

THE RADICAL GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM

*A Vision of Victory for the Church of the 21st
Century*

Orlando Mostert

Chapter 4: The Seven Principles of the Kingdom Vision

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KINGDOM VISION

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KINGDOM VISION

I present to you a whole new vision of the times in which we live. All your prophecy books and televangelists tell you that the rapture is any moment, the Antichrist will take over the world, the Kingdom of God will only come one day in the future.

Here is the alternative Kingdom Vision:

- Jesus is now Lord; He is now ruling in the heavenlies.
- We are in the Kingdom Age which means we have all power now over the power of Satan and our job now is to disciple the nations.
- The world system is now under judgment and will collapse; “Babylon” is falling.
- The Kingdom of God is spreading in power and glory until it will fill the earth.

World systems are collapsing ... but the Kingdom of God is rising. Nations will be discipled into the Kingdom of God, there are already more than 700 million charismatic evangelicals worldwide. Soon the glory of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. Get ready for a greater outpouring of God’s presence and power in his church:

The Kingdom Vision ... a vision of victory for the church of the 21 Century.

Orlando Mostert

June 2012

Chapter 4: The Seven Principles of the Kingdom Vision

INTRODUCTION

My wife loves to build puzzles. But to put several thousand different pieces together in make a complete picture I notice that she first sets out the corner pieces and then the straight pieces to create a framework from which to fill in all the other pieces. This is what I want to do for you now.

I am going to give you the seven basic principles of the Kingdom Vision that will form a framework that will help you to put the many thousands of wonderful prophetic scriptures together in their right relationship. This will help you get out of prophecy confusion that is so prevalent today in the church. Thousands of books, tapes, conferences, charts, sermons...all meant to enlighten you as to what the Lord is wanting to do in our times and what His purposes are with the church...and all adding to the confusion. And I will be honest with you...I believe most of the prophecy books out there to be just plain deception as to what the plan of God is with the church, what the times are in which we live and what lies ahead for the church.

So here are my framework principles for understanding prophecy and the plan of God through the ages for His church and my explanation for each one in the next seven chapters:

Principle 1: Jesus is Lord now and rules now.

Yes we call Him Lord but do prophecy writers actually believe that? No, because they believe that He only rules one day in a future one thousand year Millennium. I will show you how wrong this idea is.

Principle 2: This is the Kingdom Age and not the End Times.

That's right, the Kingdom of God has come and we are now living in the Kingdom Age where Jesus is now ruling. That means that everything you have heard that we are living in the "end times" is just not true. I will show you when the "end time" were and why the Kingdom Age is now and not one day in the Millennium.

Principle 3: The Church is God's instrument in the Kingdom Age...not the Jews

Most prophecy writers believe that the church age is just a "parenthesis" period until God can turn to the Jews to inaugurate the Kingdom of God. This is false teaching.

Principle 4: The Destruction of Satan and his works

Most prophecy books teach you the defeat of the church and the takeover over the world by the devil and his antichrist. This is satanic propaganda. The church is called and empowered of God to defeat satan and destroy his works in this the Kingdom Age not some distant future Millenium.

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Principle 5: The Restoration of All Things

Most prophecy books and preachers will tell you that the next thing on God's agenda for the church is the Rapture...this is wrong. The next thing on God's agenda is the Restoration of all Things. God is in the process of restoring to the church everything we lost in Adam through the work of the second Adam, Jesus Christ. That process of restoration is not yet complete as there is still coming a far greater restoration of power and glory to the church to bring in the great harvest of the nations into the Kingdom.

Principle 6: Dominion over all the works of His hands.

With the restoration of our Adamic inheritance will come a restoration of our calling to take dominion over all the works of God's hands. This great work of God to His church stretches into the galaxies of the universe and unto thousands of generations.

Principle 7: The Return of the Lord.

The return of Jesus Christ is a cornerstone of our faith. But we need to understand when the Second Coming of the Lord takes place, when the Rapture takes place and when the resurrection takes place.

Once I have laid out for you these seven principles as a framework for which to understand prophecy then we can find the wonderful fulfillment of so many prophecies in history. The current prophecy books all are desperate to give us "signs of the times" to prove the end of the world is upon us, the Antichrist is taking over the world, the church is unable to disciple the nations, the Jews will bring in the Kingdom of God. All of it is defeatist propaganda.

The truth is that most of the prophecies of the great prophets of the Bible have already been fulfilled in history. We are now in the Kingdom Age, Jesus is now Lord and ruling over the earth, the church will defeat Satan and his demons and the nations of the earth will be disciplined into the Kingdom by the church.

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Principle 1: Jesus is Lord Now...Not one day in the Millennium

INTRODUCTION

The common view in all popular prophecy books from America is that Jesus is only one day in the future coming to establish His Kingdom and that Kingdom will last for exactly 1000 years. This false teaching arises both from a wrong translation of the Greek word for “thousand” in Rev. 20 as well as a total denial of the present Lordship of Jesus over all principalities and powers both in heaven and on earth right now!. Is Jesus Lord now or only in the future? Is His kingdom for only 1000 years or everlasting?

Before looking closer at the scriptures that clearly show us that the Kingdom has indeed come and that Jesus is now Lord let me first pose some questions to you. This is not just a minor theological debate about whether you are a “pre-mill” or “post-mill” or “a-mill” or do you believe in a “pre-trib” Rapture etc. This issue goes to the fundamental issue of who is Jesus and are His claims true!

- Do you really believe that Jesus is Lord now? If so why do you insist that He must physically be present in Jerusalem for 1000 years before He can rule His Kingdom on earth?
- Do you believe that you are presently seated with Christ in heavenly places ruling in this life with His authority or do you think only one day in the Millennium you are going to rule with Christ?
- Do you believe that upon His resurrection from the dead He triumphed over Satan, death and hell and that all power in heaven and earth have been given unto Him? If so, why do you think He will only exercise that power one day in the Millennium and not now?
- Do you believe that Christ has delegated His authority to the Church to trample on Satan and destroy his works? If so why do you then think that the Church does not have the authority to bring in the Kingdom and only 144,000 Jews in the tribulation are going to do that?

The truth of the matter is that you in your spirit already believe the Kingdom message. What you need to do is to get your mind in tune with your spirit! Your mind has been fed defeatist false teaching coming out of the popular prophecy books telling you, “relax, it isn’t time for the Kingdom, that is only going to be in the future, this is not your job in any case, the Jews will bring in the Kingdom, you can’t expect to disciple nations, the Antichrist is taking over the world, you’re ok, you’re getting Raptured out of here so don’t sweat it!”

In our Principles of the Kingdom section we are going to answer all those questions but lets start with the

first issue:

What about the Millennium?

Let’s get to the immediate objection: How can this be the Kingdom Age if the Millennium has not arrived yet? Revelation 20 clearly says that Christ will come and rule for a thousand years and then the end will come, does it not? Christ has not returned yet, He is not ruling yet and therefore the thousand year millennial reign of Christ has not started yet and therefore it cannot be the Kingdom Age. And if I am claiming in this teaching that the Kingdom Age started at the triumphant resurrection of Jesus Christ then in fact the Kingdom Age should have finished a thousand years later in 1033 AD! It’s obvious that nothing great happened in 1033 AD so where are you going to put the Millennium if not in the future?

Ok, good point so let’s have a close look and see what scripture actually says.

The only reference in the Bible that states that Christ reigns for “a thousand years” is found in Revelation 20. The argument around these verses among Bible students was; should we take this phrase “a thousand years” literally or figuratively? Does Jesus literally reign for an exact period of a thousand years or is this meant in a figurative way like Psalm 50 says that “the cattle on a thousand hills” belong to the Lord. Surely the cattle on hill 1001 also belong to the Lord? Traditional interpretation has always been to see it as figurative, not literal since Revelations is so full of other figurative narratives like beasts and dragons etc.

The Dispensationalists, however, responded and said, No way, Revelation 20 clearly states that the saints are to reign with Christ for “a thousand years” and demanded a literal interpretation of those verses and not a figurative interpretation.

Well, here’s the problem... if you want a literal translation of what really is stated in Rev. 20 then you

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Principle 1: Jesus is Lord Now...Not one day in the Millennium

need to go to the original Greek manuscript to see what is actually written there...which I did and found an amazing surprise there! Now I had enough semesters of basic and advanced Koine Greek (ancient Greek) in College, not to be an expert in ancient Greek, but enough to use a good concordance like Strong's. I also remember from my Greek classes that while there is a definite article like "the" in Greek, there is no indefinite article like "a", which is added by translators. Then looking up the word "thousand" in Strong's concordance (Strong's G5507) I find that the Greek word used for "thousand" in Revelation 20 is "Chilioi". Now here is the amazing thing about that word. (Look this up yourself in your Strong's Concordance!) "Chilioi" is in fact a plural noun meaning "thousands"!

The singular noun "thousand" is spelled "Chilias" and is used in Rev.7 for describing "twelve thousand" from each tribe. To describe exactly 12,000 John uses the Greek word for 12 and then the singular for "thousand" which is "chilias". If he wanted to say Christ rules for exactly one thousand years he would have done the same. The Greek word for "one" and then the singular "thousand" "chilias". He did not because he wrote exactly what the Holy Spirit intended for him to write: Jesus rules for "thousands of years"! So in actual fact a literal translation from the original Greek used in Rev. 20 says that Christ reigns for "thousands of years" and not "a thousand years".!

Now when the translators of the Bible came across this "thousands of years" in the Greek they decided to interpret it as meaning that Christ reigns for an indeterminate long period of time much like "cattle on a thousand hills" are many hills or Peter saying that "a day with the Lord is as thousand years" (he did not mean exactly a thousand years) and so they wrote He reigns "a thousand years". They assumed it would be taken figuratively that Christ reigns for a long time. Unfortunately the early Fundamentalists and Dispensationalists were not Greek scholars and did not realize that a literal translation from the original Greek said Christ reigns "thousands of years" and instead demanded a literal interpretation of what the beloved King James translation clearly stated, that Jesus will reign for only what they thought was a literal thousand years. Folks, this is both a wrong translation as well as a wrong interpretation!

So let me say this clearly:

There is no scripture in the Bible that says that Jesus Christ will reign for 1000 years in the future!

Instead the clear teaching of all scripture is that Jesus Christ is now the risen Lord! His Kingdom has come and His will is being done. He has all power in heaven and on earth. He will continue to reign for as long as it takes until every knee bows and every tongue confesses that Jesus is Lord! His Kingdom began on earth on the day of Pentecost when He poured out His Spirit on 120 in the upper room in 33 AD and that Kingdom will grow and grow until it fills the earth...and don't be surprised that it takes thousands of years because that is exactly what Revelations said it would take! God rules eternity and He has lots of time!

What modern day prophecy writers want is the same kind of Messiah that the Jews wanted in Jesus day. Someone who would physically sit in Jerusalem and kill their enemies with God's power. Someone that will make a Jewish Kingdom that rules the world a reality.

Like Thomas after the resurrection who would not believe that Jesus was risen until he could touch him, today's prophecy writers cannot believe that Jesus is ruling as King of Kings until they can literally see him physically sitting on a throne in Jerusalem. I ask you this: What makes you think Jesus can only rule this earth more effectively if He is physically present in Jerusalem? If Jesus is truly living in us His church then surely He is physically on earth touching the lives of millions? Is Jesus not able to make His will done on earth seated on the throne of heaven commanding the armies of heaven?

Beware of false doctrines that appeal to our flesh! The reality is the Spirit world not the fleshly world!

Now let's see if other scriptures support our first principle...Jesus is Lord now. His reign and His Kingdom on earth was launched at His resurrection in 33 AD when all power in heaven and on earth was given unto Him and has continued thousands of years into the present day! There is no future 1000 year rule of Christ...

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Principle 2: This is the Kingdom Age...Not the End Times

INTRODUCTION

In Principle 1 I introduced you to the radical idea that there is no future 1000 year reign of Jesus Christ...Jesus is Lord now reigning with all power in heaven and earth. And what that means is that this is in fact "The Kingdom Age" and not "the end-times". The "end times" or "last days" referred to by so many writers in the New Testament was the period from the resurrection of Jesus in 33 AD to the end of the Old Covenant period that terminated in 70 AD with the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple. It was time for a New Covenant and a New Jerusalem (His Bride the church) and a New Temple where God was to dwell (the Church.)

One of the most widely held views among evangelical Christians is that we are now living in "the end times". This is so commonly held to be true that nobody bothers to question whether this is actually so. Numerous books and articles are written to expound on the "end times". Cataclysmic prophecies are hauled out at every disaster to show all these earthly travails are merely fulfillment of what can be expected in "the end times". More prophecy books have been sold than any other genre of writing. Whole publishing and broadcasting industries have been created around these prophets and their prophecies.

This is not merely idle speculation – a lot depends upon the correct answer. For instance, suppose this is not the end times and the entire Israeli state and the American war in the Middle East turn out to be a disaster? What if there is no Russian invasion of Israel as predicted by the preachers of the end times? What if there is no great antichrist to rise up over the European Union and make a pact with Israel? In fact what if there is no Rapture in the next 20 years and we are facing not the Great Tribulation but the great world economic depression as the oil starts running out, economies contract, empires of debt implode, Baby Boomers retire with no savings, pension funds collapse from collapsed world stock markets...etc etc. Are you ready for this kind of disaster scenario? Is the Church ready to deal with the onrushing crises of the 21st Century?

If we are indeed in the end times then we don't have much to concern ourselves with. The coming world collapse and the demise of billions will not be our concern as the Rapture will have taken us safely out of harms way. But if these are not the end times then we must ask ourselves, where are we in God's timeline and are we and the Church ready to face the tumultuous times of the 21st Century?

If you are to understand what the Lord is calling the

Church to do in the 21st Century then you urgently need to know what time we are living in. The time we live in determines our strategy. Our vision of the task in hand determines our strategy. If you or your ministry leader believes that we are living in the "end times" and that the Rapture will take place at any moment then this really affects how your local church operates, how you do financial planning, what the emphasis of teaching and ministry is in your fellowship group and how you grow and mature spiritually.

If you believe the Antichrist is going to take over the world then what is the point of even planning practical strategies for discipling nations into the Kingdom? If the Antichrist is taking over the world what is the point of long term financial planning? If you believe that you are going to escape the tribulation then why do disaster planning?

The End Times for Babylon the Great

But I do believe in the end times, I just don't believe it's the end of the world. We are however coming to the end of the Babylon New World Order prophesied in Revelation 18. We are in the midst of an economic collapse that will lead to the collapse of corporations and nation states. We are also entering the oil collapse that will lead to the collapse of the ability for planet earth to keep supporting 7 billion people. This in turn will lead to the collapse of civilization as we know it. And then? And then "when the judgments of the Lord are in the earth, the people will learn righteousness" and the Kingdom of our Lord will spread to cover the earth!

So the signs that we are looking for are not when does Jesus return to take us out of here but how and where is the world system collapsing and what must we do to get out of Babylon that we be not partakers of her judgment!

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Principle 2: This is the Kingdom Age...Not the End Times

Rapture preachers on TV have their audiences enthralled looking at Israel for signs of a new Temple and a Russian invasion. I am looking for different signs: economic indicators, debt levels, oil shortages, solar flares, revivals in Africa, China, South America, food shortages, UFO's (the Abyss has opened!), return of the Nephilim, outpourings of the Holy Spirit and power, restoration of gift ministries!

What does the Bible say about the End Times?

But let's look and see what the New Testament writers have to say about "last days", "latter days" or end times. And after reading these scriptures see if you don't agree with me that all the New Testament writers believed that they were living in the end times. But understand this...they were not wrong or mistaken! They were living in the "last days" of the Jewish era but the beginning of the Kingdom Age!

Peter the Apostle...

Peter on the day of Pentecost, when the 120 were gathered in the upper room and the power of the Holy Spirit was poured out and everyone started speaking in tongues, clearly under the power and anointing of the Holy Spirit preaches to the gathering crowds and says: "this is that spoken of by the prophet Joel, and is shall come to pass **in the last days**, sayeth the Lord, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh..." (Acts 2: 16, 17) Peter, speaking under the anointing of the Holy Spirit declares that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit taking place right there before their eyes, in the upper room in Jerusalem in about 33 AD was a direct fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel which was to take place "**in the last days**".

That Peter clearly believed they were living in the last days is further confirmed in his epistle (! Peter 1: 19,20) "Christ...who was verily foreordained before the foundations of the world but was **manifest in these last days** for you." Jesus made His appearance on earth in the "**last days**" i.e. about 33 AD!

The Writer of Hebrews.....

The writer of Hebrews (probably either James or Paul) says, "*God who at sundry times and divers manners spoke in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, has in **these last days** spoken to us by His Son.*" (Hebrews

1:1,2) And he repeats very emphatically in Hebrews 9:26, "...but now **in the end of the world** has He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself". Very clearly the writer of Hebrews is saying that Jesus' appearance and sacrifice happened at "the end of the world" and that when God spoke to them through Jesus it was during "the last days". The word "world" is from the Greek word "eon" meaning age. What he means is that Jesus appeared at the end of the Jewish age of Temple sacrifice to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself!

John the Apostle....

John writes in his epistle to the Church (1 John 2:18), "*Little children **it is the last time**; and as you have heard that antichrist shall come, **even now are there many antichrists**, whereby we know **that it is the last time.***"

Can it get any clearer? John clearly believed that he was living in the end times because the prophesied antichrist had come...in their time, 2000 years ago! No John, surely you're wrong, why I've got 8 great prophecy books that says that the end times are upon us 40 years after the founding of the state of Israel in 1948 and the Antichrist is still going to come! Who am I supposed to believe? John or modern day prophecy writers?

Paul the Apostle....

Paul warns his disciple Timothy that they are living in the last days and therefore he must watch out for certain things:

*"Now the Spirit speaks expressly saying that **in the latter times** some shall depart from the faith..." (1 Tim.4:1)*

*"For know also that **in the last days** perilous times will come..." (2 Tim. 3:1)*

Paul was warning Timothy that because they were in "the latter times" or "the last days" these things were going to happen and this is what he must do to guard against these deceptions. So why warn Timothy about what is going to happen in "the last days" if he did not believe that Timothy is living in the last days? What is the point of warning him what is going to happen in 2000 years time?

Jesus our Lord....

In Matthew 24 we find Jesus and the disciples viewing the great temple in Jerusalem. It was a monumental

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piece of construction by King Herod the Great that took decades to build at enormous cost. As the disciples stood admiring the great building Jesus made the remarkable prophecy: *“for verily I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.”* The startled disciples then asked Him “tell us when shall these things be and what shall be the sign of thy coming and the end of the world?” (meaning “eon” or the end of the age). His incredible time prediction in verse 34 says, “Verily I say unto you, **this generation shall not pass away until all these things shall be fulfilled.**”

These clear scriptures of the New Testament leave you with only one of three options:

Option 1...

Yes, Jesus, Peter, John, James and Paul did believe they were living in the last days but they were just flat out mistaken. Obviously they were not living in the end times or last days because the world has gone on for another 2000 years.

Option 2...

Yes they were living in the “last days” or “end times”, but this is actually a period of time that stretches for thousands of years because they were living in the end times and we are also living in the end times.

Option 3...

The New Testament writers were in fact correct that they were living in the end times but we are not correct in thinking we are living in the end times.

Option 1 is not an option for any Christian who believes that the Bible is the inspired word of God. In fact if you were to read any of the many skeptics who try to point out supposed mistakes in the Bible, one of their primary attacks always is to point out that the writers of the New Testament all believed that they were living in the “end times”, “last days” or end of the world. That the world has gone on for another 2000 years is proof to them that these early Christians were deluded and the Bible a fallible document.

Option 2 is just plain avoiding the issue. It’s a fudge. You can’t seriously think that when the Bible talks about the end times it is talking about a period of 2000 years.

Option 3 is the only realistic, scriptural option for Christians of the 21st Century. But it leaves us unfortunately with some major unavoidable problems and it is time we confront these issues head on and get the mind of Christ for our time. The clear indication from scriptures is that the writers of the New Testament believed they were living in the “end-times”. And since scripture does not lie the only right conclusion we can therefore make is that we in the 21st Century are not living in the “end-times”. This also means that anyone preaching to you that these are the “end-times” and the world is about to end and we are shortly about to be Raptured out of here does not have the mind of Christ, does not understand scripture and does not know that in actual fact we are already in the Kingdom Age!

Are we in the Kingdom Age now? Or is it still some future time called the Millennium?

Let me say this clearly:

There is no scripture in the Bible that says that Jesus Christ will reign for 1000 years in the future!

Instead the clear teaching of all scripture is that Jesus Christ is now the risen Lord! His Kingdom has come and His will is being done. He has all power in heaven and on earth. He will continue to reign for as long as it takes until every knee bows and every tongue confesses that Jesus is Lord! His Kingdom began on earth on the day of Pentecost when He poured out His Spirit on 120 in the upper room in 33 AD and that Kingdom will grow and grow until it fills the earth...and don’t be surprised that it takes thousands of years because that is exactly what Revelations said it would take! God rules eternity and He has lots of time!

Now let’s see if scriptures support this wonderful vision of Kingdom Now or the Dispensationalist idea of Kingdom Postponed.

Kingdom Present or Kingdom Postponed?

You must be careful of people who try to push their pet theories on their interpretation of one scripture! Proper expository teaching takes the Bible from Genesis to Revelation to get the mind of Christ. So if

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Principle 2: This is the Kingdom Age...Not the End Times

you take away the wrong translation of “thousand” from Rev. 20 and instead put in “thousands of years”, what other scriptures are you going to use to prove that Jesus rules one day in the future for a thousand years? There are none! Instead lets look to see what both the Old Testament as well as the New Testament teaches about when is the coming of the Kingdom of God.

Daniel’s Timing of the Coming Kingdom

In Chapter 5 “Kingdom Prophecies” I will show you an accurate 490 year countdown in the book of Daniel to the appearance of the Messiah. But equally remarkable was that Daniel also actually prophesied when the Kingdom of God was to appear on the earth!

In Daniel chapter 2 we have the prophecy of the great statue of 4 metals and in Chapter 7 the prophecy of 4 beasts. These signify that four kingdoms were to come after each other. All prophecy writers agree that these four successive kingdoms were, Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome. But note the wonderful declaration made by Daniel 2:44:

But in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, and the kingdom shall not be left to other people but shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms and it shall last forever.

Daniel prophesied that during the time of the Roman Empire the Lord would set up his Kingdom here on earth and that it would last forever. That means the kingdom would not be set up 2000 years later nor would it last only a thousand years...it would last forever!

Daniel chapter seven repeats this amazing prophecy using four beasts to signify the four coming world empires. But once again during the time of the fourth beast empire the Lord would set up His kingdom.

Incredibly Daniel accurately predicted not only the exact time for the appearance of Messiah the King but also how many world kingdoms would rise and fall during this time until Messiah came to set up His Kingdom on the earth! But the Kingdom postponed teachers don’t believe Daniel!

The Kingdom Postponed Doctrine...

The Kingdom Postponed theory that is taught in most prophecy books says that, yes Jesus did come to proclaim the gospel of Kingdom at His first coming and yes He did intend to inaugurate the Kingdom of God on earth but the Jews who were supposed to be inheritors of this Kingdom rejected the King and His Kingdom. Then after this rejection of the Kingdom by the Jews, the Lord then turned to the Gentiles with the gospel of grace and the launching of the Church age. This Church age dispensation however is only a “parenthesis” period until the Church is Raptured out of the earth. Then the Lord will once again offer the Kingdom to the Jews who will then accept and a 144,000 Jews will proclaim the gospel of the Kingdom during the 7 year Great Tribulation period. This will then lead to the thousand year Millennial reign of Christ on earth ruling from erusalem.

Let me quote from two of the favorite writers of the Kingdom Postponed doctrine and then show you the enormous problems this false teaching creates for the Church and the believer:

“God...made the attempt to set up His Kingdom on earth, but the Jews rejected it, so the Kingdom has been withdrawn until the second coming. (Larkin, Dispensational Truths, p.85)

“Messiah’s Kingdom on earth was offered by John and Jesus. It was rejected so was postponed until Christ comes to set up the Kingdom” (Dake, Annotated Bible, p.3) I can quote many more but these two writers are among the most widely quoted.

The Kingdom Now Doctrine...

The Kingdom now doctrine states that the Kingdom of God on earth was inaugurated by Jesus Christ at His first coming. The reign of Christ began at His resurrection when He triumphed over all the power of the enemy and He is now ruling being seated at the right hand of God with all power in heaven and earth given unto Him. He will continue to rule until all His enemies are made His footstool. The last enemy to be conquered is death. His Kingdom began small, in the hearts of His disciples but as prophesied by all the prophets it will grow and grow till it fills the earth.

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Daniel's prophecy says that His kingdom will be like a rock that strikes the fourth world empire (Rome) and then grow and grows till it fills the earth. Isaiah and Habakkuk says His glory will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

His second coming will be at the consummation of the ages when He has subjected all under Him and He then presents the Kingdom to the Father and the dead are resurrected and all are presented for judgment before God. (1 Cor. 15). This reign of Christ is manifested through His Church here on earth who are tasked with spreading His Kingdom everywhere. The gates of hell will not prevail against the all conquering Church of Jesus Christ who is His body, His bride and His temple in whom He dwells.

So what does the scripture teach us?

The Kingdom has come and Jesus is now Lord and now ruling over all or The Kingdom will one day come and Jesus will one day rule for a thousand years.

The first obvious starting point is not what does Dake, Larkin, John Hagee or TBN or 700 Club believe but what did Jesus teach and believe about the Kingdom?

Jesus said *"..the time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand, repent ye and believe the gospel"* (Mark 1:15). (see also Matt. 3:1-2 and Matt 4:17).

Now I want you to read this next paragraph very carefully and what it implies:

If Jesus came to set up the Kingdom but had to postpone it because the Jews had the ability to postpone the Kingdom by rejecting it; then it means Jesus did not know they would reject it...otherwise why proclaim it was at hand? But if He knew they would reject it and He would have to postpone it for 2000 years then why say it is at hand? That would be a lie! Can you see that those who hold this Kingdom Postponed view make Christ out to be either ignorant or a liar!

Did Jesus believe the Kingdom of God had come?

" But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, then know the kingdom of God is come upon you." (Luke 11:20) What do you think Jesus believed? And can you see why the devils don't want you to believe that the Kingdom has come? Because we now have authority to cast out devils and they know it! The devils know that the Kingdom has come even if the theologians don't.

Did Jesus believe the time had come for the Kingdom to appear?

Mark 9:1: *"For verily I say unto you, there be some standing here that shall not taste of death till they have seen the Kingdom of God come with power"*. When did the Kingdom of God come? Jesus said it would come while some of those listening to His words almost 2000 years ago were still alive!

What did Paul believe and teach? Kingdom Now or Kingdom Postponed?

Paul states we are now in the Kingdom, because God has *"delivered us from the power of darkness and has translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son"* (Col.1:13).

What did John believe? Kingdom Now or Kingdom Postponed?

John writing in his introduction to the Churches of Asia in the beginning of Revelations says, *"...Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the first begotten from the dead and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood and made us kings and priests unto God..."* (Rev. 1:5-6). What do you think John believed? Jesus is one day in the future a king for a thousand years or is He King now over all the rulers of the earth and we are now kings and priests in that Kingdom?

But is Jesus Christ now King or must we wait for the Second Coming for Him to be crowned King of Kings?

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Principle 2: This is the Kingdom Age...Not the End Times

According to the Dispensational-Kingdom Postponed teachers, Jesus is savior now but only at His second coming is he King of Kings when He comes to sit on David's throne in Jerusalem as the King of Israel during the Millennium. But this is not what scripture says:

I Tim 6:15-16 says that Jesus is now the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Matth 28:19 Jesus says that all power in heaven and earth had now been given unto him.

Heb. 10:12,13 says that He is now seated at the right hand of God until all His enemies are made His footstool.

1 Cor. 15: 25 says that "he must reign until he has put all enemies under his feet".

There are so many more scriptures but the point is clear: Jesus is now both Lord and Savior. He is ruling now not just one day in the supposed Millennium. And if He is Lord now then His Kingdom has come!

The two Gospel theory..

But the Dispensational Rapture – Kingdom Postponed preachers don't believe this. They believe there are two different Gospels; the Gospel of the Kingdom and the Gospel of Grace. The Gospel of the Kingdom was preached by Christ but because the Jews rejected Him the Kingdom message was withdrawn and will only be preached again during the tribulation by 144,000 Jews. In the interim the Gospel of Grace is to be preached by the Church. I know this is difficult to believe in the face of such overwhelming Kingdom scriptures I have given you above but let me quote from some of their teachers;

"In the gospels, the Lord proclaims the gospel of the Kingdom. After the Church is taken out (in the Rapture) the gospel of the kingdom will again be proclaimed" (Ironside, The Lamp of Prophecy, p.62)

"The gospel of the kingdom is to be preached again after the Rapture of the Church for a witness unto all nations..." (Larkin, Rightly Dividing the Word, p.53)

"A remnant of the Jews will preach the Gospel of the Kingdom. Today we preach the Gospel of grace." (Ford, Seven Simple sermons on the Second Coming, p.48)

"The gospel of the kingdom is not preached now...God called another man, Paul, and revealed to him the gospel of grace. When God will have completed the body of Christ and will have taken them to be with Himself in the rapture...then the gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in all the world." (Pentecost, Judgments, p.49)

That's right...two Gospels! One preached by the Jews one day for the Jews to re-establish a Jewish kingdom where Jesus will be crowned king. This is their gospel of the Kingdom! That is why they are obsessed with anything to do with Israel. Watch Israel, watch for the new temple to be rebuilt. Watch for Russia to invade Israel. Its almost all over, the end times are upon us! This is what the American televangelists believe, this is what all the popular prophecy books teach, this what the major Pentecostal Churches teach.

The other Gospel for them is the Gospel of grace that is to be preached by the Church. Get born again, go to church, hang in there, the rapture is any moment and then we are out of here and the Jews can then carry on with their gospel of the Kingdom.

Remember, according to this theory Jesus came to the Jews to be their king and set up His kingdom but they rejected Him and so Jesus withdrew the Kingdom but after the Rapture they will accept the Kingdom offer. Now let me state the real shocking truth:

Jesus was offered the Jewish Kingdom by the Jews but He rejected it!

The Jews of Jesus day wanted a political, military Kingdom that would destroy the hated Roman occupiers. They perceived this Jesus son of David was indeed that prophesied Messiah that would come and contrary to the Kingdom Postponed theorists they not only offered Him the Crown they wanted to force Him to be King:

"Then those men when they had seen the miracles that Jesus did, said This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world. When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force to make him a king, He departed again into a mountain, Himself alone." (John 6: 14,15)

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And still today the modern “Judaizers” in the evangelical movement want a physical King Jesus sitting in Jerusalem, organizing a vast global bureaucracy overseeing sewage works, tax collections, train connections, trade relationships and with a vast army of angels standing ready to bash anyone who would dare not obey His directives. And then after a thousand years of this rule by Christ and His followers the world is so disgusted with a thousand years of Christ and His rulership that Satan is able to organize an international revolt of the oppressed masses against Christ and His Kingdom! Folk’s, Jesus rejected this kind of Kingdom the first time the Jews offered it to Him, what makes you think He is going to accept it the second time?

But what about Luke 22: 29-30 where Jesus promises His disciples that He appoints them a Kingdom and they would eat and drink at His table and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel? When is this supposed to take place if not in the Millennium?

In the parallel verse in Matthew 19:28, Jesus explains that they would sit on thrones “in the regeneration”. When is the “regeneration”? Is it the Millennium? Paul tells us in Titus 3:5-6 “*Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of **regeneration** and renewing of the Holy Spirit..*”. “Regeneration” means to be born again. Jesus said you must be born again to enter the

Kingdom of Heaven (John 3: 1-8). And the moment we are born again we are raised up in Christ and seated with him in heavenly places. The Bible says, “and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (Eph. 1:3; 2:1-6). Rev. 1: 5-6 says “Jesus Christ who is...the prince of the Kings of the earth ...that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood and has made us Kings”

Folks, the Kingdom is now! We are now Kings seated in heavenly places ruling with Christ! Not one day in the supposed Millennium! When we sit at the Communion table to eat and drink we are now eating and drinking in His Kingdom! This is not something that is going to happen for just a thousand years sometime in the future! It is now a present reality and has been since the day of Pentecost when the Church was founded and given the keys to the Kingdom to let the multitudes into the Kingdom!.

This is the real Gospel preached by Jesus and the Apostles... there is no other.

The Kingdom of God has come (not one day), Jesus is now Lord (not one day). This Kingdom will last forever (not just a thousand years). We are now reigning with Christ bringing in His Kingdom (not one day).

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Principle 3: The Church is the Key to the Kingdom of God...not the Jews

INTRODUCTION:

Do you believe in the triumphant church of Jesus Christ who is His Bride, His Body and His army on earth, called to be the Temple of God where the power and glory of God is to be manifest in the earth, against whom the gates of hell shall not prevail? Called of God and equipped of God to destroy the works of Satan and deliver the people into the Kingdom of God.

Or do you believe in Christian Zionism which the vast majority of evangelical preachers believe and teach which says the following:

Christian Zionism is the belief that the Jews of today are the lineal descendents of Abraham and the heirs of the blessings of the covenant that the Lord made with him on the basis of their race. As such they have a separate covenant with God which includes the possession of the land of Palestine, the bringing in of the Kingdom of God on earth through the reestablishment of the throne of David in Jerusalem and the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem, thus all nations of the earth will be blessed through them. This will be accomplished after the Lord takes the Church in the Rapture and works through the Jews to bring in His Kingdom on earth during the last days of the 7 year Great Tribulation.

Simply put the question is this:

Do you believe the Church of Jesus Christ is the instrument by which God brings His Kingdom into the earth or do you believe the Jews are God's instrument for bringing in His Kingdom?

The sad answer to that question is that the vast majority of evangelical preachers believe the second. Let me explain to you why that is a serious error...

Christian Zionism is the commonly held view among the vast majority of evangelical Christians and any preacher in any one of the major evangelical churches who holds an alternate view will have serious problems with his congregation and his head office. Since the founding of the state of Israel in 1948 it is surely the foolhardy who would doubt the clear evidence of his eyes and clear promises of scripture. Who could possibly deny that miraculously after 2000 years Jews are gathered from all over the world into their own Israel nation with Jerusalem as the capital, Hebrew is once again spoken in Palestine and the deserts are blooming. Be warned... looks can be deceiving!

But is this really the Lord's doing or are we

evangelicals, like blind old Isaac, unaware that Jacob was making out to be Esau in order to steal Esau's birthright blessing; is Esau not now fooling us making out he is Jacob (Israel) in order to steal back the birthright blessing? Malachi 1: 3-4 says:

"And I hated Esau and laid his mountains and his heritage waste...wherefore Edom says, we are impoverished but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the Lord of hosts, they shall build but I will throw down and they shall call them the border of wickedness and the people against whom the Lord has indignation forever."

Watch out Church! Malachi prophecies that descendents of Abraham (Edomites, descendants of Esau) are going to possess the promised land and rebuild the waste places calling it their right, but the Lord is going to throw them out! You need to discern this very carefully in the spirit because there are three very obvious problems with Christian Zionism:

- It is not historically accurate
- It is not scriptural
- It leads the Church into strategic dead-end for the Church.

In Chapter 5 "The Return of Israel" I am going to give you the historical and prophetic fulfillment to the prophecy of Ezekiel and Isaiah that the Lord would bring Israel out from all the nations where He drove them and restore their nation, the temple and priesthood and that they would dwell safely in their own land again. Let me just recap that story here with this statement: Historically the 1948 state of Israel is not the fulfillment of Ez.36:24! I prove this historically and scripturally in Chapter 5.

What does scripture say of the Jews?

But the real issue is what does scripture say about the claims of Christian Zionism? More specifically in this New Testament era of the New Covenant made in Christ's own blood, **is it still possible that anyone can possibly claim to be specially blessed of the Lord purely on the basis of their**

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race and genetic makeup even though they outright reject the Lordship of Jesus Christ?

That in actual fact is the claim of Christian Zionists today, that there are a special group of people on the earth today who purely on the basis of their race and regardless of their rejection of Jesus Christ have a special covenant relationship of blessing from God!

Here is the cardinal mistake that the evangelical preachers are making and that Paul warned the Church of in his day:

“...for they are not all Israel which are of Israel, neither because they are of the seed of Abraham are they all children...they which are the children of the flesh these are not the children of God..” (Rom.9:6-8).

Paul says there are two Israel's. He says that just because you are a Jew does not make you a partaker of Abraham's covenant. He emphasizes this again in Galatians 3:7-9:

“Know ye therefore that they which are of faith the same are the children of Abraham...so then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.” Meaning those who are of Abraham's faith... not race are blessed! In Romans 2 Paul says, “he is not a Jew who is one outwardly (circumcision)...but he is a Jew who is one inwardly (circumcision of the heart)..”

Christian Zionists deny these scriptures. They contend that the Jews in Israel today are blessed of God and are partakers of Abraham's blessing purely on the basis of their race. Exactly what Paul warned against is now the standard teaching in the church! Furthermore if we bless these Israeli's then the Lord will bless us (that is part of Abraham's blessing, whoever blesses him the Lord will bless). Furthermore the land that the Lord promised Abraham has now been passed on to the Jews of today purely because they are the inheritors of Abraham's blessing through their racial connection. This is a gospel of race not of grace, it denies the New Covenant made in Christ's own blood as the basis of God's favor to man. It is therefore another gospel and not the gospel of grace and faith!

Christian Zionists must face another problem of race

The problem is this... Through thousands of years there have been so many other races of people who have converted into Judaism that the whole idea of a genetic race connection of the present day Jews to Abraham is ludicrous. Only about 42,000 racial Israelites returned to Judah from Babylon. The land was full of other races. For hundreds of years anybody who lived in Judea was called a Jew (a resident of Judea). John Hyrcanus in 125 BC forced the circumcision and conversion of the Edomites (the descendants of Esau) in southern Judea and they became “Jews”.

It was these descendants of Esau who were converted to Judaism who told Jesus, *“They answered him, We be Abraham's seed and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free..(Jesus answered them) I know that you are Abraham's seed but you seek to kill me... If you were Abraham's children you would do the works of Abraham.”* (John 8:33-39) They were right. Esau's descendants were never in bondage in Egypt like his brother Jacob's descendants. But they still considered themselves Jews, the seed of Abraham and Jesus acknowledged that they were indeed the seed of Abraham but just like Paul, **Jesus denied that they were children of Abraham!** Genetics mean nothing to God, only faith! They have no part in the blessings of Abraham regardless of what the Christian Zionists teach.

In about 740 AD the entire Kingdom of the Khazars in the Caucasus region converted to Judaism, took on Jewish names and developed the Yiddish form of Hebrew. They are the forebears of most of today's Askhenazi Jews. To try to maintain that the modern Jews of today have some genetic link thousands of years later to Abraham and on the basis of this tenuous, questionable link, you want to base a whole theology of racial blessing?... a whole eschatology of the Kingdom on a myth? Paul warned Titus about “Jewish fables” (Titus 1:14). He told Timothy (1 Tim.1:4) the same thing warning him against “fables and endless genealogies”. The Church is still infected by these Jewish fables about how your genealogy qualifies you to be a special heir to Abraham's covenant promises!

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Dual Covenant Theology

The teaching espoused by prophecy preachers today that the covenant relationship that the Lord had with the Jews which began with Abraham is still applicable today to his racial, genetic descendants...and therefore the Jews have the right to possess the land of Palestine and call it Israel. This is called Dual Covenant Theology. One covenant with the Jews based on race and the New Covenant with the Church based on faith. In fact they expect other aspects of this covenant to be fulfilled as well, including rebuilding the Temple, resumption of sacrifices, the nations to be blessed through Israel etc.

On the face of it this belief seems so spiritual, so biblical! Who can possibly be against this except anti-Semites? But let me take you further down the road of Dual Covenant Theology and see where it leads to and see if you don't agree with me...it is in actual fact heresy against the gospel of Jesus Christ and a replacement to the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom because it promises the blessings of Abraham on the basis of race and not faith in Christ.

The chief proponent of Dual Covenant theology in America is John Hagee the pastor of a Houston mega-church and the national leader of CUFI (Christians United for Israel). John Hagee (you may have heard on TBN or read one of his many books) actually puts into words what the only logical conclusion you can come to the moment you believe there are two covenants in operation right now; one covenant with the Jews based on their race and another covenant with the gentiles based on faith in Christ.

Here is a direct quote of John Hagee on You Tube promoting his new book. "In Defense of Israel":

"In Defense of Israel will shape Christian Theology...it will also prove that Jesus did not come to earth to be the Messiah...since Jesus refused by word and deed to claim to be the Messiah, how can the Jews be blamed for rejecting what was never offered." There is more...

"There are right now Jewish people on this earth who have a powerful and special relationship with God ...**let us put an end to the Christian chatter that all Jews are lost and can't be in the will of God until they convert to Christianity**" ("Should Christian Support Israel", Hagee, p.124,125,127)

In an article in the Houston Chronicle of April 30, 1988 (Hagee has been teaching this heresy for a long time!) he is quoted as saying:

"I'm not trying to convert the Jewish people to the Christian faith. In fact trying to convert Jews is a waste of time...The Jewish person who has his roots in Judaism is not going to convert to Christianity. They have a faith structure. Everyone else whether Buddhist or Baha'I needs to believe in Jesus, but not Jews.

Jews already have a covenant with God which has never been replaced by Christianity."

There is lots more where this came from, but you get the idea of where Dual Covenant theology leads you. But how did an evangelical preacher like Hagee get to such a clearly unscriptural teaching? Actually quiet easily and logically from the following statement from his website:

*"Our Commitment to Israel
We believe in the promises of Genesis 12:3 regarding the Jewish people and the nation of Israel. We believe that this is an eternal covenant between God and the seed of Abraham to which God is faithful."*

It seems an uplifting and scriptural statement does it not?

Until you ask the question: "Yes, but with which seed of Abraham does God have an eternal covenant with? The spiritual seed or the genetic seed?"

But Hagee is actually correct in making the further conclusion about the other aspects of that covenant, including salvation. If it is an eternal covenant to the racial descendants of Abraham (the Jews of today) and therefore still in operation, then not only can they claim the land of Palestine back, but the promises of salvation blessings under that covenant are also still in effect!

Therefore today's Jews can have a relationship with God apart from faith in Jesus Christ just as John Hagee claims.

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Can you see where Dual Covenant Theology ends up?

But regardless of what Hagee and the Christian Zionists say this is what the Bible says:

“And if you be Christ’s then are you Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promise” (Gal.3:29)

Can scripture be any clearer? Your race does not qualify you to be an heir and inheritor of Abraham’s covenant promises and that includes “the promised land”. Only faith qualifies you to be his seed...and that means faith in Jesus Christ! So let’s make this very clear:

If you believe that the Jews of today have inherited the land of Palestine because they are heirs of Abraham by race and do not need to be heirs of Abraham through faith in Christ, then you are preaching another gospel and you need to get back to sound Biblical evangelical principles...don’t judge by sight, judge by what the Word of God says!

Let’s get back to a sound scriptural position that reflects the gospel, prophecy and historical facts:

- The establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 was not a fulfillment of Ez.36:24 as that promised return already happened in 143 BC with the re-establishment of the independent state of Judea and the monarchy in 103 BC as prophesied by Ez. 4:1-6. (I will explain this in detail in Chapter 5 “The Return of Israel”)
- The covenant promises to Abraham are only applicable to his true heirs, those of faith. (Gal.3:29)
- The Jewish return to Palestine in 1948 was not a re-gathering by the Lord as it did not fulfill the requirements of Deut. 30:1-3 that it be accompanied with repentance and a return to the Lord. The return of 143 BC was accompanied with repentance and a return to the Lord.
- Christian Zionism of today is a racist theology based on blessings to people on the basis of their genetics and is totally incompatible with the entire gospel as preached by the apostles.
- In actual fact the Jewish people of today have no real genetic link in any case to Abraham or Jacob

because of the many proselytes from other races who became Jews through the centuries. This is especially true of Ashkenazi Jews.

All Israel Shall be Saved

This will then obviously lead to the question that Paul raises and answers in the 11th chapter of Romans:

“Has God cast away his people?” (Rom.11:1)

To which he immediately declares emphatically, No! and his first proof is that he himself is a Jew and has been saved. And then he goes into a lengthy explanation of the tree of Israel and the root and branches being cut off and others grafted on and then he concludes with this incredible statement in verse 26: **“...and so all Israel shall be saved”**. Not only has God not cast away His people but in actual fact all of Israel will be saved!

It is here where the Christian Zionists miss the entire point of Romans 11. They start with verse 1 to say, “See God has not cast Israel away and He still has a plan for the Jews!.” That is right, the Lord has a plan for the Jews but that plan is for them to be grafted back into the tree, not have a separate tree! That plan has this indisputable result...”and so all Israel shall be saved”. But in the theology of Christian Zionists they teach Jews = Israel. So if all Israel is to be saved they are looking for some event in the supposed Great Tribulation which will cause all the Jews to be saved. But what about the Jews of the last 2000 years? Surely according to this interpretation they must also be saved if “all Israel is to be saved”? (John Hagee probably believes they are saved) Can you see that this just does not work at all. Paul is not teaching all Jews will be saved, that’s the false doctrine of Universalism.

To understand that phrase you need to read the phrase immediately before it and it will all become clear what Paul means “...and so all Israel shall be saved”. I am going to drop the verse division and just write it in one sentence as it was meant to be read; **“...until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in and so all Israel shall be saved.”** Rom.11:25-26).

Can you see what Paul is saying; Only when the Gentiles come to salvation can you say that all of Israel has been saved! Why is that? Because throughout his epistle to both the Galatians and Romans he has been explaining that there is and only has been one Israel

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through all the ages: the people of faith! This tree called Israel is rooted in Abraham but only those who like Abraham had faith in the Lord are part of this tree called Israel. Branches are cut off if they do not produce fruit; Ishmael was cut off, Esau was cut off, even though they were genetic children of Abraham, but that counts for nothing. But what about the Jews? Paul says no, they have not been thrown away, and he uses himself as an example. The gospel went first to the Jews like him and those who believed like he did were saved and grafted back into the true tree of Israel. That is God's plan for the Jews and all nations.

You see Paul also knew of the other promises of the covenant to Jacob when he was renamed Israel: "And God said unto him...a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee." (Gen:35:11) God's plan was never intended for just one nation. Israel was to be a "company of nations". That is what Paul meant that when the Gentiles also come into the covenant relationship then indeed all Israel will be saved and not just the Jews. We are to go forth and disciple the nations and graft them into this tree called the Israel of God that they also become heirs of Abraham's covenant blessings.

The Promised Land is not in Palestine

The promised land is no longer a small dry dusty piece of land in the Middle East and neither was it to be Israel's intended final place. The prophet Nathan told David after he had established the kingdom of Israel, "Moreover **I will** appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them that they may dwell in a place of their own and move no more..." (2 Sam. 7:10) meaning that they were not yet in the final promised land, they were still to move. At the height of David's kingdom the prophet Nathan tells him that small patch of the Middle East was not God's final destiny for His people. Today's Zionists are desperate to make the small land of Palestine the final resting place for Israel. It will fail. God through Nathan told David there was a greater destiny for His people...

The Earth is the Lord's and has been given to His Church...

The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof (Psalm 24:1) He has given us dominion over all the works of His hands. (Psalm 8:6) This is our promised land inheritance as the Israel of God. Bring in the nations into the Kingdom and possess the earth...it belongs to us!

The Church is His Body of which He is the head (Eph.1:22, Col 1:18, Rom:12:5, 1Cor 12:27). The Lord is present in the earth through His church. His church is mighty to pull down strongholds. The gates of hell will not prevail against His church (Mat.16:18).

So I ask you: Who is going to do the work of the Kingdom of God in this world? The Church filled with the power of the Spirit of God or the Jews?

Strategic Dead End

The evangelical church has lost the gospel of the Kingdom and replaced it with a gospel of race. To them the Jews will bring in the Kingdom, not the Church. They are looking to a nation in Palestine for end time miracles instead of discipling the nations. They are looking for a rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem instead of building the true Temple of the Lord, His Church. They are looking for a physical Jesus to sit in Jerusalem ruling the nations instead of manifesting the power and presence of Christ in the world today because He is in fact now ruling over all principalities and powers in both the heavenlies and on earth.

This is the legacy of Christian Zionism...we have given back to Esau the birthright inheritance so he can establish Zion through war, money and power politics. It's a strategic dead end for the Church diverting us from our calling to disciple the nations and bringing in the Kingdom through faith and the power of His Spirit.

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Principle 4: The Victory over Satan and his demons by the Church

INTRODUCTION

The coming of the Kingdom of God on earth also means the end of Satan and his demonic infestation of the earth and the people and nations of the earth. Jesus boldly declared (Math.12:28) “But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God then the Kingdom of God is come unto you.” John declared (1 John 3:8), “For this purpose the Son of God was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil”. Jesus gave this power and authority over all the power of Satan to His church to liberate people and planet earth of this malicious presence and to execute judgment on these evil entities (Psalm 149).

But a majority of evangelical believers do not really believe this is going to happen. They believe the church will not defeat Satan because the church will be Raptured out of the earth so that Satan can take control of the world. Our 4th Principle of the Kingdom vision states boldly: The time for Satan’s defeat is now, not in a thousand years time and the Lord has empowered His church with the Holy Spirit and the authority of His Word to do the job.

Paul tells Timothy (1 Tim.4:1) that the time will come that many in the church will depart from the faith and give heed to the seducing doctrines of devils. If devils could preach doctrine to the church what do you think they would try to make the church believe? They know their time of judgment for them to be cast in the pit has come...so what is their desperate doctrine to the church? Here is what I think they would try to convince us of: It isn’t the time yet for Satan’s defeat (that will only happen a thousand years later at the end of the Millennium) and it isn’t the job of the church (Jesus and the angels will do that).

From the beginning of the great Azusa street revival that spread all over the world with millions of reborn Christians speaking in “new tongues” the devils knew the game was up...Jesus said (Mark 16:17), “***And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues.***” These new Spirit filled believers speaking in “new tongues” have the power to cast out demons and send them to the pit where they belong. But a new “doctrine” was taught to this great army of God: Dispensational Raptureism. This new doctrine taught the new Pentecostal believers this: It is not the time for Satan’s defeat because the Antichrist will take over the world and it is not the job of the church to defeat Satan because the church must be Raptured out of the earth. The defeat of Satan will only happen in the distant future...at the end of the thousand years Millennium...and Jesus and the angels will do it!

Central to this idea are the following beliefs firmly held by the majority of evangelical preachers and taught by them to the church:

- Satan is the prince or ruler of this world and rules over the nations and appoints who he wills to rule.
- Satan will only be cast out of the heavenlies and down to the earth during the coming Great Tribulation when he knows that his time is now short.
- At the end of the Great Tribulation period Satan and his armies will be defeated at the battle of Armageddon by the return of Jesus and His saints and Satan will then be bound for a thousand years during the coming Millennial reign of Christ so that he cannot deceive the nations anymore.

The clear impression created by these false teaching is that during this “Dispensation of the Church Age” Satan is in fact triumphant to such an extent that he ends up with a world government presided over by his Antichrist. The church is unable to stand against this satanic onslaught and must in fact be rescued out of the earth in the Rapture as a measure of protection.

Let me give you scripture to counter this propaganda and for added measure let me clear up a couple of small matters as well; Satan’s name is not “Lucifer” and a third of the angels of heaven are not in rebellion against the Lord...in fact it is only a few hundred and they will be quickly dealt with as we liberate planet earth from the foul presence of these fallen angels and their demon hordes.

So let’s answer the following questions from scripture:

- Who rules on earth God or Satan?

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- When will Satan be judged and cast out of the heavenlies...past or future?
- When will Satan be bound ...past or future?
- Who executes Satan's sentence of judgment... the Church now or angels in the future?

1. Who rules on earth, God or Satan?

How many times have you heard "faith preachers" (who ought to know better!) proclaim, "When Adam sinned he handed over the title deeds of the earth to Satan". And to substantiate this lie they actually quote Satan from Luke 4:6 "And the devil said unto him All this power I will give you and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me and to whomsoever I will I give it." As if Satan can utter one sentence without lying!

What does the Word of God say? Daniel the prophet (read Daniel 4) interpreted a dream that King Nebuchadnezzar had from God, a message from God that the prophet interpreted to him. The message from God was this: God is going to punish you for your pride until you learn the following lesson **"...till you know that the most High rules in the kingdom of men and gives it to whomsoever he will."** (Daniel 4:25)

But Daniel gives us further great insight into who the Lord has assigned rulership over the earth. In Daniel 7 we have a great dream vision that he has. God reveals to him that the Lord will give rulership to four "beast empires" one after the other but during the time of the fourth empire (the Roman Empire)...**"the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever"** (Daniel 7:18)

So here is what the Word of God declares: The Lord God rules over the kingdom of men and he gives it to whosoever He wills. He gave rulership over Israel to certain gentile nations to punish Israel for their disobedience. He gave rulership to certain earthly rulers for a time being over His saints until His saints are ready for possessing the kingdom. When the saints are ready to possess the kingdom they will do so forever and ever and not just for a thousand years. The handover of earthly rulership started during the Roman Empire (the fourth beast empire) and it

continues today and will continue forever and ever (and not just a thousand years!)...until every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord!

So who rules on earth, Satan or the Lord and His saints?

2. When will Satan be judged and cast out of the heavenlies?

There is a prevailing view among evangelicals that only one day in the distant future will Satan be judged and cast of the heavenlies and onto the earth during the Great Tribulation. They read Rev.12:7-10 "*And there was war in heaven...and the great dragon was cast out...Satan which deceives the whole world and he was cast into the earth and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven Now is come salvation and strength and the kingdom of our God and the power of his Christ...*"

So when was this great war in heaven when Satan and his angels cast out and salvation come and the kingdom of our God come and the power of His Christ? Sometime in the future still?

Here is what Jesus said just before His crucifixion: John 12:23-32, "*...The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified...Now is the judgment of this world: Now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I if I be lifted up shall draw all men unto me.*" Jesus again states in John 16:11 "*...the ruler of this world has been judged.*"

When the 70 disciples went out preaching the gospel of the Kingdom and returned victorious the bible tells us:(Luke 10:18) "And the seventy returned again with joy saying Lord even the devils are subject to us through thy name. And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightening fall from heaven. Behold I give you power to tread on serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy..."

So here is what the Word says: Stan has already been judged and cast out of the heavenlies, he is on the earth and knows his time is short, the Kingdom of God has already come and we have all power over the power of the enemy!

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3. When will Satan be bound?

Again people read Rev. 20:2-3 and think this is some time in the future during the Millennium: “And he laid hold of the dragon, the old serpent who is the devil and Satan and bound him for a thousand years...that he should not deceive the nations any longer”.

Remember what I said about “thousand” in Rev. 20 in Principle 1? It actually is in the plural “thousands” in the original Greek. So when did Jesus bind Satan for thousands of years? This is what Jesus says about binding Satan...

“How can anyone enter the strong man’s house and carry off his property unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house.” So has Jesus bound and spoiled the enemy?

Here is what Paul says...

Col.2:15, “*And having spoiled principalities and powers he made a show of them openly triumphing over them.*”

Church rejoice, Satan is cast out of the heavenlies, he is bound and defeated and we can proceed with plundering his house filled with lost souls!

4. Who executes the judgment on Satan...the Church now or the angels in the future?

Paul writes to the Ephesians (6:12) and says “*For we (the church) wrestle not against flesh and blood but against principalities against powers against the rulers of the darkness of this world against spiritual wickedness in high places.*”

Is this wrestling going to be successful? Yes “*and the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.*” (Rom. 16:20) “*and they (the church) overcame him (Satan) by the blood of the lamb and the word of their testimony.*” (Rev. 12:11)

Read what the Lord tells us in Psalm 149: 4-9...

“*For the Lord takes pleasure in his people, he will beautify the meek with salvation. Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds. Let the high praise of God be in their mouth and a two-edged sword in their hand; to execute vengeance upon the heathen and punishments upon the people; to bind their kings with chains and their nobles*

with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgment written: this honour have all the saints. Praise ye the Lord”

What honour does all the saints have? To bind the rulers of this world (Satan and his demons) and execute upon them the judgment handed down at Calvary. So who executes God’s judgment on Satan and his demons? The saints of God, the church. When is this to happen? Now!

Explanation on Satan and Lucifer

I don’t like all this reference by preachers and the church to Satan as “Lucifer”. Satan means “adversary” and that is what he is. Everyone seems to think that Satan has a personal name “Lucifer” (taken from Isaiah 14:12, “How art thou fallen from heaven O Lucifer, son of the morning...”) Here is the truth. In the original Hebrew there is no proper name “Lucifer” written there like Gabriel or Michael is found in Daniel. What is written there in the Hebrew is “helel” meaning “shining one” or “light bearer”. The Latin Vulgate written by Jerome translated this in Latin to “luciferos” and unfortunately the English translators just translated from Jerome’s Latin straight into English as a transliteration (not as a translation) the word “Lucifer”. Satan loves it when you call him “Lucifer” or light bearer...when the actual fact is that he is a bringer of darkness and in him there is no light or truth at all. Just stop it! Preachers especially ought to know better.

One Third of the Angels of heaven in Rebellion?

Another major propaganda effort by Satan is to depict his rebellion against the Lord as having the support of a third of the uncounted billions of angels. Just think of it. Billion upon billions of angels who are all sons of God and know Him as heavenly Father and who have known Him for uncounted billions of years are so disgusted with the Lord that they just cannot stand to be in heaven anymore. And upon what scriptural authority is this widely accepted “truth” based? Just one scripture in Rev. 12:3-4 which says the following: “*And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great dragon...and his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven and did cast them to the earth...*”

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Upon this slim scripture a whole doctrine of a third of all angels are in rebellion against God. But this is not what the scripture says. It says the dragon's tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven and cast them to earth. We know this is not referring to the rebellious angels who were cast out of heaven because a few verses later it says that it is Michael and his angels who cast Satan and his angels to the earth (vrs. 7-9) and not the tail of the Dragon. So what does the tail of the dragon refer to and which third of the stars of heaven?

Here is what the Lord says about the stars in Genesis 1:14...

"And God says Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years."

We know how to use the stars for determining days, seasons and years bit for ...signs? Well that is where astronomy and constellations and the Zodiac come in and there is where we are going to get a clue as to what the Lord is giving us a "sign" about in Rev. 12.

The constellation Draco was well known to all the ancients. It's a constellation with a very long tail that extends through the northern sky and used to end as the pole star Draconis but due to the precession of the equinoxes the polar star is now Polaris. The twelve constellations of the Zodiac (which tell the story of salvation in the sky!) circle the earth at its equatorial circumference. But Draco the Dragon sits in the "sides of the north" and when you measure its tail across the constellations of the Zodiac it covers one third of the twelve constellations of the Zodiac. Below Draco is

Virgo (the Virgin") which is why Rev. 12 begins with, "and there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet and upon her head a crown of twelve stars..." So when Rev. 12 talks about Draco's tail casting a third of the stars of heaven to the earth, it is talking about the phenomenon of the "precession of the equinoxes" and their time it takes to move from one sign of the Zodiac to the next. That is why when the Dragon is cast to the earth he knows his time is short...

I am not going to solve this time riddle for you lest people accuse me of being a "date setter", but dig deep here...there are mysteries here that the Lord told us back in Genesis to look out for. The stars hold keys to signs of the times, that is why the Magi knew when the Messiah was to appear!

How many angels rebelled along with Satan?

I don't know but I think the ancient book of Enoch that was widely read in Jesus day and which was quoted in our Bible by Jude has this to say about how many angels fell from heaven...

Enoch 6:6 says there were 200 fallen angels who descended on the earth to corrupt the earth and it then goes on to name the leaders of this rebellion. I will not bother to name them but believe me there is no "Lucifer" among them. But, yes I can agree with Enoch...about 200 rebellious angels among multiplied billions of true angelic sons of God who stayed true to the Lord! That sounds about right...

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Principle 5: The Restoration of All Things

INTRODUCTION

In chapter 3 of the book of Acts we have Peter preaching the gospel after a great healing of a lame man. We accept and believe his clear presentation of salvation. What the evangelical charismatic church has not accepted was his great prophetic declaration “Jesus Christ... whom the heavens must receive until the times of the restoration of all things.” Peter did not say Jesus must remain in heaven until the time of the Rapture! The next thing on God’s Kingdom agenda is not the Rapture but the restoration of all things and Jesus will not return until the church has finished this task. We examine the restoration agenda.

In Acts 3:12-26 Peter declares the gospel to the thousands in the temple area who had just witnessed the miracle of healing of the lame man. Peter not only declares the way of salvation to his listeners but God’s plan for the return of Jesus Christ. He says this...*and He shall send Jesus Christ which was before preached unto you, whom the heavens must receive until the times of the restoration of all things which God has spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.*” (vrs.20-21)

Peter makes this great prophetic statement that Jesus is now in the heavens until the restoration of all things and then He will return. Where did Peter get this revelation from? From Psalm 110:1 “The Lord said unto my Lord sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool.” Peter was preaching restoration and second coming; the church today is preaching rapture and second coming. The word rapture is not in the Bible, but the word restoration is. Actually the better word to use is “reconstitution” which is a better translation of the Greek word “apokatastasis” used in the text. We are to reconstitute that which was lost and Peter says all the prophets have prophesied about this restoration or reconstitution of all that we have lost.

The Restoration Agenda

There are numerous things that we can place on what I want to call the restoration agenda. It will have to include all things that the Lord has already given to us but that was lost in time; it must include all things that Jesus died for and paid for by His blood to buy back for us. Certainly there is a lot of talk from our pulpits on such things as restoring the five-fold leadership structure of the church with a strong emphasis on the restoration of Apostolic and Prophetic ministries. There is talk of restoration of power and the authority of the believer, there is talk

of restoration of the New Testament church. There is great emphasis also today with many prophetic ministries on the restoration of David’s tabernacle with an emphasis on worship and praise coming back into our churches. All of these topics I wholeheartedly agree with and they show me that the Lord is busy with the task of restoration in the church. But they do not go back far enough to what we lost.

The Restoration of Eden

At the top of the restoration agenda is the restoration of Eden. Everything we lost in Eden, Jesus Christ the second Adam has bought back for us and wants to restore to us. On one level all of us agree with this. We have all read the scriptures in 1 Cor. 15 that in the first Adam we all died in sin but that Jesus our second Adam has restored to us eternal life. But I believe that we need to go beyond the restoration of eternal life...Jesus is indeed the second Adam and He has restored to us all that we lost in Eden and therefore all of that must be restored as part of the process of the restoration of all things. Can you see that Peter living in the New Testament church was not concerned with restoring Apostolic and Prophetic authority, he was living it; he was not interested in restoring the New Testament church, he was living it; he was not concerned with restoring miracles to the church, he was living it. So what “restoration of all things” was he declaring that all the prophets had prophesied about? **It is the restoration of Eden on Earth and all that goes with it!**

I know this sounds startling to most readers especially to those who believe that there is still a thousand year Millennium ahead when they believe Eden and God’s Kingdom is to be restored on the earth. But in Principle 1 & 2 I showed you we are now in the Kingdom Age and there is no future 1000 year reign of Christ still to come. He is in fact now risen and ruling in the heavenlies seated at the right hand of majesty and power and He will return when all has

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been restored that we lost through Adam. This is what Peter preached in Acts 3, this is what Paul preached on the resurrection and coming of the Lord in 1 Cor. 15. and this is what all the prophets prophesied would happen.

Before detailing to you specifically what great things are on the restoration of Eden agenda let us first have a closer look at how Genesis begins and how Revelations ends. What I want to show you is that the New Jerusalem of Revelations 21-22 is in fact the restoration of Eden in Genesis. That is how the Bible ends... the way it begins. And everything in between is the great story of restoration...God's great plan to restore to us that which we lost.

Adam and Eden: Restoration of Glory

If you go to Genesis 2 we have the story of how the Lord planted a garden to the east of Eden and there placed His representative on earth Adam, created in God's image. Eden was a place on earth. This is not a mythical allegory. Adam had work to do and to do that work the Lord gave him help, Eve. And He called them, Adam (Gen.5:2). The two of them were to be the image bearers of God on earth. Now let me say some controversial things which you do not need to believe but which I believe are part of our Kingdom restoration calling:

The "tree of life" in the garden was not some mystical fruit tree. It was the Lord Jesus Christ who fellowshiped there with Adam. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil was not an apple tree. It was Satan who also had access to Eden. Scripture says of Satan, "thou hast been in Eden the garden of God". (Ez. 28:13)

Adam was covered by the glory of God and was energized by the presence of God in Eden. While he lived in the presence of God his body would not deteriorate. When he sinned, the glory covering departed and he and Eve realized they were naked. Moses had a small taste of that experience when the glory of the Lord passed him by on Mount Sinai and coming down from the mountain his face shined with that glory and they had to cover him. But it so affected his physical body that his testimony before his death at 120 was that his eye had not dimmed nor his natural strength abated. In fact the Lord had to take

him and his dead body was still so energized that Satan tried to contend for his body and the Lord Himself buried Moses' body. Adam really did live almost a thousand years.

Adam was not the only person on the earth, neither was he the first person in the world. The people of the earth were created in Genesis 1 on the sixth day of creation, each race group created in God's image and each to bear after their own kind. When Cain sinned and was judged by God he complained that people would kill him if they found him and he left the region of Eden and went into the land of Nod and built himself a city. That meant lots of people on the earth at that time as well as cities.

Adam however was the Lord's representative on earth. If you wanted to know what the Lord was like you went to Adam who would reveal God to you. He walked with God and talked with God. He was supposed to teach people the way of God. He was supposed to bring God's government into the world. The Lord equipped Adam with glory and power and revelation to do his work of establishing God's Kingdom on the earth. Eden was not a farming operation. Throughout scripture nations are referred to as trees or mountains. When Adam was given the task of tending God's garden he was to be the administrator of nations and people.

Adam was to create heaven on earth. Heaven consists of God's family. The Bible describes the many hosts of heaven as the sons of God, they are His kids, He loves them and they have enormous family gatherings around the Father's throne. Central to God's plan for Adam was the creation of the family as God's vehicle for replenishing the earth and subduing the earth.

Restoration of Mankind's Purpose

The Psalmist in Psalm 8 asks this question which mankind has asked through the ages, who is man? Who is man and what is his purpose in this vast universe?

When I consider thy heavens and the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained; what is man that thou art mindful of him, the son of man that thou visitest him? For thou has made him a little lower than the angels and has crowned him with glory and honor; Thou hast made him to have dominion over the works of your

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hands; thou hast put all things under his feet.” (vrs. 3-6)

Ask a scientist what is a man and he will tell you man is an intelligent animal originating from the primeval sludge. Ask the corporation what is man and it will tell you he is consumer and a worker. Ask government what is a man and it will tell you he is a tax payer and a voter. But ask the Lord what is a man? The Lord will tell you he is my son, my child, created in my image, crowned with glory and honor and all things that I have made are his to enjoy and have dominion over. Our calling is not to be citizens or subjects, workers or consumers, lovers or fighters; we are called to be God’s image bearers on this earth and to take dominion over all the works of His hands. For this task the Lord Jesus came from heaven to be our second Adam, to restore to us our calling and destiny and when we have fulfilled our calling and destiny He will return once again.

The New Jerusalem: Restoration of Heaven on Earth

Now read Revelation 21 and 22 and see if you do not see Eden restored once again there. This city, the New Jerusalem is called the Bride of Christ. A restoration of Adam to Eve, the family of God restored. It says there is a river that flows from it as the river flowed out of Eden. It says there is the tree of life there just like in Eden. It says this tree bears fruits and leaves for the healing of the nations. Just as in Eden where Adam was called to minister to the nations. It says the glory of the Lord shines there just as His glory was manifest in Eden. It says that there is no curse in the city just as there was no curse in Eden. Inside the city are the righteous and the kings of the earth bring their glory into the city but outside the city are the unrighteous, murderers, sorcerers, whoremongers, liars. This is what Eden was like, the righteous inside minister to the unrighteous outside.

Is this a real city? No. This is a description of the Bride of Christ which is the church. We are the city of God, the Body of Christ, a holy nation, the tabernacle of God. It is within us as a people that the Lord will manifest His presence and His power for the healing of the nations to teach them the ways of God. Nations and kings will come into this spreading Kingdom of God. This was Adam’s calling in Eden and this is our calling restored to us in Christ.

But there is a little secret about this New Jerusalem that is found in its measurements.

Revelations tells us that the city was foursquare with 12,000 furlongs on a side in length. For one of John’s readers during the time of the Roman Empire if he read that this great city was 12,000 furlongs on a side and with 660 feet to a furlong (see wolframalpha.com) that would mean a city about 1500 miles on four sides. A square city of that size in Roman days would cover all the great cities of the empire. So in John’s day his readers would get a very clear message; the city of God, the ekklesia, the Bride of Christ would grow to envelope the entire Roman Empire.

But it has an interesting similar message for us today. If you take 12,000 furlongs times 660 feet you get a distance of 7,920,000 feet. But if you take the average diameter of the earth from north to south and east to west (the earth bulges a bit at its equator) you get a distance in miles of 7,920,000. What does that tell you? It tells me the same thing it told a reader in the time of the Roman Empire. The kingdom of God is going to grow and grow till it fills the earth as all the prophets proclaimed.

But it also tells me more than what an ancient reader would have even imagined. If the city that John describes is as tall as it is high then it must be also 1500 miles high. Can you see why this is not an actual physical city. A hundred miles high and you are already in space. But it does tell me where the Lord’s agenda for His Church reaches...into space! And that agrees with Psalm 8. The Psalmist tells us to look to the heavens and then tells us all the handiwork of God and that includes all things in the heavens are to be brought under our dominion. Only in the last 100 years as telescopes have reached into the farthest corners of the universe have we understood the incredible magnitude of God’s creation. Hundreds of millions of stars in our galaxy, each with planets and then billions of galaxies throughout space! And it all belongs to us and we are to take dominion over all that!

The Restoration Agenda

Lets go through the great tasks ahead of us as we fulfill the restoration of Eden on earth.

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Restoration of Relationship

First and foremost is the restoration of our relationship with the Lord. We have been brought back into fellowship with Him and back into His family through the death of Jesus Christ.

Restoration of His Word

Jesus Christ is the Word of God. When we minister Him to the world we are ministering His Word to the world. It is this Tree of Life that we have access to and it is these “leaves and fruits” of this tree that we minister “for the healing of the nations” as Revelations puts it. But something happened to this Word after the departure of the Apostles and early church fathers. The Word was lost. The church was taken over by an antichrist spirit that apostatized it into the apostate Roman Catholic church. The way of salvation was lost, the very Bible the Word of God was lost and anybody that had the courage to preach that word was tortured and burnt by this antichrist entity. Anybody who would actually translate the word into common language for people to understand was burnt at the stake. This desperate onslaught of Satan against the church and its mission to heal the nations almost succeeded.

From 1517 with the emergence of Martin Luther and the Reformation the process of restoration of the Word began. During the centuries that followed the process of restoration was continued.

The Lutherans restored to us the key to salvation; the just shall live by faith and the primacy of scripture.

The Anabaptists restored to us believers baptism and the home church.

The Calvinists restored to us the doctrines of the depravity of man, the sovereignty of God and the election of the saints.

The Presbyterians restored to us the leadership of elders in the church.

The Puritans restored to us holiness and the separation of the church from state and the world.

The Congregationalists restored to us the primacy and independence of the local church.

The Wesleyans restored to us hymns, mass evangelism and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit.

The English evangelical social activists restored to us

the power of the Gospel to change our society with abolition of slavery, building societies for housing for workers, insurance for widows, Sunday Schools for educating children, pensions for retired workers, Bible Societies and missions into the British Empire.

The Baptists restored to us revival meetings, adult baptism and missions.

Restoration of Power

From the beginning of the 20th Century with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the Azusa Street revival which spread all over the world a new phenomenon was taking place. Previously the Lord was restoring doctrine to the church, now He began restoring the gifts and power of the Spirit to the church.

The first most dramatic gift of the Spirit that was restored was speaking in tongues. This had a dramatic effect in the lives of believers as it helped to open their spirits to deeper levels of worship and made them more sensitive to the voice of the Lord.

This was soon followed by the power gifts of healing, faith and the working of miracles. God raised up men like John G. Lake who came to South Africa with a wonderful gift of healing that drew crowds to hear the gospel and many were saved, healed and delivered. Smith Wigglesworth and many other men of faith restored the gifts of healing to the church.

Restoration of the Five Fold Ministry

From the 1950's we saw a dramatic restoration in the five fold leadership ministry of the Apostles, Prophets, Pastors, Teachers and Evangelists. The first were the great evangelists like Billy Graham and Oral Roberts filling tents and stadiums all over the world reaching millions for the Kingdom. At the same time a new level of prophets were being raised with miraculous words of knowledge, discerning of spirits and gifts of prophecy. Men like William Branham had enormous impact on the church with their prophet's anointing. When William Branham came to South Africa in 1951 it shook the entire nation with the miracles that were very evident in each meeting. At the great Durban gathering 40,000 people came to Christ in salvation. The charismatic movement in South Africa was greatly advanced from that time on. This was repeated in many nations of the world as

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God raised up a great prophetic movement.

During the 60's and 70's saw a great emerging of teaching ministries. Thousands gathered in halls and stadiums to hear men teach the word. I remember in the 1970's attending a Bill Gothard seminar with 10,000 other people for a week of intensive teaching.

During the 1970's and 1980's you have the rise of new Apostolic ministries, men who pioneered new works of God in amazing creative ways. Loren Cunningham raised up thousands of young people in YWAM to go into all the world. Thousands of YWAM'ers in turn started many thousands of new churches and ministry outreaches. Others launched new ministries in the media through satellite TV; others started Christian schools and universities.

What the Lord was doing in the emergence of these new leadership structures was to restore to us the anointing for leadership that came not because of education or because you are the president of an organization, but because you have a calling and an anointing for the job. The mold of denominational structures was breaking down and the Lord was doing a new thing in His church.

Restoration of Worship

With the restoration of doctrine, gifts of the spirit and true leadership in the church, it allowed for new levels of praise and worship to begin manifesting itself in our churches. We moved beyond three hymns, the offering and the sermon to allowing the Holy Spirit to take control of our gatherings and letting people move in deeper levels of worship. New music centered on praise and worship has been emerging in the church over the last twenty years. This has an impact not only in our charismatic churches but has greatly impacted all evangelical churches. Here in South Africa I can't even recognize some of our Dutch Reformed Churches anymore. Many have introduced new levels of praise and worship in their meetings and the people have responded by the thousands.

But have we come to the end of the process of restoration? For many evangelicals the answer is yes. The Lord can now come and rapture us out of here. But I say no. All that has happened until now is that the Lord has been raising His army and equipping

them and training them. There is still the work ahead of "healing the nations", there is still the great task of destroying all the works of Satan and crushing his head; there is still the work of taking dominion over all the works of His hands; there is still a greater manifestation of His glory in the church coming.

Restoration of Glory

Isaiah gives us a further glimpse into the world ahead. He prophesies that as we establish the Kingdom there are going to come changes in our physical bodies as well. We are not meant to just live for 70-80 years on this earth and then still to be subject to sicknesses and diseases. Isaiah 65:17-25 the Lord says... "Behold I create a new heavens and a new earth..." where have you heard that before? What is going to happen in this new world that is coming?

Verse 20 says that a child will die at 100 years, meaning that the Lord will restore to us the long lives of Eden; He says in verse 21-22 we will build and inhabit, we will each have productive work and enjoy it and "for as the days of a tree are the days of my people and my elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands, they shall not labour in vain." Folks this is for our day and not some Millennium in the future. We can move into Kingdom abundance if we start the great move out of the world system and get on with God's Kingdom agenda. We have been equipped for this great task, we have been preceded by the great men of God of ages past who have restored to us all the teaching that we need, all the revelation from the Word that we need. The Lord has been pouring out greater outpourings of His spirit with each passing decade. We are now ready

for the greatest breakthrough ever, the restoration of all things that all the prophets spoke about that the Lord has been working for these last thousands of years. The world no longer has answers to the crises coming, we have the answers! B

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

The purpose of the book of Revelations is not to outline the judgment of the world but the "apokalypsis" of Jesus Christ. The word means revelation, the purpose of God from ages past since Eden is to reveal Himself to the world. That is how

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the Bible begins and that is how it ends. God dwells with man and all eyes will see Him. But where does He dwell that men may see Him? In His Bride, who is His temple who is His image on this earth. The restoration of glory in the church will mean a greater revelation of Jesus Christ to the world through us.

That is how the world will come into the Kingdom, when they see Jesus manifest in glory in His church (John 17:21). The prophets all told us that the glory of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters cover the seas! Every knee will eventually bow and every tongue will eventually confess that Jesus is Lord!

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Principle 6: The Dominion Mandate

INTRODUCTION

The vast majority of the evangelical writers and preachers miss the entire point of God's work here on earth through His church. They place the entire emphasis of the Gospel on getting people into heaven (and surely this is of critical importance) but forget that it is the plan of God to bring heaven to earth. That is how Genesis begins and that is how Revelations ends.

I will call this the "Dominion Mandate". It is found in Genesis 1:26-28: The Lord made mankind in His own image and gave them a command..."Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it and have dominion..."

In our previous principles of the Kingdom I have shown that the church is God's instrument of dominion, we have power over all the power of the enemy, this is the Kingdom age where Jesus is now Lord...but here is the crucial principle to understand: Jesus is the second Adam who came to restore to us everything we lost when the first Adam sinned...we are now in the time of the restoration of power and authority so that we can get on with the job for which God created man...which is to be fruitful, fill the earth and subdue the earth and take dominion over all the works of God's handiwork! We are not leaving here in the Rapture until we have completed our Dominion Mandate!

Our job as the church is firstly the salvation of souls...so that we can get on with our original calling: Fulfilling our Dominion Mandate.

What I am going to write now is going to be very radical especially for those who have been taught prophecy interpretation by Dispensationalists. The vast majority of evangelicals believe that the world will shortly end, that most of mankind will be lost, that God has a prophetic timeline of about 7000 years and then basically it's over and after that it is heaven. So let me give you some scriptures that will indicate in fact the vast extent of the Lord's Dominion Mandate that lies ahead for all of us to participate in.

The Earth and the Cosmos are forever and will not be destroyed...

There are a lot of what I would call apocalyptic scriptures in the Bible that many people believe point to the destruction of the earth and the heavens. And from these misinterpretations many evangelicals believe that God is going to destroy the heavens and the earth. This is not going to happen. The Lord has an eternal plan for His creation and He created it good and blessed it. Lets look at a couple of these apocalyptic scriptures and their real meaning:

Isaiah 34:4. "All the stars of heaven will be dissolved and the sky rolled up like a scroll..." No this is not a prophecy of the end of the universe but instead it is a

prophecy of the coming destruction of Edom in the late 6th Century BC.

Ezekiel 32:7 "I will cover the heavens and darken their stars; I will cover the sun with a cloud...all the shining lights of heaven I will darken over you." No the stars are not going to stop shining, instead the Lord is prophesying to the Pharaoh of Egypt of his coming fall in mid-6th Century BC.

Many other examples can be given. But here is what the Word of God tells us of the earth:

"Generations come and generations go but the earth endures forever (Eccl. 1:4). The Psalmist tells us that the earth is established forever (Psalm 78:69) and the earth and its foundations will never be removed (Psalm 104:5, Psalm 93:1, 96:10, 119:90). But not just the earth but also the sun and the moon and the whole cosmos are forever (Psalm 89:36-37; Psalm 148:4,6). And not just in the Old Testament but Paul also believed the world was without end... "...from the beginning of the world...throughout all ages, world without end. Amen" (Ephesians 3:9,21).

But this world is blessed and not cursed as many people have been taught..."Never again will I (God) curse the ground because of man." (Genesis 8:21).

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But what is God's purpose with the earth and the cosmos?

The earth has a purpose. The Lord told mankind to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth with life! But now here is the amazing thing...in Isaiah we are given a command by the Lord that not only the earth but the whole cosmos must be filled with life.

Isaiah 45:18 the Lord says the following: *"For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens, God himself that formed the earth and made it; he established it, he created it not in vain he formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord and there is none else."*

The Lord created the earth and the heavens and He made them to be inhabited! In the Hebrew the word "vain" is "to'hoo" meaning "to lie waste, desolate" (Strong's H8414). The Lord made the earth to be inhabited and He made the heavens to be inhabited. It is only in the last century with modern telescopes that we have been able to see the extent of the heavens that the Lord has made. Our galaxy the Milky Way consists of over 400 billion stars, each of those with planets. Billions of those planets can be inhabited. But astronomers have also discovered over 14,500 billion galaxies each with billions of stars and planets! All are meant by the Lord to be inhabited!

But that is not all. Scientists have discovered that the universe is expanding endlessly. They once thought that it would expand and then contract. But it is not contracting. In fact the expansion is speeding up and as it expands more star clusters and galaxies are being formed all the time.

The Abrahamic Covenant

Now we can also see why the covenant that the Lord made with Abraham was not an exaggeration. The Lord told Abraham "That blessing I will bless thee and multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven and as the sand which is upon the sea shore..." (Gen. 22:17). This is not an exaggeration! The Lord intends literally to fulfill this promise. Abraham's seed will multiply into uncounted billions and trillions. Why? Because the Lord loves children. He is making a family. This earth and the vast cosmos is the Lord's womb from which trillions of children are to come

into existence. The issue is not Abraham's family...the issue is this is the Lord's family.

The Lord has provided a universe of unlimited abundance for us. There is an unlimited amount of energy, minerals, plants and animals, soils and nutrients for us to fulfill His command to be fruitful and multiply. There are no limits to growth in God's Kingdom. There are no shortages of resources in God's universe. He simply makes more.

How long do we have to fulfill our Dominion Mandate?

One of the false impressions made by prophecy books and sermons is that it is all about to end, the world is finished, the end is upon us. God has given us a few thousand years for mankind on earth and then He finishes it all. But this is not what scripture tells us.

Deut. 7:9. "Know therefore that the Lord thy God he is God the faithful God which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations."

Ex.34:7 *"keeping lovingkindness for thousands of generations, forgiving iniquity and transgressions and sin...visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and upon the children's children upon the third and fourth generation."*

That is right. This is not an exaggeration. The Lord has plans spanning for thousands of generations. Because it will take thousands of generations for us to fulfill our Dominion Mandate.

But in addition to thousands of generations that are needed to fulfill the Lord's commandment we are also going to be given extended life spans. It is not part of the Lord's plan for the future that people only live for about 70 years. There is a reason the Lord wanted Adam to live for thousands of years...the universe is an incredibly big place and it takes time to travel and colonize space! The Lord is going to restore long life. In Isaiah 65:20, *"there shall be no more thence an infant of days or an old man that has not filled his days; for the child shall die a hundred years old..."*

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Subdue the earth...

After the Lord made the earth and declared it to be good he made Adam and told him to “subdue it”. That means that the Lord is not going to do everything for us. We have to do our part and it requires work. Work was part of the command to Adam from the beginning. Work is not a curse, it is a blessing. But the Lord is going to restore to us productive work that we can enjoy what we produce without others stealing our labour.

Again Isaiah 65:22-23 says, *“they shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for as the days of a tree shall the days of my people and my chosen shall long enjoy the works of their hands. They shall not labour in vain nor bring forth for calamity for they are the seed of the blessed of Jehovah and their offspring with them.”*

But subduing the earth means understanding the way that the Lord made the earth. That requires understanding science and technology to unlock the hidden wealth of the Lord’s creation. And it also means protecting the earth and all of God’s creation. We are not to pollute the earth or destroy the wonderful animals the Lord placed here on the earth and their natural habitats. There is room for all to live and thrive.

Who is to take dominion of the earth?

Psalm 8:3-6 says, “When I consider thy heavens the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained; What is man that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man that thou visitest him? For thou has made him but little lower than the angels and crowned him with glory and honor. Thou makest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands, thou hast put all things under his feet.”

Now do what the Psalmist says. Consider the incredible works of God that we have observed with our telescopes. Look at the billions of galaxies out there. Now consider this: God has given all that for us to have dominion over! The universe belongs to us. It does not belong to some ET’s or interplanetary UFO inhabitants or to Satan or to the angels...it all belongs to us and our children.

But we must go out there and subdue it. The angels are not going to do it nor is the Lord going to do it. We have to do it. We have been made in God’s image. We have been crowned with glory and honor. Adam had direct access to the presence of the Lord. He had fellowship with God. The Lord was very interested to see what Adam would call the various things He had made. He expected Adam to explore and discover. We have been fully endowed by the Lord to fulfill our Godly Dominion Mandate.

The Gospel and the Dominion Mandate

For thousands of years of human history mankind did not subdue the earth...the earth subdued mankind. People lived in wretched poverty. The earth had potential abundance to provide support, food, comfort and shelter for billions of people but instead mankind lived in abject poverty.

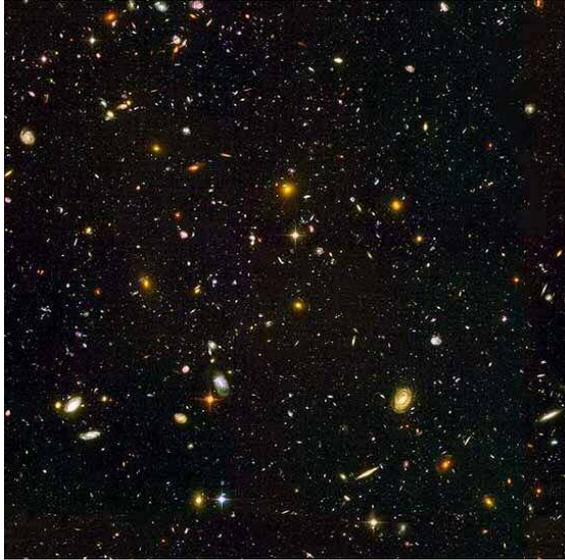
Then came the Reformation of 1517 when the Bible was translated into the common language of the people and the Reformation preachers like Luther and Calvin began to preach the Word of God to the common people. This preaching starting in Europe brought freedom to the masses from the deprivations of the feudalism that held them in bondage. The power of kings and priests were broken, the gospel freed people to study the work of God around them and the process of subduing the earth could begin. What followed was the scientific revolution and with it the Industrial Revolution. Soon wealth was being produced in enormous quantities, medical breakthroughs brought about healing for the masses. This was the effect of the gospel on the world.

Mankind cannot fulfill his Dominion Mandate as a sinner. He must repent, be born again and return to the image of God in which he was created. It is only with the mind of Christ that we can understand the works of God. It is only with the mind of Christ that we can get the mind of God for how to take dominion over all the works of God’s hand. Sinful man in his arrogance thinks he can do this without God. He thinks he can take dominion over God’s creation without the mind of the creator. He will fail. All the technology of man will not save him from his greed. He will destroy his world by his greed and technology will not save him.

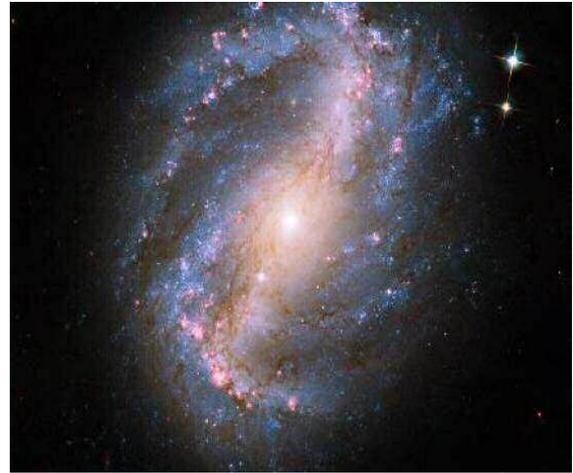
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Billions of galaxies in the universe...



Billions of stars and planets in each galaxy...



Behold the heavens...consider the works of God's hands. He has made all this not in vain...He made them to be inhabited and bring forth seed to Abraham like the stars of heaven and the sands of the seas in number. Our Dominion Mandate: Be fruitful, multiply and fill the galaxies and subdue the universe!

History will prove the Word of God true...in the end it is the meek who will inherit not only the earth but all the works of God's hands, the entire universe. It

will be those who have taken on the image of God that will be given all the works of God's hands.

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INTRODUCTION

There is enormous confusion in the church over the issue of the Second Coming of Christ. For those who want to move in the Kingdom Vision it is important to know: When does the Kingdom come? When does Jesus return in the clouds? When does the Rapture take place? When is the resurrection of the dead? These issues are actually quite easy to understand and see in scripture when I show you the following truth: The return of the Lord is Three-Fold!

- 1) Jesus has come in the clouds of Judgment as He promised His generation (70AD)
- 2) Jesus is coming through the ages to be manifest in His saints (the Parousia)
- 3) Jesus will come at the Consumation which we call the Second Coming when the resurrection of the dead and the rapture of the living church takes place.

This is like our three-fold salvation process: We have been saved (Justification), we are being saved (Sanctification), we shall be saved (Glorification).
(Line Break Box)

Before His crucifixion Jesus told His disciples that He was going away but that He would return, *"I go to prepare a place for you and if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself that where I am you may be also"* (John 14:3). What an incredible statement, I am going to be killed but I am coming back! This has been the clarion call of the church through the ages, Jesus is coming back to take us with Him! Death is not the end, there is a resurrection, there is a place prepared for us in heaven. The death, the resurrection and the return of Jesus Christ is the bedrock of our faith as Christians. But how Christ returns and when Christ returns have caused much debate among us.

The long held view of the church since the time of the Reformation is that there is just one more return of Christ called the Second Advent or the Second Coming of Christ. This is the time that the dead will rise in the resurrection and this is the time that those who are still alive on the earth will be changed in the twinkling of an eye and be caught up into heaven to meet Christ in the air. The Kingdom of God started on earth with Christ's first coming and resurrection and it will finish with His Second Coming in triumph.

But over the last hundred years within the evangelical and charismatic movements there has prevailed another view first popularized by the Brethren movement in the 1800's and the Scofield Bible early in the 1900's. It said basically this: there is first a secret coming of Christ for His saints called the rapture which also includes a resurrection of the saints, then there is a 7 year tribulation period with the appearance of the Antichrist after which there is

another coming of Christ which is followed by a thousand year reign of Christ on the earth and then after that there is another resurrection of the dead. So according to this view there are still two more comings of Christ and still two more resurrections and the Kingdom of God has not yet come and will only come some time in the future.

I used to hold the second view but after much study of the Word came to the first view along with such men of God as Oswald J. Smith and Pat Robertson (CBN, The 700 Club) who had this to say:

"We might go through all the writers of the New Testament and we would fail to discover any indication of the so-called two stages of our Lord's coming...there is no verse in the Bible that even mentions it." (Oswald Smith, *Tribulation or Rapture-Which?* P.10.)

"I do not find in the Bible the teaching that Christians will be raptured prior to the tribulation...The Bible teaches two comings of Jesus- one His birth; the second, his coming again in triumph. There is no third coming for a secret rapture." (Pat Robertson, *Answers to 200 of Life's Most Probing Questions*. P.155.156)

This is no longer just a matter for idle speculation or what Paul referred to as "doubtful disputations". Understanding the time we live in is crucial for preparing for what is coming. If you are in a church fellowship that believes we are getting taken out of here before things get bad and that the Kingdom of

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Christ is still to come, then you are not ready for what is lying ahead. You are probably getting Sunday morning entertainment instead of getting trained and prepared as a Kingdom warrior for the fight ahead.

End Times Confusion

There is a reason for this confusion about the coming of the Lord and I will explain it with an illustration from the ancient Greeks. The ancients could not understand the movements of the five planets that they could see with the naked eye. The Greeks called them “planets” which means “wanderers” because they seemed to move randomly in the sky. Elaborate schemes were worked out to try and predict their movements. All because of one cardinal error. They thought the stars, moon, sun and planets revolved around the earth. When Copernicus discovered that in fact the earth and planets revolved around the sun it became very easy to work out the movements of the planets.

We have a similar problem today with popular dispensational prophecy preaching. We have an elaborate system of several comings of Christ and several resurrections, interspersed with a rapture, a 7 year Great Tribulation and the Millennium reign of Christ. It might look pretty on elaborate charts to try to explain everything but in actual fact it only adds to the confusion of the believers.

So let’s put the sun at the center of this confusion and see how the planets line up. Here is the essential fact that will help put everything in its proper order for you to understand scripture:

The Kingdom of God began on earth when Jesus rose from the dead and all power in heaven and earth was given unto Him. He is now Lord over all and He will continue to rule seated at the right of the Father until all His enemies are made His footstool. The last enemy to be conquered is death. He then returns at the last trumpet, with the shout of the Archangel and with all His holy angels to gather His saints and raise the dead.

Simple enough? Now let’s look at some scriptures to see how they flow with this simple explanation for the

Kingdom and the Second Coming of Christ. There are two sections of scripture that are always quoted when presenting the idea of the Rapture. 1 Cor. 15 and 1 Thes.4. Let’s have a closer look at them and see if we are saying correctly what Paul was trying to explain to his Greek Christian audience. For a moment now just put away all your prophecy books and let the Apostle Paul teach you the simple truth of the Rapture and Second Coming of Christ.

Paul on the Rapture and Second Coming

Put yourself in Paul’s place for a moment. His only scripture to refer to was what we call the Old Testament. So anything he is teaching must be grounded in the scriptures and prophecies of the Old Testament. And now he must also explain these scriptures to his Greek converts in Corinth and Thessalonica.

For Greeks of that day what Paul was presenting was totally new and unknown. They had no conception of history having an ending, or of history actually having a purpose or that there is such a thing as a resurrection from the dead with new spiritual bodies that were tangible. The Greeks had an idea of life after death but it was a vague idea of ghostly wisps they called “shades” living in “Hades” the place of departed spirits. For them also daily life had not changed for hundreds of years. History just meandered in purposeless circles with nothing really changing. Now read 1 Cor. 15 and begin to see how Paul is teaching them.

For the first 22 verses he is defending the idea that there is such a thing as the resurrection of the dead. Because in verse 12 he says, “. . .how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead.” Some of these Greek converts found this whole idea of a resurrection from the dead to be very alien to them. So for the first 22 verses he goes into an extensive explanation of why it is necessary to our faith that we believe Christ rose from the dead.

But then from verse 23 he starts to explain how this all fits into God’s plan for the ages. Here we have Paul teaching eschatology to his disciples and it is important for us to see how simple he makes it. No two more comings of Christ, no two more resurrections, no 7 year Great Tribulation, no 1000 year Millennium.

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From verse 23 he begins to explain the order of how and when the resurrection and the Second Coming takes place:

“But every man in his own order; Christ the firstfruits, afterwards they that are Christ’s at his coming. Then comes the end when he shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.” (1 Cor. 15:23-26)

Now let’s unpack these very important verses. Firstly you must understand that Paul is grounding his teaching in the scripture, this was not just his imagination. Psalm 110:1 says “The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool.”

Paul is describing three separate events in logical order which consist of the first resurrection when Christ rose from the dead, then He ascended into heaven and started His rule to put down all authorities and powers and then when He is finished He returns and resurrects the dead.

The First...

“Christ the firstfruits”. This was the first resurrection when Jesus rose from the dead and He cleared out paradise and took the Old Testament saints into heaven. Math. 27:52-53 confirms this and says, *“and the graves were opened and many of the bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection and went into the holy city and appeared unto many.”*

The Second...

The reign of Christ: which we are now in where Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Father after His resurrection and conquering all His enemies through His mighty Church to whom He has given power to tread on Satan and his demons and to destroy all the works of the enemy. Please note that He is not said to be ruling from an earthly Jerusalem for a thousand years one day in the future. His reign began with His first resurrection and He is now ruling from the throne of God!

The Third...

“Then comes the end”, when He has put all His enemies under His feet the end comes and He returns triumphant, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords and He comes to fetch us and conquers the last enemy death by raising the dead from the grave at His Second Coming. He then presents the Kingdom to the Father.

Does this line up with our foundation truth I told you to build your eschatology on? Yes it does. But what about the Rapture? Paul explains it further in this same chapter how “we shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye”.

Paul’s Rapture Explanation

In verse 35 he notes a further question some of the Corinthians have, *“and some will say, how are the dead raised up and with what body do they come?”* Paul now goes into a lengthy explanation from verses 36-49 explaining that there are earthly bodies and there are heavenly bodies and that the Lord will give us real glorious heavenly bodies in the resurrection. He concludes his arguments with this statement in verse 50, *“for flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.”*

But now comes an obvious objection, but before his Greek believers can make this objection Paul answers the objection from verse 51. The unstated objection is this: Ok Paul, I accept what you say that the dead will be raised at the Second Coming of Christ and that they will be given new glorious heavenly bodies to enter heaven but not everyone will be dead when Christ returns, there will still be many multitudes alive on earth when He returns, all living in earthly corrupt bodies; how are they to enter heaven with their mortal bodies without dying first?

And this is how Paul answers in verses 51-52, *“Behold I show you a mystery, we shall not all sleep (we are not all going to die), but we shall all be changed (we are all going to get heavenly bodies even if we have not died yet). In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump. For the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed (those not dead will be changed into heavenly bodies).”*

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Can you see that Paul is describing the rapture here. Everyone actually agrees this is a description of the rapture. So when does the rapture take place according to Paul? It takes place at the Second Coming of Christ when Christ raises the dead and those alive on the earth are changed in the twinkling of an eye. And when does the Second Coming occur? Paul says after Christ has reigned and put down all powers and all authorities, then comes the end. So does the rapture come before Christ begins His reign? No, not according to Paul, it happens “at the end” when Christ has finished conquering all His enemies.

The Thessalonian Teaching

Now let’s look at that other famous rapture scripture of 1 Thes. 4:13-17 and see if it agrees with what we have discovered from Corinthians.

“For I would not have you to be ignorant brethren concerning those who are asleep (dead) that you sorrow not, even as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord that we which are alive and 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.”

Can you see that there is no difference here between what Paul says to the Thessalonians and what he said to the Corinthian believers. Christ returns, the dead are raised and those not yet dead but that are alive on the earth when He returns are also transformed with the dead into heavenly bodies and meet the Lord in the air. The only difference between the two is that with the Corinthian explanation he described **WHEN** the Second Coming was to be. He did not do that with the Thessalonians. And when was Christ to come again? After He has reigned in heaven putting down all His enemies, the last enemy is death, then comes the end when He comes back to take His saints, raise the dead and He hands the Kingdom over to the Father. There is no resurrection, rapture or Second Coming before the “Millenium”, it occurs after the reign of Christ when He is victorious over all His enemies.

But in 2 Thes. 2 Paul does give us another interesting clue as to when the coming of the Lord is going to happen. He says something very important must happen before the coming of the Lord.

“Now we beseech you brethren by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (the Second Coming) and our gathering together unto him (the rapture), that you be not soon shaken in mind or be troubled neither by spirit nor by word neither by letter as from us that the day of Christ is at hand” (verses 1-2)...Here is what Paul is saying; don’t think that the rapture and the Second Coming is at any moment. Why?

Someone had written to the Thessalonians claiming to be Paul and scaring them saying the end was at hand, Christ is coming soon. This of course is a common occurrence today when every pulpit and TV program and prophecy book coming out saying, “it’s the end times Jesus is coming” because all the signs have been fulfilled. Paul had to calm them down by saying the following in verse 3:

“Let no man deceive you by any means (lots of deception still going on today with continuous false prophecies of the end times), for that day shall not come (the rapture and Second Coming of Christ) except there come a falling away first and that man of sin be revealed the son of perdition.” (the Antichrist).

Paul says here, don’t worry the rapture and Second Coming of Christ does not take place until there is first coming a great falling away and “the Antichrist” or “man of sin” is revealed. But every popular prophecy book that you read on the Rapture and the end times will tell you the exact opposite of what Paul just said to the Thessalonians. They all teach, first the rapture to take us out of here and then comes the Antichrist and the Great Tribulation. Why? So we can escape the suffering to come. People love this kind of deception because who wants to hear bad news? But Paul is upfront about the bad news, he says there is coming a great falling away of Christians because of the deceptions and the sufferings. He warned us that we are in a fight with Satan and his followers and that with Christ as our head, we the Church, will destroy all the works of the enemy and then comes the end when Jesus returns triumphant. But people don’t want to hear about the battles ahead, they want to hear about an easy quick escape out of here and let the Jews tackle the Antichrist.

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The Parousia of the Lord

There is another coming of the Lord which we must not forget in the midst of all our studies on prophecy and signs of the times. In the New Testament the Greek word “parousia” is also used for the “coming” of the Lord. This word in New Testament times was used to denote “presence” or “arrival” or “presence after absence”. The “parousia” of the Lord is His promise to every believer “I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you.” (John 14:18). Jesus promised all of His disciples through all the ages, “behold I am with you even to the end of the world.” (Math. 28:20). The coming of the Lord for us therefore is not just an apocalyptic event at the end of time but a continuous present reality that the Lord has truly come to each of us. He is with us, we are not alone. This is the coming of the Lord in His saints and not just for his saints. For Paul says that the Lord is coming to be glorified in his saints. We are to walk daily in His presence, His “parousia”. When two or three of us gather together He is in our midst.

This concept of the coming of the Lord in His saints and His manifested presence now with us is crucially important for us in the battles ahead. Some would tell you that we are not able to defeat Satan in this world and that we must leave it till Jesus comes with His angels. But let me show you the power of this “parousia” in 2 Thes. 2:8:

“And then shall that wicked one be revealed whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.” I am going to give you the real Greek words for “brightness” and “coming” and then see how it reads. “Brightness” is translated from the Greek word “epiphania” which means “manifestation” and of course “coming” is translated from “parousia”. So here is a better translation: The Lord is going to destroy Satan through “the manifestation of His presence”. Where is He going to manifest His presence? In His people. Who is going to destroy Satan? The Church of Jesus Christ manifesting the presence of Christ in this world. This manifestation of God’s presence is only going to increase in His people and with that will mean an increase in our ability to destroy the works of Satan. This is our calling, this is our task and when we have finished that task, then the end will come. All other signs of “the end times” are deception that Paul warned you against.

So...

If Jesus prayed in John 17:15, “I pray not that thou takest them out of the world...” do you really think we are going to get taken out of this world? If Jesus said, “In this world you shall have tribulation” (John 16:33) do you really think you are going to escape tribulation? Many evangelicals are like Thomas who would not believe Jesus rose from the dead until he could touch him; today they will not believe that Jesus is actually now ruling until they see Him physically on a throne in Jerusalem. This is unbelief.

Jesus is now Lord, His Kingdom has come, His Church is triumphant against Satan and all his demons and He will return to resurrect the dead and rapture the living saints when the job is done and not before. Until then we have a job to do...even so come Lord Jesus.

Now let’s line up the other wandering truths and see how they circulate around our essential truth of the Kingdom:

The Millennium: There is no future 1000 year reign of Christ, He is reigning now already. For how long? According to Rev.20 He reigns for “thousands of years” not “a thousand years”, the original Greek word for thousand in Rev.20 is in the plural (“chilioi”) not singular (“chilias”).

The Rapture: It takes place exactly when Paul in 1 Cor.15 says it takes place, at the last trumpet, at the Second Coming, when Jesus returns and the dead are raised to life then those who are on earth who have not yet died will be changed in the twinkling of an eye along with the dead to receive a resurrection body and meet the Lord in the air.

The 7 Year Great Tribulation: There is no 7 year Great Tribulation. It comes from a wrong interpretation of Daniel 9:27 (see Chapter 5).

The End Times: The New Testament writers all believed they were living in “the last days’ or end times. They were right, modern day prophecy writers are wrong. The “last days” meant the last days of the old Jewish Covenant order and it consisted of the generation living from 33 AD to the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in 70 AD.

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The Return of Israel: Yes, according to the prophecies of Ezekiel Israel was to return to their land before the coming of Christ. This happened exactly 390 years after Ezekiel prophesied it to happen in 143 BC when Israel once again became an independent nation. (see Chapter 6)

The Antichrist: Yes the Antichrist is supposed to appear before the Second Coming of Christ but it is not some European leader heading a world government during the Great Tribulation. The Antichrist did appear in the Temple of God (the Church) proclaiming himself to be God and persecuted the saints for 1260 years as Daniel prophesied he would. (see Chapter 9)

Armageddon: There is no Russian invasion of Israel coming. That is a faulty interpretation of Gog and Magog. The invasion of Gog into Israel from the north prophesied by Ezekiel 38 and 39 already happened in 37 BC (see Chapter 7).

The Book of Revelations: Every prophecy book tells you the church gets Raptured out at Rev. 4.

Wrong, in chapter 16 of Revelations in the midst of the judgments on the earth Jesus still had not come for he says in verse 15, “Behold I come as a thief, blessed is he that watches...” and then all the way in Rev. 18 He is telling His people to get out of Babylon.

Jude 1:14 says the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, so surely He must come **for** His saints in the rapture before He can come **with** His saints at the Second Coming? Wrong. The “saints” referred to here mean “holy ones” which are the angels. See Deut. 33:2. Jesus comes with His angels to fetch His saints!

Now lets get into the exciting prophecies the show the remarkable historical fulfillment of:

The Return of Israel

The fulfillment of the 490 years till the Messiah

The Invasion of Gog

The Battle of Armageddon.

The Antichrist

All in the past...all already amazingly fulfilled...