

# THE END TIMES



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(Photo taken on July 3, 1970 in French Polynesia by the French Army)

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## Notes

The biblical references in this article were taken from the New King James Bible. When a comment, word, or phrase is inserted within a reference from the scriptures, it will be written in italics between parentheses. In many cases the referenced passage is very long and not included here, so I suggest that all the biblical references mentioned also be read to obtain the greatest benefit.

This extract does not cover all the subjects addressed in The Revelation of the Sealed Book, nor many of the details found in it. The complete book is in Spanish and is still in the process of being translated into English.

My hope in the Lord is that this brief summary will be of great blessing to each one who reads it, and that you would be part of what the Lord is doing at this time in the body of Christ, the church, which God will keep from the hour of trial that will come over the whole world to test those who live on the earth. I dedicate this summary of “The End Times” to those who love God and obey His word with a sincere heart. Amen.

## Introduction

The Great Tribulation is a long period of suffering that will be experienced by all inhabitants living on the earth during the latter times. In the past, many events and catastrophic wars have been registered in the history of humanity, such as the First and Second World Wars, where millions of people died. Although these conflicts were disastrous, none of them can be compared to the events prophesied to start soon. Jesus said, “For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be” (Matthew 24:21). The word of God is real and true to point out the specific events that will happen and the scope that these will have in the entire world.

To have more understanding of the apocalyptic topics, it is necessary to consider certain issues related to the purpose of God for the people of Israel—past, present, and future. There are prophecies directly relating to the nation of Israel which have not been fulfilled yet. Many people think that Israel is already out of the focus or purpose of God, but this is not so; God has not yet finished His dealing with His chosen people. It is my intention to share these riches in Jesus Christ manifested by the Holy Spirit and made known to those who get nearer to God, who recognize His word and the revelation of the eternal purpose of God for mankind.

The Scripture tells us in Romans 16:25-27 that since ancient times, the prophets (the men through whom God chose to declare His word) spoke the word of God “in mysteries.” They did not understand many things of which they spoke. We might say that they saw through “the prophetic eye,” so that even while seeing the things to come, they could not discover the meaning of them. Daniel 12:4 says, “But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end.” Then Daniel 12:8-9 also says, “Although I heard, I did not understand. Then I said, ‘My Lord, what shall be the end of these things?’ And he said, ‘Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.’”

But glory to God who sent Jesus Christ to give us understanding! Alleluia, to Him be glory and honor forever! God did not leave us orphans and lacking understanding; He sent His Spirit who, among many other things, can teach and direct us to green pastures and waters of rest. The time of the end has come—the time to open the book which Daniel was commanded to seal. For this, God raised up another prophet, the apostle John. This man was chosen by God to open the book that the prophet Daniel had closed and sealed. In Revelation 22:10 we read, “And he said to me, ‘Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand.’”

## **Why Is This Word for the Church?**

God reveals His purpose and will to those who are capable of obeying and experiencing those riches of His glory. The simple knowledge of facts and experiences of others do not make us partakers of His promises. The “law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” has to be experienced by each of us in an individual way. Each one of us must know the Lord and must have the capacity to live and experience Him in a real and continuous way. We are the possession of the Lord, and in this way we must walk, expressing His true image in this world. “He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked” (1 John 2:6). Therefore, when God reveals His purpose and will, He does it so that we can obey Him by faith.

Why is this word of the end times for the church, if she will not go through the Great Tribulation? God chose the church for a great mission: to spread the gospel and to bring understanding of His purpose and will to all people. Ephesians 3:9-11 says, “and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Therefore, it is the church which must have a full understanding of all future events, in order to teach and proclaim them in a sound and clear way. He who loves God and walks in His will can know and understand the mysteries of God, since they are understood not through human intelligence or ability, but by the revelation of God through the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, “If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority” (John 7:17).

The book of Revelation was written for the church. “John, to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come...” “What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia...” “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches” (Revelation 1:4, 11, 2:7). Therefore, all members of the church have the responsibility to understand and keep this word of God. “Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.” “Then he said to me, ‘These words are faithful and true.’ And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place. ‘Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book’” (Revelation 1:3, 22:6-7).

In addition to this, in the last two chapters of Revelation we find one of the most wonderful and glorious pictures of God’s final purpose, the full union (wedding) of the Lord Jesus with His bride, the church. With this final event, God fulfills His goal for mankind as He states it in Ephesians 1:9-12: “having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him. In Him 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 that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.” How great and wonderful is the plan of God for us! Amen.

## **A Whole Panorama of God’s Plan**

What did the old prophets see, and what did they not see? Prior to Christ, God selected servants and prophets who would be torches shining on the way of men. Part of the plan of God for future generations was revealed through them. The revelation of God to the ancient people before Christ was a “shadow of things to come” (Colossians 2:17). They did not see all the coming events, especially those related to the church of the Lord. “Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven

—things which angels desire to look into” (1 Peter 1:10-12). In order to give the most clear possible expression of what we are saying, let us consider the diagram of Figure 1 – The Prophetic Eye.

In this diagram each “peak” represents an important event that affected or will affect the earth and its inhabitants. The ancient prophets saw the peaks presented in this diagram, but did not see what we will call the “valley,” and the short peak that represents the “catching up” (rapture) of the church. Let us mention some examples of events that the ancient prophets did see, which are represented by the peaks of the diagram in Figure 1.

- The great flood, prophesied by Noah, was a prophecy to be fulfilled in the time of the prophet Noah.
- The prophets saw the birth of Christ, His sufferings and death, His resurrection, and the coming of the Holy Spirit. The Old Testament contains many scriptures related to the birth of the Lord Jesus (Isaiah 7:14, 9:6-7, Micah 5:2), His sufferings and death (Isaiah 53:1-12, Numbers 9:12, Psalms 34:20), His resurrection (Psalms 16:10), and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Joel 2:28-29).
- In the year 70 A.D., the prophecy of Daniel 9:26 was totally fulfilled, when the Roman Empire destroyed the city of Jerusalem and the temple. This event was of great importance, since it was the last event to happen before the coming of the judgment, the Great Tribulation, over Israel and all other nations.
- Another event that the prophets saw was the Great Tribulation. During approximately the last three and a half years of a period of seven years, all the earth and its inhabitants will experience events never seen before (Jeremiah 30:7, Daniel 7:19-25, 9:24-27, 12:1, Zechariah 14:1-2).
- The event that ends the Great Tribulation is the second visible coming of Christ to the earth. This event was also seen by the prophetic eye (Zechariah 12:10-14, 14:3-4, Matthew 24:30, Daniel 7:13-14, 26-27). For the Jewish people, this will be like the first coming of Christ, since they did not believe in Jesus the Messiah when He came for the first time.
- The Millennium is another event prophesied by the ancient prophets (Zechariah 14:16-19, Micah 4:1-4). It consists of a period of one thousand years, which will come after the Great Tribulation.
- The last two events that the ancient prophets saw were the final judgment and the creation of the new heaven and new earth: in other words, a new world (Isaiah 65:17-25, 66:22), which will be established after the Millennium.

God had a purpose in each event prophesied by the ancient prophets. It is very important to understand the place that the nation of Israel and the church occupy in the plan of God. The fulfillment of God’s promises for Israel is not the same as those for the church; that is why the ancient prophets saw the future events in a limited way.

As you see in Figure 1 – The Prophetic Eye, the ancient prophet did not see what is represented by the “valley,” the church, nor the peak of the rapture of the church. This valley represents the period between the coming of the Holy Spirit and the beginning of the Great Tribulation. The ancient prophet did not have any idea what the church could be, according to the hidden purpose of God. He could see what was related to his nation Israel, even without much understanding; but could not see what was related to the new covenant in Christ Jesus, which is the church as the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 3:5-6 speaks of the mystery “which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel.” Colossians 1:26-27 tells of “the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints. To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.” The church, as the body of Christ and the habitation of the Holy Spirit, was hidden from the forefathers in the time before Christ until the coming of the disciples and apostles of Jesus. From the Day of Pentecost, the purpose of God related to the design of His church has been available to those who love the

Lord and live in obedience to His word. The church waits for her **Lord** and **Husband**; on the other hand, Israel awaits the **Messiah** and **King**.

Therefore, according to the old prophetic eye, the next event to be fulfilled for Israel is the Great Tribulation (see Figure 1). There are many scriptures that clearly show the skip from Jesus' death to the Great Tribulation events without going through the church time, because the people before Christ did not see the church. For example, Joel 2:28-32 mentions three events that according to the prophetic eye seem to occur in a continuous way:

#### The pouring out of the Holy Spirit (Joel 2:28-29)

“And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days.” (See also Acts 2:1-20)

#### Great Tribulation events (Joel 2:30-31)

“And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: blood and fire and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord.” (See also Mathew 24:29, Revelation 6:12)

#### Millennium events (Joel 2:32)

“And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, as the Lord has said, among the remnant whom the Lord calls.” (See also Ezekiel 37:21-25, Zechariah 14:1-11)

What happened between the pouring out of the Holy Spirit (vss. 2:28-29) and the events of the Great Tribulation (vss. 2:30-31)? In this period of time the church arose, which, again, the old prophet did not see; this is why the prophets “jump over” that period of time. There are other passages (prophecies) that show this same message (Daniel 9:26-27, Luke 23:27-31, etc.).

#### Summary:

Israel is the people of God which will be shepherded. God promised them a land from the river of Egypt to the River Euphrates (Genesis 15:18). This will be the Christ's kingdom (the Millennium) on this earth.

The church is the bride of the Son of God, Jesus, and co-heir with Him in the Father's kingdom. God promised the New Jerusalem, the habitation of God the Father, to be established in the new earth (Revelation 21-22). The church is not the spiritual Israel.

### **Daniel Chapter 9 – The Seventy Weeks**

As was already mentioned, the ancient prophets saw the Great Tribulation as an event that **follows immediately** after the destruction of the city of Jerusalem and the temple (sanctuary). In other words, it is as though the “prophetic clock” stopped after the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem. What is the actual place of Israel before God, and what is the purpose of God to be fulfilled soon for this nation? Romans 11:11-32 describes how “blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved.” This passage shows how God “stopped” in His treatment with Israel as a nation to deal with the Gentiles, and so bring forth the church. Then, at the end time, when the church is caught up out of this world (raptured), God will return to His dealing with Israel to fulfill His promise that “all Israel will be saved” (although we will see that only a remnant will be saved). This work of God will be accomplished during and at the end of the Great Tribulation, bringing them to the blessing of the millennial kingdom, where Jesus, the son of David, will reign one thousand years as King.

Daniel 9:20-27 speaks about the time God has chosen to fulfill His purpose with the people of Israel, not the church. Figure 2 shows the events related to the “70 weeks” prophecy. This period of 70 weeks began in the time of King Artaxerxes, king of Persia. The Daniel 9:24 passage is full of details, as follow:

1. Seventy weeks are determined

God established a specific time to accomplish this prophecy. This means that everything mentioned in this prophecy takes place over the span of 70 weeks (which is actually 490 years, as we will see it later).

2. For your people and for your holy city

The prophecy is addressed to “your people” (Israel) and to “your holy city” (Jerusalem), excluding the church. Also, Daniel 10:14 says, “Now I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision refers to many days yet to come.”

3. To finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation (*expiation*) for iniquity

We know that Israel rejected Christ, and from that time the nation has lived in sin, as any other nation. On the other hand, it is also true that God has not abandoned Israel, although she has sinned. The remnant will be saved. “Behold, I will gather them out of all countries where I have driven them in My anger, in My fury, and in great wrath; I will bring them back to this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely. They shall be My people, and I will be their God; then I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear Me forever, for the good of them and their children after them. And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from doing them good; but I will put My fear in their hearts so that they will not depart from Me. Yes, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will assuredly plant them in this land, with all My heart and with all My soul.’ For thus says the Lord: ‘Just as I have brought all this great calamity on this people, so I will bring on them all the good that I have promised them’” (Jeremiah 32:37-42). “For Israel is not forsaken (*has not become a widow*), nor Judah, by his God, the Lord of hosts, though their land was filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel” (Jeremiah 51:5).

4. Bring in everlasting righteousness

This is the promise for Israel: “For Zion’s sake I will not hold My peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest, until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burns. The Gentiles shall see your righteousness, and all kings your glory. You shall be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord will name. You shall also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God. You shall no longer be termed Forsaken, nor shall your land any more be termed Desolate; but you shall be called Hephzibah (*my delight is in her*), and your land Beulah (*bride*); for the Lord delights in you, and your land shall be married” (Isaiah 62:1-4). Also Isaiah 1:26-27 says, “I will restore your judges as at the first, and your counselors as at the beginning. Afterward you shall be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city. Zion shall be redeemed with justice and her penitents with righteousness.”

5. To seal up vision and prophecy

This means to fulfill the vision and prophecy. God is faithful and He will do it.

6. To anoint the Most Holy

This is the day when the Lord Jesus will come to reign in His kingdom for one thousand years. The remnant of Israel and the saved people of other nations will worship the Lord and will honor Him as King and Messiah. “And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles” (Zechariah 14:16).



As we mentioned before, this prophecy will be accomplished without reference to the period of the church, that is, from the destruction of the city and the temple until the time of the beginning of the Great Tribulation. This time of the church was hidden to the people of Israel who lived before the time of Christ.

Daniel 9:25-27 says, “Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times. And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; and the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, and till the end of the war desolations are determined. Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; but in the middle of the week he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, even until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate.”

Let us examine the meaning of the 70 weeks. In Genesis 29:27-28 the scriptures show the correlation: “Fulfill her **week**, and we will give you this one also for the service which you will serve with me still another **seven years**. Then Jacob did so and fulfilled her **week**...” In Ezekiel 4:4-6 there is also another instance, “...**forty days**. I have laid on you a **day for each year**.” So, 70 weeks = 490 days = 490 years.

The prophecy says that the starting point is “from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem, the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times.” This was accomplished in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes (around 445 B.C.), when there was a decree to rebuild the city, including the walls and its doors (Nehemiah 1:3, 2:1-8). By this we understand that the count of the 70 weeks (490 years) began at the year 445 B.C. (see Figures 1 & 2).

According to Daniel’s prophecy, from the command to restore and build Jerusalem until the death of the Messiah there will be 69 weeks (483 years). The prophet Daniel divides these 69 weeks into two parts: seven weeks (49 years) that lasted until the restoration of Jerusalem, and 62 additional weeks (434 years) from the restoration until the death of the Messiah (“And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off”). We know from history that all these events have already been fulfilled.

Daniel prophesied that “the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary” (Daniel 9:26), which would have to occur after the death of the Messiah. Here does not say that the *prince* would come to destroy, but that the *people* of the prince who is to come (in the future) would destroy the city and the sanctuary. This “people” is the Roman Empire, which governed in Judea in the time of Jesus. As we stated before, in the year 70 A.D. this part of the prophecy was totally fulfilled, when the Roman Empire destroyed the city of Jerusalem and the temple. This event was of great importance, since it was the last event to happen before the coming of the judgment, the Great Tribulation, over Israel and all other nations. Jesus also predicted this event of destruction; see references: Matthew 23:37-38, 24:1-2 and Luke 19:43-44.

The prophecy mentions “the prince who is to come,” and he has not yet come. The Antichrist is this prince, who shall govern over all the earth in the time of the Great Tribulation. He will use a people with Roman roots, which is the European Union (EU), as his best ally.

The last part of the prophecy to be fulfilled is verse 9:27: “Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for **one week** (*seven years*); but in the **middle of the week** (*three years and a half*) he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, even until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate.” This is the last week or last seven years of the prophecy, which correspond to the seven years of the Great Tribulation. Figure 3 – Division of Years in the Great Tribulation shows the different periods of time within the seven years of the Great Tribulation and the events that will occur.

This “prince who is to come,” the Antichrist, will be a wise person who comes as a great leader, as part of his first strategy. At the beginning he will not come openly as “the messiah,” but as a very charismatic worldwide leader. He will receive that special ability and power from the devil, as is stated in Daniel 8:23-25, “In the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors have reached their fullness, a king shall arise,

having fierce features, who understands sinister schemes. His power shall be mighty, **but not by his own power**; he shall destroy fearfully, and shall prosper and thrive; he shall destroy the mighty, and also the holy people. Through his cunning he shall cause deceit to prosper under his rule; and he shall exalt himself in his heart..." Also Revelation 13:2 says, "Now the beast (*Antichrist*) which I saw... The dragon (*Satan*) gave him his power, his throne, and great authority." The Antichrist will be a despicable and deceiving leader that will blaspheme God and deceive all the nations.

The first strategy of the Antichrist will be to bring peace among all nations, especially between Jews and Arabs. In Daniel 11:24 says, "He shall enter peaceably, even into the richest places of the province..." This action of this evil prince is described also with the appearance of the first white horse in Revelation 6:2. This apparent peace will last for only the first three and a half years of the seven-year period of the Great Tribulation (see Figure 3). At the middle of the "week," the Antichrist will take off his mask of a good leader, and will come with all his forces to destroy and kill all the nations, especially the people of Israel (see Daniel 11:21-24). The other three horses in Revelation 6 show what will happen from the middle of the "week" until the end of the Great Tribulation. The so-called peace will end. "For when they say, 'Peace and safety!' then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape" (1 Thessalonians 5:3).

The Antichrist is so abominable that he will present himself as God: "Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away (*apostasy*) comes first, and the man of sin (*Antichrist*) is 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, showing himself that he is God" (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4). Mark 13:14 also speaks about this: "So when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains." "The coming of the lawless one (*iniquitous*) is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders" (2 Thessalonians 2:9). The scriptures describe this time as the "time of Jacob's trouble (*distress*)" and "great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be."

But the end of this vile leader will come on the earth, because the Lord "shall take away his dominion, to consume and destroy it forever" (Daniel 7:26). Also, Daniel 8:25 says, "...He shall even rise against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without human means."

### **Gospel of Matthew (Chapters 24 & 25)**

The book of Matthew is known by many as the "Gospel of the Kingdom" because it dedicates a great part of its content to messages related to the kingdom of God. For example, Matthew 24:14 says, "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come." This gospel presents Christ as the King: "Tell the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your King is coming to you, lowly, and sitting on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey'" (Matthew 21:5). The three wise men who came to Jerusalem asked, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him" (Matthew 2:2). Jesus was rejected by the people of Israel, but in His second coming, He will be received as their King. He will establish His kingdom on this earth, which will last one thousand years (the Millennium).

We have mentioned already that the promise for the Jewish people is a kingdom with its throne located in the land of Israel, the one promised to the patriarch Abraham (Genesis 15:18). In Luke 1:32-33 the angel Gabriel announces to Mary that the son she will conceive "will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end." Jeremiah 30:9 says, "But they shall serve the Lord their God, and David (*Jesus*) their king, whom I will raise up for them." There are many other prophecies in the scriptures related with the kingdom promised for Israel.

Therefore, when we read the gospel of Matthew, it is important to recognize the message and purpose of each passage, because many of them only speak of the people of Israel, and not of the church. The promise

for the church is not a kingdom on this earth, but to be the bride of Christ in the Father's kingdom, the new earth.

For this section of the gospel of Matthew, we will provide only a few comments on chapters 24 and 25, which show a clear picture of the position of the people of Israel before the future events to occur very soon. First of all, the "catching up" or rapture of the church before the Great Tribulation is not mentioned in these passages. The message in these chapters is for Israel and the other nations, those who will suffer the final judgments of the Great Tribulation on this earth. Matthew 24:14 says, "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come." This "gospel of the kingdom" is the word to be spread during the Great Tribulation time; it is not the message of our current time. The gospel of the kingdom will be the hope of entering the Millennium, for those who live during that very difficult time of trials. We do not preach that kind of gospel now, but rather a message to be part of the body of Christ, the church. This is our hope now; it is a hope of glory. Our hope is to be the bride of Christ, not to enter the Millennium. Chapters 7 and 14 of Revelation describe 144,000 chosen people (12,000 of each tribe of Israel), who will preach the gospel of the kingdom before the second coming of the Lord. These, together with other believers, will be the ones fulfilling the prophecy that "this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world...and then the end will come."

Matthew 24:34 says that "this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place." The "generation" mentioned here is the generation of the signs described in chapter 24. Remember what we have stated: that according to the "prophetic eye," the Great Tribulation is the next event to happen after Jesus' time. So "this generation" is then the same as the generation of Jesus, because the generation mentioned in Matthew is a continuation of the one in the time of Jesus (you must see the time of Jesus "united" with the Great Tribulation time). The Roman Empire was governing in the time of Jesus, and in the Great Tribulation they will also be in authority, together with the Antichrist, represented politically by the European Union and religiously by the Catholic church, the great harlot (more on this later).

Again, the church will not be on earth in the Great Tribulation. The saved ones mentioned in Matthew 24:13 are those who believe in Christ during that period of great trials, who endure to the end. They will inherit the millennial kingdom. During the Great Tribulation time, the church will be in heaven around the throne of God. This is the great privilege of those born-again believers who are part of the body of Christ, the church, who live and walk by the Holy Spirit.

From Matthew 24:4 on, Jesus is describing the events to be accomplished during the latter time. This time is named the "time of Jacob's trouble (*distress*). There will be really great distress and sufferings: "they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold" (Matthew 24:9-12). Friends will hate and betray one another, even in their own family circle. "And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken" (Luke 21:25-26).

The Lord Jesus warns that when they see the desolator (Antichrist) "standing in the holy place" (Matthew 24:15, 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4), making himself as God, then all the people around Judea should flee to other places, because the most fearful persecution and tribulation of all time has arrived, "For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be" (Matthew 24:21, see also 24:29).

Jesus describes His second coming in Matthew 24:27, 30-33, and 36-44. He will place His feet on the Mount of Olives and will be seen by the inhabitants of Jerusalem and surrounding areas, "Behold, the day of the Lord is coming..." "And in that day **His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives**, which faces Jerusalem on the east..." (Zechariah 14:1, 4, Revelation 1:7). This second coming will be a visible coming to the earth with many signs to identify it. In the rapture, Jesus will not come down to the earth; rather, we "shall be

caught up together with them (*the resurrected ones*) in the clouds **to meet the Lord in the air**. And thus we shall always be with the Lord” (1 Thessalonians 4:17). There will be no signs before the rapture.

In His second coming, Jesus will overcome the devil and his army, then judge the inhabitants of the world, in order to, after these things, establish His one thousand-year kingdom on the earth, not in heaven. “And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other” (Matthew 24:31). “When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world’” (Matthew 25:31-34).

“But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be” (Matthew 24:37-39). Men today do not hear God; they are rebellious and scoff at the message of God, as they did in Noah’s time, when all of them perished.

Dear reader, stop now for awhile and meditate in the Lord. Are you prepared to escape all the judgment that will come over the entire world? Come and humble yourself before the throne of grace, that you may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. The Lord exhorts us at the end of this chapter (24:44) to watch and be prepared “for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.” So, “Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing” (vs. 46).

### **Book of Revelation**

The book of Revelation contains a prophetic word that will be fulfilled in the latter times. God told Daniel that the meaning of the prophecies he received were not revealed to him because the time of their fulfillment had not come yet. “But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end” (Daniel 12:4). Then in 12:8-9, Daniel says, “Although I heard, I did not understand. Then I said, ‘My Lord, what shall be the end of these things?’ And he said, ‘Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.’” Now the time has come to accomplish the prophecy, so God chose the prophet John to open and bring understanding to the prophecy: “Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand” (Revelation 22:10).

The author and sole source of the book of Revelation is the Lord Jesus Christ, as is said in its first verse, “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place.” And as Matthew 24:35 says, “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.” I emphasize what the book begins by saying, that this revelation is “to show His servants things which must shortly take place” (Revelation 1:1). The time has arrived. “Blessed is he who **reads** and those who **hear** the words of this prophecy, and **keep** those things which are written in it; for the time is near” (vss. 1:3, 22:6-7). Dear reader, you can be blessed as you read, hear, and keep the word that God sows in your heart.

Revelation 1:19 summarizes the whole book. The “things which will take place after this” are those to happen in the future, after the “things which are” (those which were happening in John’s time). The prophetic eye unites the events in the time of the Roman Empire with the “things which will take place after this” (Luke 23:27-31). The first three chapters of Revelation cover the “things which are.” Then chapter 4 begins saying “Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this.” From that point on, all descriptions are of the future.

The seven churches that were in Asia at the time of John (at the end of the first century) are represented by seven golden lampstands, placed around the Lord Jesus, when He visited John on the island of Patmos (vss. 1:11-13, 20). Jesus was not in heaven; He was manifesting Himself to John on the earth. Chapters 2 and

3 describe the state the churches were at that time, so Jesus warns them to keep the word of God in order to be part of the victorious church (the one that will be caught up to heaven), “Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more” (vss. 3:10-12). “To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne” (vs. 3:21). “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

The rapture of the church will take place between the end of chapter 3 and the beginning of chapter 4. The churches in chapters 2 and 3 were on the earth, some of them struggling in sin and disobedience. On the other hand, John sees the church in chapter 4, represented by the 24 elders, in full victory before the throne of God. This is the church that will be taken away from the earth into the presence of God. “Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne. And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald. Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads” (vss. 4:2-4). “The twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: ‘You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created’” (vss. 4:10-11).

Let us notice the details in the description of these 24 elders:

- They have been made kings and priests to God and Father (vss. 1:6, 5:10).
- They shall reign on the earth – the new earth (vs. 5:10).
- They are seated on thrones with crowns of gold on their heads (vs. 4:4).
- They are clothed in white robes (vs. 4:4).
- They have harps and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints (vs. 5:8).
- They were redeemed by the blood of Christ (vs. 5:9).
- They come from all parts of the earth (every tribe and tongue and people and nation) (vs. 5:9).
- It is clearly established that the seals of the scroll (chapter 6), from the hands of God, have not been yet opened. In other words, the events of the Great Tribulation have not begun yet. The events of the Great Tribulation begin with the opening of the first seal.
- The Lamb is Christ, and the elders recognize that Christ is the only one worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for He was slain (vs. 5:9).
- The 24 elders remained seated on their thrones during the whole period of the Great Tribulation. The last time they are mentioned is in verse 19:4, at the end of the Great Tribulation.
- The meaning of the 24 elders: The church is made by the union of the Gentiles (Ephesians 2:11-22, Revelation 21:12), represented by the names of the 12 apostles, plus the Jews (Romans 11:23-24, Revelation 21:14), represented by the names of the 12 tribes.

Considering all these characteristics, we may say that the 24 elders are persons, not angels, nor any other creatures. There is no scriptural evidence that the angels are redeemed by the blood of Christ. The fact that these elders are seated before the throne of God before the opening of the seals is evidence that they will not go through the Great Tribulation and are guarded in a secure place. The phrase “and is to come” (vs. 4:8) signifies that at this time in the vision of John, Jesus had not yet come to the earth in His second visible coming. This place of glory before the throne of God was the promise for those who overcome in this world: “To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father

er on His throne” (vs. 3:21). Therefore, the 24 elders represent the victorious church that will be taken away in the rapture. To these true believers Jesus says, “Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth” (vs. 3:10).

Chapter 5 presents a scroll, with seven seals, in the hands of God the Father. Jesus is the only one worthy to open this scroll. The events that will happen at the moment the first seal is opened (chapter 6) mark the beginning of the seven-year period of the Great Tribulation, the most difficult era over the whole earth since the foundation of the world. Therefore, dear reader, be prepared, that you may be one of those chosen by God to be kept from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. God seeks worshipers in spirit and truth, not those that only comply with rules or religious rites.

Although the whole world will be greatly affected by the events of the Great Tribulation, Israel and the nations around it will feel the strongest impact of the judgments. The colors of the four horses in chapter 6 represent different strategies or events that will happen during the seven years. The four riders are the same person, and represent the Antichrist. The prophet Daniel describes the strategies of the Antichrist in this way: “And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors have reached their fullness, a king shall arise (*the Antichrist*), having fierce features, who understands sinister schemes. His power shall be mighty, but not by his own power; he shall destroy fearfully, and shall prosper and thrive; he shall destroy the mighty, and also the holy people. Through his cunning he shall cause deceit to prosper under his rule; and he shall exalt himself in his heart. He shall destroy many in their prosperity. He shall even rise against the Prince of princes (*Christ*); but he shall be broken without human means” (Daniel 8:23-25).

The first white horse (Revelation 6:1-2) represents a period of 3½ years of peace (see Daniel 9:27, 1 Thessalonians 5:3). In this time, the Antichrist will prepare to conquer the whole world; that is why he comes with a bow (without arrows) and a “crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.” The bow without arrows represents preparation for war in a “secretive” way.

The second fiery red horse (vss. 6:3-4) of the second seal means the blood of wars; that is why there is given to him a great sword. “It was granted to the one who sat on it to take peace from the earth, and that people should kill one another.” “For when they say, ‘Peace and safety!’ then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape” (1 Thessalonians 5:3, see also Daniel 11:21-24). The second seal opens the really great tribulation over the entire world. From this time (the last 3½ years), the world will be filled with the greatest suffering and tribulation ever experienced, since the beginning of time.

The third seal (vss. 6:5-6) brings a black horse and the rider Antichrist with a pair of scales in his hand to measure the food. The black color means death by hunger (Lamentations 4:8-9, 5:10). This scarcity of food is produced by the previous wars and the establishment of the 666 mark. This mark will be imposed at the middle of the seven years. “He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666” (vss. 13:16-18).

The fourth seal (vss. 6:7-8) brings a pale (*yellow*) horse. “And the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him. And power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth.” The pale color means death by all types of plagues and infirmities (see Jeremiah 15:3, Ezekiel 5:17). This will be the last time of suffering and tribulation on the earth.

After the opening of the fifth seal (vss. 6:9-11), a picture is shown of those believers who were slain for their testimony of Christ. They are in rest, in a place in heaven, waiting for their resurrection at the second coming of the Lord.

In the time of the sixth seal (vss. 6:12-17), some strange events will occur in nature: the earth is shaken with a great earthquake, the sun becomes black, the moon becomes like blood, every mountain and island moves out of its place, and other fearsome things. The sky is rolled up as a scroll, announcing the second coming of the Lord—and who will be able to stand?

### **The Antichrist and the False Prophet in the Book of Revelation**

The first beast in chapter 13, rising up out of the sea, is the Antichrist. The dragon (Satan, the devil) will give his power and great authority to the beast. “And he (*Antichrist*) was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months (*the last 3½ years*). Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven (*Father, Jesus, the church, and angels*). It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If anyone has an ear, let him hear” (Revelation 13:5-9).

The Antichrist is a charismatic man that will be greatly supported by many people and nations; that is why he comes from the sea (see vs. 17:15). 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4, 9-10 adds a little more about who the Antichrist is. He will be a man possessed by demons (vss. 16:13-14).

The second beast in chapter 13, coming up out of the earth, is the false prophet (the Anti-Spirit). “He had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast...He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: his number is 666” (vss. 13:11-12, 16-18). This beast will make an image in honor of the Antichrist, to be worshiped by all people, and cause as many as will not worship the image to be killed. He is the one to establish the mark of the beast, the number 666, to all people of the earth. This man will act as the “Holy Spirit,” exalting the Antichrist (see John 16:14-15).

The three beasts of Revelation try to imitate the trinity of God: the dragon as the Father, the Antichrist as Christ and the false prophet as the Holy Spirit.

### **The Great Harlot in the Book of Revelation**

“Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, ‘Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.’ So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement” (Revelation 17:1-6).

This great harlot represents the greatest religious institution in all the world, the so-called Catholic church. Chapters 17 and 18 provide a detailed description of this deceitful institution. Some characteristics of the great harlot are as follows:

1. Is named the Great Harlot, Mother of Harlots (vss. 17:1, 5)

This name comes from a spiritual adultery or fornication. Israel was called an adulteress when she left God and served other gods or committed idolatry. Ezekiel 23:37 says, “For they have committed adultery, and blood is on their hands. They have committed adultery with their idols, and even sacri-

ficed their sons whom they bore to Me, passing them through the fire, to devour them.” Revelation 17:2 says this is one “with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication” (see also vss. 18:3,9). She is also called mother of harlots, signifying that she has many “daughters” who imitate her actions and religious system. These “daughters” have leaders who serve for money, fame, power, or any other thing that does not honor the name of God. “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven” (Matthew 7:21).

Christ has a bride, the church, which is virgin, holy, and without blemish. The Antichrist will imitate this also, having a bride, but this one will be a “harlot,” the Catholic church.

The Catholic church teaches to worship and serve idols of wood, metal, and other materials. This institution teaches also to adore and serve other creatures, including people like the apostles, Mary (Jesus’ mother), and even persons that they declare “saints.” They use the so-called rosary to “pray” and make petitions to God and to dead human beings.

2. Is seated on many waters (vs. 17:1)

“Then he said to me, ‘The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues’” (Revelation 17:15, see also Jeremiah 51:13). It is clear that this religious system is present in all nations of the world, exerting authority over the main leaders and governments. The Catholic church is the only religious institution that is considered by all nations as a “state” (Vatican City), having her own embassy in all nations.

3. Is a great city, settled over seven mountains (vss. 17:9,18, 18:16-19)

Vatican City is located in Rome, capital of Italy. Rome is settled over seven mountains (this is not a coincidence), named as follows: Capitoline, Quirinal, Viminal, Esquiline, Caelian, Aventine and Palatine. “What is like this great city?” (vs. 18:18). How great and true is the word of God!

4. Uses a particular attire (vss. 17:4, 18:16)

“The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication” (vss. 17:4, 18:16). These are the vestments used by the Catholic priests. They also use a golden cup in their religious activities and ceremonies. The Vatican was built and adorned with gold and precious stones.

5. Carries a particular name, Babylon the Great (vss. 17:5, 18:23)

The woman carried a written name: “Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and of the Abominations of the Earth” (vs. 17:5). The word Babylon comes from the word babel, which means confusion (Genesis 11:9). Therefore, Babylon the Great means the great confusion. This religious institution has deceived thousands and thousands of people around the world. She has filled the whole world with her false doctrines. Then the Lord says, “Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues” (vs. 18:4).

6. Maker of religious merchandise and idolatry (vss. 18:3, 11-13, 19)

These passages describe the types of merchandise the Catholic church has produced since her origin. She uses this kind of business to enrich herself and to spread her deceitful doctrines. Among these are: idols (images) and other objects of different materials, crucifixes, candles, etc. Another thing that brings great earnings to this religious institution is the trade with slaves and souls of dead persons. “And the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, for no one buys their merchandise anymore: merchandise of gold...and bodies and souls of men” (vss. 18:11-13). Part of the activities of these religious people is to intercede in prayers for the souls of the dead, similar to the



activities of those who practice sorceries and spiritism. As part of some of these activities, they ask for a lot of money to fulfill these intercessions.

God has His own judgment prepared against this religious institution: “And great Babylon was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath” (vs. 16:19). God will use the Antichrist and his army to destroy the great harlot: “And the ten horns (*European Union*) which you saw on the beast, these will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire. For God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled” (vss. 17:16-17). The Vatican City in Rome will be burned (see Revelation 18:8-10, 17-18).

### **The Final Battle**

Revelation 19:11-21 (see also vss. 14:14-20) describes the return of Christ to the earth in His second coming. Jesus will come as a warrior. After He defeats Satan (the dragon), Antichrist (the beast), and his army in the valley of Armageddon (vs. 16:16), the Lord will plant His feet on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. This will be the greatest battle of all time. The army of the Antichrist that will be killed numbers two hundred million (vss. 9:13-16). The Antichrist and the false prophet will be cast into the lake of fire (vs. 19:20). This battle will mark the end of the Great Tribulation. Then “the Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!” (Matthew 13:41-43).

### **The Millennium**

At His second coming, the Lord will separate two groups of people that are present on the earth at that time, the sheep (believers) and the goats (unbelievers). Matthew 25:31-34, 41 describes this event: “When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.’ Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.’”

This is the time when Jesus will establish His kingdom of one thousand years (Millennium) on this earth. This is the fulfillment of the promise of God for the people of Israel, as previously stated. The throne of Jesus, Lord and King, will be in Jerusalem, from where He will rule not only Israel, but the believers from all nations of the world. “He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end” (Luke 1:32-33). Hosea 3:5 says, “Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the Lord their God and David their king. They shall fear the Lord and His goodness in the latter days.”

“And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, (*those who received ability or authority to judge*) and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for 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. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years” (Revelation 20:4-6).

Who will enter the Millennium? There will be at least three groups of people who will inherit the kingdom. First group: those who believed in Christ (after the rapture) and kept His word during the Great Tribulation, and were alive at Jesus’ coming (Matthew 25:31-34, Daniel 12:1). Second group: those who believed in Christ and kept His word during the Great Tribulation, and were dead, but resurrected at Jesus’ coming

(Revelation 6:9-11, 20:4). Third group: those who walked in faith in the time before Christ, who will be resurrected at Jesus' coming (Luke 13:28-29, Mathew 8:11, Daniel 7:22, 12:13).

Some passages that speak about the Millennium or promised land are Genesis 15:18, Exodus 23:31, Isaiah 11, 27:12-13, Jeremiah 23:5-8, Ezekiel 37:21-28, 39:22-29, and Zechariah 14.

### **The New Earth**

The church will not be in the Millennium because the time for her descent from heaven as the bride of Christ has not yet come (see Revelation 21-22). In addition, the redemption work of Christ with mankind has not been completed yet. He will fulfill it at the end of His millennial kingdom reign. At that time He will carry out His promise for the church, which is to be one with her forever and ever. Therefore, the wedding of Christ and the church will take place in the new earth (please read Revelation 21:1-2, 9-11, 22-23). This new earth is our current earth, that will be restored with fire (2 Peter 3:7-13).

1 Corinthians 15:24-28 describes the last work that the Lord Jesus will do before He unites with the church as one. "Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed is death. For 'He has put all things under His feet.' But when He says 'all things are put under Him,' it is evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted. Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all." Jesus will deliver His kingdom to God the Father, and, as the Son, will subject Himself to His Father, that God may be all in all. "And He said to me, 'IT IS DONE! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End'" (vs. 21:6). The church will be in the New Jerusalem, the holy city, the tabernacle of God, which will be located in the new earth. After the rapture, the church will be in heaven, before the throne of God (represented by the 24 elders), up to the time when she descends with God as the bride of Christ to the new earth. All of this will occur in the New Jerusalem, where the throne of God the Father, with His angels, will also be (vss. 21:3, 22-23, 22:1-3).

Revelation 21:3-4, 24-26 describes the place that all the other saved nations (those who come from the Millennium) will be. They will not be part of the New Jerusalem, but will be around it. God will be their God, and they will be His people.

### **The Last Exhortation**

"Then he said to me, 'These words are faithful and true.' And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place. 'Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book'" (Revelation 22:6-7). "'And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to everyone according to his work. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.' Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city" (vss. 22:12-14). For many, salvation is a light matter, and they think that to accept Christ and visit a congregation is enough, but this is not correct. God demands holiness and obedience to His word, a life fully given to the Lord. "Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth" (vs. 3:10).

### **The Rapture of the Church**

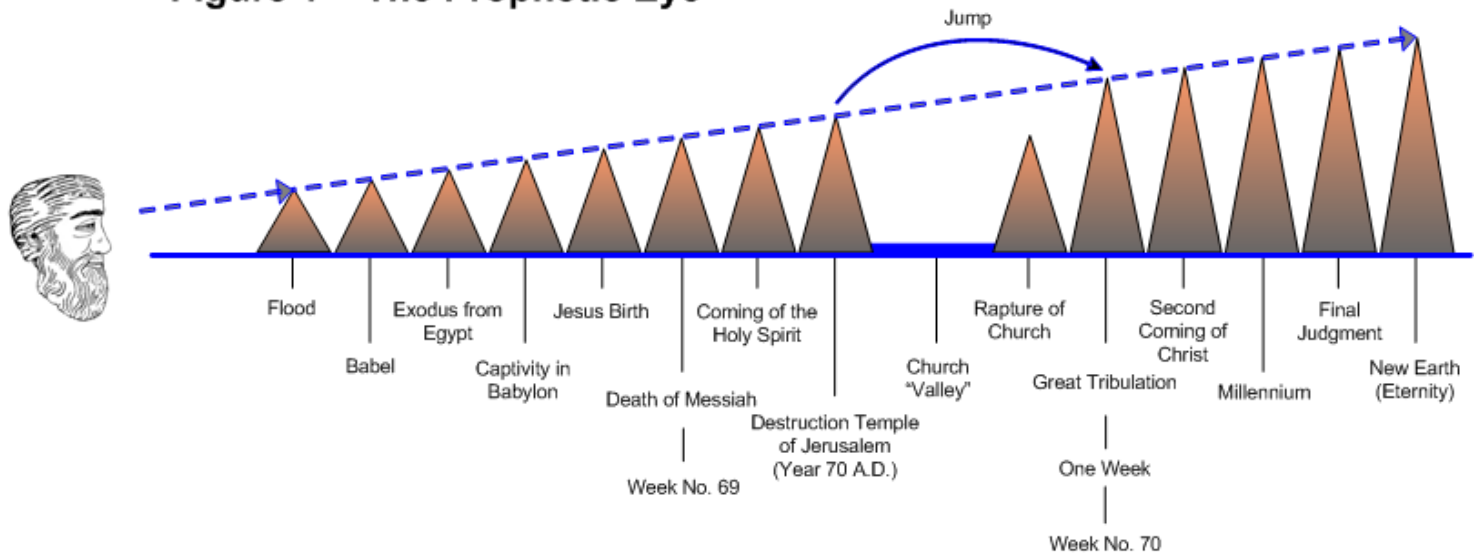
The "catching up" or rapture of the church will happen before the beginning of the seven years of the Great Tribulation. "Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown" (Revelation 3:10-11). The rapture is a great event that will happen very quickly—as in the "twinkling of an eye." "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,

at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality” (1 Corinthians 15:50-53). When the church disappears, all the people in the world, especially those who know a little about the scriptures, will be terrified and cry bitterly, without any consolation.

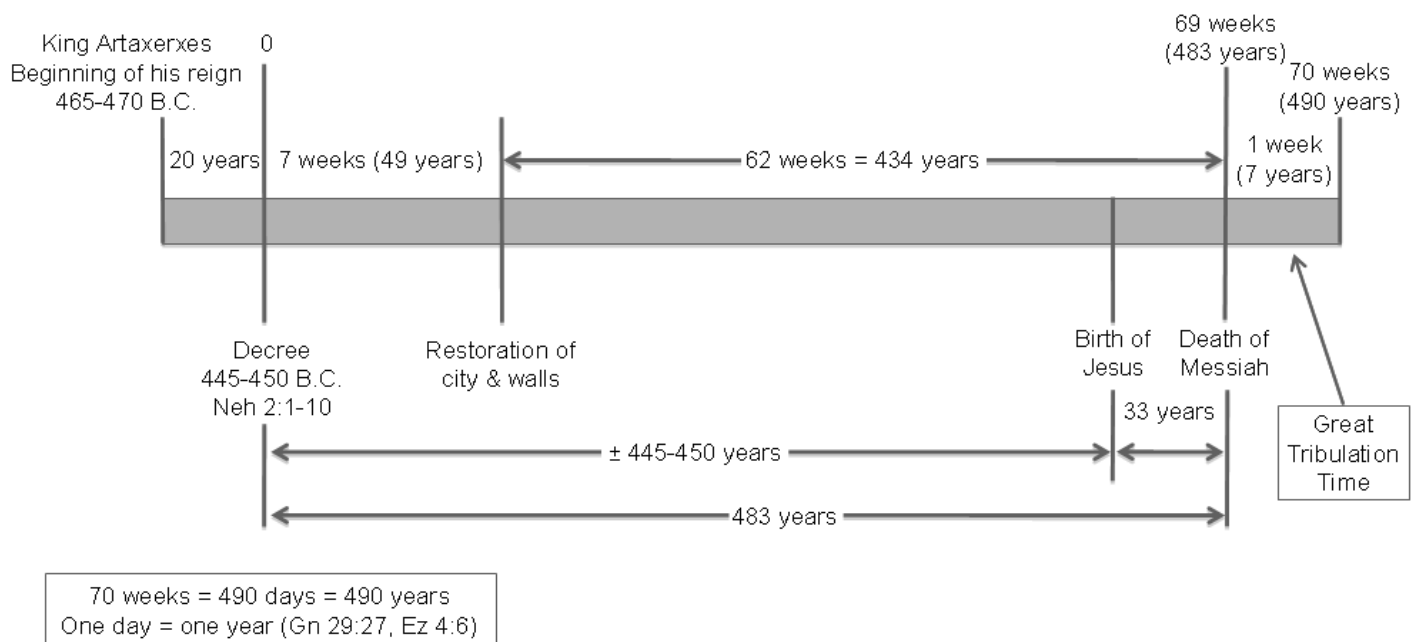
On the other hand, the rapture will be the most marvelous event for those who love the Lord and walk in Him. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 describes that great event, where the church will be **caught up in the air** to be always with the Lord. Jesus will not come down to the earth, as in His second coming after the Great Tribulation (Zechariah 14:4), but we now look for his “glorious appearing” (Titus 2:13) when he catches us up to be with Him. There are some who believe the church will go through the Great Tribulation, but how could it be our “blessed hope” to wait for that time of trials? How could we “comfort one another with these words” (1 Thessalonians 4:18, 5:11), waiting for the Great Tribulation? “For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thessalonians 5:9).

Jesus will come for His church, “that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish” (Ephesians 5:27). This is the church of the rapture, and He will have nothing less than this! It is a church with born-again members who know God and walk in the Spirit. They are known by their fruits, and because they love one another as Christ loves them.

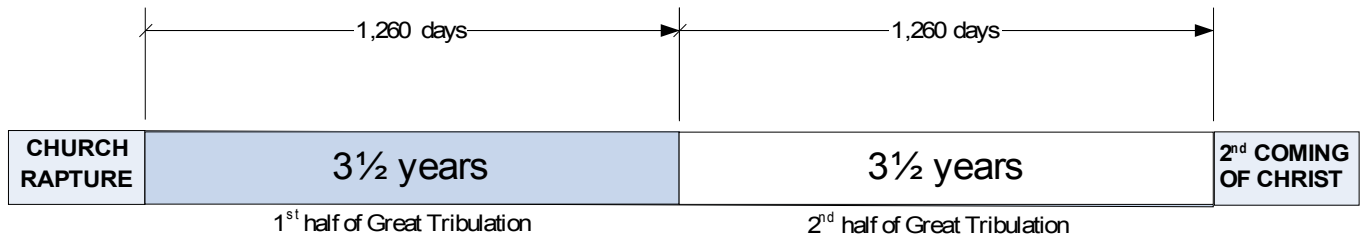
**Figure 1 – The Prophetic Eye**



**Figure 2 – 70 Weeks (Daniel 9:24-27)**



## Figure 3 – Division of Years in the Great Tribulation



1 month = 30 days  
 1 year = 12 months = 360 days  
 3½ years = 1,260 days = 42 months  
 7 years = 2,520 days = 84 months  
 A time + times + half a time  
 1 year + 2 years + ½ year = 3½ years