

THE REVELATION & END TIMES (Part 6) **THE LAST DAYS**

The Lord's Day, 11th November 2018

Reading: Isaiah 2:1-5

Introduction: The title I have chosen for this series of studies (*The Revelation and End Times*), is chosen as a matter of convenience, because firstly, ***The Revelation*** is the one book of Scripture which is central to the whole subject of what is commonly called *End Times Prophecy*, and secondly, because ***End Times*** is the popular term used in our day, to describe what the theologians call *Eschatology*.

ACCORDING TO ***THE COLLINS DICTIONARY*** **ESCHATOLOGY** MEANS, “THE DEPARTMENT OF DOGMATIC THEOLOGY WHICH TREATS OF THE SO CALLED **LAST THINGS**, SUCH AS DEATH, THE MILLENNIUM, THE RETURN OF CHRIST, THE RESURRECTION, AND THE END OF THE WORLD. [Gk. *eschatos*, last; *logos*, discourse].” So, “*eschatology*” literally means, *a study of last things*. And the literal translation of its component parts in the Greek – “**last discourse**” – very aptly and exactly describes what ***The Revelation*** is. It is the last book of prophecy, the last Word of God to man, given by the ascended and reigning Lord Christ, and in the providence of God, the last book of Holy Scripture, (last in order of arrangement in the Bible), because it is last in its relevance to the Church in the times following the apostles: We have ***the four gospels***, covering all the essentials about Christ's coming into the world, His ministry in the world, His atoning death and resurrection, and then His ascension and departure from the world; then we have ***The Acts of the Apostles***, recording the inauguration of the Church at Pentecost, its mission, its witness to Jesus in “Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the uttermost parts of the earth,” as the Church fulfilled the Great Commission after the Lord's ascension to heaven; then ***the epistles***, which were specific letters of instruction to the churches at the time, but are generally applicable to all church life; and finally, ***The Revelation*** stands alone as the last prophetic book which speaks of both Christ's first and second advent, as well as the time in between, while the Church awaits His return.

OUR TEXT TODAY, *ISAIAH 2:1-5*, IS AN EXAMPLE OF AN OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY WHICH CAN BE DESCRIBED AS “ESCHATOLOGY,” A PROPHECY OF “LAST THINGS,” as it predicts the first advent of Messiah, and the establishment of His spiritual and eternal kingdom, and while its major focus

is His first coming and the establishment of His kingdom and His Church, it includes the fulness of that kingdom in its final, eternal state – e.g. *verse 4*: “nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.” Just as in Joel's prophecy (*Joel 2:31*), “the great and the terrible day of the Lord” speaks of both the first and second coming of Christ, and everything in between.

CONSIDERING THE DEFINITION OF ESCHATOLOGY: JUST AS AN INTERESTING OBSERVATION, AS TO HOW KEEN WE NEED TO BE IN DISCERNING TRUTH AND ERROR, this *Collins Dictionary* I quote is dated 1959, about 59 years ago, and it is interesting that the definition of “*eschatology*” even as far back as 1959, seems to have been tainted already by the prevailing Futurist understanding of prophecy, as we see here the mention of “the millennium” as part of what eschatology entails! (We have observed in our study of *The Millennium in Revelation 20* just recently, that the concept of a “millennium” was completely rejected by the Reformed Churches of the Protestant Reformation times, when the ancient Truth of the Scriptures was revived after years of Roman Catholic darkness, oppression, and false doctrine. We also observed that **WJ GRIER, IN HIS BOOK, “THE MOMENTOUS EVENT,” stated, “WHEN AT THE REFORMATION MEN TURNED AGAIN TO THE WORD OF GOD, EVIDENTLY THEY FOUND NO MILLENARIANISM THERE,”** I.E. THE REFORMERS FOUND NO LITERAL MILLENNIUM IN THE SCRIPTURES! And in our studies of *Revelation 20*, which is the only place in Scripture that mentions the “thousand years”, we observed that the vision of the thousand years was merely one of *many* visions given to John, all depicting the kingdom of God or the New Covenant in Christ, in other words, one of many angles, or facets, or views, given to us, of Christ and His Church in His eternal kingdom, which began 2,000 years ago! But the very mention of “the millennium”, as it is in this Collins Dictionary, as a doctrine all of itself, is proof of that prevailing error of the Futurists). How subtly the enemy plants seeds of false doctrine into our minds, even as we read a dictionary definition of eschatology from 1959! So, even by 1959, the Church had been so well and truly cut off from its Protestant roots, that even the Collins Dictionary subtly reflects the established Futurist end times heresy. But how many Christians would even notice this? How undiscerning is the Church today! It is like the frog being slowly boiled, so that it has no sensibility to its spiritual environment, not enough even to save itself from blatant Popish error. The Church is eating out of the hand of “Mother” Rome, and the wide

acceptance of the doctrine of “the millennium” is just more proof of this. Nevertheless, the *Collins Dictionary* definition is basically correct, notwithstanding this apparent subtle error.

SO, TO SUMMARIZE THIS BRIEFLY, WHAT I’M SAYING IS THAT “END TIMES” HAS BECOME THE POPULAR MODERN TERM FOR “ESCHATOLOGY.” BUT THIS IS MISLEADING, BECAUSE “END TIMES” AND “LAST THINGS” ARE TWO ENTIRELY DIFFERENT CONCEPTS: ONE SPEAKS OF “TIMES,” THE OTHER SPEAKS OF “THINGS;” one speaks only of an order and timing of events, while the other speaks of the great doctrines of Christ and His Church, being the very culmination of God’s creative purposes, as all is completed in the return of Christ, the resurrection, the judgment, and the eternal state of all things – so the “last things” and *The Revelation*, really begin with the *first* advent of Christ, and are in fact a series of prophecies of the New Covenant in Him. To put it in a nutshell, “last things” are Christ and His kingdom, or the New Testament in Christ, but we must recognise that, according to Scripture, THESE LAST THINGS BEGIN WITH THE FIRST ADVENT OF CHRIST, NOT THE SECOND!

THEREFORE THE TERM “END TIMES” IS MISLEADING because, as I’ve mentioned so many times already, the popular view of eschatology, of Bible prophecy concerning the “last days” and the “last things,” has followed the Jesuit line of indoctrination, *contrary* to the historic Protestant position, *contrary* to the historic position of the ancient Church, and **has become futuristic and almost exclusively focused on the very end of the world**, whereas, according to the dictionary definition, and according to the historic position of the Church, the subject is much broader than merely a few years of cataclysmic events at the very end of time – E.G. “DEATH” IS ONE OF THE MATTERS INCLUDED IN THIS SUBJECT OF “LAST THINGS”, and every believer since the beginning of the world has had to deal with death, **so if we are to be true to our subject, we must understand this modern distortion of it, that it is not really just about “end times,” but about “last things.”** When Adam died, he was not primarily concerned with the return of Christ – By that stage, Christ had not even come the first time! But Adam, like every man since, had to face death. And If I die today, the second coming of Christ is not the issue and subject most important to me, but in that case, death is the all-important thing – “It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment” (*Hebrews 9:27*), and that very subject, **death and judgment**, is a central aspect of the doctrine of “last things” and of the content of *The*

Revelation. It is not just “end times,” (an idea which breeds a sort of imbalance and mania in the minds of those who pursue it), but it is actually about “last things.”

Nevertheless, because of this very distortion of the facts and doctrines, we are forced by the errors of the Futurists, to examine the Scriptures which speak of “the last days” and other similar terms.

SO TODAY, AS WE CONTINUE TO STUDY ESCHATOLOGY (LAST THINGS), LET US BE CLEAR ABOUT WHAT THE SCRIPTURES MEAN BY THE TERM, 'THE LAST DAYS.' And our first observation from the Scriptures is this,

1. THE SCRIPTURES TEACH THAT THE “LAST DAYS” BEGAN AT THE FIRST ADVENT OF CHRIST:

Isaiah 2:1-5, “THE word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. 2 And it shall come to pass in the last days, *that the mountain of the LORD’s house shall be established* in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. 3 And many people shall go and say, **Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.** 4 And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and **they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.** 5 O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD.”

Micah 4:1-2, “**BUT in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established** in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. 2 And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: **for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.**” *This prophecy is confirmed by both Isaiah and Micah.*

CAN YOU SEE HOW THE MIND-POISONING DRUG OF FUTURISM WOULD QUICKLY ROB US OF THE RIGHT UNDERSTANDING OF THIS TEXT? If Futurism is what your mind is full of, then you will see this whole passage as speaking *only* of the events surrounding Christ's *second coming*, but this is simply not

true! The theory of a “millennium,” a golden age upon the earth, may *seem to some to fit* this passage, but that is not what it speaks of at all. Both Isaiah and Micah spoke of Christ’s first coming, not second, they spoke of a New Covenant, which is already gloriously fulfilled, and in which we can all rejoice!

WE MUST REMEMBER THAT THE KINGDOM OF GOD HAS THREE BASIC ASPECTS FOR ALL BELIEVERS: *FIRSTLY*, our walk with God on earth after our new birth; *SECONDLY*, our state of liberty and nearness to Christ in heaven, after our souls have departed from our bodies; and *THIRDLY*, the eternal state we are to enjoy after the resurrection – all these are the normal experiences of the saints in the kingdom of God, in both time and eternity, and all these three aspects of the kingdom of God are plainly taught throughout the Scriptures! **THOSE WHO FOCUS ON THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST AND A SO-CALLED MILLENNIUM, DOWNPLAY THE AWESOME SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NEW BIRTH, and they also seem to forget that there is an eternal state, which the Scriptures call “new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness” (2 Peter 3:13)!**

WE MUST ALSO KEEP IN MIND THAT THE MOST BASIC LESSON OF ALL PROPHECY, AND OF THE UNDERSTANDING OF PROPHECY IN GENERAL, IS THAT ALL PROPHECY SPEAKS OF THE LORD JESUS (as He Himself said to the Jews, “Search the scriptures ... they are they which testify of me” – *John 5:39*). *Hence*, it is easy to see that Isaiah and Micah spoke of Jesus' coming into the world (i.e. His first advent – NB: At a time centuries before Christ appeared, why would these prophets speak of His second coming and not His first? This shows just how absurd this Futurist idea is!): There can be nothing plainer than the fact that Jesus, from the moment He began His ministry of teaching on earth, and especially on occasions such as the “sermon on the mount,” that Jesus, at that time was the very source of “the Law going forth from Zion,” and of “the Word of the Lord (going forth) from Jerusalem,” and the people certainly did flock to the mountain of the Lord, in their thousands, to hear Him. Not only in this most simple sense, (of the teaching of the Law at Jerusalem), but even more importantly and more profoundly, **CHRIST HIMSELF, LITERALLY IS THE LAW GOING FORTH FROM ZION (both from Jerusalem and from heaven itself): He is “the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world” (*John 1:29*), Who bore the penalty of the Law for His people, and also imputed to His people His own obedience to the Law – as Paul put it, when he explained, that the Jews, generally speaking, only saw the natural aspect**

of Christ's teaching, but those who believed on Him saw much more: (***Romans 10:1-4***), “BRETHREN, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. 2 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. 3 For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. 4 For **CHRIST IS THE END OF THE LAW FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS TO EVERY ONE THAT BELIEVETH.**” (Christ has met all the requirements of the Law on our behalf, as our Substitute, therefore the Law has no claim against those who are in Christ – we have literally been tried and acquitted in His name! Not that we don't have an obligation to obey the Law, but as far as the eternal judgment of our souls is concerned, the Law is ended, Christ has ended it for us, and His death has for ever satisfied divine justice for us. **But there is a higher sense in which Christ is the “end of the law,” the end being the culmination or purpose or fulfilment of it** – i.e. just as He is the “fulness of the Godhead bodily” (***Colossians 2:9***), He is also the embodiment of the Law; **the Law has its fullest and most perfect expression in the very Person of Jesus Christ. John called Him “the Word” (*John 1:1*)**, and as the Word, He is also the Law. This speaks of His perfect moral character, and His almighty and eternal and absolute perfection.) This doctrine is *most* precious! It is not a matter of merely hearing and trying to obey Christ, but a matter of believing unto eternal life! i.e. when we believe on Him Who is the Lamb of God, He Himself becomes, to us, the very Law itself – the Law fulfilled in Him is the Law fulfilled in us, by imputation! As also in ***James 2:23***, “And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.” That is Christ’s righteousness imputed to us who believe in Him – the Law fulfilled in us by Christ, not by ourselves!

SO, ACCORDING TO ISAIAH AND MICAH, CHRIST BOTH TAUGHT AND FULFILLED THE LAW FOR US AT JERUSALEM IN “THE LAST DAYS!” These prophecies about the “last days” are not prophecies of Christ's return, but prophecies of *everything about Him!*: His incarnation, His doctrine, His crucifixion, resurrection and ascension, and His return also, which ushers in the eternal state of the new heavens and new earth!

MUCH IS MADE, BY SOME OF THE FUTURISTS, OF ISAIAH'S MENTION OF THE BEATING OF SWORDS INTO PLOWSHARES ETC., AS IF THAT JUST HAS TO BE A FUTURE GOLDEN AGE ON EARTH, a sort of Jewish utopia called 'the

millennium,' but there is nothing in the context to require this, it is pure fabrication. Just as both the terms 'Zion' and 'Jerusalem' speak sometimes of the earthly city and sometimes the heavenly city, depending on the context, so the idea of the ceasing of war can be seen as either earthly or heavenly, depending on the context – **hence the first thing we understand by this, is not peace among worldly nations, but the taming of the elect people of all nations under the gospel, because Isaiah's context is the spiritual kingdom of Christ, which was yet to come in his day, but is now a reality to us, who live, chronologically, on the other side of Calvary.** And, as we have seen just recently in our study of the millennium in *Revelation 20*, the visions of the millennium (so-called) are of a heavenly scene, not an earthly one. Remember also, that when Christ came, and first began His ministry on earth, He said, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (***Matthew 4:17***). SO CHRIST CAME TO INTRODUCE AND INAUGURATE THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN, I.E. THE KING CAME TO INTRODUCE HIS KINGDOM. And this He did, quite wonderfully, and in such a way that the whole world cannot mistake it! (*THIS IS WHY TO SPEAK OF FOLLOWING BUDDHA OR MOHAMMED, OR SOME OTHER RELIGIOUS LEADER, IS JUST SO ABSURD, WHEN ALL THE WORLD HAS KNOWN FOR 2,000 YEARS, THAT CHRIST CAME INTO THE WORLD FROM HEAVEN, THE CREATOR HAS VISITED HIS PEOPLE IN THE FLESH! THE LAW HAS INDEED ALREADY GONE FORTH FROM ZION, I.E. JERUSALEM!*) And that kingdom He introduced, as He said, is like a grain of mustard seed, gradually filling the whole earth, and like leaven, gradually leavening the whole lump of dough: ***Matthew 13***: “31 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: 32 Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof. 33 Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened,” (*This kingdom fills not only earth, but it fills heaven also, where the millions of departed saints are already!*)

WE MUST UNDERSTAND THAT THE GREAT BATTLE THE EARTH HAS BEEN ENGAGED IN IS NOT SO MUCH THE VISIBLE WARS AMONG THE NATIONS (ALTHOUGH THAT WILL EVENTUALLY CEASE), BUT IT IS MORE ABOUT THE SPIRITUAL WAR AGAINST CHRIST, WHICH IS PERFECTLY EXPRESSED IN *Psalm 2:1-3*: “Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? 2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together,

against the LORD, and against his anointed (Christ), *saying*, 3 Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us”. **BUT WHILE THE WHOLE WORLD WAGES WAR AGAINST CHRIST, THERE ARE SOME SOULS IN EVERY NATION, WHO LAY DOWN THEIR WEAPONS, AND BOW AT THE FEET OF THE KING OF KINGS, and ignore the demands and threatenings of 'Caesar,' and confess, “Jesus Christ, He is Lord of all!” (Acts 10:36)** And spiritually speaking, they take their “swords and spears” (i.e. weapons they used against Christ) and beat them into pruning hooks and ploughshares (the tongues which once blasphemed the name of Jesus, now sing His praises and preach peace with God in His name; the deeds which promoted the kingdom of darkness and furthered the devil's cause, now are turned to serve the eternal King – My father-in-law was a great blasphemer. He could hardly open his mouth without blaspheming the name of Jesus Christ, but near the end of his life, those blasphemies ceased, and he used to watch hymn signing on TV on Sundays. I saw real evidence that a man who had waged verbal war against Christ for most of his 93 years, had at last, “beaten his sword into a ploughshare”). **THIS PROPHECY IS NOT ABOUT WARS BETWEEN NATIONS. NOR CAN THERE BE ANY PEACE BETWEEN US AND OUR ENEMIES, UNLESS THE PEACE OF GOD RULES IN OUR HEARTS; UNLESS WE ARE FIRSTLY AT PEACE WITH GOD. And there shall be no peace on earth until all the wicked are cast into the lake of fire and saints of all nations who are in Christ are the only ones left in the new heavens and new earth! But all this begins with the spiritual kingdom of God within us, as Christ conquers and subdues us, and makes us His own. And, ironically, even as we lay down our weapons and are at peace with God, another battle rages which we must engage in: 2 *Corinthians 10:4-5*, “the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) 5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.”** SO, IN REFERENCE TO ISAIAH'S PROPHECY OF THE BEATING OF SWORDS INTO PLOWSHARES AND SPEARS INTO PRUNING HOOKS, THOSE WHO ARE SPIRITUAL, HAVE SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT, AND UNDERSTAND THE SPIRITUAL NATURE OF THE PROPHECY, BUT THE JESUITS ARE NOT MEN OF GOD, BUT CARNAL MEN – IS IT ANY WONDER THEN, THAT THEIR INTERPRETATIONS OF PROPHECY ARE CARNAL AND NOT SPIRITUAL? Can men, who make lying their very motto and way of life, have any fellowship with God? (The Jesuit motto is: “The end justifies the means”.) Let us not forget that they serve Popery and Popes! Let us not forget what Popes are: they are men who establish themselves as “Christ on earth”, as standing in Christ's

place (that's the meaning of the word "antichrist": to stand in the place of Christ!) And they well might look for an age to come, in which they hope to rule the earth unopposed, but they are imposters, false Christ's, and their kingdom of Popery is a false kingdom, and when Christ comes, He will not hand a millennial kingdom over to them, but He will consume them with the breath of His mouth and destroy them with the brightness of His coming", even as the Scripture says: **(2 Thessalonians 2:8). Their idea of the kingdom of God is carnal, and they shall be well rewarded for their carnality when Jesus returns! Whatever you do, don't follow the Jesuits and Popes, or their evil doctrines!**

BUT, SPEAKING OF THE BATTLE, BROTHERS AND SISTERS, LET US EXAMINE OUR OWN HEARTS AND MINDS TO SEE WHETHER WE ARE FIT FOR THE BATTLE. If we are born of God, then, by His grace, we are "delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of his dear son" **(Colossians 1:13)**. Once, when we were dead in trespasses and sins, we fought against Christ and His kingdom; we fought alongside the devil and his angels, and we did so without even realizing what we were doing, but now, our warfare is of a very different kind. In our former ignorance, we *were* in a spiritual battle then, but we were on the wrong side; now we are on the right side, as Newton sang, "I once was lost but now am found, was blind but now I see", so let us be encouraged with Paul's instruction, which helps us to stand and to triumph in that holy war: **Ephesians 6:10-20**, "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. 11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 **For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.** 13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with **truth** (*girded with God's Word, not the sophistication of the theologians or the cunning, carnal manipulations of the Jesuits*), and having on the breastplate of **righteousness** (*not any supposed righteousness of our own, but the righteousness of Christ, freely given and imputed to us eternally!*); 15 And your feet shod with the preparation of **the gospel of peace** (*not the Roman Catholic myth and the Jesuit inspired 'millennium' of peace for a mere 1,000 years among the nations, but peace with God eternally through our Lord Jesus Christ!*); 16 Above all, taking the shield of **faith** (*faith in God's*

*Word, in Scripture alone, not in man's inventions and traditions and speculations!), wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. 17 And take the helmet of **salvation** (a salvation that does not depend on ourselves but is found in the very Person of our Lord Jesus, whose one offering of Himself has perfected forever all those who believe on His name!), and the sword of the Spirit, which is the **word of God** (the written Word of God which the Church has known since its foundation, not something plucked out of the air or a manuscript plucked out of a cave in some desert place): 18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; 19 And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, 20 For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.”*

AND HOW BOLDLY WE OUGHT TO SPEAK TODAY, WHEN THERE IS SO MUCH CONFUSION, WHEN TRUTH IS FALLEN IN THE STREET AND EQUITY CANNOT ENTER, WHEN LIES AND DECEIT ARE TAUGHT FOR DOCTRINE, WHEN THE CHURCH ITSELF IS MORE INTERESTED IN SATANIC FANTASY AND PAGAN RITUAL THAN THE WORD OF GOD, WHEN ON EVERY SIDE OUR LORD JESUS IS BLASPHEMED AND HIS WORDS TRODDEN UNDERFOOT! How great is the need of prayer for the Word of God to be taught in the midst of this appalling ignorance, and arrogance and stubbornness with it! There was no sword like the sword of Goliath (David said), and there is no arrogance like the arrogance of the wilfully ignorant. May God have mercy on this lost generation! May He revive His Church to boldly speak His Truth again and expose the lies!

THE PROPHET JOEL MADE PREDICTIONS SIMILAR TO THOSE OF ISAIAH AND MICAH. Peter recognized the fulfilment of this prophecy on the Day of Pentecost at Jerusalem (just seven weeks after Christ rose from the dead), when Peter stood up to preach to the gathered crowd, when the miracle of unknown tongues took place. Luke records this in ***Acts 2:16-21***, “But this is that which was **spoken by the prophet Joel**; 17 And it shall come to pass **in the last days**, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: 18 And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: 19 And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: 20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, **before that great and notable day of the**

Lord come: 21 And it shall come to pass, *that* whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” Peter declared this prophecy to be fulfilled 2,000 years ago, as they prophesied in Jerusalem – “*in the last days*”!

The “great and notable day of the Lord,” which he says was to come, *is often thought* to refer to the Lord's second coming at the end of the world, but as we have seen previously in our studies of **Matthew 24**, this sort of language and imagery was used to describe the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD as well, so there is no need to suggest, as the Futurists do, that all this is yet to come. For one thing, we know on apostolic authority, that Joel's prophecy applied to Jerusalem 2,000 years ago at Pentecost, and the prophecy may well cover the whole sweep of the Christian era, from Pentecost till the end of the world – at the very least, it covers the first advent of Christ, the establishment of the New Covenant, and the fall of Jerusalem with its Old Covenant trappings. That much at least, is certain, so, why would ministers in the churches today, leave out all this obvious Truth, and teach that it refers to the Lord's *second coming*? It is because those ministers are like today's politicians – they have become so used to telling lies that they don't recognise what a lie, or a contradiction, or a blatant misrepresentation of Scriptures, is any more!

THE FUTURIST ANGLE ON THIS IS, AT BEST, A WILD SPECULATION. CLEARLY “THE LAST DAYS” THAT ISAIAH, MICAH, AND JOEL HAD IN MIND, AT THE VERY LEAST, BEGAN AT CHRIST'S FIRST ADVENT ALMOST 2,000 YEARS AGO! If you are in Christ's kingdom, you are safe – but let your warfare be glorious for Him; if you are not in Christ's kingdom today, then you are on the losing side of the battle, and if you perish, you perish eternally – make sure you are in Christ today! If you serve the Lord Christ, then serve Him with all your might; IF THE LAST DAYS BEGAN WHEN JESUS FIRST APPEARED, THEN HOW LATE IS THE DAY TODAY, 2,000 YEARS LATER?

IF, IN THE LAST DAYS THE SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF GOD ARE TO PROPHECY, THEN HOW GREAT IS THE NEED FOR THEM TO HEAR THE WORD OF GOD AND GET A RIGHT UNDERSTANDING OF IT, BEFORE THEY SPEAK! Amos said, “The Lord hath spoken; who can but prophecy?” (**Amos 3:8**). But so many speak, without ever hearing what God has said! What made the difference to Amos was that he **heard** the Word of God. I know people who have been taught sound doctrine continually, some of them for decades, and they still have no discernment to speak of, they are still ill-equipped to 'prophecy.' i.e. when they speak, they often speak nonsense, and not the Word of God; they love to voice their own opinions, but they rarely speak the Word of God! This can only be

because, at the same time they hear sound doctrine, they also turn aside to the pig-swill of false teachers, and while they love to hear the gospel preached, they also love to have their ears tickled, and their egos stroked, by the sensual doctrines, which speak of things to come which the Bible says nothing of, when in reality, today the “last days” are already upon us, and have been for 2,000 years. **“God hath, in these last days, spoken unto us by His Son.”** (*Hebrews 1*). The voice of the Father from heaven, still echoes throughout the whole earth, **“This is my beloved Son! ... Hear ye Him!”** (*Matthew 17:5*), *but those who think they are clever, have moved on to something else, something other than Jesus Christ, whereas Paul, the great apostle said, “I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified”* (*1 Corinthians 2:2*). To hear Him is the most wonderful, most glorious blessing imaginable! It is so wonderful, that it is way beyond the imagination of man, just to hear Him! Just to know He has spoken to you, not in anger, not for your destruction, but for your eternal comfort and blessing.

IS THERE ANYBODY WHO WILL HEAR HIM TODAY? HE TELLS US THAT THE “LAST DAYS” BEGAN WITH THE FIRST ADVENT OF CHRIST. To say otherwise is to utter heresy and lies, and disregard the Scriptures. May the Lord magnify His Words today, in us and through us, for He is not glorified in the words of men, but in His own divine Words, which, by His amazing grace, we have heard something of this morning! Amen.

THE REVELATION & END TIMES (Part 6)
THE LAST DAYS

Continued, the Lord's Day, 25th November 2018.

We have observed firstly that, *The Scriptures teach that the “last days” began at the first advent of Christ.* Let us observe secondly that,

2. **THE SCRIPTURES TEACH THAT THE “LAST DAYS” ARE THE END OF THE OLD COVENANT;**

This naturally flows on from our previous point, because, if the “last days” refer to Christ's first advent and the beginning of Christianity, then at the same time the Old Covenant was brought to an end.

THE END OF THE OLD COVENANT WAS PROPHESED BY DANIEL: We see this in the prophecies of Daniel, predicting events to occur at “the time of the end,” which was clearly to be **the end of the world known to Daniel and his contemporaries.**

Daniel 8:16-17, “And I heard a man’s voice between *the banks of Ulai*, which called, and said, Gabriel, make this *man* to understand the vision. 17 So he came near where I stood: and when he came, I was afraid, and fell upon my face: but he said unto me, Understand, O son of man: for **at the time of the end shall be the vision.**”

This vision of Daniel was in the third year of Belshazzar, king of Babylon (**Daniel 8:1**), and it was of a battle between a ram and a he goat.

THE VISION IS EXPLAINED TO DANIEL IN 8:20-23, “20 The **ram** which thou sawest **having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia.** 21 And the **rough goat is the king of Grecia:** and the great horn that *is* between his eyes *is* the first king. 22 Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power. 23 And in **the latter time of their kingdom,** when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up.”

WE LEARN FROM THIS THAT EVERY KINGDOM AND EVERY POWER ON EARTH HAS ITS DIVINELY ALLOTTED TIME, and when the Lord has had enough of its wickedness, He brings it to an end, usually by some other conquering power. And in *verse 23*, “**the latter time of their kingdom**” is an interesting expression, which reminds us that phrases such as **this do not always refer to the end of the whole world,** but this did refer to the end of Israel as a nation and as God’s covenant people, because the Old Covenant is finished.

DANIEL HIMSELF LIVED THROUGH TWO GREAT EMPIRES (BABYLON AND MEDIA-PERSIA), AND THE LORD SHOWED HIM TWO OTHER GREAT EMPIRES WHICH WOULD ARISE AFTER THEM (GREECE AND ROME), AND AFTER THAT A “LITTLE HORN” (Daniel 7:8) which would arise in the place of the Roman Empire, which all Protestants understand as the Roman Catholic Papacy. So Daniel's visions have to be read properly in their context, e.g. in *Daniel 11*, again, the term, “the time of the end” is used in relation to the kingdoms of Persia and Grecia, not in any way relevant to the end of the world:

Daniel 11:33, “And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, *many* days. 34 Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help: but many shall cleave to them with flatteries. 35 And *some* of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make *them* white, **even to the time of the end:** because *it is* yet for a time appointed. 36 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 shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done. 39 Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge *and* increase with glory: and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain. 40 And **at the time of the end** shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.

Then again, in *Daniel 12*, there is a glimpse of a more distant time towards the very end: **Daniel 12:4**, “But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and **SEAL THE BOOK, EVEN TO THE TIME OF THE END:** many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased. *shall be* the end of these *things*?6 And one said to the man clothed in linen, which *was* upon the waters of the river, **How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?** 7 And I heard the man clothed in linen, which *was* upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever that **IT SHALL BE FOR A TIME, TIMES, AND AN HALF; AND WHEN HE SHALL HAVE ACCOMPLISHED TO SCATTER THE POWER OF THE HOLY PEOPLE, ALL**

THESE THINGS SHALL BE FINISHED. 9 And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: FOR THE WORDS *ARE* CLOSED UP AND SEALED TILL THE TIME OF THE END. **10 Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.** 11 And from the time *that* the daily *sacrifice* shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, *there shall be* a thousand two hundred and ninety days. 12 Blessed *is* he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days. 13 But go thou thy way till the end *be*: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.”

SO WE CAN SEE THAT, THE SORT OF ESCHATOLOGY THAT LATCHES ONTO WORDS AND PHRASES LIKE “THE TIME OF THE END,” OR “THE LAST DAYS”, AND DEMANDS THAT THEY ALL SPEAK OF THE END OF THE WORLD, DOES GREAT VIOLENCE TO THE SCRIPTURES.

THEREFORE, LET US BE REMINDED, FIRSTLY, TO ALWAYS READ THE SCRIPTURES IN THEIR CONTEXT, AND BELIEVE WHAT THE SCRIPTURES THEMSELVES SAY, as opposed to what some popular author says about them. It is evident, in these two references to “the time of the end,” that the period referred to, was in relation to the world of those days and the empires of those days, and if you follow through to Daniel's other prophecies, you will find references to other kingdoms and to the Christian era as well.

SECONDLY, LET US KEEP IN MIND THE MAIN POINT AND PURPOSE OF ALL SCRIPTURE – as Jesus said, “They are they which testify of me...” (***John 5:39***). Ask yourself as you study, and as you compare the various commentators, “What does this Scripture say about Christ and the kingdom of God?” Some of the **calculations** made in modern times, claiming to pinpoint events in modern history, are impossible to prove, even if the numbers and dates seem to line up, and without exception, all the fanatical Futurist predictions of the time of the Lord's second coming, are proven false, time and time again! And the danger is that people get so obsessed with their calculations, that they lose sight of the reality, that: ***firstly***, they cannot prove what they claim; ***secondly***, they have forgotten the central purpose of all prophecy – to reveal Jesus Christ the Lord!

SADLY, WHAT IS SO OFTEN THE CASE, IS THAT SOMEBODY READS A POPULAR BOOK, AND FROM THAT MOMENT ON, COMPLETELY IGNORES WHAT THE SCRIPTURES ACTUALLY SAY – e.g. “the time of the end” in some cases, refers

to the end of a particular empire, **BUT REMEMBER THAT THE WHOLE BOOK OF DANIEL IS ABOUT DANIEL AND HIS PEOPLE (THE ISRAELITES), WHO ARE IN CAPTIVITY IN BABYLON AT THE TIME, AND THEREFORE THE CONCERN IS FOR THEIR RETURN FROM CAPTIVITY, THE REBUILDING OF JERUSALEM, AND THE COMING OF THEIR MESSIAH – I.E. THE FIRST COMING OF CHRIST, NOT THE SECOND.** So, logically, the “time of the end” refers to the end of that Old Covenant era. The Grecian Empire was in power only about 200 years before Christ. It was overtaken by the Roman Empire, as Daniel also reveals in other prophecies, but certainly the Grecians had a major role to play in preparing the world for the Messiah, e.g. Greek was the predominant language of the world at that time, hence we have the New Testament Scriptures originally written in Greek. So the “time of the end” here in Daniel, speaks more of the end of the Old Testament period, than the end of the whole world.

In fact, there is an interesting piece in *Daniel 12:6-7*, where Daniel asks, **“How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?”** And the answer is, **“it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.** Interestingly, Josephus, the Jewish historian, as Matthew Henry mentions, records that the Grecian King, Antiochus Epiphanes took Jerusalem and held it for 3 ½ years. But also, when the Lord Jesus came to establish His kingdom, His ministry lasted about 3 ½ years, and about 40 years later, in 70 AD, His words of condemnation of the Jews and their temple were fulfilled by the Roman siege of Jerusalem. This seems to me a clear reference to the ending of the Old Covenant. And I put it to those who say this is merely an opinion or an interpretation, that if you have a gospel mindset (which according to Scripture, we are supposed to have), and if you see that all Scripture speaks of Jesus (“The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” *Revelation 19:10*), then it is very easy to see this as the fulfilment. It is only if your mind is already in a state of confusion or obsession, filled with the preconceived ideas produced by the acceptance of much false teaching and false prophecy, that you can't see this. You will notice that, in all this series of studies on *The Revelation and End Times*, through every phase of it, and even throughout my ministry at all times, I have emphasised this very doctrine, because it is so central to God's Truth – i.e. **the doctrine of the change of Covenants, from the Old to the New, the New Testament emphasis that Christ is at the centre of all things, and all things point to Him.** Therefore, again, clearly, Daniel's prophecies speak very plainly of the end of the Old

Covenant and all that pertains to it, including the destruction of Jerusalem, its people, and its temple, after they rejected their Messiah. If we must preach Christ, then we must preach Him as the grand Subject and Object of both the Old Covenant and the New. There is an old saying, “The Old Testament is the New concealed, and the New Testament is the Old revealed.” This is very profound and true, hence all of Scripture (both Old and New) is a revelation of Christ, and Christ alone! *Therefore, as I say, there is a great danger of reading what popular authors say, and from that point on, having your mind bent in such a way as you ignore what you read in the very Word of God! The Scriptures are really quite plain – let us not allow false teachers and false prophets to hide the plain truth of the Scriptures from us!*

MOST COMMENTS I HAVE EVER HEARD OR SEEN, OVER THE YEARS, ON THESE VERSES IN DANIEL 12, ALL MAKE THE FALSE ASSUMPTION IT IS ABOUT THE VERY END OF TIME, and on the basis of this wild guess as to the time, they launch out into the deep of further wild fantasies, and claim that, according to verse 4, prophecy is “sealed,” (i.e. the meaning of it is hidden), until a point very near the end of time, and then God will reveal its meaning to us. Firstly, I think I have shown sufficiently that this is a case of taking those words out of their context, because the context explains the meaning pretty well, but secondly, let us ask, What fruit does this wild speculation produce? It opens up the minds of the unwary, to accept every false prophet who comes along in the so-called “last days,” who claims to have special insight into the prophecies which were supposed to be hidden until now! This is not only fantasy, but gross heresy! This is the very reason so many are deceived by Ellen G White, Herbert W Armstrong, Charles Taze Russell, William Branham, and all the rest of the cult leaders, who are given more credit than the very Word of God! AND PRACTICALLY ALL THOSE MAJOR CULTS HAVE FOLLOWED THE FUTURIST INTERPRETATIONS OF THE JESUIT, FRANCISCO RIBERA, THE CATHOLIC COUNTER-REFORMATIONIST OF THE LATE 16TH CENTURY. It is misleading to think of these cults as Protestant – they are not truly Protestant at all, because they follow Rome’s eschatology, as do most modern evangelicals who are considered to be orthodox. This is the reason so many Christians are being led astray by Rome and the cults. They seek an interpreter, not the Lord, and they believe the words of false prophets and false teachers above the very Word of God! And just think about this – *End Times Prophecy* is said to be hard to understand, but it is easy when you start by exposing the Jesuit lie (that the prophecies of Antichrist are not about Popery).

SO, THE SOURCE OF ALL THE CONFUSION ABOUT END TIMES IS ONE THING ONLY – THE JESUIT PROPAGANDA MACHINE CALLED THE ‘COUNTER-REFORMATION’, OF WHICH FRANCESCO RIBERA IN 1590 WAS THE MAIN PERPETRATOR.

MANY CHRISTIANS ARE FOREVER SEEKING AN INTERPRETER OF PROPHECY INSTEAD OF READING WHAT THE SCRIPTURES SAY. They have taken on board this false doctrine that the prophecies need special revelation in the last days to be interpreted to us. This is just a blatant lie! They would even quote *Daniel* and say that the book was sealed until the time of the end, so therefore God has given us wise interpreters in recent times who understand this. Rubbish! All modern interpreters follow Ribera’s basic time line! It’s like a case where people are all living in a house together and, strangely, one by one, they are all mysteriously dying. Then somebody discovers there is a poisonous snake living in a dark corner in the house, so he just kills the snake, and the people stop dying! WELL, RIBERA IS THE SNAKE IN THE DARK CORNER OF THE CHURCH TODAY, KILLING OFF THE PROTESTANTS – KILLING OFF FAITH IN SCRIPTURE ALONE! We must kill Ribera’s serpentine Counter-Reformation lies, and the people’s faith will stop dying, and be able to see God’s simple truth about prophecy. It is really not a hard subject – it is only made hard by the Jesuits and those fake Protestants who defend their lies! In other words, if you can find the honesty in yourself to admit that the Papacy is the Anti-christ, the final beast of prophecy which persecutes the Church, then all the difficult questions about prophecy just melt away, as you simply read what the Scriptures say!

THE ONLY INTERPRETERS OF SCRIPTURE THE LORD HAS GIVEN HIS CHURCH IN THESE LAST DAYS ARE THE APOSTLES AND PROPHETS – ONLY SCRIPTURE INTERPRETS SCRIPTURE, AND THE WESTMINSTER DIVINES WERE SO THOROUGHLY CONVINCED OF THIS THAT THEY WROTE IT INTO THEIR CONFESSION IN 1646! And so, we have men like Paul and John who have revealed much more than was revealed to Daniel in his day, and they prophesied in the “time of the end”, as Paul said in ***HEBREWS I***, “GOD, WHO AT SUNDRY TIMES AND IN DIVERS MANNERS SPAKE IN TIME PAST UNTO THE FATHERS BY THE PROPHETS, 2 HATH IN THESE LAST DAYS SPOKEN UNTO US BY *HIS SON*”! How much plainer can it be said? But in spite of all this, many are believing, against all the plain warnings and doctrines of Christ and His apostles, that the **archaeological discoveries of so-called hidden books of Scripture, and the rise of modern so-called prophecy experts, provide special insight for us today, which our forefathers didn’t have – this is gross arrogance, to claim we know**

more than the apostles of Christ! It is as simple as ‘ABC’ to discover, that these apocryphal books have been known of by the Church for centuries, and have always been discarded as not inspired, and have been rejected as never being part of the true canon of Scripture, and for very good reasons. I mentioned some time ago about a conversation over the so-called “Book of Enoch.” Sadly, those who ‘go for anything’ will *continue* to go for it, just one fad after another! To give you an example, **this *Book of Enoch*, as it happens, introduces the spurious idea that the “giants” spoken of in *Genesis 6*, were the offspring of angels and humans, which of course is the grossest, most ridiculous concept imaginable, especially when the Lord Himself and His apostles teach us that this is impossible (See *Matthew 22:30*, “30 For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.” And *Hebrews 1:7*, “7 And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire.”). THIS POINT ALONE, RULES OUT COMPLETELY THE BOOK OF ENOCH, AND CONDEMNS IT AS SPURIOUS AND UNINSPIRED! PLEASE HEAR THE WORD OF GOD: ACCORDING TO JESUS AND THE APOSTLE PAUL, ANGELS ARE “SPIRITS”! THEY DO NOT HAVE BODIES! AND THEY DO NOT MARRY! But some never seem to learn. They are without discernment, not being grounded on sound doctrine.** Somehow the plain Truth is not enough to satisfy their corrupt appetites – like Eve, they must seek after voices other than the Scriptures, and prefer what the Devil himself has to say, contrary to the Word they have been taught by the Lord already.

TO THOSE WHO LOVE FANTASY, THE TRUTH IS BORING, AS IT WAS TO EVE IN THE BEGINNING – SHE RELISHED THE THOUGHT OF KNOWING SOMETHING GOD HAD FORBIDDEN. Such believers are not built upon the unchanging Rock of Christ, but on the shifting sand of men's ideas and lusts. And again, not long ago, I received an email which raved about the discovery of bones, claiming to be “proof of the existence of the ‘nephilim’ i.e. the giants.” Let us remember that ***THE DISCOVERY OF GIANT'S BONES ONLY PROVES THERE WERE GIANTS, NOT THAT THEY WERE THE OFFSPRING OF ANGELS.*** And as somebody also pointed out, these photos of the giant bones are probably fakes anyway. The book of ‘Enoch’ is spurious. It is not inspired by God, because it introduces a false doctrine, which contradicts the Scriptures and the very Words of Jesus. Angels are spirits – they cannot produce offspring by some bizarre union with human beings. This is not only contrary to Scripture, but contrary to all sound reason and common sense! Note well that anything outside of

Scripture which promises new revelation is the Devil's lie, because if it is new it is not of God. If it contradicts Christ and His apostles and prophets, it is false and evil – have nothing to do with it! (I am digressing here, but this well illustrates the point that we must avoid all that is claimed to be new revelation – everything new is false! New revelation is the Devil's lie! And honest people can see this.)

***ANOTHER POINT WORTH NOTING, IN RELATION TO THIS EXAMPLE, IS THAT FALSE TEACHERS OFTEN USE SOPHISTICATION IN ORDER TO DECEIVE: e.g. the word “nephilim” is not English but Hebrew, which comes from a root word meaning “to fall,” and according to Strong's Concordance, it has the connotation of “bully” or “tyrant,” and in the Authorised/King James Version it is simply translated “giants.” THESE ‘NEPHILIM’ WERE NOT FALLEN ANGELS, BUT FALLEN MEN, gross sinners, rebels, bullies and tyrants – they were giants, physically perhaps, but certainly, giants, as wicked tyrants in the earth! The context in **Genesis 6:4** tells us they were “mighty men” and “men of renown.” Their might and their renown were clearly in a negative and sinful sense, this was not merely a comment on their physical size. No doubt they were much like the 'criminal motor cycle gangs' of today, who bully and intimidate whole communities and even the police, and run criminal rackets including drug dealing and extortion, to the point where they are like a kind of mafia, which runs the whole nation almost, through an underworld criminal system. These are 'men of renown' today. Some are almost ‘giants’, physically speaking, but they are all giants, in terms of their gross rebellion against the Lord. But do we run around calling bikies “nephilim?” The idea is ridiculous! AND SO IS IT RIDICULOUS, TO CALL THESE “MEN OF OLD”, “NEPHILIM.” THAT IS MERELY THE HEBREW WORD FOR THEM. Let us, once and for all, blast away the sophistication of the false teachers, by speaking plain English, and simply call them “giants,” as the Word of God does! NB: The Church of Rome has been deceiving the multitudes of centuries by her sophisticated Latin speaking in her Masses, and now she even fools Protestants by using the same sort of sophistication, introducing Hebrew words into both Scripture and theology, and thereby teaching lies! According to one dictionary, “This word, translated “giants” in the King James Version, but retained in the Revised Version (British and American), is found in two passages of the Old Testament--one in Genesis 6:4, relating to the antediluvians; the other in Numbers 13:33, relating to the sons of Anak in Canaan.*” This change of Scripture is the infamous work of Westcott and Hort**

in the Revision Committee of 1881, and those who have followed them, by introducing the Hebrew word (Nephilim), instead of its English translation (giants), using sophistication to mesmerise their victims, just like their ‘father’, the old serpent!

HENCE WE SEE THAT THE WHOLE IDEA OF THE “NEPHILIM” IS A SIDE TRACK, WHICH LEADS ITS VICTIMS ONTO THE PATH OF OTHER FALSE DOCTRINES, SUCH AS THE ACCEPTANCE OF SPURIOUS ‘GOSPELS’ AND ‘EPISTLES’ (SUCH AS ‘ENOCH’) WHICH, LIKE THE SERPENT OF OLD, PROMISE TO PROVIDE HIDDEN AND SECRET KNOWLEDGE, WHICH THE SCRIPTURES DO NOT CONTAIN. THERE IS NO SPECIAL REVELATION IN THE DAYS NEAR TO THE END OF THE WORLD! NOTHING TO ADD TO SCRIPTURE – ALL THAT MEN HAVE ADDED IS LIES! ALL THE MAJOR CULTS AROSE IN THE LATE 19TH CENTURY, THE VERY SAME PERIOD IN WHICH WESTCOTT AND HORT BEGAN TO CHANGE OUR BIBLE! ALL THESE RECENT DEVELOPMENTS ARE HERESIES! THEY DO NOT BELONG TO THE OLD “FAITH WHICH WAS ONCE DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS”! And if Daniel's prophecies did refer to special revelation in the time of the end or the last days, then he referred to Jesus and the apostles and the true New Testaments prophets of the Lord, not some false teachers who were to come nearly 2,000 years after them. Remember, “All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works” (***2 Timothy 3:16-17***).

'Scripture alone,' as Luther put it, is sufficient for all our instruction, but this sort of sophisticated, tangent theology, takes the unwary away from the plain facts of Scripture, and here in ***Daniel***, we see examples of mention of “the time of the end,” referring, not to our times today, but the end of the era of the Old Covenant, as we have also seen elsewhere, in other Scriptures in our recent studies.

ARE YOU THANKFUL THAT THE OLD COVENANT IS ENDED? YOU OUGHT TO BE, IF YOU KNOW ANYTHING AT ALL WORTH KNOWING! THE OLD COVENANT IS ENDED BECAUSE A NEW COVENANT IS IN FORCE, WHICH IS FAR BETTER! Let us hear Paul's inspired comment on this: ***Hebrews 8***: “NOW of the things which we have spoken *this is* the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; 2 **A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.** 3 For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore *it is* of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer. 4 For

if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: 5 Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, *that* thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount. **6 But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.** 7 For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. 8 For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: **9 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.** **10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:** 11 And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. 12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. 13 In that he saith, **A NEW COVENANT, HE HATH MADE THE FIRST OLD. NOW THAT WHICH DECAYETH AND WAXETH OLD IS READY TO VANISH AWAY.**”

NOTICE PAUL'S CLOSING STATEMENT IN THIS CHAPTER! HE SAYS THE OLD COVENANT “IS READY TO VANISH AWAY.” HE WAS THE GREAT APOSTLE OF GOD'S NEW COVENANT, BUT HE SPOKE AS IF THE OLD HAD NOT YET VANISHED. THIS IS A TINY BUT IMPORTANT DETAIL. IT SHOWS THAT CHRONOLOGICALLY, THERE WAS AN OVERLAPPING OF THE OLD AND NEW COVENANTS – the Old Covenant likely would never have been finished with, if it had not been for the fact that God severely judged the nation of Israel in 70 AD, and if He had not had the Roman armies completely destroy the temple, the city, and the nation! The Jews had so doggedly opposed God, and when He came to them in the flesh, as our Lord Jesus Christ, they hated Him so vehemently, that they had Him crucified, then they proceeded to persecute His disciples as well. Take note just how stubbornly anti-Christian Judaism is even today, 2,000 years later, even though they have no temple today, they will never give up, claiming that God gave them the land, and that they must reclaim it and rebuild the temple, and they are murdering and destroying in the land of Palestine today,

because they say God gave them the land! **But God took away their temple and their land and their nation**, just as He said He would do if they did not keep His Old Covenant, and GOD REPLACED EVEN HIS OWN OLD COVENANT, SO THAT THE JEW, LIKE THE GENTILE TODAY, HAS NOWHERE TO GO, BUT TO CHRIST ALONE:

PETER WAS AN ISRAELITE AND A JEW, and when Jesus asked him if he would go away like others, he replied, (*John 6:68-69*), “Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. 69 And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.”

JOHN WAS AN ISRAELITE AND A JEW, and he wrote that Jesus “came unto his own and his own received him not, 12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name” (*John 1:11-12*).

PAUL WAS AN ISRAELITE AND A JEW, and he said, God “hath in these last days spoken unto us by *His Son*” (*Hebrews 1:1*).

AND LONG BEFORE THESE APOSTLES, DANIEL THE PROPHET SPOKE OF THE END OF THE JEWS AND THEIR COVENANT, and of “Messiah the prince” who would “confirm his covenant” (*Daniel 9*), *i.e. the New Covenant!* These men (Daniel, Peter, John, and Paul) believed in Christ, even in a day before the New Covenant was fully established. They did not have a veil over their eyes as other Jews did, and as other Jews do today. They saw something infinitely better than the temple and its rituals; they saw Him of whom all these things spoke in a figure. **They knew, the moment they were introduced to the Lord Jesus, that the Old Covenant was merely a shadow of Him and of His eternal kingdom.** Can God create something that is no good, that He has to throw away? Does God make mistakes? Of course not! He created His Old Covenant in absolute perfection, but it was never intended to succeed as a means of saving sinners and reconciling them to God – it was merely a type of Christ, Who is the One Mediator between God and men! **Do you know this today? Do you know that the Old Covenant is ended? Do you know that the “last days” and the “time of the end” that the ancient prophets spoke of, spoke of the end of a Covenant which was to be replaced by a better Covenant, a New Covenant?** Can you, by the grace of God, look with the eye of faith, to Jesus Christ, and confess with all other believers, that He is “the Lord from heaven”, that He is “the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world”? If you can, you are infinitely blessed with eyes to see

what others cannot see! Let us, who can see, never cease to give thanks to God, that the Old Covenant has ended and the New Covenant has come; that the shadows have passed and the reality is here; that the shadows have fled away before Him Who is “the light of the world,” our risen, ascended, and reigning King of kings and Lord of lords!” May God help us all to thoroughly believe His Words and enter into the joy of our Lord! Amen!

THE REVELATION & END TIMES (Part 6)
THE LAST DAYS

Continued, the Lord's Day, 2nd December 2018 – Reading: Hebrews 1.

We have observed so far that the Scriptures teach that The Last days began at the First Advent of Christ (not at a time near His second advent), secondly that, the Last days are the End of the Old Covenant (not the end of the world, as is popularly taught today). Let us observe further that,

3. **THE SCRIPTURES TEACH THAT THE “LAST DAYS” ARE THE WHOLE CHRISTIAN ERA TILL THE END OF THE WORLD**

FIRSTLY, THE LAST DAYS ARE THE DAYS OF THE LORD JESUS

That is to say – the last days are Christian days! It has been a common cry among Christians of the past few decades, “We are in the last days!” But these people are about 2,000 years behind the 'eight-ball.' It's time they woke up and began to read the Scriptures and believe them! John and Peter and Paul and Jude all told us long ago, that they were already in the last days! And Paul, in *Hebrews 1*, has made perhaps the most complete and most unambiguous statement of all, about this very fact, that **the Christian era (or the time of the New Covenant) is the last days.**

THE MOST IMPORTANT AND MOST OBVIOUS IMPLICATION OF THIS IS THAT THIS WORLD WILL END AFTER THE CHRISTIAN ERA! And to put it more bluntly, Christ and Christianity are not a mere anticlimax in God's great plan, but the very fulfilment and culmination of all that went before.

NB: Hebrews 1:1-3, “GOD, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; 3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, **sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.**”

THESE ARE THE LAST DAYS! CHRIST HAS COME! CHRIST IS CRUCIFIED AND RISEN! CHRIST IS ASCENDED AND IS SET UPON HIS ETERNAL THRONE! WHEN THE LORD JESUS FIRST BEGAN HIS MINISTRY ON EARTH, HE SPOKE THESE WORDS: MARK 1:15, “THE TIME IS FULFILLED, AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS AT HAND: REPENT YE, AND BELIEVE THE GOSPEL.” DO YOU BELIEVE THE GOSPEL TODAY, 2,000 YEARS LATER? DO YOU BELIEVE THE KINGDOM OF GOD

IS ALREADY AT HAND? AND DO YOU BELIEVE THAT “OF HIS KINGDOM THERE SHALL BE NO END” (**LUKE 1:33**)? Then, if you believe Christ's gospel at all, you must believe that from the moment He appeared on earth, we were in the last days, we were in the very climax of the ages, not just another phase!

THE FUTURISTS, WHO LOOK FOR OTHER DAYS TO FOLLOW “THESE LAST DAYS”, ARE CUTTING RIGHT ACROSS THE PLAIN TRUTH OF SCRIPTURE and, as the old saying goes, “A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.” The “bird in the hand” I refer to, is the gospel, the Scriptures which we have in our hand, which are sure and proven and as clear as crystal, while the “two in the bush” are the speculations, the false prophecies about the future, the multitude of theories about what might happen and when, which are all unfounded and un-Scriptural to start with. So the Futurists continue to “beat about the bush,” looking for their futuristic “birds” which do not exist, while those who simply love the Word of God and believe the gospel, look forward to three glorious things:

FIRSTLY, **death**, they long to “depart and be with Christ”;

SECONDLY, they look forward to the **resurrection**, when the Lord “shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body” (**Philippians 3:21**), and

THIRDLY, to “we, according to his promise, look for **new heavens and a new earth** wherein dwelleth righteousness” (**2 Peter 3:13**).

So, the last days are the days of the Lord Jesus Christ. They are the very revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ! And the last book of Scripture is called *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, but the days of *The Revelation* began at His first coming, and the visions of John reveal Christ, the King, and His kingdom, in both its visible and invisible aspects. You will have noticed our introductory reading, from **Hebrews 1**, that this chapter is also a summary of the very same things as the whole book of *Revelation*; they are a summary of the whole gospel. In other words, **THE LAST DAYS ARE GOSPEL DAYS - DO YOU BELIEVE THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST?**

THE LAST DAYS ARE THEREFORE DAYS OF SALVATION: 1 Peter 1:1-20, “PETER, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, 2 Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied. 3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 **Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.** 6 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: 7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: 8 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: 9 Receiving the end of your faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls. 10 **Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace *that should come* unto you: 11 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.”** 18 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; 19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: 20 Who **verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.**” Peter spoke of “**these**” last times, not some future last times. He spoke of gospel times, New Testament times, as “these last times”.

THE NAME 'JESUS' COMES FROM TWO HEBREW WORDS MEANING JEHOVAH AND SAVE (OR SALVATION). So it means that Jehovah is salvation. It does not simply mean that Jesus saves, or that salvation is found *in* Him, or that He is Jehovah's *agent* of salvation (although all these things are true). **THE DISTINCT MEANING OF OUR LORD'S NAME IS THAT JESUS IS JEHOVAH, AND THAT HE IS OUR SALVATION,** so that all who merely look upon Him, look to Him, look up to Him in worship, are saved, just as did the thief on the cross, just as the people did in a type in the wilderness, when Moses was instructed to make a bronze serpent on a pole and when the people were bitten by serpents, they had only to look at that pole and they were saved from the certain death of the serpent's poison (*Numbers 20:9*). **SO FOR US SINNERS, IF WE LOOK AT JESUS, WE LOOK AT 'JEHOVAH OUR SALVATION!' Peter said that He “verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was**

manifest in these last times for you.” And because He was foreordained from the beginning, all the prophets knew this:

ISAIAH PREACHED THIS SAME GOSPEL LONG BEFORE CHRIST: *Isaiah 45:20-23*, “20 Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye *that are* escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god *that* cannot save. 21 Tell ye, and bring *them* near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? *who* hath told it from that time? *have* not I the LORD? and *there is* no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; *there is* none beside me. **22 Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and *there is* none else.** 23 I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth *in* righteousness, and shall not return, That **unto me every knee shall bow**, every tongue shall swear.” So, to Whom do we look? To Jehovah! To Jesus!

PAUL PREACHED CHRIST AS THIS JEHOVAH, THIS SALVATION, by saying it was to *Jesus* that every knee should bow, and that the true confession of faith is that *Jesus is Jehovah: *Philippians 2:10-11**, “10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth; 11 And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

AND LIKEWISE, SIMEON, EVEN WHEN CHRIST FIRST APPEARED AS A BABE, at eight days of age, when He was brought to the temple to be circumcised and named, Luke records in ***Luke 2:25-32***, “25 And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name *was* Simeon; and the same man *was* just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. 26 And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. 27 And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, 28 Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, 29 Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: **30 FOR MINE EYES HAVE SEEN THY SALVATION (*emphasis added*)**, 31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; 32 A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.” When Simeon saw Jesus, he knew that he was looking at 'Jehovah his Salvation.' And he knew Jesus would be the Saviour of the world, not just of the Jews.

So we see the abundant testimony of Scripture, both Old and New Testament, that the last days are the days of the Lord Jesus, that He is Jehovah, Almighty God, and that He is our salvation.

THERE IS AN ENORMOUSLY IMPORTANT IMPLICATION OF THIS FOR ALL AUSTRALIANS: If Jesus Christ is Almighty God, which the Scriptures teach in no uncertain terms, then the Australian Constitution is based squarely on Jesus Christ! When our founding fathers penned the preamble, and said, ***WHEREAS the people of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Queensland, and Tasmania, humbly relying on the blessing of Almighty God, have agreed to unite in one indissoluble Federal Commonwealth under the Crown of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and under the Constitution hereby established,*** they were emphatically declaring faith in Jesus Christ, and not just personal faith in Jesus Christ, but that the very union which created this nation is based on faith in Jesus Christ, because He is the Lord from heaven! Therefore, how desperately this generation needs to be reminded of its past, and taught what the Commonwealth of Australia is: that it is not ‘Multicultural, as our lying politicians keep telling us, that we do not stand for every kind of faith or belief under the sun, but we are Christian, and that our laws and customs are based on the very Words of God, and therefore, all who deny this are liars, and all who vote for candidates who are socialist, Roman Catholic, or Buddhist, or Moslem, or Atheist, or in any way accommodating Multiculturalism, Feminism, euthanasia, abortion, homosexuality etc., are in breach of the very Constitution which brought the nation into existence, and which all members of parliament are required to represent and uphold. This wicked mindset has crept up on a generation of people who have been taught a false gospel, an easy-believism gospel, that everybody needs to make a decision for Christ, and that those who don’t make this decision, are not really responsible to obey God or to acknowledge Jesus Christ, that those who are not believers do not have Jesus as their King – this is a denial that Christ is Creator and Lord over all Creation, and that every knee must bow to Him, and to Him alone! This is why the only political and social and economic remedy for Australia as a nation, is a spiritual remedy, because the disease is of a spiritual nature, a denial of Christ, a denial of the faith of our founding Fathers!

The last days are Christian days! But sadly,

SECONDLY, THE LAST DAYS ARE ALSO THE DAYS OF THE ANTICHRIST AND THE APOSTACY OF CHRISTIANITY

FIRSTLY, A GENERAL APOSTACY AFTER THE TIME OF THE APOSTLES:

2 Timothy 3:1-5, “THIS know also, that in the last days **perilous times shall come.** 2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, 4 Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; 5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.”

Many comments have been made to suggest this is a reference to the very end of time, but if we just understand some basic facts of history, it is easy to see that a great “falling away,” or apostacy, in the Christian Church, began to happen right on the heels of the apostolic days, and within about 200 years the very system of Antichrist, in the form of the Papal Roman Empire, was beginning to form in the days of Emperor Constantine, but this was 1700 years ago! **So we must understand that the last days have been with us for a long time! The fact that we can observe apostacy today, says nothing whatsoever about *how near* we might be to the return of Christ, because the apostles observed the beginnings of this apostacy even in their day!**

PETER WARNED OF AN IMMEDIATE FALLING AWAY: 2 Peter 3:1-12, “THIS second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in *both* which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: 2 That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour: 3 Knowing this first, that **there shall come in the last days scoffers**, walking after their own lusts, 4 And **saying, Where is the promise of his coming?** for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of the creation. 5 For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: 6 Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: 7 But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. 8 But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. 10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall

melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. 11 *Seeing then that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness, 12 Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?”

The same apostles who preached the risen and ascended Christ, as His very eyewitnesses, and testified that He would come again to raise the quick and the dead, also saw, in a short time, people began to scoff at such an idea. To multitudes, Jesus was very soon 'out of sight and out of mind.' The apostacy or falling away, began very early.

JUDE GAVE SIMILAR WARNINGS OF THE SAME APOSTACY: Jude 14-25, “And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, 15 To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard *speeches* which ungodly sinners have spoken against him. 16 These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling *words*, having men’s persons in admiration because of advantage. 17 But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; 18 How that they told you **there should be mockers in the last time**, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. 19 These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit. 20 But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, 21 Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. 22 And of some have compassion, making a difference: 23 And others save with fear, pulling *them* out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh. 24 Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present *you* faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, 25 To the only wise God our Saviour, *be* glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.”

THEN THERE IS SOMETHING MORE SPECIFIC ABOUT THE FALLING AWAY – JOHN WARNED ABOUT THE ANTICHRIST WHO WAS SOON TO COME: So that the falling away became an evil, world-wide political-religious system. In other words, the falling away was not passive, but an active, ruling force of evil in the world – it was the beginnings of the very hierarchy of Satan's kingdom on earth, as a counterfeit of Christ's heavenly kingdom. The Satanic kingdom had always been there in the form of Paganism, beginning at Babel with Nimrod

and his kingdom (**Genesis 10 & 11**), but a ‘Christian’ version of this Satanic kingdom was to come, and was already waiting in the wings in the days of the apostles!

The apostles knew this and saw it coming: **1 John 2:18-20**, “18 Little children, **it is the last time**: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby **we know that it is the last time**. 19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would *no doubt* have continued with us: but *they went out*, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. 20 But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.”

WHO IS THIS ANTICHRIST? We have seen glimpses of him in our various studies, in various Scriptures, but briefly today, notice that **PAUL CALLS HIM THE “MAN OF SIN.”** **2 Thessalonians 2**: “NOW we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *by* our gathering together unto him, 2 That ye be not soon 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. 3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for ***that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed***, the son of perdition; (*Christ was not to come immediately in those days, but a false Christ, a counterfeit Christ would come first, and literally claim to be God in the flesh, God's representative, God's viceregent, God's 'vicar', a stand-in for Christ*) 4 **Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.** 5 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? 6 **And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time.** 7 **For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth *will let*, until he be taken out of the way.** (*There was a political power in place at the time, still under the Roman Caesars, which for a time prevented the rise of this Antichrist, but Paul could see the plot unfolding already – the mystery of iniquity was already at work in Paul's day!*) 8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: 9 *Even him*, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, 10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: 12 That they all might be

damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. 13 But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: 14 Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. 15 Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle. 16 Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given *us* everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, 17 Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.”

So Paul understood very well, and even explained this in private to the Church, but he didn't name the 'man of sin' publicly. It became very obvious a few hundred years later. (** See footnote*)

THE WORLD KNOWS THIS MAN OF SIN: NOT SO LONG AGO, NEWS ON POPERY ABUNDANTLY CONFIRMED THE BIBLICAL TRUTH, THAT ROME’S POPE IS “THE MAN OF SIN”: Even the United Nations recently demanded action against the man of sin for his heinous crimes. The stench of Popery’s sins has reached the highest heaven! It is no secret. Now the whole world knows.

THE CHURCH ALSO HAS KNOWN HIM FOR CENTURIES: THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF 1646 IS AN EXAMPLE OF THE STANDARD BELIEFS OF ALL THE PROTESTANT CHURCHES CONCERNING THIS MAN OF SIN, and correctly outlines the Bible truth about “last things” as opposed to “last days”:

CHAPTER XXV

Of the Church

I. The catholic or universal Church which is invisible, consists of the whole number of the elect, that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one, under Christ the Head thereof; and is the spouse, the body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all. *Eph. i. 10. 22, 23; Eph. v. 23, 27, 32; Col. i. 18.*

II. The visible Church, which is also catholic or universal under the Gospel (not confined to one nation as before under the law), consists of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion; and of their children: and is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of God, out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation. *1 Cor. i. 2; 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13; Ps. ii. 8; Rev. vii. 9; Rom. xv. 9, 10, 11, 12; 1 Cor. vii. 14;*

Acts ii. 39; Ezek. xvi. 20, 21; Rom. xi. 16; Gen. iii. 15; Gen. xvii. 7; Matt. xiii. 47; Isa. ix. 7; Eph. ii. 19; Eph. iii. 15; Acts ii. 47.

III. Unto this catholic visible Church Christ hath given the ministry, oracles, and ordinances of God, for the gathering and perfecting of the saints, in this life, to the end of the world; and doth by His own presence and Spirit, according to His promise, make them effectual thereunto. *1 Cor. xii. 28; Eph. iv. 11, 12, 13; Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; Isa. Lix. 21.*

IV. This catholic Church hath been sometimes more, sometimes less visible. And particular Churches which are members thereof, are more or less pure, according as the doctrine of the Gospel is taught and embraced, ordinances administered, and public worship performed more or less purely in them. *Rom. xi. 3, 4; Rev. xii. 6, 14; Rev. ii. and iii; 1 Cor. v. 6, 7.*

V. The purest Churches under heaven are subject both to mixture and error; and some have so degenerated, as to become no Churches of Christ, but synagogues of Satan. Nevertheless, there shall be always a Church on earth, to worship God according to His will. *1 Cor. xiii. 12; Rev. ii. and iii; Matt. xiii. 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 47; Rev. xviii. 2; Rom. xi. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22; Matt. xvi. 18; Ps. lxxii. 17; Ps. cii. 28; Matt. Xxviii. 19, 20.*

VI. THERE IS NO OTHER HEAD OF THE CHURCH, BUT THE LORD JESUS CHRIST; NOR CAN THE POPE OF ROME, IN ANY SENSE, BE HEAD THEREOF; BUT IS THAT ANTICHRIST, THAT MAN OF SIN, AND SON OF PERDITION, THAT EXALTETH HIMSELF, IN THE CHURCH. AGAINST CHRIST AND ALL THAT IS CALLED GOD. *Col. i. 18; Eph. i. 22; Matt. xxiii. 8, 9, 10; 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4, 8, 9; Rev. xii. 6.*

CHAPTER XXXII

Of the State of Men after Death and the Resurrection of the Dead

I. The bodies of men, after death, return to dust and see corruption; but their souls (which neither die nor sleep) having an immortal subsistence, immediately return to God who gave them: the souls of the righteous, being then made perfect in holiness, are received into the highest heavens, where they behold the face of God, in light and glory, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies. And the souls of the wicked are cast into hell, where they remain in torments and utter darkness, reserved to the judgment of the great day. Beside these two places, for souls separated from their bodies, the

Scripture acknowledgeth none. *Gen. iii. 19; Acts xiii. 36; Luke xxiii. 43; Eccles. xii. 7; Heb. xii. 23; 2 Cor. v. 1, 6, 8; Phil. i. 23 with Acts iii. 21 and Eph. iv. 10; Luke xvi. 23, 24; Acts i. 25; Jude ver. 6. 7; 1 Pet. Iii. 19.*

II. At the last day, such as are found alive shall not die, but be changed: and all the dead shall be raised up, with the selfsame bodies and none other, although with different qualities, which shall be united again to their souls for ever. *1 Thess. iv. 17; 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52; Job xix. 26, 27; 1 Cor. xv. 42, 43, 44.*

III. The bodies of the unjust shall, by the power of Christ, be raised to dishonour; the bodies of the just, by His Spirit, unto honour; and be made conformable to His own glorious body. *Acts xxiv. 15; John v. 28, 29; 1 Cor. xv. 43; Phil. Iii. 21.*

CHAPTER XXXIII

Of the Last Judgment

I. God hath appointed a day, wherein He will judge the world in righteousness, by Jesus Christ, to whom all power and judgment is given of the Father. In which day, not only the apostate angels shall be judged, but likewise all persons that have lived upon earth shall appear before the tribunal of Christ, to give an account of their thoughts, words, and deeds; and to receive according to what they have done in the body, whether good or evil. *Acts xvii. 31; John v. 22, 27; 1 Cor. vi. 3; Jude ver. 6; 2 Pet. ii. 4; 2 Cor. v. 10; Eccles. xii. 14; Rom. ii. 16; Rom. xiv. 10, 12; Matt. Xii. 36, 37.*

II. The end of God's appointing this day is for the manifestation of the glory of His mercy, in the eternal salvation of the elect; and of His justice, in the damnation of the reprobate who are wicked and disobedient. For then shall the righteous go into everlasting life, and receive that fulness of joy and refreshing, which shall come from the presence of the Lord: but the wicked, who know not God, and obey not the Gospel of Jesus Christ, shall be cast into eternal torments, and be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power. *Matt. xxv. 31 to the end; Rom. ii. 5, 6; Rom. ix. 22, 23; Matt. xxv. 21; Acts iii. 19; 2 Thess. i. 7, 8, 9, 10.*

III. As Christ would have us to be certainly persuaded that there shall be a day of judgment, both to deter all men from sin, and for the greater consolation of the godly in their adversity; so will He have that day unknown to men, that they may shake off all carnal security, and be always watchful,

because they know not at what hour the Lord will come; and may be ever prepared to say, Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly Amen. *2 Pet. iii. 11, 14; 2 Cor. v. 10, 11; 2 Thess. i. 5, 6, 7; Luke xxi. 27, 28; Rom. viii. 23, 24, 25; Matt. xxiv. 36, 42, 43, 44; Mark xiii. 35, 36, 37, Luke xii. 35, 36; Rev. xxii. 20.*

WE SEE THEREFORE, THAT THE SCRIPTURES TEACH CLEARLY AND EMPHATICALLY, THAT THE “LAST DAYS” OR “TIME OF THE END” ARE INDICATIVE OF:

- FIRSTLY, THE FIRST COMING OF CHRIST, NOT THE SECOND;
- SECONDLY, OF THE END OF THE OLD COVENANT, ITS TEMPLE AND ITS PEOPLE ISRAEL; AND
- THIRDLY, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, THE WHOLE ERA OF THE NEW COVENANT, OR THE CHRISTIAN ERA,

SO LET US DRAW TO OUR CONCLUSION ON THIS STUDY OF THE LAST DAYS AND THE END TIMES BY OBSERVING AGAIN, IN THE INSPIRED WORDS OF THE APOSTLE PAUL, “GOD HATH, IN THESE LAST DAYS, SPOKEN UNTO US BY HIS SON!” (HEBREWS 1)

You will notice that in Scripture, many comments about the “last days” (and similar phrases) are somewhat vague and general. The reason is very simple – the last days are a long time! In them, we find the glorious revelation of God manifest in the flesh, His wonderful ministry and miracles, His death and resurrection and ascension; we find a vibrant Church growing and shedding abroad His glorious gospel light, then apostacy and all sorts of struggles and trials and tribulations, but through all ages the Church is triumphant. There is always “a remnant (*of God’s people*) according to the election of grace” (***Romans 11:5***), even in the darkest times there is gospel light shining brightly in this world: when the 'Dark Ages' were upon this world, there was, here and there, a Catholic priest who saw the light: John Wycliffe in England in the 1300's, the 'Morning Star of the Reformation,' was debating with the unbelieving professors, and training preachers, Lollards, who preached the Word of God all over England; in Bohemia, John Huss preached the Word of God and died a martyr's death – these were long before the Reformation. Then there were Luther, Tyndale, Calvin, Knox, and many more, until the whole world was flood-lit with the gospel, and the Bible in print in the common languages of the people. And we have seen even more apostacy since the Protestant Reformation (even the Protestant Churches are falling away from the true faith, so that real Protestantism is hardly even a memory

today! It's fair to say that, on a world-wide visible scale, Protestantism almost ended with the death of Iain Paisley of Northern Ireland.), but God can revive us again; God's promises are always true; Jesus is still with us "always, even unto the end of the world." These last days are an enormous challenge, but also an enormous privilege for us. **These are the days of Antichrist, but they are more importantly, the days of Christ – God is still speaking through His Son – Let His testimony not decrease, but increase for His glory!**

After I prepared these comments, we were reading *Spurgeon's 'Morning & Evening'* and he makes a most encouraging remark, speaking on *Zechariah 1*, about *the four horns and the four carpenters* – the four horns the prophet saw were the four powers which "scattered Israel"; they were the enemies of the Church, but the four carpenters were men that God would raise up to overthrow them! Spurgeon goes on to say that God will always find men for His work, He will find them at the right time; He will find enough men; and He knows where to find them, because it is He Who prepares His servants for the battle. SPURGEON SAID, "**YOU NEED NOT FRET CONCERNING THE WEAKNESS OF THE CHURCH OF GOD AT ANY MOMENT; THERE MAY BE GROWING UP IN OBSCURITY THE VALIANT REFORMER WHO WILL SHAKE THE NATIONS: Chrysostoms may come forth from our Ragged Schools, and Augustines from the thickest darkness of London's poverty. The Lord knows where to find his servants. He hath in ambush a multitude of mighty men, and at his word they shall start up to the battle; "for the battle is the Lord's," and he shall get to himself the victory. Let us abide faithful to Christ, and he, in the right time, will raise up for us a defence, whether it be in the day of our personal need, or in the season of peril to his Church.**"

So, let us remember, Jesus will have the last word, and ultimately, to Him, every knee shall bow and confess that He is the Lord Jehovah, that all the world is guilty before Him, and that He alone is the Salvation of sinners. What glorious days "these last days" are! Amen.

FOOTNOTE 1: * I have already mentioned how the "falling away" culminated in the time of Roman Emperor Constantine (C 312 AD), but in time it developed further: **The following record of the manifestation of "the man of sin" is taken from a webpage article by Steve Rudd:**

<http://www.bible.ca/ntx-organization-historical-development-papal-patriarchal-systems-588-606AD.htm>

606 AD Sabinian, the bishop of Rome dies and is replaced by Boniface III. Phocas writes to the new bishop of Rome, Boniface III and through imperial decree of the Roman government, proclaims Boniface III, as the "Head of all the Churches" and "Universal Bishop". Phocas transfers the title from Constantinople to Rome. Boniface III, Bishop of Rome takes title: "universal Bishop": Catholicism is formally born in its final evolved form but the east never accepts Rome's claims and finally split fellowship with Rome in 1054 AD.

FOOTNOTE 2: * *Have Popes Really Claimed to be God?*

Quotations (more properly, alleged quotations for the most part, as we'll see later) showing that popes have claimed to be God or equal to God are a staple of anti-Catholic polemics. I recently ran across such a list, and the results of my investigations are below. I suspect the list as I got it is rather old, as its most recent entry dates only to the late 19th Century. The continuing growth of materials available on the Internet has made it possible to shed some light on the facts behind these "quotations".

The List

1. Pope Innocent III (1198-1216) wrote: "We may according to the fullness of our power, dispose of the law and dispense above the law. Those whom the Pope of Rome doth separate, it is not a man that separates them but God. For the Pope holdeth place on earth, not simply of a man but of the true God." (1 Book of Gregory 9 Decret. c. 3)
2. The Lateran Council addressing Pope Julius II in an oration delivered by Marcellus said: "Take care that we lose not that salvation, that life and breath which thou hast given us, for thou art our shepherd, thou art our physician, thou art our governor, thou art our husbandman, thou art finally another God on earth." (Council Edition. Colm. Agrip. 1618)
3. Pope Nicholas said of himself: "I am in all and above all, so that God Himself and I, the vicar of God, hath both one consistory, and I am able to do almost all that God can do... wherefore, if those things that I do be said not to be done of man, but of God, what do you make of me but God? Again, if prelates of the Church be called of Constantine for gods, I then being above all prelates, seem by this reason to be above all gods. Wherefore, no marvel,

if it be in my power to dispense with all things, yea with the precepts of Christ.” (Decret. par. Distinct 96 ch. 7 edit. Lugo 1661)

4. The RC New York catechism states: “The Pope takes the place of Jesus Christ on earth... by divine right the Pope has supreme and full power in faith, in morals over each and every pastor and his flock. He is the true vicar, the head of the entire church, the father and teacher of all Christians. He is the infallible ruler, the founder of dogmas, the author of and the judge of councils; the universal ruler of truth, the arbiter of the world, the supreme judge of heaven and earth, the judge of all, being judged by no one, God himself on earth.”

5. The title “Lord God the Pope” - these words appeared in the Canon Law of Rome. “To believe that our Lord God the Pope has not the power to decree as he is decreed, is to be deemed heretical.” (The Gloss extravagances of Pope John XXII Cum. Inter, tit XIV Ad Callem Sexti Decretalium, Paris, 1685)

Father A. Pereira acknowledged: “It is quite certain that Popes have never disapproved or rejected this title “Lord God the Pope” for the passage in the gloss referred to appears in the edition of the Canon Law published in Rome by Gregory XIII.”

6. Pope Nicholas I declared that “the appellation of God had been confirmed by Constantine on the Pope, who being God, cannot be judged by man.” (Labbe IX Dist.: 96 Can 7 Satis Evidentur Decret Gratian Primer Para)

7. Speaking [in] the name of the Pope (a rhetorical device) Cardinal Manning said: “I acknowledge no civil superior, I am the subject of no prince, and I claim more than this, I claim to be the supreme judge on earth and director of the consciences of men, I am the last supreme judge of what is right and wrong.” (Sermon in the Pro Cathedral, Kensington, Tablet Oct 9, 1864)