

*“After the Tribulation -  
The Gathering of the Elect”*

*A Study on Matthew  
24:29-31*

*By  
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## **After the Tribulation – The Gathering of the Elect**

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All scripture references are taken from the Authorized Version of the Bible. More commonly known as the King James Version of 1611.

## **Introduction**

In this study, we will examine the words of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 24:29-31, along with the Old Testament prophecies of the gathering of the Jewish nation, the elect, or chosen of God, from the different countries of the world back to the land of Israel. We also will see that fulfillment of various prophecies of the Old Testament clearly show the proper interpretation of Matthew 24:29-31 which will occur, “after the tribulation,” or more commonly called, “The Time of Jacob’s Trouble’ or more commonly called, “The 7-Year Tribulation Period.”

The prophecy of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 24:29-31 is of extreme importance to all those saints who truly want to know the events of the end times as revealed in Matthew, Mark and Luke, and the events as recorded in the Book of Revelation. We will also discuss these prophecies thoroughly and show if, and how, and why, false teachers incorrectly interpret the coming of Christ for the church age saints, commonly called the *rapture*, as revealed in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

## **Method Employed in the Study of Matthew 24:29-31**

To properly develop the correct interpretation of the prophecy of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 24:29-31, I have decided to give a more complete background of material connected with the events of those verses. This background material includes prophecies from the Old Testament prophets that concern the events of Matthew 24:29-31. We will endeavor to interpret the words of the Lord Jesus according to the prophecies of the Old Testament prophets.

In this study, we also will see that the fulfillment of the prophecies concerning the gathering of the remnant of the Jews during the “Time of Jacob’s Trouble,” or more commonly called, “The 7-Year Tribulation Period.” The restoration of the nation of Israel will occur, literally, as it was prophesied by the Old Testament prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Micah, Zephaniah and Zechariah, and as prophesied by the Lord Jesus in Matthew 24:29-31. The restoration of Israel will occur by the gathering of the Jewish remnant near the end of the tribulation period.

All of the promises and covenants given to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the prophecies given by the prophets will be fulfilled to the letter, exactly as they were given.

A correct dividing of the scriptures and serious study of the prophecies of the Old Testament prophets, the covenants, and promises given by God to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will enable the reader to correctly interpret Matthew 24:29-31 and the supportive events in the Book of Revelation. Second Timothy 2:15 states, “Study to shew thyself approved of God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

The apostle Paul further stated, “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” (2 Timothy 3:16-17) Throughout this study, we will, by an adherence to the truth of the scriptures, Old and New Testament, show the doctrine of the prophecy of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 24:29-31.

May this study assure the reader that God is faithful in every word that He has inspired the prophets to write and will fulfill all of the writings of the prophets. If God cannot keep the promises to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and their descendants, because of their unfaithfulness, iniquities, and unbelief, how can we expect God to keep the promises He gave to us? The keeping of the promises and the oaths of God are not contingent on our faithfulness but on the faithfulness of God. God will fulfill every promise, every oath, every covenant, every prophecy, exactly as He said.

The study of the prophecy in the scripture is a tremendous blessing from God. As God is infinite in knowledge and understanding, He reveals to His saints future events in order to give us insight of future events in order to show His Deity, power, and glory. The apostle John stated, "Blessed is that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand." (Revelation 1:3)

In Christ,

*Dr. Maurice Alan Young,*  
*January 26, 2021*

## Chapter 1

### Prophets, Prophecies, Interpretations, Covenants, & Promises

In this study, we will examine the Old Testament prophecies and the New Testament prophecies of the Lord Jesus of the gathering of the Jewish nation, the elect or chosen of God, from the wanderings among the nations of the world back to the nation of Israel. We also will interpret the prophecies of the words of the Lord Jesus as recorded in Matthew 24:29-31, according to the written prophecies of the Old Testament prophets.

#### Revelation & Habakkuk – The Fulfillment of the Old Testament Prophecies

God, through His foreknowledge of all of the events in the history of the human race, gave to the Old Testament prophets, from Joseph of Egypt to the prophet Malachi, the end time events in a mystery form, giving verifiable, tangible and literal events, that can be recognized when the prophecy is fulfilled. Revelation 10:7 reveals that the prophecies of the Old Testament prophets were to be fulfilled in the end times and it was the Apostle John who was given the task to reveal the fulfillment of the prophecies, “But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.”

We will *interpret scripture with scripture* instead of by *private interpretation*. As the apostle Peter stated, “Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scriptures is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” (2 Peter 1:20-21). As with all subjects of the Bible, the context, who is speaking to whom, and when and where the passage it directed to, and any other important detail dealing with the issue in question, must be considered.

The prophet Habakkuk stated that when the fulfillment of a vision came, the vision, or prophecies, of the prophets, most of the time, was fulfilled a very long time in the future and at the time of fulfillment the prophecy would speak for itself. “And the LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.” (Habakkuk 2:2-3) The reason why the prophets were commanded to write their prophecies is that the vast majority of them were for a long, long time in the future.

The Lord stated, “... *but at the end it shall speak ...*” When the vision, or prophecy, or promise, was fulfilled the prophecy would speak for itself. In other words, every word that the prophet stated would be fulfilled and would be known by the results themselves. Every prophecy had certain benchmarks, or a literal fulfillment that could be seen, witnessed, felt, or in some way tangible to observe. The prophecies were to be fulfilled literally, not figuratively, nor symbolic. Thus, the prophecy of the Lord Jesus as recorded in Matthew 24:29-31, will be fulfilled literally as recorded.

The co-authors, R. A. Torrey and A. C. Dixon, of *The Fundamentals – A Testimony To The Truth*, Vol. 1, let it be known, that according to the prophet Habakkuk that a literal fulfillment of the prophecies of the Bible are to be expected, “Moreover, in a literal way has been fulfilled what the prophets David and Isaiah foresaw concerning the last sufferings of Christ — His death on the cross, His drinking of

vinegar, and the casting of lots for His garments. And there are other prophecies which will still be most literally fulfilled, such as the promises made to Israel, the final judgment, and the end of the world. “For,” as Habakkuk says, “the vision is yet for an appointed time, and will not lie. Though it tarry, wait for it; it will surely come”<sup>1</sup> (Habakkuk 2:3).

The fulfillment of most of the prophecies of the prophets, when concerning the end times, and the promises given to Israel, are recorded in the Book of Revelation. Therefore, if a person wants to know the correct interpretation of the Book of Revelation; then he must have a correct knowledge of the Old Testament prophets. This includes the prophecy of Matthew 24:29-31, “Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.”

When the vision, or prophecy, in this study Matthew 24:29-31, or promise, was fulfilled the prophecy would speak for itself with tangible, observable, literal results.

The apostle Paul is very clear that all of the covenants, prophecies, or promises given to the Jews will be fulfilled exactly as given, cannot be given to someone else, nor can they be annulled. Galatians 3:15-18 states, “Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man’s covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise.”

In a direct reference to the children of Abraham, the Jewish race, concerning the covenant, gifts, and promises of God, the apostle Paul stated, “For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.” (Romans 11:29)

The writer of the Book of Hebrews, in the conclusion of the great Hall of Faith chapter, Hebrews 11, further states that the promises given to the Old Testament saints were not as yet fulfilled, “And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise.” (Hebrews 11:39)

Therefore, it is an inescapable conclusion that the promises of God as given in the Old Testament has not been fulfilled up to our time, was not given to the church as taught in *Replacement Theology* and awaits a future fulfillment.

## **Preterism & Replacement Theology**

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<sup>1</sup> R. A. Torrey and A. C. Dixon, eds., *The Fundamentals – A Testimony of the Truth, Vol. 1*, (Rio, WA: The Ages Digital Library, Version 1.0, 2000), p. 66.

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary definition of preterist is “in Christianity: one who holds that the prophecies in the Bible about the end times have already been fulfilled.”<sup>2</sup> The preterists mistakenly teach that the prophecies of the prophets concerning the end times are fulfilled in the church age. As mentioned before, the end time prophecies of the prophets of the Old Testament begin to be fulfilled as written in the Book of Revelation as Revelation 10:7 declares, “But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.”

Originally, the Roman Catholic Church originated the doctrine of a-millennialism and the preterist position on eschatology. The doctrine of a-millennialism is a heretical doctrine. The teaching of *Preterism* is basically the same belief as a-millennialism and Replacement Theology. After the Reformation Period, slowly the doctrine of the Preterism was accepted in Protestant denominations.

Unfortunately, since Marvin Rosenthal wrote “The Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Church,” the doctrine of Replacement Theology and Preterism has gained inroads among the Independent, Fundamental and Baptist ranks.

Replacement Theologians teach that since the Jews in the time Christ rejected the Lord Jesus as the Messiah the believers of Christ inherit the promises, in a spiritual manner, instead of the Jewish race. In times past, Replacement Theology was called *Supersessionism*.

The teaching of Replacement Theology attempts to disannul, or take away the promises, covenants, and prophecies of the Old Testament prophets and either give them to the church “spiritually” or to teach that the prophecies have been already fulfilled in the past, annulled, or abridged due to the unbelief of the Jewish race. To most teachers who hold to the Replacement Theology, or Preterist, the prophecies of the Old Testament prophets are considered *figurative* or *symbolic*.

Philip Mauro was raised as an Episcopalian. After his conversion experience under the preaching of A. B. Simpson, instead of being baptized in the Gospel Tabernacle where he was saved, Mauro, and his wife, decided to be baptized in the Episcopal Church. Mauro’s biographer, Gordon Gardiner, a Charismatic minister, states, “Thus the Mauros were buried with Christ into His death by baptism at the hands of the rector of an Episcopalian Church and raised again to walk in newness of life!”<sup>3</sup>

For a few years, he worked in the fundamentalist ranks, but then he rejected the pre-millennial coming of Christ. Mauro became a bitter enemy of C. I. Scofield and his *Scofield Reference Bible*. Mauro spent the remainder of his days promoting the teaching of Preterism in the Protestant realm of religion. Philip Mauro states,

“But some will ask if later prophets, as Isaiah, Ezekiel or Zechariah, have not foretold the return of the children of Israel to Palestine and by implication prophesied the re-constitution of the nation?”

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<sup>2</sup> “Preterist.” Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, Merriam-Webster, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/preterist>. Accessed 13 Nov. 2020.

<sup>3</sup> Gordon, P. Gardiner, *Champion of the Kingdom – the Story of Philip Mauro*, (Berryville, VA : Hess Publications, 1998), p. 6.

The answer is that the later prophets *could not* contradict the word of the earlier prophets – they all being the mouthpiece of Jehovah – and that, of course, they do not. What has misled some students of the Bible in this regard is the fact that the prophets of latter times, as Isaiah and Jeremiah, predicted the captivity of the Jews *in Babylon* and their return from that captivity (Isa. 6:12, 13; 44:26-28; 45:13; Jer. 30: 3, etc.). Prophecies of that class have all been fulfilled.”<sup>4</sup>

Mauro is mistaken. The later prophets did not contradict the earlier prophets in any prophecy. Mauro cannot correctly divide the prophecies according to the context of the passage nor to whom, and when, the prophecy is directed to.

Without stating which covenants and promises, Mauro further compounds his error by stating that the promises were annulled, or already fulfilled, “Therefore, as regards God’s covenants with that earthly people, “Israel after the flesh,” the matter stands thus: the *conditional* promises thereof were *all nullified* by their breach of covenant; whereas the *unconditional* promises were *all fulfilled* to them, the last detail, through Moses and Joshua; and God, moreover has caused that fact to be plainly recorded, as we shall presently see.”<sup>5</sup>

Concerning the prophecies of the Old Testament prophets being either *figurative* or *symbolic*, Mauro states, “For the language of the prophets is figurative and symbolical.”<sup>6</sup> Concerning Philip Mauro teaching the incorrect spiritualizing of the scriptures as taught by the Roman Catholic Church in the Dark Ages, A. J. Pollock, a contemporary of Mauro, states, “In his striving after novelties, Mr. Mauro would plunge us back into the theology and meaningless spiritualizing process belonging to the dark ages, much of which was carried over into Reformation Days.”<sup>7</sup> A. J. “Algernon James,” Pollock is correct. The teaching of Philip Mauro is the symbolism of the dark ages, by the Roman Catholic Church.

Evidently Philip Mauro, and those adherents of Replacement Theology, and the doctrine of Preterism, does not count Hebrews 11:39 as applicable to the promises to the Jews in the Old Testament. Mauro states, “... all future promises of glory and blessing for Israel and Zion must belong to the true Israel and heavenly Zion.”<sup>8</sup> Thus, Philip Mauro, as also other preterists and Replacement Theology teachers, believes that the prophecies concerning Matthew 24:29-31 cannot be applied to the Jewish race but has to be applied to the church.

Dr. Roland Rasmussen is considered a teacher of *Replacement Theology* within the independent Baptist realm. Dr. Rasmussen is the “voice-over,” or announcer, for the Steven Anderson, “After the Tribulation” video. Dr. Rasmussen and Pastor Anderson have close church, family and doctrinal ties.

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<sup>4</sup> Mauro, Philip, *The Hope of Israel: What Is it?* (Boston, MA: Hamilton Brothers, 1929), p. 84.

<sup>5</sup> Mauro, Philip, *The Hope of Israel: What Is it?* (Boston, MA: Hamilton Brothers, 1929), p. 41.

<sup>6</sup> Mauro, Philip, *The Gospel of the Kingdom*, Accessed on: 15 April 2019. Available from: [https://www.preteristarchive.com/Books/1927\\_mauro\\_gospel-kingdom.html](https://www.preteristarchive.com/Books/1927_mauro_gospel-kingdom.html); Internet.

<sup>7</sup> Pollack, A. J., *A Brief Examination of Mr. Philip Mauro’s Later Views On Dispensational Truth*, (New York: Loizeaux Brothers, Publishers, n.d.), p. 2.

<sup>8</sup> Mauro, Philip, *The Hope of Israel: What Is it?* (Boston, MA: Hamilton Brothers, 1929), p. 17.

Rasmussen says, “The kingdom of God was taken from that Israel, and it was given to the church.”<sup>9</sup> The teaching of Dr. Rasmussen is an accurate description of Replacement Theology.

Contrary to the apostle Paul’s teaching in Galatians 3:15-18, and Romans 11:29, Replacement Theology teaches that the covenants and promises were, “all fulfilled” or “annulled” and “given to the church.” According to Paul’s teaching in Galatians 3:15-18, Romans 11:29, and other passages, the teaching of Replacement Theology is in error.

As with the preterist, the Jehovah’s Witnesses believe that the prophecies of the end times as prophesied by the prophets were fulfilled either in historical times, or symbolically in the church age. As with the preterist, the Jehovah’s Witness does not believe in a literal fulfillment of the prophecies of the Old Testament prophets. In their commentary on Revelation 10:7, “But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets,” the Jehovah’s Witnesses teach that Revelation 10:7 was fulfilled in 1914 and is not future.

The Jehovah’s Witnesses state, “So, then, when and how was this royal “mystery of God” finished? It was finished at the end of the Gentile Times in 1914 and by Jehovah’s beginning this kingdom of Himself by means of his Messiah or Christ, the resurrected, glorified Jesus Christ.”<sup>10</sup>

### **Interpretations belong unto God.**

The reason why we have so many different interpretations of the prophecies of the scriptures is due to the fact that false prophets, and false teachers, cannot accurately interpret the scriptures. The apostle Peter clearly stated that the scriptures are not to be interpreted *privately*, or according to some denominational slant or social issue. The standard to properly interpret the scriptures is by the scriptures themselves. 2 Peter 1:20 and 21 says, “Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scriptures is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”

In Hosea 12:10, we read how God speaks His will through the prophets as a messenger, an example, their visions and their similitudes. “I have also spoken by the prophets, and I have multiplied visions, and used similitudes, by the ministry of the prophets.” The prophets used “similitudes” to show by an example of the real event what would happen literally.

In this study, we will consider three examples of *holy men of God*, using visions, dreams and similitudes, either gave prophecy or interpreted the dreams of other men correctly.

### **The Prophet Ezekiel**

In the Book of Ezekiel, on numerous occasions, God used Ezekiel as a ‘similitude,’ or as an example, on what God would accomplish literally. As one example of many, in Ezekiel 4:1-17 the prophet Ezekiel used a tile to picture a real event to the nation of Israel. The tile was the similitude of the warfare,

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<sup>9</sup> Rasmussen, Roland, Dr., *The Post-Trib, Pre-Wrath, Rapture*, (Canoga Park, CA: The Post-Trib Research Center, 1996), p. 129.

<sup>10</sup> *Then is Finished the Mystery of God*, (Brooklyn, NY: Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, 1969), p. 285.

destruction, famine, of the nation of Israel for their iniquities. The reality was the literal destruction of Jerusalem, and all Israel, through warfare, extreme famine and eventual banishment to Babylon for their iniquities. Thus, God used similitudes, which He explained verbally, what would happen literally in His time period.

### **Joseph the Prophet and Interpreter**

In Genesis 40:1-23, we have the story of Joseph interpreting the dream of the butler and the baker while in prison. The dreams of the butler and the baker were visions, using similitudes, for the prophet, by following the verbal words of God, to properly interpret them as they would literally happen in a future event.

In Genesis 41:1-36, we have another example of how Joseph correctly interpreted the two dreams of Pharaoh and his horrifying dreams. In verse 39 we read, “And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art.” Again, Joseph had the verbal word of God to correctly interpret the dream, of Pharaoh. In our age we have the inspired *written word of God*. Previous to this story we read that the life of Joseph was holy in all aspects and in Genesis 39:2 we read, “And the LORD was with Joseph, and he as a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian.” Joseph, throughout his life, walked with God and exhibited the fruits of the Holy Spirit in his life through the midst of extreme trials, temptations, and difficulties. Joseph was a “holy man of God” who God used for the giving of prophecy and the interpretation of dreams. Joseph interpreted the dreams of the baker and the butler by the verbal word of God through the Holy Spirit and now that we have the written words of the God as given by the Holy Spirit we can correctly interpret prophecy through an adherence of the scriptures. In other words, in order to interpret the prophecy of the Lord Jesus we need to use the Old Testament scriptures.

### **Daniel the Prophet and Interpreter**

Daniel 2:27 & 28 states, “Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, shew unto the king; But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these.” The false prophets and false teachers in the churches, the false gods of the Taoists, the Confucians, and the Buddhists, cannot correctly interpret the scriptures and cannot reveal the end times. Only the correct – and I want to emphasize the word *correct* – dividing of scriptures can give us the correct events of the end time.

As with Joseph, God gave Daniel the proper interpretation, and Daniel gave the honor and glory to God. “Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, shew unto the king; But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these.” (Daniel 2:27-28)

### **Discernment between True Prophets and False Prophets**

The proliferation of false prophets and false teachers are causing confusion in the churches. Therefore, we must consider it imperative to determine from the scriptures how to determine a false teaching from a correct teaching from any prophet or teacher of the Bible.

God told Moses, and thus us, how to determine whether or not a prophet was true or false. Deuteronomy 13:1-5 states, “If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them. Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Ye shall walk after the LORD your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him. And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death; because he hath spoken to turn you away from the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed you of the house of bondage, to thrust thee out of the way which the LORD thy God commanded thee to walk in. So shalt thou put the evil away from the midst of thee.” God would give each prophet certain signs, or within the prophecy, certain tangible, observable, and literal, aspects of the prophecy so that there would be absolutely no doubt that the prophecy was fulfilled. The prophecy may have used similitudes within the prophecy but the fulfillment had literal, observable, and tangible benchmarks.

And, even if the prophet had signs or wonders, if they did not prophecy according to the Law, or the scriptures already written, they were to be considered false. Remember, the Egyptian counselors could do miracles, and the false prophet in Revelation 13:14 uses wonders to deceive the world.

For those teachers who use a symbol, or similitude, or spiritualize the fulfillment of a prophecy, than they erroneously used the visions and prophecies of the prophets. As the church was not known by any of the prophets of the Old Testament, then none of the prophecies can be construed to be given, or for, the saints in the church age, nor taken away from the Jews and given to the saints in the church age.

The oaths, promises, covenants and prophecies given by the Old Testament prophets, are literal and every word, every letter (or tittle), will be fulfilled as written, and to whom the prophecy was written to.

### **The Promises were confirmed by Jesus Christ**

All of the prophecies, covenants, and promises given by God in the Old Testament were confirmed by the Lord Jesus Christ: “Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers.” (Romans 15:8)

The writer of the Book of Hebrews clearly brings out that the promises of God to the saints in the Old Testament have not been fulfilled. “And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise.” (Hebrews 11:39)

Therefore, the promises of the covenants and prophecies in the Old Testament not yet fulfilled, literally, will be fulfilled in the future exactly as foretold by the prophets.

## Chapter 2

### The Wanderings of the Nation of Israel

To properly and to fully interpret the prophecy of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 24:29-31, we need to get the context of whom He is referring to. So, we will read the Lord's concluding remarks in Matthew 23 in order to know the context and the events leading up to the prophecy of Matthew 24:29-31.

In Matthew 23:1-36, the Lord Jesus verbally condemns the hypocrisy and unbelief of the Jews. The Jews were spiritually blinded. The apostle Paul later stated concerning the spiritual blindness of the Jews in rejecting the Lord Jesus as the Messiah, "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." (Romans 11:25)

The Lord then gives the prophecy that the generation He was talking to would suffer complete destruction and that the house of Israel would be desolate. The complete destruction, and desolation, of the capital Jerusalem with the Temple, did occur in that generation in 70 AD by the Roman General Titus.

After His denunciation and prophecy of their destruction, the Lord Jesus states that when the Jews, as a people, repents, and turns to the Lord, than He would gather them together. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." (Matthew 23:37-39) The words of the Lord Jesus – "... Blessed us he that cometh in the name of the Lord ..." – is a direct reference to Psalm 118:26, "Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the LORD: we have blessed you out of the house of the LORD."

Near the end of the 7-Year Tribulation period, according to the apostle Paul in Romans 11:26, the Jewish remnant will repent as a nation, and be saved, "And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob."

#### The Jewish Diaspora of 70 AD

*Diaspora* means exile. In the case of the Jews, it is the dispersion of Jews from the ancestral homeland of Israel and their settlement to other countries. Throughout the history of the Jews, there have been several exiles, or Diaspora's. In the Old Testament, the exile of the Jews to Babylon is the most notable.

In this study, due to the reference of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 23:39 of the desolation of the land of Israel, and the immense scope of the scattering of the Jews among the nations of the whole world, we only will consider the Jewish Diaspora that occurred in 70 AD as having a bearing to prophecies in the Old Testament of the wanderings of the children of Jacob, the Jews, until the gathering together of the Jews as prophesied by the Lord Jesus in Matthew 24:31, "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

The prophet Hosea prophesied that God would leave the house of Israel, the Jewish race, His elect, to their own devices until they acknowledged their offenses and repented. Hosea 5:15 states, “I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offense, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early.” The *affliction* that Hosea prophesies about is the horrors of the 7-Year Tribulation, or, *the time of Jacob’s Trouble*.

The *scattering* of the Jews among the nations of the world for their iniquities, and the rejection of His Son as the Messiah, is called, *The Diaspora*. As recorded in Deuteronomy 4:27, it is obvious that the scattering of Jews in the 70 A. D. Diaspora is far more reaching in scope than the Babylonians Captivity and the other exiles in Jewish history. Deuteronomy 4:27 states, “And the LORD shall scatter you among the nations, and ye shall be left few in number among the heathen, whither the LORD shall lead you.”

Moses further prophesied, “And the LORD shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone.” Deuteronomy 28:64. In the prophesy of the scattering of the Jews in Deuteronomy 4:27 and 28:64, the Jews are scattered among all of the nations of the entire planet for more than 2,000 years. Thus, this scattering, this exile, of the Jews among the nations of the entire world is more intense and longer, than any other Diaspora.

### **The Burning Bush**

Since the days of Moses, God has made the nation of Israel as a *burning bush* – the bush that burns but that the flames do not consume away. “Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb. And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Hear am I.” (Exodus 3:1-4)

The incident of the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace, Daniel 3:1-30, reveals, among other things, that God will keep the nation of Israel, the Jews, from total destruction among the many fiery trials, exiles, anti-Semitism, yea, even *the time of Jacob’s trouble* that the Jewish race experience in this world of woe. Daniel 3:23-25 states, “And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.”

Throughout their history, the Jewish race has passed through many national trials, national exiles, and the horror of the Holocaust, under Adolph Hitler. They will go through the horrific of fiery trials in the 7-Year Tribulation Period. God will bring them through the fiery experience of the 7-Year Tribulation Period and gather them together as a nation restored.

Through the inspiration of God, and in a direct reference to the nation of Israel, the Psalmist wrote this wonderful promise, “For thou, O God, hast proved us: thou hast tried us, as silver is tried. Thou broughtest us into the net; thou laidst affliction upon our loins. Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water: but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place.” (Psalm 66:10-12)

## Chapter 3

### The Time of Jacob's Trouble

The prophet Jeremiah prophesied of the time when God would save the house of Jacob, the physical descendants of Jacob, the Jews, out of the captivity of wandering throughout the nations of the world after their scattering in 70 AD, through great tribulation, or travail, as Jeremiah states, and assemble them in the nation of Israel.

“The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD God of Israel, saying, Write thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in a book. For, lo, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith the LORD: and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it. ... Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it. For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off they neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him: but they shall serve the LORD their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them.” (Jeremiah 30:1-3 and 7-9)

#### Daniel's Seventieth Week

The catastrophic events of the 7-Seals, the 7-Trumpets, the 7-vials, and the three Woes, as revealed by the apostle John in Revelation 6:1 to 19:11, is commonly and aptly called “The 7-Year Tribulation Period.”

In Daniel 9:20-27, the angel Gabriel appeared to Daniel. Within that vision, the angel Gabriel gives the reasons for the seventy weeks. In a direct reference to Daniel's people, the Jewish race, in Daniel 9:24 we read, “Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.”

Afterward, in Daniel 9:25-27, the angel Gabriel explained how the 70 weeks would occur. The seventy weeks are comprised of 7 years; every year is counted as one week, there is an interval between the 69<sup>th</sup> and the 70<sup>th</sup> week of years. The 69<sup>th</sup> week of years ended at the sacrifice for sins of the Messiah, the Lord Jesus, on the cross of Calvary and the last week of the seven years is the 7-Year Tribulation Period that commences at the start of the reign of the anti-Christ as written in Revelation 7:1.

Therefore, the last of the seventy years of weeks, the 70<sup>th</sup> week, is referred to as, “The 7-Year Tribulation Period.”

The “7-Year Tribulation Period” is the time when the anti-Christ rules the world. As previously mentioned and discussed, in Jeremiah 30:1-3 and 7-9 this period is also known as, “The Time of Jacob's Trouble.

During the 7-Year Tribulation period, the anti-Christ, will rule the world and “confirm the covenant” and at the mid-point break the covenant. “And he [the anti-Christ] shall confirm the covenant with many for one week [7years]: and in the midst of the week [after 3 ½ years] he shall cause the sacrifice to cease [in the Tribulation Temple in Jerusalem, Israel], and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it

desolate [the Tribulation Temple and Jerusalem, Israel], even until the consummation [the end of the second 3 ½ years], and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.” (Daniel 9:27)

We must take careful note that Daniel does not give this prophecy to the church-age saints. The prophecy of Daniel 9:20-27 is for the nation of Israel and God’s dealing with the Jewish race as a nation. Not one mention is made of the saved Gentiles in the church age. The church was a mystery to Daniel and to all of the other Old Testament prophets.

In Daniel 9:26 we read, “And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.” Concerning the time interval the between the 69th and the 70th week, in Daniel 9:27, Lehman Strauss observes, “The sixty-nine weeks are separated from the last week by an interval of time. Verse 26 refers to the death of Christ and the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., while verse 27 passes on to a time yet future. The seventieth week of seven years awaits its fulfillment at some future date. ... We cannot lose sight of the fact that the entire prophecy has to do with Daniel’s people (the Jews) and the “holy city” (Jerusalem).”<sup>11</sup>

The 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel will begin, and last for 7 years, after the church is taken out of earth by the coming of Christ, as revealed in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

The apostle Paul is very clear that the prophets in the Old Testament did not know anything about the church nor give any of their prophecies concerning the church. Ephesians 3:1-6 states, “For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles. If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward. If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward. How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ). Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel.”

The apostle Peter clearly stated the same thing. 1 Peter 1:8 -11 states, “Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.”

David Cloud wrote, “The New Testament church has no part in the chronology of events foretold by the Old Testament prophets. They clearly foretold the first coming of Christ as the Suffering Messiah: His miraculous birth, sinless life, atoning death, bodily resurrection, and ascension. The same prophets describe Christ’s Second Coming as the Reigning Messiah, preceded by a time of unprecedented worldwide tribulation and followed by the establishment of the glorious Messianic kingdom centered in

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<sup>11</sup> Strauss, Lehman, *The Prophecies of Daniel*, (Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Brothers, 1969), p. 274.

Jerusalem. But these prophets did not see the church – ‘which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit’ (Eph. 3:5).”<sup>12</sup>

### **The Anti-Christ is the Fourth Beast – Kingdom**

The reign, the kingdom, of the anti-Christ is revealed in the opening of the first seal as recorded in Revelation 6:1 and is the fulfillment of the prophecies of the fourth kingdom as prophesied by Daniel in Daniel 2:40-45. The fourth beast as prophesied by Daniel in Daniel 7:7-9 and interpreted in Daniel 7:23-26 and 8:23-25.

The timing of the rise of the fourth kingdom, the fourth beast, coincides with the riding of the anti-Christ on a white horse as recorded in Revelation 6:1. The reign will last 7 years as prophesied by Daniel in Daniel 9:27. During the entire 7 years, the wrath of God will execute vengeance upon the entire world. Speaking of this time of destruction on the earth, the prophet Micah prophesied, “And I will execute vengeance in anger and fury upon the heathen, such as they have never heard.” (Micah 5:15)

The prophet Nahum stated, “God is jealous, and the LORD revengeth; the LORD revengeth, and is furious; the LORD will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth his wrath for his enemies.” (Nahum 1:2)

Therefore, we refer to the Tribulation Period as a period of 7 years. The duration of seven years of Daniel’s last week of years is fulfilled as a literal 7 years with the middle point, the first 3 ½ years, dividing the reign of the anti-Christ in half as Revelation 11:2 states, “But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.” Forty-two months equal 3 ½ years. For the first half of the 7-Year Tribulation period the two witnesses of Revelation 11:1-14 preach against the anti-Christ, perform miracles against their enemies, as such as did Moses and Elijah, but, the miracles are performed against the whole world instead of just against Egypt or in Israel.

In Matthew 24:1-15, the Lord Jesus prophesies of the events leading up to the time of tribulation on the entire world. Concerning the horrific, and catastrophic, events of the time period after the events of Matthew 24:1-15, the Lord Jesus said, “For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.” (Matthew 24:21) This time of tribulation is the fulfillment of Micah 5:15 and other prophecies of the Old Testament.

Micah prophesied of the event of the time when the anti-Christ was revealed to the world and is the start of the 7-Year Tribulation Period, when he said, “And I will execute vengeance in anger and fury upon the heathen, such as they have not heard.” (Micah 5:15) The entire reign of the anti-Christ, starting in Revelation 6:1 when he is revealed is a time of the wrath, of fury, of vengeance, of judgment and of the anger of God upon all of the heathen, the Gentile nations, of the world.

Concerning the appearing of the anti-Christ being the seventieth week of Daniel 9:27, and the gathering of the Jews (Matthew 24:29-31), after the tribulation period has ended, Lehman Strauss elaborates, “When the seventieth year begins, God will once again take up His dealings with the nation of Israel,

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<sup>12</sup> Cloud, David *What About Steven Anderson?* (Port Huron, MI: Way of Life Literature, 2017), p. 127-128.

fulfilling the prophecy of Daniel 9:27 through the appearing of the Antichrist. When the seventieth week has ended, Christ will return, Israel will recognize and receive Him, and then the nation will enter the millennial rest.”<sup>13</sup>

Therefore, the events of Revelation 6:1 to 19:21 is called, “The Time of Jacob’s Trouble” and “the 7-Year Tribulation Period.” In this study, both appellations are referred to as the same time-frame of events.

### **Matthew 24: 1-28 - Events Leading up to Verses 29-31**

In Matthew 24:1-28, the Lord Jesus gave express details concerning the judgments, including the destruction of the Temple, the sorrows the Jews must endure, before the conversion experience, and gathering together, of the house of Israel.

Therefore, the events of Matthew chapter 23 and chapter 24 are primarily directed at the “house of Israel, the Jewish race. Although the Lord Jesus makes reference to the nations of the world, and gives all people the admonition to “watch,” the Lord Jesus does not make one direct reference to the church in either Matthew chapter 23 or chapter 24 or its companion passages in Mark 13:1-37 and Luke 21:5-38.

In Matthew 24:22 the Lord Jesus said, “And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened.” In the continuous context of Matthew 23:1 to 24:21 and Mark 13:1-37, and Luke 21:5-38, the Lord Jesus is talking about the nations of the world, Jews and their sins, sufferings and tribulations that they must endure for their iniquities and for the rejection of Him as the Messiah.

Although the Lord Jesus makes reference to the nations of the world, and gives all people, in every age, the admonition to watch, the Lord Jesus does not make one direct reference to the saved Gentiles in the church age saints.

Therefore, in the immediate context, the word *elect* in Matthew 24:31 is a direct reference to the *house of Israel*, the Jewish race, and not the saved Gentiles in the church age.

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<sup>13</sup> Strauss, Lehman, *The Prophecies of Daniel*, (Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Brothers, 1969), p. 286.

## Chapter 4

### The Gathering of the Nation of Israel

Besides the prophet Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Hosea, the prophet Micah prophesied of time when God would assemble Jacob, the house of Israel, the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the remnant of the physical Jews from a time of terrible distress, with the Messiah, the Shepherd of Jacob, before them and David as their king.

The prophet Micah prophesied, “O thou that art named the house of Jacob, is the spirit of the LORD straitened? are these his doings? do not my words do good to him that walketh uprightly? ... I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee; I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah, as the flock in the midst of their fold: they shall make great noise by reason of the multitude of men. The breaker is come up before them: they have broken up, and have passed through the gate, and are gone out by it: and their king shall pass before them, and the LORD on the head of them.” (Micah 2:7, 12-13)

Furthermore, in addition to Micah 2:7, 12-13, after prophesying that the LORD would destroy the nation of Israel for their transgressions, in Micah 1:5-9; 2:10 and 3:1-10, the prophet Micah prophesied that God, in the last days, would assemble the remnant of the Jews back to the land of Israel and that God would reign over them forever; “In that day, saith the LORD, will I assemble her that halteth, and I will gather her that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted; And I will make her that halteth a remnant, and her that was cast far off a strong nation: and the LORD shall reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever.” (Micah 4:6-7).

The prophet Micah further prophesied of the day when the Lord, due to His mercy and compassion, would deliver the remnant of the Jews from their iniquities and gather them back to the land of their heritage, the land of Israel, as promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Micah prophesied, “Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old.” (Micah 7:18-20)

Since the days that the prophet penned the prophesy of Micah 2:7, 12-13, 4:6-7, and 7:18-20, none of these prophecies, or promises, have been fulfilled in either the literal, figurative, or spiritual sense of the word. They were not fulfilled after the return of the Jews from Babylon, they were not fulfilled in the time of Christ, they were not fulfilled after 70 AD, nor have they been fulfilled after 70 AD, in the church age, or given in a spiritual sense to the church, to our age. The only time the words of Micah can be fulfilled is “after the tribulation” when Christ appears visibly in the clouds from heaven, and sends His angels, with the sound of trumpets, to gather the remnant of the Jews that escaped death from the anti-Christ during the Time of Jacob’s Trouble or The 7-Year Tribulation Period, and David is raised up as their King, as written in Matthew 24:29-31.

### The prophecy of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 24:29-31

In Matthew 24:29-31 the Lord Jesus prophesied, “Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.”

### **The Gathering of the Jewish Remnant from the Nations of the World**

The Lord Jesus prophesied, “Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken.” (Matthew 24:29) The events that the Lord Jesus is referring to take place during the 7-Year Tribulation Period as describe by John the apostle in Revelation chapter 6-18.

### **Matthew 24:30, ‘and then shall all of the tribes of the earth mourn’**

The words of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 24:30, “*and then shall all of the tribes of the earth mourn*” is the literal fulfillment of Zechariah 12:9-14, Revelation 1:7 and the prophecy of Paul the Apostle in Romans 11:26-28, “And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved of the father’s sakes.”

The remnant of the gathered 12 tribes will mourn when they see, ‘*the sign of the Son of man in heaven*’ exactly as the prophet Zechariah prophesied in Zechariah 12:9-14, the Lord Jesus in Matthew 24:30 and as the apostle Paul prophesied in Romans 11:26-27.

The “sign of the Son of man in heaven” when all of the tribes of the earth mourn is fulfilled in Revelation 1:7 at the coming in the clouds, with His church, as depicted in Revelation 19:11-21. Revelation 1:7 states, “Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindred’s of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.”

Revelation 1:7, and its companion passage, Revelation 19:11-21, is the complete fulfillment of the prophecy by the prophet Zechariah. The prophet Zechariah prophesied, “And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon. And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; The family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart; All the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart.” (Zechariah 12:9-14)

We must take careful note that after the death of the Lord Jesus on the cross of Calvary the soldiers pierced the side of the Lord Jesus and was seen by those in the area of the cross, “But when they came to

Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs: But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there came out blood and water. And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken. And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.” (John 19:33-37). While the phrase ‘*They shall look on him whom they pierced,*’ from Zechariah 12:10, was fulfilled at the cross the rest of the prophecy of Zechariah was not. Therefore, the rest of the prophecy of Zechariah is yet to be fulfilled in conjunction with the prophecy of Amos 87:9-11, and Revelation 1:7.

The Lord Jesus will come with the church saints in the air as KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS as revealed in Revelation 19:11-21 and Revelation 1:7. At that time, the nations of the earth, and the Jewish remnant, will mourn. The remnant of the Jews that escape death at the hands of the anti-Christ will mourn for their sins, their iniquities, and unbelief in Christ as the Son of God and Messiah.

The prophecy of the mourning of the remnant of the Jewish nation, as Amos 8:9-11 and Zechariah 12:10 plainly state, will be fulfilled, to the letter, at that time. The prophet Amos stated, “And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD GOD, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day: And I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation: and I will bring up sackcloth upon all loins, and baldness upon every head; and I will make it as the mourning of an only son, and the end thereof as a bitter day.” (Amos 8:9-10)

#### **Philip Mauro and Zechariah 12:9-14**

Philip Mauro, as with most preterists, and other individuals who spiritualize the promises in the prophets, or believe that the promises and prophecies given to the sons of Jacob are fulfilled in the church age, does not believe that the events in Zechariah 14:4-9 are literal. In his comments on Zechariah 14: 4, 7-9, Mauro is very clear that the fulfillment of all of the verses mentioned, specifically the phrase in ‘in that day’ in Zechariah 14:4, 8 and 9, are for the present day of grace, the church age, and not at a future time. Mauro is very clear that he does not believe in the restoration of the nation of Israel. Mauro states.

“**In That Day.** The question that concerns us for the moment is this: Are these passages to be understood as predictions of the *national* conversion of the Jews in a coming “day,” as some now teach? Or are they prophecies of *the gospel*, having their fulfillment in this present “day,” which has always held (as I understand it) until recent times? In the first place, we call attention to the fact that the context makes it clear that the oft-recurring phrase, “in that day,” refers to *this present day of grace*, and not to the succeeding day of judgment.”<sup>14</sup>

#### **Anderson and Zechariah 12:9-14**

Pastor Steven Anderson, as with the adherents of Preterism, believes that the prophecy of Zechariah 12:9-14 was already fulfilled and does not await a future fulfillment. Anderson also believes that the tribes listed in Zechariah 12:14 are forever lost, that the remnant of the Jews after the tribulation will not mourn for Christ as prophesied by the prophets Amos and Zechariah and as revealed in Revelation 1:7.

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<sup>14</sup> Mauro, Philip, *The Hope of Israel: What Is it?* (Boston, MA: Hamilton Brothers, 1929), p. 98.

Concerning his discussion on Zechariah 12:10-14 and the 12 tribes mourning, without giving scriptural proof, Anderson states, “So, at the time of Christ you can have the tribe of Judah apart, the Shimei apart, you can have Levi apart. That makes sense.”<sup>15</sup>

Anderson further that since no one can know what tribe that they belong to that Zechariah 12:10-14 cannot be future. “How can the house of David mourn apart when no one knows what tribe [sic] they don’t know if they are of the tribe of Judah?”<sup>16</sup> Anderson seemingly cannot comprehend that in Revelation 7:2-3 it is not man that seals the 144,000 Jewish evangelists and tells which tribe that they belong to but a special angel, with the seal of God, along with the other four angels, that descends from heaven that determines which tribe an individual belongs to and the angels seal the 144,000 Jewish evangelists. “And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.” (Revelation 7:2-3).

Pastor Steven Anderson, and just about every person who believes in Replacement Theology, does not believe that the 12 tribes of the Jewish nation will mourn as the Lord Jesus prophesied in Matthew 24:30, the prophet Zechariah in Zechariah 12:9-14 and the apostle Paul in Romans 11:26-27.

Pastor Anderson, in his comments on Romans 11:27, teaches that Zechariah 12:9-14 is *cryptic* and *stuff* and has, *already been fulfilled*. Therefore, Romans 11:26-27 and Matthew 24:30 do not apply to the Jews. Concerning those believe that the Jews will get saved as a nation as Romans 11:26 prophesies, Anderson belittles those who accept Zechariah’s prophecies as future and states, “See, they have to go back to some cryptic Scripture from the Book of Zechariah in the Old Testament and try to take Old Testament prophecies and try to bring them forward. Stuff that was talking about the first coming of Christ, like when it says they shall look on Him whom they pierce and everything. Stuff that’s already been fulfilled.”<sup>17</sup> The American Heritage Language Dictionary lists the definition of “stuff,” when used as an informal, or slang, usage of the word as Anderson used it, as follows. “stuff (1)The material out of which something is made of or formed; substance. (2) *Informal* a. Worthless objects. (3) *Slang*. Foolish or empty words or ideas.”<sup>18</sup>

Pastor Anderson, by his mocking tone, and usage of the word *stuff*, in his comments on Zechariah 12:9-14, regards Zechariah’s prophecy as *foolish words or ideas*. According to Anderson, the Old Testament prophetic books, Daniel, Ezekiel, Zechariah, Jeremiah, Hosea, and Zephaniah, are cryptic, ambiguous, have a hidden meaning or are in some code and just plain stuff, and foolish or empty words. Anderson does not believe the prophecies of the prophets of the Old Testament when they are different from his own personal beliefs.

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<sup>15</sup> Anderson, Steven *Zechariah 12*. Accessed on: 20 April 2019. Available on: <https://soundcloud.com/bible-preaching/2016-01-27p-zechariah-12>. Internet.

<sup>16</sup> Anderson, Steven *Zechariah 12*, Accessed on: 20 April 2019. Available from: <https://soundcloud.com/bible-preaching/2016-01-27p-zechariah-12>; Internet.

<sup>17</sup> Anderson, Steven, *Romans 11 Verse by Verse Bible Study*, Accessed on: 21 Sept 2020. Available on: [http://www.faithfulwordbaptist.org/transcript\\_romans11.html](http://www.faithfulwordbaptist.org/transcript_romans11.html); Internet.

<sup>18</sup> *The American Heritage Language Dictionary*, 2012 ed. s. v., “Stuff.”

Anderson's lack of reverence towards the Old Testament prophets does not endear him to those who have a deep reverence to the prophecies of the Old Testament prophets.

### **Symbolism & Historical Interpretations - Unbelief of the Prophets**

The Preterist position on the fourth kingdom, or the fourth beast, in Daniel's visions (and other visions of the prophets), and the beginning of the reign of the anti-Christ in Revelation in Revelation 6:1 at the opening of the first seal, and his kingdom lasting seven years, is that these prophecies are fulfilled symbolically and historically.

Philip Mauro is the classic preterist. Mauro teaches that the symbols of the Old Testament, in this case specifically Zechariah and Daniel, are symbolic and have already been fulfilled historically: "For the symbols of the horses and of the wild beasts are used in Old Testament prophecy, the former in Zechariah, and the latter in Daniel. The symbols of the beasts are explained in Chapters 7 and 8 of Daniel's prophecy, so there is happily no room for question as to their meaning. The four great beasts that Daniel saw were four Kingdoms or world-powers that were to arise out of the earth (Dan. 7:17). Each one of those empires lasted many times seven years; and the last of them (the Roman) more than twice seven centuries."<sup>19</sup>

As with just about all of the teachers who interpret the fulfillment of the prophecies of the Old Testament as being fulfilled symbolically, there are too many errors in Mauro's interpretation to discuss in the study. The Kingdom of the fourth beast has not been fulfilled historically with the Roman Empire. Daniel 9:27 and the prophecy of the fourth kingdom and beast is to be fulfilled literally, with observable results, in a 7-year time span, that begins with the opening of the first seal in Revelation 6:1. Philip Mauro and the Preterists historical and symbolical interpretation fulfillment of Scripture is in error.

The Seventh Day Adventists, besides using a complicated number-day system, uses the symbolic method of interpreting scripture. Mrs. Ellen G. White was a disciple of William Miller. When the Lord Jesus did not come in 1844, Mrs. White, using Revelation chapter 14 and 17, and more European historical events, decided that Jesus did come in 1844. But, instead of coming literally in the clouds, Jesus came symbolically. Mrs. White said, "In like manner the types which relate to the second advent must be fulfilled at the time pointed out in the symbolic service."<sup>20</sup> Mrs. White's interpretation of the coming of Christ in a symbolic manner does not hold up in the light of the scriptures and can be considered a private interpretation.

### **The Trumpet of Matthew 29:31**

The Lord Jesus stated, "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." (Matthew 24:31)

"...with a great sound of a trumpet ..." In Numbers 10:1-10 God commanded Moses to have two trumpets of silver made for eight reasons:

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<sup>19</sup> Mauro, Philip, *Of the Things Which Soon Must Come to Pass – A Commentary on the Book of Revelation*, (Grand Rapids, MI: WM. B. Eerdmans, 1933), p. 30.

<sup>20</sup> White, Ellen G., *The Great Controversy*, Accessed on: 21 Nov. 2018. Available from: [www.end-times-prophecy.org/GreatControversy.pdf](http://www.end-times-prophecy.org/GreatControversy.pdf); Internet.

1. “For the calling of the assembly.”
2. “For the journeying of the camps.”
3. “For the princes to assemble at the tabernacle.”
4. “For an alarm.”
5. “For days of gladness.”
6. “For the solemn days.”
7. “For the beginning of the months.”
8. “For the sacrifice of the peace offerings.”

Two of the specific reasons was for the “calling of the assemblies and journeying of the camp.” Numbers 10:1 & 2 state, “And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Make thee two trumpets of silver; of a whole piece shalt thou make them: that thou mayest use them for the calling of the assembly, and for the journeying of the camps.”

The context of the passage in scripture will tell us the reason for the blowing of the trumpet, who blows the trumpet, and who the trumpet belongs too (i.e., the trump of God).

So, the trumpet in Matthew 24:31 was for to call together, by angels (not an archangel), the assembly of the Jews, the elect, from around the world to assemble the congregation in Israel.

The calling of the trumpet in Matthew 29:31 was not the “trump of God” blown by an archangel as described in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 and in 1 Corinthians 15:52, is for the church to meet the Lord Jesus in the air. The trump of God in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 and 1 Corinthians 15:52 is the trump of God as when God called Moses up to heaven to meet Him on Mount Sinai as recorded in Exodus 19:16-25

The “trump of God” as used in Exodus 19:16-25, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 and 1 Corinthians 15:52 is used by the arch-angel to call people to meet God in person.

Also, nor was the trumpet in Matthew 24:31 one of the seven trumpets in Revelation sounded for war or for judgment “*for an alarm.*” The seven angels in in Revelation are given seven trumpets to sound an alarm for war and for judgment and not for calling an assembly for any reason.

### **Matthew 24:31, “... and they shall gather his elect...”**

In His discourse concerning the end times, the Lord Jesus prophesied, “Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” (Matthew 24:29-31)

To fully interpret this prophecy of the Lord Jesus, we need to get the context of whom He is referring too. So, we will read His concluding remarks in Matthew 23 in order to know the context and the events leading up to this prophecy.

## **Isaiah 43:1-7 The Gathering of Jacob**

In a direct reference to the sons of Jacob, the prophet Isaiah prophesied of the time when the Jews as a nation would pass through a national time of intense trial and after the fiery trial they would be gathered from the nations of the world and blessed in order to glorify God. In Isaiah 43:1-7 we read, “But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life. Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yes, I have made him.”

The prophecy of Isaiah in Isaiah 43:1-7 is very clear. Isaiah is talking about the gathering of the seed of Jacob; his sons and his daughters from the four different corners of the earth exactly as the Lord Jesus stated in Matthew 24:31, “And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” Matthew 24:31 is clearly the fulfillment of Isaiah 43:1-7, specifically verse 5 and 6.

## **The Gathering of the Elect as Prophesied by Ezekiel**

Ezekiel 28:24-26 states, “And there shall be no more a pricking brier unto the house of Israel, nor any grieving thorn of all that are round about them, that despised them: and they shall know that I am the Lord GOD. Thus saith the Lord GOD; When I shall have gathered the house of Israel from the people among whom they are scattered, and shall be sanctified in them in the sight of the heathen, then shall they dwell in their land that I have given to my servant Jacob. And they shall dwell safely therein, and shall build houses, and plant vineyards; yea, they shall dwell with confidence, when I have executed judgments upon all those that despise them round about them; and they shall know that I am the LORD their God.”

The Lord Jesus prophesied, “And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” Matthew 24:31 The words of the Lord Jesus prophesying the gathering of the “*elect*,” or as Jeremiah states, “*the house of Israel*,” or as Isaiah states, “*the outcasts of Israel*,” is in fulfillment of Jeremiah 23:7 & 8, Isaiah 11:11 & 12, Ezekiel 28:24-26, and Micah 2:7,12-13 and 4:6-7.

## **Israel, the Jews, the Chosen of God**

The Jews are of the lineage of Abraham, lost or saved, and are in a “*chosen*” or “*elect*” class of their own. God “*chose*” or they were His “*elect race*.” Depending on the context of the verse, this in no way implies that all of the Jews are “*saved*.”

God said, “For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. 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.” (Deuteronomy 7:6-9)

In Deuteronomy 7:6-9, God specifically chose the Jews, the seed of Jacob, above all of the nations of the world.

*Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* has this definition for the Hebrew word, ‘has chosen’ as used in Deuteronomy 7:6; *Strong’s Number*: “977. בָּחַר **bâchar**, baw-khar’; a prime root; prop. To try, i.e. (by impl.) select: acceptable, appoint, choose (choice), excellent, join, be rather, require.”<sup>21</sup>

*Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* has this definition for the Greek word *election* as used in Romans 11:28; *Strong’s Number*: 1589. ἐκλογή **ekloge**, *ek-log-ay*; from 1586; (divine) *selection* (abstr. or concr): - chosen, election.<sup>22</sup>

*Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* has this definition for the Greek word, *elects* as used in Matthew 24:31; *Strong’s Number*: 1588. ἐκλεκτός **ekletous**, *ek-lek-tos*; from 1586; *select*; by impl. *favorite*: - chosen, *elect*.<sup>23</sup>

In an effort to maintain the complete definition of the words, *election* and *elects* we will quote the *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* previously referenced Number 1586; *election*: ἐκλέγομαι **eklegomai** *ek-leg-om-ahee*; mid. from 1537 and 3004 (*in its prim. sense*); *to select*; - make choice, choose (out) chosen.<sup>24</sup>

In all of the biblical definitions, in Hebrew and Greek, the word *chosen* and *election* has the same sense of choosing out, or in selecting from a group, in this case the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, for any reason the one choosing, or elects, decides to choose or to select. God did not choose, or elect, or select, to set His love upon the Jews because they were powerful or any other special worldly attribute. He chose, or selected, or elected, the Jews because of His promise to the Fathers: to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He chose the Jews in order to show His faithfulness; His faithfulness in keeping His covenants, His promises and to show His mercy. Because of the faithfulness of God and mercy of God, He will keep His promises made to the fathers.

## **The Doctrine of Election & The Olive Tree Romans 11:1-36**

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<sup>21</sup> Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, *has chosen*, Strong’s Number 977, (New York: Abingdon Press, 1890).

<sup>22</sup> Ibid. *election*, Number 1589.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid. *elect’s*, Number 1588.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. *election*, Number 1586.

In Romans 11:1-36, the apostle Paul makes the doctrinal argument that God has not cast away the elect, or chosen, or selected, nation of Israel the Jewish race. Paul contends that the nation of Israel, up to his age, has always had a few elect according to the election of grace. Romans 11:1 and 5, “I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin... Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. ”

Paul further argues that the majority of the Jewish nation of Israel are currently blinded and that the Gentiles are, “a wild olive tree,” that is “grafted” into the “natural olive tree.” Romans 11:15-17 states, “For if the casting away of them [Israel] be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? For is the first fruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root [Abraham] be holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches be broken off [the nation of Israel at 70 A. D.] and thou [the Gentiles], being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree.” The apostle Paul is very clear that the saved Gentiles do not replace the Jews as the Olive Tree; but *contrary to nature*, are “grafted in” the *good olive tree*.

The apostle Paul then, in Romans 11:18-24 contends that God is able, and will according to Isaiah 27:9, Jeremiah 23:1-8 & 31:31-37, Romans 11: 26-29, and other Old Testament prophecies, graft them back in their own olive tree.

In Romans 11:25 we read, “For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.” The apostle Paul, talking to brethren, clearly, and emphatically, states the mystery that the nation of Israel is, “in part,” blinded and when the fulness of the Gentiles come in the remnant of the Jews, as a nation, will be saved. The fulness of the Gentiles is accomplished during the 7-Year Tribulation Period. The brethren that do not accept the apostle Paul’s teaching that the Jews would be restored as before was rebuked by Paul as being *ignorant* and *conceited*.

The apostle Paul then, in Romans 11:26-28, makes it abundantly clear that the natural branches, the descendants of Jacob, the Jews, the elect, will one day be saved, as a nation. And, furthermore, this is a *covenant* from God to the Jews. Romans 11:26-28, “And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved of the father’s sakes.” The apostle Paul makes is abundantly clear in verse 28 the nation of Israel, “for the father’s sakes,” is the “elect(tion).”

I need to re-emphasize that the Greek word *elect* in verse 28, is the same as *election*, used as a *noun*, in Romans 11:5,7 and 28 (quoted above), is: *Strong’s Number*: “1589. **ἐκλογή εκιογε**, *ek-log-ay*”; from 1586; (divine) *selection* (abstr. or concr): - chosen, election.”<sup>25</sup>

We need to remember that once the church age saints are taken out at the rapture just previous to the 7-Year Tribulation Period that God initiates the ministry through the 144,000 Jewish evangelists, the two prophets, and the ministry of the angel flying through the atmospheric heavens preaching the gospel. Therefore, initially, the only saved people, the only *elect* people on the earth, are Jewish.

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid. *election*, Number 1589.

Therefore, according the apostle Paul in his doctrinal discourse in Romans 11:1-36, the *elect* in Matthew 24:29-31 is the remnant of Jews, saved as a nation, the elect, the chosen of God, gathered out of the four corners of the world.

## **Bible Believers**

Most of the independent, fundamental, Baptist pastors, teach that the *elect* in Matthew 24:31 is clearly the Jews and not the Gentile saints in the church age.

Evangelist John R. Rice stated, “The miraculous regathering of living Israel to Palestine is told in verse 31, “he shall send his angels.” That is, Zionism will not bring the whole nation of Jews back to Palestine; the angels of God will gather these “elect,” chosen people and bring them back to their own land.”<sup>26</sup>

Oliver B. Greene, another fine evangelist and author, in his comments on Matthew 24:31 states, “*The four winds*” speaks of the four quarters of the globe – the entire earth. This and other similar expressions were common among the Jews. (Please note Ezekiel 37:9 and Isaiah 43:5-6.) The elect of God (Israel) will be gathered “*from one end of the earth to the other.*” (Mark 13:27 says, “*from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.*”) This merely denotes that Israel will be gathered from all parts of the earth where that nation is now scattered, and where it will be scattered when Jesus comes in the Revelation.”<sup>27</sup>

## **Israel and the Mercy of God**

After the children of Israel sinned greatly in the sight of God and slid back to the point that God would destroy the nation of Israel and send them into captivity in Babylon, God gave this promise of mercy to the nation of Israel, “For the LORD will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the strangers shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob. And the people shall take them, and bring them to their place: and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of the LORD for servants and handmaids: and they shall take them captives, whose captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors. And it shall come to pass in the day that the LORD shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, and from thy fear, and from the hard bondage wherein thou wast made to serve.” (Isaiah 14:1-3)

Since the days that Isaiah penned this prophesy to our day, the nation of Israel, the sons of Jacob, have not had mercy as a nation. The Jewish race has been oppressed, despised by nations and religious leaders, have had hard bondage, and have not had the mercy spoken of in this passage. Also, there is no possible way, in any manner or fashion, to neither symbolize, or use these prophecies as a figure of speech, nor be able to *give* this prophecy to the Gentiles in the church age.

Therefore, the prophecy of Isaiah 14:1-3, has not yet been fulfilled and the prophecy awaits a future fulfillment. God, because of His mercy and His faithfulness, God will keep this, and all of the other, “oaths,” promises, and covenants that He made to the Jewish race. Every word, of every oath, promise, covenant, and prophecy given to the Jewish race will be fulfilled. The Lord Jesus gave this great promise

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<sup>26</sup> Rice, John R., *A Verse-by-Verse Commentary - Matthew* (Murfreesboro, TN: Sword of the Lord Publishers, 1955), p. 388.

<sup>27</sup> Greene, Oliver B., *The Gospel According to Matthew, Vol. 5*, (Greenville, SC: The Gospel Hour, Inc., 1975), p. 319.

concerning His words, “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.” (Matthew 24:35)

### **The Gathering of the Elect as Prophesied by Zephaniah**

In Zephaniah 3:1-7, the prophet Zephaniah pronounces the judgments and punishment of God upon the oppressing princes, the false prophets, the corrupt priests, and the iniquities of the people. After the judgments and punishments of God are finished, the prophet Zephaniah declares that God is determined to gather the nations of the world in order to pour out His fierceness anger upon all of the nations of the world.

The prophecy of Zephaniah in Zephaniah 3:8 is a concise description of the wrath of God on the entire world as fulfilled in the entire 7-Year Tribulation Period. In Zephaniah 3:8, we read of the fierce anger of God against all of the assembled nations of the world, “Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy.”

God is very clear. All of the nations of the world will be assembled to experience His fierce wrath, judgment and anger. This fierce anger of God is not just against the various nations surrounding the nation of Israel, nor the Middle East, nor in Europe, but in all of the nations of the world.

Consider just this one example. Not including the trumpet and vial destruction, after the horrific multitudes of deaths in the first three seals, in the fourth seal, Revelation 6:7-8, over a fourth of the population of the entire world, is dead. “And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name was that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.” (Revelation 6:8)

After the tribulation, in conjunction with many other Old Testament prophecies, in Zephaniah 3:9-20 the prophet Zephaniah prophesies that God will gather the children of Israel, the Jews, back to the land of Israel and give them a time of rejoicing. Zephaniah 3:18-20 declares, “I will gather them that are sorrowful for the solemn assembly, who are of thee, to whom the reproach of it was a burden. Behold, at that time I will undo all that afflict thee: and I will save her that halteth, and gather her that was driven out; and I will get them praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame. At that time will I bring you again, even in the time that I gather you: for I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the LORD.”

The literal, observable and tangible events of the prophecy of Zephaniah given to the Jews have not been fulfilled, in any manner, whether spiritually, allegorically, or figuratively, since the day that he penned them. The events of Zephaniah 3:14-20 were given to the sons of Jacob, has never been dis-annulled, and cannot be construed in any manner as given to the saints in the church age.

The word of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 24:31, “... and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other” is the fulfillment of Zephaniah 3:18-20. According to the

prophecy of Zephaniah 3:9-10, the word 'elect' in Matthew 24:22 and 31, it is very clear that the 'elect' is the remnant of the Jews that are gathered 'after the tribulation.'

### **The Gathering of the Elect as Prophesied by Isaiah**

The prophet Isaiah prophesied, "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth." (Isaiah 11:11 & 12)

Isaiah clearly stated, "... the second time to recover the remnant of his people ..." the first time the Lord recovered Israel was with Moses and the Exodus from Egypt. Therefore, the second is a clear reference to the gathering of the house of Israel from the affliction that they suffer under the hands of the anti-Christ during the 7 year Tribulation period as revealed in Revelation chapters 6-19.

"... and from the islands of the sea." The second time of the recovery of the house of Israel "from the islands of the sea" did not take place after the Babylonian Captivity, nor any time since then. Nor can "and from the islands of the sea" be symbolic, figurative, or in any fashion refer to the Gentile saints in the New Testament church age. Therefore, at the only time this can occur is at the gathering of the elect as prophesied by the Lord Jesus in Matthew 24:31.

In Isaiah 65:1-7, Isaiah, in a clear reference to the Jews in Israel, gives the prophecy that the Jews were a rebellious people, hypocritical, full of iniquities, and were blasphemers. Therefore, God would punish the nation of Israel. To our age, God is still punishing the Jews for their iniquities and will do so until they repent of their iniquities.

After stating that God would punish, not destroy, the nation of Jews for their iniquities, in Isaiah 65:8-10 the prophet Isaiah prophesies of the day, in the far future of his era, when His elect, the sons of Jacob, would seek the Lord. At that time, God would bring forth the seed of Jacob to inherit the land of Israel. "Thus saith the LORD, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it: so will I do for my servants sakes, that I may not destroy them all. And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah and inheritor of my mountains: and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there. And Sharon shall be a fold of flocks, and the valley of Achor a place for the herds to lie down in, for my people that have sought me." (Isaiah 65:8-10)

The "elect" in Isaiah 65:9 is to inherit "the mountains" in the land of Israel, the city of Sharon in Israel, the "valley of Achor" in the land of Israel, and herds of beasts in the land of Israel. This prophecy cannot be construed as being promised to the saints in the church age. The saints in the church age are promised an heavenly city and spiritual blessings. Ephesians 1:3, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." There is not one earthly promise given to any of the church-age saints.

### **The Jehovah's Witnesses and the Elect**

The Jehovah's Witnesses believe, as most preterists believe, that at one time in the past the Jews were God's chosen people.

“Bible prophecy proves beyond a question of doubt that the nation of Israel was at one time God's chosen people. The Orthodox Jews and many religionists of “Christendom” believe that Bible prophecy foretells that the Jews will be regathered once more into their “Holy Land of Palestine.” They claim that that time is now here and that their effort in that direction is in fulfillment of these prophecies.”<sup>28</sup>

The Jehovah's Witnesses teach that they Jehovah's Witnesses are now the chosen of God, or the elect. They believe that that the promises of Jeremiah were partially fulfilled and that in 1919 the promises were completely fulfilled with the gathering of the Jehovah's Witnesses.

“They [ apostate Christendom ] do not realize that the first or miniature fulfillment of that promise [ Jeremiah 32:37 ] applied to the Jewish remnant that returned from Babylon in 537 B.C. and that the major or complete fulfillment applied to the “Israel of God” made up of ‘Jews inwardly’ or spiritual Israelites who come out from captivity to this Babylonish world. ( Galatians 6:16 ) From and after A.D. 1919 these have been gathered into the earthly condition of Jehovah God's favor as his witnesses and as ambassadors of his kingdom established in the hands of the Messiah.”<sup>29</sup>

As with the preterist, the Jehovah's Witnesses are adamant in the teaching that the Jewish race will never be gathered again nor will they ever be the chosen, or become the elect, of God again. The Jehovah's Witnesses do not believe in the future restoration, or gathering, of the Jews in fulfillment according to Matthew 24:31. The Jehovah's Witnesses teach.

“If more Jews are in the future gathered to Palestine, it will only be a political, humanitarian gesture, and not of God's provision according to prophecy. God's promises concerning restoration are being fulfilled upon his spiritual Israelites, Jehovah's witnesses, who are the remnant of faithful followers of His Messiah.”<sup>30</sup>

The Jehovah's Witnesses are incorrect in the teaching of the Jews will not be gathered again according to the prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel. They are also incorrect in their teaching that the Jews will never again be considered the chosen, or the elect, of God according to the teaching of Paul the Apostle in Romans 11:1-36 after a period of mourning, as a nation, *after the tribulation*. Therefore, they do not believe that the remnant of the Jewish nation is the elect in Matthew 24:31 that are gathered together *after the tribulation*.

### **Anderson and the Elect in Isaiah 65: 9**

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<sup>28</sup> *Let God Be True*, (Brooklyn, NY: Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, 1946), p. 198.

<sup>29</sup> *Let God Be True*, (Brooklyn, NY: Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, 1946), p. 205-206.

<sup>30</sup> *Let God Be True*, (Brooklyn, NY: Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, 1946), p. 207-208.

Pastor Steven Anderson teaches that the promises made in Isaiah 65:9 concerning the elect inheriting the mountains in Israel, and by direct context, the city of Sharon, and the flocks and the herds, are for the church-age saints. After quoting Isaiah 65:1, but completely ignoring verses 2-8, Anderson states, “Isa. 65:9 And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah, an inheritor of my mountains: and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there. . . . According to verse 1 of the chapter, it is NOT referring to the Jews as his people, but rather to believers who are not of the nation of Israel.”<sup>31</sup>

In his endeavor to try and prove that the Jews will not inherit the land promised to the Jews as prophesied by Isaiah in Isaiah 65:9, Anderson claims that the church will inherit these physical promises. How can this be? The apostle Paul clearly states that the promises given to the Gentile church age saints are spiritual and in the heavenlies.

### **Rasmussen & Anderson and the Elect in Matthew 24:31**

Dr. Roland Rasmussen ignores the plain teaching of God choosing out the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as the chosen people of God to accomplish His will as recorded in Deuteronomy 7:6-9, and declares that the Lord Jesus was referring to the church in Matthew 24:31. In his comments on Matthew 24:31 Rasmussen states, “It is apparent that the elect here are the saints and faithful brethren who constituted the membership of the church.”<sup>32</sup>

Pastor Steven Anderson ignores the words of Moses in Deuteronomy 7:6-9, the prophecy of Zephaniah 3:9-20, Isaiah 65:8-10, and other Old Testament prophecies, and the context of Matthew 24, concerning the restoration and the gathering of the Jews from the four corners of the world and states that the Jews are not the elect. Concerning Matthew 24, Anderson states, “It is very easy to demonstrate that the word ‘elect’ in Matthew 24 is not referring to the Jewish people.”<sup>33</sup>

God, plainly stated, which Anderson ignores, in Deuteronomy 7:6-9 that the Jews are His chosen people, “For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: But the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. 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.” Pastor Anderson says that the Jews are not God’s ‘chosen’ people. Anderson states, “The question is, therefore, who are the elect? Who are God’s chosen people? Many will answer that “the Jews” or “the nation of Israel” are God’s chosen people, but that is a teaching that is blatantly contrary to the word of God.”<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Anderson, Steven, *Who are God’s “Elect as Mentioned in Matthew 24?”* Accessed on: 10 April 2019. Available from: <http://www.faithfulwordbaptist.org/elect.html>; Internet.

<sup>32</sup> Rasmussen, Roland, Dr., *The Post-Trib, Pre-Wrath, Rapture*, (Canoga Park, CA: The Post-Trib Research Center, 1996), p. 126.

<sup>33</sup> Anderson, Steven, *Who are God’s “Elect as Mentioned in Matthew 24?”* Accessed on: 10 April 2019. Available from: <http://www.faithfulwordbaptist.org/elect.html>; Internet.

<sup>34</sup> Anderson, Steven, *Who are God’s “Elect as Mentioned in Matthew 24?”* Accessed on: 10 April 2019. Available from: <http://www.faithfulwordbaptist.org/elect.html>; Internet.

Both Rasmussen and Anderson are incorrect. The elect as spoken by the Lord Jesus in Matthew 24:31, and interpreted by the prophets, is clearly the saved remnant of Jews that escape death by the hands of the anti-Christ during the *time of Jacob's Trouble*.

In conclusion, the prophecy of the gathering of the elect, the chosen of God, the sons of Jacob, the Jews, after the horrific terrors of the 7-Year Tribulation period, was prophesied by the Old Testament prophets and will be fulfilled literally and exactly as they foretold.

The Lord Jesus stated, "...and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." (Matthew 24:31)

## Chapter 5

### The Gathering of Moses

The prophet Jeremiah prophesied in Jeremiah 23: 7 & 8, “Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that they shall no more say, The LORD liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, the LORD liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the land of north country, and from all the countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land.” The children of Israel out of the land of Egypt” has only one correct interpretation, and that is the Exodus of the children of Jacob, the Jews, from the country of Egypt under the leadership of Moses.

Jeremiah said, “The LORD liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt” is a fact of recorded history. The story of the house of Israel, the descendants of Jacob, the Jews, being gathered in Egypt and led out of Egypt by Moses, is recorded in the Book of Exodus to the Book of Deuteronomy. The complete journey of the Exodus of the children of Israel from Egypt concludes when Joshua leads them over the river Jordan into the promised Land after the death of Moses.

The Exodus of the nation of Israel, the physical descendants of Jacob, from Egypt by the leadership of Moses to the Wilderness is without parallel in the history of mankind. The Exodus of the nation of Israel by Moses is also known by all of the religions of the world and even the rulers of the world will comment on the Exodus of Israel from Egypt by Moses.

“...and which the led seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them...” also has only one interpretation, and that is when God drove the Jews out from Jerusalem in 70 A.D., into the four corners of the earth due to their iniquities and the rejection of the Lord Jesus as the Messiah as the Lord Jesus prophesied in Matthew 23:36 & 24:1-3.

“Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that they shall no more say, The LORD liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, the LORD liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the land of north country, and from all the countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land.” (Jeremiah 23:7-8) The only correct interpretation of this prophecy is that the gathering of the house of Israel from the various countries of the world that they have been wandering in since 70 A.D. to be gathered back to the physical land of Israel as written in Matthew 24:29-31 will exceed in greatness then the Exodus from Egypt.

Egypt is a type of the world and the leader, or Pharaoh, of Egypt at the time of Moses was a type of the anti-Christ who will govern the entire world during, *the time of Jacob’s Trouble*, or called *The 7-Year Tribulation Period*.

During the time of the captivity of the Jews in Egypt, they were under extreme distress. For example, in Exodus 1:16 and 22 Pharaoh tried to kill all of the male children of the Jewish women. “And he said, when ye do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women, and see them upon the stools; if it be a son, then ye shall kill him: But if it be a daughter, then she shall live. ... And Pharaoh charged all his people,

saying, Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive.” (Exodus 1:16 & 22)

The 10 plagues by Moses were supernatural plagues from God in order to deliver the Jews from the hand of Pharaoh and bring the entire nation to the Promised Land: Israel. Right after the plague of hail and fire, Exodus 10:7 reveals, “And Pharaoh’s servants said unto him, How long shall this man be a snare unto us? Let the men go, that they may serve the LORD their God: knowest thou not yet that Egypt is destroyed?” The physical destruction of the land of Egypt from the plagues of Moses was to the point that Egypt was destroyed.

By the time of the last plague, the death of the firstborn of all the male men and beasts, the destruction was so great that Pharaoh, and the people, urged them to leave Egypt. The defeated Egyptians testified, “And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste; for they said, We be all dead men.” (Exodus 12:33)

The plagues leading up to the destruction of Egypt occurred only within the confines of the nation of Egypt. But, the destruction of the world under the leadership of the anti-Christ and the plagues of the two prophets, and after the two prophets of Revelation 11:1-13, will be on a world-wide scale. The world-wide destruction during the 7-Year Tribulation Period will be of an intense magnitude that the Lord Jesus prophesied that if the days were not shortened than every human being on the face of the earth would die; “For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened.” (Matthew 24:21-22)

### **The Saving Miracles of Moses**

After the gathering, and Exodus, of the children of Israel by Moses, the Lord performed miracles to save the Jews from the total destruction by the Egyptian army, supply their physical needs, and give victory to the battles along the journey to Israel.

The miracles of Moses as he led the children of Israel out from Egypt are unparalleled to this day. The crossing of the Red Sea by the Jews, and the destruction of Pharaoh and the Egyptian army is so miraculous that there is nothing to compare it too. “For the horse of Pharaoh went in with his chariots and with his horsemen into the sea, and the LORD brought again the waters of the sea upon them; but the children of Israel went on dry land in the midst of the sea.” (Exodus 15:19)

The saving miracles performed by the two prophets, yea, even the earth itself, in the gathering of the Jewish remnant from the persecution of the anti-Christ from the four corners of the earth will surpass the saving miracles of Moses. Concerning the miraculous wonders, on a world-wide scale, of the two prophets we read, “And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.” (Revelation 11:5-6)

We must take note the fire proceeding out of the mouths of the two prophets correspond with the first angel trumpet sounding in Revelation 8:7, “And the first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire

mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of tree was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.”

We must also take note that this miracle to turn water into blood corresponds with the second and third angel pouring out his vials of the wrath of God as recorded in Revelation 16:3-4, “And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man; and every living soul died in the sea. And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and the fountains of waters; and they became blood.” Both the vials of wrath of the second and third angel are performed on a worldwide scale.

The prophecy of Jeremiah when he said, “... and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the land of north country, and from all the countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land” will commence during the latter half of the 7-Year Tribulation period. The earth itself will open up her mouth in order to save the fleeing Jews in the wilderness from the anti-Christ, Satan incarnate, as they gather as a nation as in the days of Moses in the wilderness. “And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.” (Revelation 12:15-16)

Since the time that Jeremiah penned the prophecy of Jeremiah 23:7-8, the prophecy has not fulfilled in any sense of the word, either literally or symbolically. The prophecy by Jeremiah, in Jeremiah 23:7-8, concerning the gathering of the seed of Jacob, the Jews, from the nations of the world under the leadership of the anti-Christ, we be far greater in scope, in magnitude, in duress, in miracles and wonders, than the Exodus of Egypt by Moses. According to Jeremiah, there will come a time when men will not look to the Exodus of Moses from Egypt as a great wonder of God but the gathering of the Jews on a world-wide scale as prophesied by the Lord Jesus in Matthew 24:29-31 and fulfilled ‘after the tribulation.’

### **Anderson’s Unbelief in the prophecy of Jeremiah 23:7-8**

In his remarks concerning Jeremiah 23 and the Independent Baptist Fundamental pastors who believe that Jeremiah’s prophecy is literal and has not been fulfilled, Steven Anderson expresses his unbelief in the prophecy of Jeremiah and belittles the IFB pastors who hold that the prophesy is literal. Anderson states, “Now they [IFB pastors] will show you all kinds of Old Testament scriptures that have no relevance in the New Testament because of the fact that He had to make a new covenant because they [a reference to the Jews] continued not in the covenant. They [the Jews] don't get those promises, it was taken from them and given to the Gentiles. Ok. So they [IFB pastors] will only quote Old Testament stuff from Zechariah and from Jeremiah.” Anderson then states that the verses taken by “old school” IFB's from the Old Testament are, “taken out of context.”<sup>35</sup> The immediate context of Pastor Anderson in stating “stuff,” and “taken out of context,” is Jeremiah 23:7-8

Pastor Anderson, by his mocking tone and the usage of the word ‘stuff’ in his comments of Jeremiah 23:7-8, clearly indicate that he considers the prophecies of the restoration of the nation of Israel as “foolish words or ideas.”

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<sup>35</sup> Anderson, Steven *Jeremiah 23*, Accessed on: 24 November 2018. Available from: [soundcloud.com/bible-preaching/2016-08-17p-jeremiah-23](https://soundcloud.com/bible-preaching/2016-08-17p-jeremiah-23); Internet.

## Chapter 6

### The Gathering by the Great Shepherd

In the context of Jeremiah 23:7-8, we read in Jeremiah 23:1-2 of the false shepherds scattering the flock of the house of Israel.

God gave this prophecy, and promise, that one day, He, will gather the scattered flock of the house of Israel back to the fold of Israel and they, the house of Israel, would again be fruitful in the land. Jeremiah 23:3-4 states, “And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase. And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the LORD.”

The Lord Jesus is the Good Shepherd; God incarnate. “I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.” (John 10:11) As He is the Good Shepherd, the Lord Jesus gave His life for His sheep, “I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.” (John 10:14-15)

Also, more importantly, the Good Shepherd explained, “I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.” (John 10:9) In the days when He walked upon the earth in Israel, the vast majority of the Jews rejected Him and His message of eternal salvation. As a nation, the Jews rejected Him as the Messiah. Therefore, the Jews, as a nation, have found no salvation, and no pasture of peace and safety, and have been spiritually blind since then.

But, the day is coming, as foretold by the prophets, Jeremiah 31:30-31 and Isaiah 27:9 for example, and foretold by the apostle Paul in Romans 11:26-27, that the Jews, as a nation, would repent of their unbelief, and receive the Lord Jesus as the Christ, the Messiah as foretold by the prophets, and be saved. At that time, the Lord Jesus will gather them as sheep gathers the flock. Romans 11:26-28 states, “And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved of the father’s sakes.” In Matthew 24:31, the Lord Jesus, the Good Shepherd, is gathering the house of Israel back to the fold of Israel.

The American Heritage dictionary meaning for “gather” is: “»v. **1a.** To bring or come together. **b.** To draw (someone or something) closer to oneself. **c.** to draw (e. g., cloth) into small folds or puckers. **2.** To harvest or pick. **3.** To conclude; infer; *I gather you're ready.* **4.** To summon up: *gathered up my courage.* **5.** To accumulate gradually: *The bookshelf gathered dust.* **6.** To gain by process of gradual increase: *gather speed* »n. **1.** An act of gathering. **2.** A small fold or pucker in cloth. - gatherer *n.* - gathering *n.*”<sup>36</sup>

In the context of Jeremiah 23:7-8, Isaiah 11:11-12, Matthew 23:37-39, and Matthew 24:31, the meaning of the word “gathering” is to bring the Jews, the elect, in a gradual process, from the four winds of the earth, from every nation, as Moses gathered the house of Israel together in Egypt, as a hen gathers her

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<sup>36</sup>“Gather.” The American Heritage Language Dictionary, (New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2012).

chicks, and the shepherd gathers his flocks, back to the nation of Israel. The word gather, in the context of the above verses, does not mean a rising in the air, the rapture, to meet the Lord Jesus in the air. The works of Moses, specifically the gathering of the house of Israel in the Exodus, will pale in comparison to the works of the Lord Jesus in the gathering of the house of Israel from the entire world.

Therefore, the 'elect' that the Lord Jesus refers to in Matthew 24:31 is the saved remnant of the house of Israel that is gathered from the entire world and returned to the land of Israel during the 7-Year Tribulation period.

## **Conclusion**

Therefore, it is an inescapable conclusion that in Matthew 24:29-31 the Lord Jesus referred to the fulfillment of the prophecies of the prophets Isaiah, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Zechariah, Zephaniah, Amos, and Hosea. The gathering of the elect is the gathering of the remnant of the Jewish people after the tribulation period to the land of Israel by the angels blowing trumpets for the gathering of the camp to the tabernacle as revealed in Numbers 10:1-10.

## Chapter 7

### The Gathering of the Church Age Saints

Since the scattering of the Jewish nation in 70 A. D. God is primarily dealing with the saved Gentiles in the *dispensation of the grace of God*, as recorded in Ephesians 3:1-6. The apostle Paul taught, “For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles. If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward. If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward. How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ). Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel.” (Ephesians 3:1-6)

The *dispensation of the grace of God* is also called, *the dispensation of grace* or *the church age*. During the church age, God is working primarily with the Gentile saints in lieu of the Jewish saints due to their unbelief and iniquities. The Lord Jesus, in reference to the Jewish leaders in His age, stated, “Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.” (Matthew 21:43) The *nation* that it is given to is the church age saints as recorded in 1 Peter 2:4-10, “To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious. Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.”

Please take very careful note of the following three items concerning the words of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 21:43 and by the Apostle Peter in 1 Peter 2:4-12 and the errors of the doctrine of Replacement Theology:

1. The *kingdom of God* was given to the church age saints. Not one Old Testament Covenant, prophecy, or promise, was given to the church-age saints. All of the blessings given to the saints in the church age are spiritual and in the heaven. Not one physical, or literal, or tangible promise, such as land, is promised.
2. Not one word is mentioned to the church age saints, *replacing*, as in *Replacement Theology*, the nation of Israel.
3. In our previous mentioning of Romans 11:17-29, we discovered that the Gentile saints are *grafted into* the good olive tree, the nation of Israel, and does not *replace* the olive tree or be a separate tree of any kind. In Ephesians 3:1-6 the Apostle Paul says that the Gentile saints are fellow-heirs, *of the*

*same body*, and *partakers*, of the promises, through Christ: not one word is mentioned of the church age saints replacing the promises given to the Jewish saints.

Please take careful note that, according to Romans 11:17-29 and Ephesians 3:1-6, the Gentile saints would be *follow-heirs* and *of the same body* and *partakers of the good Olive Tree*, or the chosen of God. The saved Gentiles did not replace the chosen, or elect, (saved) Jews and given the promises of the Old Testament prophets. But, the Gentiles were *fellow-heirs* and *partaker of the same body* of the chosen, or elect, Jews in the Old Testament. The doctrine of *Replacement Theology*, and its attendant symbolic prophecies supposedly given to the church, is in grievous error. In this study I will continue to do so and I will state that *the dispensation of the grace of God* or *the church age saints* are fellow-heirs of the grace of God and are partaker of the same body as the Old Testament saints and have not replaced the saints in the Old Testament. Also, it is my belief that that *the dispensation of the grace of God* will end at the start of the 7-Year Tribulation Period and that God will restore the nation of Israel *after the tribulation*.

Therefore, in this study the phrase, *the dispensation of the grace of God* and *the church-age saints* will be used interchangeably and will mean from the start of church until the Second Coming of Christ, called the Rapture, at the end of the church age as signified by the example of John the Apostle in Revelation 4:1 and before the start of, *The Time of Jacob's Trouble*, also called *The 7-Year Tribulation Period*.

The apostle Paul stated, “Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon be shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.” (2 Thessalonians 2:1-2) Very obviously, somebody had been teaching the Thessalonian saints that the coming of the Lord Jesus, the rapture, the day of Christ, that Paul taught in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, the *gathering together* had already happened, and they were troubled. The apostle Paul was trying to assure the saints that they should not be troubled as due to the fact that since the anti-Christ has not been revealed yet.

In both of his epistles to the Thessalonian church, Paul wrote extensively of the Second Coming of Christ for the church. In 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 Paul wrote, “But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which 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. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”

The Thessalonians saints were concerned that for some reason they missed the second coming. As with all doctrines of the scripture, false teachers have their own ideas concerning the second coming of Christ.

## **Looking for the anti-Christ**

In our age, false teachers are not only teaching a-millennialism and its attendant doctrine, Replacement Theology, but are now teaching a new doctrine that the saints in the church age will go through the horrific 7-Year Tribulation Period and that the rapture is at the end of the 7-Year Tribulation Period. This teaching is called, “The Post-Trib, Pre-Wrath, Rapture.” As with the false teachers at Thessalonica, “The Post-Trib, Pre-Wrath, Rapture” teaching is causing much confusion and much troubling among the saints.

For example, instead of waiting for Christ, these false teachers are telling us to prepare for meet the anti-Christ. In his book, *The Post-Trib, Pre-Wrath, Rapture*, on the back page of the book, in bold print, Dr. Roland Rasmussen states, “**Are YOU ready to face the Antichrist?**”<sup>37</sup> Rasmussen further states, “If you look, you can see the end of the age rapidly approaching, and the stage being set for the emergence of the Antichrist.”<sup>38</sup>

Dr. Roland Rasmussen very plainly stated, “Therefore, since the elect are saints or brethren who constitute the membership of the churches, it must be concluded that the church will go through the Great Tribulation and be tried by the Devil at the hand of the Antichrist.”<sup>39</sup> Rasmussen’s reasoning and conclusions are both in error.

Pastor Anderson believes that the next prophetic event recorded in the scriptures is not the coming of Christ in the air, as recorded in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. Pastor Anderson is not waiting for the Lord Jesus to come at any time. Anderson is waiting for the anti-Christ. Anderson believes that the next prophetic event is the coming of the anti-Christ during the Tribulation Period, not Christ.

Anderson also incorrectly believes that the events during the Tribulation Period are not caused by God, the Lamb, i.e. supernaturally, but are all natural occurring events. Anderson states, “The next thing that we will see happen prophetically is what is called the tribulation. ... A lot of horrible things will be happening. Well, out of all this warfare and cataclysm that will be taking place during the tribulation, (not supernatural cataclysm, not God raining fire and brimstone, but rather natural disasters, warfare, famine, caused by human beings) there is going to be a man that will emerge and become a dictator of the entire world who is known as “the antichrist.”<sup>40</sup>

The unbelief of Anderson in stating that the horrific events in the Tribulation Period are not supernatural, “*but rather natural disasters, warfare, famine, caused by human beings,*” is astounding for a person who claims to be a fundamentalist. The opening up of the Six Seals in Revelation 6, the opening up of the Seventh Seal, containing the Seven Angels with Seven Trumpets in Revelation 8:1, the Seven Thunders in Revelation 10:3, the Seven with Seven Vials containing the seven last plagues in Revelation 15, are all supernatural events coming directly from the throne of God in heaven.

As with the 10 plagues in Egypt (Exodus 7:19-12:30), being supernatural events from God Himself from His throne in heaven, beginning with the opening up of the Seven Seals by the Lamb, the Lord Jesus, from His throne in heaven, the entire Seven Year Tribulation Period is one supernatural event after

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<sup>37</sup> Rasmussen, Roland, Dr., *The Post-Trib, Pre-Wrath, Rapture*, (Canoga Park, CA: The Post-Trib Research Center, 1996), Back Cover.

<sup>38</sup> Rasmussen, Roland, Dr., *The Post-Trib, Pre-Wrath, Rapture*, (Canoga Park, CA: The Post-Trib Research Center, 1996), p. 245.

<sup>39</sup> Rasmussen, Roland, Dr., *The Post-Trib, Pre-Wrath, Rapture*, (Canoga Park, CA: The Post-Trib Research Center, 1996), p. 131.

<sup>40</sup> Anderson, Stephen, *After the Tribulation*, Accessed on: 6 December 2018. Available from: [http://www.faithfulwordbaptist.org/after\\_the\\_tribulation.html](http://www.faithfulwordbaptist.org/after_the_tribulation.html); Internet.

another. “And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see.” Revelation 6:1. As one reads Revelation 6:1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 12 and 8:1 it is plainly evident the Lamb, the Lord Jesus sitting and reigning on His throne in heaven, is the one, not an angel, opening the Seven Seals. For Pastor Steven Anderson to state that all the horrific judgments produced by the opening of the seals are not supernatural is an example of his unbelief, lack of spiritual discernment, and the inability to interpret the Book of Revelation correctly.

Furthermore, the teaching that the events in the Bible, including the Book of Revelation, are not supernatural is one of the hallmarks of the ‘*Higher Criticism*’ of the critics of the Bible.

Concerning the unbelief of the supernatural by the scholars of the *Higher Criticism Movement*, emanating from Europe, to around the world, the editors, R. A. Torrey and A. C. Dixon, of *The Fundamentals – A Testimony To The Truth, Vol. 1*, states, “ANTI-SUPERNATURALISTS - In the third place, the dominant men of the movement were men with a strong bias against the supernatural.”<sup>41</sup>

Therefore, Pastor Anderson cannot properly interpret Matthew 24:29-31 as he does not have a proper understanding of the scriptures when it comes to prophesy and the supernatural work of God.

### **False Teaching and Matthew 24:29-31**

The Jehovah’s Witnesses state that the Jews will never be a restored nation, “The facts and prophecies prove that the natural Jews will never again be a chosen, regathered people. They have as a people flagrantly rejected the Messiah, his truth and his kingdom. It is a false hope that they must be regathered to Palestine and be converted in mass to Jesus Christ prior to his second coming and as a sign of the early establishment of his kingdom.”<sup>42</sup>

In fact, the Jehovah’s Witnesses teach that they are the elect in Matthew 24:31 and that the regathering has already occurred, “After a period of interruption of their proclamation during World War 1 these servants of Jehovah were regathered and reorganized and commissioned to perform a still greater work (Matthew 24:31).”<sup>43</sup>

The Seventh Day Adventists teach that the events of Matthew 24:29, and by way context verse 30-31, along with Revelation 6:13, was fulfilled symbolically on 1833. Mrs. Ellen G. White states, “In 1833, two years after Miller began to present in public the evidences of Christ’s soon coming, the last of the signs appeared which were promised by the Saviour as tokens of His second advent. Said Jesus: “The stars shall fall from heaven.” Matthew 24:29. And John in the Revelation declared, as he beheld in vision the scenes that should herald the day of God: “The stars from heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.” Revelation 6:13. This prophecy received a striking and impressive fulfillment in the great meteoric shower of November 13, 1833.”<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> R. A. Torrey and A. C. Dixon, eds., *The Fundamentals – A Testimony of the Truth, Vol. 1*, (Rio, WI: The Ages Digital Library, Version 1.0, 2000), p. 9.

<sup>42</sup> *Let God Be True*, (Brooklyn, NY: Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, 1946), p. 208-209.

<sup>43</sup> *Let God Be True*, (Brooklyn, NY: Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, 1946), p. 250.

<sup>44</sup> White, Ellen G., *The Great Controversy*, Accessed on: 21 Nov. 2018. Available from: [www.end-times-prophecy.org/GreatControversy.pdf](http://www.end-times-prophecy.org/GreatControversy.pdf); p.333; Internet.

Pastor Steven Anderson and Pastor Roger Jimenez, both ministers in the New IFB movement, teach that the gathering together of the “elect” in Matthew 24:29-31 is a reference to the rapture of the church saints as taught in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

In the film, “After the Tribulation,” in a running conversation concerning the rapture of the church age saints, quoted as written in the pdf copy of the film, Anderson and Jimenez stated:

(Matthew 24:31) and he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. Pastor Anderson: All the same elements! Jesus is coming in the clouds. A trumpet sounds. He sends the angels to gather his elect. Pastor Jimenez: The reason I showed you this is that I wanted you to understand that in Matthew 24:29-31, we see the rapture, and when we compare it to 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17, it matches up perfectly.”<sup>45</sup>

The beliefs of the Seventh Day Adventists, the Jehovah’s Witnesses, Dr. Rasmussen, and Pastor Anderson with Pastor Jimenez, concerning the elect in Matthew 24:29-31 as being the saints in the church age are all in error. The passages of Matthew 24:29-31 and 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 do not match up perfectly as Pastor Jimenez in his conversation with Pastor Anderson states.

### **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 and Matthew 24:31 Contrasted**

We will contrast the words of Paul the apostle in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 with the words of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 24:29-31 in order to determine if the two passages speak of the same event.

The apostle Paul taught in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, “But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which 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. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”

The Lord Jesus prophesied in Matthew 24:29-31, “Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” (Matthew 24:29-31)

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<sup>45</sup> Anderson, Steven, *After the Tribulation*, Accessed on: 6 Dec. 2018. Available from: [http://www.faithfulwordbaptist.org/after\\_the\\_tribulation.html](http://www.faithfulwordbaptist.org/after_the_tribulation.html) ; Internet.

1. The dead bodies of the saints are raised in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

There is no resurrection of any dead saints in Matthew 24:31, There is a “gathering” of the living people and not a “rising” of dead people and live people in the air. In the context, the word “gathering” is a bringing together of the elect: the chosen seed of Jacob.

2. The bodies of the dead saints are changed and ascend to be with the Lord Jesus in the clouds in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

There are no dead bodies of any saint ascending to meet the Lord in the air in Matthew 24:31.

3. Only saints are involved in the coming with the Lord Jesus, the ascension of the dead and live saints, to meet the Lord in the air as recorded in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. Paul brings this truth out as a “*comfort*” to all concerned. There is no mourning of the tribes of the earth recorded, or even hinted at, in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

Matthew 24:30 states, “... all of the tribes of the earth shall mourn.” This in direct contrast, and opposition to, with 1 Thessalonians 4:18 when the scriptures state, “*Wherefore comfort one another with these words.*”

4. In the Bible, Numbers 10:1-10, we have various usages for the blowing of trumpets by the Jews. In Exodus 19:13, 16 & 19, we have the trumpet of God not the Jews sounding trumpets.

In addition, in Revelation 8:2 we have the seven angels with seven trumpets. Revelation 8:2 states, “And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets.” The archangel is clearly a separate angel, with special duties apart from the seven angels with the seven trumpets.

In 1 Thessalonians 4:16 we read, “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.” This trumpet sounding is called, “the trump of God” and is heralded by an “archangel.” This is the “last trump” as spoken of in 1 Corinthians 15:51-52. 1 Corinthians 15:51 and 52 states, “Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.”

In 1 Corinthians 15:51, the saints are *changed*. In Matthew 24:31, nobody is *changed*.

And in Matthew 24:31, the angels – plural – are blowing trumpets; there is no archangel at all. Again, the angels in Matthew 24:31 are different angels from the archangel in 1 Thessalonians 4:16 and 1 Corinthians 15:52

Anderson presumes just because both of these passages, along with 1 Corinthians 15:52, have a trumpet sounding that they are all the same. Anderson's presumption is speculation based on an inadequate study of the different trumpets in the Bible, who uses them, whether or not it is an angel, or an arch-angel blowing, “the trump of God,” and for what reasons. Anderson and his followers completely ignore the different uses of the trumpets in Numbers 10:1-10, the prophecy of the gathering of the Jews in Jeremiah

23:7-8, the prophecy of Isaiah in Isaiah 11:11-12, the prophet Ezekiel in Ezekiel 28:24-26, and the prophet Hosea in Hosea 5:15.

And, more sadly, Steven Anderson, and his followers, completely ignores the words and prophecy of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 23:37-39.

## **Conclusion**

Therefore, in Matthew 24:29-31 the Lord Jesus is referring to the fulfillment of the prophecies of the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Micah, Zechariah, Daniel, Hosea and Zephaniah, in gathering the Jews back to the land of Israel and it is not referring to the rapture of the church age saints. The gathering of the elect is the gathering of the remnant of the Jewish race after escaping the horrors of the tribulation period. As God's chosen people, as a nation, will once again be the saved elect of God as recorded by Moses in Deuteronomy 7:6-9 and the apostle Paul as taught in Romans 11:1-36.

The Lord Jesus is going to send angels blowing trumpets to gather the chosen of God back to the land of Israel according to the gathering of the camps as recorded in Numbers 10:1-10.

The prophet Amos prophesied, Amos 8:9-10, "And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord GOD, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day: And I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation; and I will bring up sackcloth upon all loins, and baldness upon every head; and I will make it as the mourning of an only son, and the end thereof as a bitter day."

*After the tribulation*, as revealed in Revelation 1:7, Zechariah 12:9-14, and Amos 8:9-10, the Jews, as a nation, will realize their horrendously terrible mistake of the rejection of the Lord Jesus as the Messiah. As a nation, the Jews will repent, and sincerely mourn for their sins, their iniquities, and their unbelief in Christ.

The prophecy of the gathering from the entire earth, national repentance, mourning, and salvation of the Jews as a nation will exceed in such a magnitude that the Exodus by Moses from Egypt will pale in comparison as a small footnote in history.

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