



A Biblical Study of the Future of the World, the Middle East, and the Church

**November 4, 2017
Dr. John Weeks**



Laurelwood
BAPTIST CHURCH

East Clark County Epicenter Day Conference

“What Is the World Coming To?”

Laurelwood Baptist Church
November 4, 2017

Welcome!

We are glad you are here today with an interest in God's plans for the Middle East and for the whole world. This conference will be based on the living, abiding Word of God as the final authority.

Please make yourself comfortable and enjoy the relaxed environment. Grab a cup of coffee and a snack to eat during the presentations and again at break times.

Let us know how we can serve you better during this conference.

Maranatha (1 Cor. 16:22 -- Our Lord Come!)
John Weeks
ACL Director
Laurelwood Baptist Church



Information

- We do ask you to silence your cell phones during the sessions.
- We do provide pens for you to take notes during these sessions. If you no longer need the pen after today's conference, just return the pen to the materials table.
- This day conference is not being recorded to be available outside of today. The materials packet is free for your use. This is your permission to duplicate materials as long as you print the credit on a page.
- Restrooms are located off the lobby in the hall to the left as you entered the building.
- The snacks, coffee, and water on the tables in the back are yours to enjoy at any time during the day. We ask that your coffee be covered.

SCHEDULE FOR THE CONFERENCE

8:45 am	Pick up materials	
9:00 -- 10:00 am	1st General Session :: Are current World Events Signs of His Coming?	#comingsoon4u
10:00 -- 10:15 am	BREAK	
10:20 -- 11:25 am	2nd General Session :: Does the Church Fulfill God's Promises to Israel?	#hope4u
11:30 -- 1:00 pm	LUNCH PROVIDED	
1:00 -- 2:00 pm	3rd General Session :: Should We Support Secular Israel Today?	#blessing4u
2:00 -- 2:15 pm	BREAK	
2:15 -- 3:15 pm	4th Session Video Panel :: Evaluating Attempts to Ignore Israel Today.	#experts4u

4th Session Video Panel includes: Joel Rosenberg, Moderator; Tomas Sandell; Wayne Hilsden, Pastor in Israel; Dr. Michael Rydelink, Professor of Jewish Studies, Moody

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Dr. John Weeks taught eschatology at Southeastern Bible College, Birmingham, Alabama for 4 years. He has also been teaching the books of Daniel and Revelation for over 24 years, including 20 years at Multnomah Biblical Seminary in Portland, Oregon. Dr. Weeks takes full responsibility for the content of this conference and these materials, and he is aware that respected Bible scholars disagree on some of this material.

Dr. Weeks acknowledges the insights by many professors, teachers, pastors, and books that have been woven into these materials.



Are Current World Events Signs of His Coming?

Session 1

Every Christian looks forward in faith to things that are not seen yet, future/prophecy --

"I believe that I will go to heaven."

"I will be raised from the dead."

"I will be accountable at the Judgment Seat of Christ."

"Jesus Christ will return to the earth again as King of Kings."

Your personal faith is built on and strengthened by hope in the sure promises of God yet to be fulfilled.

Hebrews 11:1 -- ***Now faith is the reality of what is hoped for, the proof of what is not seen.***

Do you realize that you can strengthen your personal faith by believing all the promises that God has made, including the future things? We don't need to fear or worry (Isa. 35:4).

Do you know how your opinions and attitudes about what is happening in the Middle East can lead you to experience greater favor with God? The strength of your faith can be measured by your beliefs about Israel as a nation.

What is happening at the epicenter of Jerusalem, Israel, and the Middle East? What does God's Word promise will happen? Should Christians today be looking for these things to happen?

The Epicenter of the World

Thus says the Lord God,
"This is Jerusalem; I have set her at the center of the nations,
with lands around her."
Ezekiel 5:5

^{NAU} **Ezekiel 38:12** "...to capture spoil and to seize plunder, to turn your hand against the waste places which are *now* inhabited, and against the people who are gathered from the nations, who have acquired cattle and goods, **who live at the center of the world.**"

The epicenter of world events from God's perspective is the Middle East.



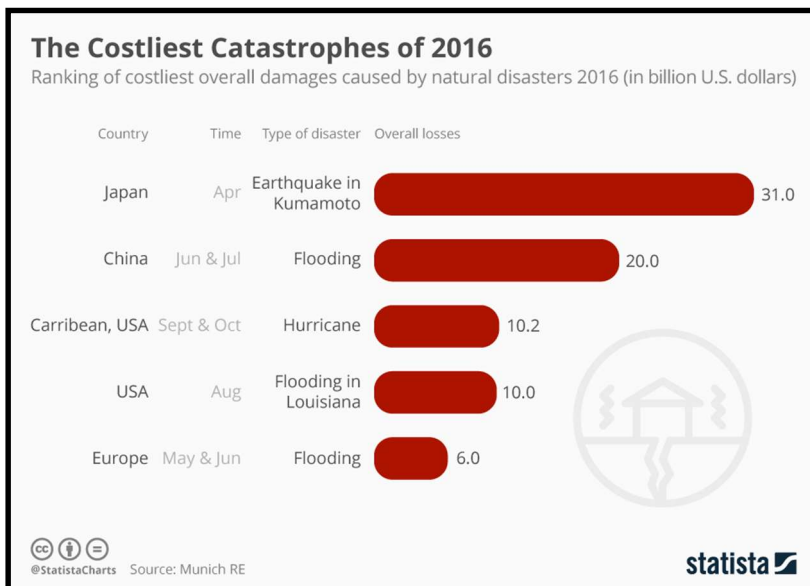
Key question: What is the relationship between events in the Middle East and the Coming of Jesus Christ? Is the end of the world near? Do world events indicate the end is near?

Our world accelerates toward a global crisis.

You might be feeling that God is shaking the nations physically, spiritually, emotionally, financially, politically and in so many other ways.

- The people of Israel are being shaken by fears that Iran is rapidly closing in on building nuclear weapons and the world is not doing nearly enough to stop them in time.
- World-wide natural disasters are estimated to have caused global economic losses totalling US\$75M in 2007. The number of natural catastrophes recorded in 2007 was 950, the highest figure since 1974 when Munich began keeping systematic records.
- In the brief span of two months in 2017, a series of disasters have swept across the globe. Hurricanes in the Gulf Coast and the Caribbean left homes, businesses, and streets flooded, disarmed power grids and basic services, and devastated the communities that rely on them. An earthquake in Mexico spurred mass evacuations and toppled buildings. Floods in South Asia killed thousands and shut millions of children out of school.

- Korea threatens the USA or allies with a possible nuclear missile attack.



What if these events are not all random?
What if the God of the Bible is allowing these to happen to shake us, to wake us, to get our attention, that we might turn to Him and ask Him to have mercy on us and help us?

Why does God allow such disasters to happen to us? It is not because He does not love us. It is because He loves us so much that He wants to shake us loose from trusting in other things.

The Lord shakes individuals and nations that we might let go of all of the flawed political, philosophical, intellectual and religions notions that we cling to that won't give us true peace, that don't give us real hope, that can't bring us any security, and that can't provide forgiveness from our sins or eternal life for our souls. The God of the Bible wants to shake us loose of such things that we might trust Him, and seek the life He offers through faith in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord isn't letting us be shaken because He hates us. He's letting us be shaken precisely because He loves us and wants us to repent and turn to Him and call out to Him, as individuals, as families, and as nations.

"People have all kinds of theories as to what is happening, but the answer is quite straightforward -- God is trying to get our attention. These events are not random. The God of the Bible is allowing these events to shake us, to wake us, to get our attention, that we might turn to Him and ask Him to have mercy on us and help us." Joel Rosenberg Saturday, Sept. 9, 2017



Our world appears to be accelerating toward global crisis with Jerusalem at the epicenter.

We should wake up to see the signs of the times.

The world stage is being set up by God. We see the supernatural rumpling in the stage curtain; the "hand writing on the wall."

We can predict what will happen by knowing that God's words about the future have always come true with 100% accuracy. A number of Bible prophecies are still future to our time, and they will come true.

Can you discern the signs of the times?

Jesus gave signs that encourage us to watch and wait. In Matthew 16:3b Jesus says, "Do you know how to discern the appearance of the sky, but cannot discern **the signs of the times?**"

As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things happen, and what *will be* the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?" (Matt. 24:3).

Jesus gave signs that encourage us to watch and wait. ^{NAU} **Matthew 24:36** "But of *that day* and *hour* no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. (see also Mark 13:32)

First Guideline for Healthy
Study of Prophecy

***Never set a date for the
Lord's return***

***Expect the Lord to come
at any moment.***

Second Guideline for
Healthy Study of Prophecy

We must be ready! We must be alert.

Wake Up Church!

^{NAU} **Revelation 3:3** 'So remember what you have received and heard; and keep *it*, and repent. Therefore if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you.

^{NAU} **1 Thessalonians 5:1-2** Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. ² For **you yourselves know full well** that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night.

If I see the warning signs and do not tell you, Church, then I am the one responsible when the disaster strikes, according to Ezek. 33:1-9.



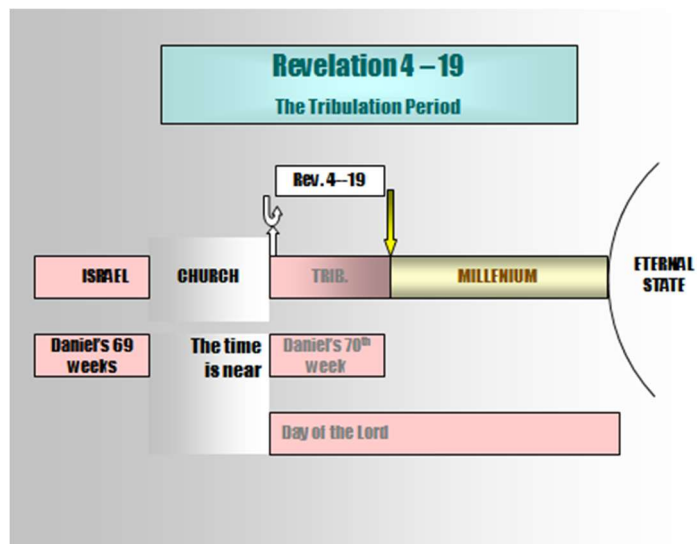
Key: when does “the Day of the Lord” start?

NAU **2 Thess 2:1** Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, ² that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come.

See scriptural references to the phrase “Day of the Lord.”^A What do we learn?

1. The “day” is not a 24-hour period of time, but an extended period of time when the Lord judges the present earth.
2. The day of the Lord begins Daniel’s 70th week (Dan. 9:24-27), also called the 7 year Tribulation. It occurs after the Rapture of the Church, when Jesus comes like a thief and takes true believers from the earth.
3. Conclusion: The Day of the Lord includes the Tribulation, the 2nd Advent, the kingdom reign, the rebellion of Satan, and the destruction of the earth and the solar system as we know it.

NAU **2 Pet. 3:10** But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.



The Rapture of the Church will come “like a thief” and then the Day of Lord will begin

NAU **Rev. 16:15** (“Behold, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his clothes, so that he will not walk about naked and men will not see his shame.”)

NAU **1 Thess. 5:3-4** While they are saying, “Peace and safety!” then destruction will come upon them **suddenly like labor pains upon a woman** with child, and they will not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief;

Zeph. 1:14 Near is the great day of the LORD, near and coming very quickly; Listen, the day of the LORD! In it the warrior cries out bitterly.

CAUTION: The 2nd Coming of Jesus to the earth is also said to be “like a thief” (Rev. 16:15; Matt. 24:42, 44, 50; 25:13).

Nothing needs to happen before the Lord comes back for His church. Jesus could return at any moment.



Some Bible students make the mistake of placing Ezekiel's war (Ezek. 38-39 Gog and Magog) before the Rapture, instead of before the 2nd coming of the Lord to the earth and the campaign of Armageddon in the Valley of Meggido, the wine press of the wrath of God (Ezek. 39:17-20; Rev. 19:15, 17-21; Isa. 63:1-6).

Nations around Israel are unsettled and increasingly hostile toward Israel, the Holy Land, the Beautiful Land. The land promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Israel forever is the Epicenter of God's plan for the whole world.

By knowing what will take place as soon as we are gone,
WE CAN WAKE UP AND SEE THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

So what are those events? What are the signs?

The following list is merely a suggested order of future events that are found in the Bible so that when we see our world moving toward these descriptions, our heart can beat faster since we know that the Lord's coming is very near.

1. **Daniel 12:4b** Daniel is told to keep the book sealed "until the end of time; many will go back and forth and knowledge will increase."

- **Increased travel.** From running, horseback riding, trains, automobiles, planes, supersonic flight, to space travel.
- **Increased knowledge.**
IBM once predicted that during these 20-teen years, information will double every 11 hours.

Buckminster Fuller created the "Knowledge Doubling Curve"; he noticed that until 1900 human knowledge doubled approximately every century. By the end of World War II knowledge was doubling every 25 years. Today things are not as simple as different types of knowledge have different rates of growth. For example, nanotechnology knowledge is doubling every two years and clinical knowledge every 18 months. But on average human knowledge is doubling (2013) every 13 months.

2. **The "beginning of birthpangs"** (Matt. 24:7-8):

This might suggest that, much like birth contractions, these signs of the end times in Matt. 24 will occur with greater frequency and intensity as Christ's return draws near. This is why Jesus mentioned this sign first when answering his disciples' questions "When will all this take place? And will there be any sign ahead of time to signal your return and the end of the world?" (Matt. 24:3)

⁶ You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not frightened, for *those things* must take place, but *that* is not yet the end. ⁷ For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes. ⁸ But all these things are *merely* the beginning of birthpangs. (Mt 24:6-8)

- **Wars, rumors of war**
According to a [Wikipedia list of wars](#), the past 500 years have witnessed an increase in the frequency of wars:
15th Century - 29 wars
16th Century - 59 wars
17th Century - 75 wars
18th Century - 69 wars
19th Century - 294 wars
20th Century - 278 wars



- **Famines**

According to a [Wikipedia list of famines](#), the past 500 years have also witnessed an increase in the frequency of famines:

15th Century - 6 famines
16th Century - 10 famines
17th Century - 24 famines
18th Century - 28 famines
19th Century - 30 famines
20th Century - 44 famines

The first decade of the 21st Century alone has already witnessed 12 famines, putting humanity on course for 120 famines over the next one hundred year period.

- **Earthquakes**

- These local earthquakes (plural) occur early as “merely the beginning of birth pangs,” a sign of the Lord’s coming (Matt. 24:3, 7-8).
- The prophetic scriptures predict worldwide earthquakes occur during the Tribulation --Ezek.38:18-20; Joel 2:10; Hag.2:6-9, 21; Heb.12:26-29; Rev.6:12-14; 16:18-20
- US Geological Survey (USGS) provides the total number of (local) earthquakes worldwide for any period of time. Take into account that the recording equipment has improved and the reporting has improved in recent years.

As of September 20, 2017 <https://earthquaketrack.com/p/mexico/recent>

Mexico has had: (*M1.5 or greater*)

4 earthquakes in the past 24 hours
71 earthquakes in the past 7 days
291 earthquakes in the past 30 days
1,708 earthquakes in the past 365 days

The largest earthquake in Mexico:

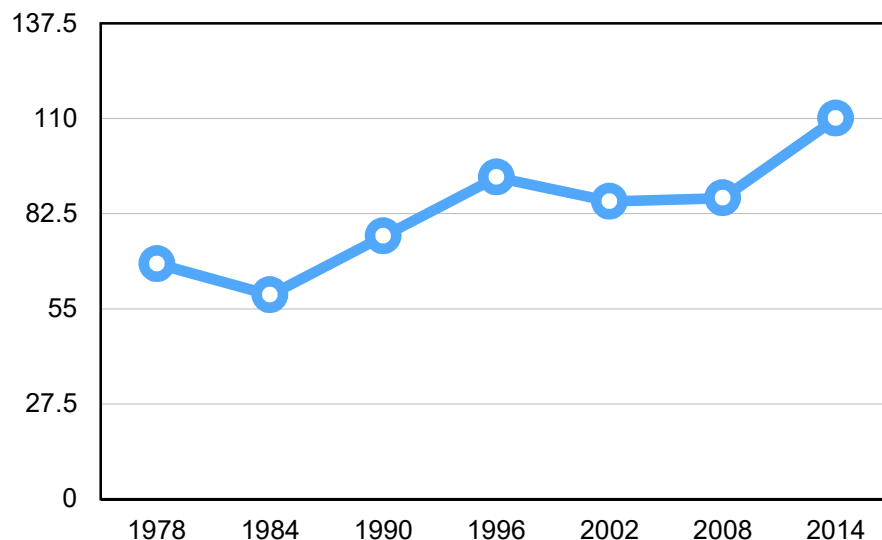
today (9-20-17): 4.7 in El Palmarcito, Chiapas, Mexico
this week: 7.1 in Raboso, Puebla, Mexico
this month (Sept 2017): 8.1 in El Palmarcito, Chiapas, Mexico
this year (2017): 8.1 in El Palmarcito, Chiapas, Mexico

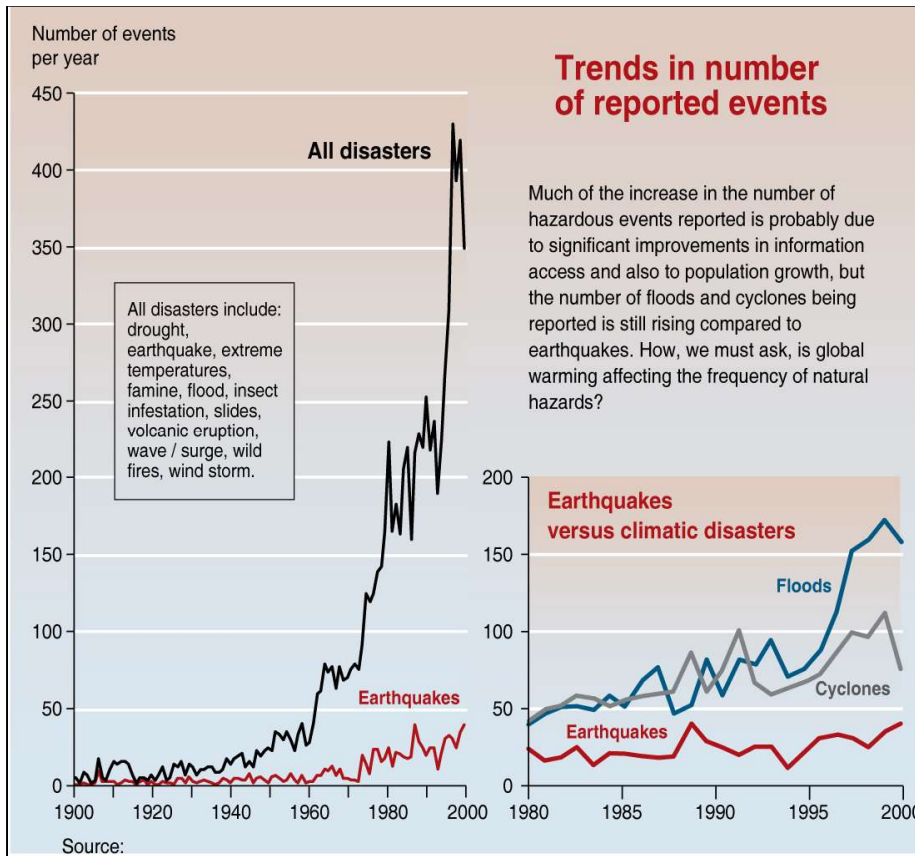
U.S.Geological Survey

National Earthquake Information Center (NEIC)

1711 Illinois Street (on the Colorado School of Mines Campus)

Chart -- Data every 6 years, starting 1972 - 1978, magnitude 7+





3. Israel became a nation again in 1948.

On May 14, 1948, in Tel Aviv, Jewish Agency Chairman David Ben-Gurion proclaimed the State of Israel, establishing the first Jewish state in nearly 2,000 years. This might be referenced in Ezek. 37 in the vision of the valley of dry bones, and again in Ezek. 38:8.

4. Rise of a coalition (alliance) into 10 nations in a revived Roman Empire (Dan.7:7-8, interpreted in 7:24-25; Rev. 17:12-13, 16-17).

For example, the European Union currently has **28 member nations**.

Jun. 13, 2017 1:55 PM ET

WARSAW, Poland (AP) — Poland's president on Tuesday moved next month's summit of central and eastern European nations to Warsaw, from southwestern Poland, because U.S. President Donald Trump is attending it.

The Three Seas Initiative summit will be held July 6-7, bringing together leaders of **12 nations** for talks on strengthening and integrating the region through the development of energy and infrastructure ties in the territory running from the Baltic Sea in the north to the Adriatic in the south and the Black Sea in the east. The initiative is to raise the region's standing in Europe, but also to make it attractive as an economic partner for the U.S.

The following 12 countries are part of the initiative:

Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia, Croatia, Slovenia and Austria.



5. **Apostasy and lawlessness increases, and people's love grows cold.**

Most students of the Bible note that the end times are characterized by increasing lawlessness worldwide. (2 Thess. 2:3; Matt. 24:12; 2 Tim. 3:1-5)

6. **Homosexuality and violence rampant while society continues to function outwardly.**

The end times will be like the "days of Noah" and the "days of Lot" before destruction comes suddenly from the Lord (Luke 17:26-30; Matt. 24:37-39).

7. **Mocking the promise of the Lord's coming.**

³ Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with *their* mocking, following after their own lusts, ⁴ and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For *ever* since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation." 2 Pet. 3:3-4

8. **Rise of a political ruler out of the 10 nation alliance (the Antichrist; lawless one) (Dan. 7:7-8; 23-24; Rev. 17:12).**

Most think he (the Antichrist) will arise from among the Western nations, such as Europe, out of a 10-nation confederacy.

9. **Rapture** – The "thief in the night," Jesus Christ, comes for His Bride, the Church, to meet Christians in the air. At that time, the Restrainer (Holy Spirit) who is in every person who is "in Christ" is removed from earth (2 Thess. 2; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:50-58).

10. **The lawless one (Antichrist) is revealed** (2 Thess. 2:1-3; Dan. 11:36-45; Rev. 13)

Throughout history, Christians have been guessing.

- Mussolini
- Hitler
- Putin
- American Presidents working on peace in middle east: Carter; Reagan; Clinton; Obama; Trump.

The bottom line is that we must stop thinking every "bad guy" introduced to us could be the Anti-Christ. It could be any well-loved person this world knows. A celebrity, a politician, a humanitarian, a singer, a writer, etc, could all be him. Remember, his job is to fool you! The son of the great deceiver will surely know how to deceive. What if a well-loved actor was him? What if one of the candidates running for the presidential elections was him? What if a well-known preacher or evangelist was him? Yes, a famous preacher or "Christian" leader might be the Antichrist. We don't know who he is, but we do know what to watch for. Don't assume any longer that a hated public figure could be him...he will be far from hated. In fact, he will be worshiped and adored.

11. **Emerging world leader makes a covenant** (of peace in the middle east) with Israel (Dan. 9:24-27).

History of attempts at Arab-Israeli peace diplomacy and treaties

- Paris Peace Conference, 1919
- Faisal-Weizmann Agreement (1919)
- 1949 Armistice Agreements
- Camp David Accords (1978)
- Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty (1979)
- Fahd Plan (1981)
- Reagan Plan (Sept. 1, 1982)
- Fez Initiative (Sept. 9, 1982)
- May 17 Agreement (1983), a failed attempt of peace between Lebanon and Israel
- Madrid Conference of 1991
- Oslo Accords (1993)
- Israel-Jordan Treaty of Peace (1994)
- Camp David 2000 Summit
- Geneva Accord (2003)

The **Geneva Initiative**, also known as the **Geneva Accord**, is a model permanent status agreement to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict based on previous official negotiations, international resolutions, the Quartet Roadmap, the Clinton



Parameters, and the Arab Peace Initiative. The Geneva Initiative addresses and presents a comprehensive solution to all issues vital to ensuring the end of the conflict and the realization of the national visions of both parties. It would give Palestinians almost all of the West Bank and Gaza Strip drawing Israel's borders close to what existed prior to the Israeli annexation of territory at the culmination of the 1967 war. Jerusalem would be divided administratively with East Jerusalem serving as the capital for the Palestinian state and West Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. In return for removing most of the Israeli settlements in those areas, the Palestinians would limit their "right of return" of refugees to Israel to a number specified by the Israeli government and will put an end to any further claims and demands from Israel.

- International law and the Arab–Israeli conflict
- Valley of Peace initiative
- Canaan State USA 51
- The Middle East Peace Initiative (from about year 2000), division of US Department of State Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs.

MEPI's mission is to create *vibrant partnerships* between America and the citizens of the Middle East and North Africa. Partnership was more than a slogan of the Obama Administration; it was a foundational principle of U.S. diplomacy. President Obama and Secretary Clinton made partnership a cornerstone of our engagement with Muslim communities, and it was the guiding principle of MEPI. Partnerships between the U.S., the private sector and non-governmental organizations of the Middle East and North Africa are facilitated by MEPI's work in the region.

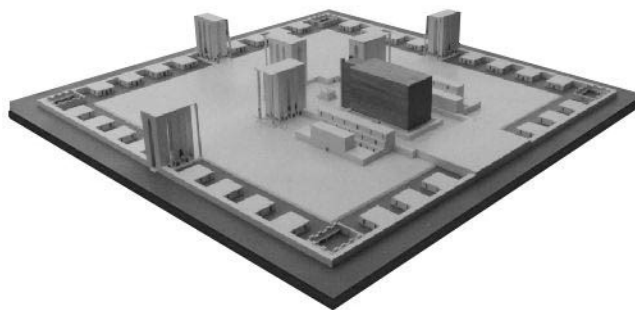
Ultimately, MEPI seeks to transform the U.S. relationship with citizens of the Middle East and North Africa.

President Donald Trump is the latest to address peace in the Middle East. Regarding middle east peace, Trump predicts he will "get it done."

<http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/894178/trump-on-middle-east-peace-we-will-get-it-done>

12. **God seals 144,000 Jews from every tribe to fulfill His covenant promise to Israel.** (Rev. 7, 14)

13. **Israel rebuilds the Temple in Jerusalem** [probably takes 3 ½ years]



Some evidence exists that Israel is already making preparations for the 3rd Temple. One title says "The Temple Institute in Jerusalem Has Spent Approximately 27 Million Dollars on Preparations For The Rebuilding of The Jewish Temple" (<http://www.templeinstitute.org/>) (<http://www.futurehopeonline.org/>)

(<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/124443>).
<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/198621>

Arute Sheva News ch. 7 July 7, 2017

The Temple Institute has released a modern three-dimensional architectural rendition of the future Third Holy Temple, utilizing the latest building material and techniques. The vivid, three-minute video walks viewers through the main sanctuary, showcasing decades of research and tens of innovative Halakhic (Jewish law) solutions to various perplexing issues that were resolved to create fully functional, ready-to-use plans.

14. **Abomination of Desolation set up in the Temple after 3 ½ years of peace** (Dan.9:27; Matt.24:15). The abomination of desolation is the man who made peace with Israel, then suddenly reverses himself and makes himself the ruler of the whole world by seating himself in God's temple in Jerusalem. It is the Man of Lawlessness, the Antichrist.



15. **The Campaign of Gog and Magog begins in the middle of the tribulation and launches the final world war, to last 3 ½ years** (Dan.11:40-45; Ezek.38-39)

16. **One World Religion set up –**
worship of One World Leader
(Da.11:36-37; 2 Thess. 2:3-4;
Rv.13:4-6)

17. **Worldwide Economic Control
by One Leader through the mark of
the antichrist** (Rv.13:16-18)

The inventor of the UPC barcode is George J. Laurer. In 1971, while Mr. Laurer was an employee with IBM, he was assigned the task "to design the best code and symbol suitable for the grocery industry". In 1973, Mr. Laurer's UPC barcode entered the world, and the rest is history.

On Mr. Laurer's web site, he has a "Questions" page, where he answers various questions about the UPC barcode. On the "Questions" page, Mr. Laurer answers the "666" question, as follows:

Question #8 - Rumor has it that the lines (left, middle, and right) that protrude below the U.P.C. code are the numbers 6,6,6... and that this is the international money code. I typed a code with all sixes and this seems to be true. At least they all resemble sixes. What's up with that?

Answer- Yes, they do RESEMBLE the code for a six.

Is the barcode the mark of the beast? No. Does the barcode pave the way for the mark of the beast. Yes. It will somehow be implanted on the forehead or the hand in order to be able to buy or sell.

Wis. Company Offering to Implant Microchips in Workers' Hands

www.theepochtimes.com

Article July 24, 2017

<http://www.theepochtimes.com/n3/2272343-wis-company-offering-to-implant-microchips-in-workers-hands/>

A Wisconsin firm is offering to implant microchips in its employees, becoming the first to do so in the United States, according to media reports on Monday.

It's offering a tiny radio-frequency identification (RFID) chip worth about \$300 into workers' hands for free. The RFID chip will allow workers to open doors, log into computers, and purchase food.

CEO Todd Westby said that employees worried about their privacy shouldn't be alarmed.

"There's no GPS tracking at all," he said.

"We foresee the use of RFID technology to drive everything from making purchases in our office break room market, opening doors, use of copy machines, logging into our office computers, unlocking phones, sharing business cards, storing medical/health information, and used as payment at other RFID terminals," Wesby elaborated in the press release. "Eventually, this technology will become standardized allowing you to use this as your passport, public transit, all purchasing opportunities, etc."

<http://www.rawstory.com/2010/02/virginia-passes-law-banning-chip-implants-mark-beast/>

Virginia delegates pass bill banning chip implants as 'mark of the beast'

DANIEL TENCER

10 FEB 2010 AT 15:58 ET

Concerns over privacy have aligned with apocalyptic Biblical prophecy in a proposed Virginia law that limits the use of microchip implants on humans because of a lawmaker's concern that the chips will prove to be the Antichrist's "mark of the beast."

On Wednesday, Virginia's House of Delegates passed a bill that forbids companies from forcing their employees to be implanted with tracking devices, a move likely to be applauded by civil libertarians.

18. **Series of Catastrophic Worldwide Disasters** (Judgments) begin the time of "great tribulation" for everyone on earth (Matt. 24:21; Rev. 6-16) and unprecedented "distress" (Dan.12:1) for Israel.





19. **God gathers all the nations of the world to a final battle** in the Valley of Megiddo (Ezek.39:1-5; Rev.16:12-16 (6th bowl); Rev. 19:17-21) known as Armageddon. Ezekiel's war (Ezek.38-39 Gog and Magog) occurs at the 2nd coming of the Lord to the earth and the campaign of Armageddon in the Valley of Megiddo, the wine press of the wrath of God (Ezek. 39:17-20; Rev. 19:15; Isa. 63:1-6).

20. **At the end of Daniel's 70th week, after the tribulation, the "sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky"** (Matt.24:29-30; Zech. 12:10; 14:4-7).

What should we look for today? Where should we as a church place our hope?

From about 1960 - 2005, most Christians in America have assumed that the Lord could return in the rapture at any moment. This is called the Pre-Tribulational Rapture. In recent years, more Christians are being taught the Post-Tribulational Rapture position that takes the Church through the tribulation. What do these Christians look for today?

Post-tribulationist View—rapture occurs moments before Jesus returns to earth at the of the tribulation.

"Is the Lord coming back today?"

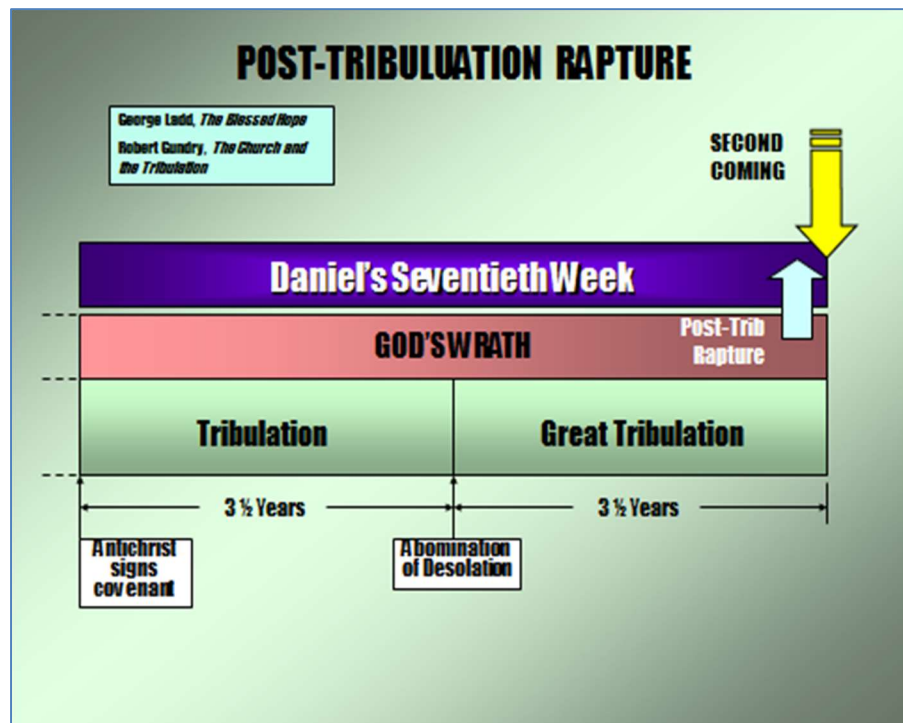
"No."

"Is the Lord returning in next 5 years."

"No."

This is a recent conversation with a teacher in a Bible college takes the post-tribulation rapture viewpoint.

Thankfully, this person being very honest. In other words, this person does not believe that the return of Christ is imminent or unexpected at moment. It is true that for someone who takes the position that the rapture occurs after the tribulation, the following things must happen before the Church can hope to see the return of Jesus Christ. Those that are **bolded are the more obvious events to look for**. This list is also a useful summary of some events during the tribulation period, Daniel's 70th week.



The
end
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who
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any



Someone who believes in a Post-Tribulation rapture needs to look for these things to occur during Daniel's 70th week (the Tribulation) before the Lord will return:

1. The restrainer is taken out of the way (2 Thess. 2:7-8).
2. The antichrist is revealed (2 Thess. 2:3-4, 8).
3. The antichrist signs a covenant of peace related to the nation of Israel (Dan. 9:24-27).
4. 144,000 celibate Jews receive a special seal on their foreheads (Rev. 7:1-8).
5. The antichrist goes out to conquer and dominate (Rev. 6:2; Dan. 11:36-39).
6. The antichrist breaks the covenant with Israel (Dan. 9:24-27).
7. Because Satan is thrown to the earth and has a short time, he empowers antichrist and apparently **restores antichrist to life** in imitation of the resurrection of Christ (Rev. 13:1-4).
8. The false prophet performs miraculous signs and **makes a talking image of antichrist that kills anyone who does not worship the image** (Rev. 13:11-15).
9. The false prophet sets up **an economic system that requires people to have the mark of the beast** (Rev. 13:16-18).
10. Because Satan knows his time is short, he tries to persecute Israel, who is sovereignly protected by God for 3 ½ years (Rev. 12:13-17).
11. **Antichrist makes war with the saints from every nation of the world** (Rev. 13:7; Dan. 7:25).
12. The **antichrist sets up the abomination of desolation in the temple in Jerusalem** and boasts arrogantly (Dan. 7:24-25; 9:24-27; cf. Rev. 13:5-6; 2 Thess. 2:4).
13. The antichrist is attacked from the North and South, launching a world-wide war lasting up to 3 ½ years (Ezek. 38-39; Dan. 11:40-45).
14. God grants authority to **two witnesses to prophesy for 3 ½ years with power to prevent rain, turn water to blood, to strike the earth with plagues, and to breathe fire to destroy anyone who tries to stop them** (Rev. 11:1-6).
15. The **whole world is plunged into economic disaster** (Rev. 6:5-6).
16. **¼ of the world population dies by famine, disease, and wild beasts** (Rev. 6:7-8).
17. Saints from every nation on the earth are martyred in great numbers (Rev. 6:9-11; 7:9-14).
18. A **worldwide earthquake occurs where every mountain and island is moved out of place** (Rev. 6:12-14).
19. **The sun becomes blackened** (Rev. 6:12).
20. **The moon becomes blood-red** (Rev. 6:12).
21. **Thousands of stars fall to the earth** (Rev. 6:12).
22. God sends thunder, flashes of lightning, and another earthquake to the earth (Rev. 8:5-6).
23. God sends **hail, fire, and blood to burn up 1/3 of the earth, trees, and grass** (Rev. 8:7).
24. God sends a burning mountain into the sea, and **1/3 of the sea becomes blood**, killing 1/3 of sea life (Rev. 8:8-9).
25. God sends a burning star that strikes **1/3 of the fresh waters and they become bitter and lethal** (Rev. 8:10-11).
26. **1/3 of the sun, moon, and stars are darkened** (Rev. 8:12-13).
27. Hideous, locust-like, demonic creatures are released from the bottomless pit inflict **5-month long torments** onto people (Rev. 9:1-12).
28. Four evil angels release 200 million demonic horsemen that **kill 1/3 of the world's remaining population** (Rev. 9:13-21).
29. Antichrist succeeds in killing the **2 witnesses whose bodies lay in the open for 3 ½ days until they are resurrected and taken to heaven with enemies watching** (Rev. 11:7-12).
30. **When the 2 witnesses ascend into heaven, a great earthquake hits Jerusalem and 10% of the city falls and 7,000 people die** (Rev. 11:12-13).
31. Another round of lightning, thunder, a worldwide earthquake and a great hailstorm hits the earth (Rev. 11:19).
32. An angel announces an eternal gospel to every nation under heaven (Rev. 14:6-7).
33. God sends **a plague of ulcerous sores on all people with the mark of the beast** (Rev. 16:1-2).
34. **God causes the sea to become blood and everything in the oceans die** (Rev. 16:3).
35. Another angel is sent to **cause all fresh water to become blood** (Rev. 16:4).
36. Another angel **causes the sun to scorch people with fierce heat** (Rev. 16:8-9).
37. A fifth angel darkened antichrist's whole kingdom and caused terrible physical pain (Rev. 16:10-11).



38. A sixth angel dried up the Euphrates River so kings from the east could come to Har-meggedon (Rev. 16:12).
39. Out of the mouths of Satan, the Antichrist, and the false prophet proceed 3 demonic spirits that gather **the kings of the whole world to Har-meggedon** (Rev. 16:13-16).
40. A seventh angel sent more **lightning, thunder, and a worldwide earthquake that splits Jerusalem into 3 parts and causes the cities of the nations to collapse** (Rev. 16:17-19).
41. **Every island disappears and mountains are not found** (Rev. 16:20).
42. God sends a **worldwide hailstorm with 100 pound hailstones** (Rev. 16:21).
43. Babylon (whatever that means – it is a “mystery”) is destroyed (Rev. 17-18).

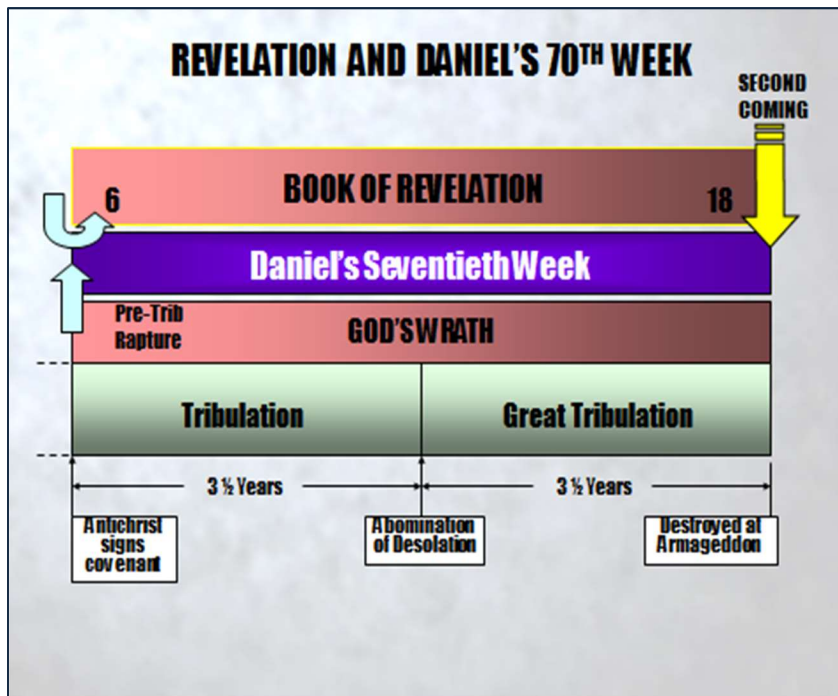
etc., etc., because this is a selective list.

According to the post-tribulationist, after all of these obvious events (signs) the saint in the Church today can look for the Lord to return in the Rapture. A Christian who holds this position should be looking for the Anti-Christ and destruction of half of the world’s population before they begin to look for Jesus’ coming.

Pre-tribulationist View (imminency) – The rapture of the Church could occur at any moment.

^BThe Pre-Tribulation Rapture View says that nothing else must happen, including the War of Gog and Magog, or the 10-nation confederacy, or anything else.

In this view, the Christian today eagerly waits for the Lord’s coming in the Rapture. We have a restful excitement about the Lord’s return. This is our hope. Romans 8:19, 23, 25; 1 Cor. 1:7; Phil. 3:20; Heb. 9:28.



❖ Eager -- we anticipate that He could come today. So we live pure, holy lives.

❖ Wait – we live, plan, set goals, and tirelessly work for Jesus since He might not come for another 100 years. We work hard for the benefit of our children and grandchildren, and the people around us.

We must live daily in a state of preparedness. We are always serving, giving, alert, anticipating the Lord's return.

1 Corinthians 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.



The practical value of eagerly waiting for the Lord in the Rapture

Personnal faith in the fact of future accountability motivates holy living today.

Romans 13:11-12

¹¹ Do this, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed. ¹² The night is almost gone, and the day is near. Therefore let us lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.

Romans 14:10-12

¹⁰ But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹ For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, And every tongue shall give praise to God." ¹² So then each one of us will give an account of himself to God.

2 Corinthians 5:9-10

⁹ Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him. ¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

2 Peter 3:11-14

¹¹ Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, ¹² looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! ¹³ But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells. ¹⁴ Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless.

1 John 2:2-3

² Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. ³ And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.



ENDNOTES

^ADay of the Lord

The key book of the Bible that highlights the “day of the Lord” is Joel. Joel’s prophecy shows that the day of the Lord involves God’s intervention in the affairs of human history to accomplish His purposes. Three facets are discernible: (1) the historical, where God intervenes in Israel’s affairs (Zeph. 1:14-18; Joel 1:15); (2) the illustrative, where historical events represent a partial fulfillment of the eschatological Day of the Lord (Joel 2:1-11; Isa. 13:6-13); (3) the eschatological, which includes the Tribulation (Isa. 2:12-19; 4:1; Rev. 4-19), the second coming of Christ (Joel 2:30-32), the millennium (Jer. 30:7-9; Isa. 19:23-25), and the end of the earth and universe (2 Peter 3:10).

Every reference in NAU that uses the phrase “day of the Lord”:

Isa. 13:6, Isa. 13:9, Ezek. 13:5, Ezek. 30:3, Joel 1:15, Joel 2:1, Joel 2:11, Joel 3:14, Amos 5:18 *2, Amos 5:20, Obad. 1:15, Zeph. 1:7, Zeph. 1:14, 1 Co. 5:5, 1 Thess. 5:2, 2 Thess. 2:2, 2 Pet. 3:10

NAU Isaiah 13:6 Wail, for **the day of the LORD** is near! It will come as destruction from the Almighty.

NAU Isaiah 13:9 Behold, **the day of the LORD** is coming, Cruel, with fury and burning anger, To make the land a desolation; And He will exterminate its sinners from it.

NAU Ezekiel 13:5 “You have not gone up into the breaches, nor did you build the wall around the house of Israel to stand in the battle on **the day of the LORD**.”

NAU Ezekiel 30:3 “For the day is near, Even **the day of the LORD** is near; It will be a day of clouds, A time of *doom* for the nations.

NAU Joel 1:15 Alas for the day! For **the day of the LORD** is near, And it will come as destruction from the Almighty.

NAU Joel 2:1 Blow a trumpet in Zion, And sound an alarm on My holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, For **the day of the LORD** is coming; Surely it is near,

NAU Joel 2:11 The LORD utters His voice before His army; Surely His camp is very great, For strong is he who carries out His word. **The day of the LORD** is indeed great and very awesome, And who can endure it?

NAU Joel 3:14 Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For **the day of the LORD** is near in the valley of decision.

NAU Amos 5:18 Alas, you who are longing for **the day of the LORD**, For what purpose *will the day of the LORD* be to you? It *will be* darkness and not light;

NAU Amos 5:20 *Will not the day of the LORD be* darkness instead of light, Even gloom with no brightness in it?

NAU Obadiah 1:15 “For **the day of the LORD** draws near on all the nations. As you have done, it will be done to you. Your dealings will return on your own head.

NAU Zephaniah 1:7 Be silent before the Lord GOD! For **the day of the LORD** is near, For the LORD has prepared a sacrifice, He has consecrated His guests.

NAU Zephaniah 1:14 Near is the great day of the LORD, Near and coming very quickly; Listen, **the day of the LORD!** In it the warrior cries out bitterly.



NAU Acts 2:20 'THE SUN WILL BE TURNED INTO DARKNESS AND THE MOON INTO BLOOD, BEFORE THE GREAT AND GLORIOUS **DAY OF THE LORD** SHALL COME.

NAU Acts 2:20 'THE SUN WILL BE TURNED INTO DARKNESS AND THE MOON INTO BLOOD, BEFORE THE GREAT AND GLORIOUS **DAY OF THE LORD** SHALL COME.

NAU 1 Corinthians 5:5 *I have decided* to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in **the day of the Lord** Jesus.

NAU 1 Thessalonians 5:2 For you yourselves know full well that **the day of the Lord** will come just like a thief in the night.

NAU 2 Thessalonians 2:2 that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that **the day of the Lord** has come.

NAU 2 Peter 3:10 But **the day of the Lord** will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.

The "day of the Lord" is a term that covers a broader period of time than the time indicated by the great day of judgment, or the "day of wrath." See the following references:

"great day of the Lord" occurs 1x:

NAU Zephaniah 1:14 Near is the **great day of the LORD**, Near and coming very quickly; Listen, the day of the LORD! In it the warrior cries out bitterly.

"the great day" also occurs 4 more times (Zeph. 1:14, Jn. 7:37, Jude 1:6, Rev. 6:17, Rev. 16:14), and all except Jn. 7:37 indicate a day of future judgment:

NAU John 7:37 Now on the last day, **the great day** of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink.

NAU Jude 1:6 And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of **the great day**,

NAU Revelation 6:17 for **the great day** of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"

NAU Revelation 16:14 for they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them together for the war of **the great day** of God, the Almighty.

Selected references that indicate the future wrath of God:

Isa 59:18; Isa 63:3-6; Ezek. 20:33-34; 22:20-31 (?); Ezek. 36:5-11; 38:18-23; Nah. 1:2-7; Zeph. 1:14-18

Matt. 3:7; Luke 21:23; Rom. 2:5; Rom. 5:9

NAU Romans 5:9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the **wrath of God** through Him.

Eph. 5:6; Col. 3:6; 1 Thess. 1:10

NAU 1 Thessalonians 1:10 and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, *that is* Jesus, who rescues us from the **wrath** to come.

NAU 1 Thessalonians 5:9 For God has not destined us for **wrath**, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Rev. 6:16-17; Rev. 11:18

NAU Revelation 11:18 "And the nations were enraged, and Your **wrath** came, and the time *came* for the dead to be judged, and *the time* to reward Your bond-servants the prophets and the saints and those who fear Your name, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth."



NAU Revelation 14:10 he also will drink of the wine of the **wrath** of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.

NAU Revelation 14:19 So the angel swung his sickle to the earth and gathered *the clusters from* the vine of the earth, and threw them into the great wine press of the **wrath** of God.

NAU Revelation 15:1 Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels who had seven plagues, *which are* the last, because in them the **wrath** of God is finished.

NAU Revelation 15:7 Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the **wrath** of God, who lives forever and ever.

NAU Revelation 16:1 Then I heard a loud voice from the temple, saying to the seven angels, "Go and pour out on the earth the seven bowls of the **wrath** of God."

NAU Revelation 16:19 The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. Babylon the great was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of His fierce **wrath**.

NAU Revelation 19:15 From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce **wrath** of God, the Almighty.

"Day of the Lord Jesus Christ" "Day of Christ" phrases in NAU

NAU 1 Corinthians 5:5 *I have decided* to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

NAU Philippians 1:6 *For I am* confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.

NAU Philippians 1:10 so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ;

NAU Philippians 2:16 holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain.

"the great day" "that day" phrase in NAU

NAU Zephaniah 1:14 Near is the great day of the LORD, Near and coming very quickly; Listen, the day of the LORD! In it the warrior cries out bitterly.

NAU Jude 1:6 And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day.

NAU Revelation 6:17 for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"

NAU Revelation 16:14 for they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty.

"That day" see Isaiah 22, 27, 30:7-8 (all the way through verse 24); 38, 39; Zeph. 1:7-17; Zech.12:8-10; 14:3-12; Matt 24:36-39

Some selected scriptures:

^{NIV} **Jeremiah 46:10** But that day belongs to the Lord, the LORD Almighty-- a day of vengeance, for vengeance on his foes. The sword will devour till it is satisfied, till it has quenched its thirst with blood. For the Lord, the LORD Almighty, will offer sacrifice in the land of the north by the River Euphrates.

^{NAU} **Zephaniah 1:15** A day of wrath is that day, A day of trouble and distress, A day of destruction and desolation, A day of darkness and gloom, A day of clouds and thick darkness,



NAU **Zechariah 12:9** "And in that day I will set about to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

NAU **Matthew 24:36** "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. (Mark 13:32)

NAU **Luke 21:34** "Be on guard, so that your hearts will not be weighted down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of life, and that day will not come on you suddenly like a trap;

NAU **2 Timothy 4:8** in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.



^BMy Biblical Evidences for a Pre-Tribulation Rapture instead of a Post-Tribulation Rapture

Dr. John C. Weeks, ThB, ThM, D.Min

These lines of evidences begin with passages that speak about this event, and build from there.

1. There is an aspect of Christ's coming in the Rapture that will change the location of the bodies of those who are in Christ, whether they are dead or alive when He comes. 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:50-58
 - This event is exclusive for the saints in the Body of Christ, no one else. The "we" of 1 Cor. 15 includes all the saints with the apostle Paul, all who are "in Jesus" (1 Th. 4:14) or "in Christ" (1 Th. 4:16).
 - This event is heard but not seen by those in Christ. "The trumpet will sound" (1 Cor. 15:52) accompanied by "a shout, with the voice of the archangel" (1 Th. 4:16).
 - This event only takes a millisecond to occur -- "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye" (1 Cor. 15:52).
 - Both the dead and the living "in Christ" will instantly receive a glorified body suitable for heaven for eternity. Only Christians who have died "in Christ" will have their bodies raised to receive a glorified body. "The dead will be raised imperishable" first (1 Cor. 15:52-54) in defeat of death (1 Thess. 4:16), and then we (who are alive) will "be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and so we shall always be with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:17). There is no mention of immediately coming back to earth.
 - A post-tribulation separate rapture event would be pointless since Jesus will raise Tribulation saints at the time of His return to the earth after the Tribulation period (Rev. 20:4).
 - The Bride, the Church, has already been given clothes of fine linen, clean and bright (Rev. 19:7-8, 14) to accompany Jesus Christ on white horses from heaven when Jesus returns to the earth at the end of the Tribulation period.
2. This rapid change for those in Christ differs from the descriptions of the coming of Jesus Christ to the earth.
 - This rapture event is heard by those in Christ, while the coming of Jesus Christ to the earth will be seen by everyone on the face of the earth.

Jesus described His future coming to the earth. "For just as the lightning comes from the east and flashed even to the west, so will the coming of the Son of Man be" (Mt. 24:27). "But immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun will be darkened, and moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory" (Mt. 24:29-30; see also Isa 13:9-10; Joel 2:10-11, 30-31).
 - The rapture event does not include judgment on the earth from an earthly throne, whereas Jesus' coming to the earth includes serious judgment on unbelievers. Rev. 19:11-21.

The Lord will come to earth and judge the unrighteous in wrath and anger, Isa.63:1-6 at an event called "the great supper of God" at the valley of Megiddo (Rev. 19:17; 14:17-20). Ezek. 39:21. Joel 3:12-14.
 - The rapture event does not include Jesus Christ's judgment on the earth from an earthly throne, whereas judgment of all the Gentiles will occur when Jesus comes to the earth and judges from an earthly throne.

Jesus said, "But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then We will sit on His glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left" (Mt. 25: 31-33). "Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels' (Mt. 25:41). Mt. 13:49-50
 - No earthly judgments are mentioned in connection with the rapture event, whereas judgment of Israel will occur when Jesus returns to the earth. Ezek. 20:34-38. Zech. 13:8-9.
 - The rapture is revealed to provide comfort, hope, and motivation for Christian service (1 Thess. 4:18; 1 Cor. 15:58) for those in Christ whereas the coming of the Lord to the earth brings judgments and destruction and eternal damnation (Mt. 25:30, 41; Rev. 19:20).
3. There yet remains a future time period of 7 years for the nation of Israel as prophesied by the angel to Daniel (Dan. 9:24-27).



- The prophecy of the "seventy weeks have been decreed for your (Daniel's) people (Israel) and your holy city" (Dan. 9:24), with no reference to the Body of Christ.
 - Just as the prophecy of the 70 weeks refers to weeks of years fulfilled literally in the coming of Messiah to die on the cross at the end of the 69th week (Dan. 9:26), so also the 70th week will be 7 years.
4. The future time period called by Jesus "the tribulation" (Mt. 24:21, 29) will be for Israel and not the Church.
 - Though the Church has experienced lots of persecution and trouble and tribulation, Jesus referred to a future time period unlike any other time in history, described in Rev. 6--18, when half of the world's population will be destroyed among many other horrific judgements.
 - Though the nation of Israel has experienced persecution and horrible anti-Semitic holocausts, nothing will compare to the future tribulation period predicted by Jesus (Mt. 24:21) and Daniel (Dan. 12:1) which says this tribulation period will be "a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time."
 - The future tribulation is predicted by Jer. 30:8 to be for Israel (Jacob). The passage says, "Alas! for that day is great, there is none like it; and it is the time of Jacob's distress, but he will be saved from it."
 - The Tribulation period is the future Day of God's Wrath (Zeph. 1:14-15; Rev. 6:15-17) and 1 Thess. 1:10 instructs the Church "to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come," and again, "for God has not appointed us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. 5:9).
 5. The future time of Israel's distress described by Revelation 6-18 does not mention the Church even one time. The word "church" occurs 19 times in Revelation 1-3 since the prophecy was written by the apostle John to the 7 churches listed in Rev. 2-3, yet the "church" is never mentioned as referring to the saints that are on the earth during the time of awful, unprecedented judgments from Jesus onto the earth.
 6. Unlike the nation of Israel, the Church did not begin until the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2 when the Holy Spirit came to permanently indwell every believer in Jesus, who by His shed blood enacted this provision from the New Covenant (ordinance of the Lord's Table).
The Jewish saints, called apostles, were told by Jesus to wait in Jerusalem for the promised baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4-5) which occurred on the Day of Pentecost at the beginning (Acts 11:15-16) of the Church. Though the Jewish apostles were already saints, they were not yet members of the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13) until the Day of Pentecost.
 7. The nation of Israel has yet to experience the eternal promises of the physical land (Gen.12:1-3; 15:18-21; 17:7-8) and a Person to sit on David's throne in Jerusalem (2 Sam. 7:16) forever, who would be Jesus (Luke 1:32-33).
 8. The nation of ethnic, physical Israel has a future promised by God to be established as a distinct nation in her land under the rule of her Messiah forever, even though God established the Church where there is no distinction between Jew and Gentile.
 - God's Word through the apostle Paul established that God has not rejected the ethnic, physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel (Jacob) (Rom. 11:1-2). Even though Paul was a member of the Church, he said, "God has not rejected His people (Israel) has He? May it never be! For I too am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin."
 - During the period of the Church age while God is saving both Jew and Gentile and adding them to the Body of Christ, the apostle Paul insists that God has a future for ethnic Israel. He says that "a partial hardening has happened to Israel" during this Church age "until the full number of Gentiles has come in," and then "all Israel will be saved" (Rom. 11:25-26).
 - A future for the nation of Israel as a separate entity from the Church is important because "the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable" (Rom.11:29). This refers to the gift of God's promises to the fathers of the nation, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Rom. 11:28) that are irrevocable and must be fulfilled after God has called the full number of Gentiles into the Church.
 - The Church is never said to fulfill all the promises given to the nation of Israel, especially regarding physical descendants and a very specific physical land.
 9. The coming of the Lord for His Bride, the Church, is described as a "blessed hope" (Tit. 2:13) for which we wait eagerly and which could occur at any moment, unannounced.



- "We eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Phil 3:20) whose coming will be "like a thief" (1 Thess. 5:1-4). We must "wake up" because Jesus says to the Church "I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you" (Rev. 3:3).
 - By contrast, the coming of Jesus back to the earth will have many horrible signs which must occur before He comes to the earth, all described in Rev. 6-18.
10. The church is promised by the Lord that "I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world" (Rev. 3:10).
- The glorified Jesus, seated now at the right hand of the Father, promises to keep the church from a future time period of trial, tribulation, and testing which will cover the entire world.
 - This period of testing is described in Rev. 6-18, where the word "church" never occurs once to describe the saints who are on the earth during this horrible holocaust for those Tribulation saints.
 - Though there will be saints who are Jews and Gentiles during the future tribulation period of 7 years, they are never called the Church.
11. If the Church is to go through the 7-year Tribulation of Daniel's 70th week, then it is strange that the church is not given any instruction on what to do or how to behave during the most severe judgments sent by God and His Son Jesus Christ to judge the earth during the Tribulation. There is no instruction because the Church will not be going through the Tribulation.

Summary

The Bride of Christ, the Church, is caught up by the Lord in the clouds of the air to go to be with the Lord in heaven during the 7-year Tribulation on earth, called the time of Israel's trouble, or Daniel's 70th week. This event of the rapture removes the Restrainer who is the Holy Spirit in His special role in restraining evil through members of the Church Body (since the Day of Pentecost) found "in Christ," (2 Thess. 2:1-10). After the Rapture, the "man of lawlessness," the Antichrist, is revealed (2 Thess. 2:8) at the start of the 70th week of Daniel. He makes peace with Israel and then breaks the peace agreement midway through the tribulation after 3 1/2 years (cf. Dan. 9:24-27). Eventually the Lord will destroy Antichrist "by the appearance of His coming" to the earth in the final battle of Armageddon (Rev. 19:19-21). Then He will set up His throne, clean up the earth, and rule and reign over the whole world (Rev. 11:15).



Does the Church Fulfill God's Promises to Israel? Session 2

When the Jews crucified Jesus Christ and rejected God's Son as Messiah, did Israel's disobedience forfeit their right to God's covenant promises given to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Israel) and their descendants? How does the Church relate to Israel? *Is the Church the ultimate expression of true Judaism?*

Genesis 12:1-3 :: The Abrahamic Covenant

NAU **Genesis 12:1-3** Now the LORD said to Abram,
"Go forth from your country, and from your relatives and from your father's house,

to the **land** which I will show you;
² and I will make you **a great nation**,
and I will **bless** you,

and make your name great; and so you shall be a blessing;
³ and I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse

God's unilateral, unconditional blood covenant with Abraham includes three provisions (promises):

NAU **Genesis 12:1-3**

Now the LORD said to Abram,

"Go forth from your country, and from your relatives and from your father's house,

to the **land** which I will show you; **LAND**
² and I will make you **a great nation**, **SEED**
and I will **bless** you, **BLESSING**

and make your name great; and so you shall be a blessing;

³and I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse.

And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed."

No other nation on earth is treated by God like the nation Israel. Some Christians today suggest that Israel is no different from any other nation. 2 Chron. 20:7 says they are different (cf. Isa.55:3-5; 62:1-2). **1 Chron. 17:21-22** is really clear.

"And what one nation in the earth is like Your people Israel, whom God went to redeem for Himself as a people, to make Your a name by great and terrible things, in driving out nations from before Your people, whom You redeemed out of Egypt? For Your people Israel You made Your own people forever, and You O Lord, became their God."

Let's examine this Abrahamic promise from two basic viewpoints found in churches today:

1. **"Some say" position:** replacement theology; unity theology; covenant theology; successionism. In this outlook, the New Testament church is one with Israel of the Old Testament. The promises to Israel are not abrogated, but extended and fulfilled through the salvation of both Jews and Gentiles in the New Testament community.^A
2. **"Others say" position:** separation theology; dispensational theology. In this view, the New Testament church is a new covenant mystery distinct from Israel of the old covenant. The promises to Israel are literally fulfilled for the miraculously redeemed physical descendants of Israel.^B



To whom did God make this Promise? (key difference)

Who is meant when the Bible uses the term "Israel"?

1. **Some say**, "The name Israel refers to spiritual, covenant keeping descendants."

Some say that God never promised anything to the physical descendants of Jacob/Israel as a secular nation. They claim that God's promises are for the true Israel, the remnant within the secular nation, now called "true Israel." Gentiles join with true Israel into one new people, the Body of Christ, the Church.

Some quote Romans 9:6, "They are not all Israel who are descended from Israel..." or reference Romans 11:6b-7.

Most recognize that the Apostle Paul used the term "Israel" three different ways:

- 1] "Israel" refers to the community of the elect, including both Jews and Gentiles in Gal. 6:16. Perhaps also Phil. 3:3.
- 2] "Israel" is the elect within the physical descendants of Israel in Rom. 9:6.
- 3] "Israel" refers to the nation, the physical descendants of Jacob/Israel (ethnic Israel) as in Rom. 11:26a -- "all Israel will be saved."

Some say that the term "Israel" is not a term limited to the physical descendants of Israel as a nation. "Israel" refers broadly to God's one elect people, to whom the promises were given. This conclusion is brought to many usages in the NT literature, and the results are often as follows:

- Tends to blur OT and NT Laws
- No clear start time (or end time) for the Church (the Church is not unique from Israel).
- The Church (and all saints alive at the time) goes through the Tribulation
- Tends to discredit secular Israel from any of God's promises

They would also say that "Israel" is limited to the people who keep the covenant, not the disobedient nation as a whole. The problem with this is that the Abrahamic Covenant was not conditional (it is the Mosaic Covenant that is conditional), but an unconditional, unilateral promise from God.

"First, a non-covenant-keeping people does not have a divine right to hold the land of promise. (emphasis mine) Both the blessed status of the people and the privileged right to the land are conditional on Israel's keeping the covenant God made with her. Thus God said to Israel, "If you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples" (Exodus 19:5). Israel has no warrant to a present experience of divine privilege when she is not keeping covenant with God."^C

Some say look at Leviticus 26:14-43, where God says to Israel if you do not obey, I will scatter you among the nations and your land becomes desolate.

This ignores the rest of the context (the verses that follow) and the conclusion of God regarding Israel:

- ^{NAU} **Leviticus 26:44-45** **'Yet in spite of this, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them, nor will I so abhor them as to destroy them, breaking My covenant with them; for I am the LORD their God.** ⁴⁵ 'But I will remember for them the covenant with their ancestors, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the nations, that I might be their God. I am the LORD."

2. **Others say**, "Israel sometimes refers to all the ethnic descendants whether they obey or not."

^{NIV} **Ezekiel 36:21-24**

I had concern for my holy name, which the people of Israel profaned among the nations where they had gone. ²²Therefore say to the Israelites, "This is what the Sovereign LORD says: It is not for your sake, people of Israel, that I am going to do these things, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you have gone. ²³I will show the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, the name you have profaned among them. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD, declares the Sovereign LORD, when I am proved holy through you before their eyes. ²⁴For I will take you out of the nations; I will gather you from all the countries and bring you back into your own land."



What Land Did God Promise to Israel?

God promised an everlasting possession of the physical land of Palestine – Is it a limited area of physical land?

1. Some say that the promise is not limited, but will be included in a “new earth.”

Some look to the eschatological new heavens and new earth as the fulfillment of Israel's hopes of a land. The land promises to Israel will be fulfilled when redeemed Israel possesses the entire earth.

- Jesus reigns through the Church right now and eventually the Church brings in the kingdom and the promises are fulfilled in the new heavens and new earth.

The goal of this viewpoint is world dominion by the people of God.

- This leads toward theonomy, the teaching that encourages OT law to be enforced on earthly governments and societies.
- This teaching suggests a progressive triumph of the Church over the governments of the world.

The “land” either has to include much more than Palestine, or, the “land” of all the saints will be as outlined in Genesis 15, and limited to a small portion of the whole earth.

2. Others say it is a limited region.

^{NAU} **Genesis 15:18** On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates." The western boundary is clearly the Mediterranean Sea. The eastern boundary is at least to the Jordan River. Genesis 17:8 says the land is part of an everlasting covenant.

Third Guideline for Healthy
Study of Prophecy

***Assume clear statements
of the Bible to be true.***

Map of Israel -- David/Solomon Conquests of Land Promised to Israel's descendants



Did the Davidic kingdom fulfill the promise? NO. The Davidic/Solomonic kingdom was not extensive enough, nor was it permanent. You could review some of the following references in Ezekiel to know that the land promise



continued unfulfilled after the Davidic kingdom. Ezekiel 36:1-2, 5, 13-15, 20-22, 36; Ezekiel 37:24-28. Notice also 2 Chronicles 20:7 --⁷ Did You not, O our God, drive out the inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel and give it to the descendants of Abraham Your friend forever?

2 Chronicles 21:7⁷ Yet the Lord was not willing to destroy the house of David because of the covenant which He had made with David, and since He had promised to give a lamp to him and his sons forever.

Jer. 7:5-7 is a conditional sentence, but then states the the land promise still remains!

For if you truly amend your ways and your deeds, if you truly practice justice between a man and his neighbor, *if* you do not oppress the alien, the ^aorphan, or the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place, nor walk after other gods to your own ruin, then I will let you dwell in this place, in **the land that I gave to your fathers forever and ever.**

When will God fulfill this Promise to Israel?

1. Some say, "It will be fulfilled in the new earth." (see above)

According to this view, the gospel goes forth to all the world, and ethnic Israel is only one nation that joins in the worldwide redemption which ushers in the return of Christ and the new heavens and earth.

- This leads toward emphasizing the importance of missions.
- According to some, the Lord cannot come back at any moment because the gospel has not yet permeated the whole world.

2. Others say, "God promised a kingdom on the earth BEFORE the new heavens and earth."

^{NIV} **Psalm 2:7-12.** ⁷ I will proclaim the LORD's decree: He said to me, "You are my son; today I have become your father. ⁸ Ask me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession. ⁹ You will break them with a rod of iron; you will dash them to pieces like pottery." ¹⁰ Therefore, you kings, be wise; be warned, you rulers of the earth. ¹¹ Serve the LORD with fear and celebrate his rule with trembling. ¹² Kiss his son, or he will be angry and your way will lead to your destruction, for his wrath can flare up in a moment. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

^{NIV} **Isaiah 60:10** "Foreigners will rebuild your walls, and their kings will serve you. Though in anger I struck you, in favor I will show you compassion. ¹¹ Your gates will always stand open, they will never be shut, day or night, so that people may bring you the wealth of the nations-- their kings led in triumphal procession. ¹² For the nation or kingdom that will not serve you will perish; it will be utterly ruined."

Jesus, the Messiah, will rule over all the nations of the earth with a rod of iron over anyone who does not worship and serve the LORD.

^{NIV} **Zechariah 8:22-23** And many peoples and powerful nations will come to Jerusalem to seek the LORD Almighty and to entreat him. ²³ This is what the LORD Almighty says: "In those days ten people from all languages and nations will take firm hold of one Jew by the hem of his robe and say, 'Let us go with you, because we have heard that God is with you.'"

^{NIV} **Zechariah 14:16** Then the survivors from all the nations that have attacked Jerusalem will go up year after year to worship the King, the LORD Almighty, and to celebrate the Festival of Tabernacles. ¹⁷ If any of the peoples of the earth do not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD Almighty, they will have no rain. ¹⁸ If the Egyptian people do not go up and take part, they will have no rain. The LORD will bring on them the plague he inflicts on the nations that do not go up to celebrate the Festival of Tabernacles. ¹⁹ This will be the punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all the nations that do not go up to celebrate the Festival of Tabernacles.

^{NAU} **Revelation 2:26-27** 'He deeds until the end, TO HIM I NATIONS; AND HE SHALL THE VESSELS OF THE also have received *authority*

We will rule and reign with Jesus Christ in His kingdom over these nations.

who overcomes, and he who keeps My WILL GIVE AUTHORITY OVER THE RULE THEM WITH A ROD OF IRON, AS POTTER ARE BROKEN TO PIECES, as I from My Father;



KEY Question: Were God's promises given to all the physical descendants of Abraham through Jacob, or only those descendants that believed and obeyed? 'they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel.'

This question is already answered. The promise was unilateral and unconditional.

Yes, it is true that the physical descendants of Israel, or the secular Jewish people today, are opposed to Jesus and the Church because a partial hardening (Rom.11:25) is occurring.

"From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint to God's choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers; for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable" (Rom.11:28-29).

The Bible affirms unbelieving Israel's opposition to Jesus Christ and the Church.

The same verses say that because God chose Israel and His choice is irrevocable, the physical descendants of Jacob (ethnic Israel) have a guaranteed future.

Romans 9-11 repeatedly addresses this question by asking whether God has rejected the physical descendants of Israel (Jacob) because Israel failed to keep the covenant. God's Word answers this question: "I say then, God has not rejected His people, has He? May it never be!" (Rom. 11:1).

"I say then, they (phys. descendants of Israel) did not stumble so as to fall, did they? May it never be!" (Rom. 11:15). Be sure that God will keep His promises to the physical descendants of Israel, even though as a nation, they are still blinded and continue to reject Jesus as the Messiah. God says, "it is not as though the word of God has failed" because Israel failed. May it never be!

Romans 11:26 -- "And so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, 'The Deliverer will come from Zion, He will remove ungodliness from Jacob.'"

Isaiah 4:3-4 -- "It will come about that he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy-- everyone who is recorded for life in Jerusalem. When the Lord has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion and purged the bloodshed of Jerusalem from her midst, by the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning."

KEY Answer: "They" in Romans 11 refers not just to saved Jews now, but also to unbelieving Israel, who "will be saved" after the full number of Gentiles have come in. Until that time, the unbelieving nation remains "enemies" of the gospel but "beloved" because of the promises to their fathers (v.28).

God's Covenant Promise to Israel Does Not Depend on Their Obedience

NAU Ezekiel 36:22-38

Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for My holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you went."²³ I will vindicate the holiness of My great name which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD," declares the Lord GOD, "when I prove Myself holy among you in their sight."²⁴ For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands and bring you into your own land.²⁵ Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols.²⁶ Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.²⁷ I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances."²⁸ You will live in the land that I gave to your forefathers; so you will be My people, and I will be your God.²⁹ Moreover, I will save you from all your uncleanness; and I will



call for the grain and multiply it, and I will not bring a famine on you. ³⁰I will multiply the fruit of the tree and the produce of the field, so that you will not receive again the disgrace of famine among the nations. ³Then you will remember your evil ways and your deeds that were not good, and you will loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and your abominations.

³² "I am not doing *this* for your sake," declares the Lord GOD, "let it be known to you. Be ashamed and confounded for your ways, O house of Israel!"

³³ 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will cause the cities to be inhabited, and the waste places will be rebuilt. ³⁴The desolate land will be cultivated instead of being a desolation in the sight of everyone who passes by. ³⁵They will say, 'This desolate land has become like the garden of Eden; and the waste, desolate and ruined cities are fortified *and* inhabited.' ³⁶Then the nations that are left round about you will know that I, the LORD, have rebuilt the ruined places *and* planted that which was desolate; I, the LORD, have spoken and will do it." ³⁷ 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "This also I will let the house of Israel ask Me to do for them: I will increase their men like a flock. ³⁸Like the flock for sacrifices, like the flock at Jerusalem during her appointed feasts, so will the waste cities be filled with flocks of men. Then they will know that I am the LORD.'"

For additional study: Galatians 3:17-18, where God's promise to Abraham is not based on the ability to keep the Law (ie, not conditional covenant).

God's Will Keep His Covenant Promise to Israel Even If Israel Fails

NAU Jeremiah 31:37

Thus says the LORD, "If the heavens above can be measured and the foundations of the earth searched out below, then I will also cast off all the offspring of Israel for all that they have done," declares the LORD.

"Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for My holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you went." Ezek. 36:22.

After over 1900 years of dispersion and exile, Israel became a nation again in 1948. Israel still exists as a secular nation. Why? God made promises to the physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, whether or not they are repentant and believers:

- 1] God promised that the physical descendants will be restored whether or not they are faithful to Yahweh God or not.
- 2] God promised an everlasting possession of the physical land of Palestine for the physical descendants. 2 Chron. 20:7
- 3] God promised an eternal kingdom on the earth. Gen. 17:8 gives Israel the promised land as a "permanent possession." 2 Sam. 7:16 -- "Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever." Psalm 89:35-37. Jesus Christ will sit on David's throne & will reign over Israel forever (Lk. 1:31-33).

NAU Luke 1:31-33

"And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. ³² "He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; ³³ and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end."



Romans 11 teaches that those promises to the physical descendants of Jacob (Israel) will be kept by God after He established the Church.

Israel's future restoration proves God's righteousness.

In Romans 11:1, we discover that Israel will be restored as a nation because God's rejection of ethnic Israel is not TOTAL. He has a remnant.

Anticipated question (11:1a): “Has God rejected His people,” the nation of Israel?

- a. Direct denial (11:1b). No! God forbid!
- b. Paul's situation proves that God has not rejected the physical descendant of Israel (11:1c-2a)

Paul maintains his distinct ethnic identity, his distinct physical link to Abraham, & his tribal identity within nation of Israel, while he is also a member of Church (11:1c).

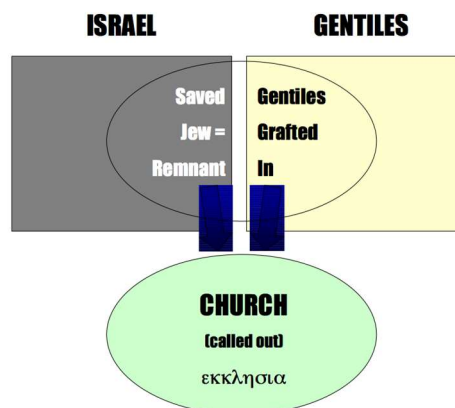
The Apostle Paul emphasizes that “in Christ,” in the Church, there is neither Jew nor Greek (Gal. 3:28). However, at the same time Paul emphasizes an important distinction in the Church – God maintains a distinct remnant of the nation Israel in the Church today. Why? He must keep His covenant promises to the descendants of Abraham and David.

For Paul, his distinct identity within the Church is sure proof that God has a future for the physical descendants of Abraham through Jacob (Israel) (Romans 11:2a).

Paul's conclusion? V.2a “**God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew.**”

Since Israel is in unbelief, does their unbelief cancel God's choice of them? The **whole chapter, Romans 11, answers this question with a resounding, “no!”**

Who is the remnant within Israel today?



“In a sense, the converted Jew is the only normal human being in the world. ” C. S. Lewis



1. **Some say** that God is finished with Israel as a nation and works from now on through the Church, the Body of Christ. For these Bible students, the Church is the new true Israel. The Church replaces Israel. This is called "Replacement Theology."

2. **Others** say, "God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew." Romans 11:2a.

Fourth Guideline for
Healthy Study of Prophecy

***Understand that the
Church and Israel are
distinct***

Why does Israel still exist as a
secular godless nation today?

Why? Because God must keep His promises. It is remarkable that Israel became a nation again in 1948. It is important that God has a **remnant** in the Church today so He can keep His promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who is named Israel.

God promised that "all Israel will be saved." Romans 11:25. This was predicted by many OT prophets, like Isaiah 44:21-23, where the Lord says, "Remember these things, O Jacob, and Israel, for you are My servant; I have formed you, you are My servant, O Israel, you will not be forgotten by Me. I have wiped out your transgressions like a thick cloud and your sins like a heavy mist. Return to Me, for I have redeemed you." Shout for joy, O heavens, for the Lord has done *it!* Shout joyfully, you lower parts of the earth; break forth into a shout of joy, you mountains, O forest, and every tree in it; for the Lord has redeemed Jacob and in Israel He shows forth His glory.

Jesus promised to gather the elect of Israel again.

NAU **Matthew 24:31** "And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other."

God's description of the future of Israel

Ezekiel 39:23-29

²³ "The nations will know that the house of Israel went into exile for their iniquity because they acted treacherously against Me, and I hid My face from them; so I gave them into the hand of their adversaries, and all of them fell by the sword. ²⁴ According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions I dealt with them, and I hid My face from them."

²⁵ Therefore thus says the Lord GOD, "Now **I will restore the fortunes of Jacob and have mercy on the whole house of Israel; and I will be jealous for My holy name.** ²⁶ They will forget their disgrace and all their treachery which they perpetrated against Me, when they live securely on their *own* land with no one to make *them* afraid. ²⁷ When I bring them back from the peoples and gather them from the lands of their enemies, then I shall be sanctified through them in the sight of the many nations. ²⁸ Then they will know that I am the LORD their God because I made them go into exile among the nations, and then gathered them *again* to their own land; and I will **leave none of them there any longer.** ²⁹ **I will not hide My face from them any longer, for I will have poured out My Spirit on the house of Israel,**" declares the Lord GOD.

Jeremiah 46:27-28

²⁷ "But as for you, O Jacob My servant, do not fear,
Nor be dismayed, O Israel!

For, see, I am going to save you from afar,
And your descendants from the land of their captivity;



And Jacob will return and be undisturbed
And secure, with no one making *him* tremble.
28 "O Jacob My servant, do not fear," declares the Lord,
"For I am with you.

For I will make a full end of all the nations
Where I have driven you.

Yet I will not make a full end of you;
But I will correct you properly
And by no means leave you unpunished."

Zechariah 8:6-15

Written after Israel was restored from Babylonian captivity

6 "Thus says the Lord of hosts, 'If it is ^atoo difficult in the sight of the remnant of this people in those days, will it also be ^btoo difficult in My sight?' declares the Lord of hosts. 7 "Thus says the Lord of hosts, 'Behold, I am going to save My people from the land of the ^aeast and from the land of the west; ⁸and I will bring them *back* and they will live in the midst of Jerusalem; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God in truth and righteousness.'

9 "Thus says the Lord of hosts, 'Let your hands be strong, you who are listening in these days to these words from the mouth of the prophets, *those who spoke* in the day that the foundation of the house of the Lord of hosts was laid, to the end that the temple might be built. 10 'For before those days there was no wage for man or any wage for animal; and for him who went out or came in there was no ^bpeace because of his enemies, and I set all men one against another. 11 'But now I will not treat the remnant of this people as in the former days,' declares the Lord of hosts. 12 'For *there will be peace for the seed*; the vine will yield its fruit, the land will yield its produce and the heavens will give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to inherit all these *things*. 13 'It will come about that just as you were a curse among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so I will save you that you may become a blessing. Do not fear; let your hands be strong.'

14 "For thus says the Lord of hosts, 'Just as I purposed to do harm to you when your fathers provoked Me to wrath,' says the Lord of hosts, 'and I have not relented, 15 so I have again purposed in these days to do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. Do not fear!'

CONCLUSION

Yes, the physical, ethnic, descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel have a future as a nation. God promised it to them. The promise is eternal.

NLT Ezekiel 34:29-31

"And I will make their land famous for its crops, so my people **will never again** suffer from famines or (be shamed by the scorn) the insults of foreign nations. 30 In this way, they will know that I, the LORD their God, am with them. And they will know that they, the people of Israel, are my people, says the Sovereign LORD. 31 You are my flock, the sheep of my pasture. You are my people, and I am your God. I, the Sovereign LORD, have spoken!"

Today, we in the Church can be absolutely confident that God will keep His Word.

- God kept all His promises to this day. He will declare "new things" for prophecies that are still future. They will surely happen too.

Isaiah 42:9

"Behold, the former things have come to pass,
Now I declare new things; before they spring forth I proclaim *them* to you."

- Just as surely as God will keep His promise to the physical descendants of Jacob (Israel), God will keep His promises to us today, too. The promise of our salvation is also unilateral and unconditional.



ENDNOTES

^AReformed Theologians today are generally found in reformed seminaries. In addition, some popular preachers are reformed: John Piper, influences Bill Hybels. A current group called The Gospel Coalition is led primarily by Reformed Theologians.

This position is based on Augustine's theology and is sometimes called Augustinianism.

This position was held by prominent reformers, Martin Luther and John Calvin. Their writings formed the base for Lutheranism and Calvinism today.

R. C. Sproul Jr. wrote a very brief article or editorial which appeared in *Table Talk* magazine, a Reformed publication published by Ligonier Ministries. It appeared in the December 1998 issue, p. 2 (inside cover). If you desire to see the entire article, contact Ligonier Ministry (1-800-435-4343).

We believe that the church is essentially Israel. We believe that the answer to, "What about the Jews?" is, "Here we are." We deny that the church is God's "plan B." We deny that we are living in God's redemptive parenthesis.

There, we are again one people. In His holy and heavenly temple there is neither Jew nor Greek, male nor female, pre-mil nor post-mil. There, we are all together, the Israel of God, princes with God, and the *ekklesia*, the set apart ones.

[From *Table Talk* magazine, Spring of 1999, p. 2 (inside cover), by R. C. Sproul Jr., editor]

A Homiletics Professor at Western Seminary, Portland, OR (underlining is from Dr. Weeks):

"Do you believe that the church replaces Israel? The answer is "no of course not!!!" The church does not replace Israel. The fact is, Jewish people who reject Jesus Christ are apostate from Israel. Following Jesus Christ is the ultimate expression of true Judaism. Everything in the Old Testament pointed to Him. Israel and the church, then, are not in radical discontinuity, rather, the latter is the consummated expression of the former."

Gary Burge, Prof of NT at Wheaton College, with specialization in Middle East studies, also holds these views.

John Piper:

"Do Jews Have a Divine Right to the Promised Land?"

<http://www.desiringgod.org/resource-library/taste-see-articles/do-jews-have-a-divine-right-in-the-promised-land>

First, a non-covenant-keeping people does not have a divine right to hold the land of promise. (emphasis mine) Both the blessed status of the people and the privileged right to the land are conditional on Israel's keeping the covenant God made with her. Thus God said to Israel, "If you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples" (Exodus 19:5). Israel has no warrant to a present experience of divine privilege when she is not keeping covenant with God.

More than once Israel was denied the experience of her divine right to the land when she broke covenant with God. For example, when Israel languished in captivity in Babylon, Daniel prayed, "O Lord . . . we have sinned and done wrong . . . To you, O Lord, belongs righteousness, but to us open shame . . . to all Israel . . . in all the lands to which you have driven them, because of the treachery that they have committed against you" (Daniel 9:4-7; see Psalms 78:54-61). Israel has no divine right to be in the land of promise when she is breaking the covenant of promise.

Because of these theological convictions, then, the Amillennial/Postmillennial Christians tend to look at any idea of a future for Israel with alarm, as an affront to Christianity, as a denial of the true position of the Church.

^BJ. Dwight Pentecost, John F. Walvoord, C.I. Scofield, Lewis S. Chafer, H. Wayne House, Randall Price et al. All current professors at Dallas Theological Seminary and Master's Seminary hold this view. The Premillennial/Dispensationalists view the idea of a future for Israel with delight. Modern Israel is a welcome harbinger of the Rapture of the Church and the Second Coming of Christ.

^CThis is a quote from John Piper.

"Do Jews Have a Divine Right to the Promised Land?"

<http://www.desiringgod.org/resource-library/taste-see-articles/do-jews-have-a-divine-right-in-the-promised-land>



Should Christians Support Israel Today?

Session 3

Some Christians answer with an emphatic "Yes!" while other Christians believe that Israel has no biblical right to any future and that we should not treat them different from any other nation. These Christians insist that since the Messiah came and was rejected by the nation Israel, God is doing a new thing through the Church instead. In the Church God broke down the dividing wall between nations and ethnicity and removed the distinction between Jews and Gentiles. This is called Replacement Theology or successionism.

Does Israel's rejection of Jesus Christ forfeit their distinct future as a nation? How does Yahweh God's statement to Abraham's descendants, "I will bless those who bless you," relate to us today?

Current issue

Some say Christians today have no obligation to support secular Israel today. They say that Palestinians have right to be a state too. The 2-State proposal started with Bill Clinton in the 2000 Geneva Accords. George W. reaffirmed what is called the 2-State Solution. American President Barak Obama's United Nations speech, September 21, 2011 reaffirmed this view for Israel and the Palestinians.

Map of 2 State solution



Whatever the current viewpoints are on whether Israel should be in the land or not, the Bible makes the Abrahamic promise to Israel unconditional.



Biblical issue

Genesis 12:1-3 :: The Abrahamic Covenant

^{NAU} **Genesis 12:1-3** Now the LORD said to Abram,
"Go forth from your country, and from your relatives and from your father's house,

to the land which I will show you;
² and I will make you a great nation,
and I will bless you,

and make your name great; and so you shall be a blessing;
³ and **I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse.**
And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed."

"I will bless those who bless you."

^{NIV} **Genesis 12:1-3** The LORD had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. ²I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. ³I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

Isaac passes the blessing to Jacob (Israel), even though Esau is also a physical descendant of Abraham.

^{NIV} **Genesis 27:28-29** "May God give you heaven's dew and earth's richness-- an abundance of grain and new wine. ²⁹May nations serve you and peoples bow down to you. Be lord over your brothers, and may the sons of your mother bow down to you. May those who curse you be cursed and those who bless you be blessed." (Gen 27:28 NIV)

Did Israel's unbelief nullify this promise?

Does their rejection of the Jewish Messiah, God the Son, Jesus Christ nullify this promise to Israel? No.

This covenant promise Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David, has no condition. **Israel disobeyed God over and over in the wilderness, yet God blessed the nation, and those who tried to curse Israel could not do it.**

Failure to support the nation of Israel puts the Christian today on dangerous ground. This attitude could easily slip into anti-semitism.

History of Attempts to Curse the Nation of Israel.

Anti-semitism = against the Semites (includes some Islamic peoples, who are also Semites!). Anti-Semitism refers to prejudice and/or discrimination against Jews as individuals and as a group. Anti-Semitism is based on stereotypes and myths that target Jews as a people, their religious practices and beliefs, and the Jewish State of Israel.

Anti-Israel, or Judeophobia is a better term. History is full of hatred of the people of Jacob (Israel), starting with his twin brother Esau (Edom) all the way through history of the holocaust, to this day in 2017.

1) It is the oldest hatred. Professor Robert Wistrich of the Hebrew University was right in calling his last book on the subject "The Longest Hatred."

2) Judeophobia is strikingly universal. It has existed in almost every country on earth, regardless of whether it had Jewish inhabitants or how many they numbered.



3) Judeophobia is deeper. Negative mental stereotypes of the Jew are profoundly embedded.

In 1913 the Anti-Defamation League was founded to stop, by appeals to reason and conscience and, if necessary, by appeals to law, the defamation of the Jewish people. The ADL has been accused by some of conflating criticism of Israel with anti-Semitism, and a need for such balance is recognized.

SELECTED BIBLICAL HISTORY OF ATTEMPTS TO BE AGAINST ISRAEL

Pharaoh was motivated by distrust of Israel found in Exodus 5-10.

Balak asked Balaam to curse Israel in Num.22-24, even though the people in the nation of Israel had sinned against God repeatedly.

NAU Numbers 24:9 -- Balaam utters **God's words about the physical descendants of the nation of Israel** -- "He couches, he lies down as a lion, and as a lion, who dares rouse him? Blessed is everyone who blesses you, and cursed is everyone who curses you."

Sennacharib, king of Assyria, 2 Chron. 32. He was against Israel and taunted the God of Israel (32:14-19). The whole Assyria army horde was killed by God, and the mighty king of Assyria was shamed and humbled by God (32:21-22).

The Edomites, the descendants of Esau (Israel's twin brother)

Mount Seir is the mountain region that is chosen for the descendants of Esau, the Edomites. Esau is Edom and made his home in Mount Seir.

"And Esau took his wives, and his sons, and his daughters, and all the persons of his house, and his cattle, and all his beasts, and all his substance, which he had got in the land of Canaan; and went into the country from the face of his brother Jacob. For their riches were more than that they might dwell together; and the land wherein they were strangers could not bear them because of their cattle. Thus dwelt Esau in mount Seir: Esau [is] Edom." (Genesis 36:6-8; Joshua 24:4).

The Lord GOD gave Mount Seir to Esau. When the children of Israel journeyed into the wilderness by the way of the Red Sea they compassed Mount Seir many days. They were instructed to pass through the coast of Esau, but cautioned to not meddle with the inhabitants because Mount Seir was given to Esau for a possession.

Whole book of Obadiah (see esp. vv.10-12) is against the Edomites, the descendants of Esau, for anti-Israel attitudes.

Ezekiel 35 – whole chapter; I will curse those who curse you.

NIV **Ezekiel 35:1-10** The word of the LORD came to me: ² "Son of man, set your face against Mount Seir; prophesy against it ³ and say: 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: I am against you, Mount Seir, and I will stretch out my hand against you and make you a desolate waste. ⁴ I will turn your towns into ruins and you will be desolate. Then you will know that I am the LORD. ⁵ **Because you harbored an ancient hostility and delivered the Israelites over to the sword at the time of their calamity, the time their punishment reached its climax,** ⁶ **therefore as surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, I will give you over to bloodshed and it will pursue you.** Since you did not hate bloodshed, bloodshed will pursue you. ⁷ **I will make Mount Seir a desolate waste and cut off from it all who come and go.** ⁸ I will fill your mountains with the slain; those killed by the sword will fall on your hills and in your valleys and in all your ravines. ⁹ I will make you desolate forever; your towns will not be inhabited. Then you will know that I am the LORD. ¹⁰ **Because you have said, 'These two nations and countries will be ours and we will take possession of them,' even though I the LORD was there.'**"

NAU **Ezekiel 35:15** "As you rejoiced over the inheritance of the house of Israel because it was desolate, so I will do to you. You will be a desolation, O Mount Seir, and all Edom, all of it. Then they will know that I am the LORD."



Haman -- Xerxes is thought to be the King Ahasuerus whose vizier **Haman planned a genocide against the Jews**, as reported in the **book of Esther**. Haman's words became a chorus for Judeophobes of all times: "There is a certain people scattered through all the provinces... and their laws are diverse from all people, neither keep the king's laws... Let it be written that they may be destroyed" (Esther 3:8).

When **Nehemiah** led the return to Zion from Babylon in the year 445 b.c.e., his attempt to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem **met with the opposition of Sanballat, called "an enemy"** (Nehemiah 6:1,16).

The days of the Syrian, Antiochus Epiphanes in 175 B.C.^A

Prediction of Daniel 8:9-14 was fulfilled by the Maccabean revolt and the Feast of Hanakah, or Festival of Lights.

OTHER SELECTED RECORDS OF JUDEOPHOBIA (ANTI-ISRAEL) IN HISTORY

Glenn Beck's 2011 video, part 2 of 3 traces the history of anti-Israel sentiments.

<http://israelmatzav.blogspot.com/2011/06/video-glenn-beck-on-history-of-hatred.html>

Martin Luther, a key Reformer during the 16th century Reformation and Protestantism, wrote a pamphlet in 1545 entitled "The Jews and Their Lies," claiming that Jews thirsted for Christian blood and urging the slaying of the Jews. The Nazis reprinted it nearly 400 years later in 1935. Some scholars feel that these scurrilous attacks mark the transition from anti-Judaism (attacks motivated because of the Jews' refusal to accept Christianity) to anti-Semitism (hatred of Jews as a so-called race that would contaminate the purity of another race).

Martin Luther, John Calvin and other great Protestant Reformers are cited today as the historical justification for the current movement in America toward Replacement Theology.

Most infamous in more recent history is **Hitler's Holocaust** and Germany's attempt to exterminate the Jews during WWII. Sadly, nearly 400 years earlier, the Protestant Reformation in Germany was led by men who believed that God was done with Israel. The Church in Germany turned away from the Jews while Hitler worked to annihilate them.

Iran's hatred of Israel

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mahmoud_Ahmadinejad_and_Israel

In August 2012, at an annual protest against the existence of Israel,^[21] Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said that "the very existence of the Zionist regime is an insult to humanity" and that "the Zionist regime and the Zionists are a cancerous tumor. Even if one cell of them is left in one inch of (Palestinian) land, in the future this story (of Israel's existence) will repeat."^[22] Ahmadinejad also said that Israel would soon be finished off, and that "the nations of the region will soon finish off the usurper Zionists in the Palestinian land".^[21] Ahmadinejad added that "it is dangerous if even 10% of the territory is given to the Zionists." Ahmadinejad also said, "The western powers cannot tolerate criticism of the Zionist regime. They feel compelled to defend it."^[23]

<http://www.timesofisrael.com/khamenei-calls-death-to-america-as-kerry-hails-progress-on-nuke-deal/>

Iran's Supreme leader Ali Khamenei called for "Death to America" on Saturday [March, 2015] a day after President Barack Obama appealed to Iran to seize a "historic opportunity" for a nuclear deal and a better future, and as US Secretary of State John Kerry claimed substantial progress toward an accord.

Khamenei told a crowd in Tehran that Iran would not capitulate to Western demands. When the crowd started shouting, "Death to America," the ayatollah responded: "Of course yes, death to America, because America is the original source of this pressure."

The Muslim Brotherhood, Al Qaida, the Taliban, ISIS, Hezbollah, and Hamas have similar goals. They are Islamic terrorists with the same agenda: All of them conspiring to form a global caliphate (kingdom) while exterminating the Jews and rubbing out the nation of Israel. At the UN in 2014, Netanyahu's key line was, "So when it comes to their ultimate goals, Hamas is ISIS and ISIS is Hamas." He also included Boko Haram in Nigeria, Ash-Shabab in Somalia, Hezbollah, An-Nusrah in Syria, the Mahdi Army in Iraq, and al Qaeda in his



condemnation of "militant Islam."

Read more at <http://spectator.org/blog/60527/netanyahu-un-isis-hamas-hezbollah-and-al-qaeda-one-and-same>

In 2013, a BBC World Service global survey found that Israel was the fourth most 'negatively viewed' nation in the world, after Iran, Pakistan and North Korea. In only one western country — America — did a majority express favourable views of Israel, and even there it was only 51 per cent; so much for the US being in the back pocket of some creepy Israel lobby. Out of EU nations, Britain was found to have the most unfavourable view: 72 per cent of Brits surveyed felt negatively about Israel, more than in that hotbed of populist anti-Zionism, France (63 per cent), and way more than in the country in which so much of the Holocaust was carried out, Poland (44 per cent).

2017 EFFORTS AT ANTISEMITISM

The United Nations

June 22, 2017 ACLJ Jordan Sekulow

This week, the United Nations (U.N.) continued its shameful attacks on Israel. Next week, I am leading a team of senior ACLJ attorneys straight to the U.N. to fight back.

The U.N.'s latest assault happened last week, when the United Nations Human Rights Council (U.N. HRC) met to discuss "Agenda Item 7," which is nothing more than a thinly veiled attempt to delegitimize Israel.

Agenda Item 7, which criticizes Israel for alleged human rights violations, is a recurring agenda item at the U.N. HRC, and every U.N. HRC session includes a meeting addressing it.

The U.N.'s hatred and contempt for Israel is blatant, and it continues to undermine and attack Israel every chance it gets. For example, the U.N. recently drew harsh criticism by Israel's ambassador to the U.N. when it was discovered that the U.N. posted a job that was located in "Jerusalem, Palestine (State of)." First, legally, there is no "State of Palestine." Second, Jerusalem is legally the capital of Israel.

The BDS Movement

The effort to Boycott, Divest from and Sanction (BDS) Israel, is an anti-Semitic movement whose end goal is the destruction of the Jewish State. BDS activists have repeatedly acknowledged that "The real aim of BDS is to bring down the state of Israel."

David Brog address the Nevada State legislature in support of anti-Bds bill SB.26.

Published on Mar 28, 2017

"You want to ask why there is no peace in the Middle East?

It's because of people like Omar Barghouti, it's because of movements like the BDS Movement, that... instead of embracing negotiations, instead of embracing peace, attack those who do."

Source: Christians United for Israel

http://www.cufi.org/site/PageServer?pagename=Talking_Points

CONCLUSION FROM HISTORY

What do we learn from history?

Any and all nations that opposed God's people, the nation of Israel, became enemies of God Himself. This was true whether or not the nation Israel was being obedient to the Mosaic covenant.

Judging antisemitism is mistakenly thought to come from a belief that Israel can do no wrong. The nation of Israel keeps doing wrong throughout her biblical and modern history, and we still should not curse the nation because of God's warning in the Abrahamic Covenant.

"I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse."



IN THE FUTURE, THE WORLD SURROUNDING ISRAEL WILL BE ALLIED AGAINST THE NATION OF ISRAEL

EZEKIEL 38

Ezekiel 38 pronounces that God evaluated the treatment of the nation of Israel and concluded that he was against the nations of **Gog, Magog, Meshech, and Tubal**, and other nations. The God of all creation examined the makeup of these nations and stated "I am against you." Why? They came against God's people, the nation of Israel.

Brief review of the nations after the flood (Gen. 10):

Shem (East (v.30)– Gen.10:21-32, Abraham, Iraq, Iran), Ham (Canaan and South – Gen.10:6-20), Cush, Nimrod, Babylon, Canaan, Jebusites), Japheth (North – Gen. 10:1-5).

NAU **Genesis 10:2** The sons of Japheth were Gomer and Magog and Madai and Javan and Tubal and Meshech and Tiras.

NAU **Ezekiel 38:1-6** And the word of the LORD came to me saying, ²"Son of man, set your face toward **Gog of the land of Magog**, the prince of **Rosh, Meshech and Tubal**, and prophesy against him ³ and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I am against you, **O Gog**, prince of **Rosh, Meshech and Tubal**. ⁴I will turn you about and put hooks into your jaws, and I will bring you out, and all your army, horses and horsemen, all of them splendidly attired, a great company *with* buckler and shield, all of them wielding swords; ⁵**Persia, Ethiopia and Put** with them, all of them *with* shield and helmet; ⁶**Gomer** with all its troops; **Beth-togarmah** *from* the remote parts of the north with all its troops-- many peoples with you."

These locations are beginning to align themselves together against the nation of Israel already in 2017 AD. What nations are prophesied by Ezekiel to come against Israel in the last days?

The following observations are to be credited to Joel Rosenberg.

1. The Hebrew prophet, Ezekiel, gives us clues. This "**Gog**" is going to be from the "land of **Magog**." One has to do some historical detective work to determine what Magog is, but it is possible. Flavius Josephus, the first century Roman historian, wrote in his famous book, *The Antiquities of the Jews*, that the people of Magog are the people whom the Greeks called "Scythians." This is a critical clue because we know from history that the Scythians were a people group that migrated from the Middle East northward and settled north of the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea in the region we know today as Russia and the former Soviet Republics.
2. There are other interesting clues, as well. Ezekiel 38:15 says that Gog "will come from your place out of the remote parts of the north." Ezekiel 39:2 says Gog will come "from the remotest parts of the north" and come "against the mountains of Israel." The country that is farthest to the north in relation to Israel is Russia.
3. "**Meshach and Tubal**," sons of Noah's son Japheth, settled in the north of Canaan (Isa. 66:19) mainly along the coastlines of the Mediterranean all the way to Tarshish on the southern coast of Spain (Ezek. 27:12, 25). These countries traded through the port of Tyre (Ezek. 27:13).
4. In Ezekiel 38:5, we learn that the first ally Russia will have is "**Persia**." Until 1935, of course, Persia was the legal name of the country we know today as Iran. So we know that Russia and Iran will build an alliance in the last days to attack Israel. According to a September 26, 2017 online news, Putin met with Turkey and Iran in Ankara to form an alliance.
5. Ezekiel tells us that another country in the alliance will be what many English Bibles translate as "**Ethiopia**." The Hebrew word, however, is "Cush" and Cush is the upper Nile region that we now know as Sudan. While the current state of Ethiopia may also be involved in the war, the focus is really Sudan, which has been a radical Islamic Sunni state closely allied with Iran and Russia and deeply anti-Semitic and anti-Israel.



6. Next, Ezekiel says a nation called **“Put”** (38:5) will be part of the alliance. Josephus identifies “Put” as “ancient Lybians” — the territory that today we call Libya and Algeria. Interestingly, both countries in 2017 are deeply hostile to Israel and closely allied with Russia.
7. The next country mentioned is **“Gomer”** (38:6), associated with countries from “the remote part of the north.” When one does the historical detective work, one learns that Gomer is what we now call Turkey. **“Beth-togarmah”** (38:6) probably includes the part of Turkey near the Syrian border.

Since the 1930's, Turkey was a NATO ally, and a friend of Israel, the U.S. and the European Union. But in the last few years, the Turkish government has swung dramatically away from the West, towards Russia and Iran, and become deeply hostile toward the State of Israel.

From YNet News (May 8, 2011) -- Turkey: Thousands attend bin Laden 'funeral.' Mourners gathered in Istanbul, Turkey to give al-Qaeda leader burial rites – even though he was buried at sea. 'US, UK, Israel murdered a martyr,' mourners chant.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/putin-to-meet-erdogan-as-russia-turkey-ties-deepen/2017/09/28/9b493484-a42a-11e7-b573-8ec86cde1ed_story.html?utm_term=.540a06b12145

Washington Post article: Russia's Putin visits Turkey as ties between nations deepen

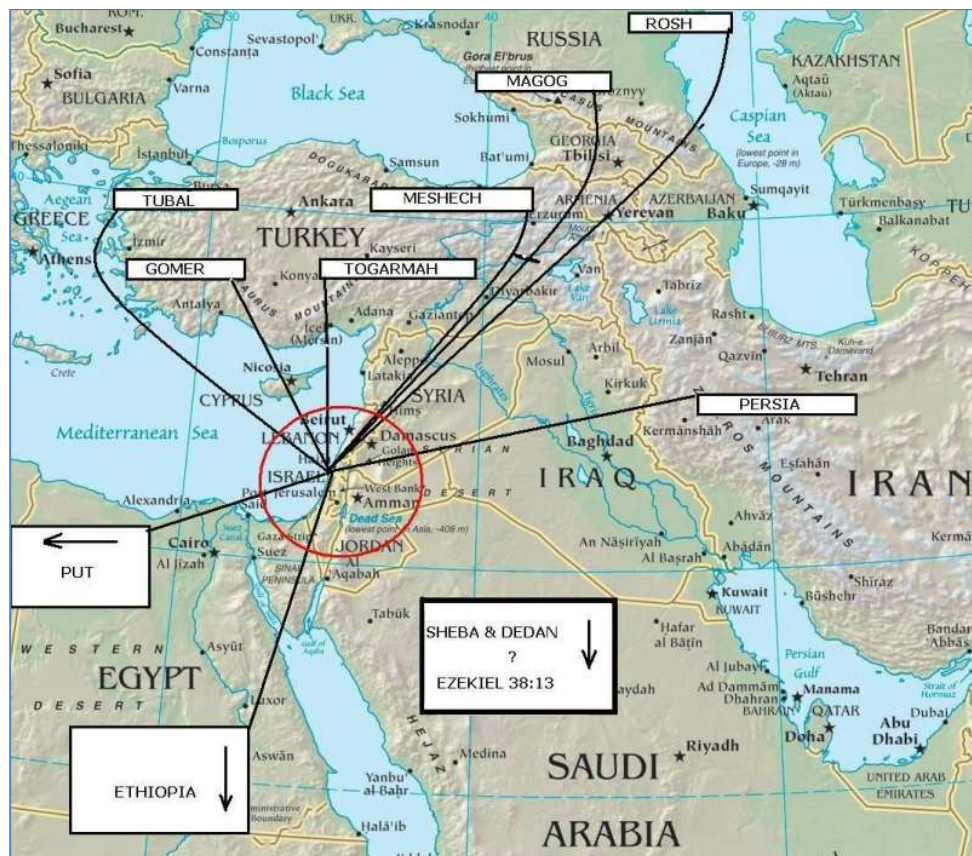
By Suzan Fraser | AP September 28, 2017 ANKARA, Turkey — Russian President Vladimir Putin visited Turkey on Thursday for talks with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan that focused on the situation in Iraq and Syria along with bilateral trade.

This was preceded by English Elarabia online news.

<https://english.alarabiya.net/en/views/news/middle-east/2017/09/26/Putin-in-Ankara-to-forge-alliance-of-Russia-Turkey-and-Iran.html>

Putin in Ankara to forge alliance of Russia, Turkey and Iran

Tuesday, 26 September 2017



Israel is at the center of surrounding Muslim countries that have been against Israel existing as a nation.



Even today, Israel is surrounded by enemy nations.



CONCLUSION FROM BIBLICAL EVIDENCE OF HISTORY AND PROPHECY

Any and all nations that oppose God's people, the nation of Israel, become enemies of God Himself.

Should Christians support secular Israel today?

This question is not primarily a political question, but a biblical question.

Since God has a future for the physical descendants of Jacob (Israel) more than any other nation, then our attitude toward them is still very relevant.



God's people should encourage supporting secular Israel today.

Why? Not because secular Israel is Christian or even following the God of the Jews. The only reason is found in the Bible, in the Abrahamic Covenant. This principle has proven itself throughout history. God promised, "I will bless those who bless you," Israel.

^{NIV} **Genesis 12:1-3** The LORD had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. ² "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

The replacement theology (successionism) currently taught by some Lutheran, Presbyterian, Reformed, and more recently some Baptist groups^C could send our churches today onto very dangerous ground. We could begin to think that God is done with the nation of Israel and fail to support them. At the very least, this teaching could lead to apathy toward people, nations and groups who are antagonistic toward Israel.

How does Yahweh God's statement to Abraham's descendants, "I will bless those who bless you," relate to us today?

Do you believe the promise of God that He will bless the one who blesses Israel and that He will curse the one who curses Israel?

Do you want God's blessing?
for your family?
for your church?
for your nation?

How do we bless Israel today? Here are some suggestions.

- 1. We pray for the peace of Jerusalem.**
- 2. We recognize and teach that God still has a future for the nation of Israel because He will cleanse and redeem them.**
- 3. We speak out our support for Israel to exist as a nation with Jerusalem as its capital.**
- 4. We look with favor on Christian organizations that express support for Israel as a nation.**
- 5. We strive to elect leaders that express support for the nation of Israel.**
- 6. We criticize any sin we see in Israel and yet not criticize the nation from a belief that God is done with them.^B**
- 7. We avoid discouraging support for Israel with our words, actions, or attitudes, even though the nation does not believe.**
- 8. We find ways to strengthen the Church in Israel and in Palestine, and lift up Moses' hands through prayer because the battle in the Middle East is raging.**
- 9. We find ways to share the pure gospel with the Jews everywhere, but especially the Middle East. "The best way to bless Israel is with Yeshua (Jesus)." Joel Rosenberg**



ENDNOTES

^ADaniel 8:23-26

Both Antiochus Epiphanes and the Antichrist fit the characteristics of this king found in Daniel 8:

- He will appear “in the latter period” of the kingdom (v.28)- (1) Latter time of Grecian (2) Latter time of Roman Empire
- He will appear “when the transgressors have run” their course (v.23)- (1) Sins of Jews after the Exile (2) Again suffer in Tribulation
- He will have great power not His own (v.24)- (1) Antiochus showed actions which could only be inspired by Satan (2) Antichrist’s power is Satan’s (Rev.13:2)
- He will work to destroy the Jewish people (v.24)- (1) Antiochus did; (2) under Antichrist it will be worse
- He will practice deceit to accomplish his purposes (v.25a)
- He will exalt himself (v.25)
- His promise of peace will eventually bring destruction (v.25)
- He will oppose the “Prince of princes” (v.25) (1) 8:11 says Antiochus removed the sacrifices (2) Antichrist will be final opposition to Christ
- He will be “broken without human agency” (v.25)
- Antiochus died of a disease at God’s hand
- Antichrist will be broken by J.C. at His return in Armageddon

VISION		INTERPRETATION		FULFILLMENT
Two-Horned Ram	v.3	Media and Persia	v.20	Medo-Persian Empire
He-Goat	v.5	Greece	v.21	Greek Empire
Great Horn	v.5	First King	v.21	Alexander the Great
Horn Broken	v.8	King Broken	v.22	Alexander’s Death
Four Horns	v.8	Four Kingdoms	v.22	Division of Greek Empire
Little Horn	v.9	Evil King	v.23	Antiochus / Antichrist
Cast down host	v.10	Destroy the holy people	v.24	Persecution of Jews
Sacrifice Stopped	v.11			Temple Sacrifice stopped, 167 B.C.
2,300 days	v.14	Many days	v.26	Antiochus’ oppression of Jews
Sanctuary Cleansed	v.14			Temple purified, 165 B.C.
		Will be broken	v.25	Death of Antiochus, 164 B.C.



^BTwo recent books address this issue:

<http://www.booksataglance.com/author-interviews/interview-gerald-r-mcdermott-author-new-christian-zionism-fresh-perspectives-israel-land/>

Interview with Gerald R. McDermott, author of
THE NEW CHRISTIAN ZIONISM: FRESH PERSPECTIVES ON ISRAEL AND THE LAND
Published on May 16, 2017 by Joshua R Monroe
IVP Academic, 2016 | 352 pages

Portion of interview ----

Fred Zaspel:

How should all of this work out in terms of the Christian attitude toward the nation of Israel today? I grew up in dispensationalist circles that – at least on the popular level – left us thinking that we must support the nation of Israel unreservedly. But that’s not what you’re saying, is it.

McDermott:

Right. If the state of Israel does things which are not right, and of course every state does things that are not right, I mean look at our own country, we should not support policies or decisions that are not righteous. However, we also need to realize, particularly at this critical moment in the history of redemption and in the history of secular politics, that the state of Israel today in 2017 is the only democracy in the whole Middle East that allows political freedom to oppose it, to speak up against it and not be thrown in jail, and religious freedom to practice your faith as you want to practice it, even if it’s not the majority religion. There’s no other nation in the Middle East that permits either of those things. And so simply for prudential and pragmatic reasons we ought to support this tiny little state that truly is a light to the nations.

Another recent resource ---

Jerusalem Prayer Team -- Mike Evans <http://www.jerusalemprayerteam.org>

STAND WITH ISRAEL (paperback), 2014.

In Stand with Israel, New York Times best-selling author Dr. Mike Evans addresses head-on the most important political and prophetic issue of our day—what we should do in regards to the nation of Israel.

Governments around the world are turning against the Jewish state and putting themselves and their people on a pathway to judgment and destruction. Drawn from Dr. Evans' many years of Bible study and first-hand knowledge of the situation in Israel and the Middle East, this powerful book opens the pages of Scripture to reveal the truth behind the news that makes the headlines.

Every friend of Israel needs to read this book to be encouraged to pray more and share these vital truths with others.



©Article by Pastor Phil Layton notes that some who might be called Reformed theologians support a future for Israel.

http://www.fredsibletalk.com/Israel_theologians.pdf

Exceprts

NOTED THEOLOGIANS FROM POST-REFORMATION HISTORY WHO BELIEVED IN A FUTURE CONVERSION OF NATIONAL / ETHNIC ISRAEL

Compiled by Pastor Phil Layton (www.goldcountrybaptist.org)

A key question: *Will unfulfilled OT prophecy be fulfilled in the same way OT prophecies were fulfilled in biblical times? When prophets spoke literally of details surrounding Christ's first coming, should we not expect that details about Christ's second coming will be fulfilled just as literally?* Great theologians have not always been consistent here.

Floyd Hamilton, an amillennialist, writes: "Now we must frankly admit that a literal interpretation of the Old Testament prophecies gives us just such a picture of an earthly reign of the Messiah as the premillennialist pictures. That was the kind of Messianic kingdom that the Jews of the time of Christ were looking for, on the basis of a literal kingdom interpretation of the Old Testament promises" (The Basis of the Millennial Faith, 38, in Ryrie, 83).

CONCLUSION

The previous 12 pp. of quotes (all from non-dispensational writers) should be more than sufficient to show that some future distinct plan and salvation for ethnic or national Israel was not (as I've heard some charge) "a view invented by 19th Century Dispensationalists"! Regrettably there is much ignorance among dear Reformed brethren today who may be surprised to find some "future Israel" views among so many of the great heroes of their faith tradition in the past. While I personally believe futuristic premillennialism does best justice to the biblical evidence, I hope that even my amillennial and postmillennial brethren will reconsider recovering their position's historical past views on Israel. This is one of the most important issues of eschatology, because God's Word and promises and biblical interpretation are at stake. Of course, no matter what theologians we can find on our side, the Reformation motto and ultimate authority can only be sola scriptura – Scripture alone must interpret Zechariah 12-14, Ezekiel 36-39, & Romans 9-11 and other passages consistently with tota scriptura (the totality of scripture). If what is written here causes some to re-study the scriptures more, then soli deo gloria. – Pastor Phil



Recommended Book List

Things to Come: A Study in Biblical Eschatology (Zondervan, 1965) by J. Dwight Pentecost. [Hardcover] 670 pages.

Future Israel: Why Christian Anti-Judaism Must Be Challenged (B&H Academic: New American Commentary Studies in Bible and Theology, 2007) by Barry E. Horner. [Hardcover] 394 pages.
http://futureisraelministries.org/contact_us.html

The Messianic Hope: Is the Old Testament Really Messianic? (B&H Academic: NAC Studies in Bible & Theology, 2010) by Michael Rydelnik. 202 pages.

Understanding the Arab-Israeli Conflict: What the Headlines Haven't Told You (Moody Publishers, 2004) by Michael Rydelnik. [Paperback]

Joel C. Rosenberg is the New York Times best-selling author of *The Last Jihad, The Last Days, The Ezekiel Option, The Copper Scroll, and Epicenter*, with more than one million copies in print.

Epicenter: Why the Current Rumbblings in the Middle East Will Change Your Future (Tyndale House Publishers, 2008) by Joel C. Rosenberg. [Paperback] 401 pages.

The Twelfth Imam (Tyndale House Publishers, 2010) by Joel C. Rosenberg [Hardback] 512 pages 2011 Retailers Choice Award winner!

The Coming Apocalypse: A Study of Replacement Theology vs. God's Faithfulness in the End-Times (The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, Inc, 2009) by Renald E. Showers [Paperback] 118 pages.



A Brief List of Commentaries on the Book of Daniel

Book	Level	Hermeneutic	Tribulation	Millenium	Notes
Recommended Titles					
Archer, Gleason L., Jr. <i>Daniel, Vol. 7 Expositor's Bible Commentary</i> . Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1985.	Medium	Futurist	Pre	Pre	
Miller, Stephen. <i>Daniel, Vol. 18, New American Commentary</i> . Nashville, TN: Broadman	Medium	Futurist	Pre	Pre	
Walvoord, John F. <i>Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation</i> . Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1971	Medium	Futurist	Pre	Pre	
Whitcomb, John C. <i>Daniel. Everyman's Bible Commentary series</i> . Chicago, IL: Moody, 1985.	Medium	Futurist	Pre	Pre	
Wood, Leon. <i>A Commentary on Daniel</i> . Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1975.	Medium	Futurist	Pre	Pre	
Other Selected Influential (or recent) Titles - not recommended					
Baldwin, Joyce G., <i>Daniel: An Introduction and Commentary</i> . Tyndale OT Commentary series. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1978.	Medium	Idealist - evangelical		Amill	
Goldingay, John E. <i>Daniel, Word Biblical Commentary series</i> . Dallas, TX: Word, 1989.	Advanced	Idealist - evangelical		Amill	
Lacoque, Andre. <i>The Book of Daniel</i> . Translated by David Pellauer. Atlanta, GA: John Knox Press, 1979.	Advanced	Historist (Dan.is mystical person; Dan.9 fulfilled in Maccabean)	--	--	



A Brief List of Commentaries on the Book of Revelation

Book	Level	Hermeneutic	Tribulation	Millenium	Notes
Recommended Titles					
Smith, J.B. <i>A Revelation of Jesus Christ</i> . Herald, 1961	Beginner	Futurist	Pre	Pre	
Tenney, Merrill C. <i>The Book of Revelation</i> . Baker, 1963	Medium	Futurist	Pre	Pre	
Thomas, Robert L. <i>Revelation 1-7: An Exegetical Commentary</i> . Moody, 1992	Advanced	Futurist	Pre	Pre	
Thomas, Robert L. <i>Revelation 8-22: An Exegetical Commentary</i> . Moody, 1995	Advanced	Futurist	Pre	Pre	
Walvoord, John F. <i>The Revelation of Jesus Christ</i> . Moody, 1966	Medium	Futurist	Pre	Pre	
Other Selected Influential (or recent) Titles -- not recommended					
Aune, D. <i>The Book of Revelation I,II,III</i> , Word Biblical Commentary, 1997-98	Advanced		Post		
Beale, Greg K. <i>The Book of Revelation</i> . NIGTC, Eerdmans, 1998	Advanced	Eclecticism, a redemptive-historical form of Idealism (mostly symbolic)	no 7-year period – church goes thru to end of time	Amill, postmill blend	
Kistemaker, Simon. <i>New Testament Commentary: Exposition of the Book of Revelation</i> . Baker, 2001	Intermediate	Idealist (highly symbolic)	no 7-year period – church goes thru to end of time	Amill	
Ladd, George. <i>Commentary on the Revelation of John</i> , Eerdmans, 1972	Medium	Moderate futurist (no distinction between Israel and the Church)	Post	Pre	
Morris, Leon. <i>The Book of Revelation</i> . Tyndale, Eerdmans, 1987	Medium	Eclectic	Post	Amill	



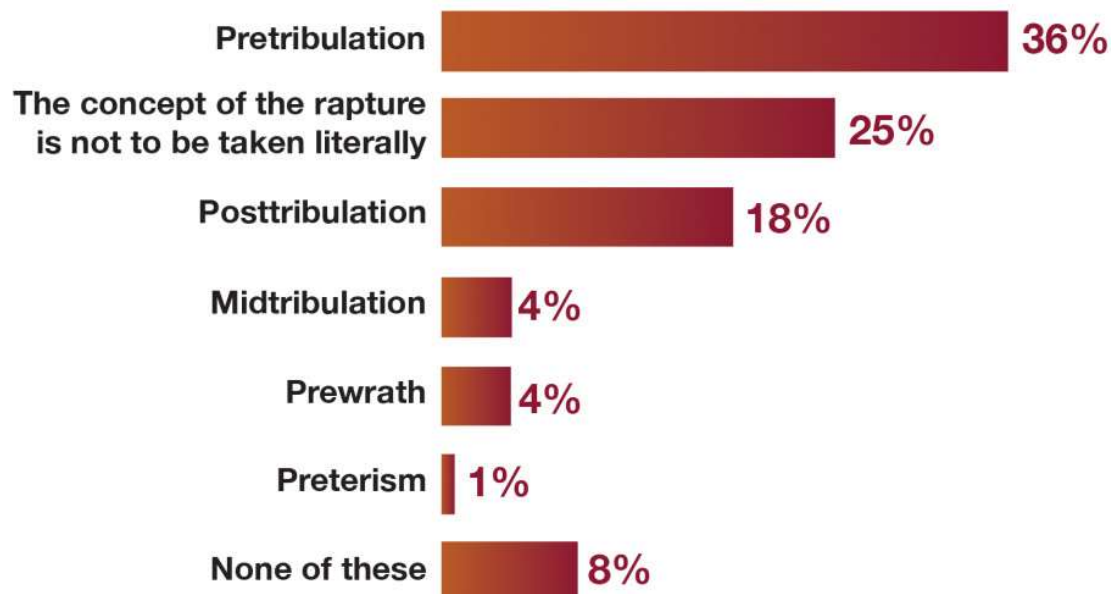
Mounce, R. H. <i>The Book of Revelation</i> . NICC, Eerdmans, 1977	Intermediate	Preterist-Futurist	Post	Pre	
Osborne, Grant R. <i>Revelation</i> . ECNT, Baker, 2002	Intermediate	Moderate futurist (no distinction between Israel and the Church)	Post	Pre	

APRIL 26, 2016

Pastors: The End of the World is Complicated

Among Protestant Pastors:

Which of the following statements best describes your views on when the biblical rapture will occur?



Note: Not sure 4%



LifeWayResearch.com

By Bob Smietana

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—Most Protestant pastors believe Jesus will return in the future. But few agree about the details of the apocalypse.

A third of America's Protestant pastors expect Christians to be raptured—or taken up in the sky to meet Jesus—as the end times begin. About half think a false messiah known as the Antichrist will appear sometime in the future.

A surprising number think the Antichrist has already been here or isn't on his way at all.

Those are among the findings of a new telephone survey of 1,000 Protestant senior pastors and their views on end-times theology from Nashville-based LifeWay Research, sponsored by Charisma House Book Group.

End-times theology remains popular with churchgoers, says Scott McConnell, vice president of LifeWay Research. But it's not an easy topic to preach about.

"Most people want their pastor to preach about the Book of Revelation and the end of the world," he says. "But that's a complicated task. Pastors and the scholars they cite often disagree about how the end times will unfold."



No consensus about the rapture

Researchers found widely varying views about three aspects of end-times theology:

- The timing of the rapture (see 1st Thessalonians 4:15-17 and Matthew 24)
- The nature of the Antichrist (found in 1 John and 2 John and other texts)
- The millennial kingdom, when Jesus reigns for 1,000 years (Revelation 20:1-10)

About a third (36 percent) of Protestant senior pastors believe in the kind of pretribulation rapture familiar to pop culture. In that scenario, Christians disappear at the start of the apocalypse. Those left behind suffer great trouble or tribulation.

One in 4 pastors say the rapture is not literal. Almost 1 in 5 thinks the rapture happens after the tribulation (18 percent). A few believe the rapture already happened (1 percent) or that it will occur during the tribulation (4 percent) or before the wrath of God is poured out on the earth (4 percent). Others don't agree with any of these views (8 percent) or aren't sure what will happen (4 percent).

Mainline Protestant pastors (36 percent) are more likely to say the rapture isn't literal. Pastors who hold this view include about half of Lutherans (60 percent), Methodists (48 percent) and Presbyterian/Reformed pastors (49 percent). Few Baptist (6 percent) or Pentecostal pastors (less than 1 percent) hold that view.

Evangelicals overall (43 percent) are more likely to believe in a pretribulation rapture.

Education and age also play a role in how pastors view the rapture. Pastors with a master's degree (33 percent) or a doctorate (29 percent) are more likely to say the rapture isn't literal than those with no degree (6 percent) or a bachelor's (16 percent).

Sixty percent of pastors with no college degree believe in a pretribulation rapture. By contrast, 26 percent of pastors with a master's hold that view.

Pastors under 45 are least likely to believe in a pretribulation rapture (28 percent), compared to their older cohorts. They're also most likely (23 percent) to believe in a posttribulation rapture.

Most expect the Antichrist, disagree on timing

LifeWay Research also found diverse views about the Antichrist.

About half (49 percent) say the Antichrist is a figure who will arise in the future. Others say there is no individual Antichrist (12 percent); that, he is a personification of evil (14 percent) or an institution (7 percent). Six percent say the Antichrist has already been here.

Baptists (75 percent) and Pentecostals (83 percent) are most likely to see a future Antichrist. Lutherans (29 percent), Methodists (28 percent) and Presbyterian/Reformed pastors (31 percent) are more likely to see the Antichrist as a personification of evil.

Education also played a role in how pastors see the Antichrist. Two-thirds of those with no college degree (68 percent) or a bachelor's (63 percent) believe in a future Antichrist figure. Fewer than half of those with a master's (39 percent) or a doctorate (49 percent) hold that view.

Premillennialism is commonplace

Pastors also disagree about the details of the millennial kingdom.

About half (48 percent) believe in premillennialism, the view that the 1,000-year reign of Christ happens in the future.

A third (31 percent) believe in amillennialism, the view that there's no 1,000-year reign—instead Jesus already rules the hearts and minds of Christians.

One in 10 (11 percent) believe in postmillennialism—the idea that the world will gradually become more Christian until Jesus returns.

Most pastors were split by denomination:

- Baptists (75 percent) and Pentecostals (84 percent) are most likely to choose premillennialism.



- Lutherans (71 percent) were most likely to choose amillennialism, followed by Presbyterian/Reformed pastors (52 percent) and Methodists (37 percent).
- Methodists (27 percent) were more likely than other denominations to choose postmillennialism.

Education also played a role. Premillennialism is popular with those with no college (71 percent) or a bachelor's degree (63 percent). Amillennialism is favored by those with a master's degree (41 percent).

Billy Hallowell, author of the upcoming book *The Armageddon Code: One Journalist's Quest for End-Times Answers*, said the research quantifies the prevalence of different end-times theories.

"I'm hoping the data opens a discussion about preachers' eschatological beliefs, why they hold those ideas, and how congregants and faith leaders can better understand the biblical texts," he said.

McConnell says it's not a bad thing that pastors disagree on the details of the apocalypse. Most agree on the main teachings about the Second Coming. The rest of the details don't affect the day-to-day life of most Christians.

"The big picture of Revelation is clear—Jesus returns, people must be ready, evil is defeated," he says. "With the rest of the details, there is room for disagreement."

Bob Smietana is senior writer for *Facts & Trends* magazine.

The phone survey of Protestant pastors was conducted Jan. 8-22, 2016. These questions were sponsored by Charisma House Book Group. The calling list was a random sample stratified by church size drawn from a list of all Protestant churches. Each interview was conducted with the senior pastor, minister or priest of the church called. Responses were weighted by region to more accurately reflect the population. The completed sample is 1,000 surveys. The sample provides 95 percent confidence that the sampling error does not exceed plus or minus 3.1 percent. Margins of error are higher in sub-groups. The full survey report is available at LifeWayResearch.com.

LifeWay Research is a Nashville-based, evangelical research firm that specializes in surveys about faith in culture and matters that affect the church.

[Download the research](#)

FILED UNDER: PASTOR VIEWS, UNCATEGORIZED



**Laurelwood Baptist Church
Adult Christian Ministries
2017-2018**

Special Saturday Seminars

Saturday, February 10, 2018 "How to Disagree Agreeably" John Weeks

This seminar is based on the content found in Dr. Weeks' out-of-print book, *Free To Disagree Agreeably: Moving Beyond the Arguments Over Christian Liberty*, Kregel Publications. This will wrestle with the current issues about which Christians sometimes disagree.

Saturday, April 28, 2018 "How to Deal with Listening to Gossip" John Weeks

This seminar is designed to help Christians recognize gossip and respond with the love of Jesus. Some of the content comes from Dr. Weeks seminary course "Conflict Resolution in the Church."

Saturday, November 10, 2018 "Pest Control: Termites in the Foundation"

This seminar will identify hidden issues that hurt believers in community. The content will help us to recognize signs from the damage, and explore the Bible for ways to exterminate the critters that hurt our churches.

9:00 am Sunday Adult Classes Starting November, 2017

Sunday, November 5

"Dealing With Grief" Pastor Mike Wilde

Pastor Mike teaches how to offer and receive comfort for those who are grieving with the hope and promises that the scriptures bring. He invites you to be a part of this time as we seek to express our grief and bring some closure to the loss that we have experienced. Join us for this 5-week class Sundays from 9-10am before service.

Sunday, December 10 and 17

"Prayer Class" Pastor Mike Wilde

How do you talk to God? How do you know when He is speaking to you? Why are there times when you can't seem to connect? Join us as we learn the key ingredients to having a fresh and fruitful conversation with God and with our eyes wide open.

9:00 am Sunday Adult Classes Starting January, 2018

Sunday, January 7, 2018

"Exposition of Ezra" Paul Lantz

"Discovery: What is Laurelwood?" Pastor Mike Wilde

"Splendor of God's Glory: God's Attributes" John Weeks

Sunday, January 21, 2018

"Women Mentoring Women" Class for Women of all Ages.

Have you ever been mentored or been interested in exploring the art of mentoring? Then this class is for you. During this seven-week course you will learn what mentoring is and what it isn't. You will experience a mentoring relationship as we read a wonderful book entitled *Calm My Anxious Heart* by Linda Dillow.

The class will equip you to become a mentor, should you choose to do so. Watch the bulletin for our next available class, or call the office to be put on the list and we will contact you.

Sunday, February 11, 2018

"Fellowship in the Body" Pastor Mike Wilde

Understand how God has designed the body of Christ to connect and grow together and how you can be a part of it.

Sunday, March 4, 2018

"SHAPE: Discover Who God Made You To Be" Becky Doel and team



