



Israel



Israel


Have you ever thought about what would happen if the Dome of the Rock is blown up to pieces by Israeli forces and immediately after this, Israel build a third Jewish temple on the Temple Mount in record time?

Do you believe that Muslims all over the world would cry out for a holy war against Israel?

Do the Bible's prophecies predict a final holy war against Israel?

Is the war of Armageddon a war in the Middle East?

Will the end of the world come as a result of this war?



Many say that they have the answers to these questions. We believe that they are deeply mistaken, but before we answer these questions, we would like to give a little background for our conclusions!

THE OLD ISRAEL AND THE MODERN ISRAEL

This subject about Israel is not so easy, but I will try to bring forth some Bible verses concerning it so that you can, for yourself, see if it is reasonable.

In Genesis 17:1, God says to Abraham: *"I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect!"*

Abraham is encouraged to walk before God and be perfect. We continue reading in the same chapter, verses 7-11: *"And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; every man-child among you shall be circumcised. And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you."*

A covenant is established by two parties. Both must keep the covenant in order for it to be valid. God also said to Abraham, *"Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations."*

If they didn't keep the covenant, God then said to Abraham in verse 14: *"And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant."*

HERE IS THE CONDITION:

If you keep my covenant, then shall God be with them and they shall keep the land as an eternal possession. So the question is: Have they kept their land as an eternal possession? The answer is no. Why? It is because they have not walked before God and been perfect.



"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

2. Cor. 5:17

Since God also says that circumcision should be a token of the eternal covenant, one can ask himself: Is this common practice among all Jews today? What does the New Testament say concerning this?

Gal. 5:6: *"For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love."*

Gal. 6:15: *"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature."*

2 Cor. 5:17: *"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."*

Circumcision should be an eternal covenant, but eternity has by no means come to an end. The New Testament says that circumcision is done away with – it has no value now, although it did in Jesus' time. We have already seen how the promise is given on conditions. If he were not circumcised, he would then be cut off from his people. He would have broken the covenant. (Genesis 17:14). We find this condition again in Genesis 18:19: *"For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; THAT THE Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him."*

If Abraham and his following generations would have stood fast in the way of the Lord and done that which was right, then the covenant would have been fulfilled throughout eternity. Both parties have not kept the covenant; God has kept the covenant, but Abraham's seed have not been faithful to the Lord.

There is no doubt about the fact that the Jews were God's chosen people before the time of Jesus. God had no other group of people or nation that believed in Him as Creator. The others were idol worshippers.

When John the Baptist preached in the desert of Judea, many Pharisees and Sadducees came to his baptizing. John said to them: *"And think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire."* (Matt. 3:9,10).

But the big separation came with Jesus when He said: *"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"* (Matt. 23:37).

THE FIG TREE

Just before, in chapter 21 and verses 18-19, we read about Jesus: *"Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered. And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away."*

A fig tree brings forth fruit before the leaves. Because there were many leaves, Jesus expected that there was fruit on the tree; but there were only leaves. The Jews' leaders had only an appearance, but did not bare the Fruit of the Spirit. John said to the scribes and Pharisees: *"Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance."* (Matt. 3:8). This they did not do. Jesus cursed the fig tree. This shows how He saw upon the Jews' leaders who should represent Him.



*"Bring forth
therefore
fruits meet for
repentance"*

Mt. 3:8



THE VINEYARD

A little further in the same chapter (Matthew 21), verses 33-46, Jesus presents a parable about a householder and his vineyard that sent some workers to gather the fruit. One was beaten, another was killed and another stoned. He then sent his only son (representing Jesus). He too was killed. Jesus then said: *“When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons. Jesus saith unto them, did ye never read in the scriptures, the stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them.”*

It is very clear that the Jews, who should have represented God's way, did not bare the Fruit of the Spirit. They were like whited sepulchres. They had a fine exterior, but within, they were full of dead men's bones (Matt. 23:27). It is therefore Jesus came to this conclusion: Because you did not bare the Fruit of the Spirit, I will then give my kingdom to a people who do bare the Fruit of the Spirit – This is not dispensationalist theology; it is Biblical theology directly from the mouth of Jesus. He reinforces this in the next verse (Matt. 21:44): *“And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.”*

This declares that all must give up self, humble themselves before God, confess their sin and receive salvation in Jesus Christ. It does not help one bit to be a blood relative of Abraham. It is the circumcision (conversion) of the heart that is of value in the new covenant. Those Jews who do not accept salvation in Jesus Christ will therefore be crushed to powder. This is also the case for all others who do not receive Jesus Christ as Saviour. The stone is a symbol of Jesus.

“The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.”

Mt. 23:43-44



PAUL: WE TURN TO THE GENTILES

Paul had much trouble with the Jewish people. When he preached in Antioch, many were gathered there to listen to him. In Acts of the Apostles, chapter 13, verses 45-46: *"But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles."*



"Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham."
Gal. 3:7

THE CHILDREN OF THE FLESH OR OF THE PROMISE?

In Paul's letter to the Romans, chapter 2, verses 28-29 we read: *"For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."*

This is the same what Jesus said. They must fall upon the rock Christ Jesus. They must, with all their heart, humble themselves before Him. It is the circumcision of the heart in the Spirit that is necessary for all of us.

Romans chapter 9, verses 6-8: *"Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."*

Who are the children of the promise? It is those who accept Jesus Christ as Saviour by faith. We read about this in Gal. 3:7: *"Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham."* Furthermore: *"Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, and to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ."* (Gal. 3:16) This last text is perhaps the clearest of them all. In the Old Testament, God calls Israel the seed of Abraham (Isa. 41:8), but here, Paul writes that Abraham's seed no longer refers to many but



"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." Gal. 3:26-29

to one, and this is Christ. Here we see that, that which originally referred to Israel as a nation in the Old Testament is now referring to Jesus Christ. The messiah is now the seed. Jesus Christ is Israel; those who accept Jesus Christ by faith are His children. Those who believe in Jesus become part of the seed. They are the spiritual Israel today.

If the Jews don't have faith in Jesus Christ as the only one that can save from sin, they cannot then be counted as the seed that shall inherit eternal life. Paul reinforces this and makes it completely clear in the following verses: *"For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus, and if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."* Gal. 3:26-29.

This is not dispensationalism. This is Biblical theology. The Bible says quite clearly here, that those who are of faith are the seed of Abraham, inheritors of the promise. To be part of this group, it doesn't matter if you are Jewish or Greek, American or Norwegian, because it is those who by faith accept Jesus Christ are all one in Christ Jesus. This is the spiritual Israel. Biological lineage from Abraham is not enough. Faith goes before family ties, position or any such thing.

ONE IN CHRIST

Paul writes more about what the New Covenant means for us: *“For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us.”* (Efe. 2:14). It goes on to say in verses 20-22: *“And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord. In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.”*

By the faith of Jesus we are built up to one faith, by one Spirit. Christ has torn down the wall of partition, between Jews and Gentiles, in such a way that we now stand on common ground. It is Jesus who brings us together. We are one in Him, in one and the same Spirit. This is the liberating message from God's word. We are all one in Jesus Christ. We stand on common ground whether we are Jewish or Arab, whether American or German. Is it difficult for you to accept this? We just read a moment ago the following words: *“For ye are all one in Christ Jesus, and if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.”* When you understand and accept this, you will be free in Christ and this is what we need. We shall not be slaves under other peculiar theories, people or congregations – we are free in Christ. He came to set us free from all the bonds that bind us. Jesus says: *“If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.”* (John 8:36). Free from sin and free from human bondage. We read about Jesus' mission. Jesus says: *“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.”* (Luke 4:18).



*“The Spirit of the Lord
is upon me, because
he hath anointed me...
to preach deliverance
to the captives”*

Luke 4:18





Jesus says:

"I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."

(Joh. 14:6; Joh. 17:17)

JESUS IS THE ONLY WAY

There are so many people today who are controlled by people, systems, authorities and not in the least, pastoral authorities, churches, and man-made traditions and teachings. There are so many people who do not read God's Word for themselves. They trust in ministers and other religious authorities. Many think like this: "When the pastor has said it, then it must be that way." This is how it is with the prophecies concerning Israel. Ministers have repeated falsehoods so many times that the people believe it. These ministers and their followers should place their focus on Christ instead of on Israel. Israel is of no value without Jesus. May God help us all to not accept deceptive, man-made teachings. There are some people who steadfastly believe that Israel is still God's special people today and will turn their backs toward you if you will not hear their arguments.

You should not cast away the following words of Jesus. They declare how we all stand on common ground before Christ. There is nobody who has a free pass to Heaven. It is faith that is the determining factor. Jesus therefore says: *"I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."* (John 14:6). We must then follow Jesus on the straight and narrow path. God's children will also follow the teachings of Jesus and not all other man-made theories. It is only Jesus who guides us forward in life. Nobody comes to the Father but through Jesus. Not the pope. Obama, Ban Ki-Moon or Herman Van Rompuy can save us with all their peace-seeking initiatives, talks and international agreements. Jesus says: *"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."* (John 17:17). We must humble ourselves, confess our sin and receive Jesus Christ by faith as our personal Saviour. (1 John 1:9). When we make this decision, Jesus has then promised us the Holy Spirit as the source of power in our life to stand against Satan's temptations. With His power in our life, we can live as Jesus' representatives here on earth. (Acts 2:38 & 1 Cor. 10:13).

The Jews then, do not have some kind of special agreement with our Lord where-

by they can be saved in lighter fashion than we can. They, just as with us, can only be saved by accepting Jesus Christ with all of our heart by faith as our personal Saviour. All who receive Him as Saviour are His children.

FAITH AND WORKS

But we don't stop with faith. Faith must be accompanied by works. *"Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone."* (James 2:17). Anyone who exercises faith does something. In the chapter of faith in Hebrews we read:

"By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain..."

"By faith Noah prepared an ark..."

"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out obeyed..."

"By faith Moses refused..."

"By faith they passed through the Red sea..." (Hebrews 11:4, 7-8, 24, 29)

They all did something in faith. It was righteousness by faith and that is Biblical. Think about these verses: *"If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him."* (1 John 2:29). *"Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous."* (1 John 3:7).

So the first step is to accept Jesus Christ as personal Saviour by faith. The next step is to do righteousness by the power of the Holy Spirit. There is also something required of us. We can choose to work together with Jesus, but *"it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."* (Phil. 2:13). Jesus says:



Jesus says: *"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me."* (Mt. 11:28-30)

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matt. 11:28-30). When we work together with Jesus, He will then bear the greatest burden, but He wills that we should work together with Him. Life is then interesting, full of experiences and meaning!

Jesus was a friend of all and a servant. He went about doing good. A disciple of Jesus will also be merciful toward others and not war against them. Remember what Jesus said: *"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."* (Matt. 25:40). He did not say: That which you have done for the greatest, the most educated, the richest or the most influential. No, that which you have done to the least.

It says that the followers of Jesus will also be occupied with helping the weak in society, those who are pushed aside and are looked down upon. Jesus came down to weak and out casted in order to encourage and help them, just as we should do also. We need to also consider the rich and wealthy in society, just as Jesus did. Think about Zaccheus, the tax collector, who had become rich through dishonest means. Even though all others despised Zaccheus, Jesus visited him in his home. Zaccheus admitted that he had acquired riches in a dishonest way. He confessed his sin and accepted the gift of salvation.

The rich can easily be passed by, but they also need to be reminded about God's goodness, salvation and spiritual riches. Jesus is glad for all people, as they are His created beings. Jesus has done all so that all can be saved. At the same time, Jesus says that it is difficult for the rich to enter into the kingdom of God. Why? It is because it is easy for the rich to place their trust in their riches. Whether we are rich or poor, healthy or sick, old or young, we all need God's presence, security and protection in this difficult world that we live in. We do not have any security outside of Jesus. We do not have security in our riches. We all need the spiritual riches as found in Jesus and in the word of God. We all need Jesus' healing power - physical and spiritual healing. If we are sick and are feeling miserable, we need to realize that there is healing for us when we help others (Isa. 58:8-11). The biggest joy you can have is in making others glad.

"Pilate saith unto them, what shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? They ALL say unto him, let him be crucified."

Matt. 27:22



THE SAVIOUR REJECTED

Before we go to Romans, chapter 11, we will take an overview of what took place at Jesus' death: *"But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus. The governor answered and said unto them, whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas. Pilate saith unto them, what shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? They ALL say unto him, let him be crucified. And the governor said, why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, let him be crucified. When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children."* (Matt. 27:20-25).

When we read this story in its entirety, we see that it was the Jewish leaders that stirred up the masses to crucify Jesus. We read that all the people agreed to having Barabbas set free and Jesus crucified. This was the Jews' destiny-determining choice. It is easy to be carried away with the current. It is difficult to go against the current, if it is necessary. Here, the masses were carried away with the current and supported the crucifixion of Jesus. But we must also see this in context. There were also Jews who earlier had accepted Jesus as Saviour, which were not among the masses. Later, after the Jesus' resurrection, there were also many Jews who accepted Jesus Christ as their saviour. Nonetheless, it was a destiny-determining choice for the Jewish nation, with the Jewish leaders at the forefront, in choosing Barabbas instead of Jesus. Barabbas is a representation of Satan; Jesus is the Saviour. Today there are still many Jews who do not believe that Jesus came to this earth about 2000 years ago. They believe that the Messiah shall come, but their Messiah is not Jesus Christ. The question is then raised: How can a people who do not believe in Jesus Christ be His special people for over 2000 years? We believe the majority would understand that the Jews cannot represent Jesus when they do not believe in Him as the Saviour of the world, who came about 2000 years ago.

When the disciples received the Holy Spirit as the source of power in their lives at Pentecost, the Bible says they were of one mind. The followers of Jesus do not have the same mind with those Jews who do not believe that Jesus came as the world's redeemer about 2000 years ago. Those who have the faith of Jesus are of



"Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Rev. 14:12

"(Matt. 27:20-25).

the same mind and have with all of their heart chosen to follow Him. They have the same faith, the faith of Jesus. The Bible says that God's children keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus. (Rev. 14:12). They have Jesus as shepherd and friend and follow Him. They keep God's law and not man-made laws that go against God's commandments. They have Jesus as Saviour. Jesus is to them the ladder connecting heaven and earth. He is the middleman between God and man and it is through Him that we can come before the Father's throne. It is through Him that we are connected by one Spirit, which is the source of power in our lives.



"Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace." Rom. 11:5

When the Jews shouted "Crucify Jesus", they also were dictating their own destiny. The Bible states that: *"Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be ON US, AND ON OUR CHILDREN."* The Jews, up until now, have unfortunately suffered the consequences of this choice.

Luckily, there were also some Jews who accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour. They believed in Him and His suffering and sacrifice on their behalf. They had also learned that *"without shedding of blood is no remission."* (Heb. 9:22). Just as the Jews had offered a lamb without blemish as a sin offer, so came Jesus as the true lamb who opened not His mouth. This is what many Jews had understood and accepted Him as their Saviour and friend.

A REMNANT

One of those who accepted Him was Paul. He identifies himself with the group of Jews who had come to believe in Jesus Christ as Saviour. It is therefore he says in Romans 11:1-5: *"I say then, hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? How he maketh intercession to God against Israel saying, Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. EVEN SO THEN AT THIS PRESENT TIME ALSO THERE IS A REMNANT ACCORDING TO THE ELECTION OF GRACE."*

The prophet Elijah stood alone against the idol worship in Israel (1 Kings ch. 28). Both the king and the queen had begun to worship idols and the people had followed in their apostasy. Elijah believed he was alone in the battle against idol worship, but there was still 7000 people in Israel who had not bowed their knees before Baal (1 Kings 19:18). There was a little remnant in Israel. Similarly, Paul says that, during his time, there was a little remnant that believed in Jesus' resurrection and Jesus Christ as Saviour. Yes, Paul identifies himself as a part of this remnant. It is this remnant that God has not rejected as His people.

God did not accept the Baal worshippers as HIS PEOPLE, but acknowledged the remnant that had not bowed their knees before Baal. Elijah was a part of this remnant. Just as Paul was a part of the remnant of his time and had received the grace and love of Jesus, so are there today *"7000 that have not bowed their knees before Baal."* They are His true remnant, His spiritual Israel. Just as Elijah, they will stand on the side of Jesus Christ and on the side of truth at Armageddon.

Paul continues in verses 7-8: *"What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded. (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day."*

There were actually many who obtained it. There were many who understood the mission of Jesus. The others were blinded, they cried out crucify Him, give us Barabbas. They received the spirit of slumber. Many believe that it was God who caused them not to be able to understand Jesus' mission, but we have already read where Jesus says: *"How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"* (Matt. 23:37).

Paul clarifies the issue dealing with the spirit of slumber and how they would not listen: *"And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not. And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest 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."* (Acts 28:24-27).



"How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"

Mt. 23:37



"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." (Acts 2:38)

So it was the people themselves who would not see, listen nor understand. They closed their eyes so that they could not see and they shut their ears so that they would not hear.

GRAFTED INTO CHRIST

Romans chapter 11, verse 20: *"Because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith."* Further in verse 23: *"And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in."*

Paul continues to write: *"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." (verses 25-27).*

We must be grafted in the true olive tree. We must accept the faith Paul and the early faithful had. We must be grafted into Christ. It is faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour that is the determining factor and not if they are of Abraham's blood or seed. Paul was one, among those Jews, who believed in Jesus Christ as the only one who can save from sin. Because the Jews would not receive the gospel, we read how Paul turned to the gentiles. They were glad because they were accepted as children of God – because they believed in the salvation found in Jesus Christ. Here

we come to a conclusion. Paul makes it clear that, whether you are a Gentile or Jew, we are one in Christ when we receive Him by faith. Paul concludes by saying, "*And so (in this way) all Israel shall be saved.*" The words "and so" point back to those who are grafted in the same faith as the believing Jews had, that is both Jews and Gentiles. They represent the vine that we shall be a part of, the tree of faith. We must have the same faith they had. We must be grafted in the tree of faith, the faith of Jesus. The Bible mentions in Revelation that those who will not receive the mark of the beast, keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus. (Rev. 14:12).

We repeat, in Romans 11:26, it doesn't say, "all of Israel shall be saved", but "*And so all Israel shall be saved.*" When Jews and Gentiles accept salvation in Jesus Christ, then will Jesus wipe away their sins, which is His covenant with us (verse 27), this is how all Israel shall be saved.

CONVERSION IS NEEDED

All must walk in the path of conversion. That is what happened at Pentecost. Peter and the apostles said: "*Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made the same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*" (Acts 2:36-38). The result: "*Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.*" (verse 41).

So where and who are God's people today? It is those who have been converted. It is those that have accepted Jesus Christ as Saviour by faith. Originally have they been Jews or Gentiles. As converted Christians, they will with all of their heart follow Jesus' steps and pray for the power of the Holy Spirit in order to do God's will. Where are they and where do they live? They are spread throughout the whole world – one here and one there. They are God's ambassadors and representatives on this earth and the Bible makes it clear that they have "*the patience of the saints, they that keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus*" (Rev. 14:12). These people are not only found in the nation of Israel today, but in the entire world. God knows the hearts and He knows where they are. This is not dispensationalist theology but Biblical theology (Gal. 3:26-29; John 1:12).

REVIVAL

When looking at Romans 11, there is much that points to the possibility of true revival within the camp of Israel. The scales will fall from their eyes when they begin to read the New Testament. They will then receive the eyesalve that is needed in



"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." 2. Chron. 7:14

order for them to see the truth about Jesus Christ as Saviour. Furthermore, the Jews have the Sabbath, which will be a testing point at the end of time in connection with the "the mark of the beast". "The mark of the beast" deals with worship. People with the pope as their head, have changed the commandments in the catholicism as compared to what it states in Exodus chapter 20, verses 3-17. They have brought Sunday in, the Bible's first day of the week, as the day of rest in place of the Sabbath, the Bible's seventh day of the week. They say that this change is a mark of their divine power and authority (Catholic Record, London/Ontario, Sept. 1, 1923). Because people have chosen a day to rest and God has chosen a day to rest, we therefore have a choice as to which authority we will be loyal to. Will we choose to worship God as Creator and keep the day of rest He has instituted since Creation and is eternal, holy, righteous and good (Psalm 111:7-8; Rom. 7:12; Prov. 28:9), or will we accept the change brought about by man and receive its mark? It is the last, big decision at the end of time. (Rev. 13:15-16; Rev. 14:6-7).

THE HUNTERS AND THE FISHERMEN

There are many who believe that all Jews will return to Israel before Jesus comes again. They also believe that Jesus shall come again and sit upon David's throne in Jerusalem. One of the arguments they use is from Jeremiah 16:14-16. Let us read beginning in verse 10.

First, I would like to briefly say that Israel as a people at that time had strayed from God's path and brought worldliness into their homes and nation. The prophet Jeremiah was called by God to warn them and say that if they did not repent from their wicked ways, then would Babylon's armies come and conquer Israel and take the Jews to Babylon as captives: We now read from verses 10-16: *"And it shall come to pass, when thou shalt shew this people all these words, and they shall say unto thee, Wherefore hath the LORD pronounced all this great evil*

against us? or what is our iniquity? or what is our sin that we have committed against the LORD our God? Then shalt thou say unto them, Because your fathers have forsaken me, saith the LORD, and have walked after other gods, and have served them, and have worshipped them, and have forsaken me, and have not kept my law; And ye have done worse than your fathers; for, behold, ye walk every one after the imagination of his evil heart, that they may not hearken unto me: Therefore will I cast you out of this land into a land that ye know not, neither ye nor your fathers; and there shall ye serve other gods day and night; where I will not shew you favour. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that it shall no more be said, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers. Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the LORD, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks."

We know that the nation of Israel was in Babylonian captivity for 70 years. The verses we have just read refer to Babylon as the land of the north. We once again find this description of Babylon as land of the north in connection with the return of the children of Israel from Babylon. (Jer. 31:8-9).

The return home from Babylon is described in this way: "Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the LORD, and they shall fish them..."



"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps."

1. Pet. 2:21

This entire event, which took place around 500 B.C., is placed in the future by many preachers. If we set this ancient, already fulfilled prophecy in the future, it then becomes a futuristic or time forwarding understanding of prophecy. The Jesuit Ribera suggested that the prophecies should be placed in the future. Many have accepted this interpretation method. Because they believe in this interpretation method, they believe that all the Jews shall return to Israel right before Jesus comes again. This is completely erroneous. The verses that we have just read have to do with the past. It took place around 500 B.C. To place this prophecy in the future is a self-made method of interpretation. They wait in vain if they are waiting for the all the Jews to return to their land before Jesus comes again, and

that when Jesus does return, He will come to reign on this earth and sit on David's throne in Jerusalem. Jesus Himself says, "My kingdom is not of this world." (John 18:36). Furthermore, we will soon see from the Bible, that Jesus will not come down and touch the earth when He comes again. We will also see that when Jesus returns, it is too late to repent. All destinies will have been decided at that point, either for eternal salvation or damnation. (John 5:24, 28-29).

There are also many orthodox Jews who only use the Old Testament. They do not believe in the New Testament and it is therefore they are not acquainted with Jesus Christ as Saviour. This concludes to them using the stories in the Old Testament and placing them in the future. They believe that these prophecies will be fulfilled in the future. Here is where they go wrong. They believe for example, that Israel will once again receive all the land they possessed during the time of David and Solomon. They also believe that all the promises to Israel shall be fulfilled in Israel. But the way they interpret Scripture is not being fulfilled. Israel has over the past few decades lost territory after territory and many surprises still await us. When all will see that things are not going as Israel has expected, then will some begin to read the New Testament. They will see that God's people today are a small remnant made up of both Jews and Gentiles, who by faith have accepted Jesus Christ as their personal saviour and have chosen to follow Jesus' steps (1 Pet. 2:21-24). Many will accept this "new" light and place themselves on the Saviour's side and in this way be a part of the small remnant that keep God's commandments and have the faith of Jesus (Rev. 14:12). Hallelujah, Praise the Lord!

WILL THE OLD TEMPLE BE BUILT AGAIN ?

There are many who believe the temple will be built again. But Jesus said to the Jews: "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." (Matt. 23:38). "And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." (Matt. 24:1,2).

In 70 A.D., the second temple was destroyed by the Romans and more than a million Jews were killed. Since then, the temple has never been rebuilt. Today, the Islamic Dome of the Rock stands on the temple mount. The Jews would hardly destroy it since it would cause the whole Islamic world to declare war against Israel and create chaos. The question is still asked by many: Will there ever be a third temple there? There are many who believe so. It is rumoured that there are Jewish organizations that are now preparing to rebuild a third temple on the temple mount. (The Edge of Time, p. 41, by Peter and Patti Lalonde). We have already seen what Jesus said about the temple – that there would not be anything left where the temple once was, not even one stone upon another. Both the first and



*"For this is my blood
of the new testa-
ment, which is shed
for many for the
remission of sins."*

(Mt. 26:28)



second temple have been destroyed. Today, there are only a few stones covered in moss that were once part of a beautiful temple. But why do they want a new temple just as it was before? The temple services and offerings are no longer. When Jesus died on Golgotha, *"the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom."* (Matt. 27:51). This was a clear sign from God that the offerings were discontinued. Jesus has come as the true lamb offer. All the offerings had pointed forward toward Him. All animal offerings were to be without noise. They symbolized Jesus who opened not His mouth. He was without sin. It is therefore He can save all who come to Him by faith. Paul writes that *"blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross."* (Col. 2:14).

There are some who believe that God's Law was done away with when Jesus died on the cross, but the Bible mentions two laws: the Ten Commandments and the law of Moses. There are differences between the law of Moses and God's Ten Commandments. God's Ten Commandments were written on stone by God Himself and put inside the ark of covenant. (Deut. 10:1-5). The law of Moses, with all the ceremonies and offerings, was written by Moses in a book and placed in the side of the ark of the covenant (Deut. 31:24-26). God's commandments are eternal, righteous and good. (Ps. 11:7-8; Rom. 7:7-12). All the ceremonies and offerings described in the law of Moses were temporary. They were no longer valid when Jesus died on the cross. Why would they build a new temple like the two previous ones that were destroyed? Is it because they have not accepted nor understood that Jesus' death has put an end to all the temple services with its ceremonies and offerings? Over 2000 years ago, the Jews rejected Jesus as Saviour. If they are planning to build a new temple, is this proof that the nation of Israel continues

to deny that which Jesus has done to save us? The Bible clearly says that Jesus brought an end to food offerings and animal sacrifices when He gave His life on the cross. (Dan. 9:27; Heb. 9:24-28). By offering Himself, He put an end to all the Levitical offerings.

When Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper just before His death, He said: *"For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."* (Matt. 26:28). This meant that Jesus Christ, the true seed, entered into a new covenant with a new Israel. It is those who have accepted Jesus' salvation by faith and receive the forgiveness of sin. This is the spiritual Israel. They are the seed of Abraham, inheritors according to the new covenant and Jesus' promises.

We should not set focus on a new Jewish temple in Jerusalem. We should now focus heavenward toward the heavenly sanctuary, where Jesus sits as our redeemer and Saviour. (Heb. 8:1-3). He goes before us with prayers and passes judgment. The Bible says, *"it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."* (Heb. 9:27). The Bible also says that we should preach that the *"hour of His judgment is come"* (Rev. 14:7). So there is a judgment that takes place determining the destiny of man from the time of death (when a person dies) and the second coming of Jesus. When Jesus comes again, it will already have been decided who is saved and who is lost. Let us read a few scriptures about this: *"There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy."* (James 4:12). *"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."* (2 Cor. 5:10). *"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."* (Rev. 20:12).

Let us take one more scripture that may tell us something about whether the Gentiles will accept the building of a third temple on the Temple Mount by the

"I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the LORD. The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies... for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid."

(Zeph. 3:12-13)



Jews. Jesus says: *"But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."* (Luke 21:23-24).

The time of the Gentiles is fulfilled when Jesus returns. There is therefore much that points to the fact that Israel will never be free from the Gentile's influence in their own land. But when Jesus comes again, it will be different. The orthodox Jews do not believe that Jesus is the Messiah. They do not therefore accept the New Testament referring to Jesus as the Saviour of the world. They are almost like Gentiles. The Gentiles also do not believe in Jesus Christ as the Saviour of the

world. When the Jews cried out to crucify Jesus, *"then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children."* (Matt. 27:25). Do you therefore believe that they must suffer as a result of taking this conclusion? Do you believe that they must suffer because they have not made Jesus their guardian, guide and Saviour? It is therefore it looks like Jerusalem will be downtrodden by Gentiles until Jesus comes again. It has not gone for Israel the way many have prophesied and believed. Israel continues to lose parts of its territory and many surprises will come. God chastens those He loves. Therefore the message to Laodicea goes out to them as well: *"be zealous therefore, and repent."* (Rev. 3:19).



"For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them..."

(1. Thess. 5:3)

A REMNANT SHALL BE CONVERTED

Jesus knocks on the door of the heart of the Jewish nation. Will they humble themselves before Him and open the door so that He can come in? Yes, there is no doubt. A remnant shall be converted and be saved – a remnant of Jews and Gentiles. The remnant will be made up of those who have accepted Jesus Christ as their Saviour by faith. The prophet Isaiah writes: *"For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant of them shall return."* (Isa. 10:22). The prophet Zephaniah writes: *"I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the LORD. The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid."*



USA, UN, EU og Russia are now being used as diplomats in handling peace talks in the Middle East.

(Zeph. 3:12-13). John writes: “And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” (Rev. 12:17).

MISINTERPRETATION OF THE SCRIPTURE

The history of the Bible is written for us that we may learn from that history. We see that history repeats itself in different ways. Problems arise when people begin to interpret Scripture and the prophecies after their own understanding. There are many today who do this, but Scripture interprets itself. We find the principal solutions and answers in the Word of God. There is therefore much that suggests that things will go differently in comparison to how many of the Israel-preachers interpret Scripture. When they take prophecies that have taken place in the past – in the Old Testament – and place them in a futuristic perspective and interpret them as they please, will many then see as time goes, that these prophecies fail, causing many to be astonished. Soon will many big changes take place in the Middle East and Israel's people will experience that God is not with them, although He would like to since they have not accepted Him as their personal Saviour by faith. Read the Bible for yourself and you will see that such are the principles in the Bible!

PEACE AND SAFETY - SUDDEN DESTRUCTION

Barack Obama supports the Palestinians in the region more than any other of USA's earlier presidents and he gives billions to Gaza and countenance to Israel (Dagbladet, July 10, 2010). The balance of power will soon be changed in this region after a short period of peace. The Bible says that they will say peace and safety and then will sudden destruction follow. (1 Thess. 5:3). This peace process is not only taking pace in the Middle East but in the entire world. This is a part of the New World Order. The Globalists will give us peace, but only when we follow their international rules. But such a peace will only be for a short time before things break loose in the end time drama.

The Bible says that it is the whore (papacy) who reigneth over the kings of the earth. (Rev. 17:18). She makes all drink of her intoxicating wine (Rev. 14:8) and the great men and merchants are deceived by her sorceries. (Rev. 18:23). The Bible reveals that the papacy has a strategy that cannot be understood by leaders and people in the world. They are deceived. They are deceived by the papacy's sorceries. It is sad but true. Those who study God's Word will see it, even though we hardly understand it all.

THE GREAT TEST

There are many who do not realize that it is the papacy that is behind the whole peace process and influencing what is taking place throughout the whole world. They are behind the New World Order. We have confirmed this citing their own sources in several other writings at www.endtime.net and we have already seen it from God's Word as well. (See Rev. 13:2; 17:12-14). USA, UN, EU and Russia are now being used as diplomats in handling peace talks in the Middle East. The Globalists want unity at all levels in accordance with their centralized, international pattern. They also want unity in the religious realm. They cannot accept that the Jews keep the Sabbath. In this way, are Jews and all others who keep the Sabbath holy, a hindrance to global unity. We believe all would like unity in the religious realm, but the Jews will keep the Sabbath holy and the others will in the end go along with Sunday as the day of rest. "*All the world wondered after the beast.*" (Rev. 13:3). Therefore will the question concerning the day of rest be the big controversial question at the end of time. Now there is talk about limitations and rights and they can also maybe agree on many other points, but soon will the day of rest question rise to the surface. All, who will not accept Sunday as a joint day of rest, will be looked upon as enemies of the authorities' laws; enemies of the government's law and order. They will ultimately be persecuted in the end and the Bible reveals that it will go as far as a death decree in order to kill them. (Rev. 13:15). That is when Jesus comes to deliver His people! (Rev. 15:2). The Jews will also be tested on this point, whether they will be loyal toward Jesus' day of rest,

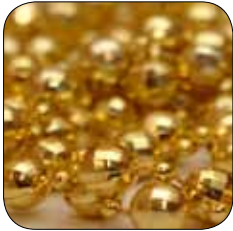
the Sabbath, or the man-made day of rest, Sunday. All will be confronted with this test. Let us choose God as our authority and be loyal to Him now. We will then gain experience and power from the Lord to be loyal to Him in the future also!

ARMAGEDDON

The Bible describes three powers that will unite at the end of time. It is the dragon, the beast and the false prophet. The Bible reads: *"And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon."* (Rev. 16:13-16).

First we will clarify that the word Armageddon is made up of two words. "Ar" means mountain. "Mageddon" reminds us of the old valley, Megiddo (2 Chron. 35:22), where there was war and great destruction. So Armageddon refers to a mountain and great destruction.

Many believe that this war of Armageddon will take place in the Middle East and that there will be great destruction. We will soon see that the war of Armageddon is a totally different war.



"I counsel thee to buy of me gold... white raiment... and eyesalve..."

(Rev. 3:18)

It is totally clear that the three powers we read about in Revelation chapter 16, which are driven by evil spirits, are against Jesus. In Revelation chapter 17, verses 12-14, we read about all the world's corrupted powers (the ten kings in the end time) that will battle against Christ and those who stand on His side. In this connection, it is interesting to note that the world is divided into 10 regions. See the pamphlet entitled *Obama and the New World Order*, under the section "All the world's corrupted powers". There will be a war of Armageddon, but Paul says that our weapons are not carnal, but spiritual. In Christ, we are mighty and able to gain the victory over Satan's temptations and evil attacks. (2 Cor. 10:3-5). It is totally clear that Satan prepares for war and gives rumours of war, but this battle of



“And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.” (Rev. 21:2)



Armageddon is first and foremost a spiritual war. It is global. It does not only take place in the Middle East. We read about how you will in this war either be naked or will be clothed. What does this mean? Nakedness is a representation of sin. To be clothed is a representation of the garments of Christ's righteousness, which is offered to all those who confess their sin and receive the grace of Christ by faith.

In the book Revelation, we read about those who consider themselves to be Christ's representatives. They believe they are rich and have need of nothing, but are poor, blind and naked. The Lord counsels them to: *“buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.”* (Rev. 3:14-18). Here we see that when the Bible describes a person as spiritually naked, it is a representation of sin. When a person is clothed, this is a characterization of the spiritual condition – the person has confessed their sin, been granted pardon and thereby symbolically received the garment of Christ's righteousness, unmerited, by grace through faith. (1 John 1:9; Zach. 3:3-4; Isa. 61:10).

There will be human destruction. If you have not accepted the grace of Jesus – you will then be naked and be destroyed before God creates a new heaven and a new earth. (Rev. 21:8). The destinies of all are determined and all are judged, the end result will be human destruction – a destruction of men and women that reaches further out than the Middle East's geographical area.

We read that the three controlling powers at the end of time will deceive the world with signs. One of the three powers is a false prophet. Today there are many who deceive with signs and wonders (Deut. 18:10-12; 1 Thess. 2:9; Matt. 7:21-24),



"The 144 000... were redeemed from the earth... These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb."

(Rev. 14:3-4)

and the world is full of false prophets. There are also many false prophets with regard to this subject of Israel. Many will therefore be deceived if they do not study God's Word for themselves and with prayer to God. When the disciples questioned Jesus what some of the signs of His coming be, the first thing He said was: *"Take heed that no man deceive you."* (Matt. 24:4).

THE 144,000

Many believe that the 144,000, seen by John on mount Zion, come from the children of Israel, the biological or physical Israel. The Bible describes the 144,000 in this way: *"And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Zion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God."* (Rev. 14:1-5)

The Lamb is standing on mount Sion. Where is mount Sion? Paul describes mount Sion in an end time perspective as follows: *"But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem"* (Heb. 12:22). We will soon read about the *"holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."* (Rev. 21:2). The Lamb, Jesus, is standing along with the 144,000 at home in God's kingdom, on the mount Sion in the Heavenly Jerusalem. The Bible says that they have *"his (The Lamb's) Father's name written in their foreheads."* God's name is a reflection of His character. We can read about this here: *"And the LORD descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth."* (Exodus 34:5, 6). Here we see that God's name has to do with His character. He is merciful, gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth. The 144,000 had these character traits in their life. They revealed God's character in their life. They had been God's representatives on this earth. It continues to say that the 144,000 had not defiled themselves with women, because they are virgins. In the Bible, a woman represents a church. (2 Cor. 11:2). A woman with white clothing represents a pure church (Rev. 12:1), and a woman with red clothing represents an impure church (Rev. 17:5; Isa. 1:18). The 144,000 had not walked in the way of compromise. They had not participated in the ecumenical movement, which is of Catholic and of non-Biblical origin, but stood fast on the truths of the Bible with love for the truth and to Jesus Christ. The 144,000 will follow Jesus wherever He goes. There will be found no guile in their mouth. They will stand fast in good and in bad times. They will have the patience of the saints, they will by the power of the Holy Spirit in their life, keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus. (Rev. 14:12). Lastly, it is said that the 144,000 are without fault.

We have already seen that when they should offer a lamb in the Old Testament, they would find one without spot or blemish. It should point forward to Jesus who would live a life without fault. He did just that (Heb. 4:15, 16). The Bible says that the 144,000 will also be without fault. They will be like Nathaniel. Jesus said that he was *"an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile."* (John 1:47). The 144,000 will represent Jesus. They have made the necessary changes in their life; they have confessed their sin, received forgiveness and power from the Lord to live a righteous life for others and for God. They have revealed Jesus' character in their life and in the end they will receive the seal of God in their foreheads. They will then be children of God forever. God will have acknowledged them as His forever. May you and I be among them! Life is then worth something. Such a perspective of the future gives a future and a hope. We then have all the best we can have right before us.

It should be clear for all that the 144,000 represent both Jews and Gentiles who

have accepted salvation in Jesus Christ and who have received the power of the Holy Spirit to live a righteous life for Him. The 144,000 cannot be Jews who have not accepted salvation in Jesus Christ because they 144,000 follow Jesus wherever He goes. They have seen the love of Jesus; they have received the love of Jesus in their own life and give this love to others. They are lights for Jesus in this dark world. They are the spiritual Israel.

We read a little more about the 144,000: *"And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel."* (Rev. 7:2-4).



"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God..."

(1. Thess. 4:16)

It is totally clear that this sealing of God's children takes place before the angels are told to harm the earth and the sea. This will be done just before Jesus returns. We are talking about the 7 plagues that come from God. The first plague will fall upon those who have received the image and mark of the beast. We have also seen that this test, regarding the mark of the beast, is the last big test in this world's history right before Jesus Christ, the saviour of the world, comes again. It is right before the 7 plagues fall that God's people receive the seal of God in their foreheads and the plagues will not fall upon them, but only upon those who have received the image and mark of the beast.

We have seen that the 144,000

- Reveal the God's character in their life
- They follow the Lamb wherever He goes
- They have not defiled themselves with other fallen churches
- They do not lie
- They are without fault
- They are they that receive the seal of God

These people know Jesus and Jesus knows them; they follow the shepherd, Jesus. (John 10:27). They speak about Jesus and His truth. They are led of the Holy Spirit. These are the spiritual Israel. Do not let any false prophets tell you any different. The Bible says that false prophets are like frogs that just talk and talk. They make their own conclusions and are satisfied with doing that. They speak not the truth. Jesus says: *"But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."* (Matt. 18:6). The wise man Solomon writes: *"A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall not escape."* (Proverbs 19:5).

Have you noticed that when John lists the tribes of Israel, they are not all same tribes that were once a part of ancient Israel? They are also not listed in the same order. The tribe of Dan and Ephraim are not listed. When Jacob was to bless his 12 sons, which the 12 tribes are named after, Dan was called a *"serpent by the way, an adder in the path"* (Genesis 49:17). One of the twelve tribes was named after Joseph's son Ephraim, a grandchild of Jacob. The Bible says: *"Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone"* (Hos. 4:17). All of the 12 tribes of Israel listed in Revelation chapter 7, verses 5-8, received God's seal in the forehead. Levi, the priestly tribe, which was not among the original twelve tribes of the Old Covenant, has replaced Dan and Joseph has replaced Ephraim. In the book of Revelation, it talks about the 12 tribes and in each tribe there is 12,000 people. It is therefore there are 12 tribes that altogether make up 144,000. They receive the seal of God in their foreheads, a description of those people, the 144,000, who are without fault and follow the Lamb (Christ) all the way. They reveal the character of Jesus in their life. They are Jesus' faithful witnesses. They are the spiritual Israel. They do not war at all, unlike Jews in Israel today. Their weapons are spiritual and not carnal or physical. We are talking about people of the New Covenant and not the Old Covenant. The 144,000 are those who have not received the mark of beast and who will be living when Jesus comes again. They are they who stand on mount Sion, saved and at home in God's kingdom. John describes this group like this: *"And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten*

the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God" (Rev. 15:2). We see that they had battled against the image and mark of beast, but through the power of God in their life they gained the victory.

Some suggest that the redeemed will be taken to heaven before the image and mark of beast are in effect, but we see that this is contrary to God's Word.

In Revelation, it is confirmed that God's children will be confronted with the mark of beast. The Bible reads: *"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years"* (Rev. 20:4).

The Bible also says that all small and great, rich and poor will face the decision dealing with worship. (Rev. 13:16).

All will be tested, God's children and the Gentiles. It is only those who choose to be loyal to the Creator and worship Him as the creator of heaven and earth, just as we do on the Lord's Day of rest, the Sabbath – who will receive the seal of God in their foreheads. The others will receive the mark of the beast. There is a difference and their decision will determine their eternal destiny. Which authority do you wish to worship and serve?

We realize that it will be difficult for many to accept this, but we have now clearly seen that Jesus has broken down the wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles, and that we all are one in Jesus Christ. Why would we go against Jesus' teachings and set up our own wall of partition again and believe that it is only Jews who make up the 144,000 and receive the seal of the God in the forehead? This leads people down the wrong track. God's children are in different places and in different denominations throughout the world, but they will all in the end, be of "one accord", as in the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1). In the end, the Bible says there will be one flock and one shepherd (John 10:16).

IS JESUS COMING DOWN TO THE GROUND IN JERUSALEM?

Jesus warns those who believe He will touch the ground when He comes to redeem His people. He says, among other things, the following: *"Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."* (Matt. 24:26, 27).

In 1 Thessalonians, chapter 4, verses 15-17, the fact that Jesus does not come down to the ground when He comes to redeem His people is clearly described: *"For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and*



"And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death."

(Rev. 20:14)

remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to MEET THE LORD IN THE AIR: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

This text very clearly states that there is nobody who is taken up to Heaven before the day of resurrection. The redeemed that remain and are alive, will by no means be taken up before those who are in the grave are resurrected. We read that the redeemed who have slept in the grave will first be resurrected, and they shall together with the faithful living on the earth, be caught up together and meet the Lord in the air. The redeemed will first go to Heaven. Jesus confirms this by saying: *"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."* (John 14:2-3).

So when Jesus went to Heaven, He said that He went to prepare a place for us. He has promised to come again in order to take us to the place He prepared for us – Heaven. The redeemed will first go to Heaven. The Bible says that they will be there for 1000 years (Rev. 20:4). After a thousand years in Heaven, God will then create a new heaven and a new earth where the redeemed shall live. This is described as follows: *"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea."* (Rev. 21:1).

We also read that after the 1000 years, the New Jerusalem will come down from God as a bride adorned for her husband along with all the saints. *"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."* (Rev. 21:2). *"And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives... and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west... and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south... and the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee."* (Zech. 14:4, 5).

Notice that the Lord shall come down from Heaven to the mount of Olives with all the saints. The redeemed have been in heaven for a 1000 years and held judgment. They have been allowed to open Heaven's books and see that the judgment is righteous and why the lost were not saved. So it is after the 1000 years that the New Jerusalem will come down from Heaven onto the mount of Olives, which has divided itself into two. We read that the New Jerusalem is adorned as a bride for her husband. The Devil will surround the beloved city and all the redeemed in an attempt to conquer it. The Bible clearly describes what the end result will be: *"But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished."* (Rev. 20:5). Here we see that the ungodly will arise from the grave after the 1000 years.

"And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog, and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea." (Rev. 20:7-8).

GOG AND MAGOG

Satan has been bound for 1000 years but is then loosed out of his prison. All of a sudden he has many to persecute because the ungodly have been resurrected from the grave. He will gather people from all directions, Gog and Magog. Here is the battle of God and Magog after the 1000 years. Many, who read the book of Ezekiel, chapters 38 and 39, believe that the battle of Gog and Magog is now, before the 1000 years, but if we read this in light of Revelation chapter 20, verses 7-9, we see clearly that the battle of Gog and Magog is after the 1000 years. Satan will gather all the ungodly in an attempt to conquer the New Jerusalem that has come down from Heaven, from God, together with all the saints, which have been there for a 1000 years. The Bible describes Satan's battle march in this way:

"And they (the ungodly with Satan and his angels in the forefront) went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them." (Rev. 20:9).

Here we read about the beloved city – the New Jerusalem that comes down from Heaven, from God. That is what we are waiting for, not a third temple that shall be built here on earth by people. This will take place after the thousand years.



"But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (Gen. 2:17)

We read in the last scripture that fire from heaven devoured them (the ungodly). John describes this punishment in the lake of fire like this:

"And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death." (Rev. 20:14). A little further he continues by writing: "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." (Rev. 21:8).

ETERNALLY BURNING HELL?

So the ungodly will be devoured, they will be destroyed. There are many who believe that they will be tormented throughout eternity. Most Bibles say, *"they shall be tormented day and night throughout all eternity."* The Bible states the following: *"And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."* (Rev. 20:10). This word for ever and ever comes from the ground text "Aion". The meaning of this word is "long time", "lifetime", or "eternity". This is in harmony with the rest of the Bible, which says that they shall be punished after their works (Rev. 20:12-13), and they shall burn as stubble. (See later). But the punishment ends with death, and not with eternal life – eternal life in torment. The tormenting of people throughout eternity does not harmonize with the love of Je-

sus. Sin shall be destroyed and it is therefore He will create a new heaven and a new earth where righteousness dwells. (2 Pet. 3:13). John also says, "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." (1 John 5:12).

ONLY GOD HAS IMMORTALITY

In the beginning God said: "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (Gen. 2:17). But the Devil said to the woman "Ye shall not surely die." (Gen. 3:4). This was Satan's first lie on this earth. This lie has paved the way for spiritism and the teaching of the immortality of the soul. The Bible says: "The life is in the blood", or that "the life is the blood" (Gen. 9:4; Deut. 12:23). When a person dies, the whole person is dead – spirit, soul, body. Had Adam and Eve eaten from the Tree of Life, they would have lived eternally, but they did not. (Gen. 3:22-24). It will first be in the new earth that they will eat of the Tree of Life and live eternally (Rev. 22:2). Aside from this, the Bible makes it clear that God alone has immortality: "Who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality..." (1 Tim. 6:15-16). He alone is immortal. We are mortal, all of us. It is not like it's just the body that sins when we sin and that the soul is free from sin. This is Plato's thinking and not Biblical thought. The Bible says: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Eze. 18:20). The Bible also says that it is first when Jesus comes, that this mortal will be clothed with immortality: "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at



"God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death... for the former things are passed away."

(Rev. 21:3-4)



the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." (1 Cor. 15:51-53). This includes the redeemed when Jesus comes again. Here we clearly see that we are mortal and this mortal will be clothed with immortality.

A NEW HEAVEN AND A NEW EARTH

It is so encouraging to read that God will create a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells – after the 1000 years. John writes about this new reality: *"And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."* (Rev. 21:3-4). This is what we look forward to; God will create a new Eden – the new earth. The Lord will have then brought us back to the original, the way it was in the beginning when He had completed His creation, and said it was very good. (Gen. 1:31).

We continue reading: *"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea."* (Rev. 21:1).

God will create a new heaven and a new earth. This earth will be destroyed. Have you thought about that? Where is hell and torment at that point? No, there



"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea." (Rev. 21:1)



is no hell and no more torment. All the unsaved have been burned up in the lake of fire before the Lord creates the new heaven and new earth. We read that the ungodly will be devoured. Malachi writes that the ungodly will burn as stubble: *"For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch."* (Mal. 4:1). The root is Satan and the branches are the ungodly. They will all burn. It will end in death. They will burn as stubble and verse 3 says that they shall be as ashes.

Satan will burn to ashes. The prophet Ezekiel describes it like this: *"Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more."* (Eze. 28:18-19).

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." (2 Pet. 3:10).

The Psalmist David writes: *"But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the LORD shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away."* (Psalm 37:20).

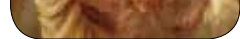
"And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly." (2 Pet. 2:6).

"Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." (Jude 1:7).

Here we read that these cities should suffer the vengeance of eternal fire, but they are still not burning today. The fire was quenched when there was no more to be burned. It became ashes. It will be like this after the 1000 years when the ungodly receive their punishment. They will be punished according to their works and when they have received their punishment of fire, it will end in death.

"Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." (2 Pet. 3:13).

When God shall create a new earth, where are the ungodly then? We have read earlier that the first earth was destroyed. (Rev. 21:1). The ungodly are also destroyed because they will not be in the new earth. There will be no more sin, pain, crying nor unrighteousness in the new earth. It is only those who have accepted Jesus Christ as their personal saviour by faith, who will be there together with the heavenly host. We indeed just read, that it is in the new earth where the righteous will live.



God knows the hearts, and among Catholics, Lutherans, Jews, Muslims, Mohammedans, Hindus, Freemasons, etc. there are honest and sincere people who have not seen all the truth from God's Word, but have uprightly followed Jesus as far as they have seen the light from God's lamp. God sees their sincerity and He will judge righteously. But we now live in a time where three messages, as found in Revelation chapter 14, verses 6-12 and chapter 18, verse 4, shall be preached. These messages contain a message of grace and a message of warning. They shall be preached as witness to all nations. These messages place people in a situation where they must choose whether they will worship "the beast and receive its mark" or if they will worship the Creator. (Rev. 13:15-16).

There is a movement going on all over the world, which is now preaching these three messages, and just as the Holy Spirit fell upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost, the Bible says that there will be a new Pentecost. The Holy Spirit's outpouring on the day of Pentecost is considered to be the early the rain and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the end of time is considered to be the latter rain. (James 5:7-8). Let us all take a clear stand for the Saviour, Jesus Christ, so that we may be a part of this movement!


The last events on this earth will rapidly take place, so let us humble ourselves and accept the gift of salvation! The difficulties we go through here are nothing compared to the glory that awaits the children of God! Let us thank God for the wonderful future He has prepared for us! We hope to meet you there!

Read more about this in the pamphlet *The King is Coming!* and *Israel in the End of Time*, at www.endtime.net or www.globalendtime.net

With friendly greetings,

Abel & Bente Struksnes,
Veststrumsbygda 26, 2879 Odnnes, Norway

www.endtime.net

The image features several tall, thin stalks of grass or wheat in silhouette against a soft, light-colored sky. The stalks are positioned vertically, with their seed heads reaching towards the top of the frame. The lighting is diffused, creating a gentle, ethereal atmosphere. The overall composition is minimalist and focuses on the natural textures and forms of the plants.

For more information, please visit our web-page:

www.endtime.net