

---

THE BOOK OF REVELATION – DAY 2 - ‘THE THINGS WHICH WILL TAKE PLACE AFTER THIS’

---

*‘The things which will take place after this.’*

The book of Revelation is written by John, at Jesus’ command, for onward transmission to the Church and anyone who will read it. And in Revelation 4 we move into the third part of the instruction given to John by Jesus – to write the things which must come to pass *‘after this’* or *‘hereafter’* where John is given a revelation of the judgements of God which are to come upon the unbelieving nations during the final stages of the history of Israel.

If ever there was an example of grace before judgement, the book of Revelation is it. Jesus clearly tells us what is to come, no-one who reads this book can be in any doubt about Who Jesus is, what He has done to redeem us and what is to come if they persist in their unbelief and rebellion.

It is in the utmost goodness and grace of God that He warns us exactly what He will do – nearly 2,000 years before He plans to do it.

Chapters 4 - 22 then, tell us what is to happen **after** the culmination of the church age when the church has been bodily removed from the earth. Anyone reading this book after the church has gone would be in no doubt at all about what had happened.

**Revelation 4:1 – 2**

*<sup>1</sup>After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said “Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this”. <sup>2</sup>At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it.’*

The words *‘after this’* or in some versions *‘hereafter’* indicates that what follows from chapter four onward covers the events **following** the time of the seven churches. The invitation to John is not a symbol of the Rapture, as is sometimes understood, as the church is already seen as being in heaven.

This is a personal invitation to John to come up to the place where he can receive the rest of the prophecy and see the heavenly battle plan.

Having settled yesterday -

- We will not be around when judgement comes on the earth, because it is the time of **Jacob's** trouble
- God doesn’t judge the righteous with the wicked and
- We are in the dispensation of the church

Let's begin with Revelation 4: 3 – 11 and what John sees when he receives this personal invitation to 'Come up here' -

### **Revelation 4:3 – 11**

*<sup>3</sup>And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald. <sup>4</sup> Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads. <sup>5</sup>And from the throne proceeded lightening, thundering, and voices. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. <sup>6</sup>Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne and around the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back. <sup>7</sup>The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle. <sup>8</sup>And the four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night saying: "Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!" <sup>9</sup>Whenever the living creatures give glory and honour and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, <sup>10</sup> the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: <sup>11</sup> "You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power; for You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created."*

John has already described the things which he saw – the Glorified Son of Man, Jesus in all His splendour, the goodness of God revealed - coming in judgement walking through the candlesticks of the seven churches. His feet like burnished bronze and a sharp two edged sword coming from His mouth, all indicating His judgement of things which displeased him about His Bride, as He gave John the letters to the seven churches of Asia and time for the churches to repent.

Now John sees something even more astonishing - and we cannot read this passage without remembering Ezekiel's vision of the throne room and the four living creatures. Like Ezekiel before him, John has to use the word 'like' because he has never seen anything so amazing, fearful and wonderful. At once terrified and fascinated, he desperately tries to describe to us what met his eyes and what he heard – lightening, thundering and voices, lamps of fire burning before the throne, a sea of glass, living creatures...Everything giving glory to God in the Highest. And 24 elders falling down, casting their crowns before the throne.

#### ***The four and twenty elders:***

Around the throne which flashed and glittered he sees these twenty four other thrones with the elders wearing white robes, which speak of salvation, seated and wearing golden crowns.

These crowns do not speak of the *diadem* worn by those who are royal by birth, a symbol of kingly or imperial dignity, but are *stephanos* – which are wreaths and a sign of victory, such as were awarded for winners of the Olympic games or a contest, these wreaths of ivy, oak, parsley, myrtle or olive leaves are made of gold, *these* are the overcomers, and *these* are the crowns received as rewards to the members of the church at the Judgement or *Bema* Seat of Christ.

From this we understand that chronologically, the events of chapters 4 and 5 occur **after** the Judgement Seat of Christ, the Bema seat, the judgement of believers works, and therefore **after** the Rapture or catching away of the saints, but **before** the Marriage of the Lamb.

### **The Bema Seat:**

Before we go any further, I want to clear up any misunderstanding about judgement seats and whether the believer will ever stand before the Great White Throne. The answer is categorically, 'No'. Your sin was judged in Jesus on Calvary, the only thing that will ever stand judgement is your works done in the body, and that for the purpose of reward.

### **1 Corinthians 3:11-15 -**

*<sup>11</sup>For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. <sup>12</sup>Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, <sup>13</sup>each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. <sup>14</sup>If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. <sup>15</sup>If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.'*

This judgement of works is based on **quality**, not quantity; it will not be a question of how much gold, silver or precious stones; the question will be was it wood, hay or stubble, or gold silver and precious stones. If a believer is doing the will of God, obeying His commands, and fulfilling the ministry for which he received his spiritual gifts, there will be a reward because he is building on a good foundation of gold silver and precious stones. If, however, a believer is drifting along doing his own thing, not concerned about falling short in these things, then he is building on wood, hay and stubble, and the fire which tests the work, will consume them and leave nothing of value.

What then determines the quality of our works? The parable of the sower is a good example. All the seed was of fine quality, but the ground or soil has the potential to bring forth, thirty, sixty, one hundred fold. Some people doubt that hundredfold production is possible. It would mean that for every one grain you put into the ground a hundred more would be produced – imagine the impact if every believer was turning out produce one hundred fold! It all depends on the quality of the soil. By that I mean, how receptive are you to God? If you are not top quality ground, then even top quality seed will not produce a hundredfold. It may only produce sixtyfold, thirtyfold or less. You may only produce one-fold, in which case you will just about duplicate yourself, that's all.

Only the Holy Spirit can actually produce any good in us at all and it is only as the Lord deals with our lives, and we allow this dealing that the Holy Spirit can change our character and start flowing through us, enabling us to do the works, the good works, that God has prepared in advance for us to do.

That is the only genuine production there is – the flesh counts nothing. It cannot produce good works, nor can it produce good fruit. It is all His life, flowing through us, only one life to be lived, His through us. Vessels only precious Master.

The believers we saw around the throne were those who had won crowns – Paul says, henceforth is laid up for me the crown of righteousness. There are crowns to be won, there is a race to be run.

**1 Corinthians 9:25** Paul speaking -

*'<sup>25</sup>Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a **crown** (stephanos) that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.'*

So our works will be judged shortly after the Rapture of the church, each one of us will stand before Jesus with our little bag of works and He will throw in on the fire to see if it endures. And whether you have done hundreds of good works or none we shall be forever with the Lord, the loss we sustain will be loss of reward, not loss of salvation.

*'If it is burned up, **he will suffer loss**; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames'.*

I trust that has cleared up any questions you might have had and encouraged you to press on into God, into all He has for you in these last days.

***The Seven Spirits before the throne:***

We see mention of these in -

***Isaiah 11:2*** where they are attributed to the Holy Spirit –

*<sup>2</sup>The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him,  
The Spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
The Spirit of counsel and might,  
The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD. '*

It is at this point we begin to see how the book of Revelation draws Old Testament scriptures to itself and puts them into context.

Isaiah saw the throne room and the seraphim

***Isaiah 6:1 – 3 –***

*<sup>1</sup>In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple. <sup>2</sup>Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. <sup>3</sup>And one cried to another and said "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!"*

And in Ezekiel 1: 4-28 we see the same thing with Ezekiel falling on his face before the vision of the Almighty and he describes the living creatures which he saw –

***Ezekiel 1: 4-28 -***

*<sup>1</sup>Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, on the fifth day of the month, as I was among the captives by the River Chebar, that the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God. <sup>2</sup> On the fifth day of the month, which was in the fifth year of King Jehoiachin's captivity, <sup>3</sup> the word of the*

LORD came expressly to Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the River Chebar; and the hand of the LORD was upon him there.<sup>4</sup> Then I looked, and behold, a whirlwind was coming out of the north, a great cloud with raging fire engulfing itself; and brightness was all around it and radiating out of its midst like the color of amber, out of the midst of the fire.<sup>5</sup> Also from within it came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance: they had the likeness of a man.<sup>6</sup> Each one had four faces, and each one had four wings.<sup>7</sup> Their legs were straight, and the soles of their feet were like the soles of calves' feet. They sparkled like the color of burnished bronze.<sup>8</sup> The hands of a man were under their wings on their four sides; and each of the four had faces and wings.<sup>9</sup> Their wings touched one another. The creatures did not turn when they went, but each one went straight forward.<sup>10</sup> As for the likeness of their faces, each had the face of a man; each of the four had the face of a lion on the right side, each of the four had the face of an ox on the left side, and each of the four had the face of an eagle.<sup>11</sup> Thus were their faces. Their wings stretched upward; two wings of each one touched one another, and two covered their bodies.<sup>12</sup> And each one went straight forward; they went wherever the spirit wanted to go, and they did not turn when they went.<sup>13</sup> As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, like the appearance of torches going back and forth among the living creatures. The fire was bright, and out of the fire went lightning.<sup>14</sup> And the living creatures ran back and forth, in appearance like a flash of lightning.<sup>15</sup> Now as I looked at the living creatures, behold, a wheel was on the earth beside each living creature with its four faces.<sup>16</sup> The appearance of the wheels and their workings was like the color of beryl, and all four had the same likeness. The appearance of their workings was, as it were, a wheel in the middle of a wheel.<sup>17</sup> When they moved, they went toward any one of four directions; they did not turn aside when they went.<sup>18</sup> As for their rims, they were so high they were awesome; and their rims were full of eyes, all around the four of them.<sup>19</sup> When the living creatures went, the wheels went beside them; and when the living creatures were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up.<sup>20</sup> Wherever the spirit wanted to go, they went, because there the spirit went; and the wheels were lifted together with them, for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels.<sup>21</sup> When those went, these went; when those stood, these stood; and when those were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up together with them, for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels.<sup>22</sup> The likeness of the firmament above the heads of the living creatures was like the color of an awesome crystal, stretched out over their heads.<sup>23</sup> And under the firmament their wings spread out straight, one toward another. Each one had two which covered one side, and each one had two which covered the other side of the body.<sup>24</sup> When they went, I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of many waters, like the voice of the Almighty, a tumult like the noise of an army; and when they stood still, they let down their wings.<sup>25</sup> A voice came from above the firmament that was over their heads; whenever they stood, they let down their wings.<sup>26</sup> And above the firmament over their heads was the likeness of a throne, in appearance like a sapphire stone; on the likeness of the throne was a likeness with the appearance of a man high above it.<sup>27</sup> Also from the appearance of His waist and upward I saw, as it were, the color of amber with the appearance of fire all around within it; and from the appearance of His waist and downward I saw, as it were, the appearance of fire with brightness all around.<sup>28</sup> Like the appearance of a rainbow in a cloud on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the brightness all around it. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD.'

We can see from these parallel passages, that Isaiah, Ezekiel and John had the same experience, with each seeing different aspects of the glory of God in the heavenly places whilst carried away in the Spirit.

## **Revelation 5: 1 – 7**

The Lamb Takes the Scroll:

*‘<sup>1</sup>And I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals. <sup>2</sup> Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?” <sup>3</sup> And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it. <sup>4</sup>So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it. <sup>5</sup>But one of the elders said to me, “Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals.” <sup>6</sup> And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth. <sup>7</sup>Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.’*

The 7 sealed scroll is the **title deed to the earth**, and John weeps because he knows that as long as this deed is sealed, Satan is still in control of the earth.

As Adam gave the deed away to Satan, none but the One who triumphantly won it back is worthy to open it and the angel reassures John that the Lion of the Tribe of Judah has prevailed and is therefore qualified to both open the book and break the seals.

The phrase *‘a Lamb as though it had been slain’* is a Hebrew idiom for one who has been **resurrected**, hence the Lamb looks as though it should be dead, but is very much alive! The eyes on the Lamb signify that nothing is hidden from His sight all things are open to Him with Whom we have to do. The Spirit of wisdom counsel and might which we saw in Isaiah 11 rests on Him. The horns on the Lamb represent strength and power – *this Lamb isn’t weak*.

The reference to the Lion and the Lamb indicate both Jesus first and second coming. He came as a **Lamb**, but will return as the **Lion** of the Tribe of Judah with judgement and with great power and authority, so the moment Jesus takes the scroll, from the hand of His Father, all heaven breaks forth with a crescendo and worships – *‘worthy is the Lamb’* -

Worthy is the Lamb:

## **Revelation 5: 8 - 14**

*<sup>8</sup>Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. <sup>9</sup>And they sang a new song, saying: “You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; for You were slain. And have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, <sup>10</sup>and have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth.” <sup>11</sup>Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, <sup>12</sup>saying with a loud voice: “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honor and glory and blessing!” <sup>13</sup>And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying: “Blessing and honor and glory and power be to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb,*

*forever and ever!" <sup>14</sup>Then the four living creatures said, "Amen!" And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshipped Him who lives forever and ever.'*

Here we are given a rare glimpse of the absolute enormity of the numbers of those already in heaven and worshipping with the angels, '*ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands*' – in other words, beyond counting - worshipping the Lamb of God who alone is worthy to open the title deed of the earth. They are fully aware of their position as kings and priests and of the fact that they will reign and rule with Him on the renewed earth.

Chapters 4 and 5 then describe events in heaven ***preceding*** the Tribulation but after the Rapture of the church.

### ***The 7 years of the Tribulation:***

The Tribulation time of 7 years can be split into two halves, with the first half being split into two quarters.

### ***The first quarter of the Tribulation:***

As we approach Chapter 6 we enter the **first quarter** of the Tribulation.

With the opening of the seven sealed scroll in the hand of Jesus, the Tribulation judgements begin.

Chapters 6, 8-9 and 16 are keys. From now on it is not difficult to take the book chronologically because we see infill detail popped in between chapters, as a commentary to help us understand what is happening on the ***earth***, as the judgements are released in ***heaven***.

### ***The second quarter of the Tribulation:***

And the opening of the 7th seal introduces the 7 trumpets which indicate we are carried into the ***second quarter*** of the Tribulation which is described in chapters 8 and 9.

The 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet, in turn, signals the 7 bowl judgements, which comprise the ***last half*** of the Tribulation.

Everything else between Chapters 7 – 8 must be placed within the consecutive events of these three judgements.

### ***The last half of the Tribulation:***

The ***last half*** of the Tribulation ushers in the time when the antichrist is in complete control as world leader.

An easy way of looking at this is to imagine a firework display, with the fireworks exploding in sequence, and then one explodes into seven others, then just when they are almost gone, one bursts into several more.

### ***The role of Angels in the Tribulation:***

As we come to examine these judgements of God upon a largely unrepentant world, I want to highlight the role of the angels.

I believe the Lord would have us become much more aware of their ministry to us and to unbelievers, His loving care is over all He has made and we are currently in a time of great grace and favour.

Incidentally, if you want to know more about angels, you need to get 'Giants and Angels', which is Number 19 in the "Passing the Baton" series, dated 25th October 2008.

As we look at these horrendous judgements which are coming on the earth as the seals are broken and the trumpets sound, and the vials poured out, we see God's battle plan being unfolded and carried out by the angelic beings.

***Each time something catastrophic happens on earth, it is as a result of an action in heaven.***

First the scroll which Jesus takes in Revelation 5 is preceded by an angel who is described as 'strong', asking a rhetorical question - "Who is worthy to open the scroll?"

Jesus, as we have already seen, is the only one found worthy to open the scroll so begins the first in a series of cataclysmic events that begin in heaven and are consummated on the earth.

As these judgements unfold we see **angels** holding back the four winds of the earth (Revelation 7:1). Another giving God's instructions (Revelation 7:2) yet another sealing the 144,000 (Revelation 7:3) and in verse 11 we see them worshipping around the throne.

In Chapter 8:2 they are given trumpets, in verse 3 a censer, verse 7 the first **angel** blows a blast the things start to happen on the earth. **Toot!** Something happens on the earth. You can trace this right the way through the book.

In ancient times when kings went to battle, they would stand on a hill surveying the battle lines. From this position the kings would instruct the trumpeters to sound to announce that the next phase of the battle was to begin: **blow!** The archers fire, **blow!** Cavalry charge, and so on in sequence. This is what we are seeing with the angels in heaven, as God instructs them, they carry out those instructions and the result is experienced on the earth.

***What event starts the Tribulation?***

The trigger for commencement of these events is the signing of a 7 year covenant – the Jews with the Antichrist - this marks the **start** of the 7 years Tribulation period. We will see this later when we come to look at the book of Daniel.

***The Rapture of the church is not the event which starts the opening of the seals and the judgements, but the signing of this contract.***

We must always keep in mind that this whole time of immense trouble on the earth is primarily the time of the trouble of Jacob, therefore, it is what is happening with the Jewish nation, that is key to the accurate understanding and interpretation of the events of the Tribulation time and the time leading up to it.



***It is as Israel plays their part that the events prophesied in Daniel 9:24 -27 unfold.***

We will be examining these scriptures in detail in a moment, but for now it is worth taking time to look at the way the Old Testament described this time which was to come on the earth. This will help you in your interpretation of the Old Testament scriptures, enabling you to place the events accurately.

The most common name for the Great Tribulation in the Old Testament is – ***‘the Day of Jehovah’, ‘that Day’ or ‘the Day of the Lord’***. I did a search on the free [www.BibleGateway.com](http://www.BibleGateway.com) site on ‘that day’ and I found so many references it was overwhelming, but if you have time it would be well worth a look, you will see then how many times the Old Testament makes reference to the coming Day of judgement and incidentally, the restoration of the Jewish nation.

In every passage of the scriptures where these terms are found it is always, without exception, a reference to the Tribulation period. You can also see these terms used in the New Testament.

*Jeremiah 30:7 (American Standard Version 1901 edition)*

***‘7 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.’***

*Zephaniah 1:15 (American Standard Version)*

***‘15 That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness,’***

Here we have a list of adjectives describing the trouble of ***‘that day’*** – distress, wasteness, desolation, darkness, gloominess, clouds and thick darkness.

This is not the only place you find these warning descriptive passages.

***Isaiah 28:21*** - Jehovah’s *‘strange work’* or *‘strange act’*

***‘21 For Jehovah will rise up as in mount Perazim, he will be wrath as in the valley of Gibeon; that he may do his work, his strange work, and bring to pass his act, his strange act.’***

***Deuteronomy 4:30*** - the Tribulation

***‘30 When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, in the latter days thou shalt return to Jehovah thy God, and hearken unto his voice:’***

***Deuteronomy 32:35, and Obadiah 12 and 14*** - the Day of Israel's calamity

***‘35 Vengeance is mine, and recompense, at the time when their foot shall slide: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that are to come upon them shall make haste.’***

<sup>12</sup>But look not thou on the day of thy brother in the day of **his disaster**, and rejoice not over the children of Judah in the day of their **destruction**; neither speak proudly in the day of **distress**.<sup>14</sup> And stand thou not in the crossway, to cut off those of his that escape; and deliver not up those of his that remain in the day of distress.'

The Indignation - **Isaiah 26:20, Daniel 11:36**

<sup>20</sup> Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself for a little moment, until the **indignation** be overpast'.

<sup>36</sup>And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods; and he shall prosper till the **indignation** be accomplished; for that which is determined shall be done.'

The overflowing scourge - **Isaiah 28:15, 18**

<sup>15</sup> Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with Sheol are we at agreement; when the **overflowing scourge** shall pass through, it shall not come unto us; for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves: <sup>18</sup> And your covenant with death shall be annulled, and your agreement with Sheol shall not stand; when the **overflowing scourge** shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it.'

The Day of Vengeance – Isaiah 63:1-3

<sup>1</sup>Who is this coming from Edom, from Bozrah, with his garments stained crimson? Who is this, robed in splendour, striding forward in the greatness of his strength? "It is I, speaking in righteousness, mighty to save." <sup>2</sup> Why is Your apparel red, and Your garments like one who treads in the winepress? <sup>3</sup>"I have trodden the winepress alone, and from the peoples no one was with Me. For I have trodden them in My anger, and trampled them in My fury; their blood is sprinkled upon My garments and I have stained all My robes."

The Year of Recompense – **Isaiah 34:8**

<sup>8</sup>For Jehovah hath a day of **vengeance**, a year of **recompense** for the cause of Zion.'

The Time of Trouble – **Daniel 12:1; Zephaniah 1:15**

The Day of Alarm - **Zephaniah 1:16**

<sup>16</sup> a day of the **trumpet and alarm**, against the fortified cities, and against the high battlements.'

In the New Testament we see –

**Matthew 24:21** – the Great Tribulation, **Revelation 2:22; 7:14**

**1 Thessalonians 1:10** – the Wrath to come

**1 Thessalonians 5:2** – The Day of the Lord

**Revelation 3:10** – the Hour of Trial

**Revelation 6:16-17** - The Great Day of the Wrath of the Lamb of God

**Revelation 14:7** – the Hour of Judgement

**Revelation 14:10, 19; 15:1, 7; 16:1** –The Wrath of God

***The judgements of God:***

Before we look closely at the judgements being poured out on the earth from chapter 6 onwards, it is worth examining why God sees such judgement unavoidable. The principle is that the '*cup of iniquity must be full*' before God brings judgement. We see the first instance of this in

**Genesis 15:16** -

*<sup>46</sup>But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete."*

God's grace always allows human nature a time to repent, we see this time after time in His dealings with Israel and the nations around them. So when God decides that the iniquity of the world is full, **universal** judgement comes again as it did with the flood.

God has made some pretty pointed statements about how He views the human condition. Let us first be aware He acts on the basis of His view, not ours!

**Psalm 53:2 – 4.**

*"God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God. Every one of them is gone back: they are altogether become filthy, there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge? Who eat up my people as they eat bread, they have not called upon God."*

And **Psalm 130:3**

*"If Thou, Lord should mark iniquities, O Lord, who should stand?"*

From a Jews perspective they have been over 2,000 years without Temple and sacrifice, and have rejected their Messiah.

The cumulative sin of this nation that is neither covered nor dismissed is huge: 2,000 + years. Such is the mercy and grace of God that Jesus has already paid for the sin of the whole world, but one of the aspects of sin is that we don't recognise it – part of its nature is to disguise its character. What really reveals sin is the judgement God pronounces against it. The greatest statement of the exceeding sinfulness of sin is Jesus' crucifixion.

**The purpose of the Tribulation: Daniel 9:24 -27** – this is The Message version -

<sup>24</sup> *"Seventy sevens are set for your people and for your holy city to throttle rebellion, stop sin, wipe out crime, set things right forever, confirm what the prophet saw, and anoint The Holy of Holies.*

<sup>25-26</sup> *"Here is what you must understand: From the time the word goes out to rebuild Jerusalem until the coming of the Anointed Leader, there will be seven sevens. The rebuilding will take sixty-two sevens, including building streets and digging a moat. Those will be rough times. After the sixty-two sevens, the Anointed Leader will be killed—the end of him. The city and Sanctuary will be laid in ruins by the army of the newly arriving leader. The end will come in a rush, like a flood. War will rage right up to the end, desolation the order of the day.*

<sup>27</sup> *"Then for one seven, he will forge many and strong alliances, but halfway through the seven he will banish worship and prayers. At the place of worship, a desecrating obscenity will be set up and remain until finally the desecrator himself is decisively destroyed."*

And the New King James says it this way –

<sup>24</sup> *"Seventy weeks are determined  
For your people and for your holy city,  
**To finish the transgression,**  
**To make an end of sins,**  
**To make reconciliation for iniquity,**  
**To bring in everlasting righteousness,**  
**To seal up vision and prophecy,**  
**And to anoint the Most Holy.***

This was revealed to Daniel at the same time as he received the prediction of the seventy sevens, from which we get the 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel. God never does anything without a purpose and from this verse we can see He had six things in mind –

1. *'To finish the transgression'* this time of suffering will finish the transgression of the Jewish people, which is the rejection of her Messiah. During this time the nation of Israel will turn to God in a great revival.
2. *'To make an end of sins'*. The words 'make an end' literally mean to seal up. This period will end with the binding of Satan, which will seal up sin. Humanity's cup of iniquity is filled to overflowing, and God will bring judgement on the earth for their rejection of His Son.
3. *'To make reconciliation for iniquity'*. Again, this is a reference to the revival of Israel, when they will be reconciled to God through Him whom they rejected.
4. *'To bring in everlasting righteousness'*. When Israel experiences her revival, the age of righteousness or the millennial Kingdom of Jesus Christ will be ushered in. Though there will be a brief uprising at the end of the millennium, it will be short lived, and will not interrupt

the final period of everlasting righteousness that will lead into the creation of the New Heaven and new earth, Revelation 21 -22.

5. 'To seal up vision and prophecy'. When Israel has turned to Jesus there will no longer be a need for prophetic vision. All will have been fulfilled.
6. 'To anoint the Most Holy'. Opinions differ on what this means, but the most likely interpretation is the 'Most Holy' referred here to is the rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem, where everyone will be expected to come at least once a year, if they want rain on their crops, during the Millennium.

### **DANIEL'S 70 WEEKS -**

**Daniel 9:27** - speaks of the seventieth 'week'

*<sup>27</sup> And he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and upon the wing of abominations shall come one that makes desolate; and even unto the full end, and that determined, shall **wrath** be poured out upon the desolate.'*

Here we see the covenant that the antichrist will make with the Jewish nation, which will signal the beginning of the Tribulation. He will agree to the resumption of Temple sacrifice, but three and a half years into the agreement, he reneges on it and sets up his own effigy.

We have seen the two distinct people groups, the church and Israel both with differing destinies and because of that the church will be removed before the tribulation period. Just before we go any further, let's look at some New Testament scriptures which support this view -

### **1 Corinthians 15:51-55 –**

*<sup>51</sup>Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed— <sup>52</sup>in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. <sup>53</sup>For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. <sup>54</sup>So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." <sup>55</sup>"O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?"*

### **1 Thessalonians 4:16 – 18 -**

*<sup>16</sup>For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup> Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. <sup>18</sup>Therefore comfort one another with these words.'*

I've always thought it wouldn't be much comfort to me to know I was going to go through the worst time the earth has ever known!

## **2 Thessalonians 2: 1 – 4.**

*<sup>1</sup>Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, <sup>2</sup> not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. <sup>3</sup> Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, <sup>4</sup> who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.'*

And previous examples: Noah and his family were saved out of the universal flood, Abram, Lot and families were saved before judgement was brought on Sodom and Gomorrah. Examples of translation or catching away, Enoch (who was not) and Elijah neither saw death; they were taken whilst fully alive to be with the Lord.

We saw that dispensations were time periods of different operations of God. A good example is that we are in the dispensation (time) of grace before universal judgement. As the judgement gets closer, God's grace is poured out. To see a scripture for this John 1:17 *'For the law was given by Moses but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.'*

Three dispensations or time periods are shown here:

- Before the law – time up to Moses
- The law – given by Moses
- To Jesus – grace – dispensation we are currently in.

We also looked at covenants, the old, which Israel broke, and the new (renewed) covenant which came not through the blood of bulls and goats, but through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. Blessed be His glorious Name!!

We now turn our attention to the first quarter of the tribulation period and specifically Daniel's prophecy of the 70 weeks. Properly 70 weeks of years.

We need some background to this: Daniel and his people had been taken into Babylonian captivity and Jerusalem had been desecrated and sacked – they were in the ***fifth cycle of discipline***. (Leviticus 26:14 – 46 and 2 Chronicles 36:17 – 21).

I taught extensively on this in the last series on Revelation, the notes you need if you want more information will be *'The five cycles of discipline'*.

Daniel learnt from studying the parchments of Jeremiah that Israel would be in captivity for 70 years Jeremiah 25:1 -12 and 29:10- 14.

Jeremiah 25 1 – 12 -

Seventy Years of Desolation

*<sup>1</sup>The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah (which was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon), <sup>2</sup> which Jeremiah the prophet spoke to all the people of Judah and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying:*

<sup>3</sup> "From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, even to this day, this is the twenty-third year in which the word of the LORD has come to me; and I have spoken to you, rising early and speaking, but you have not listened. <sup>4</sup> And the LORD has sent to you all His servants the prophets, rising early and sending them, but you have not listened nor inclined your ear to hear. <sup>5</sup> They said, 'Repent now everyone of his evil way and his evil doings, and dwell in the land that the LORD has given to you and your fathers forever and ever. <sup>6</sup> Do not go after other gods to serve them and worship them, and do not provoke Me to anger with the works of your hands; and I will not harm you.' <sup>7</sup> Yet you have not listened to Me," says the LORD, "that you might provoke Me to anger with the works of your hands to your own hurt. <sup>8</sup> "Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts: 'Because you have not heard My words, <sup>9</sup> behold, I will send and take all the families of the north,' says the LORD, 'and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant, and will bring them against this land, against its inhabitants, and against these nations all around, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, a hissing, and perpetual desolations. <sup>10</sup> Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the lamp. <sup>11</sup> And this whole land shall be a desolation and an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. <sup>12</sup> 'Then it will come to pass, when seventy years are completed, that I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity,' says the LORD; 'and I will make it a perpetual desolation.'

#### **Jeremiah 29:10 -14 -**

<sup>10</sup> For thus says the LORD: After seventy years are completed at Babylon, I will visit you and perform My good word toward you, and cause you to return to this place. <sup>11</sup> For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. <sup>12</sup> Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. <sup>13</sup> And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. <sup>14</sup> I will be found by you, says the LORD, and I will bring you back from your captivity; I will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you, says the LORD, and I will bring you to the place from which I cause you to be carried away captive.'

Calculating from the fall of Jerusalem and the carrying away to his present day, Daniel discovered that the 70 years were almost ended and it was time for his people to return home. He begins to fast and pray, confessing the sins of his people.

Gabriel the Messenger, comes with news of God's plan for the future of Israel from the present time to the end.

#### **Daniel 9:23 – 27.**

<sup>23</sup> At the beginning of your supplications the command went out, and I have come to tell you, for you are greatly beloved; therefore consider the matter, and understand the vision:

<sup>24</sup> "Seventy weeks are determined  
For your people and for your holy city,  
To finish the transgression,

*To make an end of sins,  
To make reconciliation for iniquity,  
To bring in everlasting righteousness,  
To seal up vision and prophecy,  
And to anoint the Most Holy.*

<sup>25</sup>“*Know therefore and understand,  
That from the going forth of the command  
To restore and build Jerusalem  
Until Messiah the Prince,  
There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks;  
The street shall be built again, and the wall,  
Even in troublesome times.*

<sup>26</sup>“*And after the sixty-two weeks  
Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself;  
And the people of the prince who is to come  
Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. ’  
The end of it shall be with a flood,  
And till the end of the war desolations are determined.*

<sup>27</sup>*Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week;  
But in the middle of the week  
He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering.  
And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate,  
Even until the consummation, which is determined,  
Is poured out on the desolate.”*

He begins with the phrase **‘70 weeks are determined...’** In other words, they have been **fixed** and planned by God and therefore cannot be changed.

The second thing we notice is that the **‘weeks’** concern **‘your people’** and **‘your holy city’** – no gentiles are mentioned.

This does not in any way concern the church but relates **specifically** to Israel.

**So what then is meant by ‘70 weeks’?** The Hebrew word for weeks is **‘shabua’** and literally means a **‘seven’**. So then, in Hebrew the idea of 70 weeks is seventy 7’s, or segments of 7.

The Hebrew word for **determined** is **chathak** and literally means **‘cut out’** or **‘marked off’**.

According to Daniel 9:25 the time period involved in rebuilding Jerusalem is 7 sevens or 49 years, each ‘week’ representing 7 years. Therefore seventy segments of 7 years will equal 490 years. 70 weeks represents  $70 \times 7 = 490$  years.

What God is saying in Daniel 9:24 is that **70 weeks of ‘sevens’ of time** or **490 years** is **cut out** or **marked off** for the Jewish people until the beginning of the Millennium and the Second Coming of Christ.

*What we are currently in is the parenthesis of the church age – a gap in the fulfilment of the prophetic plan for Israel which allows the gentiles access to God.*



We are between the end of week 69 and the beginning of week 70.

During the break or gap, God brought in the church Age of approximately 2,000 years so that the church is sandwiched between week 69 and week 70. ***Israel's history is on 'pause'.***

The Bible is God's prophetic textbook and blueprint for these last days and end time prophetic events! The 70 weeks of God's 'determined dealings' and plan for Israel is a period of time 490 years, or 70 weeks – 70 sevens

#### SIX THINGS THAT MUST BE FULFILLED BY THE END OF THE 70 WEEKS

1. To finish transgression.
2. To make an end of sins
3. To make reconciliation for iniquity
4. To bring in EVERLASTING righteousness
5. To seal up the prophetic scriptures
6. To anoint the Holy of Holies

These are yet future for Israel.

The weeks are divided into a trilogy of events:

- 7 weeks of years ( $7 \times 7 = 49$  years)
  - 62 weeks of years ( $7 \times 62 = 434$  years)
  - 1 week of years (7 years)
- .....a total of 70 weeks of years, or  $70 \times 7 = 490$  years.

The prophecy of the 70 weeks of years begins with ***'the going forth of the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem'***. There were 4 decrees about Jerusalem, three regarding the rebuilding of the Temple and one regarding the restoration of the city itself. The one we want is the Artaxerxes decree given about 20 years into his reign found in Nehemiah 2:1 – 9. So we begin the calculation of the 490 years from the time of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem made by Artaxerxes in 445 BC. History tells us that the date of Artaxerxes ascension to the throne of Persia was 465BC. The 20<sup>th</sup> year of his reign would place the date of this decree at 445 BC. So here we have the beginning of the 70 weeks. The angel told Daniel:

#### ***Daniel 9:25 -***

*'Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there shall be 7 weeks and 62 weeks; the streets shall be built again and the wall, even in troublesome times.'*

Again, keeping in mind that Daniel's 70 weeks of years are divided into three divisions:

1. 7 weeks of years = 49 years.
  2. 62 weeks of years = 434 years
  3. 1 week of years = 7 years
- 70 weeks of years = 490 years.