testament and it included the great hope of the Kingdom. That hope was put aside with Israel at the end of the book of Acts when the ends of the ages were postponed and a new administration was revealed to Paul with a new hope. We must distinguish things differing.

The Church which is His Body was not revealed in the Gospels or at Acts 2 and it certainly was not revealed to Paul at any point in the Acts period.

Next chapter we shall begin to examine carefully what event it was that believers were anticipating during the Gospels and Acts period. Their hope of that time is not our hope today.

Chapter nine

Paul in Acts-his message & mission

Tradition is more often than not a blinder to truth. We must not build our doctrines on any denominational tradition such as “the Church started at Pentecost” or “Israel was cast aside at the cross”. It is our obligation to examine the Word of Truth rightly divided to find out exactly whether or not the Word of God agrees with such traditions. If tradition and truth do not coincide then we have no choice but to discard tradition in favor of God’s Word.

The period covered by the book of Acts is not described by those writing at that time as the beginning of anything. It has been proven that Israel were not cast aside at the cross or Pentecost. Despite the plain words of God in relation to these things such blinkers remain entrenched in the denominational dogmas and have been the basis of the deceptive tradition called the rapture.

However, before we arrive at our examination of 1Thess.4 it is imperative to also expose a third tradition based upon the two above which says; the Acts period was the gospel going into the entire world to all people.

We ask the reader to go back to the Book of Acts and read chapters 1 through 12 and find any witness by any other than a Jew to Israelites save the introduction of the Gentiles at the conversion of Cornelius in chapters 10-11.

The reader should take great care to note the means whereby the Lord encouraged Peter to actually speak to a Gentile. Why would Peter need a vision (Acts 10:9-16) to speak to a Gentile if there had been Gentiles at Acts 2? When Peter arrived at the home of Cornelius he made a very plain statement about the impropriety of mixing with Gentiles and then asked a strange question: [And he said to them, You know that it is an unlawful thing for a man, a Jew to keep company with or to come near to one of another nation. But God has shown me not to call any man common or unclean. Therefore I came without complaint, being sent for. I ask, then, for what reason have you sent for me. Act 10:28-29](#)

Why did Peter still think it unlawful to mix with Gentiles if Christ had started the “Church” in the Gospels or Acts 2? Likewise, if Peter’s commission had been to go into the entire world and preach the gospel to the Gentiles, why would he ask Cornelius what he wanted? Where is truth found, in Peter an inspired apostle or our denominational traditions?

It would be an incredible thing if the majority of Christians would really ponder the following plain statement of Scripture and re-assess the tradition which says Jews and Gentiles were baptized into the “Church” at Acts 2; [Then, indeed, they who were scattered abroad by the persecution that rose about Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, preaching the Word to no one except the Jews. Act 11:19](#)

When our foundations are totally unscriptural then we are wide open for deception. This is exactly what the rapture theory is, a masterstroke of deception. However, we need more time to show that Acts is not the beginning of the Church and then we can present 1Thess.4 for what it is, the hope of Israel;

[For this cause, then, I called for you, to see and to speak with you. For I have this chain around me for the hope of Israel. Act 28:20](#)

We have seen that the O.T. was the basis of Paul's great gospel in the Synagogue in Antioch Pisidia and it is essential to our understanding of 1Thess.4 that we really acknowledge Paul's own claims about his Acts period ministry and especially his gospel;

[And we preach the gospel to you, the promise made to the fathers, Act 13:32](#)

There are some who theorize that Paul had some progressive revelation and the Lord gradually revealed the present truth to Paul over the Acts period which they see as being transitional. This can be shown as fabrication by allowing Paul to speak for himself. Some of these references will be repeats, but for the sake of surety I'm sure the reader will not find them wearisome.

In Acts 22, speaking to the crowds of Jews (including believing Jews) in Jerusalem, Paul gives some very clear indications that his ministry was still according to the promise made to the fathers. This is not a progression in 10 chapters. In verse 3 he reminds the crowd he was taught according to the exactness of the law of the fathers and his calling was by the God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob;

[And he said, The God of our fathers has chosen you to know His will and to see the Just One, and to hear a voice out of His mouth. For you shall be His witness to all men of what you have seen and heard. Act 22:14-15](#)

The only thing Paul had seen and heard prior to this point of his conversion was the "faith" he once destroyed (Gal.1:23).

It was the God of Israel's fathers who chose Paul. These things are important especially when considering the gospel Paul received by revelation. The gospel he received was certainly not the Mystery of Ephesians 3 which is totally unrelated to the God of Israel's fathers, and was certainly not what Paul had seen and heard;

[But when it pleased God \(of Israel's fathers\), who separated me from my mother's womb, and having called me by His grace, to reveal His Son in me so that I might preach Him among the nations, immediately I did not confer with flesh and blood; Gal 1:15-16](#)

The God of Israel's fathers "called" Paul and the gospel he received by revelation (Gal.1:11-12) was perfectly in harmony with God's purposes for the earth during the book of Acts and was a gospel concerning the things that he had seen and heard;

[... he \(Paul\) now preaches the faith \(doctrine\) which he once ravaged. \(cp 1Cor.15:11\). Gal 1:23](#)

Moving deeper into the book of Acts when Paul was making his defense before Felix, he affirms his ministry of the Acts period;

But I confess this to you, that after the Way which they call heresy, so I worship the God of my fathers, believing all things that are written in the Law and in the Prophets. And I have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. [Act 24:14-15](#)

The consistency of Paul's testimony needs to be acknowledged. Paul worshipped the God of his fathers, was called by the God of Israel's fathers, and his ministry was the things he had seen and heard though he needed a revelation and teaching from Christ to know and understand those things.

In his defense before Festus Paul declares boldly that;

.... Neither against the Law of the Jews, nor against the temple, nor against Caesar have I offended in anything. [Act 25:8](#)

Let me assure the reader that Paul would certainly have been against the Law and Israel's temple if he had been teaching the truth of Ephesians 2.:

For He is our peace, He making us both one, and He has broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*, having abolished in His flesh the enmity (the Law of commandments *contained in ordinances*) so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, making peace *between them*; [Eph 2:14-15](#)

No Jew would have tolerated "making the both one" or any suggestion that the "middle wall" had been broken down. Both of these things were the basis of Paul's arrest in Acts 21:20-29.

In Acts 26 Paul makes another plain statement that his hope during Acts was the same hope held by unrepentant Israel. That hope was based on the promise made by God to Israel's fathers;

And now I stand and am judged for *the* hope of the promise made to our fathers by God, to which *promise* our twelve tribes hope to attain, serving God fervently night and day. For the sake of this hope, king Agrippa, I am accused by the Jews. [Act 26:6-7](#)

Thessalonians was written during Acts and the hope of Thessalonians was the same hope Israel was waiting to see.

Acts 26:18 lists some wonderful objectives for Paul's Acts period ministry but the things listed are as much a part of the earthly purpose as the heavenly one; they are not unique to the Church which is His Body. Paul makes it very clear in verse 22 that his teaching and preaching were the same to Jew and Gentile and all based upon the Old Testament. Therefore verse 18 must be understood in the O.T. setting;

After this, king Agrippa, I did not disobey the heavenly vision. But to those first in Damascus, and Jerusalem, and to all the country of Judea, and to the nations, I made known *the command* to repent and to turn to God, doing works worthy of repentance Then having obtained help from God, I stand until this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying no other things than those which the prophets and Moses said was going to happen; [Act 26:19-22](#)

Indeed, Paul's appeal to Agrippa is based upon his belief in the prophets;

King Agrippa, do you believe the Prophets? I know that you believe. [Act 26:27](#)

Prior to Israel being “let go” in Acts 28:25, Paul makes the same statements about his life as a Christian to the leaders of the Jews in Rome. He preaches to them the same message he had been preaching to the Jews all during Acts which was the Lord Jesus according to the Old Testament.

And after three days it happened that Paul called together those being chief of the Jews. And they coming together, he said to them, Men, brothers, I did nothing against the people or customs of our fathers. I was delivered a prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans Act 28:17 (remember three days in Ex.19?).

And they having appointed him a day, many came to him in *his* lodging; to whom he expounded, testifying the kingdom of God, and persuading them the things concerning Jesus, both out of the Law of Moses and out of the Prophets, from morning until evening. Act 28:23

Thessalonians was written during the Acts period when Paul was preaching the O.T. The hope of Thessalonians is the promise made to the fathers and has nothing to do with the post Acts ministry of Paul. The Old Testament promises were all in relation to Israel and the purposes of God for the world through that great nation He promised Abraham’s seed would become. Only after Israel was set aside did the Lord reveal an above heavenly purpose the hope of which is not found in Thessalonians.

Finally we present some passages which show that Paul did not go into the entire world and preach the gospel to everyone. During Acts, Paul took the message of Jesus of Nazareth to the Jew first and only to the Gentiles once Israel had rejected the message. This is not the ministry we have before us today. Let us follow the history of Paul’s ministry locations from his conversion to Acts 28.

In Acts 9 Paul’s ministry is clearly stated. He preached in the Synagogues to the Jews at Damascus without reference to any Gentile. Peter had not yet introduced Gentiles into the elect remnant;

And immediately he proclaimed Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God. But Saul increased the more in strength and confounded the Jews who lived at Damascus, proving that this One is the Christ. Act 9:20,22

When Paul returned to Jerusalem he argued against the Greek speaking Jews and eventually his life was under threat so he was sent to his home country; And he spoke boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and argued with the Hellenists. But they seized him in order to kill him. But knowing, the brothers brought him down to Caesarea and sent him forth to Tarsus. Act 9:29-30

Paul returns to the recorded ministry in Acts 11:25 and is part of the relief delegation to Jerusalem. In Acts 13 he and Barnabas were commissioned and this is the clear record of the direction and witness of Paul’s first missionary journey;

And when they were at Salamis, they announced the Word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. And they also had John as an assistant. Act 13:5

We have seen Paul's message to the Jews in the synagogue at Antioch in Acts 13 where we noted the turning to the Gentiles was authorized by O.T. prophecy (Acts 13:46-47). This turning to the Gentiles was only local as the following Scriptures show:

[And it happened in Iconium, they both went together into the synagogue of the Jews, and spoke so as a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed. Act 14:1](#)

Paul's Acts period ministry was a constant thrust into the Jewish synagogues and communities. Please consider the following passages, Acts 16:13, 17:10, 17, 18:4, 19:8 and 28:17. This following passage tells us clearly what Paul's custom was during the book of Acts;

[And traveling through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. And according to Paul's custom, he went in to them and reasoned with them out of the Scriptures on three sabbaths, Act 17:1-2](#)

During Acts, Paul's ministry was to the Jews in their synagogues or places of worship. It was to the Jew first (Roms.1:16-17) and when the Jews rejected the message, then Paul turned to the Gentiles who were saved to provoke Israel to jealousy; to stimulate the Olive Tree (Roms.11:11, 14 & 17-18).

In what way can this message and ministry of Paul be seen to be the introduction of something previously unknown and which concerns all people without dispensational advantage or disadvantage? If Israel had been set aside as is traditionally believed then why did Paul bother spending so much time in the Jewish synagogues every Sabbath trying to persuade them about the Law and the Prophets? Tradition has caused so much division, confusion and denial of God's Word.

The rapture deck of cards theory is built upon the following vaporous foundational vanities;

Israel was cast aside at the cross and Christ came to start the Church. This is false.

Israel was cast aside at Pentecost where Jews and Gentiles were baptized into one and Acts is the history of the early "Church". This is false.

Acts is a beginning of something. This is false.

Paul went into the world preaching to all people about the new dispensation given to him in Ephesians and Colossians. This is false.

Acts is a transitional book and Paul had a progressive revelation. This is false.

When our foundations are totally unscriptural, then our concept of the rapture has little chance of being anywhere near the truth of the Word of God rightly divided.

Here a brief summary of the facts regarding the context of 1Thess.4 which is absolutely the fulfillment of all that the Feasts and especially the Exodus Pentecost, anticipated. These are the foundations on which we build our doctrine concerning the hope found in that passage.

Acts is not the beginning of anything but a continuation of God's dealings with Israel and His purposes for the world through that great nation.

Paul was teaching and preaching no other things than those which Moses and the Prophets said was going to happen. He sought out the Jews in every quarter and only turned to the Gentiles after Israel had rejected the message. Gentiles were saved to provoke Israel to jealousy.

The hope Paul held during Acts was the same hope held by unrepentant Israel and is the hope clearly foretold in the Old Testament.

The hope of Romans 15 is the earth promised to Abraham and in Galatians the additional blessing of Abraham is seen; the New Jerusalem which descends to the earth.

During Acts the Lord was expected to return to the earth and sit on David's throne.

Since Thessalonians was written during the Acts then the hope of Thessalonians must be understood according to all the above.

In the light of these truths we can say this about 1 Thess.4.
Thessalonians is an Old Testament hope.

Thessalonians is a hope relating to the earth, the very Promised Land given to Abraham unconditionally.

If the hope of Thessalonians is the hope of the O.T., then it can be found somewhere in Israel's history. It will be anticipated; typified in some way.

Chapter ten

1Thessalonians 4 in the Old Testament

Thus far we have seen that the Gospels and the Acts were not understood by the Lord's servants as any new beginning. Unfortunately our traditions have obscured the fact that the Scriptures of that time clearly state it was the "ends of the ages". The return of Christ to the earth and His reign out of Jerusalem was the expectation held. Not one writer spoke of any believer going to heaven; on the contrary they were all:

... waiting expectantly for His Son from (out of) the heavens,.... 1Th 1:9-10

Paul told the Corinthians they, including himself, would not all die (1Cor.15:51) and would be confirmed unto the "end" which was the "revelation" or "apocalypse" of the Lord;

even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you; so that you come behind in no gift, waiting for the **revelation** of our Lord Jesus Christ. He shall also confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. 1Co 1:6-8

The book of Revelation is a book of the events relating to the culmination of Israel's history and events that fall into place after the Lord returns to the earth. Revelation includes things about the false prophet and the Antichrist and the sufferings of the over comers in those last days. Revelation is about the great and terrible Day of the Lord, an incredible event of prophecy.

Revelation reveals 7 trumpets. When the last trumpet sounds then the Lord descends to the earth as King of Kings and Lord of Lords;

And the seventh angel sounded (trumpeted). And there were great voices in Heaven, saying, the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ. And He will reign forever and ever. Rev 11:15

This event in Revelation is not about our Lord reigning from the heavenly places over the earth. He descends to the earth at the last trumpet just as He descended to the earth with a trumpet in the Old Testament.

The book of the Revelation is about the earthly purposes of our God; Israel becoming that Kingdom of Priests they were always intended to be, see Ex.19:6, Is. 61:6, 66:21-22, Rom.12:1, 1Peter 2:5, 9, Rev.1:6, 5:10 and 20:6.

Much of Revelation was anticipated in Israel's deliverance from Gentile dominion in Egypt and their entrance into the Promised Land. Their journey from bondage to a land flowing with milk and honey is mapped out in their Feasts which are also very

helpful in understanding Revelation and 1Thess.4. These Feasts are prophetic holydays and proclaim Israel's future, greater exodus. The Feasts are about God's program for the earth, they say nothing of His program for heavenly places and the Church which is His Body.

Passover, Unleavened Bread and Pentecost are the first group of Feasts and set the stage for the Kingdom of Heaven. They foreshadow the deliverance from Satan and his bondage. Pentecost foreshadows the equipping of God's people

Israel for service. Then the later group of Feasts, in the autumn, typifies the great entering of this Kingdom under Messiah. The first of these Kingdom Feasts is Trumpets. If Trumpets in the O.T. were about Israel then they are about Israel in the N.T.

The Passover's blood stayed the hand of the destroyer and Israel, God's firstborn, was preserved while Egypt's firstborn perished. Typical Passover took place in Egypt.

Unleavened Bread speaks of sanctification, separation from the enemy to God for service. Israel consumed the Passover Lamb with unleavened bread. The separation was immediate and complete. Unleavened Bread took place in Egypt.

Pentecost is typified at Mt Sinai. Fifty days after leaving Egypt Israel arrived at the holy mountain where supernatural gifts were given to prepare that nation for service. The Old covenant was given here. Pentecost looks forward to the last group of Feasts which is Trumpets, Atonement and Tabernacles. These later feasts took place in the Promised Land.

At Trumpets Jericho fell and this foreshadows the Kingdoms of this world becoming the kingdoms of the Lord as we have seen in Revelation.

Atonement, the great day thereof, was a day when Israel enjoyed typical national cleansing. One day a year the High Priest entered the holiest of all with the blood of cleansing. Christ is Israel's High Priest and when He returns to Israel He shall take away their sins under the terms of the New Covenant. This is when they will mourn for Him and look on the One they have pierced.

The Feast of Tabernacles is the harvest festival for Israel when they will flourish under their Messiah and His bountiful provision. The Kingdom originating from heaven on the earth and the Lord's Prayer realized; "thy will be done on earth".

The Feasts of Israel might teach some wonderful fundamental truths and most expositors take these fundamental elements but totally ignore the dispensational setting of them. They disregard the fact that the Feasts are about Israel and God's purposes for the earth. As soon as these teachers see the Passover blood in the Gospels and Trumpets in the Acts period epistles they think "Church" instead of Israel. Redemption by the blood is not unique to the Church His Body, how else was Israel delivered in the past and how else will they be delivered in the future?

During Acts the believers were expecting the Lord's return to the earth at Trumpets; the very reality that the O.T. Feast typified. At that Feast fulfillment, every Israeli eye will see the Lord at the right hand of God just prior to His descent to the earth and then they will then look closely upon the One they have pierced and mourn for Him. See Lev.23:26-30, Matt.24:29-30, 26:64 and Zech 12:10 and 13:6.

This Festive calendar of Israel is the setting of 1Cor.15 and 1Thess.4. Israel's history guides us in our understanding of New Testament end time events for Israel and those blessed with her.

Let us follow Israel's salvation in type. In Egypt, Passover and Unleavened Bread had been typically fulfilled and Israel was brought to Mt Sinai where the Feast of Pentecost was typically fulfilled.

In this stage of Israel's journey to the Kingdom on the earth, certain Israelites had received "gifts of The Spirit". These divinely given gifts enabled them to make the High Priest's garments (Ex.28:2-4), and construct the Tabernacle and its vessels of service (Ex.31:1-7). Israel was made ready to enter the Kingdom. The "supernatural gifts" of the Acts period were also a foretaste of the coming antitypical Kingdom as Hebrews 6:5 states.

We have already shown that the Acts period was not the beginning of anything but the "ends of the ages" when the return of the Lord was expected at that Feast of Trumpets fulfillment. This event could have happened in the lifetime of the believers if the nation of Israel had faith in their Messiah.

In Deuteronomy 1:1-2 it was 11 days from Mt Sinai to the border of the Promised Land. Eleven days is not a long journey and had Israel faith, they could have entered then and there at Trumpets. In other words Trumpets could have followed Pentecost in a very short space of time. But Israel lacked faith and were turned and wandered in the wilderness for 40 years. In the same way, Israel was given opportunity to repent and turn back to the Lord during Acts. The Lord would have returned at Trumpets 2000 years ago but Israel nationally lacked faith and has been "in the wilderness" for all this time.

At Mt Sinai we see a typical Pentecost which anticipates the last group of Feasts which start with Trumpets. The feast of Trumpets is anticipated during this time spent at the mountain and in Ex.19 we see 1Thess.4 foreshadowed.

Here are some wonderful features of the Lord's descent "out of heaven" way back then which guide us in our understanding of this hope of the Acts period. Let us begin by reminding ourselves of the setting of the type and shadow; *You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself. And now if you will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then you shall be a peculiar treasure to Me above all the nations; for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words which you shall speak to the sons of Israel. Exo 19:4-6*

To even imply this has anything to do with us as members of the Church which is His Body is going way beyond the bounds of Scripture. It is the nations and all the earth in Exodus. We have no right to change the setting of Ex.19 to "the Church" in the fulfillment passages of Matt., 1Thess.4 and the book of the Revelation. It was the earth and Israel in Ex.19 and it is Israel and the earth in these New Testament passages as well.

In Exodus 19 the Lord descends out of Heaven to the earth in clouds. He descended to the earth with a Trumpet blast and there were thunders and lightning and earthquakes. He was accompanied by angels (Ps.68:17) and Israel was gathered together in one place at the base of the mountain. The Lord spoke with a voice and Moses went up to meet the Lord. Does this sound familiar?

Here are the Exodus 19 verses which are practically point by point repeated in 1Thess.4 and other New Testament passages which deal with Israel's future glory. Again my friends, if the setting in Exodus 19 is Israel's typical deliverance then what right do we have to alter 1 Thess.4 as being the deliverance of the Church which is His Body? The setting of Exodus is a guide to 1 Thess.4.

The Lord's coming out of Heaven in the Clouds.

[And Jehovah said to Moses, Lo, I come to you in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with you, and believe you forever. And Moses told the words of the people to Jehovah. Exo 19:9](#)

For other references about clouds see, Ex.19:16 below, Deut.33:26, Dan.7:13, Matt.24:30, 26:64, 1 Thess.4:17 and Rev.1:7. In that day Israel will certainly believe in the Lord after centuries of rejecting Him.

The Lord descends to the earth and is seen by the nation of Israel. This is not some secretive, invisible or silent coming of the Lord in Ex.19 and neither is the fulfillment of this in 1Thess.4 and Revelation.

[And be ready for the third day. For the third day Jehovah will come down in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai. Exo 19:11](#)

Every eye will see Him as He descends (Zech.12:10, Matt.24:30, 26:64 and Rev.1:7). This must be understood according to Ex.19. Every eye of Israel will see him, and the universality assumed and explained by modern TV is ludicrous.

The Trumpet blast heralds his descent in Ex.19. Again, nothing silent about this trumpet call.

[There shall not be a hand to touch it, but that he shall surely be stoned or shot through; whether beast or man, it shall not live. When the trumpet sounds long, they shall come up to the mountain. Exo 19:13](#)

For other Scriptures describing the Trumpet blast as the Lord descends to the earth and Israel being gathered see, Ex.19:16, 19, 20:18, Joshua 6:5 (note The Commander of the Lord's hosts was in the Land, see Joshua 5:14). See also Psalm 47, Isaiah 27:13, Joel 2:15, 16, 18, Matt.24:31, 1Cor.15:52, 1Thess.4:16 and Rev.11:15 where sounded in the original is trumpeted.

Joel 2:30-31 speaks of future signs in Heaven and the earth beneath including dimness of light. We can't forget that Egypt experienced darkness in Israel's typical redemption. Here are some signs in heaven and earth in Ex.19.

[And it happened on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mountain. And the voice of the trumpet was exceedingly loud, so that all the people in the camp trembled. Exo 19:16](#)

For other Scriptures which speak of thunder and lightning associated with Israel's deliverance and the Lord's descent to the earth see Ex.9:23 and Rev.11:19.

The Lord came down to the mountain and a voice was heard and smoke was seen and the earth shook.

And Mount Sinai was smoking, all of it, because Jehovah came down upon it in fire. And the smoke of it went up like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and became very strong, Moses spoke, and God answered him by a voice. [Exo 19:18-19](#)

Please note, the Lord came down to the earth in Exodus 19 and the Lord's return to the earth was the expectation of the Gospel and Acts period; the Scriptures overwhelmingly support this. The Lord returned to heaven after Exodus 19, but this will not be the case when the picture becomes a reality. See Matt.24 and 25 noting the judgment of servants and the nations on the earth. See also, Matt.24:7, 27:51, Hebrews 12:26-29, Rev.6:14-17 and 11:16-19.

The Lord came down to the earth and Moses goes up to meet Him. Moses represents that elect company who are privileged to "meet" the Lord in the future when He descends to the earth.

And Jehovah came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mountain. And Jehovah called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up. [Exo 19:20](#)

The people of Israel were gathered to meet the Lord (Ex.19:17). Remember that Israel will be re-gathered when the Lord returns, see Jer.31:10, Ez.11:17, 34:12-14 and Matt.3:12, 24:31, Lk.13:34, Jn.11:52, and 2Thess.2:1.

The people of Israel were gathered together when the Lord descended from heaven in Ex.19, but Moses was privileged to go up and meet the Lord as He descended. Again we note that in this historic anticipation of 1Thess.4, the Lord returned to heaven, but Moses did not go into heaven with Him since Moses and the people of Israel are the vehicles for God's purposes on the earth. In the glorious future for Israel, the Lord will not return to heaven, He will descend to the Mount of Olives as the following verses declare; Joel 2:27, Zech.14:4, Matt.24:3, Acts 1:11 and Romans 11:26. The Lord descends out of heaven to the earth in 1Thess.4.

It is also noteworthy to remember that the Lord descended in Exodus to further equip His people with the Law. A covenant came into being, a conditional one. Israel agreed to obey the Lord but they did this in their own strength and soon failed. At the last Trumpet of the N.T., the Lord descends in like manner and plants the New Covenant in Israel's heart as Jeremiah prophesied, (Jer. 31:33). My prayer is that every Christian would read Jer.30-31 and leave that prophecy with Israel. Then we would discard the nonsense that we are New Covenant Christians today. For too long the Christian community has taken the things of Israel and forced them into this present dispensation of the grace of God.

When the Lord descended to Mt Sinai as described in Exodus 19, it anticipated, Trumpets, the beginning of Israel's typical Kingdom. In eleven days Israel could have entered into their inheritance. This beginning is a beautiful picture of Israel's future Kingdom of glory. Just as the Lord descending to them in Exodus 19, so in 1 Thessalonians 4 He descends to Israel at the beginning of their future Kingdom which could have taken place 2000 years ago. We have identical elements and characters in both Exodus 19 and 1Thess.4.

When Israel proved faithless at Kadesh-barnea there were two men who remained convinced that the Lord could do what He had promised; Joshua and Caleb (Num.14:30). These two were preserved to the Kingdom and entered at Trumpets. During the Acts period there was a remnant; believing Jews and later, Gentiles. The remnant of the Acts period, called the "Israel of God" in Gal. 6:16, also believed in the Lord while the nation proved faithless. These Acts period believers would have also been preserved to the Trumpet coming of the Lord had the nation repented.

Though Israel were put aside at Acts 28, the faithful ones, the over comers will indeed go up to meet the Lord when He finally comes at the fulfillment of the Feast of Trumpets. For remnant verses see the following passages. Gen.45:7 where the rejected Joseph was recognized by his brethren the second time. Isaiah 1:9, 10:20-23, Roms.9:24-29, 11:5, Joel 2:32 and Acts 2:39.

Prior to the next chapter would the readers please read 1Thess.4:13-18. Try and find one word or phrase which says anyone, either the Lord or the faithful remnant of that time, were going back into heaven. If the Word of God says nothing about anyone going back into heaven, why is tradition held so powerfully in contradiction to it?

In our next chapter we shall examine the "rapture" passage of 1 Thessalonians 4 which was written in the "ends of the ages". We shall see in Thessalonians that the Lord was returning to the earth as opposed to the widely held view that he was only "descending out of Heaven" to the air and then snatching all believers back into heaven with Him.

Chapter eleven

1 Thessalonians 4

Now we begin our examination of 1 Thess.4:13-18. We shall consider its context and the words and phrases used. I appreciate this will not be the traditional fare and at some point readers may feel they are being robbed of something wonderful. Let me assure everyone, the opposite is true. By pushing aside the curtains of tradition a window opens to a glorious new view which will more than compensate for any sense of loss we might feel.

Thus far in our examinations it has been proven that Scripture opposes the tradition that the Gospel and Acts were the beginning of the new “church” era. We have seen from Scripture that they were the ends of the ages. The return of Christ to the earth was expected in the life of the believers at that time and the Kingdom of Heaven did not mean the Kingdom in Heaven, but the rule of Heaven on the earth with Christ dwelling on the Holy Hill of Zion. Pentecost was not the “birthday” of anything. Peter and Paul’s messages during Acts spoke of this wonderful return of Christ to redeem Israel and restore the Kingdom.

The mainstream denominational systems claim 1Thess.4 is the “rapture” of “the Church”. That is, that Christ will come out of heaven, snatch resurrected and changed believers to the air, then take them all back into heaven. This event is seen as being before the tribulation or half way through the tribulation. But is any of this what Scripture teaches? Let us examine the passage very carefully verse by verse.

The opening verse sets the context which is the dead in Christ. Paul is writing to assure them regarding those believers who have died;

[But I would not have you ignorant, brothers, concerning those who are asleep, that you be not grieved, even as others who have no hope. 1Th 4:13](#)

Understanding will grow if we start where Paul starts. Some of the Thessalonians had fallen asleep, they had died, and the living were grieving. Paul comforts them with this wonderful explanation of the hope before them at that time;

[For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will also bring with Him all those who have fallen asleep through Jesus. 1Th 4:14](#)

Please note the “even so” in this verse. Just as the Lord Jesus died and rose again, even so in the same way, God will through the Lord Jesus, bring with Him those who are asleep in Christ. The Lord Jesus died and rose again; believers of that time died and will rise again at the last trumpet. This is the wonderful assurance Paul is giving here.

In considering 1Thess.4, we need to discard the false teaching that all dead believers of that time were already in heaven and “coming back with Him to the air”. Paul knows nothing of that concept here. Christ died and rose again, even so, in this same way; God will resurrect and bring with the Lord to the earth those who are asleep in Christ.

Reconsider Paul's words carefully. Notice Paul does not say the souls of those who are dead will be brought back with the Lord and fused into their resurrection bodies. How can such a concept hold sway? Fanciful imaginings might be the kind way of naming such views. Read what Paul states again; [For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will also bring with Him all those who have fallen asleep through Jesus. 1Th 4:14](#)

How will God bring through the Lord Jesus those who are asleep in Christ? The answer is simple, just as Christ died and rose again even so those asleep in Christ will rise again. This is how they will be brought with Him back to the earth. Let's consider the next verse;

[For we say this to you by the Word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord shall not go before those who are asleep. 1Th 4:15](#)

When Paul wrote this letter he included himself in the "we" who would live and remain to the last trumpet. This affirms that 1Thess.4 was written in those Acts period "ends of the ages".

The words "go before" should stand out for those who think anyone who has died in Christ has "gone before". No believer gets to be with the Lord before any other believer. This idea 1Thess.4 clearly denies. I think it is time we believed the Word of God and re-examined the universal tradition of Scripture which alters the Word of God and blindly says, "to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord". Such a statement does not exist in Scripture. See appendix 1.

Paul clearly says we, and that "we" of Scripture does not include you and me today, but it included the believers at that time. At that time Paul said he and those other believers still alive would not go before those who were asleep. Tradition fails to "test things differing" and places every believer today in the "we" of a previous administration.

Paul continues his exposition about those who are dead that is, asleep in Christ. He explains how God would bring the dead believers with Christ; [For the Lord Himself shall 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. 1Th 4:16](#)

Notice, the dead will rise first when the Lord descends out of Heaven with a shout, the voice of the archangel and the trumpet of God. This passage is about those who are asleep in Christ, not about the Lord bringing Christians out of heaven. In 1 Cor.15:51-57 Paul tells us that "this mortal shall put on immortality" at the last trumpet. How is it that tradition tells us we are immortal if Paul says we are yet to put it on? In 1Tim.6:16 Paul clearly writes "Christ alone has immortality" and if only Christ has immortality then we dare not claim it for ourselves.

Paul's assurance for those Thessalonians who were grieving at the loss of loved ones was that the dead will be raised first at the coming of the Lord. He goes on to say;

[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 so we shall ever be with the Lord. 1Th 4:17](#)

This is the “rapture” verse and as always, with traditions, the focus is on the phrase “caught up together” rather than the reason for them being “caught up together”.

The dead believers of that company, who will be raised from the grave, and the living believers who will be changed (1Cor.15:51), will be caught up together TO MEET the Lord in the air. This is where tradition and the Word of God part ways. Tradition says that this body of resurrected and changed believers is snatched back into Heaven. The Word of God does not convey this for they are caught up together to meet Him as He descends out of Heaven. Look at what the Word says;

[For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven...](#) KJV, MKJV. [1Th 4:16](#)

[..... the Lord himself will come down from heaven...](#) ISV [1Th 4:16](#)

[..... the Lord Himself shall come down from Heaven..](#) LITV [1Th 4:16](#)

There is not one word or phrase in this passage which says that the Lord and this company are going back into heaven. Examine carefully please. We might think it says that because of what has been ingrained by tradition but we cannot inject into Scripture what we want it to say. The faithful believer stands on what God says, not what tradition thinks God says.

The hope of that time was that both living and dead believers would be caught up together to “meet” the Lord as He descended from, that is “out of” heaven.

The word “meet” (apantesis) only occurs four times in the New Testament. Since this is the word the Holy Ghost teaches, we should look carefully at it and understand fully what it means. It occurs twice in Matt.25 which of course is a Kingdom on the earth setting. Examine the first usage of the word “meet”.

[Then shall the kingdom of Heaven be likened to ten virgins, who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.](#) [Mat 25:1](#)

When is the THEN of this first verse? It is in the time when the Lord returns to the earth as He had been describing in the previous chapter.

[And immediately after the tribulation of those days, ;..... And then the sign of the Son of Man shall appear in the heavens. And then all the tribes of the earth shall mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of the heaven with power and great glory. And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather His elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.](#) [Mat 24:29-31](#)

How wonderfully consistent is the Word of God! In Matthew we have the Lord descending to the earth after the tribulation, after the abomination of desolation (Mat.24:15) and the word “meet” is used.

In Thessalonians the Lord is descending to the earth and Paul warns them not to be deceived for the Day shall not come until after the abomination of desolation (2Thess.2:3-4). In the same context Paul also uses the word “meet”. Yet with such bold statements, masses of Christians still think the “rapture” can happen at any time.

In Matthew 24:29-31 we read of the Lord descending out of Heaven in the clouds and with the trumpet blast as in 1Thess.4. At that time, when He returns to the earth, THEN the wise virgins will go to MEET him.

And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom comes! Go out to meet him. Mat 25:6

These virgins are not going away with the bridegroom. In eastern marriage the bridegroom comes to the bride's home. He comes TO her, not FOR her. Once the Bridegroom arrives THEN the marriage supper is enjoyed. There is no celebration for any calling before He comes. The wise virgins represented those who "watched" (Matt.25:13) and were thus rewarded with a meeting with the Bridegroom as He came TO the marriage.

This "meeting" has nothing to do with the Lord "appearing" in the heavenly places. This is the Lord coming back to the earth. We know this from the very context of these first occurrences of this word "meet";

But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He shall sit on the throne of His glory. And all nations shall be gathered before Him. And He shall separate them from one another, as a shepherd divides the sheep from the goats. Mat 25:31-32

The throne of His Glory is on the earth, the nations are on the earth, see Joel 3. The Lord will come and all His Holy angels with Him. These are the "saints" or "holy ones" of Jude 14 and in this verse:

in order to establish your* hearts [fig., inner selves] [as being] blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the Arrival of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His holy ones [or, saints]. ALT 1Th 3:13

Holy Ones does not always mean human believers, it can also mean angels. This verse cannot be used to teach that all believers who have died are coming back out of heaven with the Lord.

The next occurrence of this word "meet" is in Acts;

And the brothers from there hearing of us, they came to meet us as far as the market-place of Appius, and Three Taverns. Seeing them, thanking God, Paul took courage. Act 28:15

The brothers from Rome came to "meet" Paul. The brothers from Rome did not jump in a ship and turn around and go back to Jerusalem with Paul. Paul continued on to Rome. Those believers who are "caught up together" go to a meeting in the clouds in the air, and then they return to the earth with the Lord.

In every case this word "meet" does not mean continuing on into the place from whence the one being met came. On the contrary, it means to go out and meet the one coming to the place from which those meeting came. In other words, 1Thess.4 is about that company of that time going up from the earth to meet the Lord in the air as He descends to the earth out of heaven. Those going to meet do not continue into heaven.

Also note that those caught up to meet the Lord were only caught up to the air. The air being the place of the clouds:

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 so we shall ever be with the Lord. 1Th 4:17

We, the Church which is His Body, do not have any inheritance in the air or the clouds. Air, voice, angels and clouds are words associated with Israel.

The meeting was in the air and clouds as was anticipated in Ex.19.

The word air is not used for “heaven”, Acts 22:23, 1Cor.9:26, 14:9, Eph.2:2, Rev.9:2 and 16:17. We will not be with the Lord forever in the air. These believers of the Acts period were expecting to go to a meeting in the air as the Lord descended to the earth where the Kingdom of Heaven would be enjoyed and they would judge the world and angels 1Cor.6:2-3.

The church of 1Thess.4 that goes to meet the Lord in the air is not our company, nor is the meeting in the air our hope today.

It is time for tradition which puts “going back into heaven” in this passage to be exposed for what it is; a falsehood and a deception. I repeat, not one word or phrase in 1Thess.4:13-18 can be found to remotely suggest that anyone, either the Lord or the believers who meet Him, are going back into Heaven.

We are not robbed of hope when we put aside the error of tradition.

We want the hope given us by the Lord through our Apostle Paul after Israel were put aside at Acts 28. The hope before us today is Ephesians 2:4-7 which is realized when Col.3:1-4 takes place. Col.3:1-4 takes place before 1 Thess.4, as we shall see in later studies.

We are looking for the “appearing” of the Lord. The appearing takes place in heavenly places where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. This is certainly not in the air. The appearing takes place before the trumpet and before the Lord descends out of Heaven to the earth.

We must “distinguish things that differ” and “rightly divide” the Word of Truth, Phils.1:9-10 MKJV and 2Tim.2:15.

Chapter twelve

1Thessalonians 4 continued

In previous chapters “the rapture” theory was examined in the light of Scripture context. Not one word or phrase in 1Thess.4:13-18 provided any hint that either our Lord or those who would “meet” him in the air were returning back into heaven. Those believers were going to “meet” Him as He descended out of Heaven to the earth just like Moses went up to meet the Lord as He descended in Exodus 19.

It was proven that the Gospels and Acts were not the beginning of anything but were in fact the “ends of the ages”. During that time the believers were to be blessed with faithful Abraham in the inheritance promised to him (Gal.3). They were expecting the Lord’s return in their lifetime.

In Paul’s second letter to the Thessalonians further evidence is shown that the hope of that time was all earthbound. Both letters are about the prophetic things regarding Israel and her final days.

When Paul wrote these letters, Israel remained God’s people (Roms.11:1-2). Israel was not cast aside at the Cross or Acts 2, 9 or 13. God’s purposes for the earth were in operation during that time. When Israel was finally put aside at Acts 28, the hope of Thessalonians was postponed and a new hope revealed. In the next chapters we will try to show from the Word this new hope.

Here is the opening commendation of Paul in his first letter to the Thessalonians showing the hope they held;

For they themselves witness what kind of entrance we had to you, even how you turned from idols to God in order to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from Heaven (whom He raised from the dead), Jesus, who delivered us from the wrath to come. 1Th 1:9-10

The preposition “ek” translated “from” in verse 10 is defined by Strong’s as “out of, from, by, and away from” and not in any sense does it mean a return to Heaven. Unfortunately this plain statement is ignored in the rapture theory.

In chapter two Paul assures them he wanted to visit but was hindered;

Therefore we desired to come to you, truly I, Paul, both once and twice; but Satan hindered us.

For what is our hope or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are you not even to be in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? 1Th 2:18-19

The original word for presence means “in front of, before, as in the presence of” and the original word for “coming” which is parousia, means “a being near”, “the coming, the arrival of”. The believers were going to meet Him when He arrived. Please see these Acts period references where “parousia” means arrival, not departure; 1Cor.16:17, 2Cor.7:6, 10:10. After Israel were set aside at Acts 28, Paul uses parousia twice and never in a context of our Lord’s “second coming”, see Phils.1:26 and 2:12.

Parousia was used in ancient manuscripts to denote the arrival of a dignitary, not the departure of anyone with the dignitary to return to the place of his origin. Parousia is used by Paul seven times in the two Thessalonian epistles.

Here are a couple more references;

And may the Lord make you to increase and abound in love toward one another and toward all, even as we also toward you, in order to establish your hearts blameless in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints. 1Th 3:12-13

When considering verse 13 we need to remember that “with all His saints” might not mean with all the Christians. Saints means “holy ones” and can refer to either Christians or angels. Consider this verse;

But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He shall sit on the throne of His glory. Mat 25:31

It might interest you to know that there are 76 references to angels in the book of the Revelation, the same book that also describes the Lord’s “second coming” in power at the last Trumpet.

The Acts period hope was the Lord’s parousia, that is, His personal presence on the earth. They expected this event in their lifetime and Paul wanted the Thessalonians to be blameless right up until that day of glory;

And may the God of peace Himself sanctify you, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blamelessly at the coming (parousia) of our Lord Jesus Christ. 1Th 5:23

2Thessalonians will show beyond doubt that their hope was the return of the Lord to the earth to deliver Israel from their enemies.

In the 2nd chapter of 2Thess., Paul repeats that the Lord Jesus was coming back to the earth and they would be gathered to meet Him in the clouds as He descended;

Now we beseech you, my brothers, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, 2Th 2:1

To prevent the Thessalonians from being deceived, Paul goes on to clearly show the timing of the return of the Lord. These timing terms of reference are the very things which show the hope of Thessalonians is Israel’s and about the earthly purposes;

that you should not be soon shaken in mind or troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word or letter, as through us, as if the Day of Christ is at hand. Let not anyone deceive you by any means. For that Day shall not come unless there first comes a falling away, and the man of sin shall be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, setting himself forth, that he is God. Do you not remember that I told you these things when I was still with you? And now you know what holds back, for him to be revealed in his own time. For the mystery of lawlessness is already working, only he is now holding back until it comes out of the midst. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the breath of His mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming (parousia), whose coming (parousia) is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceit of unrighteousness in those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, so that they might be saved. 2Th 2:2-10

Paul warns the Thessalonians not to be deceived, the “Day” they were looking for will not come until after apostasy, deception and the “abomination of desolation” is set up in Israel’s Temple in Jerusalem.

What has Israel’s Temple to do with the heavenly purpose? Nothing at all for this is Matt.24 and Daniel’s prophecy. Thessalonians is a context of prophecy concerning Israel and God’s purposes for the earth, not purposes for the heavenly places and the Church which is His Body of Ephesians.

The Day of the Lord is one great subject of prophecy. The reader is encouraged to search through the prophets regarding this great day and read the elements in those O.T. passages. The book of the Revelation is all about this “day of the Lord” (Revelation 1:1-2, 10) and so are the epistles to the Thessalonians. Remember, prophecy does not exist concerning the Church which is His Body and its hope, see Ephs.3:8-9 and Col.1:26.

The setting of Thessalonians is all prophetic and easily identified with Israel and the last years of its history. Please consider these words and phrases which link Thessalonians with Daniel, Isaiah, Matthew, Corinthians and Revelation as well as other Acts period epistles;

.. the Day of Christ (some have the day of the Lord) shall not come unless ...first .. a falling away... the man of sin ... the son of perdition, ... exalts himself above .. God, or that is worshiped ... he sits as God in the temple of God, setting himself .. God... the mystery of lawlessness is already working, only he is now holding back until it comes out of the midst. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whose coming .. is .. with all power and signs and lying wonders, 2Th 2:2-4, 7-9

Notice in this version nothing is “taken out of the way” in verse 7 but rather something “comes out of the midst”.

Let us see how Thessalonians fit in the purposes of God for the earth by comparing Scripture with Scripture. In the book of the Revelation we have the terrible trinity, Satan and the two beasts.

Satan is identified as the “old serpent” (Rev.12:9) who, having been cast out of heaven, attempts to destroy the faithful remnant then makes war on Israel, Rev.12:12-17. Eventually Satan is bound for 1000 years (Rev.20:2) then released and eventually destroyed, (Rev.20:7-10). Satan’s purposes against God and Israel are facilitated by the two beasts.

Notice the first beast (the antichrist) in Revelation 13:1-8, is a great military power. Verse 4 reads, “who is able to make war with it?” This beast has a pseudo resurrection (v3) and it made war with “the saints”. The saints here are not the church which is His Body. This military engagement lasts 3.5 years when the antichrist is empowered by Satan, the dragon.

The second beast is the first beast’s promotions manager, Rev.13:11-18 (cp 16:13-14, 20:10). This second beast is the false prophet who deceives Israel by bringing fire down from heaven and other great wonders. Compare 2Thess.2:9 above.

This false prophet sets up an image to the beast which is given power to speak, and worship of this image is demanded (compare Nebuchadnezzar in Dan.3). This is the abomination of desolation of Daniel, Matthew and Thessalonians.

This terrible trinity of Revelation is composed of Satan, who empowers an undefeatable military commander and a false prophet who deceives Israel with false signs and wonders. There is a great harmony between prophecies of the O.T., Thessalonians and Revelation. Eventually many kings of the prophetic world, who were also deceived by false miracles, gathered with forces to destroy Israel for "these will make war with the Lamb who will overcome them" (Rev. 17:14). The Lord returns to save Israel by destroying these armies set against "His people". These events are described as "the fullness of the gentiles". You can read about this in Romans 11:25-26 and Luke 21:20-27.

To summarize, Satan is upon the earth empowering the Antichrist who is a military power promoted by the false prophet. These characters are set in the prophetic earth and the final years of Israel's history when an image is set up in Israel's temple. The book of Revelation deals with the "kingdoms of this world" (Rev.11:15, 15:1-4) and the crushing of gentile dominion over Israel when the Lord returns to take his authority. This is precisely the setting of Thessalonians.

Consider some other passages of Scripture which speak of the same things. For brevity I cannot post every verse but trust the reader will examine each reference. Please compare Is.11:4 (where "smite the earth" could be "smite the oppressor"), Daniel 7:24-25, 9:26-27, 11:31, 12:11, Joel and then this passage; And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled, for all these things must occur; but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines and pestilences and earthquakes in different places.

Therefore when you see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place (whoever reads, let him understand). Then let those in Judea flee into the mountains. Let him on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house; nor let him in the field turn back to take his clothes. And woe to those who are with child, and to those who give suck in those days! (Let the reader reconsider 1Cor.7) But pray that your flight is not in the winter, nor on the sabbath day; (Sabbaths no hindrance to a Gentile) for then shall be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world to this time; no, nor ever shall be. Then if any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ! Or, There! Do not believe it. For false Christs and false prophets will arise and show great signs and wonders; so much so that, if it were possible, they would deceive even the elect. Mat 24:6-7, 15-24

Our Lord speaks to the 12 disciples of these very things which are later featured in the book of Revelation and Thessalonians. Not only so, He goes on to add specific details as to what will take place after the wars, deception, false christs and false prophets;

And immediately after the tribulation of those days, ... And then the sign of the Son of Man shall appear in the heavens. And then all the tribes of the earth shall mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of the heaven with power and great glory. And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather His elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other. Mat 24:29-31

The coming of the Lord in Matthew 24 to the earth (after the tribulation) is in an identical setting of Thessalonians. If Matthew 24 and Revelation are about Israel's deliverance by the Lord's coming, then so is Thessalonians.

The word "elect" in Matthew 24 refers to Israel. They are the elect who shall be gathered from the four winds of heaven. It is Israel who will see the real Christ at God's right hand as a sign before He descends to the earth. It is the tribes of Israel who will "mourn for Him", see Matt.24:30, Zech.12:10 and Isaiah 53.

Paul's letters to the Thessalonians are perfectly in harmony with these prophecies regarding Israel. The abomination of desolation is the image set up by the false prophet in the middle of the last 7 years of Israel's history. The "lawless one" of 2Thessalonians 2 (Is.11:4) is destroyed with the Lord's coming, that is His parousia or personal presence on the earth. Not one element of Thessalonians has to do with God's purposes for the Church which is His Body seated in the heavenly places above the clouds, the air and the prophetic earth.

The setting of 2Thessalonians is exactly the same setting of Matthew 24, the prophecies listed above and the book of Revelation. The "second coming" of our Lord is after the final 3.5 years of Israel's history which years are called the "day of Jacob's trouble" (see Jer.30:7). During that time the remnant wandering in the wilderness will be praying "lead us not into tribulation but deliver us from the evil one". If these things of prophecy, Revelation and Matthew have nothing to do with our Lord as Head of the Church which is His Body in the heavenly places, then how can the same things in Thessalonians be about us and our hope today?

After those horrific final three and a half years, our Lord descends to the earth at the last trumpet as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He saves Israel by destroying the armies set against them. These events were in view during the Acts period and the believers of that time were waiting for the Lord's return. They were waiting for His return because they would go and meet Him as He descended. Then those faithful overcomers would rule and reign with Him on the earth (1Cor.6). However, Israel and the hope associated with her was put aside and postponed at the end of Acts. These things will all take place in the future. The "rapture" is a false concept of a past and postponed hope dragged into the present.

The "rapture" theory is a human endeavor which mixes the hope before us today with the earthly purposes of God for Israel. The "rapture" is a result of wrong division. It takes truth from Paul's later epistles which reveal a heavenly hope and forces it into an earthly context hope. Thus nearly all of Christendom is confused about their true hope for today.

When we hold a hope which is not ours then we hold vanity and vexation of spirit.

Chapter thirteen

Summing up so far

We pause in this miniseries about the Lord's "second coming" to recap our findings thus far. My purpose is to clarify the hope before us today in this present dispensation of the grace of God but to make this clear we had to expose some false traditions. These ingrained errors are serious impediments in our efforts to understand this current hope.

The first major hurdle to overcome was the tradition that the Gospels and Acts period were the beginning of something new, namely our present "church" age. The fact is, they were the beginning of the fulfillments of the Old testament types and prophecies for the nation of Israel and the salvation of God for the world.

The following verses written during the Acts period disallow such a tradition for they all speak of the "ends of the ages" or the nearness of the end. The first speaks of the timing of our Lord's redemptive ministry. The second group shows what Paul thought when he wrote during the Acts period. The third group confirm the consistent teaching that the nearness of the Lord's return to the earth in power and glory was in view at that time;

but now once at the end of the ages hath he been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. (RV) [Heb 9:26](#)

But this I say, brothers, The time is short. ...[1Co 7:29](#)

.. the world in its present form is passing away. [1Co 7:31](#)

.. they were written for our instruction, to whom the ends of the ages have come. (EMTV). [1Co 10:11](#)

For "in a very little while the one who is coming will return and will not delay; (ISV). [Heb 10:37](#)

..., it is the last hour. .. an antichrist is coming, .. many antichrists have appeared. .. we know it is the last hour. (ISV). [1Jo 2:18](#)

.. the coming of your Lord draws near. [Jam 5:8](#)

But the end of all things has drawn near.. [1Pe 4:7](#)

See also Rev.1:1 & 7

The Gospels and Acts were not the beginning of anything. It was the ends of the ages and the believers were waiting for the Lord out of heaven to reign over the world from the throne of His Father David in Jerusalem. This is the hope of Acts from the beginning to the end.

We examined the gospels of Peter and Paul and found this common Kingdom on the earth theme. Here is the hope of Peter in Acts 2;

knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him (David) that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He would raise up Christ to sit upon his throne, seeing this beforehand, he spoke of the resurrection of Christ (Psalm 16) [Act 2:30-31](#)

Peter tells his listeners that the Savior was resurrected to sit on the throne of His Father David. This was the hope of the Acts period. Peter also proclaims forgiveness of sins in the One crucified, see Acts 2:38, 4:12, 10:43 and Acts 15:7-11. The later truth is continuing, the former is not about us at all.

We then examined Paul and found him teaching this exact same hope; the promise made to the fathers;

Of this man's seed (David) God has raised to Israel, according to His promise, a Savior, Jesus;

And we preach the gospel to you, the promise made to the fathers, this God has fulfilled to us their children, raising up Jesus, as also it is written in the second Psalm, "You are My Son, this day I have begotten You." (Psalm 2 is Christ on the Holy Hill of Zion) [Act 13:23, 32, 33](#)

Both Peter and Paul proclaimed that the Lord was raised to sit on David's throne and it is important for the reader to examine each O.T. reference they use to see this hope.

Paul also proclaimed forgiveness of sins and righteousness by faith through grace (Acts 13:38-39) but the future place for all Acts period believers was the Kingdom of Heaven on the earth. Notice the "promise of the fathers" is Paul's consistent theme during Acts. There is no progression or transition from the great O.T. hope of the Kingdom on the earth in Paul at any time during Acts;

And we preach the gospel to you, the promise made to the fathers, (he then refers to Psalm 2, Is.55, Ps.16, Hab.1 and Is.49) [Act 13:32](#)

.. I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made to our fathers by God, [Act 26:6](#) For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, so that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. (this is not the hope of the church which is His Body revealed later). [Rom 15:4](#)

And I say, Jesus Christ has become a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers, [Rom 15:8](#)

It defies all plainness of Scripture to think that the glorious hope of Ephesians and Colossians which is part of a dispensation hidden in God and away from ages and generations, revealed after Israel was put aside at Acts 28, can be found in the "promises made to the fathers".

In Romans 15:4-13, a great passage about the hope of the Acts period, Paul quotes Ps.18, the "song of Moses" in Deut. 32, Ps.117 and finally the great millennial passage of Isaiah 11.

And again Isaiah says, "There shall be a root of Jesse, and He who shall rise to reign over the nations, in Him shall the nations trust." [Rom 15:12](#)

Also the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the cub lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the suckling child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea. [Isa 11:6-9](#)

We must not read "all My holy mountain" and "the earth" of Isaiah in Romans and imagine the heavenly places of Ephesians and Colossians.

We examined 1 Thess.4 and discovered that there is not one word or phrase which hinted that anyone, including the Lord, was going back into heaven. The phrase "ever be with the Lord" applies equally to believers destined for the earth. 1Thess.4 was the coming Kingdom for Israel established when the Lord returned to the earth. The believers of that time were to go up to the clouds in the air, to "meet" the Lord as He descended just as Moses went up to meet the

Lord when He descended to the earth in Israel's typical redemption. The believers of that time were going to judge the world and angels (1Cor.6:2-3) on the earth;

[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 so we shall ever be with the Lord. 1Th 4:17](#)

The last trumpet of Revelation 11 is the same trumpet of Matt.24, 1Cor.15 and 1Thess.4. The Feast of Trumpets is the first of the last group of Feasts the Lord gave to Israel. The Feast of Trumpets was foreshadowed when Joshua lead Israel into their inheritance and the walls of Jericho fell down at the last of seven trumpets. At the last trumpet the Lord Christ will take His authority in the world as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Israel's feasts do not outline any hope for the Church which is His Body. At trumpets the Lord returns to the earth and sets up Israel's Kingdom and the believing Gentiles of the Acts period were to be resurrected or changed to be blessed with faithful Abraham.

Paul's final words in the Acts period were to assure the believing Jews and Gentiles that this hope was before them and imminent. After quoting the millennial Isaiah passage above, Paul comforts the Christians of that time with these words;

[And may the God of \(that\) hope \(of the Old Testament\) fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Spirit. \(That is the supernatural gifts which were powers of that coming Millennial Kingdom\). Rom 15:13](#)
[And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. Rom 16:20](#)

During Acts this hope was proclaimed to the Jew first and Gentiles were brought in to provoke Israel to jealousy. Please see Acts 3:26, 13:46, and Romans 1:16, and 11:1-2, Having stated clearly that Israel were not cast aside, Paul then states the purpose of the Gentiles being included during the Acts period:

[And so I ask, "They have not stumbled so as to fall, have they?" Of course not! On the contrary, because of their stumbling, salvation has come to the gentiles to make the Jews jealous. \(ISV\) Rom 11:11](#)

We are not saved today to make Israel jealous nor are we expecting the Kingdom of Heaven on the earth, the great millennial reign of Christ on the throne of His Father David. These were the dispensational settings of the Acts period and included were the supernatural signs and wonders which were powers of that great millennial age to come (Hebs.6:4-5);

[so that you come behind in no gift, waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. He shall also confirm you to the end, 1Co 1:7-8](#)

[For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ did not work out by me for the obedience of the nations in word and deed, in power of miracles and wonders, in power of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem, and all around to Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ. Rom 15:18-19](#)

All these dispensational things belong to the Kingdom of Heaven on the earth, and were in evidence right up to the last chapter of Acts. Paul's apostolic powers were seen in Acts 28:3-9, and the hope of Israel which was the Kingdom of Heaven on the earth was still Paul's expectation, Acts 28:20, 23.

The Acts period was a further offer of salvation to Israel; it was not the beginning of our present "church" age. For 40 years this is what God was doing: But to Israel He says, "All day long I have stretched forth My hands to a disobeying and gainsaying people." Rom 10:21

But why didn't these things take place back then? This Kingdom on the earth was conditional upon Israel's repentance as Acts 3:17-21 shows. Indeed, this is confirmed when we examine Acts 28 and Isaiah 6 therein;

And some indeed believed the things that were said, others did not believe. And disagreeing with one another, they were let go, Paul saying one word: Well did the Holy Spirit speak through Isaiah the prophet to our fathers, saying, "Go to this people and say: Hearing you shall hear and shall not understand; and seeing you shall see and not perceive. For the heart of this people was fattened, and they have heard with their ears dully; and they closed their eyes;

lest at any time (perhaps, see Deut.4:26-31, Deut.30:1-6)

they should see with *their* eyes, and hear with *their* ears, and understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." Act 28:25-27

All through the book of Acts the message went to the Jews but nationally they refused to accept Jesus of Nazareth as their Messiah and after 40 years of opportunity, the Lord God put Israel and His purposes for the earth through them, to one side.

When Israel was put aside, all these elements and the great hope of the Kingdom on the Earth were put aside with them. Here is the setting aside of Israel:

And they (chief of the Jews) having appointed him a day, many came to him in his lodging; to whom he expounded, testifying the kingdom of God, and persuading them the things concerning Jesus, both out of the Law of Moses and out of the Prophets, from morning until evening. And some indeed believed the things that were said, others did not believe. And disagreeing with one another, they were let go, Paul saying one word: Well did the Holy Spirit speak through Isaiah the prophet to our fathers, saying, "Go to this people and say: Hearing you shall hear and shall not understand; and seeing you shall see and not perceive. For the heart of this people was fattened, and they have heard with their ears dully; and they closed their eyes; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." Therefore be it known to you that the salvation of God is sent to the nations, and they will hear. Act 28:23-28

Our Apostle Paul was in prison when Israel was nationally set aside and his prison ministry changed after this pronouncement of the judgment prophecy of Isaiah.

God's character does not change, but our Heavenly Father changes His administrations according to His purposes and plans. Next we begin the exciting Scriptural journey of discovering the wonderful change of hope which was introduced with the revelation of The Mystery, the present dispensation of the grace of God.

Chapter fourteen

After Acts 28, new hope-the prayer of Ephesians

Our exciting journey of discovery takes a new turn as we begin to focus on the hope set before us today by our God of rich grace and great love. We, the previously cast off Nations of the world; we who are the heathen, the Gentiles of the Scriptures, have received a glorious message of hope from our God through the Apostle Paul.

Before the end of Acts our Apostle Paul was preaching and teaching as follows;
[Then having obtained help from God, I stand until this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying no other things than those which the prophets and Moses said was going to happen;](#)
[Act 26:22](#)

The hope that Paul held and proclaimed to believers during that time was the hope of the promise made to the Fathers as these verses prove, Acts 13:23, 26, 32, 26:6, Roms.15:4, 8, 12. To read what the Prophets said was going to come, turn your Bibles to Is.11. Paul uses Isaiah 11 in Romans 15. Paul's hope in the Acts period was the kingdom of heaven on the earth. Please read Galatians chapter 3. Galatians 3 was written during Acts and is not about you and me today.

1Thess.4 is the hope of the Old Testament; it was written when Israel still stood and when the ends of the ages were to culminate with the return of Christ to the earth. The hope of 1Thess.4 is imbedded in the promise made to the Fathers and has nothing to do with us today. In the last chapter of Acts we find Paul continuing to teach both out of the law of Moses and the Prophets and looking for the hope of Israel;

[... For I have this chain around me for the hope of Israel. Act 28:20](#)
[.. having appointed him a day, many came to him in his lodging; to whom he expounded, testifying the kingdom of God, and persuading them the things concerning Jesus, both out of the Law of Moses and out of the Prophets, from morning until evening. Act 28:23](#)

In Acts 28 Paul preaches to the Jews first as was his custom all through the Acts period (Acts 17:2). To those dispersed Israelites Paul proclaimed the Kingdom of God out of the Law of Moses and the Prophets in perfect harmony with his stand in Acts 26:22. But we noticed that the Jews in Rome argued between themselves and this is not the response the Word was to bring. Thus our Heavenly Father put aside the nation of Israel for a time;
[And disagreeing with one another, they were let go, Act 28:25](#)

An Acts 28 structure follows and a second is available with it at:
<http://www.acts28.net/chartsappearing.html>

Acts 28:23-31

The Great New Testament Dispensational divide

A :23 Chief of the Jews come to Paul, a day (Hebs.3:13)
Kingdom of God. Jesus
the law of Moses and prophets
From morning till evening (Acts 26:22, all OT)

B :24-:25a They agreed not among themselves
departed = apoluonto = divorce (1st Matt.1:19, 5:31-32)

C :25b-:26a The word of the *Holy Ghost* (Is.6)
unto our fathers, Acts 3:25, Roms.9:4-5

D :26b-:27 this people

Hear ... not understand
See ... do not perceive, for
hearts fat
ears dull of hearing
eyes closed

least at any time

eyes they see
ears hear
hearts understand
converted

I should heal (cure, save) them

C 28:28. The salvation of *God*
SENT unto the Gentiles

B 28:29. The Jews departed = apelthon = went away
great reasoning among themselves

A :30-:31 The two years, Paul freely receives all
Paul 'heralds' the kingdom of God
the Lord Jesus Christ, no reference to O.T.
With all confidence, unhindered,

Isaiah 6
judgmental prophesy
against Israel

Tracts with further information regarding Acts 28 can be found here,
<http://www.acts28.net/whatisacts28.html>

After Israel was put aside and the hope of the Acts period put aside with them,
The Lord descended and revealed to Paul alone, the present set of conditions in
which we live today.

When we turn to Ephesians we find many different dispensational things. In
Ephesians Paul is still a prisoner but now he is not bound for the hope of Israel
but bound for the nations, the Gentiles;

[For this cause, I, Paul, am the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you nations, Eph 3:1](#)

After the Acts period, after Romans and Galatians, Paul writes about a
dispensation which had been hidden in God and away from ages and
generations:

[This grace is given to me \(who am less than the least of all saints\) to preach the gospel of
the unsearchable riches of Christ among the nations, and to bring to light what is the
fellowship of the mystery which from eternity has been hidden in God, who created all
things by Jesus Christ; Eph 3:8-9](#)

[who now rejoice in my sufferings ...behalf of His body, which is the church; of which I
became a minister, according to the administration of God given to me for you, to fulfill the
Word of God; the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but
now has been revealed to His saints. Col 1:24-26](#)

In this new dispensation which is in operation today, a new hope is revealed
which cannot be found in the Law of Moses and the Prophets. It was “hidden in
God” and away from ages and generations including Paul and the other
believers during Acts. This is why Paul prays that these saints and faithful
brethren would know this new hope (Eph.1:15-19). But before we look at his
prayer for these Christians, notice the incredible opening to this post Acts
period epistle.

Paul opens his letter to the Ephesians by blessing God with a doxology;
[Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who blessed us with every
spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ; Eph 1:3](#)

Paul blesses God in the light of the incredible nature of these new blessings and
incredible place where these new blessings are found. They are “spiritual
blessings” and located “in the heavenlies”, or “heavenly places”. We will not
find these blessings in the O.T., the Gospels or the Acts period writings. Further
down in chapter one he tells us we have obtained an inheritance;
[in whom also we have been chosen to an inheritance, Eph 1:11](#)

These glorious blessings which are all spiritual are not located on the earth; they
are not associated with faithful Abraham, they are in the heavenlies and we
have no doubt as to where “the heavenlies” since our Lord has been raised and
seated at God’s right hand in the heavenlies (Eph.1:20).

Now we turn to Paul's wonderful prayer for the Ephesians and for you and me today:

Therefore I also, hearing of your faith in the Lord Jesus and love to all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of His calling Eph 1:15-18

Paul prays that they will know the hope of His calling. Why would this be if Paul had spent two years with the Ephesians back in Acts 19? Paul tells the Ephesians elders in Acts 20:20, 27 that he had not failed to declare all the counsel of God and had kept back nothing that was profitable to them. Had Paul forgotten to tell them about their hope? No, of course not, the hope had changed since he had seen them last.

Previously they were to be blessed with faithful Abraham on the earth and were looking for that meeting of 1Thess.4. Now a new hope with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places had been revealed.

Paul wanted the Ephesians to know the hope of His calling; he wanted the Ephesians and us to have this great anchor God has given us today through Paul. He continues his prayer;

the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what is the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us, the ones believing Eph 1:18-19

There are three things in this prayer that Paul wants us to know today and they are the hope, the riches of the glory of His inheritance (for us) and the power in us. This prayer is as much for you and me today as it was for the Ephesians. Paul prays that we:

1. would know the hope of **HIS** calling.
2. would know the riches of the GLORY of **HIS** inheritance in the saints.
3. would know **HIS** Power toward us, the one's believing.

These three things are linked together and Paul goes on to outline them. He describes this power in us and what it accomplishes and we soon begin to appreciate the riches of glory of our wonderful inheritance and the hope of His calling. The following is a helpful outline of Paul's expansion of this prayer. I have personalized it and given it a heading.

Let us start with the power in us today. Paul explains that the power in us is according to the working of His mighty strength which he wrought in Christ. and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us, the ones believing according to the working of His mighty strength which He worked in Christ Eph 1:19-20

Here are the things accomplished in Christ by the power of God. Please note where our Lord is located and His new title.

1. Christ is raised from the dead. [Eph.1:20](#)
2. Christ is seated at God's right hand. [Eph.1:20](#)
3. Christ is seated In the heavenly places (or heavenlies). [Eph.1:20](#) (Far above all....)
4. Christ is given to be Head of The Church His Body. [Eph.1:22-23](#)

Here are the things accomplished in US by the power of God.

[But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love *with* which He loved us \(even when we were dead in sins\) has made us alive together with Christ \(by grace you are saved\), and has raised *us* up together and made *us* sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in *His* kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace you are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God, \[Eph 2:4-8\]\(#\)](#)

Please note where we have been placed by God and the name of our church.

1. We have been made alive (quickened). [Eph.2:1,5](#) (in Christ)
2. We have been seated together. [Eph.2:6](#) (In Christ).
3. We have been seated together in the heavenlies. [Eph.2:6](#).
4. We are the Church which is His BODY. [Eph.1:22-23](#)

Please note, that the Head and the Body are seated in the same place. Here is Paul's outline regarding our hope put together in a chart. This is the parallel Paul wants us to see.

Our hope today

His glorious inheritance for us today

His power in us today

Power in Christ

1. Raised from the Dead. [Eph 1:20](#)
2. Seated at God's right. [Eph 1:20](#)
3. In the heavenly Places. [Eph 1:20](#)
4. HEAD of the church. [Eph.1:22-23](#)

Power in Us

1. Made alive with Christ. [Eph.2:1,5](#).
2. Seated together in Christ. [Eph.2:6](#).
3. In the heavenly places....[Eph.2:6](#).
4. The church. His BODY. [Eph.1:22-23](#).

None of this can be found in the Feasts of Israel's Exodus.

The power in us raised us up to the heavenly places. Our glorious inheritance is in the heavenly places. Our hope today is to be seated together in the heavenly places where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. That is where our Heavenly Father has raised and seated us. This is the Word of Truth for you and me today.

Why did God do this? Why have we been seated in the heavenlies where Christ is seated? Certainly not because we have any worth or value and because of any good works we may or may not do, but as Paul explains, it is to show forth something in the future:

so that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. Eph 2:7

What a glorious hope we have, to be seated in the heavenlies. God's Word declares we are there now and in God's good time, when faith becomes sight, we shall be seated there in wonderful reality. Why not praise and thank our wonderful God for the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness towards us right now.

Chapter fifteen

New Hope-raised and seated in the heavenlies

In the last chapter we saw that the glorious new hope was revealed for us believers today by our Lord through the Apostle Paul. This new calling and hope was only revealed to Paul after Israel was put aside at Acts 28. Our hope is to be seated together in the heavenlies for God has raised us and seated us together there, in Christ. This new calling and hope has nothing to do with 1Thess.4.

Notice Paul's opening prayer in Ephesians was not that these Christians would be Christians, they were already "saints and faithful" ones. Paul had no need to pray they would know eternal life through faith into Christ's finished work. This was Paul's prayer for them and for all saints today;

Therefore I also, hearing of your faith in the Lord Jesus and love to all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of His calling, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that you may know what is the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and (that you may know) what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us, the ones believing..... Eph 1:15-19

Here are the three things Paul wanted these Christians to know by God giving a wise and revealing spirit in the knowledge of Christ;

1. The Hope
2. The Inheritance
3. The power

The Ephesians did not need to know about righteousness by faith reckoned by grace. They did not need to know that the Lord Jesus died for our sins, or was buried and rose again the third day all according to the Scriptures. NO! After Israel had been cast aside at Acts 28, the Lord descended and revealed to Paul a completely new dispensation, a new administration which had been hidden away from previous generations. Such fundamental things as Christ dying for our sins were as much part of this new dispensation as the previous one.

The new dispensation contained new dispensational things which are specific for this specific time in which we live. The previous dispensational things had been put aside with Israel. Christians today are not going to be blessed with faithful Abraham on the earth and in the New Jerusalem. Paul wanted Christians to know these dispensational changes and it is important we also know them;

Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, was this grace given, to preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men (saints) see what is the dispensation of the mystery which for ages hath been hid in God who created all things ASV Eph 3:8-9

We will not read about this new dispensation in the Gospels or any other New Testament writer nor in Paul's Acts period letters. We only read about this new dispensation in the letters written after Acts which are, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1&2 Timothy, Titus and Philemon.

Let us refresh our memories about the new hope revealed in Ephesians. Remember, hope is an earnest expectation that God will fulfill His promise. We have a promise found in these combined passages;
.. the surpassing greatness of His power toward us, the ones believing (is) according to the working of His mighty strength which He worked in Christ in raising Him from the dead, and He seated Him at His right hand in the heavenlies, Eph 1:19-20

This ascension power in Christ is also seen in us;
And He has made you alive, who were once dead in trespasses and sins, But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love with which He loved us (even when we were dead in sins) has made us alive together with Christ (by grace you are saved), and has raised us up together and made us sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. Eph 2:1, 4-7

God has declared that we have been quickened (made alive) in Christ. God has declared that we have been raised together, and seated together in the heavenlies in Christ, exactly the same place where Christ has been raised and seated at the Father's right hand.

The word for "sit" in Eph.2:6 is the same word "seated" in Eph.1:20. Our Lord Christ and His Body are seated together in the heavenly places, though only Christ is at the Father's right hand.

How many Christians can recite the following verses but are unaware of the salvation to which they refer;
For by grace you are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. Eph 2:8-9

The salvation by grace through faith in this context is not Christ dying for our sins or righteousness reckoned. Nor is this grace embedded in the Feasts given to Israel. It is the wonderful new position believers have received on the basis of grace. This new position, this new sphere, was only made known at the revealing of the new dispensation given to them and us through Paul. This is the place to which we have been saved by grace through faith.

Ephesians and its sister epistle Colossians are full of unique words and phrases not found in Paul's earlier Acts period letters which are Galatians, 1&2 Corinthians, 1&2 Thessalonians, Romans and Hebrews. Look at the opening verse of Ephesians;
Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ; Eph 1:3

We search in vain to find "every spiritual blessing" "in the heavenlies" in any of Paul's Acts period letters. Notice that our blessings are located where Christ is seated in the heavenlies, and we have been seated in the heavenlies as well. Try finding this in the Gospels or the O.T. We search in vain for any hint of this wonderful place of blessing prior to these later letters of Paul.

What a brilliant Father we have, our blessings and position in the same place. Our blessings are not here on the earth to be experienced in this present life. We have been seated in the heavenlies, our blessings are in the heavenlies, and that is where our inheritance is located.

The second objective of Paul's prayer for the Ephesians and us today is that all should know "the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints". What is our inheritance, or better still where is it located? It will not surprise us that our Heavenly Father has told us all about this in the following verses;

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ; according as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him, in love having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, (EMTV) Eph 1:3-5
in whom also we have been chosen to an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His own will, Eph 1:11

I have underlined the small phrases which identify the location and consequently the "riches of the glory" of His inheritance for us today. Our inheritance is "before Him", we have been marked off as the heirs "to Himself". Our blessings are "in the heavenlies" so we are left in no doubt that our inheritance is exactly where our blessings are, that is, in the heavenlies where Christ is seated.

Think about this dear reader, we have been raised and seated together in the heavenlies, our blessings are in the heavenlies, and that is the exact location of the inheritance which is ours in Christ. No wonder Paul writes in such a spirit of praise in these opening passages of Ephesians;

to the praise of the glory of His grace, in which He has made us accepted (highly graced us, see Luke 1:28) in the One having been loved. Eph 1:6

The original word for "before Him" in verse 4 is katenopion and as a wonderful confirmation regarding the location of our inheritance we find this word in some other great verses as follows;

For we are not as many, hawking the Word of God; but as of sincerity, but as of God, we speak in Christ in the sight of God. 2Co 2:17
in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and without blemish, and without charge in His sight, Col 1:22
Now to Him being able to keep you without stumbling, and to set you before His glory without blemish, with unspeakable joy; Jud 1:24

Ephesians 1:5 says very clearly that we have been predestined, that is "marked off beforehand" as the "sons". This does not mean that God determined who would be saved. It means God determined (through foreknowledge, cp Romans 8:29-30) who would be His heirs. You and I have been "marked off" as the heirs in the heavenlies.

Israel is God's firstborn son on the earth and that nation has its inheritance on the earth. We are God's sons in the heavenlies, and our inheritance and blessings are not on the earth but in the heavenlies. This is a great honor and it is not according to any works of righteousness we have done, as Paul writes;
in love having predestined us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, Eph 1:5
in whom also we have been chosen to an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His own will, Eph 1:11

It is not for us to reason why we are His heirs but to accept the wonderful fact that God did this "according to the good pleasure of His will", "according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His own will".

Faith accepts the truth of God's Word. Our heavenly Father has a purpose for you and I, we are not a random number; we were known "before the foundation of the world" and appointed as the heirs in the heavenlies where our inheritance and blessings are located. What a God of grace!

So together we have seen and believed the threefold object of Paul's prayer for the Ephesians and us today. Let's read this prayer one more time and really understand it in the light of this new dispensation Paul had been given for us; [Therefore I also, hearing of your faith in the Lord Jesus and love to all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of His calling, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that you may know .. what is the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us, the ones believing Eph1:15-19a](#)

The power in us raised us and seated us together in Christ, in the heavenlies.

The riches of the glory of His inheritance for us, is the inheritance in front of God's face, in the heavenlies.

The hope is that we will be seated in our inheritance in the heavenlies in all wonderful and glorious reality. Our Heavenly Father will bring to pass these things for us in the times or the seasons, which the Father has put in His own authority. Paul writes of these future days in this verse; [.. an administration \(dispensation\) of the fullness of times, to head up all things in Christ, both the things in Heaven, and the things on earth, even in Him, Eph 1:10](#)

Before Ephesians, the purposes of God were all about the earth and the New Jerusalem which descends to the earth. Now a hidden part of God's plans has been revealed and eventually the Lord will head up all things including those on the earth and those in the heavenly places.

1Thess.4 is about the earth and is not part of this wonderful new calling of Ephesians and Colossians.

Next chapter we begin to identify the times when we shall be literally seated together in the heavenlies. Today we are seated there so far as God is concerned, we are there "in Christ", but in the future, we will be in our inheritance in reality.

We are left in no doubt as to when we take our seats in the heavenlies and as a foretaste of the coming chapters we turn to this passage of glory; [If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God. Be mindful of things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life has been hidden with Christ in God. When Christ our Life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory. Col 3:1-4](#)

This “appearing” of our Lord and Head is far above the clouds, trumpets and air of 1 Thess.4. This appearing is before He begins His descent to the earth. In the day; in the moment our Lord is manifested on the right hand of power, we shall be there in our seats manifested with Him. What an honor, what a moment of unimaginable joy. Let each one of us set our affection “where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God”, for there, in front of God’s face, we have been raised and seated. In that day we will understand every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.

Chapter sixteen

New Hope-when Christ appears, then

After Israel was put to one side at the end of the book of Acts, Paul was inspired to write Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians 1&Timothy, Titus and Philemon.

In Ephesians we read of the wonderful new hope set before us believers today; And He has made you alive, who were once dead in trespasses and sins, But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love with which He loved us (even when we were dead in sins) has made us alive together with Christ (by grace you are saved), and has raised us up together and made us sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. Eph 2:1, 4-7

God has declared that we have been quickened (made alive) in Christ, we have been raised together, and seated together in the heavenlies in Christ, exactly the same place where Christ has been raised and seated at the Father's right hand (see Ephesians 1:19-21). There, where Christ is seated above all of the heavenly rulers and authorities, is our glorious inheritance in front of God's face. There our blessings are located and there we are the heirs of God. It is not surprising that Paul brings this wonderful section to a close with these verses; For by grace you are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. Eph 2:8-9

Many Christians love these verses thinking they only refer to Christ dying for our sin and sins, but the salvation provided by grace through faith in Ephesians 2 goes way past these foundational truths to include our glorious inheritance in the heavenlies and the unique blessings we have there. We have been raised and seated together in the heavenlies that is the context of "FOR by grace you are saved through faith". Praise the Lord, what a wonderful salvation by grace!

This salvation is not an earthly one. We, the Church which is His Body, are not destined for the earth. We are not to be blessed with faithful Abraham; nor is the Jerusalem above the mother of us all today. These things were put aside with Israel at Acts 28. Galatians, 1&2Corinthians, 1&2 Thessalonians, Hebrews and Romans which were written before Acts 28, speak of Christ dying for our sins, but they know nothing of the wonderful hope we have today by grace through faith as found in Ephesians and Colossians written after Acts 28.

After Israel was put aside then the Lord gave to Paul this wonderful salvation concerning heavenly places. This hope is an element of the Mystery, the present dispensation of the grace of God which was hidden away from ages and generations. It was also hidden away from Paul during the Acts period.

We now begin to address a very important question. Since God's Word says we, in Christ have been raised and seated in the heavenlies where Christ is seated at the right hand of God, exactly when will we literally be seated there in the heavenlies or heavenly places? In other words, when will our hope be realized?

When will our faith be realized? When will God's Word regarding us come to pass? When will we be seated there in our wonderful new bodies "fashioned like His glorious body"? What is the timing of our hope?

The answer to this is found in Colossians 3:1-4 which flows wonderfully onwards from Ephesians 2;

If then (or since, if does not always mean doubt) you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God. Be mindful of things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life has been hidden with Christ in God. When Christ our Life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory. Col 3:1-4

Here we are clearly told that "WHEN" our Lord, The Head is revealed, "THEN" we, the Church which is His Body, will also be revealed "WITH HIM". That is the timing of our hope; the revealing of our Lord. Here are one or two other versions:

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. (KJV) Col 3:1-4

And

If then ye were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth. For ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall be manifested, then shall ye also with him be manifested in glory. (RV) Col 3:1-4

These three versions use "revealed" "appear" and "manifested" to translate the Greek word "phaneroo". Here are some helpful definitions of "phaneroo":

Strong's.

phaneroo; from G5318; to *render apparent* (literally or figuratively): - appear, manifestly declare, (make) manifest (forth), shew (self).

Word Study (E-Sword).

phaneroo; manifest, visible, conspicuous. To make apparent, manifest, known, show openly.

Dr Strong says that the word "phaneroo" comes from another word, G5318 which is "phaneros". Phaneros means "shining" and itself comes from a word which means "light, to give light".

When our Lord appears it is a moment of revelation involving great light, a shining forth. Where is this shining forth; this appearing of our Lord? The location is very clearly identified; it is "where Christ is sitting at *the* right hand of God". Our Lord will be seated at God's right hand when He is manifested. We shall look more closely at this in later chapters but for now we recognize this is not in the air of 1 Thess.4, where the clouds are located.

We can see a contrast in this Colossians passage. Notice, our life is “hidden with Christ in God” and while these things are hidden now, there is a time coming when they will be manifested or revealed. This moment will be a very bright one, a blazing forth as some have described it. It will be a glorious moment when our Lord and Head is manifested, but you and I and the rest of the Church which is His Body will be manifested there, in the heavenly places with Him at that same time.

What will this appearing be like? Imagine you are sitting on a chair on top of a hill which, if there was light, would be clearly visible to the city below. The hill and the city are in darkness but there comes a time when the top of the hill is illuminated with a bright light. Then you, sitting on top of the hill, will be clearly visible to all those in the city below. You have been “manifested”, you have been “revealed”, you have “appeared” to all. In a similar but far more extensive way the Lord will appear to all in a blazing forth of light. He will be manifested at the right hand of the Father. He will be seen by those in the heavenly places and by those on the earth beneath. At that same time we will also be seen in the same place seated together with Christ.

Please consider the following verses as an anticipation of future chapters;
For as the [lightning comes out of the east and shines even to the west](#), so also will be the coming of the Son of Man. [Mat 24:27](#)
And immediately after the tribulation of those days, [the sun shall be darkened and the moon shall not give her light](#), and the stars shall fall from the heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then the [sign](#) of the Son of Man shall appear (phaino- the same family of words giving phaneroo of Colossians 3) in the heavens. [Mat 24:29-30](#)
[The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood](#), before that great and glorious (epiphanes-the same family of words giving phaneroo of Colossians 3) Day of the Lord. [Act 2:20](#)

And

Jesus said to him, You said it. I tell you more. From this time you shall [see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power](#), and coming on the clouds of the heavens. [Mat 26:64](#)
And he (Stephen) said, Behold, I see Heaven opened and [the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God](#). [Act 7:56](#)

And this passage;

And when He had opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake. [And the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood](#). And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, even as a fig tree casts her untimely figs when she is shaken by a mighty wind. And [the heaven departed like a scroll when it is rolled together](#). And every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains. And they said to the mountains and rocks, [Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him sitting on the throne](#), and from the wrath of the Lamb; [Rev 6:12-15](#)

When the Lord is manifested in the heavenly places, the world will be morally, spiritually and physically dark and in that darkened day a light will blaze forth, our Lord shall be visible and “every eye shall see Him”. The heavens will be peeled back and they will see Him sitting on the right hand of God.

This “appearing” of our Lord and Head is far above the clouds and the air of 1 Thess.4. This is before He begins His descent to the earth. In the day; in the moment our Lord is manifested on the right hand of God, we shall be there in our seats manifested with Him. What an honor, what a moment of unimaginable joy. Let each one of us set our affection “where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God”, for there, in front of God’s face we have been raised and seated to “appear with Him”.

That moment of His appearing is when our hope will be realized.

Chapter seventeen

New Hope Timing-appearing vs. 1Thessalonians 4

I am certain my reader wants to deeply understand the Word of God. This means to grow in knowledge and understanding of it.

Once we appreciate that the Lord died for our sins and we have God's gift of eternal life, we are told to seek and find the deeper things regarding our calling and hope.

For this cause we also, since the day we heard, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that you might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, that you might walk worthy of the Lord to all pleasing, being fruitful in every work and increasing in the knowledge of God, [Col 1:9-10](#)

Therefore you should not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner. But be partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God, who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the eternal times. [2Ti 1:8-9](#)

I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you that you walk worthy of the calling with which you are called, [Eph 4:1](#)

How do we know the holy calling with which we are called? And if we do not know what it is, how can we walk worthily of it? Israel is a called out company; a "church", the remnant of Romans 9-11 is a called out company; a "church". What church or called out company has God given us today and instructed us to pursue and make our own?

To know the calling God has given us in Christ through the Apostle Paul requires we do a lot more than just read our Bibles, we need to become diligent in our study of God's Word. Does this sound imbalanced or too difficult? We might study many years for a college degree which will only fit us for this life, but the Word of God prepares us for eternal life and the opportunity not only to live with Christ but to reign with Him. This does not mean we have to attend a theological college, it means we need to regularly, diligently study God's Word. However, to diligently study our Bibles we must apply the Bible study rules our Heavenly Father has given us.

Many Bible teachers are now realizing this wonderful truth; all the Word of God is for us (2Tim.3:16) but not all the Word of God is about us (2Tim.2:15). Not all the New Testament is about us either.

Here are two important Bible study principles we have considered in the past. They are found in the writings of our apostle Paul and they instruct us as to how we must study God's Word;

And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in full knowledge and in all perception; that you may distinguish between things that differ, [Php 1:9-10](#)

And

Study earnestly to present yourself approved to God, a workman that does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth. [2Ti 2:15](#)

In Philippians Paul says distinguish things that differ or as the KJV says “approve things excellent”. It is impossible to approve things that are excellent if we do not compare the differences in the Word of God. Notice the MKJV which has “distinguish things that differ” does not say extinguish things that differ by ignoring the things that differ. When the Holy Spirit inspires the NT writers to use different words and phrases it is important we notice the differences to understand God’s precious Word. Remember the game, which one of these is not like the other?

In 2Timothy Paul says we must rightly divide the Word of Truth and divide means to separate the things that differ. Most dispensationalists are very familiar with this phrase but we need to recognize that dispensationalists did not invent this Bible study principle. It was God Himself who told us to rightly divide and if God says we are to rightly divide then it is up to us to recognize that God suggests there could be wrong division.

Do we understand what it means to distinguish things that differ and to rightly divide? Here are two things that are different. By separating the following things we learn, grow and begin to rejoice in the wonder of God’s only calling in operation today.

Both the following passages are written by our Apostle Paul. The first passage was written during the Acts period when Israel still stood as God’s people and the Lord’s imminent return to the earth was the hope held. The second pair of passages was written after Israel was set aside for a time at Acts 28 and the return of the Lord to the earth was postponed.

In the following Acts period passage Paul writes about the “parousia” of the Lord. The parousia means His personal presence on the earth, His arrival back from Heaven to the earth. When we looked at this passage we discovered that nothing in it remotely suggests that either the Lord or the believers associated with this hope were going back into heaven. The Lord is descending out of heaven to the earth and those resurrected and changed believers were going up to meet Him in the air as He descended to the earth.

But I would not have you ignorant, brothers, concerning those who are asleep, that you be not grieved, even as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so (like this) God will also bring with Him all those who have fallen asleep through Jesus. For we say this to you by the Word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming (parousia) of the Lord shall not go before those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall 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. 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 so we shall ever be with the Lord. 1Th 4:13-17

After Acts 28, Paul writes about a new hope as follows:

And He has made you alive, who were once dead in trespasses and sins, But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love with which He loved us (even when we were dead in sins) has made us alive together with Christ (by grace you are saved), and has raised us up together and made us sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. Eph 2:1, 4-7

The Church which is His Body has been raised and seated with Christ in the heavenly places which is far above the clouds and air of 1Thess.4.

The following passage is completely different to 1Thess.4 but sadly tradition has obscured the difference;

If then (or since, if does not always mean doubt) you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God. Be mindful of things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life has been hidden with Christ in God. When Christ our Life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory. Col 3:1-4

Here we are clearly told that when our Lord is revealed in the heavenlies, then we, the Church which is His Body will also be revealed with Him at the same time in the same place; the very place God has raised and seated us. This appearing takes place before the meeting in the clouds.

God the Father is not enthroned in the air or the clouds and our Lord is not seated at God's right hand in the air or the clouds either. Our Lord, The Head of our Church is seated at God's right hand in the heavenly places. We have been raised together and seated in front of God's face in the heavenly places as well.

When our Lord is revealed or manifested (phaneroo), He is seated at God's right hand in the heavenly places; He is not descending in the clouds with angels. His descent in the clouds of 1Thess.4 is His parousia which is not the same as the phaneroo of Colossians 3.

When the Lord is revealed He will not be moving at all. He will remain seated at the Father's right hand in the heavenlies when the light bursts forth and reveals Him throughout His entire kingdom. Our Lord's Kingdom stretches from the heavenly places or the heavenlies to the earth beneath.

When we are manifested with Him we will not be meeting Him as He descends "out of heaven", we will be taken to heavenly places, seated and then manifested with Him there. This takes place before He descends to the earth, before 1Thess.4.

I hope we are beginning to see the wonder of the differences between 1Thess.4 and Ephesians and Colossians.

It is my opinion that Satan has been working for many years to blind the eyes of Christians to this incredible event, the appearing, the revelation of our Lord and Head in the heavenly places. Can we see how subtle the enemy has been? He turned Christians' eyes away from the hope given to us today by turning eyes to another hope given to another group of believers in another time. The enemy did not turn Christians' eyes away from the Bible, which would be too obvious. Our eyes were turned away because we failed to rightly divide the Word of truth; we failed to test things that differ. I hope each reader is beginning to see how important the Bible study principles really are.

That moment of His appearing in the heavenlies is when our hope will be realized.

Chapter eighteen

New Hope – how was it lost?

How was the Christian community turned away from the hope given by our Lord through the apostle Paul?

We are now scripturally assured of the hope before all Christians today which is that, in Christ, we have been raised and seated together in the heavenlies where our Lord and Head is seated at the Father's right hand. Eph.2:4-7.

We are also aware that this glorious hope will be realized when our Lord is manifested or revealed in that place, Col.3:1-4. In other words, when the Lord is manifested at the Father's right hand in the heavenlies, we will be literally raised and seated together and manifested with Him there. The Head and the Church which is His Body will be revealed at the same time and in the same place.

When we examined Ephesians we saw that Paul's prayer for them was that the Father would grant them knowledge in Christ to know the hope of His calling; Therefore I also, hearing of your [faith](#) in the Lord Jesus and [love](#) to all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, [that you may know what is the hope of His calling](#), Eph 1:15-18

We notice something different in the opening of Colossians. The Colossians had heard about this wonderful new hope and so Paul did not need to pray that the Father would give them the "spirit of wisdom" so they would know it; since we heard of your [faith](#) in Christ Jesus, and of the [love](#) you have to all the saints, for the [hope](#) which is laid up for you in Heaven, of which you heard before in the Word of the truth of the gospel, which has come to you as it has also in all the world, Col 1:4, 5-6

In Ephesians, Paul encouraged them to walk worthy of the calling and the worthy walk included the maintenance of a watchful eye on the "one hope" of our calling. The Ephesians had to guard the one hope given by grace; I therefore, the prisoner in *the* Lord, beseech you that you walk worthy of the calling with which you are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep (guard) the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. *There is one body and one Spirit, even as you are called in one hope of your calling*,.... Eph 4:1-4

A casual reading of Colossians will show a marked difference in tone since Colossians contains a number of warnings. The new dispensation of the grace of God had been proclaimed and the enemy was sowing seeds of doubt and confusion through the human agencies which had been opposing Paul from the beginning of his ministry. Notice these warnings;

For I want you to know what a [great conflict I have for you and those at Laodicea](#), and for as many as have not seen my face in *the* flesh, that their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and to all riches of the [full assurance](#) of the understanding, to *the* full knowledge of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. And I say this that [not anyone should](#)

beguile you with enticing words. Col 2:1-4

Beware lest anyone rob you through philosophy and vain deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the elements of the world, and not according to Christ. Col 2:8 Therefore let no one judge you in food or in drink, or in respect of a feast, or of the new moon, or of the sabbaths. For these are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ. Let no man rob you of your prize by a voluntary humility and worshipping of the angels, dwelling in the things which he hath seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, (ASV) Col 2:16-18

Why these warnings?

Imagine if your government changed the constitution and introduced a whole new set of conditions. There would be confusion as folks tried to adjust and clarify the changes. In such an environment of change, opportunities would exist for malevolent folks to further muddy the waters and take advantage of and exploit many people who could be confused by the changes.

There was an incredible change of conditions brought about by God at the end of the book of Acts. The Kingdom on the earth administration was postponed and the Mystery of Ephesians 3 was introduced.

It is difficult for us today to appreciate the dramatic changes that had overtaken the Christian community back then. The Christians Paul wrote to in Ephesians and Colossians had been previously living in the powerful Acts period which was a foretaste of the coming millennium. There were prevalent and widespread mighty signs and wonders, every sick person was healed, the dead were raised and those believers who sinned were judged, made sick and even died. The expectation that the Lord was going to descend out of heaven to the earth in the foreseeable future meant they were to avoid marriage and distribute their possessions to the poor as they saw the day approaching.

Among this widespread teaching by all the apostles of that time came word that Paul had received a new dispensation. God, who never changes as to virtue and character, changed the dispensation after providing Israel with nearly forty years of opportunity to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus as their Messiah. They were “let go” at Acts 28 and the foretastes of the millennial kingdom on the earth ceased and the imminent return of the Lord was postponed.

As Paul wrote and unfolded the new set of conditions the Christians saw differences. Paul now wrote that the young widows were to marry (1Tim.5:14), he left behind friends who were sick (2Tim.4:20) and advised Timothy to take a little wine for his illnesses (1Tim.5:23). Very few Christians are healed today and we are certainly not judged and made sick because of sins. No reference to the imminent return of the Lord can be found in Paul’s seven post Acts letters and in fact he wrote about a new hope where believers were raised and seated together in the heavenly places in Christ. This hope was completely different to Paul’s Acts period letters.

Such a dramatic change of dispensation certainly gave opportunity for Paul’s opponents to further ridicule the man and his God given ministry. Instead of embracing the changes God had introduced through Paul, Christians were confused into retaining elements of the previous administration.

We need not turn to history to prove that the majority of Christians had been moved away from Paul not long after the change of dispensation;
This you know, that all those in Asia have turned away from me, of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes. 2Ti 1:15

These Christians were not casting aside their faith in Christ; many were to die at the hands of the Romans for their faith. They were turned away from Paul and the message for today. When Paul wrote his last letter to Timothy he was very concerned the younger man would hold fast to the truth for today in the face of this widespread apostasy;

*Therefore you should **not be ashamed** of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner. who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the eternal times. 2Ti 1:8-9*

***Hold fast** the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. **Guard** the good Deposit given through the Holy Spirit indwelling in us. 2Ti 1:13-14*

Those Christians turning away from Paul were not faithless but they were not faithful to the changes God had made. Indeed, Paul instructed Timothy to seek out these faithful believers and commit the “good deposit” to them so they could pass it along.

Therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit the same to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. Therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. 2Ti 2:1-3

The dark ages continued for 900 years and after the reformation slowly Paul was re-discovered. When the Christian community finally began to realize there would be a literal return of Christ to the earth they embraced the hope of the Acts period (1Thess.4). The rapture theory is based upon a failure to distinguish things differing in Paul. Many expositors inherited the legacy of confusion left by the majority who had turned away from Paul centuries before.

The rapture theory is the result of extinguishing things that differ and forcing the post Acts hope into the Acts period hope. Square pegs can be smashed into round holes if the splinters are ignored. The rapture is misinformation and a subtle misdirection to the wrong hope and sadly, the rapture theory holds a powerful place in the Christian community today. The groundwork for the rapture was laid by the enemy while Paul was still alive; he turned Christians away from Paul.

Returning to the letter of Colossians we read a significant appeal of Paul regarding the new hope. They had heard of this new hope and he wanted them to hold fast to it and be not turned away from it:

*However, you must remain firmly established and steadfast in the faith, **without being moved from the hope** of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven and of which I, Paul, have become a servant. (ISV) Col 1:23*

My appeal to each reader is the same. Having seen this new hope; the appearing of glory, let us guard and treasure it with all our strength. The day of our Lord’s appearing is not in the foreseeable future yet we know every day is another day closer to that moment when our Saviour will be revealed in the

light of God and every eye will see Him. Not only will those on the earth see Him but those aristocracies in the heavenly places will behold Him in glory as well.

Ponder this once more friends, the created beings on the earth and in the heavenly places will see you and me revealed in that same place and moment of glory. What an honor to be revealed with Him. Praise God from whom all wonders of grace flow!

Chapter nineteen

New Hope- appearing, when does it happen?

What a thrill it is to know that we are not a number; a random happening, we were known of God in the far distant past, before the foundation of the world; [Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ; according as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him Eph 1:3-4](#)

In this series we are setting our hearts and minds on our glorious future, the appearing of Christ our Lord and Head in the heavenly places;

[If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God. When Christ our Life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory. Col 3:1, 4](#)

Our life is hid with Christ in God and on that glorious day when the Head appears, then we, the Church which is His Body, will appear with Him in that place. In other words, we will be revealed with our Lord and Head at the same time and in the same place. The appearing is in the heavenly places far above the air and clouds of I Thess.4.

We would love to know when this appearing will take place.

The Word of Truth has clearly told us when this appearing will occur but our traditions have clouded the issue. The traditions which have obscured the timing of the appearing are the fascination with the “rapture” and the timing of that event as either being pre, mid, or post tribulation, along with a few variants.

As we have shown, the “rapture” is a total misconception, the twisting of an event which has nothing to do with us today. Because we have focused on the rapture which is really the parousia or coming of the Lord to Israel, we were also lead to believe that the tribulation was for us and worldwide, this is incorrect on both counts. The great tribulation is specifically identified as belonging to Israel and it is called the time of Jacob’s trouble;

[Ask now, and see whether a man is giving birth? Why do I see every man with his hands on his loins, like a woman in labor, and all faces are turned into paleness? Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it; it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it. For it shall be in that day, says Jehovah of Hosts, I will break his yoke from your neck and will burst your bonds. And strangers shall no longer enslave him, Jer 30:6-8](#)

This specific tribulation will begin once the Antichrist sets up the “abomination of desolation” in Israel’s temple:

[Therefore when you see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place \(whoever reads, let him understand\). \(Dan.9:27, 12:11\).](#)

[Then let those in Judea flee into the mountains. Let him on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house; nor let him in the field turn back to take his clothes. And woe to those who are with child, and to those who give suck in those days! But pray that your flight is not in the winter, nor on the sabbath day; for then shall be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world to this time; no, nor ever shall be.](#)

[Mat 24:15-21](#)

We can't help but notice how specifically this passage is about Israel. Those in Judea are to flee once they see the abomination. Prayer is to be offered that the flight is not on the Sabbath day, and earlier in this chapter the wars and rumors of wars are in and around Israel (compare Lk.21:20).

The Lord then goes on to say that after the tribulation He shall come:

And immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun shall be darkened and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from the heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then the sign of the Son of Man shall appear in the heavens. And then all the tribes of the earth shall mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of the heaven with power and great glory. Mat 24:29-30

The Lord clearly says only AFTER the tribulation of those days in that location, THEN the son of Man will appear in the heavens and descend in the clouds. Matt.24 is not an unfolding of worldwide events, but events in and around Jerusalem in those last days prior to the Lord's return to Israel.

How plain can the Lord be? After the Temple is desecrated, after the tribulation, then He returns. The Scriptures are clear; there is no "coming of the Lord" prior to the abomination of desolation and the full days of the great tribulation. Some teachers see Matt.24 as being about Israel and Thessalonians as being about the Church which is His Body. This position is to be avoided and discarded. The trumpet of Matt.24 is the same Feast as 1Cor.15, 1 Thess.4 and Revelation.

Are the trumpets of Matt.24, 1Cor.15, Thessalonians and Revelation all different? I don't think so. If the Trumpet of Matt.24 is for Israel, then how can we change the Trumpet of 1Thess.4 to an imagined silent, "Christian" one before the other trumpets? The Feasts clearly outline the steps in Israel's history. Passover, Unleavened Bread, and Weeks (Pentecost) have all been fulfilled; the next event for Israel is the Lord's coming at the Feast of Trumpets. There is nothing before Trumpets, no secret non-propheesied event like the imagined "rapture".

Please avoid any teachers who tell you the "rapture" could be at anytime now (2007). This is a false hope with serious consequences. It is better to know truth that might be painful than be ill prepared through deception.

There are those who desperately use this following passage to point to the secret snatching away of the church which is His Body but this passage is about Israel and in the same context of the Lord's coming; Matthew 24;

But as the days of Noah were, so shall be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered into the ark. And they did not know until the flood came and took them all away. So also will be the coming of the Son of Man. Mat 24:37-39

Then two shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Therefore watch; for you do not know what hour your Lord comes. But know this, that if the steward of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched and would not have allowed his house to be dug through. Therefore you also be ready, for in that hour you think not, the Son of Man comes. Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord has made ruler over His household, to give them food in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his Lord shall find him doing so when He comes. Mat 24:40-46

The ones taken away in verse 39 are not the Lord's faithful servants. So why do we ignore this and suggest the ones taken away just a few verses later are the faithful? Perhaps it is time we considered the parable passage given earlier in Matt.13. Please read Matt.13:24-30 and then consider the Lord's explanation of it here;

He answered and said to them, He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; the field is the world; the good seed are the sons of the kingdom; but the dandel are the sons of the evil one. The enemy who sowed them is the Devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. Therefore as the dandel are gathered and burned in the fire, so it shall be in the end of this world. The Son of Man shall send out His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire. There shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous shall shine out like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear. [Mat 13:37-43](#) (is this Rev.14:14-?)

The harvest is the end of the world. The very phrase which is found in the disciples' question in Matthew 24:1-3:

And as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the world? [Mat 24:3](#)

I don't think we are left in any doubt as to who the ones taken away in Matthew 24 really are. The faithful are gathered; the wicked seed are taken out of the Kingdom and destroyed. The ones left are those to be blessed in the kingdom of heaven on the earth.

Thessalonians is about the same abomination of desolation, the same dispensational setting as Matthew 24. Paul writes to the Thessalonians and speaks of this same gathering to the Lord in the Kingdom of Heaven; [Now we beseech you, my brothers, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, 2Th 2:1](#)

So is Paul speaking of something totally new and previously hidden in God in Thessalonians? NO! He is talking about the same second coming of the Lord as embedded in the Feasts and written in Daniel, Matt.24, Luke 21 and the book of Revelation, along with other prophecies.

Note the exact same details in the following passage regarding the Lord's "coming" and their (not our) gathering together to that glorious meeting in the air as He descends to the earth;

[Now we beseech you, my brothers, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, that you should not be soon shaken in mind or troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word or letter, as through us, as if the Day of Christ is at hand. Let not anyone deceive you by any means. For that Day shall not come unless there first comes a falling away, and the man of sin shall be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, setting himself forth, that he is God. 2Th 2:1-4](#)

Notice that day shall not come until after apostasy and deception (2Thess.2:9-11). This deception is not deception in Christianity, it is deception for Israel. After this, then the Antichrist and his desecration of Israel's temple are seen and after that, the Lord descends to the earth in the clouds and with a trumpet blast et al.

Scripture tells us Israel will suffer greatly during the tribulation which follows the Antichrist's desecration of their temple but they will be saved despite the horror of that time period. The Church which is His Body has never been told that they will suffer the great tribulation. The great tribulation takes place in Israel. However, Paul warns us of "perilous times", see 2Tim.3:1 and we should accept that we could see these perilous times rather than dream of some silent secret escape from them. Are we beginning to see that we cannot mix the things which belong to Israel with the things which belong to us? Right division is essential.

Some suggest that the fear of the tribulation has encouraged many to use this verse as some sort of pre-tribulation escape route;

[For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.](#) (KJV) [2Th 2:7](#)

Nothing is to be taken out of the way. These passages in Thessalonians were written in the Acts period when the present truth for today had not been revealed. How can Paul be writing about our church when he knew nothing about it? Here is the same verse in a modern version:

[For the mystery of lawlessness is already working, only he is now holding back until it comes out of the midst.](#) (MKJV) [2Th 2:7](#)

Where is the Church which is His body in either of Thessalonians? Paul is writing about Israel and her final days of suffering, the Antichrist and his desecration comes out of the midst of deception and apostasy of Israel. Again note the consistency of Matt.24, Revelation and Thessalonians in these details.

Folks also use this verse as supportive material for the silent secret "rapture" theory;

[For they themselves witness what kind of entrance we had to you, even how you turned from idols to God in order to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from Heaven \(whom He raised from the dead\), Jesus, who delivered us from the wrath to come.](#) [1Th 1:9-10](#)

And also

[For God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,](#) [1Th 5:9](#)

It is a violent twisting of Scripture to expound that these verses mean a secret "rapture" prior to the tribulation and wrath. Israel were in Egypt when God's judgment fell but Israel were not delivered out of Egypt until after those judgments yet they were preserved from them. In 1Thess.10 Paul tells the believers of the Acts period when their salvation would materialize, and that is when the Lord returns out of, or from heaven, not before. To be preserved from God's wrath does not automatically mean being snatched away out of it but rather preserved among it.

The Lord's return to the earth takes place AFTER the final week of Israel's history. Israel's final week is broken into two distinct halves, three and a half years of false peace and three and a half years of great tribulation. The dividing element is when the Antichrist, who Israel thought was a good guy, exposes his real self and sets up an image to his own glory inside Israel's temple. At this

point Israel will realize they have made a horrible mistake and the Antichrist will turn on them with intent to destroy them thoroughly, shades of Adolf Hitler. The Lord returns to save Israel after those last three and a half years of tribulation.

In Daniel 7:7-14, Thessalonians 2:3-12, and Revelation 19:20, we read that the Antichrist is destroyed by the Lord when He comes to the earth with a trumpet blast in power and glory and saves Israel. There is no secret silent rapture; the last trumpet heralds the return of the Lord in power and glory. His return is with great light when the sun and moon are darkened.

The Lord's return to the earth after the tribulation is in three stages as we have already shown;

Mat 24:29 And immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun shall be darkened and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from the heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken.

Mat 24:30 And then the sign of the Son of Man shall appear in the heavens. And then all the tribes of the earth shall mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of the heaven with power and great glory.

Mat 24:31 And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather His elect from the four winds, from one end of *the* heavens to the other.

And

Jesus said to him, You said it. I tell you more. From this time you shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of the heavens. [Mat 26:64](#)

The present dispensation had not been revealed when the Lord spoke these words and consequently He made no mention of anyone appearing with Him where He is now seated at the Father's right hand. But this doesn't negate the fact that the appearing is the first stage of the Lord's return to the earth. We shall show many other Scriptures to establish this shortly.

In other words, the appearing is linked with Israel's Feast of Trumpets and does not occur anytime before that. The appearing is the first stage of the Lord's return to the earth. This does not mean we will be returning to the earth with Him.

For now, please seek and love the truth, and consider that while my thoughts are not traditional, they just might be the truth and it is up to all of my friends to search and see if these things are so.

Chapter twenty

New Hope-three stages of the Lord's second coming

The "second coming" of the Lord has been made a very confused issue, all I ask is every reader examines these things; please don't take it from me.

It is my opinion that the enemy has truly blinded our eyes to the hope before us today. The rapture is the biggest set of blinkers the enemy has softly slid across our eyes. The crown of righteousness is for those who love His "appearing" which is not the man made "rapture".

1Thess.4 was the hope before the believers during the Acts period. 1Thess.4 describes how the believers at that time would go up to meet the Lord as He descended to the earth. There is nothing in 1Thess.4 about anyone going back into heaven, search and see what that passage really says, not what we have been told it says.

1Thess.4 was written during the Acts period when Israel remained a people before God. After Israel was set aside at Acts 28, the hope of 1Thess.4 was also set aside and a new dispensation with a new hope was revealed to Paul. 1Thess.4 is not the hope before us today, we must "distinguish things that differ".

The hope before us today is the phaneroo; the appearing of the Lord. This is not the parousia which is the coming of the Lord as found in 1Thess.4. The Lord's "second coming" is a threefold event. It unfolds in three stages which occur at the same time. Here are the three stages;

Stage one. The phaneroo or appearing.

The Lord appears in the heavenly places. He is seated at the Father's right and in that future day of gloominess when the sun and moon do not give light, He appears. The light blazes forth and everyone sees Him up there. All on earth see Him; all in Heavenly Places will see Him as well. This is our hope. Col.3:1-4. We will be resurrected and raised before 1Thess.4 and appear with Him there.

Stage two. The descent out of Heaven aspect of His parousia or coming to the earth.

The Lord leaves heavenly places and descends to the earth through the clouds of the air with trumpet blast, shout and voice. This is not our hope; it belongs to another called out company, the elect remnant; the seed of Abraham.

Stage three. His personal presence on the earth. This is included in the term parousia.

The Lord will arrive back on the earth exactly where He previously left it, the Mount of Olives. There He will re-gather Israel back into their land. This is the hope of Israel.

Even though these things take place at the same time, they are different events for different called out companies. Even though these three aspects are His “second coming”, they need to be kept apart, not in time, but in our understanding. These three aspects represent three hopes for three groups of companies and we must not mix them.

Tradition and some modern theories divide these three stages into wide time gaps. So we are taught that the Lord “comes” in the clouds, raptures away “the Church” and then comes back to the earth much later for Israel. This concept is not supported in Scripture. The appearing and the parousia are not separated by any large amount of time.

Those readers who love to examine the Greek words the Holy Spirit used will see that I have not yet distinguished between phaneroo and epiphaneia. I also acknowledge there are different words for “coming” in the original.

Previously, we looked at these three stages of the Lord’s “Second Coming” in Matthew.

Stage 1

And then the sign of the Son of Man shall appear in the heavens. Mat 24:30

This is the appearing or first visible aspect of his “second coming”. (Greek students note, the word for “appear” is phaino, the base word for phaneroo and epiphaneia).

Stage 2

.... And then all the tribes of the earth shall mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of the heaven with power and great glory. Mat 24:30

This is the “descent” aspect of His “second coming”.

Stage 3

And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather His elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other. Mat 24:31

and

But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He shall sit on the throne of His glory. And all nations shall be gathered before Him. Mat 25:31-32

This is the “arrival” aspect of His “second coming”.

Here are the first two stages again in another Matthew passage.

Stage 1

Jesus said to him, You said it. I tell you more. From this time you shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, Mat 26:64

This is the 1st stage, the appearing aspect of his “second coming”.

Stage 2

..... and coming on the clouds of the heavens. Mat 26:64

This is the “descent” aspect of His “second coming”.

At the “appearing” the Lord does not move; He is seated at the Father’s right hand above the air and clouds and we go to Him there, He does not come for us. At His “coming” He moves out of heavenly places through the clouds and air back to and stands upon the earth. These three stages constitute His “second coming”.

In the book of Acts, when the Lord's return to the earth was expected, Stephen saw heaven opened and the Lord standing at the Father's right hand. Stephen saw a vision of the first stage of the Lord's coming back to the earth but he was not expecting to go to that appearing. Stephen was waiting for the Lord to descend out of heaven just like the Thessalonians were.

[But being full of the Holy Spirit, looking up intently into Heaven, he saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. And he said, Behold, I see Heaven opened and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God. Act 7:55-56](#)

Revelation speaks about the heavens departing like a scroll and then the world will see into heaven and the Son of Man sitting on the throne, Rev.6:14-16. The Lord gave Stephen an encouraging vision about His soon return to the earth at which point Stephen will be resurrected. Regarding Stephen; some teach that Israel were judged and put away at Stephen's death, since they assume the Lord stood in judgment. They then erroneously go on to assume that from Acts 9 Paul started to teach about "the church". This is an impossible theory since Stephen, like his Lord before Him (Luke 23:34) begged on Israel's behalf, "lay not this sin to their charge". The very next chapter begins with the widening of the ministry in and to Israel according to the commission to the 12 in Acts 1:8. This is not some new commission given to Paul.

When we read the letters in the New Testament we find many authors referring to the first and second stages of the Lord's "coming" as synchronous events. In other words, they interplay "coming" and "appearing" to describe the Lord's return as occurring at the same time. Here are some examples where "coming and appearing" are so used. Please note that there is no suggestion, not one hint, that the appearing and coming are years apart.

John is an apostle to Israel and Israel will not be "appearing" with Christ in the heavenly places, yet John tells us plainly that these two stages are at the same time. In the second passage John says "we shall see Him" (from the earth) when He "appears" in the heavenly places. Every eye will see Him and this is consistent with the Lord's words in Matthew.

[And now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He is revealed](#) (phaneroo = 1st stage of His coming), [we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him in His coming](#) (parousia =, 2nd and 3rd stages of His coming). [1Jn 2:28](#)

[Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be. But we know that when He shall be revealed](#) (phaneroo = 1st stage of His coming), [we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. 1Jn 3:2](#)

Peter is also an apostle to Israel and he writes about the first two stages as being at the same time. Peter uses both "appear" and "coming" interchangeably regarding the Old Testament Day of the Lord. The Day of the Lord is the subject of Revelation and God's purposes for the earth. Peter, like John, did not write about anyone going to the "appearing". Peter uses the word "appear" with the Lord's earthly title of Shepherd, not His above heavenly title of Head.

While Peter knew the "appearing" took place in the heavenly places he only knew it as the first stage of the Lord's coming back to the earth. He did not embrace it as his hope. This is why he links it with the Lord's ministry on the earth; the earth is where the Good Shepherd operates. Peter refers to the

transfiguration which anticipates the Lord's glory on earth.

And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear (phaneroo = 1st stage of His coming), you shall receive a never-fading crown of glory. 1Pe 5:4

For not having followed fables having been cunningly devised, but becoming eyewitnesses of the majesty of Jesus Christ, we made known to you the power and coming (parousia = 2nd and 3rd stages of His coming) of our Lord. 2Pe 1:16 and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? (parousia =, 2nd and 3rd stages of His coming). For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation. 2Pe 3:4

But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night (we shall see this phrase in Thess., also written in the Acts period), in which the heavens will pass away with a rushing noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat. And the earth and the works in it will be burned up.

2Pe 3:10

But according to His promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. 2Pe 3:13

New Heavens and New Earth, see Is.65, 66 and Revelation 21.

The "appearing" is the first stage of the Lord's "second coming" and all NT writers knew about this but not all held it as their hope. In Paul's Acts period ministry, he also interplays the first and second stage words to speak of the Lord's "second coming" and like John and Peter at that time, he did not know that anyone would "appear" with the Lord in the heavenly places. It was only after Acts Paul wrote about the appearing as a new hope. After Acts and only after Acts does Paul write about a company which will appear with Christ in the heavenly places.

Praise our loving Heavenly Father, this company is the company to which you and I belong; the Church which is His Body and our hope is realized before the so called rapture, isn't that exciting?

Chapter twenty one

New Hope-appearing vs. 1Corinthians 15

We are considering the very important “second coming” of the Lord to clearly understand the hope before us today. I realize I am repeating myself but we are working towards a wonderful clarifying of truth friends, so please be patient.

Our hope is the phaneroo; the appearing of the Lord which takes in the heavenly places far above the air and the clouds. This is not the parousia which is the personal presence of the Lord on the earth as found in 1Thess.4.

The Lord’s “second coming” is a threefold event. It unfolds in three stages which occur at the same time.

Stage one. The phaneroo or appearing.

In those dark days the Lord appears in the heavenly places. Col.3:1-4. This is our hope, the hope of the Church which is His Body. We will be resurrected, raised, seated and appear with Him there.

Stage two. The parousia part one.

Is our Lord’s descent out of Heaven to the earth through the clouds of the air with trumpet blast, shout and voice. Ex.19, 1Thess.4, Matt. 24, 1Cor.15, and Revelation describe this hope. This hope is for believers of a previous dispensation, and those believers will be resurrected, changed and caught up together to meet the Lord as He descends to the earth.

Stage three. The Parousia part two.

The Lord will arrive back on the earth exactly where He previously left it, the Mount of Olives. There He will begin the re-gathering of Israel back into their land. This is the hope of Israel, and those who went to meet the Lord will participate in the Lord’s kingdom on the earth.

These three stages of our Lord’s return were known clearly and can be found in letters of the New Testament. However, despite the fact that these three stages were known, it is very clear that not until after Israel was put aside at Acts 28:25 did the Lord declare that the newly created group of believers would participate in the first stage of His “second coming”. You and I today are members of this Church which is His Body.

What we have seen so far is that during the Acts period, some New Testament writers used both parousia and phaneroo when considering the Lord’s “second coming”. These were just different aspects of the Lord’s return to the earth so they used them interchangeably.

During the Acts, neither Paul nor any others suggested anyone was associated with the first stage, the appearing of the Lord. All were looking for the Lord to return to the earth. None expected to go to heaven. Their hope was the Kingdom of Heaven on the earth which would be set up when the Lord came back out of Heaven back to the earth as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

The Feast of Trumpets was the next Feast after Weeks (Pentecost) and they were looking for it to be fulfilled just as the other Feasts had been. Trumpets features in the Lord's "second coming" in Matt. 24, 1Cor. 15, Thess. and Revelation and is associated with Israel and the Kingdom with their King on the earth. Consider Hebrews 12:18-21 (Ex.19) and Revelation 6:14-17.

We now compare the letters of Paul. We shall compare those written during the Acts period and those after Acts 28. We shall find that during the Acts period the hope he wrote about was stage 2 and 3 of the Lord's "second coming". Like his contemporaries of the Acts period, Paul knew nothing of anyone going into Heaven.

In His Act's period letters, Paul uses the word *parousia* when speaking about the "second coming" of the Lord. He does not use *phaneroo* in any context of the Lord's "second coming". Here are critical passages from Paul's Acts period letters where he writes about the hope at that time.

But now Christ has risen from *the* dead, *and* has become the **first-fruit** of those who slept. For since death *is* through man, the resurrection of *the* dead also *is* through a Man. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all will be made alive. But each in *his* own order: Christ the **first-fruit**, and afterward they who are Christ's at His coming (*parousia*); 1Co 15:20-23

This is a comprehensive passage regarding resurrection written to those who knew the gospel as found in verses 3-4 of this very chapter. However, the resurrection expected during Acts was in a context of Israel's Feasts. The Lord fulfilled the **first fruits** of Unleavened Bread and the harvest, that is the resurrection of the over comers of those times, not us today, would be at the Feast of Trumpets. The Feast of Trumpets, the harvest resurrection, was expected during the Acts period. The Feast of Trumpets is part of Israel's hope. The Feasts of Israel are about Israel and God's purposes for the earth.

Paul goes on to write about the Feast of Trumpets as he assures the Corinthians when those who had fallen asleep in Christ would be raised. Paul includes himself in those who might not die:

Behold, I speak a mystery to you; we shall not all fall asleep, but we shall all be changed; in a moment, in a glance of an eye, at the last trumpet. For a trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall all be changed. 1Co 15:51-52

To prove that 1 Cor. 15 has nothing to do with us dispensationally, let us look at the Old Testament passages Paul quotes to conclude his discourse on resurrection. First the passage from Corinthians, then the Old Testament passage Paul uses;

For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality. But when this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and when this mortal shall put on immortality, then will take place the word that is written, "**Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory?**" 1Co 15:53-55

Verses 54 and 55 contain a double quote from the prophets, the basis of Paul's doctrines during Acts, see Acts 26:22. The quote in verse 54 is from Isaiah 25 as follows;

You shall bring down the noise of foreigners, as the heat in a dry place; even the heat with the shadow of cloud. The shouting of the terrifying ones shall be brought low. And in this mountain Jehovah of Hosts shall make a feast of fat things for all the people, a feast of wine on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of refined wine on the lees. And He will

destroy in this mountain the face of the covering which covers all people, and the veil that is woven over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord Jehovah will wipe away tears from all faces (Rev.7:17, 21:4). And He shall take away from all the earth the rebuke of His people. For Jehovah has spoken. And one shall say in that day, Lo, this *is* our God. We have waited for Him, and He will save us. This *is* Jehovah; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation. Isa 25:5-9

Isaiah 25 is a prophecy regarding Israel. Notice the removal of Gentiles from Israel's "holy mountain", how the Lord takes away the scorn Israel endured, and it is Israel saying "this is our God". Not in the wildest stretch of spiritualizing Scripture could we possibly see "heaven" in Isaiah 25. Isaiah 25 can be found in the Revelation chapters 7:17 and 21:4.

The last Trumpet of 1Cor.15 is the same trumpet of Israel's Feasts and the same setting as prophecy and Revelation. Our hope today has nothing to do with prophecy or Israel. If Paul quotes Isaiah 25 as the doxology of his resurrection exposition in 1Cor. 15, then Paul sees the last Trumpet as belonging to Israel as it has always done, and the hope he expected in resurrection at the sound of that Trumpet was to the earth not to heaven.

The second Old Testament quote is found in Hosea 13;

Yet I *am* Jehovah your God from the land of Egypt, and you shall know no God but Me. For there is no Savior besides Me.

O Israel, you have destroyed yourself; but in Me *is* your help.

I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death.

O Death, where *are* your plagues; O Grave, where *is* your ruin! Repentance shall be hidden from My eyes. Hos 13:4, 9, 14

Hosea prophesies about the northern Kingdom and speaks of Israel who would be scattered (Jezreel), who would be unloved (Lo-Ruhamah) and who would be not God's people (Lo Ammi). But despite their spiritual adultery Hosea looks to the day when Israel will be re-gathered, will be loved and God's people, then the following united joy is realized;

Yet the number of the sons of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered. And it shall be, in the place where it was said to them, You *are* not My people, there it shall be said to them, You *are* the sons of the living God.

Then the sons of Judah and the sons of Israel shall be gathered together, and shall set over themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land. For great *shall be* the day of Jezreel. Hos 1:10-11

In this great prophecy of hope for the united kingdoms of Israel, Paul finds inspiration to conclude his resurrection chapter of 1Cor. 15. The last Trumpet of 1Corinthians 15 is the fulfillment of the Feast of Trumpets given to Israel concerning their future and the purposes of God for the earth. The "second coming" of the Lord in 1Cor.15 is at the last Trumpet when according to Isaiah and Hosea Israel will be re-gathered. No one waiting for that hope is going to heaven. During Acts, Paul wrote about the parousia as the hope, not stage 1, the appearing.

Paul's Acts period expectation was the return of the Lord to the earth and he wrote about stages 2 and 3 only as being the hope of all believers at that time. Not once during Acts did Paul even hint that anyone was going to participate in stage 1.

Next chapter we shall see the same Feasts of Israel in Paul's letters to the Thessalonians.

Chapter twenty two

New Hope-appearing vs. Matt.24 & Thessalonians

During the Acts period Paul wrote clearly about the hope he and all believers were expecting. They were waiting for the Lord to return to the earth out of heaven.

The modern day “rapture” theory has exposed millions of Christians to doubts, uncertainty and weakened faith. How many times in living memory can we recount the false joy and disappointment experienced after yet another zealous Christian individual or group proclaims the imminent silent thief in the night snatching away of the Church? The reason why we constantly entertain such false claims is because the rapture concept is the breeding ground for them. You and I want truth not tradition as the basis of our understanding.

Last chapter we looked at the Feasts of Israel in Paul’s great resurrection chapter of 1 Cor. 15. The Lord as the First Fruit of Unleavened Bread, and the believers of that time were to be resurrected at the last trumpet of the Feasts of Trumpets. The Feasts of Israel know nothing of God’s above heavenly purposes involving us today. We examined Paul’s quotes at the conclusion of his exposition and saw 1Cor. 15 looked to the restoration of Israel, a purely earthly theme totally unrelated to our inheritance today in heavenly places. Let us now identify this identical Israeli theme in Thessalonians.

We return to the “rapture passage” and again ask all readers to find one word or phrase which actually says anyone, including the Lord, would return back into Heaven. This passage is about those who are asleep in Christ and like 1Cor.15, the Lord died and rose again as the first fruit and the harvest is at the (last) trumpet. Here are Israel’s Feasts exactly as they are in 1Cor.15.

But I would not have you ignorant, brothers, concerning those who are asleep, that you be not grieved, even as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will also bring with Him all those who have fallen asleep through Jesus. The first fruit of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. For the Lord Himself shall 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. The Harvest, the faithful of that calling at Trumpets. 1Th 4:13-16

In Matt. 24:1-3 the disciples asked about the final Feast grouping; the Lord’s coming (Trumpets) and “harvest in-gathering” which is the Feast of Tabernacles. The Lord’s discourse included the wars Israel will experience and the Anti-messiah setting up an image in Israel’s Temple. He then describes His second coming at the Feast of Trumpets and following that is the Feast of Atonement and “harvest ingathering” called Tabernacles. The Lord descends to sit on David’s throne as per Matt. 25:31 and we note in verses 1-6 wise virgins go to “meet” Him as He comes to them. We are not virgins; we are the church which is His body (masculine). All this belongs to God’s earthly purposes for the world through Israel.

In 2Cor.11:2 Paul also describes the believers of that time as “chaste **virgins**” and in 1Thess.4:17 they were going to “meet” the Lord as He comes back to them. If Matt.24-25 is about the earth, then so are Corinthians and Thessalonians; how consistent can the Scriptures be? In Matt.16:27 & 25:31 the Lord comes back with His holy angels. This is exactly what Paul writes about in Thessalonians, see 1Thess. 3:13 and 2Thess.1:7 and compare 1Cor.6:3. It could not be made any plainer. The Old Testament Feasts of Israel are the great “second coming” elements in Matt.24, 1Cor.15, Thessalonians and the Day of the Lord in Revelation. All these were written before Israel were put aside at the end of the book of Acts.

Here are some comparative passages for your consideration:

Then they will deliver you up to be afflicted and will kill you. And you will be hated of all nations for My name's sake. [Mat 24:9](#)

And immediately after the tribulation of those days, [Mat 24:29](#)

For this is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God for which you also suffer, [2Th 1:5](#)

since it is a righteous thing with God to repay tribulation to those who trouble you, [2Th 1:6](#)

(Note Paul does not tell the Thessalonians to flee into the Judean hills when they hear about the image being set up because they don't live in Israel but Paul prays for their preservation unto the second coming of the Lord, 1Thess.5:23.)

And many false prophets will rise and deceive many. [Mat 24:11](#)

Therefore when you see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place (whoever reads, let him understand). [Mat 24:15](#)

Let not anyone deceive you by any means. For that Day shall not come unless there first comes a falling away, and the man of sin shall be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, setting himself forth, that he is God. [2Th 2:3-4](#)

And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the breath of His mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming, whose coming is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, [2Th 2:8-9](#)

And it deceives those dwelling on the earth, because of the miracles which were given to it to do before the beast, saying to those dwelling on the earth that they should make an image to the beast who had the wound by a sword and lived. [Rev 13:11-14](#)

How can we continue to entertain any thought of an imminent “rapture” when Paul says nothing happens until after the image in Israel's Temple? How can Thessalonians, which has as its prophetic key the setting up of that image, be anything other than the hope of Daniel, Isaiah, Matthew and Revelation?

Thessalonians were written in the Acts period when Israel stood and the truth for today had not been revealed. I think we could write the following verse over Matt.24-25, 1Cor.15, both Thessalonians letters and the book of Revelation don't you? Certainly Paul refers to this passage in Romans 15:10 where he writes of the hope at that time.

Rejoice, O, nations, *with* His people; for He will avenge the blood of His servants, and will render vengeance to His foes and will be merciful to His land, to His people. [Deu 32:43](#)

The evidence is overwhelming. Up until the end of the book of Acts the hope before believers was the Lord's parousia, that is, the second and third stages of His "second coming"; His descent out of Heaven and His feet on the earth. Those faithful ones of that time were to be caught up to a meeting in the clouds of the air as the Lord descended back to the earth. This took place after the tribulation, those last three and a half years which followed the setting up of the image in Israel's temple. This did not take place back then as expected because Israel was set aside at Acts 28 and this hope was postponed.

If there was ever an opportunity for Paul to describe or introduce the first stage (that is the phaneroo and epiphaneia) of the Lord's "second coming" as a hope, then the epistles to the Thessalonians would certainly be the place to do that but Paul did not.

It wasn't that Paul did not use the words phaneroo or epiphaneia during the Acts period. Paul uses phaneroo about 15 times in his Acts period writings but not once does he use this word in reference to the Lord's second coming or as the basis of a hope. Please compare these uses of phaneroo in the Acts period, Roms.1:19, 3:21, 16:26, 1Cor.4:4, 2Cor. 2:14, 3:3, 5:10-11, 7:12 and Hebrews 9:26. Now compare this passage written after Acts, Col.3:4. Paul had no idea during Acts that the first stage of the Lord's second coming, the appearing, was a hope before any company of believers.

What about epiphaneia another post Acts word for our hope today, did Paul use this word during Acts? Yes, once only in Thessalonians as given here:

[And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the breath of His mouth and shall destroy with the brightness \(epiphaneia\) of His coming \(parousia\), 2Th 2:8](#)

Just as Paul does not use phaneroo as a word describing the hope of the Acts period so he does not use epiphaneia in the Acts period to describe the hope of that time

either. Paul uses epiphaneia to emphasize the parousia aspect of the Lord's "second coming". For those who would like to compare Paul's use of epiphaneia during Acts and after, please compare these references. Epiphaneia during Acts once only here 2Thess.2:8. Now compare Paul's use of the word after Acts, 1Tim.6:14, 2Tim.1:10, 4:1:8 and Titus 2:13. What an amazing difference! We have been instructed to "distinguish things that differ" and here are marked differences in Paul, will we recognize and acknowledge them?

In the Acts period, Paul, like Peter and John, knew about the first stage of the Lord's "second coming", that great blazing forth of light which revealed the Lord at the Father's right hand in the heavenly places, but Paul gave no inkling, not one hint in his Acts period letters, including Thessalonians, that anyone was to participate in that first stage of the Lord's return.

In Thessalonians Paul knew of the manifestation, that great light revealing of the Lord which begins His "second coming", but that appearing first stage is not the hope of the believers of that Acts period economy.

There are some right dividers who assert Paul had a progressive revelation, that he was gradually given the present truth, proclaiming Acts as a transition period. Paul's dramatic and clear cut contrasting use of phaneroo and epiphaneia before and after Acts 28 certainly demands a reassessment of that theory. The error that the church started at either Acts 7, 9 or 13 is not sustainable by any progressive revelation theory.

Our hope is not found in the Moses and the Prophets, Matthew, Romans, Corinthians, Thessalonians or the book of Revelation. Our hope today is found in Paul's post Acts 28 letters; those written after Israel were set to one side and God's purpose for them postponed. However, the timing of all hopes is the same event. Please consider this verse for your further study;
(the mystery is) [for an administration of the fullness of times, to head up all things in Christ, both the things in Heaven, and the things on earth, even in Him, Eph 1:9-10](#)

Chapter twenty three

New Hope-hope comparisons with charts

There is no easy way to know the Word of God; each of us must do the hard work. This book is to inspire you to study don't just relax and file this as another different idea. Jumping from church to church will not help too much either. What have you made your own in the Word of Truth? The Lord does love you, He will guide you so don't leave your Bible on the bedside table. Study it and over time answers will come with wonderful, rich assurance.

We are examining the Lord's "second coming" and the timing of our hope today which is part of that "second coming".

Before we look at the words Paul uses to describe our hope after the Acts period; after Israel were set aside, it might be helpful to review our Lord's ascension. Our Lord's ascension into heaven was in three stages.

Stage 1.

The Lord ascended from the Mount of Olives near Jerusalem; His city.

[Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount Of Olive Grove, which is a sabbath day's journey from Jerusalem. Act 1:12](#)

Stage 2.

The Lord ascended through the clouds which hid Him from their sight.

[And saying these things, as they watched, He was taken up. And a cloud received Him out of their sight. Act 1:9](#)

Stage 3.

The Lord was seated at God's right hand.

[Therefore being exalted to the right of God, Act 2:33](#)

No time gap occurred between any stages of the Lord's ascent into heaven and there is no time gap in the reverse order when He descends out of Heaven at His "second coming". Here are the Lord's "second coming" three stages again.

Stage 1.

The Lord appears, seated at the Father's right hand and the Greek words are phaneroo and epiphaneia. We with our church will be taken and appear with Him there. No more hidden Lord Christ, He will be visible in heavenly places and the earth beneath.

Stage 2.

The Lord descends out of Heaven through the clouds and the air. The Greek word is parousia. Believers of another church go to meet Him as He descends and no one is going back into heaven at this stage. The Lord and this group return to the earth.

Stage 3.

The Lord's descent concludes on the Mount of Olives. The Greek word is also parousia. The church, Israel, slowly recognizes Him they repent and are cleansed and re-gathered.

Three different groups of believers (churches) participate in the three different stages of our Lord "second coming".

Up until the end of the book of Acts Israel remained God's people and the hope for all was the Kingdom of Heaven on the earth. We have seen the Feasts of Israel in Thessalonians and Corinthians (and Matthew and Revelation). The feasts of Israel unveil God's plan for Israel and the earth, not God's plan for the Church which is His body in heavenly places.

In Thessalonians Paul wrote about the antichrist and his image he would set up in Israel's temple (compare Rev.13, 14). These prophetic events occur in the last days of Israel. After the tribulation (Matt.24:29 & Acts 14:22) the Lord will return to the earth at the fulfillment of the feast of Trumpets to save and re-gather Israel. The believers of that time (chaste virgins) would go up and "meet" the Lord and return to the earth with Him. On the earth they will judge angels and the world see 1Cor.6:1-3.

During the Gospels and Acts period, the Lord, Paul, Peter and John spoke or wrote about all three stages of the Lord's coming. The Lord spoke about His parousia and Paul, Peter and John used phaneroo, parousia and epiphaneia to describe the Lord's return to the earth as the hope at that time. At that time no one indicated that there would be a company of believers who would participate in stage 1 (phaneroo & epiphaneia) of the Lord's "second coming". The reason why no one wrote about anyone participating in Stage 1 of the Lord's descent is because the truth for today had not been revealed during the gospels and the Acts period. Israel still stood as God's people until Acts 28.

During Acts, all these events were expected to be fulfilled in the very near future but at Acts 28, these things were postponed. God introduced a different purpose with a different hope which has lasted for nearly 2000 years.

During Acts Paul wrote Galatians, 1&2Corinthians, 1&2 Thessalonians, Hebrews and Romans. In those letters the Lord's parousia was the hope, that is, stages 2 and 3 of His "second coming". Here are the Acts period verses where Paul uses parousia. 1Cor.15:23, 1Thess.2:19, 3:13, 4:15, 5:23, 2Thess.2:1 and 2:8. Seven times Paul uses parousia in regard to the hope of the Acts period.

During Acts Paul also used parousia in reference to the arrival of himself and his friends, please compare these passages 1Cor.16:17, 2Cor.7:6-7 and 10:10. Four times during Acts Paul uses parousia in reference to the arrival; the personal presence, of his friends or himself.

Now let us compare this same word after Acts 28, after Israel was put to one side and the hope of Thessalonians was postponed.

In the letters written after Acts 28, namely Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1&2 Timothy, Titus and Philemon, Paul never uses the word parousia in association with the new hope. There is not one use of parousia to describe the new hope after Acts 28. The Holy Spirit guides us with the words of Scripture.

In the same letters written after Acts 28, when the new dispensation of the grace of God was revealed, Paul uses parousia twice in reference to his desire to visit the Philippians, see Phils.1:26 and 2:12. Notice the consistent use of parousia, Paul was coming TO them. After Acts 28, only two references to parousia in total and none refer to our hope.

During Acts Paul uses epiphaneia once in Thessalonians but only as a feature of the Lord's parousia, that is, His return to the earth.

After Acts when the hope had changed, Paul uses epiphaneia five times. Four refer to our hope. See 1Tim.6:14, 2Tim.1:10, 4:1, 8 and Titus 2:13.

Dear reader, there was a change at the end of the book of Acts. The hope of the Acts period was to meet the Lord as He descended to the earth. The believers of that time were to participate in stages 2 and 3 of the Lord's "second coming". This hope was postponed but at the Lord's second coming. Those believers of that time will participate in this meeting in the clouds and air but we will not.

After Acts, Paul was given the truth for today. We live in a 2000 year period which divides those ends of the ages that Paul wrote about during Acts. Our hope is to be seated in the heavenly places with our Lord and Head Christ Jesus. Our hope is realized at stage 1 of our Lord's second coming.

I pray we are beginning to see why the "rapture" is a deception, turning us away from the hope before us today and a crown of righteousness.

Some charts follow showing the difference between the Gospels, the Acts period and the post Acts periods.

The first chart shows no break between the Gospels the Acts and the Trumpet coming of the Lord. This is exactly how the believers at that time understood the times in which they lived. They knew nothing about "the church which is His Body" in this present time.

God stopped the prophetic clock at Acts 28, postponing His purposes for Israel and the World and introduced something completely unknown for believers through Paul and only Paul.

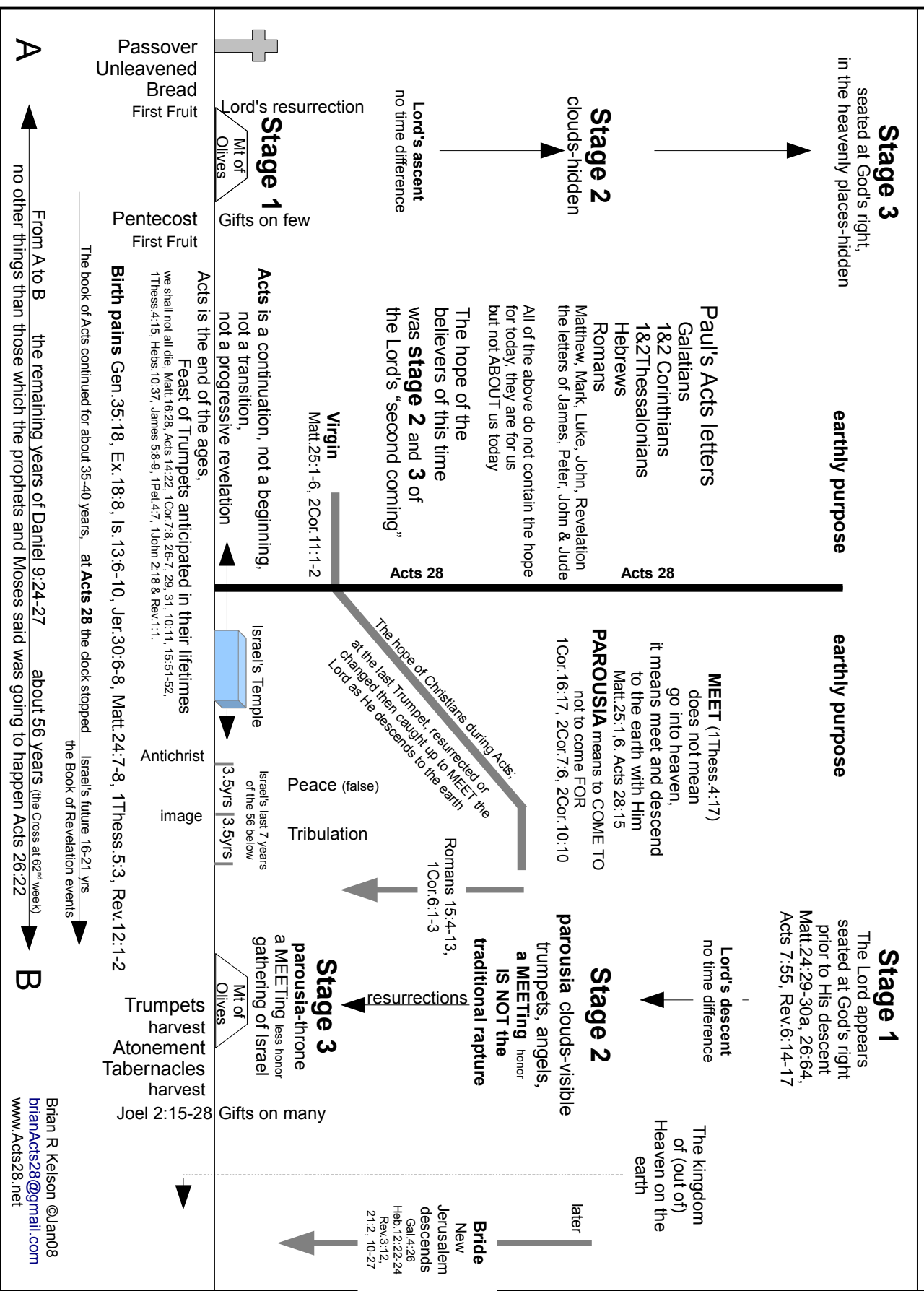
The second chart shows the interval in which we live. This present parenthetical dispensation of the grace of God started after Acts 28 and has been in operation for nearly 2000 years. This new dispensation was not revealed at any other time or to any other person other than Paul after Acts 28. We seek in vain to find anything about it in the O.T., the Gospels or the Acts period. The second chart shows the new hope of this present new dispensation.

Can we appreciate how dangerous and blinding our denominational tradition is that "the church started at Pentecost"? What confusion this has caused!

These charts do not show all the details at this point. I realize there are other questions to be addressed which I will do towards the end and in the appendixes. Are we resurrected at or before the last Trumpet? When is the out resurrection of Philippians 3? Will the Church which is His Body descend with Christ to the earth? May the Lord give all of us understanding in these things.

These charts are available on <http://www.acts28.net/chartsappearing.html>

This chart shows the hope prior to Acts 28 and the Scriptures on it do not show the church which is His Body or its hope



this chart shows how the present heavenly dispensation fits between the interrupted earthly one

Stage 3

seated at God's right,
in the heavenly places-hidden

Our Hope

The Head seated at God's right
The Body seated together
in the heavenly places
when He appears, we appear WITH HIM

Stage 1

phaneroo, epiphaneia
The Lord appears seated at God's right

earthly purpose

heavenly purpose

earthly purpose

Lord's descent
no time difference

Paul's Acts letters

Paul's post Acts letters

Stage 2

clouds-hidden

Galatians
1&2 Corinthians
1&2 Thessalonians
Hebrews
Romans

Ephesians
Philippians
Colossians
1&2 Timothy
Titus, Philemon

Meet (1Thess.4:17)
does not mean
go back to heaven
Matt.25:1-6, Acts 28:15

Stage 2

parousia clouds-visible
trumpets, angels,

(these letters do not contain
the hope for today,
they are not ABOUT us)

(these letters are
about us today, 2008,
only here is our hope
found)

a meeting
IS NOT the
traditional rapture

Lord's ascent
no time difference

The hope of the
believers of this time
was **stage 2** and **3** of
the Lord's "second coming"

We have been raised
and seated together
in the heavens
Eph.2:4-7(not by works)

1Cor.1:8, 15:52,
1&2 Thess. Revelation

resurrector
Bride
New
Jerusalem
descend
Gal.4:26
Heb.12:22-24

Virgin
Matt.25:1-6, 2Cor.11:1-2

Stage 1



Lord's resurrection
Mt of Olives

Acts is a continuation,
not a beginning, not a transition

Our hope is **stage 1**
of His "second coming"

Israel put aside for a time
the end of the ages postponed

Gifts on many

Stage 3

parousia-throne
gathering of Israel

The end of the ages to Trumpets

Passover
Unleavened Bread
First Fruit

Pentecost
First Fruit

A

From A to B about 56 years

B

16-21 yrs
the Book of Revelation

Trumpets
harvest
Atonement

Tabernacles
harvest

Chapter twenty four

New Hope-Paul's words either side of Acts 28

By comparing spiritual with spiritual we have found different words used in relation to the Lord's "second coming". The Bible study rules demand we distinguish, not extinguish things that differ;

And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in full knowledge and in all perception; that you may distinguish between things that differ, that you may be sincere and without offense until the day of Jesus Christ, Php 1:9-10

During the Acts period Peter & John used phaneroo and parousia and Paul epiphaneia and parousia to describe the Lord's second coming. However, the hope held was the Lord's return to the earth where they were expecting to rule and judge the world and angels. When these apostles wrote during the Acts period, they were waiting for the Lord's parousia and said nothing of anyone participating in the phaneroo or epi-phaneroo.

In recent chapters we examined these words used by Paul in his writings during Acts and observed the change use of those same words after the close of the book of Acts.

At Acts 28:25, Israel were "let go" and for nearly 2000 years God's purpose for the earth through that great nation has been postponed. The hope of the parousia as found in 1Thess.4, commonly called "the rapture" was also postponed and a new hope revealed for the new dispensation. The dispensation of the grace of God, The Mystery of Ephesians 3, was given to Paul alone by revelation and only Paul's post Acts epistles contain the hope for us believers today. 1 Thess.4 is not a post Acts letter and "the rapture" is not the hope for today.

Even though Acts 28 saw a change in dispensation, it did not mean a change in the timing of the new hope which is also at the "second coming". The new hope of the appearing was not some new and totally different event but a change in association with the stages of that event. In Acts believers were looking for stage 2 and 3 of the Lord's return to the earth.

The appearing takes place at the first stage of the second coming and only after Acts 28 did the Lord reveal that a called out company was associated with this aspect of His return. This was a very new and previously unknown hope. The appearing was not new and unknown, it was previously written about but no one knew that believers would appear with Him in the heavenly places.

For this reason we should not be surprised to see Paul using words and phrases that are associated with the Lord's coming in power and glory during and after Acts. He might even use related terms across the dispensational boundary such as 2Thess.2:7 and 1Tim.3:16 where the system of the lie is counteracted by the system of the truth at the appearing of Him who is invisible.

Here are some phrases which occur in Paul's Acts and post Acts letters. When we realize they refer to events associated with the Lord's return and all hopes are realized at that return, then they are not a cause of confusion and concern but a confirmation that the same "second coming" is in view; only the aspect of that second coming has changed.

The following references in Paul are to the Day of Christ, the day of the Lord Jesus and variations both before and after Acts 28. The Day of the Lord includes all those things up to and including His return in glory. The Day of Christ and variants refers to the time when He judges His servants after He returns. All servants in all spheres will be judged in "that day".

Acts epistles.

He shall also confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. [1Co 1:8](#)
to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. [1Co 5:5](#)
each one's work shall be revealed. For the Day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try each one's work as to what kind it is. If anyone's work which he built remains, he shall receive a reward. [1Co 3:13-14](#)
even as you have recognized us in part, that we are your rejoicing, even as you also are ours in the day of the Lord Jesus. [2Co 1:14](#)

Post Acts epistles.

being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ, [Php 1:6](#)
that you may distinguish between things that differ, that you may be sincere and without offense until the day of Jesus Christ, [Php 1:10](#)
holding forth the Word of Life, so that I may rejoice with you in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain nor labored in vain. [Php 2:16](#)
For this cause I also suffer these things; but I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that He is able to guard My deposit unto that Day. [2Ti 1:12](#)
May the Lord grant to him that he may find mercy from the Lord in that Day. And in what things he ministered to me at Ephesus, you know very well. [2Ti 1:18](#)
Now there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that Day; and not to me only, but also to all those who love His appearing. [2Ti 4:8](#)

As right dividers of the Word of Truth, we certainly distinguish things that differ, but we also acknowledge things that are fundamental, eternal if you will, things that are featured in all dispensations. All will be judged in the same Day of the Lord Christ when he renders to each servant according to the "talents" given.

We have no issue to read of redemption through His blood and the forgiveness of sins in Ephesians 1:7 because we know there is redemption and forgiveness for all companies in the same finished work of our Lord on the cross. Not every detail of our present calling was "hidden in God", the present dispensation was hidden but some things that construct our calling are common to all callings.

We are aware that the “elect remnant” of prophecy of the Acts period (Romans 9:22-27, 11:5-6) enjoyed the righteousness of God by faith through grace. Do we enjoy righteousness any other way? Of course not! However, that Acts’ period remnant was going to the earth (Acts 13, Roms.15) which begins at the “second coming” while we are going to the above heavens which also begins at the “second coming”. The above heavens and the earth are part of the Kingdom of the Lord.

As I grew in understanding of these things, what seemed to be conflicting passages in both sets of Paul’s epistles became clear and illuminating.

Only once in the Acts period did Paul use epiphaneia in relation to the Lord’s second coming found in 2Thess. 2:8. In that passage it is translated “brightness” and only as it relates to the Lord’s coming (parousia) with all His angels back to the earth. IN this once only use Paul does not remotely suggest anyone was participating in that epiphaneia. However, after Acts 28 look at how Paul uses this same word.

Here are the references to epiphaneia in the post acts epistles and the first occurrence is rather stunning:

Fight the good fight of faith. Lay hold on eternal life, to which you are also called and have professed a good profession before many witnesses. I charge you before God (who makes all things alive) and in the sight of Christ Jesus (who witnessed the good confession to Pontius Pilate), that you keep the commandment without spot and without blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. For He in His own time will reveal who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, (cp 1Tim.1:17). who alone has immortality, dwelling in light which cannot be approached, whom no one of men have seen, nor can see; to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen. 1Ti 6:12-16

Since we know the appearing (epiphaneia) is associated with our calling in the above heavens, we might ask why it is Paul uses the Lord’s earthly title of King of Kings and Lord of Lords and not His above heavenly title of Head in this passage. Why does Paul use a phrase found in the book of Revelation in this post Acts epistle? We shall answer these questions in the following chapters.

Here are the remaining references to epiphaneia in Paul’s post Acts letters and please note the judgment for works context;

Therefore you should not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner. who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, ... given us in Christ Jesus before the eternal times. But it is now having been manifested by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, .. to which I am appointed a preacher and an apostle and a teacher of the nations. 2Ti 1:8-11

Therefore I solemnly witness before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who is going to judge the living and the dead according to His appearance and His kingdom, 2Ti 4:1

Notice in this following verse “the Day (of Christ)”, judgment and the appearing are in the same mind of Paul.

Now there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that Day; and not to me only, but also to all those who love His appearing. 2Ti 4:8

Again, notice the worthy walk is the context of Titus and the appearing. You and I will be judged for our walk at the appearing, see 2Tim.4:1 above:

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that having denied ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live discreetly, righteously and godly, in this present world, looking for the blessed hope, and the appearance of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify to Himself a special people, zealous of good works.

Tit 2:11-14

It is interesting to note our calling began with an appearing and concludes with an appearing.

What we have seen so far suggested in the Scriptures is that the main three hopes of the New Testament are realized at the Lord's second coming. No group of believers gets to be with the Lord before anyone else. At the Lord's second coming He will be fully seen as the Head, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the Priest King and the Bridegroom. All His titles in "that day" will be fully known and operational for each separate company in their different inheritances.

All companies will be "headed up in Christ" (Eph.1:10) when He returns to the earth after the tribulation. As I have noted before, we will not be returning to the earth with Him since our inheritance is in the heavenly places.

Some of you might be alarmed at the thought of going through the tribulation but the tribulation doesn't take place in America, Australia or any other part of the world save the land of Israel and those nations of prophecy immediately around Israel. However, we have been warned that we will experience "perilous times" (2Tim.3:1), so please don't hold onto some "get out of jail free" card that is falsely provided by the traditional "rapture" out before the hard times come theory. The remnant of the future tribulation times will be preserved ("saved") during the tribulation and if we heed the warnings of Scripture, we shall also be helped through the hard times fast approaching.

Chapter twenty five

New Hope-appearing and 1Timothy 6

These final few chapters will address the link of the hope in the post Acts epistles which ties our hope to the second coming of the Lord at Trumpet as found in Matthew, Thessalonians and Revelation.

After that we will make some suggestions about the “out resurrection” of Philippians 3 as it relates to the resurrection of Christ as the seed of David.

For many years the timing of the appearing was problematic for me. As always, the Word of God is never the problem, it was my own ignorance.

My problem was that I thought everything about the Mystery, that is the dispensation of the grace of God of Ephesians 3 and Colossians 1, was hidden in God. This is not the case. Redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, and righteousness by grace through faith were never hidden away from ages and generations and must never be understood as the Mystery. Grace is not the Mystery; love is not the Mystery yet praise God these elements are also found in the Mystery. Without the finished work of Christ not one calling of God will stand. The cross of Christ is not the Mystery, but some of the work accomplished there was not revealed in the Gospels or Acts it was still “hidden in God” until after Acts 28. See “by the blood and by the cross” in Eph.2:13-16

Likewise the appearing, the first stage of our Lord’s second coming was never “hidden in God”. What was hidden in God and away from ages and generations was that a company would appear in heavenly places with Him. By confusing the things hidden with the things apparent, we invented a false hope called the “rapture” and then to make the error worse, we placed it in a false timeframe. We put it a long time before the second coming of the Lord. The rapture totally disarms Christians from the perilous times coming by lying to them that there will be a secret escape from that which God has clearly said we will experience.

Returning to our real hope the appearing, we find in the post Acts first letter of Paul to Timothy, passages that link the appearing (epiphaneia) with the Trumpets and second coming of the Lord. Before examining an incredible phrase I’ll supply a simple structure of 1Timothy based on one by Mr. Stuart Allen as found in the Berean Expositor Vol.48, page 42.

Structure 1 Timothy.

A. 1:1-2. Greetings.

B. 1:3-20. Teach no other. (doubts, shipwreck).

Godly dispensation, Paul's ministry, charge.

The King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise GOD.

C. 2:1-7. Salvation of all men. (including Kings?).

The MAN Christ Jesus, to be testified in due time.

D. 2:8-3:15 These things I write.

E. 3:15, 16. The Mystery of godliness

God manifested (phaneroo) in flesh

Justified (vindicated) in the Spirit

Seen of Angels

Preached among Gentiles (see Col.1:27 among)

Believed on in the world

Received up into Glory (currently hid in God Col.3:3)

E. 4:1-8. Apostasy. Demons

C. 4:9-12. Saviour of all men. The Living God.

D. 4:13-6:2. These things teach.

B. 6:3-20. Teach otherwise. (waste, error).

Timothy's fight, calling & charge,

the appearing (epiphaneia). In his times, He will show.

Only Potentate, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords,

immortality alone, in the light, unapproachable, unseen.

Amen.

A. 6:21 Greetings.

It is truly wonderful that the first occurrence of the word appearing (epiphaneia) after Acts 28, occurs in this wonderful letter. The first of Timothy speaks of our Lord's current hidden status but also of that future "time"; a due time, a unique time when He will be shown forth.

My past problems with this letter were based on such questions as, why would Paul refer to the ascended Lord Christ with all those earthly titles? If Christ was seated at the Father's right hand in the heavenly places, then surely the title of Head (Eph.1:22) would have been more appropriate. But we have King, the only Potentate, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and it is the man Christ revealed as GOD with these all encompassing titles. Of course now I realize that at the moment of our Lord's appearing He will appear through every sphere as God, the Man Christ Jesus, the mystery of godliness demystified if you will. Because

He will appear in every sphere He appears bearing every rank and authority the Father has given Him.

This glorious appearing is the beginning of His Kingdom which spans from the heights of heaven to the earth beneath. The appearing is the first stage of His second coming and we are going to share in this glorious all sphere appearing. What an honour!

All these titles prove to us that His appearing is for all and seen in all spheres and not just the above heavens. In other words, while our Lord appears seated at the Father's right hand in heavenly places, He appears to all in all spheres. Therefore the timing of the appearing is not something unique to our calling.

As we have seen, this is the first occurrence of epiphaneia after Acts 28 and Paul's only use of epiphaneia before Acts 28 is found in 2Thess.2;

[And now you know what holds back, for him to be revealed \(apocalypse\) in his own time. For the mystery of lawlessness \(iniquity\) is already working, only he *is* now holding back until it comes out of *the* midst. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the breath of His mouth and shall destroy with the brightness \(epiphaneia\) of His coming \(parousia\), whose coming \(parousia\) is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, 2Th 2:6-9](#)

So in 2Thess.2 we have the mystery of iniquity or lawlessness and the appearing or brightness of our Lord's coming; His parousia. In 1Tim.6 we have the mystery of godliness and the appearing, the unseen One revealed in His due time.

These two "systems", the mystery of lawlessness and the mystery of godliness come together in resolution at the appearing of our Lord. Mr. Allen puts this rather eloquently;

"We should note that the "Mystery of godliness" is in direct opposition to the "mystery of iniquity" and both find their expression in a person (1) the Lord Jesus Christ and (2) the man of sin, the son of perdition, energized by Satan, and both represent a climax of revelation of these two opposing forces. Let us never forget that Christ is Himself, the Mystery (secret) of God (Col.2:2 R.V.)-Who later became "manifest in the flesh". BE.Vol.48 page 225

At the Lord's coming, the LIE is exposed, its exponents destroyed and incapacitated and truth reigns. Compare the truth and the lie in 2Thess.2:10-11.

In 1Tim.6 we find an amazing link between the appearing and the second coming of the Lord in power. Please note the following powerful title in this verse;

[For He in His own time will reveal who is the blessed and only Potentate, the **King of kings and Lord of lords**, 1Ti 6:15](#)

It is quite stunning to note that the title King of Kings and Lord of Lords only occurs in one other place in the New Testament as follows;

And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all His servants, and the ones fearing Him, the small and great. And I heard as the sound of a great multitude, ... saying, Hallelujah! For the Lord God omnipotent reigns! Let us be glad and rejoice and we will give glory to Him. For the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has prepared herself. [Rev 19:5-7](#)

And I saw Heaven opened. And behold, a white horse! And He sitting on him was called Faithful and True. And in righteousness He judges and makes war. And His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head many crowns. And He had a name written, one that no one knew except Himself. And He had been clothed in a garment dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies in Heaven followed Him on white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, so that with it He should strike the nations. And He will shepherd them with a rod of iron. And He treads the winepress of the wine of the anger and of the wrath of Almighty God. And He has on His garment, and on His thigh a name written, **KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS**. [Rev 19:11-16](#)

The title King of Kings and Lord of Lords is the link between 1Tim.6 and Revelation 19. It is powerful and provides the key to understanding the timing of the appearing, the hope before us today. The appearing in 1Tim.6 is linked with the apocalypse, not before.

Remember, this appearing was never hidden in God but no revelation had been given that any company would participate in this great blazing forth of the unseen God until after Acts 28.

Please note, I am not suggesting we are descending to the earthly marriage supper of the Lamb or that we will be part of the armies of heaven descending with Him to the earth, I am simply trying to show that in my view the Scriptures are clear, the “appearing” is the first stage of the Lord’s second coming; His great manifestation to all in every sphere.

Chapter twenty six

New Hope –appearing, after the tribulation

The Bible teaches us that hope is an anchor (Hebs.6:19), something which will hold us fast in the disturbing waves of doctrine which surround us. Hope is a wonderful security when the entire world is in a flap. We find Paul reminding us to hold hope fast and “not be moved away” from it;
since indeed you are continuing in the faith, having been firmly established and steadfast, and are not being shifted away from the hope* (ALT) Col 1:23

Our hope is not vague or confusing. It is one thing to say “my hope is in the Lord Jesus”, but Abraham and the 12 apostles hoped in the Lord Jesus and their hope as regards to inheritance is not the same as ours. We must distinguish things differing. All of God’s children have life in the Lord, but God has families, some destined for heaven, some for the earth;
Because of this, I bow my knees towards the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom every family in [the] heavens and on earth is named, (ALT) Eph 3:14-15

Each family looks for the Lord’s second coming. At the Lord’s second coming He takes control of His kingdom which stretches from the heights of heaven to the earth beneath;
Therefore I solemnly witness before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who is going to judge the living and the dead according to His appearance and His kingdom, 2Ti 4:1

Every company or family hopes in the Lord Jesus but not every family has been told to look for the same aspect of the Lord’s second coming. We have been told to look for the Lord’s appearing, the first stage of His second coming. As we have shown in previous chapters, this is not the “rapture” of 1 Thess.4. The appearing of the Lord is an event which takes place above the clouds and air. The appearing takes place where Christ is seated at the Father’s right hand;
If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God. Col 3:1
When Christ our Life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory. Col 3:4
When Christ, who is our life, shall be manifested, then shall ye also with him be manifested in glory. (RV) Col 3:4

We have searched for the first occurrence of the word epiphaneia (also translated appearing) in the post Acts letters of Paul and found it here;
*Fight the good fight of faith. Lay hold on eternal life, to which you are also called and have professed a good profession before many witnesses. that you keep the commandment without spot and without blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. For He in His own time will reveal who is the blessed and only Potentate, the **King of kings and Lord of lords,*** 1Ti 6:12-15

We found this title of the Lord (King of kings and Lord of Lords) a great linking title which proves that the appearing is part of our Lord's second coming. The only other place this title occurs is in the book of Revelation and the reader should consider these passages;

And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all His servants, and the ones fearing Him, the small and great. And I heard as the sound of a great multitude, ... saying, Hallelujah! For the Lord God omnipotent reigns! [Rev 19:5-6](#)

And out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, so that with it He should strike the nations. And He will shepherd them with a rod of iron. And He treads the winepress of the wine of the anger and of the wrath of Almighty God. And He has on *His* garment, and on His thigh a name written, **KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS**. [Rev 19:15-16](#)

And the seventh angel TRUMPETed. And there were great voices in Heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world have become *the kingdoms* of our Lord, and of His Christ. And He will reign forever and ever. [Rev 11:15](#)

Staying in the book of Revelation we have another passage regarding resurrection which is helpful;

And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. The second death has no authority over these, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and will reign with Him a thousand years. [Rev 20:4-6](#)

The "first" or foremost resurrection is for the "blessed" some of whom will also reign with Christ. This resurrection is at the last Trumpet. Now the reader should be very careful here. I am not saying we are the "blessed" in this passage. We are not "priests" as per Ex.19:6, Isaiah 61:6, Roms.12:1 and 1Peter 2:5-9. What we can take from this passage is that at this resurrection, which takes place at the Lord's second coming, faithful ones begin their reign with Christ. Since our hope is also realized at the Lord's second coming, we shall also be resurrected at this time. We will not be resurrected to the earth as priests and kings, Rev.1:6. We will not be resurrected to the air and clouds but we will be resurrected to the heavenly places where some of us will reign with Him.

In the post acts letters of Paul I cannot find one passage which reveals any different time of general resurrection for the church which is His Body. If our company is to be resurrected prior to every other company, then Paul is silent about it. If our apostle is silent then we can only maintain his previous teaching as being the universal doctrine on the matter.

Paul spoke at length about resurrection in 1Cor.15 and in a condensed way in 1Thess.4. Both of these contain the last Trumpet of Revelation and Matt.24. as the timing of resurrection. Again, the reader should be careful. I am not saying we are those who will go to the meeting in 1Thess.4 to return to the restored Kingdom of Isaiah 25 and Hosea 13 as found in 1Cor.15:54-55. What I am saying is that since we do not have any alternative post Acts expositions by Paul as to the timing of our resurrection, then we maintain that the general testimony of the NT regarding resurrection includes us. The foremost resurrection at the last trumpet is the resurrection for all companies of believers.

This position fills Christians with great concern. They immediately assume they have to face the great tribulation and suffer the wrath of God. This fearful position is incorrect on two counts. The great tribulation will not be found in America or Australia and the great tribulation and wrath is on the unfaithful, though some of the faithful in Israel during that time will be martyred.

First of all, the great tribulation is particularly associated with Israel and the land of Israel. It is called the “day of Jacob’s trouble” (Jer.30:7). In my opinion, the “world” of prophecy is the world around the nation of Israel. We are not Israel and these things have little to do with us as members of the Church which is His Body.

Secondly, most of the faithful associated with the earthly purposes of God were to be preserved during the tribulation. The tribulation is not for the faithful Israelites or the elect remnant of that Acts period. The tribulation and wrath is for unrepentant Israel, those who are deceived and believe the lie. The reader might like to prayerfully consider Jer.30:7, Joel 2:32, Matt.3:7-10, Acts 2:40, Acts 13:40-41, 1Cor.1:4-9, 1Thess.5:1-9 and Rev.12:6, 13-17. Yes, some of the faithful during the tribulation will suffer as they stand for truth, but in general, the Lord preserves the faithful as He preserved Israel during the judgments on Egypt.

On these two points we should not be concerned that we will “go through” the great tribulation. What we should be concerned about is the rapidly declining authority of God’s Word in the “churches” and the growing evil in the world around us. These things Paul plainly warned us about are happening before our eyes.

I believe the last days are fast approaching. Maybe some of us will suffer death at the hand of the ungodly in our world; already Christians are dying for their faith, see <http://www.persecution.org/suffering/index.php>

Here is Paul’s prophetic warning of the ends times for us in the world.

But the Spirit expressly says that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and teachings of demons, [1Ti 4:1](#)

For a time will be when they will not endure sound doctrine, but they will heap up teachers to themselves according to their own lusts, tickling the ear. [2Ti 4:3](#)

Know this also, that in *the* last days grievous times will be at hand. For men will be self-lovers, money-lovers, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, unyielding, false accusers, without self-control, savage, despisers of good, traitors, reckless, puffed up, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power of it; even turn away from these. [2Ti 3:1-5](#)

This passage above is not talking about the world around us but the state of organized religion. Watch out for these things coming to a nice church near you.

Once again we make a brief summary. All hopes are realized at the Lord’s second coming. The different hopes for the three companies of the N.T. are realized within the three stages of the Lord’s second coming.

1. He appears in the heavenly places and we will appear with Him there. The Church which is His Body.

2. The Lord then descends out of Heaven and another company of believers are caught up to meet Him as He descends to the earth. The Church of the Firstborn, the Israel of God also called the elect remnant (of prophecy).

3. The Lord stands upon the Mount of Olives, He saves the remaining Israelis and the dispersed are re-gathered into their land. The Church which is Israel.

At the Lord's second coming there is a resurrection of the faithful, including us. However, the different companies will be raised to that particular stage of the Lord's second coming which relates to their place of blessing. We will be resurrected to the heavenly places. The remnant of the Acts period and before will be raised to the air and the clouds and some of Israel will be resurrected to the earth.

The Lord will then reign for one thousand years and in each place of blessing there will be those who will reign with Him. Some of the Church which is His Body will reign in the heavenly places. Some of the Church of the Firstborn will reign with Christ in Israel and the world.

Chapter twenty seven

New Hope-Phils.3:11, the out resurrection

We now arrive at a very exciting stage. We examine this verse in particular; [if by any means I might attain to the resurrection of the dead. Php 3:11](#)

To determine exactly what it was Paul wanted to “attain” we will need to review the chapter structurally to help determine the context and then build our opinions from the great theme found within. After that we will examine the Lord’s life and resurrection as a key to deeper understanding.

First of all we need to know the views about this particular verse.

There are many expositors who see this resurrection as being the general resurrection which takes place at the Lord’s second coming. In other words, this is the resurrection assured by faith in Christ and associated with the gift of eternal life. Others feel this resurrection is something “better” in either time or quality or both; something that is dependent upon a life lived in faithfulness rather than the initial faith into Christ.

Before we make any decision one way or the other, let us examine the context which is essential in any diligent study. Here is a structure of Philippians showing the relationship of chapter 3 to the rest of the letter. This structure is based on one by Mr. C.H.Welch, found in his book “The Testimony of the Lord’s Prisoner” pg. 152.

Structure Philippians.

A.1:1-2. Greetings. Bishops and Deacons.

B.1 1:3-26 Fellowship in Gospel from 1st day

C. 1:27-2:5. Manner of life here. Stand fast, mind of Christ now

D. 2:6-11 Seven fold humility of Christ who endured, exalted.

Resurrection Glory

E. 2:12-17 Appeal. Work out our Salvation

F. 2:17-30 Example of Paul, Timothy and Epaphroditus

E. 3:1-3. Appeal. Beware

D. 3:4-19. Seven fold loss of Paul who presses on for the prize.

To know Christ’s resurrection power

C. 3:20-4:10 Manner of life there. Stand Fast. Body of Glory then

B. 4:11-20. Fellowship in beginning of Gospel.

A. 4:21-23. Greetings. Caesar’s household.

It is very important that we see the relationship between the two sections marked “D”. The Lord humbled Himself and lived a life of obedience. The cross is not seen as the means of salvation in Philippians but an emblem of endurance in the walk (cp Matt.10:38, 16:24). Having endured the cross our Lord was highly exalted and this balances Paul’s desire “to know Him” and the power of His resurrection and presses on for the prize.

Philippians is not an epistle about the elemental things of Salvation. It is not about “becoming” a Christian; it is about working out our salvation as a Christian (Phils.2:12). We do not work for our Salvation. We are saved by grace through faith unto good works, striving to hear the “well done thou good and faithful servant” (Matt.25:21, 23).

Here is the passage leading up to the resurrection Paul hoped to “attain”:

But whatever things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. But no, rather, I also count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them to be dung, so that I may win Christ and be found in Him; not having my own righteousness, which is of the Law, but through the faith(fullness) of Christ, the righteousness of God by faith, that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable to His death; [Php 3:7-10](#)

Look at Paul’s great hunger in the passage above. He wanted to “win Christ”; to be “found in Christ” and to “know Him”. Paul is an old man who had certainly met and “knew” Christ. Paul did not need to know about Christ’s sufferings but wanted to know the “fellowship” of them. Paul did not need to know about Christ’s death but wanted to be made conformable to it. Paul did not desire to know about the general resurrection which we all have in Christ, he had already written 1Cor.15. Paul wanted to know the “power of His resurrection” which is linked to a resurrection that could be “attained”. Christ’s resurrection was different to the general resurrection as to time and quality. Our Lord was raised out from among other dead believers who would rise later. This is what Paul wanted to know.

Paul was willing to use any means to attain that same resurrection which was like the “power” of the Lord’s resurrection.

[if by any means I might attain to the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I am pressing on, if I may lay hold of that for which I also was taken hold of by Christ Jesus. \[Php 3:11-12\]\(#\)](#)

The following phrases in this passage are not phrases of established fact but phrases of hope with the end uncertain. Paul says “if by any means” and “not as though I had already attained” and (not as though I were) “already perfect” but I am “pressing on if I may” lay hold of something.

If Paul was hoping “if by any means” to attain this resurrection then this resurrection cannot be the general one we all have in Christ. The one we have in Christ is part of God’s gift, not the result of faithfulness like Christ’s faithfulness.

Paul's life in the past unfolds in Phils.3: 4 through 7. Notice this is about how Paul "worked" in the past, which works he discarded in order that through a walk that pressed onwards "in Christ" he might attain something over and above that which he already had "in Christ".

Paul's new life and the gains he wanted to make can be found in verses 8 through 14. Paul's objectives or gains were not secure when Paul wrote this letter. We simplify the section as follows;

- A1. 3:8. Excellency (higher value) of the knowledge of Christ.
 - b. to Win Christ
- A2. 3:9. Be found "in Him".
 - b. the faithfulness of Christ. Righteousness by faithfulness (cp James)
- A3. 3:10. To know Him
 - b. Power of His resurrection. Fellowship of His sufferings,
conformable to His death.
- A4. 3:11. If by any means.
 - b. Attain the (out) resurrection from the dead.
- A5. 3:12 I follow, am pressing on
 - b. Not as though I had attained, if I may take hold of....
- A6. 3:13-14. I do not reckon I have taken possession, forgetting, reaching forward, pressing
 - b. for the prize of the high calling.

We cannot escape the thread weaving from verse 8 to verse 14. Paul expresses his heart felt desires and the objective those desires entertained. Please follow the A and b sections to understand the mind of Paul here. Paul reached forth for some things he did not have.

In A1 Paul discards his previous life for the higher value of the knowledge of Christ in order to win Christ. This has nothing to do with Paul's Damascus road experience.

In A2 Paul wants to be found in Christ where a "righteousness of God" exists. But every believer is "in Christ" upon believing (Eph.1:13) and is righteous by grace through faith upon believing, see Romans 3:20-22. This is not what Paul is seeking; he already had that righteousness. He seeks righteousness by the same faithfulness of Christ not faith IN Christ.

Remember that Cornelius was a devout man and one fearing God whose fear of God produced "works of righteousness". These works of righteousness were acknowledged by God who granted this man "repentance unto life". See Acts 10:1-4, 43 & 11:18. Works of righteousness do not save us, but they should be found in the faithful walk. Please do not recoil from the thought that Peter, Paul and James are on the same page in the matters of maturing of faith, perfection and a righteous walk of obedient faith. We don't have space to expand this

thought but Philippians 3 is not the apostle Paul desiring to become a Christian again as if he somehow lost the righteousness by faith through grace he received when he first believed. No! It is Paul desiring to finish the worthy walk and attain the righteousness of God by mature faith obedience. In Philippians there was something which may or may not be realized and that is not God's gift of eternal life.

Paul wanted the same faithfulness of Christ who endured all things. It was Paul's desire to be found in Christ with this righteousness. I remind my readers that the crown of righteousness is not awarded by the righteous Judge to all those who have initial faith in Christ but it is for those who have fought a good fight, who have finished their course, who have kept the faith (doctrine) and who have loved Christ's appearing;

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith. Now there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that Day; and not to me only, but also to all those who love His appearing. 2Ti 4:7-8

In A3, Paul already knows Christ but wants to know Him, that is, the power of Christ's resurrection. To attain a similar resurrection as Christ's, Paul was willing to endure similar sufferings and death. Compare Phils.1:29-30 and 20-21 where Paul does not say he will gain Christ when he dies, but he wants Christ to gain something by his death.

In A4 Paul wants these things "if by any means" he might "attain" or "arrive at" this resurrection. This phrase "if by any means" is found in Acts 27:12 where the sailors strived to reach Phoenix, they used "any means" but they never made it. If by any means is not a confident assurance of outcome. A5 affirms this uncertainty by plain statement of the apostle.

A6 brings the theme back to its initial objective where "win Christ" now appears as the "prize".

It is my conclusion that the resurrection in this passage is a special resurrection, one that can be "attained". It is in context of winning Christ and the prize and is therefore something we must know about and seek like Paul our pattern. I am certain my readers want to be found in this verse;

Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, be of this mind. Php 3:15

Since Phils.3:4-19 is in structural balance to 2:6-11 (see above) then next chapter we will examine the "faithfulness of Christ" and the "better" resurrection He "attained". This is the great clue to understanding the timing of this (out) resurrection.

Chapter twenty eight

New Hope-the Lord's resurrection

When Paul wrote to the Philippians he wrote to those who were “ones loved and longed for, my joy and crown”. He encouraged them to “stand fast in this way in *the* Lord”. Philippians is not an epistle reviewing the elemental things of salvation but an epistle written to those encouraged to press on, to endure. Paul appeals to believers to leave babyhood and go forward to perfection or maturity. Remember, perfection has nothing to do with being sinless, but rather Christian adulthood. For those who seek to grow, a prize is in view. This is the context of the resurrection Paul sought to attain.

Let us briefly review verse 10 -11 comparing those verses with some other passages of Paul;

that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable to His death; if by any means I might attain to the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, [Php 3:10-12](#)

Paul did not desire to know about Christ's resurrection or the resurrection of the dead. He wanted to know something beyond these things which he had already written about, see Acts 13:23, 30, 17:32, 23:6 1Cor.15:3-4, 12, 22-23 & Roms.6:5-11.

Paul wanted to know the “power of His resurrection”. He sought a resurrection like the Lord's as to time and quality. The Lord did not enjoy a resurrection of the dead but a resurrection from the dead. Many saints remained in the grave when the Lord was resurrected out from among them. We shall look at this next chapter.

It will help us if we understand the unusual word and phrasing in the original. Paul uses the phrase the resurrection of the dead in many places before this as we have noted, however Paul does not use this phrase in Philippians 3:11. The resurrection Paul wanted to attain by any means was a resurrection from the dead. We must distinguish things differing.

In the Philippians verse according to some manuscripts there is a double use of the preposition “out”. The preposition is a prefix to the general word for resurrection and then again independently in the closing phrase. The verse may be read as follows:

if somehow I may attain to an (out) resurrection (exanastasin) out (ek) from the dead. [Php 3:11](#)

Paul wanted to attain a resurrection like the Lord's. Our Lord suffered, He did not give up, He endured all things, and so obtained a resurrection of great glory “from the dead”.

Once again we show the structure harmonizing Paul's desire to know the power of the Lord's resurrection and this resurrection of Christ as found in chapter 2;

D. 2:6-11 Sevenfold humility of Christ who endured. Resurrection Glory

(a resurrection from the dead, Mk.9:9-10)

E. 2:12-17 Appeal. Work out our Salvation

F. 2:17-30 Example of Paul, who was ready to be offered.....

(not for sin and sins)

E. 3:1-3. Appeal. Beware

D. 3:4-19. Seven fold loss of Paul who presses on. To know Christ's

resurrection power (an (out) resurrection from the dead)

It is very important that we see the relationship between the two sections marked "D". The Lord humbled Himself and lived a life of faithfulness. In Philippians our Lord died on the cross as a result of faithfulness. He died, was offered in an act of obedience. Consequently our Lord was not only the first fruit but the first to be raised from the dead to heights of Glory, the very "heavenly places" of Ephesians where all things are put under His feet. The Lord's ascension of glory is in harmony with the (out) resurrection from the dead which Paul desired to "attain". Notice Paul was ready to be "offered" in the same spirit of faithfulness

Let us turn to another post Acts epistle of Paul which also features the Lord's resurrection in a context of faithfulness, perfection and a crown.

Therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No one who wars tangles with the affairs of *this* life, that he may please him who chose *him* to be a soldier. And also if anyone competes, he is not crowned unless he competes lawfully.

It is right for the laboring farmer to partake first of the fruits.

Consider what I say, and the Lord will give you understanding in all things.

Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel, in which I suffer ill as an evildoer, *even* to bonds. But the Word of God is not chained.

Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. 2Ti 2:3-12

For faithful is the Word, for if we died with *Him*, we shall also live with *Him*. If we suffer (endure), we shall also reign with Him. 2Ti 2:11-12

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith. Now there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that Day; and not to me only, but also to all those who love His appearing. 2Ti 4:7-8

Read 2Tim.2:10 carefully please. Paul did not endure so the elect could obtain salvation; Paul endured so the elect could obtain salvation with eternal glory. The Lord was raised "from the dead" to glory and honour. All members of the Church which is His Body will live with Christ in heavenly places but not all will reign with Him there. Some will be ashamed and found reprobate in that day, see 2Tim.2:15. Those Christians who endure, who go on to perfection and have their eyes set on the prize, are like Paul who desired to "win Christ" and know the "power of His resurrection". The resurrection of Philippians 3:11 is the

power of Christ's resurrection "from the dead" to salvation with eternal glory for the faithful and enduring members of the Church.

We now turn to Hebrews to examine our Lord's "perfection", His endurance and the resurrection in that context. Hebrews is also a book about "perfection" or maturity, running a race and pleasing the Lord, not about becoming a Christian or maintaining our initial salvation. We did not save ourselves by works nor do we keep ourselves saved by works. We were saved and sealed upon believing (Eph.1:13) but the faithful look to a reward. Here are some passages that set the context of Hebrews;

how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, (cp 8:9 = regarded not) Heb 2:3

For everyone partaking of milk is unskillful in the Word of Righteousness, for he is an infant. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age (perfection), Heb 5:13-14

Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity (perfection), Heb 6:1

But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you and things that accompany salvation, Heb 6:9

Now, "the Just shall live by faith. But if he draws back, My soul shall have no pleasure in him." Cp 13:20-21. But we are not of those "who draw back" to destruction (perdition or waste), ... Heb 10:38-39

But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. Heb 11:6

Therefore let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Heb 12:1

See that you do not refuse Him who speaks.we shall not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks ..., Heb 12:25

Now may the God of peace ...make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well pleasing in His sight Heb 13:20-21

Notice in this book that faith has to do with pleasing God in growth and works. The Hebrews are urged to leave infancy; the elemental things of salvation and go on to productivity rather than drawing back to waste. Growing into adulthood is about things that accompany salvation. Hebrews is not about our God who gives a gift of eternal life but our God who rewards those who diligently seek Him. Diligent means to search out, to investigate, to crave or demand and please, compare 2Tim.2:15.

This passage shows the faithfulness of the Lord:

though being a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And being perfected, He became the Author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him, Heb 5:8-9

Our Lord is the wonderful example of One who endured and went onto perfection. It is also written of Him that He is not only the author of faith but the finisher (perfector) thereof, Hebs.12:2. He became victorious in all He set out to do. Then, having finished, He sat down at the right hand of God.

Therefore ... let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and sat down at the right of the throne of God. Heb 12:1-2

The Lord “endured” the cross which is an emblem of patient suffering in Hebrews and Philippians. The Lord endured, He began and finished the walk and was raised from the dead to glory. If we endure and finish our course we might also be raised from the dead to “salvation with eternal glory” just like our Lord. This is the “resurrection Paul desired to “attain”.

Let us now examine some of the “better” things in Hebrews. These “better things” are either the result of faithfulness or given to the faithful who endured, who went on to perfection. Though Hebrews is not about us, the lessons are here;

being made so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. [Heb 1:4](#)

by so much as Jesus made a surety of a better covenant. See also “better” priesthood in 7:24. [Heb 7:22](#)

But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by so much He is also the Mediator of a better covenant, which was built upon better promises. [Heb 8:6](#)

But now they stretch forth to a better *fatherland* (country), that is, a heavenly one.

Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them. (The City is something extra provided by God). [Heb 11:16](#)

Women received their dead raised to life again, and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. [Heb 11:35](#)

This word “obtain” in Hebs.11:35 is exactly the same original word as found here;

Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. Cp Colossians 1:28. [2Ti 2:10](#)

There is sufficient evidence to show that those who endure like our Lord have “better” things in view. Paul wanted something “better” when he desired to “attain” the resurrection of Philippians 3. While this is not the “better resurrection” of Hebrews yet it certainly is not the general resurrection we all have because we are in Christ, and so it is indeed “better”. Paul wanted to “attain” a resurrection out from the dead, a resurrection in the context of winning Christ, the prize, the crown and reigning with Christ.

If Paul wanted this, then shouldn’t we all? If our God has offered us something “better” then should we disregard or neglect such an offer?

Next chapter we shall examine features of our Lord’s resurrection from the dead. We shall seek hints as to its power as a guide to the features of the resurrection Paul was willing to attain by any means.

Chapter twenty nine

New Hope- timing of the out-resurrection

This is a very difficult question and I am not furnished with concrete answers. We are considering an important subject that may be somewhat obscure to us. I appreciate that many of you might not agree with everything in this book but remember I am searching for definitive answers as well, but my hope is that we consider together and may the Lord give us all understanding in these things.

Twice (Phils.3, 2Tim.2), in the contexts of winning Christ, faithfulness, the prize, the crown and enduring onto perfection we have mention of our Lord's resurrection. His resurrection is not featured as a matter of fact or as regards to initial salvation but rather as being something to consider as being unique and of special power. The possibility of sharing in the likeness of its uniqueness and power is presented.

Paul discarded certain things in favour of winning Christ, he was forgetting the things behind and pressing on if by any means he could attain this special resurrection;

But no, rather, I also count all things to be loss ...so that I may win Christ that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection if somehow I may attain to an (out) resurrection (exanastasin) out (ek) from the dead (nekron). Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I am pressing on, [Php 3:8-12](#)

In the following passage about the consequences of faithful service Paul reminds us that our Lord was raised from the dead as the seed of David which is a resurrection to reign in power.

[It is right for the laboring farmer to partake first of the fruits.](#)

[Consider ...](#)

[Remember](#) that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was **[raised from the dead](#)**

Therefore [I endure](#) ...in order that...obtain...[salvation](#) ..[with eternal glory](#).

If we suffer (endure), [we shall also reign with Him](#). [2Ti 2:6, 7-8, 10, 12](#)

Our God has offered us diamonds. Faithful, enduring, lawful service will be rewarded with eternal glory more and above eternal life. This includes the privilege of being first to partake of the fruits, a crown of righteousness and the honor or reigning with Christ. The gateway to these diamonds is the (out) resurrection from the dead to reign with Christ in power.

Let us now consider the "power of His resurrection" by remembering some of the Gospel features of our Lord's resurrection. Perhaps we shall find some clues here regarding the out-resurrection.

In Mark chapter 9 we have a passage concerning the transfiguration, but to fully understand the context we should read from 8:31 to 9:10. Here are two significant verses from that passage:

And as they came down from the mountain, He commanded them that they should tell no one the things that they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead. And they kept that saying within themselves, debating with one another what the rising from the dead is. Mar 9:9-10

These disciples knew about the resurrection of the dead. They knew of such passages as, the creation of Adam which was but life from the dust, Job 19:23-27, the birth of Isaac, Ps.16:10, 49:15, 71:20, Is.25:8, 26:18-21, Ez.37:12, Dan.12:1-2, Hos.6:2 and 13:14. Knowledge of resurrection can be seen in the statement of Martha;

Jesus said to her, Your brother shall rise again. Martha said to Him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection (of the dead) at the last day. Joh 11:23-24

However, when the Lord told the disciples about His resurrection from the dead (ek nekros) they debated among themselves as to what it was. Why? Because they did not understand that the Lord's resurrection was unique. We are suggesting the out-resurrection of Philippians 3 is unique as well.

Let us now examine the timing of our Lord's resurrection as it relates to the resurrection the disciples knew about.

We all acknowledge that the Lord's resurrection was prior to the general resurrection. He was the "first fruit" from the dead, see Lev.23:10 and 1Cor.15:20-23. In other words, the Lord was resurrected at the beginning of Israel's Festive year not the end of the Festive year.

The Lord rose from the dead in the days of Unleavened Bread, one of the early or spring Feasts. It was well known that the resurrection of the dead of Israel will be at the last day, at His coming which is the Feast of Trumpets. This feast occurs later in the year. Let me place Israel's 7 month festive year in approximate relation to our 12 month calendar. Passover (called pagan Easter) occurs around March or April. The Feast of Trumpets occurs later in the year around October. The Lord was raised 6 months before the typical Feast of Trumpets. In other words, the Lord was raised in the spring; the general resurrection of the faithful will be in the autumn or fall.

There wasn't a trumpet blast, or a shout, or a voice, at the Lord's resurrection but there was an earthquake. These are some other things about the out-resurrection to consider (2Tim.2:7-8). The out-resurrection is before the last Trumpet general resurrection.

We are all aware that there were others who were resurrected at the same time as the Lord;

And the tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised And coming forth out of the tombs after His resurrection, they entered into the holy city and were revealed to many. Mat 27:52-53

These saints were not resurrected to immortality (1Tim.6:16), but they were resurrected in the same Festive time period as the Lord, that is, not at Trumpets. Also note these saints were not revealed to everyone. After our Lord's resurrection He was not revealed to everyone either, just a select few (Acts 10:40-41). This might have some bearing on the out-resurrection, could the out-resurrection be to a revealing of Christ to a select few?

The Lord was raised, according to Israel's Feasts, 6 months ahead of the time when the other faithful Israelites will be raised eventually. Perhaps it was this earlier time frame the disciples did not understand.

The Lord's resurrection from the dead was a resurrection before other members of every calling since He is pre-eminent in them all. The Lord was raised from the dead before others who would live with Him in their respective glories. We should therefore consider the possibility that, if Paul also wanted an out resurrection from the dead, then he was anticipating a resurrection earlier in time to the general resurrection for other members of the Church which is His Body.

I suggest that the out resurrection "attainable" is at least 6 months ahead of the resurrection of the other members of the Church which is His Body. This is the "power" of the Lord's resurrection; it was better as to time and better as to quality of glory as well.

The Lord was the first fruit, the first to be raised with immortality, the first in authority. Therefore the laboring farmer of 2Tim.2:6 could imitate the Lord in resurrection. Just as our Lord was a first fruit, so those who endure and finish their course shall first partake of the fruits. That is, the faithful enduring ones will be resurrected before others of the same calling and they will be raised with authority as well.

Those members of the Church which is His body who attain the out resurrection will be first to participate in the fruits and will be raised to reign. If someone is first to partake, then there are others second to partake.

Once we appreciate that the out resurrection is a unique resurrection for the faithful laboring members of the Church which is His Body, rather than the general resurrection for all members we are then ready to seriously consider two more verses from Philippians 3;

For our citizenship is in Heaven, from which also we are looking for the Savior, *the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our body of humiliation so that it may be fashioned like His glorious body, according to the working of His power, even to subdue all things to Himself.*
Php 3:20-21

Here is a literal version of the same passage.

For our citizenship is in Heaven, from where we also wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our body of humiliation, for it to be conformed to His body of glory, according to the working of Him to be able even to subject all things under Himself.
(LITV) Php 3:20-21

It is a disregarding of the context to assume this verse (20) refers to the simple fact that our citizenship is in heaven. We need only remember Ephesians 2:4-7 for confirmation of that. In Philippians 3 the fact that our citizenship is in heaven is stated in relation to the location from which we “look for the Savior”. I believe the out-resurrection is to heavenly places prior to the appearing of Colossians 3:1-4.

If we are raised to heavenly places prior to the appearing (phaneroo) then in what way will this out-resurrection be “better” in relation to reigning and receiving crowns? If the Lord is still “hid in God” (Col.3:3) when we are out-resurrected how shall we receive our crowns and reigning positions? The answer might lie in the fact that there are two words translated appearing, phaneroo and epiphaneia.

Phaneroo is the word found in Col.3:4, but epiphaneia, (above or over appearing) is used in 2Tim.2:8 where the crown of righteousness is awarded. Perhaps the epiphaneia takes place before the phaneroo. At the epiphaneia, Christ is revealed only in the above heavens and the faithful are given their crowns and authority (possibly from the previously stripped principalities and powers of Col.2:15). Then at the phaneroo, all other members of the Church which is His Body will be resurrected and seated with the crowned members and our Lord.

I appreciate that the above comments are purely speculative as I seek to think aloud with you on this matter. This chapter has been for your consideration and I am convinced that the Word has the final answers.

The following chart is only an opinion of a humble student of the Word. This is also available at <http://www.acts28.net/chartsappearing.html>

This chart represents my current understanding. It is my wish that the traditional rapture of 1Thess. 4 is discarded for research on the appearing, the heavenly aspects of His coming

heavenly purpose before the foundation of the world

epiphaneia?

Stage 1 a?

The Lord revealed to many, not all? First partakers get crowns & positions to reign Timing = Rev. 12?

Stage 1b?

Son Father

all the Church which is His Body appears with Him here

phaneroo

The Lord, seated at God's right, appears in the heavenly places & the earth beneath

earthly purpose since from the foundation of the world

Lord's descent from heaven

Stage 2

parousia

a meeting IS NOT a rapture
clouds, angels, Meet (1Thess. 4:17) does not mean go back to heaven Matt. 25:1, 6, Acts 28:15

Romans 15:4-13, 1Cor. 6:1-3

Stage 3

parousia-throne gathering of Israel

Mt of Olives

Is. 53, Zech. 12:11, 14:4, Is. 60-61

The kingdom of God now includes heavenly places and the earth. Eph. 1:10 MKJV

Church 1, His Body. Adoption Eph. 1:5, inheritance in heavenly places-no descent to the earth

Church 2, elect remnant, the Firstborn. Adoption Roms. 8, Gal. 3-4, Blessed with Abraham

It is my view this group (the Israel of God & chaste virgins) first enjoy the kingdom on the earth ruling and reigning with Christ, later, when the NJ descends to New Earth, these have access to that great City as well Gal. 4:26, Heb. 12:22-24

Bride

New Jerusalem descends no Temple

Church 3, all Israel. Adoption Roms. 9:4 the Kingdom on the earth (incl. outer darkness)

The Lord rebuilds the tabernacle of David

The last 3.5 years of the great tribulation in Israel have concluded, perilous times in the world the "pre trib. rapture" is a deception

Trumpets harvest The last group of Israel's Feasts fulfilled, these relate to earthly purposes

Atonement Tabernacles

resurrections

In these later days of this chart the Lord has resumed his purposes with Israel and the world but this does not mean two dispensations can not exist together. I do not see one Scripture which says the Church which is His Body will be removed before the second coming of Christ, save for those who "attain" the out resurrection.

Chapter thirty

Concluding summary

We bring this booklet on the appearing of our Lord to a close for now. The appearing is the hope of the Church which is His Body and this I tried to clarify as best I could. It is my hope that this has generated lots of personal Bible study. Thank you for your patience.

The following is a brief summary of our adventures and a final chart is offered to suggest the (out)-resurrection's relationship in the second coming time frame.

We started by noting Paul's twofold ministry and the two groups of letters which are dispensationally different. In Acts 26:22 Paul made this statement: *Then having obtained help from God, I stand until this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying no other things than those which the prophets and Moses said was going to happen;* [Act 26:22](#)

During the Acts period Paul wrote 7 letters, Galatians, 1&2 Corinthians, 1&2 Thessalonians, Hebrews and Romans in which he quotes the OT nearly 400 times. The hope of the Acts letters was included in the "promises made to the fathers" not the hope of the dispensation of the grace of God given to Paul after Israel were set aside at Acts 28.

We spent some time showing the Acts period was not the beginning of anything as is traditionally taught but the "end of the ages". The Lord came to Israel and was rejected, crucified and rose again. In Luke 24 the Lord spoke about suffering and glory. This glory was His return at the Feast of Trumpets to sit on the throne of His Father David. Peter's appeal to Israel (which was not cast aside during Acts) is that they repent and turn back to God then He would send the Lord Christ Jesus back to them (Acts 3:17-21). This is the glory and hope of the Acts period.

Paul's gospel of Acts 13 is exactly the same as Peter's in Acts 2 in its dispensational setting. In Acts 13 Paul quotes Psalm 2, 16, and Isaiah 55 which all speak of Christ dwelling with Israel and restoring the nation. The hope of Romans 15 is found in Deut.32, the Psalms and Isaiah 11 which is the kingdom of heaven on the earth. In Acts 13 Paul embraces the Gentiles according to the prophecy of Isaiah 49 which is also about the restoration of Israel. The Gentiles were added to make Israel jealous, to stimulate the Olive Tree (Roms.11:11-18) and the believing Jews and Gentiles in the Acts were the prophetic "remnant according to the election of grace", see Roms.9:24-29 and 11:5.

During the Acts period this return of the Lord in glory was expected in a very "little while" (Heb.10:37) and so the believers of Acts 2-4 sold their possessions. At that time they were not expecting to die. In the light of this imminent second coming, Paul advised the Corinthians about marriage in 1Cor.7:8 & 26-29. [But this I say, brothers, The time *is* short. It remains that both those who have wives should be as not having one. 1Co 7:29](#) (compare after Acts 1Tim.3, 5:14).

Just as Israel were delivered from Egypt by the Passover Lamb and entered the Kingdom on the earth at the blowing of 7 trumpets, so during Acts the hope was the return of the Lord at the feast of Trumpets to "sit upon the throne of His glory" (Matt.25:31). Supernatural gifts were part of Israel's history and prophecy. In Exodus supernatural gifts were given to certain Israelites to make the high priest's garments and the tabernacle. Just as supernatural gifts prepared Israel to enter into the Land for service, so the gifts of the Acts period were powers of the coming age on the earth Hebs.6:5. Paul's gospel of Romans was to establish the believers at that time by imparting some gift (Roms.1:11, 15:19, 16:25). He also wrote the Corinthians that they would be confirmed (with gifts) unto the end; the apocalypse (1Cor.1:4-8).

As Israel paused at Mt Sinai in their journey to the Promised Land, we read in Ex.19 that the Lord descended in a cloud, with trumpets, a voice, angels (Ps.68:17) and earthquakes to deliver the Law that Israel agreed to obey. This is where the Old (conditional) Covenant was established by blood. Moses went up to meet the Lord as He descended out of heaven. This meeting is a foretaste of 1Thess.4 in which passage Paul writes about the Lord descending out of heaven and the Jew and Gentile believers of the Acts period going up to meet Him as He descends. When this hope is realized in the future, then the New Covenant will be established and the Law written on Israel's heart (Jer.31:10, 33-34).

The modern "rapture" theory is an error of great confusion which grew from a total disregard for the dispensational setting of the Gospels and Acts periods. Here is 1Thess.4 in the gospels;

[And immediately after the tribulation of those days, And then the sign of the Son of Man shall appear in the heavens. And then all the tribes of the earth shall mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of the heaven with power and great glory. And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather His elect.. Mat 24:29-31](#)

[Then shall the kingdom of Heaven be likened to ten virgins, who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Mat 25:1](#)

[at midnight there was a cry..., Behold, the bridegroom comes! Go out to meet him. Mat 25:6](#)

[But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He shall sit on the throne of His glory. Mat 25:31](#)

1Thess.4 is the identical dispensational setting of Matthew, and not one word or phrase in either passage suggests anyone is going back into heaven. The return of the Lord to the earth in 1Thess.4 should be read with 2Thess.2 to see the prophetic Israeli setting:

For the Lord Himself shall 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. Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air... 1Th 4:16-17

The word “meet” cannot mean go back into heaven. 1Thess.4 is the hope of the remnant of the Acts period and other overcoming believers and 1Thess.4 is not the hope of the Church which is His body today.

Paul did not want the Thessalonians to be deceived and I am certain he would be stunned at the rapture theory today for he clearly tells them that the “gathering together unto Him” would not take place until after the abomination of desolation. This is in perfect harmony with Matt.24:14-29.

Now we beseech you, my brothers, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, that you should not be soon shaken in mind or troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word or letter, as through us, as if the Day of Christ is at hand. Let not anyone deceive you by any means. For that Day shall not come unless there first comes a falling away, and the man of sin shall be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, setting himself forth, that he is God. 2Th 2:1-4

At the end of the book of Acts (28:25-28) Israel were finally put aside for a time. The hope of 1Thess.4 was postponed along with the remaining events of Israel’s history. Paul, now a prisoner of Christ for the Gentiles, was given another revelation, this time regarding a new dispensation called the dispensation of the grace of God (Eph.3:1-2). The post acts letters of Paul show this current dispensation which was hidden in God, unknown in the OT, Gospels or Acts Scriptures;

This grace is given to me (who am less than the least of all saints) to preach the gospel of the unsearchable riches of Christ among the nations, and to bring to light what is the fellowship of the mystery which from eternity has been hidden in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ; Eph 3:8-9

The 7 post Acts letters of Paul are Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1&2 Timothy, Titus and Philemon. Within these letters there are less than 9 OT quotes. Abraham is not mentioned in these post Acts letters of Paul and the promises made to the fathers is nowhere to be found as the basis of hope. Now the believing Jews and Gentiles are created “one new man” and are not the remnant of the Acts period (Eph.2:11-17).

The hope of this present calling is stunning. The Church which is His body has been raised and seated with Christ in the heavenly places (Eph.1:19-20-2:4-7). While God has seated us there now in Christ, the hope is realized at our Lord’s appearing, Col.3:12-4, which we see from Scripture as the first stage of the Lord’s second coming.

Stage 1 which concerns us, is in heavenly places where the Lord will appear (be revealed, manifested) and every member of the Church which is His Body will appear with Him there.

Then follows stage 2 when He descends down through the clouds and the air and other believers of other times go to meet Him as He descends (1Thess.4).

Then stage 3 when His feet stand on the Mount of Olives which concerns Israel. For the members of each of these companies, resurrection or changing will take place in each of the 3 stages of the Lord's second coming.

We found in Philippians 3 that Paul was reaching forth for the prize of the high calling. He wanted to win Christ, to know the power of the Lord's resurrection and he was willing to use any means to attain the (out)-resurrection from the dead not the resurrection of the dead (Phils.3:7-14). We compared this with 2Tim.2:1-12 where Paul writes of salvation with eternal glory, the crown and in that context, asks us to remember our Lord's resurrection. We suggested that the (out) resurrection was like our Lord's being better as to time and quality.

One last thing for us to consider, the Bible study rules of distinguishing things that differ and rightly dividing the Word of Truth are found in Philippians and 2 Tim. These are the very post Acts letters of Paul which speak of the prize and crown. The Bible study rules are not to be disregarded in our examination of the Word of Truth if the prize and crown are important to us.

Of this one thing we can be certain; the Word of God speaks of reward for faithful service. It is my deepest desire that these examinations will inspire each of us to "press according to the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus".

God Bless you for considering these things.

Appendix one

The immortality of the soul

One contributing factor to the complicated confusion of the modern “rapture” theory is the underlying widely held belief that we have an immortal soul.

Following on from this view is the idea that at death, the soul of the believer rises to be with the Lord and in fact death is a friend to be embraced as some doorway to glory.

We present a few facts for the believer to ponder and provide below link for further reading.

In the creation account we read that God breathed into the nostrils of Adam the breath of life and Adam became a living soul;

[And Jehovah God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. Gen 2:7](#)

The Hebrew words translated “living soul” in Gen.2:7 are translated “that hath life” and “living creature” in Gen.1:20-21.

The simple fact is Adam became a living soul, he never possessed one.

In the New Testament there are a couple of Scriptures which seem to suggest an immortal soul but on closer examination they in fact teach the opposite. Here is the famous promise of our Lord to the malefactor;

[And he said to Jesus, Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom. And Jesus said to him, Truly I say to you, Today you shall be with Me in Paradise. Luk 23:42-43](#)

Paradise is found again in 2Cor.12:4 where the word “up” does not occur in the original and in Rev.2:7. In Paradise the tree of life can be found and this is featured again in Revelation 22:2 and 14. In this context of Revelation we have the New Heavens and Earth and the New Jerusalem which has descended out of heaven to the earth. So Paradise is on the earth in which garden the tree of Life is found. The Garden of Eden in which the tree of life previously existed was on the earth.

I don’t think we can entertain the spurious concept that Paradise is some sort of half way house upwards while purgatory is some half way house downwards. Paradise is future to Calvary and on the earth so I don’t think the Lord told the malefactor he would be with Christ in Paradise that day.

On resurrection morning the Lord warned Mary not to touch Him;

[Jesus said to her, Do not touch Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father. Joh 20:17](#)

If the Lord had not ascended to the Father three days after His death, then to be certain the malefactor was not in heaven on the day they both died. Later the Lord invited Thomas to reach forth his finger and thrust it into His side, Jn.20:27.

With these facts before us, let us present the Lord's promise to the dying malefactor as follows;

And Jesus said to him, Truly I say to you today, You shall be with Me in Paradise.
Luk 23:43

Then there is the other confusion which says when the Lord was dead he went into hell and preached to the spirits there. This is the result of ignoring the order of this passage;

For Christ also once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, indeed being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the Spirit; in which also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, 1Pe 3:18-19

We notice the Lord was made alive before He went and preached to the Spirits in prison.

Next we have the story of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16. If ever a story was abused this one certainly stands as being the candidate for the worst of interpretations by the immortal soul brigade. They ignore that this is a story against the rich, that there is nothing here about the gospel of faith. Lazarus went to "Abraham's bosom" because he was poor. The object of this story is the Lord's focus on resurrection (Lk.16:30-31), rather than supporting the Pharisaic concept of Abraham's bosom. If this story is a parable then why is it not one immortal soul expositor interprets it as such? If Luke 16 is to be taken literally then I guess we should go and "Make friends by the mammon of unrighteousness for yourselves, so that when you fail, they may receive you into everlasting dwellings".

The link to the booklet below is essential reading.

Finally we come to a few statements by Paul the apostle of the Gentiles. Not once in his writings do we read of Geenna (Ge-Hinnon), that valley of shame near Jerusalem featured as "hell" in Matthew and which is described in Is.66. Paul's only use of "hell" is for the word grave and we have some plain statements by this inspired writer which are left lying on the floor by the majority of Christians;

that you keep the commandment ... blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. For He in His own time will reveal *who* is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, dwelling in light which cannot be approached, whom no one of men have seen, nor can see; to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen. 1Ti 6:14-16

And the earlier statement;

Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen. 1Ti 1:17

In 1Cor.15:52-55 Paul clearly says when we shall receive immortality, but who wants to believe plain statements of Scripture today?

The emphatic statement that only Christ has immortality should be sufficient for the Bible believing Christian. By ignoring it, the wide spread practice of abusing 2Cor.5:8 remains. This is how most Christians destroy the verse;

"to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord". Modern Traditional Version.

It would be an interesting exercise if the reader could actually guess the first word of the above verse before they open their Bibles and see what it really says;

[We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. \(KJV\) 2Co 5:8](#)

There are 21 words in the original KJV verse but with liberal abandon, the modern traditional version leaves out 13 words and then alters the conjunction “and” and by adding two words make it the most powerful verb “is to be”. Eve added to, altered and omitted from the Words of God and sin and death entered the world. With such loose handling of the Word it should be no surprise to know that the lie Satan hissed at Eve is now well embedded in denominational dogma and underpins yet another deception called “the rapture”.

The Lord is not bringing all the previously dead believers back out of heaven when He comes, He will raise the dead believers and change the ones living.

It is claimed the Lord took all the OT saints with him when He ascended into heaven. So sad He left King David behind;

[Men, brothers, it is permitted to say to you with plainness as to the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Act 2:29](#)

The other supportive error for this “rapture” concept is the resurrection of the bodies. The Bible knows nothing of the resurrection of bodies. The rapture evil is further enhanced when the suggestion is made that the previously dead believers will be united with their new bodies at the rapture. What nonsense. Paul writes like this in the section of 1Cor.15 in which he is speaking about the bodies the dead will receive at resurrection;

[So also is the resurrection of the dead..... sown in dishonour; 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. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. 1Co 15:42-44](#)

Don't be offended and full of fear at the suggestion that we don't fly away to heaven when we die, but alas it is not the Word of God which has filled many with such a false hope. Death is an enemy (1Cor.15:26), not a friend.

Look for articles under the subheading [Destiny of Man](#). You will also find two booklets on the [Rich Man and Lazarus](#) under the same heading.

Appendix two

Was Paul first in the Body?

Peter proclaimed the great prophetic Kingdom of Heaven to the Jews in Acts 2. He declared plainly that Jesus of Nazareth was Israel's Messiah who had been raised to sit upon David's throne. See Acts 2:22-36. The "church" did not start with Peter in Acts 2. What about Paul did "the Church" start with him?

The apostle Paul is the only one in Scripture referred to as the apostle of, and teacher for, the Gentiles, see Romans 11:13, Eph.3:1 and 2Tim.1:11. Because of this many assume that "the Church" started when Paul came on the scene at either Acts 9 or 13. We remember however it was Paul who wrote in those days about the ends of the ages, not the beginning of anything. Paul's gospel of Acts 13 was identical to Peter's in its dispensational setting. Paul preached in Acts 13 and Romans 15 that Christ was raised to sit on David's throne.

Drawing the conclusion that the church started with Paul they find comfort in an idea that Paul was the first in the "body of Christ" assumed from a misunderstanding of this passage:

This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting. (KJV). 1Ti 1:15-16

We notice first of all Paul does not say he was first in the "body of Christ". He tells us God made choice as to the Church which is His Body before the foundation of the world in Eph.1:4. Ephesians was written after the book of Acts. After Israel was put aside at the end of Acts Paul received revelation regarding it but not once does the humble apostle suggest he was first in the Church which is His Body. He certainly could not have been the first in the Church which is His Body in Acts because it had not been revealed at that time.

Paul said he was a pattern of mercy to all those believing thereafter. He contrasts the depravity of his trespasses with the heights of mercy he received from the Lord. He uses the word "first" to emphasize degree, not rank. I doubt such folk would dare suggest Paul was the first sinner since the word "chief" in verse 15 is the same original word "first" in verse 16.

This passage has nothing to do with "Church" membership. Such teaching is out of context. Paul wasn't the first in anything, he was the worst sinner.

Putting aside the protestations of the KJV only believers, modern versions bring out Paul's meaning, further showing the impossibility of the "Paul was first in the body" theory from this passage;

Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief (first in degree): howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me as chief (first in degree) might Jesus Christ shew forth all his longsuffering, for an ensample of them which should hereafter believe on him unto eternal life. (RV). 1Ti 1:15-16

In the past I was a blasphemer, a persecutor, and a violent man. But I received mercy because I acted ignorantly in my unbelief, and the grace of our Lord overflowed toward me, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. This saying is trustworthy and deserves complete acceptance: To this world Christ Jesus came, Sinful people to reclaim. I am the worst of them. But for that very reason I received mercy, so that in me, as the worst sinner, Christ Jesus might demonstrate all of his patience as an example for those who would believe in him for eternal life. (ISV). [1Ti 1:13-16](#)

Paul's object here is not membership of the Church which is His Body but the matter is regarding those who "believe on Him unto eternal life".

We must not assume that because Paul was saved during the Acts period the ends of the ages ceased and a new church age began or was gradually unfolded or progressively revealed. Acts is not a transition book but an ends of the ages book. The Church did not start with Paul in Acts 9 or 13 simply because Paul was converted during Acts.

Others believe that Paul started the church in the Acts period because they fall into the word trap of Galatians chapter 1. They assume that just because Paul received his gospel by revelation that this was "grace" put loosely for the present dispensation of the grace of God, also given by revelation;

[And, brothers, I make known to you the gospel which was preached by me, that it is not according to man. For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it except by a revelation of Jesus Christ. Gal 1:11-12](#)

Paul received many revelations (2Cor.12:7) and we must not assume all were the same. The gospel given by revelation as per Galatians 1 is not the dispensation of the Grace of God also given by revelation in Ephesians 3. Before seeing exactly what Paul taught during the Acts period, let us examine the theory that the gospel given by "revelation" in Galatians 1 automatically means the Mystery of Ephesians 3.

The word "revelation" in Gals.1:12 is "apocalypses" which means an unveiling, an uncovering; a disclosure, nothing more (Word Study, E-Sword). It does not in any way tell us what was disclosed, except that it was good news. This same word is used of the book of the Revelation and we would be unwise to assume Paul taught all the book of the revelation as his gospel simply because the same word is used. Paul spoke of many mysteries they are not all the same.

In Galatians Paul goes on to say that the Christians were now rejoicing in the glorious change in him and that he was preaching the faith he once destroyed; [But only they were hearing that he who then persecuted us, now preaches the faith which he once ravaged. Gal 1:23](#)

How can Paul be preaching the "faith" (doctrine) he once destroyed if it was completely new and unknown prior to Paul? Paul received his gospel by revelation, but it was preached by others before his conversion.

The revelation given to Paul as described in Galatians was the good news which contained the doctrines he once destroyed, not a new dispensation given to him alone. Let us turn to 1 Corinthians 15 to confirm this:

And, brothers, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you have received, and in which you stand; by which you also are being kept safe, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received, that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures; 1Co 15:1-4

We notice immediately that the gospel Paul preached was “according to the Scriptures” but of course, the Mystery of Ephesians cannot be found in the Scriptures (Eph.3:8-9). Paul, like the two on the road to Emmaus and the other disciples, knew the O.T. but he did not understand the Scriptures. Just as the Lord opened the minds of the disciples He likewise gave Paul an unveiling, a revelation as well. The disciples were taught by the Lord for 40 days and I wonder how long Paul was in Arabia? It certainly wasn’t three years, please read Galatians 1:17-18 carefully. Paul’s gospel of the Acts period was found in the OT Scriptures and was not the mystery of Ephesians which was also given by revelation. We must distinguish things differing, Phils.1:9-10.

Reading further into 1Cor.15 we find Paul affirming that he did preach the faith he once destroyed;

Therefore whether it was I or they, so we preach, and so you believed 1Co 15:11

Note well friends, “so WE preach” says Paul. It is an easy task to determine who the “they” are from the preceding verses. Others before Paul had taught the “faith” he was now preaching and many had believed. Peter was one Paul mentions who preached before him and folk heard and believed. Perhaps the two apostleships of Galatians 2:7-8 are apostleships of direction rather than evidence of substantially different gospels.

Paul wrote in 1 Cor.4:17 that he was their father, but he acknowledges they had many instructors. Since Paul says they had many other instructors we are again assured that Paul was proclaiming, during the Acts period, the faith he once destroyed.

Righteousness reckoned by grace was certainly more fully written by Paul, but even this wonderful doctrine was “according to the Scriptures” as a reading of Romans and Galatians will show. Peter knew about righteousness reckoned by grace since he had been taught by the Lord as well, see Acts 15:7-9. Peter refers to Cornelius, an event more than likely before Peter had met Paul. It is outside of Scripture to teach that Paul taught Peter “grace”. Peter wrote of the “manifold grace of God” and “the grace of God in which you stand”, see 1 Peter 4:10 and 5:12.

The gospel of Paul during Acts was given by revelation but is not the mystery, the present dispensation of the grace of God of Ephesians 3. It was the “ends of the ages” when he preached that gospel. Paul preached the return of Christ to the earth and the coming kingdom on the earth during Acts.

Paul was the one to whom the present dispensation was given, Paul was the first to know about it after Acts 28. The church which is His Body did not start with Paul in Acts and therefore it is a total confusion to say Paul was the first in the body at either Acts 9 or 13.

Appendix three

Does the Church, His Body descend to the earth?

In the wonderful opening of Ephesians, the letter which brings to us the present dispensation of the grace of God, Paul pens this breathtaking doxology;
[Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ; Eph 1:3](#)

The blessings of the Church which is His Body are all spiritual and in the heavenlies in Christ. We are not left in any doubt as to the location of the heavenlies;

[and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us, the ones believing according to the working of His mighty strength which He worked in Christ in raising Him from the dead, and He seated Him at His right hand in the heavenlies, Eph 1:19-20](#)

Our heavenly Father blesses His families in their inheritance. Ephesians 1 continues to emphasize the above heavenly location of our calling in these passages;

[having predestined us to adoption as sons \(heir\) by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, Eph 1:5](#)

[having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, Eph 1:9](#)

[In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, Eph 1:11](#)

The Mystery is the Dispensation of the Grace of God (Eph.3:1-2). Our inheritance must be understood in the light of this present administration. The Lord was raised and seated in the heavenlies and only in that sphere is the corporate relationship made known;

[and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ, having raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenlies, above every ruler and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the coming age. And He subjected all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him filling all things in all. Eph 1:19 -23](#)

No other writings prior to Ephesians establish this relationship of Christ as Head and the believers as the Church which is His Body. This relationship is in the heavenlies not on the earth.

As the Lord descends in the clouds He is the Bridegroom.

On the Mount of Olives He is also Israel's Priest King.

These titles of the Lord relate to different companies in each of their different places of blessing. We are not blessed with faithful Abraham today; our blessings are all spiritual in the heavenlies.

Each company is blessed in its different inheritance not outside that inheritance. When Israel was obedient they were blessed in their inheritance but when disobedient they were evicted from their inheritance, the Land Promised (Deut.28:3, 11 but compare 28:63-64).

Remember we have been raised and seated in the heavenlies;

Therefore I also, hearing of your faith in the Lord Jesus and love to all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what is the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us, the ones believing according to the working of His mighty strength which He worked in Christ in raising Him from the dead, and He seated Him at His right hand in the heavenlies, Eph 1:15-20

Just as Christ was raised from the dead and seated in the heavenlies, so we are quickened (made alive) and raised and seated in the same place;

But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love with which He loved us (even when we were dead in sins) has made us alive together with Christ (by grace you are saved), and has raised us up together and made us sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus, Eph 2:4-6

This is the Father's purpose and will for us. Nothing in Ephesians or Colossians suggests that we are part of a purpose from the foundation of the world that is coupled with the earth or the New Jerusalem which descends to the (new) earth.

Here are further statements which tie us to the above heavenly sphere;

so that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. Eph 2:7

The exceeding riches of His grace are manifested in the ages to come in the heavenlies, which is the context. Look at this passage about our witness today;

This grace is given to me (who am less than the least of all saints) to preach the gospel of the unsearchable riches of Christ among the nations, and to bring to light what is the fellowship of the mystery which from eternity has been hidden in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ; so that now to the rulers and powers in the heavenlies might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord; Eph 3:8 -11

Our future testimony is in the heavenlies, our present witness is to the principalities and powers in the heavenlies. Notice our present witness is again according to God's eternal purpose for us.

Despite these elements of our hope, inheritance and witness, some still entertain the thought that we will descend to the earth when the Lord leaves the heavenlies and descends. This concept is from the idea that where He is we will need to be since He is the Head and we are the Body. However, on the earth the Lord is not the Head of the Church which is His Body and such a conclusion is unsupported from the post Acts letters of Paul.

The Hope

But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love *with* which He loved us (even when we were dead in sins) has made us alive together with Christ (by grace you are saved), and has raised *us* up together and made *us* sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in *His* kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace you are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God, Eph 2:4-8

The Realization

If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is sitting at *the* right hand of God. Be mindful of things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life has been hidden with Christ in God. When Christ our Life *is* revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory. Col 3:1-4

The Life Now

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that having denied ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live discreetly, righteously and godly, in this present world, looking for the blessed hope, and the appearance of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, Tit 2:11-13

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Most Scripture references are from the Modern King James Version unless otherwise indicated.

Abbreviations.

KJV King James Version

MKJV Modern King James Version (J.P. Green Sr.)

ISV International Standard Version

EMTV English Majority Text Version

ALT Alternate Literal Version

LITV Literal Translation (of the Holy Bible) Version (J.P. Green Sr.)

RV Revised Version