

THE MARVEL OF  
**BIBLE**  
**PROPHECY**

MICHAEL TRAINER

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## INTRODUCTION

# **GOD'S GREAT PLAN**

*I know that whatsoever God does, it shall be forever, nothing can be added to it, and nothing can be taken from it, and God does it that people should respect and fear him Ecclesiastes 3:14. (The words of Solomon)*

If Bible prophecy fulfilment proves anything, it proves there is God, period. It proves nothing happens by chance and that everything is under God's control, especially the unfolding of his GREAT plan for mankind. This is the plan which the Bible states cannot be added to, cannot be taken from and that shall last forever. God wants as many people as possible to understand what the future holds for mankind; it is important that we all have an awareness of these things.

From a personal point of view, I have found it to be a considerable advantage to know there definitely is God and that he has an eternal plan which everybody is graciously invited into.

The God of eternity has a plan for the redemption of mankind, not a vague plan, but a plan that is defined, specific and which can be easily evaluated. God rejoices in any person who seeks out the knowledge of his plan. Proverbs 25:2 tells us that it is the glory of God to conceal a matter, and the HONOUR of kings to search it out. It is certainly a privilege and an honour to search out whether God's claims are truth or a hoax. But to know for certain either way is also of massive benefit for your whole life.

Many will think I am exaggerating when I say that assessing the claims presented in this book is the most important exercise that any person can do. But after virtually fifty years of personally evaluating these exact claims,

I am convinced there is nothing in all of life that is so important. In fact, I think this is an understatement.

As for me and who I am, well I am just like a lot of people. I was brought up to think the Bible was a book of irrelevance; I went wayward in my teenage years, got quite heavily involved in drugs, participating in usage and selling. I lived life wanting to get everything out of it, as most people do. When I first heard about the claims that are in this book, I was sceptical, as I think you should be. But at least I checked their authenticity. To my full-on surprise, I found a reality in them which is too big to ignore.

This book is to assist people to know whether we are dealing with a hoax ... or whether these are the most amazing, life-transforming facts that we could learn about.

Enjoy the book!

Mike

# 1

## What is Bible Prophecy?

Bible prophecy, or more to the point, the fulfilment of Bible prophecy, is irrefutable proof that there is definitely a God. It is also proof that the Bible should be recognized as a book inspired by God.

A prophecy is a prediction of a future event, and the Bible possesses over 1,800 precise prophetic predictions that have come to pass. They are all astounding, but as you read this book you will see that besides those that are merely astounding, there are others that are, for want of a better description, *ridiculously* astounding.

What if we are needing proof of the existence of God? What we should all know is that through Isaiah, (the Old Testament prophet), the God of the Bible stated very clearly that He would prove himself by speaking of an event before it occurred. When the event actually happened, you would KNOW your greatest grandfather was not a tadpole and you would know that you are special! You (and I) exist because there is a Creator, and not just a Creator, but one who has an immense interest in enabling us to grasp his excellence. Isaiah 46:9–10 states: “Remember the former things of old, for I am God and there is none else, I am God and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, MY COUNSEL SHALL STAND, and I will do all (and it shall be) my pleasure.”

This is a ‘nothing to lose and everything to gain’ scenario. Even if this information could be proven to be a hoax, you would be no worse off. But if you discover this to be a wonderment – way beyond awesome – well, I have to say this will be one of the most momentous times of your life.

The book is written to assist people who have never heard of the phenomenon of fulfilled Biblical prophecy. But it is also for people who may read their Bible and are not aware of the enormity of the blessing of enrichment which accompanies this exceptional knowledge.

Often, when Bible prophecy is brought up in conversation, people think you are getting a little too cosmic for your own good, thinking you are veering down the road of voodoo or some mystic hocus-pocus, soothsaying, clairvoyance, or Nostradamus-type fortune-telling. But in fact, Bible prophecy fulfilment is not like those things at all – it is not vague, it is not “hit and miss” chance. Bible prophecy prediction is detailed and exact; it is an understatement to describe it as absolutely amazing. This phenomenon is perfect, and you can prove it for yourself, and if you do, you will marvel till you melt. It is irrefutable, God-chosen proof of who he is.

Before we embark on an evaluation of Bible prophecy, it is important to have a basic awareness of what it is. When a person mentions biblical prophecy, they are alluding to the fact that God himself decided that speaking of an event before it came to pass was going to be the means by which God would prove his existence to man. Isaiah 46:10 revealed that God’s “counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure”. In the Bible, over 1,800 times He has given counsel about the future and every single time, his counsel does stand. Whether it is hundreds or even thousands of years later, it always comes to pass, and is announced by the person speaking on God’s behalf.

The Bible informs us that all biblical prophecies are spoken by people who are inspired by the Spirit of God. 2 Peter 1:21 clearly states that prophecy came not in old times by the will of man. But holy (God-respecting) men of God spoke as they were moved (inspired) by the Holy Ghost. It is noteworthy that not one prophet claimed personal skill or heightened self-intellect; the credit is always given to the ever-living God.

Hopefully, after reading this book and honestly considering the facts in it, you will be able to know confidently whether the source of biblical prophecy is divine or fake.

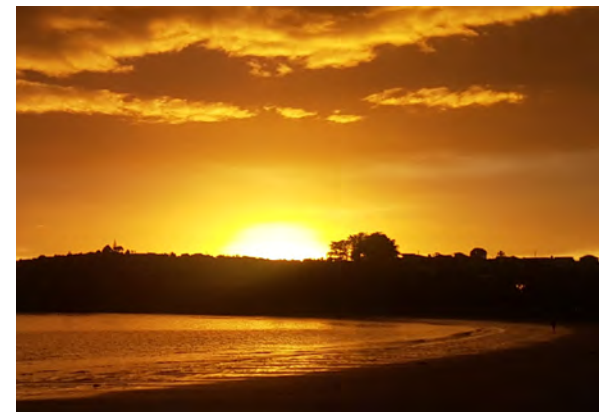
Over several decades I have quite deliberately assessed many prophecies. To my knowledge, after checking and double-checking their authenticity, I can honestly say I that I have not found (and am not aware

of) even just one prophecy being proven false. This is absolutely staggering. It is also worth noting that there has not been an archaeological discovery that has opposed what the prophets predicted, which also is incredible.

Some prophecies are about individuals, some are about various groups. There are prophecies about countries, nations, and empires. Some are about specific events or actions, and some are about God’s perfect plan for mankind. But whatever they are and no matter how unlikely the chances of them being fulfilled, the prophecies have always come to pass...ALWAYS.

The only prophecies that are yet to be fulfilled are those that speak of the days prior to the return of Christ and the establishing of the Kingdom of God on earth. These days are referred to as the latter-days. These prophecies will be addressed later in this book; I will give extra detail to assist with the context, emphasising, especially with the clear biblical warning, that modern day “churchianity” has deviated from the pure Christianity described in the book of Acts.

In the first verse of the Bible, we are told that in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Planet Earth and nature are magnificent, as are the 200 billion galaxies we are told exist; therefore, I have no trouble saying that God is awesome. If He chooses prophecy to reveal his existence, it is worth a genuine evaluation. I find it intriguing that Peter (who heard God speak and literally saw Jesus transfigured on the mountain with James and John) would actually say that PROPHECY is MORE SURE, and that we should take heed, because it is a (life transforming) light that shines in a dark place (our mind).



2 Peter 1:19. We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts

# 2 ASSYRIA

For the sake of simplicity, time, and space, I think it best that we start our evaluation of Bible prophecy from the time of the Assyrian Empire through to the time of Christ, including his life, death, resurrection, and the establishment of the New Testament Church. During this period, Old Testament prophets spoke many hundreds of prophecies which have all been proved completely accurate as history has unfolded.



The extent of the Assyrian Empire at the height of its power

This segment covers approximately 900 years, an extremely busy time for the Israelites.

The beginning of this period was characterized by the increase and dominance of the Assyrian people. Although they can be traced back to before 2000 BC, they did not become consequential until they broke free from the dominance of Babylon, around 1300 BC. As the world's first mega-empire, Assyria's final 300–400 years were spectacular. Unfortunately, their many successes resulted in inflated pride; they overrated themselves and underestimated God. History records that they embraced thought patterns which ultimately brought about their demise. We all do well to remember that he who ignores history is doomed to repeat it, whether it be personally or nationally.

The first major biblical reference to Assyria was when God sent Jonah to Nineveh, Assyria's capital city, in about 862 BC. At this time, Jonah challenged the people of Nineveh to repent of their evil deeds. Surprisingly and commendably, they did repent, but this improved attitude did not endure. Before too long, they had regressed to an even worse state. The Assyrians became infamous for their severe cruelty towards those they conquered. It seemed as though nobody would be able to withstand their expansion, but their victorious days were numbered.

The Assyrian Empire was the first empire that reigned supreme over the Asia Minor area and beyond; they conquered and ruled from Egypt, Mesopotamia, and the Middle East, to beyond modern-day Turkey, Iraq, and Iran.

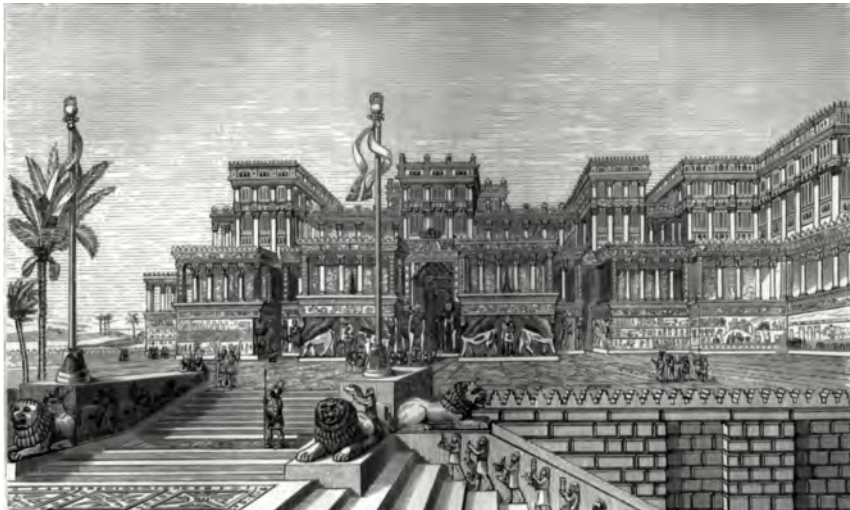
Nineveh, like Babylon, was a city of magnificence, a fortress almost beyond comprehension for those times. Its walls were 100 feet high and 50 feet thick, with scanning towers reaching 200 feet. The city had fifteen gates, was surrounded by a moat (150 feet wide), and the circumference of the city was seven miles.

After the reign of King Solomon (975 BC), the nation of Israel divided into two parts. The northern region was still known as Israel and the southern region was known as Judah. The people of the northern kingdom were the majority, amounting to approximately 70%–80% of the total Israelite population. In the Bible, God declared that because of the northern kingdom's blatant and continual rejection of his him, He would use the



Assyrian army not only to defeat them, but also to remove them to another land as captives. This actually occurred between 734 BC–721 BC. Later, for similar reasons, God also used the Assyrians to conquer most of the southern kingdom (Isaiah 8:17). (Those who were based in Jerusalem with King Hezekiah and Isaiah the prophet remained protected.)

Whenever the Assyrian army defeated a foe, they deported the captives to another land to prevent future uprisings and to destroy national pride. This is exactly what happened to those Israelites defeated by Assyria. It is historical fact that they never returned to their homeland, therefore they are referred to as the LOST tribes (families) of Israel.



An artist's depiction of the Nineveh palace of Sennacherib - a powerful Assyrian King who reigned about 700 BC and attacked Israel. It was known as a Palace without Rival. Sennacherib lived about 100 years before Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon. Check out the context here: II Kings 18:13 and II Chronicles 32:1

Assyria did accomplish that which was prophesied by biblical prophets. However, though the Assyrians were determined to do so, they never defeated Jerusalem (read 2 Chronicles 32). This was strange because the Assyrians were so powerful and successful against all the countries they attacked. Yet they could not conquer the small population of Jerusalem. We should ask why this is. The truth is, they could not defeat Jerusalem, not

because they lacked military might, but because 100 years before the event, both Isaiah and Micah prophesied that Jerusalem would be taken captive by Babylon. Against all odds and logic, this is exactly what happened. Both prophets prophesied in the heyday of Assyrian might, a time when it could not be envisaged that the far weaker Babylon would be the power that ultimately conquered Jerusalem. It is yet another case of acknowledging that if God speaks of an event unfolding in a certain way, it is certain to happen as prophesied. This is why it is so important for us to know these things: firstly, that there is Almighty God, and secondly, to understand that the Bible is the inspired Word of God, rather than just another book.

The way these events occurred may not sound overly significant. However, they really are, not only because they happened as prophesied, but also because they signalled something far more important. Even during this period, God had his eyes firmly set on the Person who was worthy to give his life for mankind. From this point in time, the most amazing prophecies would be given about Jesus, all of which have been – or soon will be – fulfilled. In Zechariah 4:10 it comments: “For who has despised the DAY of small things, for they will rejoice”. Although these things may appear minor, stay with us. This is the beginning of the most incredible events.

It was the prophet Nahum who prophesied about the fall of Nineveh, the capital city of the Assyrian Empire. The year Nahum spoke the prophecy was approximately 712 BC, just over 100 years prior to the event's actual occurrence.

History once again proves that the words spoken by Nahum were inspired by God. The Ninevites, unprepared for defeat, had total confidence in their apparently impregnable, fortified city. This confidence in their dominance over all opposition had lasted for over 300 years.

Nahum clearly stated that the fall of Nineveh would be caused by flood. In fact, Nahum states this three times in the Bible. Archaeologists have confirmed the outcome of these prophecies, having discovered a silt and pebble layer found within the city that corresponds with the sedimentary time scale. Nineveh may have been very close to the Tigris River which may have been in flood. However, there is no historical record of this happening beforehand, so this is unlikely. It is now thought that the attacking armies of Media and Babylon tried a different strategy when rising against Nineveh.

Rather than attempting to scale the huge walls, they would divert the river (Khosr) which flowed through the city, dam it up, and then release it in a quantity that the floodgates could not cope with. Either way Nineveh was destroyed by flood and was defeated at that very time.

Nahum also stated it would be burnt. Archaeologists have again verified this by confirming the presence of ash and soot in remains; there was also baked clay in the walls – apparently the fire was fierce. Nahum also said the city – which to this point was one of the greatest cities ever built by man – would become totally desolate.

Nahum even gave the reasons for Assyria's fall; we should take special note, because those same reasons are very prevalent today. Nahum stated that the city (Nineveh) was full of lies and robbery, as our societies are, especially when it comes to truth regarding the Bible, God, and his desire to make us whole. We are lied to with the likes of evolution and accepting the futility of life. Some people steal things, but the worst type of theft is when God's victorious words are stolen from us.

What attracts my attention is what is spoken in Nahum 3:4 about the multitude of whoredoms or harlots being well-favoured. It is easy to parallel with our world today: immorality is rife, sex out of marriage, adultery, homosexuality, transgenderism, paedophilia and the like, are all on the increase. The prophet Micah said the wound of Assyria was incurable. I hope that is not the case with the societies we are part of because the desolation of Assyria predicted by the prophets was to be permanent. That is exactly what has happened.

I might mention here that it is not the intention of this book to be condemning in any form to anybody; the purpose of this book is to establish whether God is mythical or a reality. If He is mythical, basically we can go any direction in life that we want to go. But if He is proven as reality, we need to evaluate the advice that is offered by the Creator of all things.

It is also amazing to note that Nahum announced the end of Nineveh would be as a ripe fig falling from a shaken tree; in other words, her end would be quick. Nobody would have envisaged how an enormous city, backed by the might of a colossus like Assyria, could just capitulate. But that is precisely what happened. A three-month siege of Nineveh (by the combined forces of Media and Babylon) was all that was needed: they were

defeated. It made no sense at all because other cities, much smaller and nowhere near as powerful, sometimes resisted sieges for decades. This did not apply to Nineveh.

As the prophets predicted, Nineveh was destroyed by flood, it was burnt by fire, its defeat was as a ripe fig falling from a shaken tree, and it has remained desolate until now, over 2,600 years later.

In closing this chapter, it is worth mentioning a prophecy by another Old Testament prophet, Zephaniah. Inspired by God (as they all were), he spoke specifically of Nineveh and Assyria, clearly stating Assyria would be destroyed, (which it was), and that Nineveh would be made a desolation (which it was and still is). However, Zephaniah also said it would be DRY. This is unusual because Nineveh had an excess of water; the Tigris was close, as was the river Tebiltu, and it is quite likely the river Khosr flowed right through the fortress city. To top it off, the city had a 150-foot moat for added protection. So how could someone dare predict that it would become dry, like a wilderness? And yet, how do you suppose Nineveh looks today? Yep, as you would expect if God were involved, it is a desolate wilderness and DRY.



## 3

## Daniel and Babylon

*And in the days of these (Rome) Kings shall the God of Heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed, and the Kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these Kingdoms (futility of life) and IT SHALL STAND FOREVER. Daniel 2:44*

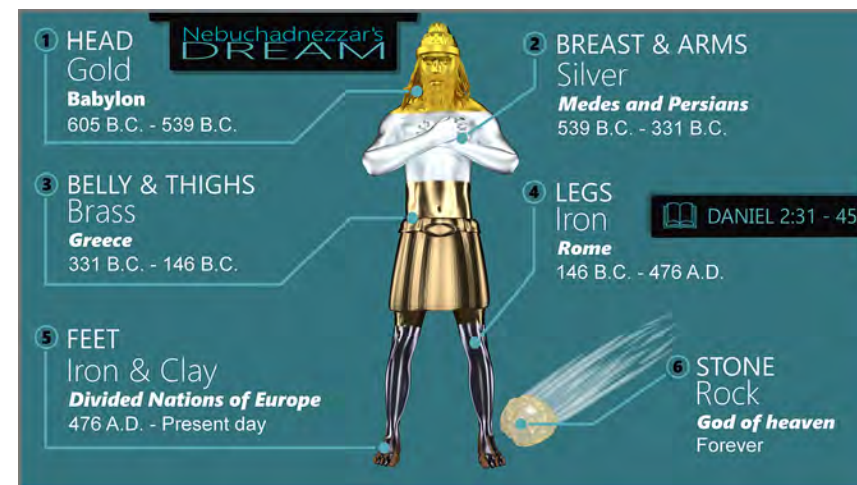
This chapter is dedicated to some of the prophecies from the Book of Daniel. For those who know a little about the Bible, you will quite likely



The extent of the Babylonian Empire at the time of King Nebuchadnezzar - about 600BC

know that there was a person named Daniel who was thrown into the lion's den but was not devoured by the lions because God intervened. This is that same Daniel. You can read about that event in the book of Daniel if you so wish, but this chapter is not based around that happening. It is based around the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, King of the Babylonian empire at the time Assyria had been conquered – as prophesied. Within a decade (604 BC), Jerusalem had also been conquered by Babylon, which the prophets Micah and Isaiah had prophesied 100 years earlier. Daniel was one of the captives who were taken from Jerusalem to Babylon. He was most likely in his mid-teens, he definitely had a sharp awareness of the God of Israel, and he was definitely an exceptional individual.

Within two years of Daniel being in Babylon, the Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar, had a dream that bothered him, and he wanted to know if it had significant meaning. He asked the wise men of his empire to tell him what the meaning might be, and they said to him, “Tell us your dream and we will give you the interpretation”.



The meaning of the image revealed to King Nebuchadnezzar in a dream, as interpreted by the prophet Daniel in about 600 BC

However, he replied: “I want you to tell me the dream and then tell me its meaning”. Obviously, they were unable to do this. But according to the second chapter of the book of Daniel, Daniel prayed and asked God to

show him what the dream was, along with its interpretation. God answered Daniel's prayer, so Daniel boldly went to address the King's request. The Bible informs us that if Daniel had been incorrect in what he had relayed to Nebuchadnezzar, he would have been put to death. The situation was very serious.

But Daniel was a remarkable person and even at his young age trusted God with enviable courage. He went to the King and confidently told him what he had dreamt and also gave him the interpretation.

Daniel told him that in the dream he saw a "terrible" image of a man whose body was made up of four metals. The head was gold, breast and arms were silver, his belly and thighs were brass, his legs were iron, and his feet were made of iron mixed with clay. Daniel said to the King: "You saw this image until a stone smote the image on its feet which were broken to pieces. Then the iron and the clay and the brass, silver and gold were also broken to pieces and became as chaff (waste) on the summer threshing floor and no place was found for them, and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth."

Then brave Daniel said he would give the king of Babylon the interpretation. He said the head of gold was symbolic of Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian Empire, the silver symbolised an inferior Kingdom which would rule after Babylon, then the brass (another kingdom) would overtake or dominate the silver kingdom (or empire). After this, the brass kingdom would become the most dominant empire. However, it would be weakened and conquered by the iron kingdom, which would split into two sections so that both would eventually mix with clay. After being decimated by a stone, it would become as unwanted and unneeded waste. Then for good measure and to top everything off, the young man Daniel said words we should all remember. He said the dream is CERTAIN and the interpretation SURE, and what has unfolded in the process of time, right up to today, fully confirms this.

Daniel was extremely precise, and it appears he did not flinch. The result was that the great Nebuchadnezzar, the King of mighty Babylon, bowed before Daniel, worshipped him, and said: "Of a TRUTH it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of Kings and a revealer of secrets". This was a wonderful moment in the life of Nebuchadnezzar – as it is with us when we come to the place of realizing this same truth.

This event happened around 602 BC. What is even more amazing is the fulfilment of what Daniel spoke of from the dream. He prophesied that the Babylonian empire would be defeated by another army – this was the Medo-Persian army. The Medo-Persians would later be defeated by another empire which was Greece, led by Alexander the Great.



The stone that destroyed the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream is the kingdom of God, that shall never never end. All earthly civilisations and empires will be subject to the same fate.

Greece would ultimately be defeated by Rome (which would split into two as symbolised by the legs—probably the Roman Catholic and Islam divisions) which would exist, although weakening with time, right through to the intervention by God at the return of Christ. This would signal the establishing of God's kingdom on earth. The stone that destroyed the image symbolised the kingdom of God, the kingdom that shall never, ever end. All of what Daniel said has come to pass in the last 2,600 years, the only exception being the scriptures that refer to the second coming of Christ. Clearly this will also happen, just as the rest of the predictions did. One significant point made in Daniel 2:44 is that in the days of the Roman Empire, "shall the God of heaven set up a Kingdom, that shall NEVER be destroyed and never go to another people". This refers to the time of Jesus, his death, his resurrection, and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Of course, this also happened and now beckons everybody, calling us all out of the darkness of not knowing truth and into his marvellous light.

Barring the last portion of the dream, all has come to pass. In a very simple and precise way, Daniel described the takeover of kingdoms (Asia Minor/Europe) for 2,600 years until the return of Christ.

When I was first made aware of this dream/prophecy, I did take notice and was sort of impressed, but not anywhere near the level that I am now. I don't specifically know why – maybe I have a lazy mind, I don't know – but it did press my curiosity button for which I am so very thankful. It was like the little prophecy seed sprouted in my mind and from that seemingly insignificant starting point, it has grown to a point where now, I am in absolute awe of the marvel of Bible prophecy.

When I realised the connection between history and Bible prophecy, the penny started to drop for me. My interest in Bible prophecy increased substantially and has continued as I have evaluated the authentic outcomes of prophecy over the years. I love how Bible prophecy proves the certain existence of the God of the Bible, I love how it proves the Bible is a God-Inspired book and I love its perfection.

That journey is what this book is all about. If the Bible can be proven to be God's Word and the promises that God makes to a person can be proven to be real...then for me at least, I would have to be a full-on goof to ignore what is offered. I'm just so glad I have taken time to check this realm a bit deeper.

Whether you decide to embrace this information or not is fully your call, but it is always better to know important facts (especially eternity-related) as you live life. An informed decision is a better than an uninformed decision, because an informed decision enhances the chances of a best decision. In addition, given that we are calling the Bible "God-inspired", it is good to know that Proverbs 18:13 advises all of us, saying: "He that answers a matter before he hears/checks it, it is folly and shame to him".

Initially I had no idea that there were other prophecies relating to the Babylonian captivity of the Israelites besides the dream that Daniel interpreted. However, since then I have discovered that the prophet Jeremiah prophesied about the length of time the captivity would last. He prophesied that the time of captivity would be exactly seventy years, that Jerusalem would be ransacked, and he prophesied this before the Babylonian invasion of Jerusalem had taken place. Those prophetic claims (see Jeremiah 25:11–12) alone were astounding, but Jeremiah also predicted that it would be the end of mighty Babylon – in fact that Babylon would become a perpetual desolation. Ultimately Jerusalem was destroyed and made captive to Babylon for exactly seventy years. And Babylon has

become, to this very day, a perpetual desolation. Everybody everywhere should know this.

What I find even more staggering is the prophet Isaiah's prediction that Babylon, the great empire, would be defeated by an enemy and that it would be led by a man named Cyrus. The fact that Cyrus was literally named in the prophecy is incredible, as the prophecy was given approximately 160 years before the defeat took place, and as you would expect, it happened in the seventieth year of the captivity. So how could a mere human being know these things? I mean, Cyrus was from another country, and the prophecy was given 120 years before he was even born. It all happened and is 100 percent endorsed by history. Even a committed sceptic would have to at least blink – surely!! (I have a question. Why is this not taught in schools...and while we are there, how come pre-schoolers are getting sex and gender education?)

For any who are not aware, Babylon was a mega-fortress in its heyday. Archaeologists have proven the following specifications. The overall size of the city was approximately 190 plus square miles—its side walls were 14 miles long and it was surrounded by a 30-foot moat. It had double walls, the outer wall was over 300 feet high, and just under 90 feet wide. There were around 100 brass gates and there were 250 watch towers that are said to have been 100 feet higher than the outside wall.

As is always the case, it all happened exactly as the prophets spoke. This amazing city, the capital of the great empire, where the marvel of the hanging gardens was on display, this city that housed the captives from Jerusalem, ended abruptly when Babylon was invaded by the combined armies of Medo-Persia, led by Cyrus.

There are several more prophecies about Babylon, describing how it would fall and its abysmal future. Once again, the accuracy of the fulfilment of the predictions is flawless, and it seriously challenges – no let me adjust that wording, *it blows to pieces* – anything that concludes this could only be by chance or fortuitous guesswork.

One aspect of Bible prophecy that becomes more and more obvious is the number of times that the given prophecy contended with general perception and common sense at the time it was delivered. This was certainly the case regarding the demise of Babylon.





An artist's rendition of the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, once known as one of the wonders of the ancient world. (Ferdinand Knab (1886))



Babylon, as it is today – uninhabited except by desert creatures – in accordance with Biblical prophecy

Two examples of this phenomenon (already mentioned) are those spoken by the prophets Isaiah and Micah regarding Babylon. Micah's prophecy is dated at 710 BC and Isaiah's at 712 BC. Both predicted the fall of Babylon, but what made this unusual was that during this period, Babylon was a very inferior power in comparison to the feared, powerful, and dominant Assyrian Empire. Assyria had dominated Asia Minor for over 250 years, had attacked and beaten Babylon and was still expanding towards its apex of power. But as usual, the prophets spoke what they were shown, even when logic condemned what they said as stupidity. Micah could not have been more precise with his words in Micah 4:10, and the same applies for Isaiah in Isaiah 39:6. In both cases, it was clear, Babylon is named, and again, against all odds, what God inspired the prophets to speak became reality just over 100 years later.

Babylon's time to shine above the dominance of the Assyrian empire came at the defeat of Nineveh, Assyria's capital, in the year of 712 BC after what was a short siege for such a massive powerhouse empire. Babylon seized its opportunity to be ruler supreme of the Asia Minor area and it was only eight years later that they attacked Jerusalem and took the captives to Babylon (Daniel etc). You would think any power that could defeat Assyria would dominate for many centuries, but as I have mentioned, the prophets spoke against Babylon. Jeremiah predicted the seventy years' captivity and then the deliverance led by Cyrus which meant the fall and end of Babylon. Of course, this would have been super unlikely if evaluated by logic, but certain if the prophecies were inspired by the God who worked with Israel.

Isaiah spoke openly of Babylon's unfortunate future. In the year estimated to be 712 BC (Isaiah 13:19–22 and Isaiah 14:23), he made predictions that to this day, are again nothing short of astounding. Isaiah referred to Babylon as the beauty of kingdoms. It must have been magnificent, huge walls, the great river Euphrates flowed through the middle of the fortress, the hanging gardens and no doubt so much more, yet Isaiah said it would be like Sodom and Gomorrah and that it would never be inhabited again. Another point of interest is its abrupt, "Sodom and Gomorrah-like" end. Babylon was similar in that it should have taken several decades to fall due to its incredible fortification. However, what appears to have happened is that the river to the city was diverted and as a result, access directly into the city was created. It seems the Babylonians

were overcome with festivities at the time and before they could rally the troops, it was all over. The Bible predicted that neither tents nor sheepfolds would be there and that the decimated city would be inhabited by desert creatures and animals. It is also mentioned that the valuable foundation cornerstones would not be removed (ever) which is very surprising – yet that is exactly what has happened. Lastly, it was prophesied that the city would become a swampy land, only to be infrequently visited.

Literally against mammoth odds (apparently guesstimated to be one in five billion), 2,500 years later, exactly as had been predicted, all eight of these prophecies were fulfilled. But this is not meant to be an exercise solely to impress us with the marvel of prophecy. It is to remind us that all the miraculous fulfilments of prophecy are for a far superior purpose, that we might KNOW for CERTAIN that there is a God, and that this same God has inspired the Bible. It is to confirm to us that there is a specific plan for mankind which bypasses death and beckons us into eternity.

Remember, God has chosen the fulfilment of prophecy to reveal his existence and desire.

Remember what Isaiah spoke in Chapter 46:10, way back in 712 BC? “Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure...”

As Balaam said in the book of Numbers 23:19–20 (in around 1450 BC), “God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? Or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?” As Balaam said, if God has spoken it, it CANNOT be reversed.

We should all know that if we adhere to the requirements that God confronts us with, He will speak the most magnificent words for our lives, and they cannot be reversed unless we willingly embrace actions that oppose what we are called to.

# 4

## Tyre

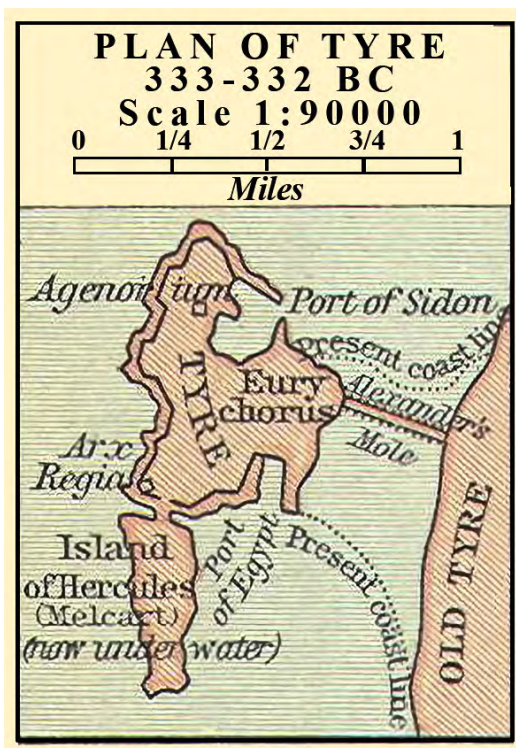
*For thus says the Lord God, when I shall make thee a desolate city, like the cities that are not inhabited; when I shall bring up the deep upon thee, and great waters shall cover thee. Ezekiel 26:19*

*I shall make thee a terror and thou shalt be no more. Ezekiel 26:21*

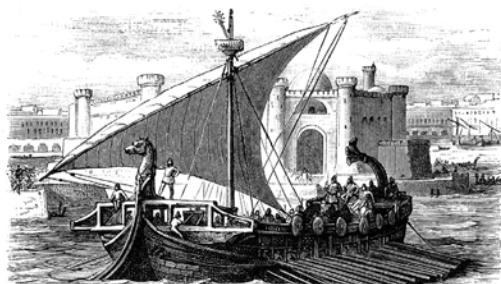
Some of you will be relieved to know this is the last prophecy regarding a city or empire that I intend to draw attention to. Tyre was one of many other places that one or more of the Old Testament prophets prophesied about. And as is the case with all biblical prophecies, they have ALL come to pass, no mistakes, no near misses, just good-old, on-the-button, right-every-time. Tyre was assisted by Assyria to become the spectacular city that it became, but it was not a capital city of an empire. It was a commercial hub, extremely prosperous and by all accounts majestic and beautiful. Once again, the demise of Tyre was brought about by its own successes. Pride in self-achievement morphed into another manifestation of pride – one that mocked God or his people. In this case, it was directed against the Israelites who had been taken captive by the Babylonians.

It was Ezekiel who prophesied in 588 BC the demise of Tyre. Part of the prophecy said that the city would be cast into the sea and that the original city would be cleared to look like a flat rock. It was only three years later that Babylon decided to besiege the city; this siege lasted thirteen years, but when the Babylonians eventually entered the city, they realised that the people had moved to an island one kilometre from the coastal mainland





Map of Tyre showing the 1km long causeway (Alexander's Mole) built by Alexander the Great -in fulfilment of the prophecy that that Tyre would both be razed to the ground and cast into the sea. (Map from [www.emersonkent.com](http://www.emersonkent.com)) - improved.



Alexander besieged the island of Tyre from a causeway built from the ruins of the old mainland city. He also had 200 galleys under his command

city. Nebuchadnezzar did not pursue them, but he did destroy the original city.

Initially, it appeared as though Ezekiel's prophecy could be the first prophecy from an anointed prophet which had failed to come to pass as it had been spoken. At this point, the city was not in the water and the site of the city was a mountain of rubble rather than a flat rock. But over time, events took place in Tyre which once again proved that the words spoken by the prophet were anointed by an entity that knew – with certainty – the future.

As I wrote earlier, this realm of Bible prophecy fulfilment is not dealing in the realm of hocus-pocus-maybes. As Daniel said to Nebuchadnezzar, all prophecy is certain and sure, and Tyre is yet another example proving that there is an Almighty God and that He is in complete control. Personally, I have a little soft spot for Tyre because

it was the first prophecy that woke me up in regards to the enormity of Bible prophecy fulfilment. In 2 Peter 1:19, Peter writes about prophecy, likening it to the day-star (the sun), implying that prophecy removes the darkness of not knowing there is rock-solid, factual proof that there is God, and that prophecy can – and should be – investigated.

By all accounts, Tyre was an exceptional city. Even God (through Ezekiel) referred to her majesty, a very prosperous city of trade, beautifully positioned and presented. But as can so easily happen, it was her successes which led to her demise. As I mentioned, Tyre's inhabitants became proud, the pride became arrogance and before too long they were speaking against the people of Jerusalem, rejoicing in their fall to Babylon. They forgot that God said Jerusalem was his city and that the inhabitants (Israelites) were his people.

The Assyrians allowed and helped Tyre become the prosperous trade centre it had become, and by the time of Ezekiel's prophecy, the city was over 200 years old. It is generally thought that the prophecy of Ezekiel was given around 588 BC, approximately twenty-five years after the people of Jerusalem were conquered by Babylon. This meant it was thirty years from when Babylon overthrew the Assyrian rule and destroyed Nineveh.



Excavations have uncovered the ruins of ancient Tyre, including this colonnade

The prophecy regarding Tyre (found in the book of Ezekiel, chapter 26) involved events that were imminent at the time of the prophecy, but also events of the future. Scripture and reality aligned, causing the Biblical prediction to be completely fulfilled.

Ezekiel initially predicted that Nebuchadnezzar would destroy the mainland city of Tyre, but also stated that many nations would come against Tyre, that her walls and towers would be destroyed, and that the city would be scraped clean as a bare rock.

He also claimed that her riches would become a spoil for others, that the broken walls and timber would be thrown into the sea, that the original city would be as the top of a rock, and that, although people would seek to do so, the city would never be rebuilt again.

Now, approximately 2,600 years later, what does history tell us? Tyre was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, only three years after the prophecy was spoken. Babylon besieged Tyre for thirteen years, then demolished it – as predicted. During this time, almost all inhabitants of Tyre moved to a fortress-like island approximately one kilometre from the mainland where they once again became strong and influential. However as prophesied, the mainland city was abandoned by Babylon and left as a mound of demolished debris.

Approximately 250 years later, another portion of the prophecy was fulfilled. At this time in history, Alexander the Great was on his mission to



The remains of Alexander's causeway are still visible under the sea near modern Tyre, along with other rubble from the ancient city

subdue Egypt and asked the Phoenicians to support him. But unfortunately for Tyre, they refused. As a result, Alexander decided to make an example of them lest any other peoples be emboldened by their rebellion. He besieged the island city by using the ruins of mainland Tyre to build a causeway out to the island from which he breached its defences and massacred thousands of its inhabitants, selling thousands more into slavery and pardoning some.

Modern Tyre is now the 4th largest city in Lebanon but the debris in the ocean is still visible today, evidence of the razing of its mainland site. The original city of Tyre was scraped flat, and its debris was cast into the sea. Now, over 2,300 years later, we know that any attempts to rebuild on the mainland site of the old city have proven futile. Again, against crazy odds, the prophecy is fulfilled perfectly.

- The coastal city of Tyre was invaded and destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar and his Babylonian army
- Alexander scraped the old city flat, throwing its debris into the sea
- Many nations have come against the city in its history: Greeks, Romans, Crusaders, Arabs, Muslims
- The old mainland city of Tyre has never been rebuilt on its former site...amazing!!!

Before progressing into another phase of prophecy fulfilment, it is worth commenting that the prophecies we have considered thus far are a minute portion of what is available. However, with all biblical prophecy, it is the same principle: truth, if spoken by a person inspired by God, always comes to pass. We could have examined the prophecies about Sidon, Gaza, Moab, Jerusalem, or Petra, all of which also came to pass, every single time. It is undeniable that whether it was empires, countries, cities, groups, or individuals, if they were prophesied about by a biblical prophet, prophetic fulfilment could not be prevented – even those prophecies that seemed impossible at the time they were spoken. Even if they appeared so unlikely you would think only a fool would be stupid enough to speak them out, they also always came to pass – always. Their fulfilment became yet another irrefutable witness that there is an eternal Being overseeing the affairs of mankind and that the only book that possesses this divine seal is the Holy Bible.



# 5

## Jesus the Christ

*For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is GIVEN, and the government shall be upon his shoulders and his name (his person) shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and upon his Kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgement and justice, from henceforth even for ever, the zeal of the Lord of Hosts WILL perform this. Isaiah 9:6-7*

I think I can say without fear of contradiction, that to any person who has taken time to study the realm of biblical predictions, it becomes glaringly obvious that there is a paramount thread that weaves its way through the prophetic words of the Bible. This thread is of such mammoth importance, that all others – no matter how spectacular – pale into lesser significance when compared to its magnificence. The subject of this magnificence is both the apex and centre of the Bible, ALWAYS!!!

The Bible tells us that because of certain actions, humanity (ourselves included) finds itself locked into a realm where, no matter what we do or what we might achieve, we all inevitably fulfil the first prophecy of the Bible – which is that we shall surely die. Because it happens to all who live on earth (and maybe because so many believe that we came from tadpoles), we generally seem to accept it without question, concluding that is just how it is. But that is not the case with God. He is repulsed by the finality of death and the futility of life. In our own strength we can do nothing to avert death, but the God of the Bible can, and did, and what he did is all connected to this golden thread that is so predominant in Bible prophecy.

As you would expect, God intervened and provided an escape from the finality of death; although accepting it is optional, his provision can be accessed by anybody. He has the perfect plan to redeem lost mankind. For this amazing and magnificent opportunity to exist, a massive price had to be paid; something – in this case *somebody* – perfect had to die on behalf of the impaired. The theme of God's plan is this golden thread of prophecy which runs through the Bible.

After the fall of Adam, God looked for an upright man with whom he could be a friend, whose offspring he would bless and increase. The man he chose approximately 4,000 years ago was Abraham. One of Abraham's grandsons was Jacob (whose name was changed to Israel), and it was Jacob's seed who became the children of Israel. Speaking through the prophets of the Old Testament, God made it very clear that out of this nation, an individual would be miraculously conceived at a specific place and time (Isaiah 7:14). This individual would carry out God's plan, making it possible for God to become the friend of every person who accepted his ineffable offer. And because of this special friendship, the recipients of this unspeakable benefit would bypass the sting of death and live forever. Sounds too good to be true, I fully agree, but that is the whole point of this book, that it can be proven FACTUALLY true – not by hope, not by wishful thinking – but by pure fact, which is as solid as a rock.

This portion of this book is devoted to this exceptional individual. The many prophecies (several hundred) that speak of him assist us in understanding his person. But in all honesty, I don't think anybody can fully appreciate the courage and fortitude that was necessary for him to do what he did for mankind. He does have a genuine care for others, he is selfless, his loving kindness is beyond what we know of love. His desire to make a person whole, (mind, body, and soul) is limitless, he works miracles for people, he can enrich anybody or anything, as he did when he turned the water into wine. He is the ultimate in being a true ally, a loyal friend and he is a champion for his people. He cannot lie and cannot fail you, he is the Saviour of man, he is Jesus the Christ, magnificence personified.

To bring this person into true perspective we should consider the prophecy of Daniel (Chapter 2) which speaks of the empires of this world from the time of Babylon until today. It tells us that all the efforts and achievements of mankind from the beginning of time will become as

chaff on the summer threshing floor – it will just be blown away, gone forever. However, this special person, who laid down his precious life for us, will establish a kingdom which shall never ever end. Let us learn about him because there is nothing better. He himself said: “Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you [TRUE] rest; Take my yoke upon you and LEARN of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest for your souls, for my yoke is easy and my burden is light”. He loves man beyond what our minds allow us to comprehend, yearning for our well-being through everything. He promises to neutralise the sting of death and then share the glory that only God can give, and it will be forever.

Basically, from the fall of Adam, the concern of God has been to redeem man out of the futility of life and the dreaded, but certain, result of death. Initially the comments and prophecies about this person were not so clear. But as time unfolded, we were able to understand a little more of what was to come; it wasn't too long before the prophets spoke with even more precision and specificity. It is these prophecies which have allowed us to identify this person with certainty, assisting us with comprehending the enormity of what is at stake. It is not an overstatement to say that of all knowledge we can accumulate as we live our days on earth, there is nothing more important to establish than whether these prophecies are either fiction or fact. The only catch is that we must be honest while assessing – which can definitely be a challenge for our pre-conditioned minds.

The Bible tells us that this person will be born of a woman, that he would be a male from the seed (offspring) of Abraham, and that he would eventually become a blessing for the whole world – which is a good start. The prophet Micah is recorded as saying his birth will occur in a specific place – that being Bethlehem – which historians say was a small town of only 400 or so people. This prophecy was given around 710 BC. Matthew 2:1 tells us this happened as it was written, 710 years later.

In Isaiah 9:1-2 we are told this person would be found in Galilee, and Matthew 4:12 confirms this. The prophecy by Isaiah was given in 740 BC.

Isaiah 40:3 spoke of a predecessor who would pave the way for this person who was born in Bethlehem. The predecessor was John the Baptist who was the man who baptised Jesus in the Jordan river. The date of Isaiah's prophecy was 740 BC and Matthew 11:10 confirms John's role.

Isaiah 35:1-7 (713 BC) speaks of what appears to be a quite miraculous transformation. This transformation happened many times as Jesus preached the truth of life faithfully, and is endorsed continually in the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The wilderness and parched places are more than likely a reference to lost people rather than literal land. Isaiah talks about eyes and ears being opened which Jesus did (and still does), both physically and spiritually.

Even with that small group of scriptures, there is only one person who they could possibly be referring to. But there are over 200 specific prophecies relating to this person's (first) appearance on earth. Neither time or space is available to address each scripture and its corresponding confirmation, but I will select some that will hopefully be helpful.

Psalms 78:2 says this person shall teach with parables and Matthew 13:34 says that is exactly what Jesus did. In Malachi we are told that this person, who is referred to as Lord, will come to HIS temple and Matthew 21:12 tells us this is precisely what happened. We are also informed in Psalm 69:9 that he would be zealous, and zealous he was, as he made a whip and turned the tables of those trading in the temple upside down, driving them out, as described in John 2:15-17.

The ministry of Jesus only lasted for three and a half years, but what an amazing effect and influence those few years have had on mankind; no one even slightly compares. Besides all the miracles he performed and the awesome words he spoke (John 7:46 tells us that never a man spoke like this man), to this day, he still affects our lives. This is true even though we were born so many years later than Him.

Even more puzzling is the way people use his name to swear with. It is weird; I mean, why, out of all names given to a human being, would you swear using the name of the only one who claims to have beaten death? After Jesus's resurrection from death, the angel spoke to those who went to anoint his body, saying what may be the most important words a person can ever hear: “You seek Jesus of Nazareth. He is not here, HE IS RISEN”. For forty days after his resurrection, he was seen by people, sometimes seen by gatherings of 400 plus people, and yet we swear with his name! Why do people do this?

For the record, I do not play the slot machines that give a jackpot, but I have seen movies (and once was even present) where people hit the jackpot. Firstly, you hear a few coins hitting the metal money tray, then you hear more, then more again and maybe you even get to hear a squeal or scream as the tray gets to maximum load and the money starts to pour onto the floor...it all looks exciting. Well, it may not be the best example, but in a slightly weird way, it actually reminds me of Bible prophecy. And you say, how on earth can a slot machine remind anybody of Bible prophecy? Let me explain, please!!

OK, it's like this, or at least, it can be. One day you discover that a certain biblical prophecy literally came to pass, and it makes an impression – normally quite a minor impression. Then you check another prophecy and notice the same result...and then again and again. Firstly it is maybe something like Nineveh, then Babylon, then Tyre...not only does it just keep on going, the more prophecies you check, the more you marvel...then Daniel, then Christ, his birth, his wisdom, his life, then his betrayal, his rejection, his death, the resurrection, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the true gospel, the days before the return of Christ, his triumphant return, the setting up of his kingdom...it just pours out more and more, until you realise this can change your life, mega.

Point being, this is the jackpot of life; it may not initially blow your socks off, but as you get to grasp the enormity of what you are evaluating, you will realise it is all too much to contain. It is mind-blowing and then a whole lot more. The end result of understanding and accepting this is that you will be rich, in the purest sense of the word. Yes, you will know about Bible prophecy, yes, you will know the Bible is inspired, that God has a plan for salvation, that Christ died for you, that whoever you are, you can receive the Holy Spirit as the apostles did, and still heaps more. As I said, you will be rich.

What I have found very interesting is the number of Old Testament prophets who prophesied of the days from when Christ entered Jerusalem for the last time. It was the end of his ministry, and he fully knew it. He knew the Old Testament scriptures well, he knew about the betrayal by a friend, he knew he would be abandoned by his followers, he knew those who praised him as he entered Jerusalem would be the same people screaming, "Crucify him!" only a few days later. He knew there would be

false witnesses, that he would suffer whippings, the crucifixion...but he still did it.

Jesus was – and still is – amazing.



A depiction of Christ in the wilderness before he started his earthly ministry - the salvation of the world - by the Russian painter Ivan Kramskoi in 1872



## 6

**The Sixty Days That Mean Everything**

*For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that you, through his poverty might be rich. 2 Corinthians 8:9*

There is a sixty-day period in the Bible, where even the word “astounding” is pathetically insufficient to describe what took place. It is the time in which Jesus travelled from Bethany to Jerusalem, including his last hours with his disciples, his betrayal, his death, his resurrection, the days post-resurrection, his ascension, and then his sending of the great Holy Spirit of God which was received by the apostles on the day of Pentecost. This period is by far the most prophesied about in the Bible, it is the time where the bulk of Bible prophecy was fulfilled, the time where God’s desire to redeem a person from futility to abundant life came to pass. Everybody who lives should be fully aware of the events that took place during this time and the massive ramifications for every person, whether you believe or whether you don’t.

I will endeavour to be chronologically accurate, but the issue isn’t so much the exact timing as it is whether these events did actually happen. This is especially true of the events that took place over the three days after the last supper – and if they did happen, what bearing do they have on our lives?

**The first 30 days**

As Jesus was nearing Jerusalem, he firstly ascended the Mount of Olives to a place called Bethany. It was there where Mary, Martha, and

Lazarus lived. (Yes, the one who was raised from the dead four days after he had died.)

It appears that it was during this time that Mary took one pound of precious ointment of spikenard (the approximate modern-day equivalent being \$60,000), and anointed the feet of Jesus, which was something no one else did. (John 12:1–8) Virtually everybody who made contact with Jesus wanted something from him (not so much a criticism as an observation), but Mary seems to have realised something which many others didn’t. She realised that she could actually give something back, and not just give back, but give back with a thankful and selfless attitude. It appears Mary joined the dots. Now that Lazarus her brother was alive again, she must have been more attentive than others when Jesus spoke of his being put to



A depiction of the Last Supper by a famous Flemish sculptor, Willem van den Broecke, in 1560

death and rising from the dead three days later. But whatever it was that bought her to this point, she got it; she saw the big picture and she just marvelled. Good on you, Mary. I look forward to meeting you at the return of the Lord – you are an impressive person. Jesus rejoiced in what Mary did; we do well when we realise that we can do the same.

When the time came to leave Bethany for Jerusalem, Jesus instructed two disciples to go into the village and find a donkey foal and bring it



Jesus praying in the Garden of Gethsemane – a wood engraving by the French artist, Gustave Doré in 1886

back. They did just that – found it, talked with the owner, and brought it back to Jesus. Jesus rode on the foal, fulfilling what Zechariah (Zechariah 9:9) had spoken almost 500 years before. During the trek towards Jerusalem, they got to a point where the city could be viewed. He wept because the potential of the city was not realised. The Bible refers to those who believe the gospel as “New Jerusalem”. Realising the potential of what we now are (since being born again) is a source of great joy

for the Creator of the universe. Please don't forget that.

Once Jesus had entered the city, he got into action. Firstly, he sorted out the people who had turned the temple of God into a place of traders and money changers. He made a whip and went about turning their tables upside down and said what they needed to hear – which was in simplified terms: HOW DARE YOU BE SO ARROGANT! Good on him. As always, he ministered to the people, the common people. At the same time, the religious leaders felt threatened (as you will when you uphold a powerless, empty, religious dogma), so they sought to kill him. It was during this week that they agreed upon certain terms with Judas – that he would betray the person (Jesus) who had befriended him. Jesus spoke more parables to the people and in Matthew 23, let rip on the pharisees. He knew what they were up to and told them they were hypocrites. As he always was during

his ministry, he continued to be in these final days; he was honest, some might say brutally honest, but he was honest.

Then came the time for the last supper, the bread and grape juice. He said that they should remember what he was going to do for them – and for any other person with the courage to embrace the abundant life that Jesus would make available because of his death. It was at this supper that Jesus washed the feet of the disciples (John 13:1); he loved them to the end. This is our saviour – amazing!!

He then walked with the disciples towards Gethsemane, which means “oil-press”. Knowing fully what awaited him there, he refused to let it consume his mind; there was no self-pity. He knew the time to talk with his friends, the disciples, was limited, so he gave all he could give. Chapters 14 to 17 in the book of John record these most incredible words. He just let it flow – the importance of the Holy Spirit, how to love God the way he has requested to be loved, by honouring and following him. The best advice any person will ever hear.

As they were arriving at Gethsemane, or maybe just before, Jesus told the disciples that they would all be offended by him because (as he said), it is written, “I will smite the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered” (Zechariah 13:7). Peter was adamant there was no way that he would be scattered, but as is always the case, if it is written, it cannot be stopped – as Peter was soon to find out. He denied the Lord three times, exactly the number that Jesus predicted he would. Even the rooster crowed the exact number of times that Jesus predicted.

Before Peter's denial, Jesus had asked Peter to especially come to be with him along with James and John. The Bible states that Jesus was “sore amazed” and very heavy. He went forward a little and began praying, asking if it be possible that this situation could be averted. But this could not happen because we needed someone perfect to die for us, and Jesus was determined not to fail us. At this time, we are told that Jesus sweat blood, such was his anguish. After this, he was strengthened by an angel, all incredible happenings. Guess who fell asleep during this incredible time – yep, Peter, James, and John.

It appears that it was only a very short time later that Judas arrived with the religious leaders, and he betrayed Jesus with a kiss. Jesus was

taken captive and as Zechariah said those many years ago, they who were with Jesus all fled (Mark 14:50).

Jesus had mentioned at the last supper that his betrayer was at that table (Luke 22:21). For that reason alone, you would think Judas would have reassessed, but he didn't. For whatever reason, he continued. Maybe it was that he did not want to embarrass himself before the religious leaders, maybe it was the money, or maybe he was plain dumb. This event of Jesus's betrayal by Judas is addressed in Bible prophecy (written by David close to 1,000 years earlier) where it says that he would be betrayed by a friend (Psalm 41:9).



The famous *Remorse of Judas*, by the English painter, Edward Armitage (1866). Judas, having betrayed Jesus for a fee of 30 pieces of silver later tried to return the money to the Jewish religious leaders. They weren't interested

The amount of money Judas received for the betrayal was spoken of by Zechariah (487 BC) – the infamous thirty pieces of silver. We are also told that the money was cast on the floor, and it was used to buy a potter's field (Zechariah 11:12–13). This is explicit detail for something that happened over 500 years later! Yet Matthew confirmed it was Judas, the payment to him was 30 pieces of silver, that money was cast to the ground, and more

to the point, it was in the temple, and the money was used to purchase the potter's field (see Matthew 27:3–10).

Then Jesus was condemned by the High Priest, which was prophesied in Psalm 35:11 and confirmed in Matthew 26:59–60. He was oppressed, afflicted, and did not speak, as Isaiah 53:7 states. The confirmation of this is given by Matthew in chapter 27:12. The following morning the priests took counsel against Jesus, then bound him (pure madness) before taking him to Pontius Pilate, who actually concluded that Jesus was innocent. But the pressurizing of the chief priests and the gullibility of the people were enough to get the whole city crying out, "Crucify him, crucify him!" (Luke 23:21). The people were fulfilling what is written in Ecclesiastes 9:3, the thing Solomon called evil, the madness that is in the hearts of people who live outside the life (which Jesus called abundant) that God desires to give every person.

"How mad is this madness?" one might ask.

Well, the whole city came out and demanded that Jesus lose his life. These were the same people of the city who rejoiced at his entrance on a donkey foal, these were the people of the city that he wept over, and all within the previous two days. Solomon was right; there is an evil in the heart of man, and when it rears its ugly, arrogant head, it is pure illogical madness.

Even though Pilate himself said that he saw no fault in Jesus, being a man-pleaser type (which is a sign of the madness), Mark 15:15 informs us that he had Jesus whipped, or scourged as the King James version of the Bible states. Isaiah 53:5, the great crucifixion chapter of Isaiah (spoken around 712 BC), tells us those stripes, or whippings or scourging, were for us. Those whippings provide healing for us, they neutralise madness of mind, heal our body and refresh our souls. These great promises are yea and amen for every single person who treasures God's Word.

By this time, Jesus had sweat blood, had no doubt been pushed around by some and had been scourged (whipped). I can't help but wonder if he was completely covered in blood. Psalm 22, (the other great Old Testament account of the crucifixion), does state in verse 6 that the person being slaughtered looked like a WORM. I tend to think this is the most likely case, considering the blood he had sweat and the pulverising of his back (for us).



Jesus was then taken to Herod, the overseeing ruler of the Jews. Apparently, Herod was pleased to see Jesus and hoped he might perform a miracle for him. He questioned Jesus, but Jesus answered him nothing (Luke 23:9). At this stage, we are told the chief priests had progressed from fierce (Luke 23:5) to vehemently accusing him (sounds like that madness again). This seemed to embolden Herod, who with his men of war, took the opportunity to mock Jesus even more. They clothed him in a purple robe which symbolised royalty, and mockingly even gave him a crown made of thorns. Must have been a really fun day for them all. Madness was on a roll, and they didn't know where to stop. In Isaiah 50:6 (written 712 BC), it was prophesied that he did not cover his face from their humiliation and spitting. Matthew 26:67 confirms this clearly, stating they spat in his face, they beat him with their fists, and they slapped him, with still not one word of opposition from anybody. Psalm 22:7–8 prophesied about people sneering at him and verbally mocking him. In Matthew 27:31 it states that after the mocking, they removed the robe that was intended as pure mockery, put his garments back on him and led him away to be crucified. To top it all off, after despising each other intensely for a long while, Herod and Pilate became friends that day. A unifying time without a doubt.

Jesus was then led to Calvary to be crucified, and not one person, disciple or beneficiary of his grace spoke up, no, not one. What a disgrace and what an indictment on man. Where was Peter? He had walked on water when Jesus did and he had seen Jesus transfigured on the mountain. Where was Lazarus? Where was Mary? Where was the blind man or the cripple? They were scattered as had been prophesied; they stood afar off as Psalm 33:11 said they would, and Luke 23:49 verified.

This was the event that was spoken of in Daniel 2:44. In approximately 600 BC, Daniel had prophesied that in the time of the Roman Empire, God would set up a kingdom that would never be destroyed – may I emphasize the word never – and here it was, unfolding before their very eyes. Jesus was denied, betrayed, forsaken, falsely accused, whipped, mocked, and despised without a cause, all exactly as it was prophesied about in the scriptures. He still refused to give up on our need for an escape from futility of life, and he did all this without one friend present to encourage him. What a champion, what a friend, what a saviour and in every sense

the only person who is 100 percent worthy to be the King of kings and the Head of a kingdom without end.

Psalm 109:24–25 (written about 900 BC) helps us to grasp the dauntless fortitude he showed on his way to Calvary, at this special time for all of mankind – not for him, but literally for us. Thank you so very, very much, our one true, unfailing friend. We are told that he was weak from the mocking actions that had preceded this time, the whippings, the fist-punches, the crown of thorns etc. We sometimes forget he hadn't eaten from the time of the Last Supper, yet he did not buckle. From his mocking, he went out alone and a reproach to everyone, but he kept going.

Luke 23:26 tells us he was so weak he couldn't even carry his cross. A man called Simon from Cyrene (who we know very little about) was coerced to carry the cross, walking behind Jesus – most likely the greatest privileged service ever performed by a human being. I hope God blessed him mightily for this, blessed him in the true sense of the word, blessed him with a revelation of Christ being the Saviour of all, the only true restorer of your soul. I hope he heard somewhere a few days later that the man whose cross he carried was risen from the dead; I hope he was near the disciples when Jesus instructed them to not depart from Jerusalem until they were baptised in the Holy Spirit, and that he stayed around that week or so. I hope that he was one of the 120 who were filled with the Holy Spirit of God on the day of Pentecost (Acts 1, 2), and I hope he kept the faith to the end, that he didn't buckle or compromise. And last, but definitely not least, I hope his name is read out from the Book of Life and that he is beckoned into the Kingdom that never, ever ends... winning.

Sorry about that digression...now back to this horror show.

They got to Calvary and nailed Jesus to a stake or cross (it does say that the Cyrenian carried a cross) but the issue is not whether it was a stake or cross. It is that Jesus had mega-nails hammered through his hands and his feet, as is recorded in Psalms 22:16. If that isn't proof enough, Zechariah 12:10 (written 500 years before it occurred) again literally predicts that he was pierced; it states that some people mourned for him. I wonder whether those who mourned included those outside of this world. I wouldn't be surprised if there was another group who mourned. The heavenly host would have marvelled at such determination to make a way of escape for mankind, and although I definitely don't grasp the reality, I think

Zechariah wanted us to somehow understand that the Father of Jesus, God himself, mourned in true bitterness for his firstborn Son...

Isaiah 53:12 speaks of him being numbered with the transgressors. In Matthew 27:38, it is recorded that criminals were crucified alongside Jesus, one on his left and one on his right – this is clear and is reasonably well known. But did you know that Isaiah 53:12 prophesied that he made intercession for them? The people who crucified Jesus – or who were complicit in his slaughter – were transgressors also. In regards to the two crucified with Jesus, Mark 15:32 clearly states that they were with him, reviling him. To one of the thieves Jesus said, “Today you will be with me in Paradise,” and I have talked to many people who quote that thief as an example of why you don’t need to “repent and be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and the the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). Whatever happens in the future regarding the thieves is God’s call, but as there is so much at stake with our personal salvation, it is always better to be safe than sorry.

### More fulfilled prophecies

There are many more prophecies fulfilled by the incredible death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, but the point of this book is not to make a person a Bible prophecy scholar.

I will list a few more specific prophecies because not only is it good to know that they exist, but the references will also be there for you to scrutinise. It could only be beneficial if you do so. The intent (as I have mentioned in other places), is that you grasp the miracle of it all, that you realise that the God of the Bible has chosen this means to reveal his existence to mankind (Isaiah 46:10). As with every prophecy, no matter how extreme it appears or how precise the detail, the conclusion is always: if it is written in the Bible, nothing can stop the event coming to pass. Even then, you don’t have to respond as the Bible encourages you to, it is your call. All I say is that it is smart to know for sure that this realm is rock-solid, provable fact and there is God, not a goof god, but a most amazing being who is manifested in Jesus the Christ.

The following are a few (of the many) other prophecies that were fulfilled. I will give the original prophecy, the date (generally accepted by

scholars) that each was recorded, and the New Testament confirmation of fulfilment.

- » Psalm 22:18 (approximately 1000 BC) *They part my garments among themselves and cast lots for my clothes...* Fulfilled: John 19:24 *Let us not tear [his tunic] it but cast lots for it and whose it shall be.*
- » Psalm 69:21 (approximately 1000 BC) *They gave me gall for my food and in my thirst, they gave me vinegar to drink ...* Fulfilled: Matthew 27:34 *They gave him vinegar to drink, mingled with gall and when he had tasted thereof, he did not drink.*
- » Psalm 38:11 (approximately 1000 BC) *My loved ones and my friends stand afar off from my plague and my relations also ...* Fulfilled: Luke 23:49 *...all his acquaintances and the women who followed him from Galilee stood at a distance, watching these things.*
- » Psalm 109:25 (approximately 1000 BC) *I also have become a reproach to them, when they see me, they wag their heads...* Fulfilled: Matthew 27:39 *... and those that were passing by hurling abuse at him and wagging their heads...*
- » Psalm 34:20 (approximately 1000 BC) *He keeps all his bones and not one is broken...* Fulfilled: John 19:33 *... but coming to Jesus the soldiers saw he was dead they did not break his legs (It was the normal procedure in a Roman crucifixion to break legs to be certain the crucified person had died.)*
- » Zechariah 12:10 (487 BC) *and they shall look on me whom they have pierced.* Fulfilled: John 19:34 *...but one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear.* Note: They didn’t break his legs (which was normal) because they could see he was dead, but he had a spear thrust into his side which was not normal. However, as the Spirit of God had prophesied through Zechariah, it was recorded, and as always, against all odds and the accepted norms for the time, it came to pass.
- » The prophecy from Amos 8:9 (over 800 years before the event) is also quite astounding because it is so unlikely that it could ever happen, let alone the coincidence of such precise timing being correct. Amos clearly made a crazy-ridiculous statement: God himself shall cause the sun to go down at noon [sixth hour] and make the earth dark in broad daylight. But again, it is recorded in Matthew 27:45 (over eight



centuries later) that at this exact time, for three hours, it was dark. It is worth noting what God spoke through Amos in the next verse: (from this time, after this happening) *I will turn your feasts into mourning and your song into lamentation* (sadness). This is as relevant today as it was then.

Without wanting to sound like Mr Negative, no matter how many good times we experience, we still surely die and take nothing with us. This is why Jesus endured all these attacks, so that we could sidestep the futility of life and have a purpose that is beyond description – not merely weak churchianity, but vibrant, purposeful, Holy Spirit filled, empowered, true (Book of Acts style) Christianity. Just sooo good.

» And lastly, as conclusion for this portion of the week of weeks, is the prophecy from the super-descriptive, but all-time beautiful Psalm 22, spoken by the man who slew Goliath. The first verse: “*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me*” records the identical last words spoken by Jesus before he died. These were recorded in Matthew 27:46 as well as Mark 15:34. It has certainly become a discussion point as to what Jesus was alluding to. Maybe he did speak those words to connect Psalm 22 and the crucifixion. My thought is more that Jesus literally bore the sin of mankind, and as a result, manifested sin’s great failing, which is to devalue God or willingly embrace a claim against God himself, or his Word.

At this time, Jesus also spoke the words of Psalm 31:5: “*Into thy hand I commend my spirit*” – which is recorded in Luke 23:46.

This second phase of this cosmically pivotal 60 days that mean everything, is unique because of the number of people who actually prophesied of the events fulfilled during this time. The Spirit of God moved upon many of the Old Testament heroes, the ones who God rejoiced over, and they prophesied something relating to specific happenings during this time.

Whether it was Job, Abraham, Moses, David, the prophets, or Jesus himself, they all got it pinpoint accurate. As a result, the God who created our beautiful earth and the 200 billion galaxies of our universe expects us to be affected by such wonderment. Anybody can ignore this and just walk away, but why, what would be the point? Some might say ignorance is

bliss, but they are wrong. True bliss satisfies and restores your soul, which is mega better. I go with: “*Cometh the hour, cometh the man*”. Be strong and courageous, in the true sense of the words. You may think I’m a goose for saying this, but I will say it anyway. If you sincerely check out this realm of fulfilled Bible prophecy with an honest heart, God will literally see your efforts, and he will reward them. The great God of the Bible doesn’t miss a beat. The Word of God informs us (and is very definite in doing so), that if we draw near to him, he WILL draw near to us. Also, whatever a man sows, that he shall also reap. In finishing the discussion of this second phase, I would like to contend with those people who say that God can do anything, as that is not true. He cannot (under any circumstances) lie – we do well to remember this.

*Be of good courage (Joshua type) and he will strengthen your heart.*  
Psalm 31:24

### The second 30 days

The exact date of Psalm 31:5. (just mentioned) is not certainly known, but it is quite likely over 1,000 years before the actual event. Some bystanders may have thought the exceptional days of Jesus’s three and a half years of wonder and amazement were all over and that life could start returning to normal again, but they were wrong – about as wrong as you ever could be. It wasn’t so much the end of what had been taking place, it was the beginning of something far superior; the gates of eternity were about to be opened for lost and deceived mankind.

Jesus, destroyed and completely forsaken, committed his Spirit to God (Luke 23:46) and then he died. How he endured such humiliation is impossible to fully grasp, but he did it, and more to the point, he did it for us. He was as determined as determined could ever be, and all for us. As it was written, he laid his life down for his friends. Thank you, Lord, so very much.

It appears that at the time of his death there was an earthquake, and simultaneously the curtain in the temple was ripped in half. The curtain was the barrier covering the room that is referred to as the “*Holy of Holies*” (God’s dwelling place), and it symbolically represents mankind being separated from the presence of God. The Babylonian Talmud said the curtain was 9 cm thick, and what is of even more interest is that it was

ripped from the top to bottom. In other words, it was not ripped by man, but by God. It very much reflected what the death of Christ was to achieve, a closeness between man and God, superior to anything there had been up until that point. It was superior to what Abraham had, to what Moses had, to what David had, and to what any Old Testament prophet had.

It seems that anybody who was crucified was destined for a wretched grave. The scripture states in Galatians 3:13, when speaking directly of Christ, that “cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree”; the Bible goes on to say that Jesus became a curse for US. Therefore, because Jesus had died in the place of cursed humanity, you would have expected that he would also have had an abject burial. But again (as so many times before), the exact opposite is prophesied. In this case, the prophet Isaiah said he would have his grave with the rich (Isaiah 53:9), and you have to wonder, how could this be? Thankfully Matthew noted that in the evening, a man named Joseph, a RICH man from Arimathea, went to Pilate and actually begged for the body of Jesus. (Matthew 27:57–60) It was given to him, and he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and then laid it in his own NEW tomb. Once again, the prophecy was fulfilled.

So, the body of Jesus was placed in a NEW tomb, owned by a rich man and Joseph rolled a great stone against the sepulchre door. You would think that killing Jesus would have been enough damage done by the religious pharisee twits, but no, it wasn't. They were concerned that the followers of this crucified man (who the Pharisees had the audacity to call a deceiver), would take the body away and then claim that he had risen from the dead. Jesus had literally said that he would be raised from the dead – he even said it would happen on the third day. No worries for the Pharisees though; Pilate allowed them to do what they thought necessary to prevent such an unfortunate event. They sealed the rock (Matthew 27:66) and secured it; they even had Roman soldiers guard it, keeping watch, just in case there was any foul play.

That kind of security would have been more than adequate under normal circumstances, but as we are learning, normality doesn't apply when God's Word has already been spoken. The Pharisees didn't get it because nobody gets it if they choose to embrace powerless religion or the ideals of lost mankind. It is an unwritten law that cannot be broken.

As you most likely have guessed, the most amazing day arrived and the stone that had been sealed was rolled back from the entrance of the rich man's tomb. As luck would have it, the individual who moved the great stone decided to sit on it (Matthew 28:1–7). The people guarding the tomb literally saw the individual who moved the sealed rock and were scared, maybe even petrified, because the recorded account tells us that they shook and became as dead men. This was most likely because the countenance of this person (we are told), was as lightning. Thankfully, Matthew informs us that the person was an angel, and in my humble opinion, it is always best that you don't mess with an angel.

Early, on the morning of the third day, three ladies approached the tomb to anoint the body of Jesus. These were Mary Magdalene, Salome, and Mary the mother of James and Joses. It appears that Mary Magdalene went away to tell the disciples that the great stone had been rolled away, while the other Mary drew nearer to the tomb, looked in and saw an angel. The angel spoke to these women with the most wonderful words ever spoken to a human being: “*HE IS RISEN*”.

There is a great parallel here for all of us to realise. If you really want to know the Lord you will be on the receiving end of more blessing than you can contain. Jesus describes the blessing he offers as “pressed down, shaken together and running over”. His blessings include such promises as healing, mind renewal, knowing the truth of life, strengthening by the Holy Spirit, protection through death, being presented faultless before the presence of his eternal glory, and the blessing of living forever. You must read Ephesians 3:14–21. This is big time: “Now unto him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above ALL that we may ask or think, according to the POWER that worketh in us”. Jesus himself said, “You shall receive POWER after that the Holy Ghost has come upon you” (Acts 1:8). That power came on them when they received the Spirit on the day of Pentecost only days later. You can read of this moment in Acts 2:4, and this experience is still available to anybody, anywhere today.

During the time of the ministry of Jesus (from his baptism until his crucifixion), Jesus did say that those who followed him would soon be able to perform the works that Jesus himself did, and even greater works.

So, we have to ask, what could the greater works be? When we look at the book of Acts, the post-resurrection book, we see one tremendous

miracle happening that Jesus never performed. This miracle was greater than any miracle that he performed. It was the miracle of people being baptised (or filled) with the Holy Spirit. Jesus could not do this during his ministry time on earth, because the price of the death of a perfect man had yet to be paid. Jesus specifically told the disciples that he had to go to the Father after the resurrection and he would send the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, “Whosoever receives him who I send, receives me”(John 13:20). You cannot receive Christ without receiving the Holy Spirit, who he sent. This is the greater work; anybody claiming to represent Christ must not in any way reject the Holy Spirit? (A slight, but very important digression.)

But now back to that wonderful day, the day the angel moved the great stone. Amidst all the commotion around the tomb, it seems Peter and John were the first of the disciples to arrive. They looked in and then left. At that point, no-one had seen the RISEN Christ, but the moment was very near. Mary Magdalene returned to the tomb weeping. It would have been an extremely emotional time and I would imagine her mind was perplexed. Then she saw the two angels, and I’m guessing if her mind wasn’t perplexed before, it definitely would have been after seeing the angels! They spoke to her and asked her why she was weeping. She politely answered: “Because they (assume the Romans or the Pharisees) have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him”. After this, she turned and saw Jesus, but did not recognize him. Just when you would think she could bear no more, it happened.

He who never buckled, who completed what had to be done, he who got mocked and slaughtered in a manner we can never fully relate to, the person who walked on water, stilled the storm, raised Lazarus and so, so much more, said to her (this was your great moment Mary): “Woman why weepest thou, whom seekest thou?”

Mary thought it was the gardener and said to Jesus: “Sir if thou hast taken him anywhere, tell me where and I will take him away” (as a dead body).

Then he said to her, “Mary”.

Finally recognizing him, she replied, “Master”.

She would have been in absolute awe! What a super-privileged person. This is a beautiful thing. I hope the Lord calls me by my first name, as he did to Mary, and I hope he does it to many others.

Firstly Mary, then the women she was with, then Peter...can you imagine the relief for Peter after his denial moments? That shows the CARE the Lord. Of all the people he could appear to, he went to Peter, I would say because Peter would have been hurting really badly. He then walked with the disciples who were on the road to Emmaus and then mixed with all the disciples. WHAT A DAY!!!

There are not many direct prophecies of the days after the resurrection, but the things that Jesus had predicted would happen to him, certainly happened. He said he would be betrayed, he said he would be taken by the authorities, he said he would be crucified, and he said (recorded in all four gospels) that as Jonah was three days in the whale, so he would be in the heart of the earth.

I think it is of interest that some people who knew Jesus before the resurrection had difficulty recognising him after the resurrection. I’m not sure why, but I do think it is of extreme importance that any New Testament, post-resurrection believer realise that the raised Christ is not the pre-crucifixion Christ. He was stronger, more forthright, more deliberate. He spoke boldly in Acts chapter 1, as he did at the end of Mark 16. If you dwell only on the pre-resurrection Jesus, you will be weaker than the person you are called to be.

Jesus was seen for forty days after his resurrection. After this, he went back to the Father and sent the Holy Spirit, who came on the day of Pentecost as is recorded in Acts 2. As Jesus told the disciples before his final departure, The POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT was now available. Peter, who had vehemently denied the Lord fifty days before, was empowered, and now boldly proclaimed that this was the fulfilment of the prophecy from Joel. When people asked him what they should do to align with God’s expectations, he said that they must repent, be baptised (as a believer, by full immersion), and then they would receive the Spirit as on this day. (This is also mentioned in Acts 10 and Acts 19).

Ezekiel 36 spoke of this and Zechariah 12 also. But it was Isaiah who gave definition and clarity to this. He said it for what it is, saying, “This is

THE REST and this is THE REFRESHING". In Acts 3:19 we are told that you receive Christ at the time of the refreshing. The apostle Paul identified the stammering lips and another tongue that Isaiah spoke of as the New Testament miracle of speaking in tongues. This is praying in the Spirit; it is the sword of your armour that is spoken of in Ephesians 6. It is the praying in the Holy Ghost (Jude 20) that builds YOU up in the MOST HOLY FAITH. This is the tongues that the apostle Paul said he spoke in more than them all (when writing to the Corinthian church). It is an identifier of the faithful who are mentioned in Philippians 3:3. This is very important.

From Pentecost to the end of the sixty days, the apostles took the gospel out to the world. The healing of the man in Acts 3 typified the miraculous realm the disciples (and many others) had entered into. This was Mark 16:15 in action; God calls every believer to this power in their lives.

In closing off this section, there is a thought worthy of consideration. In the gospel of Luke 24:13–35, there is the account of Jesus meeting with the disciples on the road to Emmaus, after meeting with Peter. Initially they did not realise that it was Jesus who was with them as they discussed the events that had taken place in Jerusalem in the last few days. Jesus basically rebuked them for not connecting the dots regarding what was spoken by the prophets of the Old Testament. Jesus said to them: "Ye fools and slow of heart to believe ALL that the prophets have spoken, ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory..."

The thought worth consideration is that part of the glory that awaited Christ was that his followers would finally KNOW and understand what the prophets spoke and have connected the prophecy and the fulfilment. I find it astounding how few people understand this realm of prophetic fulfilment. Without wanting to sound extreme, when people claim allegiance to the gospel message, I honestly think we owe it to the Lord to be tuned into this topic. In fact, it is part of the glory that Christ purchased. We should be familiar with all the Old Testament scriptures that spoke of Christ's first coming and the ineffable success that it is. Remember the fulfilment of prophecy is what God has chosen to prove his existence and his authority; it is a great, irrefutable confirmation that strengthens faith and resolve. Anybody who has even a simple knowledge of the Bible would know that God rejoices most over people who are strong for his cause, like Moses or Joshua or David and the like.

The same applies today – don't be weak or vague or a pushover for those who despise Christianity. There is a Creator who has intervened in the affairs of lost mankind. Whether we like it or whether we don't, this is the truth of life. You glorify Jesus when you take time out to explore these things; it is our opportunity to do something constructive, a form of thankfulness for what he has done for us. Everything to gain and nothing to lose. Winning!!! And we do well to remember the words spoken by Hosea (chapter 4:6) that reflect God's concern when he said: "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge". If it was good enough for Jesus to emphasise the prophetic scriptures concerning him, surely it is a good thing for us to know and take to heart the same.

That is half the thought, the other half is this. Luke 24:30 informs us that Jesus stayed with these disciples and as they had something to eat together, Jesus took bread, blessed it, and then gave it to them. Then we are told they finally (miraculously) recognized him. Earlier, during Christ's ministry, he broke bread with the disciples and when he did, in reference specifically to the bread, he said: "This is my body, broken for you. This do in remembrance of me" (1 Corinthians 11:24). The point I am hoping to make is that there (obviously) is enormous benefit in being aware of the intricacies of the Lord's death and what it means for us. There is nothing that enhances this heavenly goal of remembrance like exploring the prophecies related to this occasion.

Therefore, it makes perfect sense when we are told in Romans chapter 6 (verses 1–3), that as many as are baptised into Christ, are baptised into his death, and we are baptised into Christ by the Spirit. (1 Corinthinans 12–13). (I will explain about the baptism of the Holy Spirit in more detail later; at this point, I am only wanting to emphasise the importance of the Lord's death).

During my years of wanting to be found faithful to God's calling, I can say with absolute confidence that the only people I have seen walk away from the Lord are those who have begun to minimise the importance of his death. I can say just as confidently that those who have continued to love and follow the Lord have always grown in their awe of what Jesus accomplished in his death. I have seen no person press on in supporting God's standards without allowing the importance of his death to increase in their minds. It is just so very, very important.



## 7

**His Death for Our Life**

*For as many as are baptised into Christ, are baptised into his death.*  
Romans 6:1–3

If a person can be courageous enough (and I mean courageous in the true sense of the word), to honestly evaluate this realm of Bible prophecy, you will find you will be drawn into absolute wonderment – as the title of this book suggests. I personally am convinced that the implications of fulfilled Biblical prophecy are huge, whether you choose to believe – or not believe. To ignore such evidence makes no sense, in my view, while a simple, common-sense appraisal is quite harmless. My introduction to Bible prophecy was not so much a manifestation of courage as it was the manifestation of a vague curiosity regarding something I knew nothing about. It was only as I considered the odds of these predictions becoming reality that I started to take notice. And it wasn't so much about events that took place; it was about the fact that the Bible could be proven to be inspired by a divine being who is not bound by time.

In Zechariah 4:10, it is suggested that it is unwise to despise the day of small things (beginnings). As we know, often things that seem minor can morph into something very influential in our lives, including things like relationships, jobs, ideals and suchlike. That is how Bible prophecy has been for me. As I decided to not ignore it, it has grown to what it now is. Firstly, it was prophecies about certain specific events – the rise or fall of countries and/or empires – the fulfilment of which I found quite astounding. If it

finished there it would be more than adequate to demand our attention, but it doesn't. Instead, it moves into another level which makes every prophecy in the Bible pale into insignificance – the level where God became man so that he might die on behalf of his lost creation (mankind). The same mankind that he had created in his own image.

There are no words that can even touch the enormity of what I am alluding to. The eternal power that made all things on the earth (as well as 200 billion galaxies), this supreme being, became a man. He would go on to fulfil all prophecies given by the Old Testament prophets, providing a miraculous means for us to live lives of massive importance, lives in which we can connect with pure truth that literally delivers a soul from death. I mean, seriously, how can this be? I have no real idea, but luckily it doesn't depend on whether I, or anybody else for that matter, get it. What matters is: is it true and can it be proven? And the answer is an emphatic “yes”. The most emphatic yes there ever can be.

The Apostle Paul spoke of the concept of the Trinity as a mystery, so I have no trouble suggesting likewise. Whether we fully understand it or not is not essential. But what we all should acknowledge is that 2 Corinthians 5:19 tells us that God was in Christ just as the Holy Spirit was (which Jesus received when baptised by John), and therefore it makes sense that all three entities were present at the crucifixion. Bible prophecy of events is one dimension; this is something far more exalted, this is true wonderment in its purest form.

**Personal implications of the death of Jesus**

What follows is a simple list that will help us understand how this New Testament salvation is beyond spectacular, and how privileged any person is who becomes a partaker of the divine inheritance that the Bible talks about (Colossians 1:12–14).

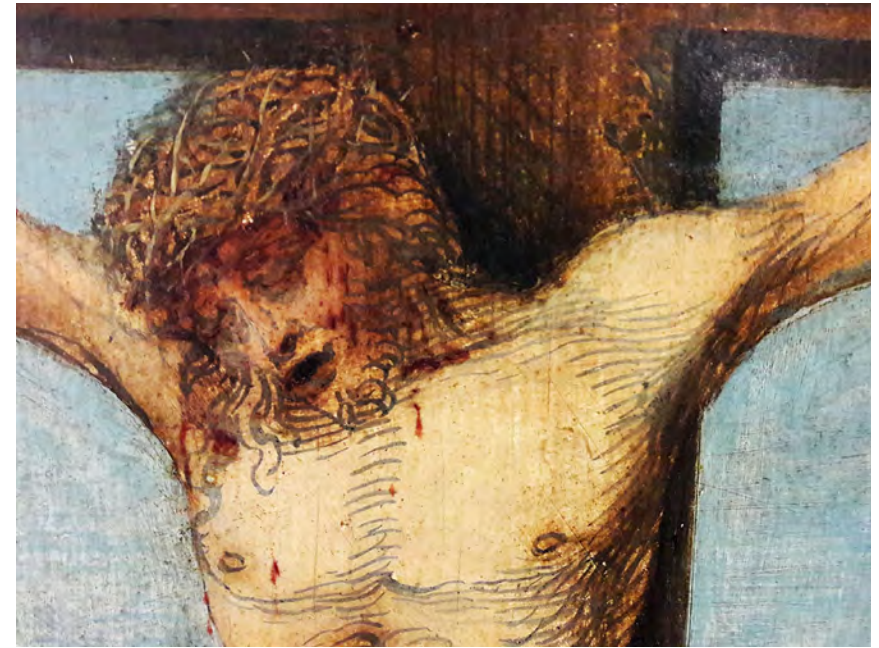
This is the salvation that the prophets spoke of, the one that angels desire to look into, the one where a mere mortal can be given the eternal Holy Spirit as a permanent gift (1 Peter 1:10–12). This is the great salvation of (Hebrews 2). It reminds me of a time in the Star Trek series when Spock said to Captain Jim, “This is life, Jim, but not as we know it”. What Christ's death has given us is life, but it is God's version of life, which is far superior to what we have as we live out our days on planet Earth.



This chapter is intended to encourage as many people as possible to realise just how complete the Lord's death was on that day. There is nothing of any consequence that was left out; death is conquered and so is anything our lost world throws at us. If you accept the offer to stand with God's Word in its entirety, rejoice greatly little flock, because the God who cannot lie has said he will never leave you or forsake you. FOREVER!!

The following list shows the devotion of Jesus towards those he loves (us), and how complete his death was, so that we might never, ever be conquered by death.

- » The disciples slept (Luke 22) as he agonised in the garden of Gethsemane, so that he might never sleep when we need divine assistance.
- » He was betrayed by a kiss (which should have been an expression of love), that he might never betray us. It also enables us to realise we can access mental fortitude so we might never forsake him. The scripture says he cannot deny himself. If there is ever a separation between us and God, it is our doing, even if we do it with a kiss.
- » He was abandoned by Peter, who vehemently denied him – that he might never abandon us. No matter what the circumstances are that are haggling our brain cells, the Lord has it sorted. It is written in Romans 8, that ALL works out for good for those who love God (agape love) and are called according to his purpose. In the same chapter, it later states that NOTHING can separate these people from God's commitment to them.
- » He was accused and condemned to die by false witnesses (Matthew 26:60), that we might be able to be his witnesses and live the eternal version of life (Acts 1). We are baptised by the Spirit into THE CHURCH where there is no condemnation for those who stand for God's truth.
- » He was scourged (whipped) that we might be healed (Isaiah 53:5), not so much for our sore toe, but more so for major things like healing a disturbed or corrupted mind, healing the broken spirit of a person, or healing a damaged soul. The issue is a meaningful, everlasting relationship with the ever-living God. But he will sort out the sore toe – and anything else – if they are that big of a drama.



Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. (Hebrews 12:2)

But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes [whippings] we are healed. (Isaiah 53:5)

Detail from *The Crucifixion* by a Dutch painter, Joos van Cleve, and a German painter Matthias Grünewald in the 16th century.

- » He was given a crown of thorns and had it thrust into his head. They were mocking him, and he allowed it; I sure am glad I wasn't one of those people who laughed at him. But, as always, there was purpose in him suffering such humiliation. The Bible informs us that we can now receive the crown of life. This alone is amazing, but even more amazing is that Jesus himself will actually give it to us. (Revelation 2:10) What a wonderful day that will be.
- » He had his cross carried to Calvary by Simon from Cyrene, so that as an act of appreciation, we might carry ours. The difference is that Jesus was weak and unable to carry his cross so that we might realise that we can (and should), carry our crosses with strength and joy. There is no greater privilege for a person who lives on planet Earth than to stand strong for the truth of life. The cross we carry was spoken of by Jesus in Mark 8:34. It is the one area we get to show our worth. We are to deny ourselves if needs be, not in the sense of living like a monk or a hermit, but rather, in the realm of what we think and mentally support. If God has set a standard, we should have the common sense to respectfully agree with him. But, as crazy as it sounds, our mind has trouble with accepting that he who is eternal, he who has made 200 billion galaxies, could, in a weird way, actually know better than us. Bizarre!!
- » As we all know, Jesus had his hands and feet nailed to the cross, not with little smooth, factory machined nails, but rather rough, grotesque 9-inch hunks of steel. He allowed such torture because we need as much help as we can get to do what God hopes we will do. His hands were minced that we might hold onto the plough of the gospel (Luke 9:62), that we might lay our hands on people so God may intervene to make them whole (Mark 16:15), or lay hands on people to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:17). His feet were nailed so we might walk in the Spirit (Romans 8:1), that we might run the race – and finish it (1 Corinthians 9:24). And let us never forget what Isaiah 52:7 says about the beauty of the feet of those who trust in him, who remind people that the God of Abraham is the mighty God of the Bible, the one who cannot fail.
- » Jesus was blindfolded (Luke 22:64) and they smote him. They even asked him to prophesy who it was who hit him. He endured all that,

so that we might see (grasp or comprehend), the amazing redemptive plan that God has for man. The apostle said he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision; Jesus was blindfolded that we all might get this vision. It is interesting that they asked Jesus to prophesy to them. At that time, he didn't because he has reserved that for those who search out the matter of prophecy to learn whether it is provable truth or myth. I tend to think you can confirm that you have heavenly vision by asking yourself if you concur fully with what Paul said in Ephesians 3:14: "For this cause (God's ETERNAL purpose) I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord, Jesus Christ...". As Peter said to Jesus: "Thou hast the Words of Life, where else can I go?" The heavenly vision is definitely a pearl of great price.

- » The Bible tells us that the life that we have in the flesh (our body), is in the blood (Leviticus 17:11) and therefore we do well to consider what happened when Jesus, very deliberately, laid down his life (blood) for his brethren. There were several occasions when Jesus bled. It appears that he sweat blood in Gethsemane; he was scourged/whipped by Herod's mob, he was punched in the face, his beard was pulled from his face, he bore a crown of thorns, and his hands and feet were nailed through. As if that wasn't enough, a spear was thrust into his side after he had been declared dead, and when blood and water spilled from his body, it was a complete giving of his life for us. We all need to understand that from when we were baptised by the Spirit INTO CHRIST, ALL the priceless cleansing benefits of the blood of Jesus Christ are available to us. Ephesians 1:7 says exactly that, stating that it is in Christ that we obtain redemption (from futility) and forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace. 2 Corinthians 8:9 informs us that Jesus was rich – in vision, faithfulness, and humility to the Word of God. But being selfless (and more), he was made poor (2 Corinthians 8:9) when he took on the sin of mankind at Calvary so that through his grace, we might be made spiritually rich.

That is the reason I think 1 Corinthians 12:13 is one of the most important verses of the Bible. We are baptised by the SPIRIT into the body of Christ. We must be in THE CHURCH, which is the body of Christ, the body that Jesus is the head and Saviour of. If you understand this, you have every right to claim that the God of heaven

and earth is blessing you mightily, and always remember that you are complete in Him. This is why Jesus told Nicodemus (John 3:1–3), that he must be Born Again.

- » Luke 23:11 tells us that the soldiers set Christ at nought, mocked him, and dressed him in a gorgeous purple robe. Mark 15:17 says that at the same time they hit him with a reed, spat upon him and mockingly worshipped him. Still, he bore it all, that we might be complete in him. They cast lots for his garments that we might understand something very important, that the spiritual clothing we are freely given when we are baptised into Christ might not be taken from us. We are clothed in robes of righteousness (Isaiah 61:10), we have garments of praise (Isaiah 61:3), we have zeal for a cloak (Isaiah 59:17). Don't trade them in for anything, they are WONDER clothes that prevent us being seen as naked. As John comments in the book of Revelation, you can't be lukewarm if you wear zeal for a cloak.

- » John 19:28–30 is the end of the crucifixion torture. The last words spoken by Jesus are recorded before he commended his Spirit to God. Amazingly, Jesus was conscious of all scriptures that were to be fulfilled by his death. Even when in agony, he realised there was still the one scripture still unfulfilled (Psalm 69:21), so he said: "I thirst". A person filled a sponge with vinegar, put it to his mouth and he received the vinegar. After this, he said, "It is finished", and he died. The reason he did this was to connect with the words he spoke in John 7:37 – "If anyone thirst, let them come to me, and I will give them living water to drink". These words are clarified; we are told that he was speaking about the Spirit – which those who believed in him would receive.

As we live our lives and inevitably get mesmerised by the world in one way or another, our soul thirsts for pure truth. Unfortunately, all the world can provide is the vinegar of futility. But when Jesus received the vinegar to his mouth, he initiated what was going to become the major issue of the New Testament – the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The last words that Jesus spoke to the disciples were the words where he commanded that they stay in Jerusalem until they receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 1). It records this happening in Act 2. This baptism is the living water (that Jesus talks about us receiving), whereby we shall never thirst again.

In closing this chapter, I can think of no better scripture than the great crucifixion chapter of Isaiah 53, especially verses 3-8. There is no sugar coating here, it tells it just how it was. Facts, but facts that we have no right to ignore. This torture was endured for us; as it says in Hebrews 12:2: "He endured the cross and despised the shame". But it wasn't the external attack that God saw on his son, but rather the indescribable tenacity of Jesus's mind and soul for this incredible cause. It literally states in Isaiah 53:10 that the offering of his soul was the offering for sin. Deep in his being, he refused to draw back from this resolve. I don't fully get this, in fact I don't think anyone does. But we should allow it to draw our attention from the world of futility to at the very least marvel at what he did. It does take a special kind of courage to evaluate this, but because of the death he suffered, this courage is now on tap. Ask sincerely and you shall receive graciously. It will help us with the greatest decision of our lives, period!!

Although I could write a book on this chapter alone, I won't, but will finish with a few thoughts about Isaiah 53.

- » Firstly, James commented in his book (James 53:4–5) that Jesus was somehow smitten by God on top of what man did to him. Smitten for our sakes. By his stripes (whippings) we are healed, mind, body, or soul. If you need healing (especially in the realms that are beyond man's capability), please realise that this is available to everybody with Doctor God, the perfect healer of any ailment. The seventh verse is worth some contemplation also, touching on the fact that Jesus basically kept quiet through the trial and crucifixion – no self-justification or suchlike. It states that he was as a lamb to the slaughter, as a sheep before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. So, what can be derived from this? Maybe Jesus did it so that that we might not be dumb ourselves. The Bible states that out of the heart the mouth speaks. We should speak of the great hope for mankind as much as it is possible. James commented that the tongue is like a rudder on a ship; it is only small but possesses major influence, it determines our direction in life, so therefore it is wise to speak of these amazing truths. Without wanting to be discouraging, it is dumb not to.
- » Finally, v8, we are told Jesus was "taken from prison and from judgement." The prison wasn't like jail. The Hebrew text helps us realise it was referring more to the mental space that Jesus was captive



to. He was taken from his joyful relationship with God to absolute mockery by fools. Judgement was stolen from him, BUT IT WILL NEVER BE STOLEN FROM US. Jesus had no choice but to die for us, but we do have choices. The Bible says in 1 Cor 2:13, that he who is spiritual judges all things. We are free to make right judgments about what we accept and uphold

Be smart as you walk with the Lord in this life, don't allow the heavenly vision to be diluted. Be strong in the Lord and the power of his might. He will never leave you or forsake you, as it is written in the book that is inspired by God. Remember, he cannot lie.

# 8

## The End Times Are NOW

The terminology of this chapter is speaking of the days that precede what many say is the ultimate prophecy of the Bible: the return of Jesus Christ. There are multitudes of prophecies that refer to the events that will take place regarding the return of Christ and the establishing of the Kingdom of God on earth. As with much prophecy, they can be awkward to envisage. But as is always the case, if it has been spoken, it will be fulfilled to the absolute letter. As Daniel said, prophetic fulfilment is certain and it is sure; it cannot and will not, under any circumstances, be stopped.

Something that I found helpful when considering prophecy is the comment made by Peter where he says that with the Lord, a day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as a day (2 Peter 3:8). This initially might not mean much, but when we read Revelation, we read that after the return of Christ, there will be 1,000 years of peace, the period which is referred to as the Millennium.

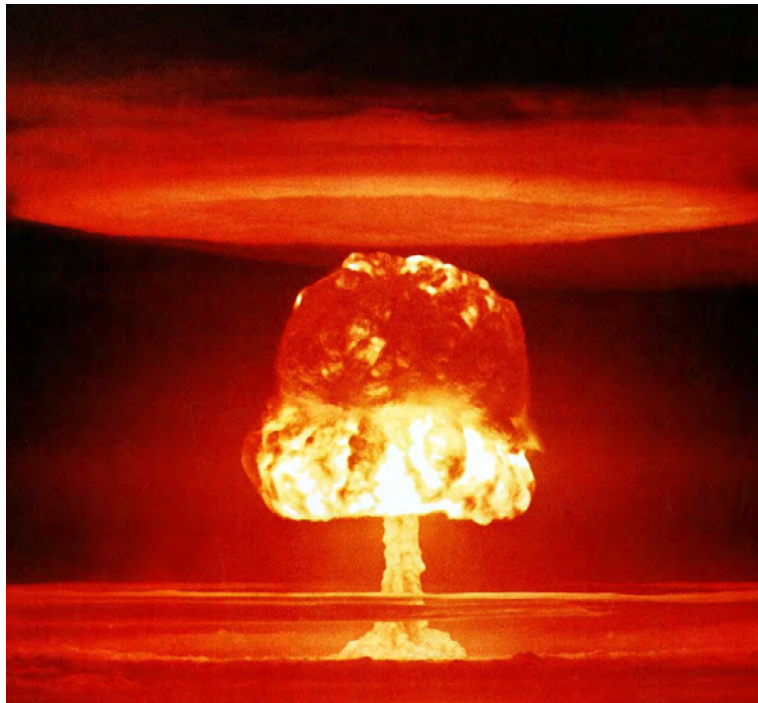
The Bible tells us that God created the heavens, the earth and everything in it in six days (not necessarily 24-hour days), and that he rested on the seventh day. So, for us rocket scientists, as the millennium is 1,000 years (or one day), it is reasonable to assume that God will deal with fallen mankind for 6,000 years (six days). We don't know exactly when man decided to partake of the (symbolic) tree of good and evil, but it definitely happened, and we are still living with the consequences today. Our lifestyles, our opinions, our preferences are all based around whether we see a thing as good or bad. After reading Hosea 6:1-2, it is reasonable to see the death of Jesus as having occurred 4,000 years from the fall of



mankind. Hosea states that there will be two days (2,000 years) where God revives us – this represents the gospel age from the Day of Pentecost. And on the third day he will raise us up (at his return) and we shall live in his sight (the millennium). Whaaaaattt !!!

Jesus is recorded speaking in detail of the last days, in both Matthew 24 and Luke 21. The way he talked then describes well the world we are living in now. In principle, Jesus addressed two realms which dominate this time, specifically the distressing current state of our world and also the lamentable condition of the true faith that saves a soul from death.

Addressing firstly the condition of our world, Jesus was brutally honest. He said the time would be perilous, so much so that men's hearts would be



Castle Romeo - the code name given to the first test of a thermonuclear bomb. It was deployed by the US in 1957. Could this be what is described in the following scripture: Zec 14:12, "And this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth.

failing them for fear of what was happening on the earth – from wars and commotions to distress of nations with perplexity (Luke 21). Luke records Jesus stating there would be great earthquakes, famines, pestilences, and fearful sights (like a nuclear bomb detonation maybe). There is reference to it being an awkward time for pregnant women, a time that distresses the people and causes wrath to increase...definitely not pleasant for many.

The times that we now live in are the end result of living 6000 years outside of God's advice, and what a mess it is. It is the end that Jeremiah spoke of, saying: "Cursed is the man who trusts in man". At this time in history, we have major political corruption virtually everywhere and a planet that is suffering because people cannot see the future effects of their actions. The culprit is always the same entity. It is not the individual, it is the heart (mind) of Man (see Jeremiah 17:9) – the same heart that justified the slaughter of God's perfect Son, the same heart that refuses to accept God's perfect standard, and dare I say it, the same thinking that all too easily accepts futility and lostness as being OK.

More of a concern – especially to our creator – is the masquerading and accepting of a counterfeit type of Christianity. Jesus specifically said many teachers would come in his name and deceive many. It seems that the deception will be embraced by people who could have and should have been much wiser.

Personally, I think the clue to the problem that Jesus expounded on is found in Matthew 24:12 which states: "Because lawlessness abounds, the love of many will wax cold". Naturally we gravitate towards acknowledging increased crime rates and suchlike, but I think it is alluding more to people who claim to worship God but have, in their hearts, pulled back from him. I say that because the word "love" here is the love that God gives a person.

In the original New Testament Greek text, the word describing the type of love that grows cold is *AGAPE* love. *Agape* love is the love that Jesus displayed; it is identified as being zealous too. When Jesus mentioned about the *agape* love waxing cold (the Greek meaning is, "to gently chill") he said in the next verse, that he who *ENDURES* shall be saved. To not allow *agape* love to chill can sometimes take endurance, but it is noticed by God and is a mighty attribute. It includes such things as aligning with the acts of the original New Testament Church, affirming the baptism of the Holy Spirit, treasuring Acts (Chapters 2, 10 & 19), rejoicing over the miraculous

signs of a believer listed in Mark 16, understanding what praying in the Spirit is (1 Corinthians 14:14) and not replacing the baptism of the Holy Spirit with a confession or the sinner's prayer. Endure because the reward is immeasurable.

After his resurrection, when Jesus met the disciples on the road to Emmaus, he rebuked them because they hadn't joined the dots about the recent events in Jerusalem. He said to them, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and entered into his glory" (Luke 24:26). His glory is that we should know Him, but it specifically says that these disciples didn't know him.

So, what did he do? Beginning with Moses and all the prophets (verse 27), Jesus expounded to these men all the scriptures, recounting things concerning himself. I think it is important that THE CHURCH people, true Christians, now realise that we are dealing with the crucified and risen Christ. The Lord wants us to be as David, not Saul.

All Bible words about the last days are prophecy, the most recent being almost 2,000 years ago. Some other last days prophecies were delivered more than 3,000 years ago. God's Word informs us that in the last days, the truth will be spoken of as evil (2 Peter 2:2), that there will be a departing from THE faith (1 Timothy 4:1-2), that there will be perilous times where men will love themselves. They will be boastful, proud, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, and there will be people who hold to a form of godliness but deny its power, i.e., the Holy Spirit (see Acts 1).

From such we are warned BY GOD to turn away (2 Timothy 3:1-7). Jesus warns that many will come in his name and deceive many (Matthew 24). There will be mockers (of the truth) and people will be sensual, following their own lusts (Jude 16-20). Zechariah 14:2 prophecies about major tensions around Jerusalem, and verse 14 gives a scary description of what could be nuclear war. Ezekiel 38 describes an alliance of nations that were the old names of Russia, Iran, Turkey, and others. All of these are happening before our very eyes. The return of Jesus could be very close. The advice Jesus gave when questioned about this age was to be ready (Luke 12:40).

Another point of interest is that when Jesus talked about the tensions in the world in Matthew 24, he didn't just say there would be certain tensions,

but emphasised that "you will HEAR" of them. I am not certain where he was leaning, but one of the great feats of our time is the speed with which we seem to hear about anything, especially if it is negative.

There is a lot of prophetic scripture about this period, and it is interesting if you take time to check it out. But it would be wrong for me to mention those events and not shine a light on what is much more important for us to know. In Daniel 2:28, Daniel told the King of Babylon that there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets and makes known to the king what shall be in the last days. Please read Daniel 2:31-35.

These things will happen, and they cannot be stopped.

# 9

## Surely This Cannot Be !

*Eye has not seen, nor has ear heard, neither has entered into the heart (mind) of man, the things which God HAS prepared for them that love him, but God has revealed them to us by his Spirit, for the Spirit searches all things, yea the deep things of God. 1 Corinthians 2:9-10*

Isn't it strange how this type of information eludes us? I mean, I was never averse to learning and expanding my horizons. I proved this by expanding my horizons in my late teenage years – the ones that eventually got me into strife. But for all my so-called expanding, I never once heard anybody mention the marvel of flawless Bible prophecy fulfilment. As 1 Corinthians 2:9 (above) says, it wasn't deliberate evasion by me, I just never knew anything of its existence.

I guess people just don't want to know. It was the same with Jesus in a sense, he stilled storms, walked on water, raised the dead, and the end result was THE WHOLE CITY came out and yelled, "Crucify him...crucify him"! The point I am wanting to make is that in this realm of assessing God, his truth and even eternity, we do need assistance. Without wanting to sound over the top, that is why Christ laid down his life and died for us. We can easily overrate our ability to evaluate properly when dealing with issues like these; it is through the death of Jesus that the Holy Spirit is now available to enable us to evaluate without bias.

That is why I have said in this book that we are not on a mission to turn people into scholars of Bible prophecy. It is good to know such a phenomenon exists, but the phenomenon exists for a reason, which is that

we realise (with certainty), that there is God. After that, it is to realise his Son Jesus was not just a coincidence in time, but every detail of his life was planned by God: where and when he was born, his life, his betrayal, his death, and resurrection, all of which were fulfilled exactly as they were written about. But it didn't finish there.

The purpose for all of these happening is that we (today) can now receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 2). We can now become partakers of God's eternal plan, adopted into the family of God by receiving the Spirit of adoption, made joint heirs with Christ (Romans 8). We will get to meet the Lord along with all others who perceived what God invited them into; we get to be part of something incredible. Along with others who have stood resolute against unfavourable odds, we will get to live in the dimension that is spoken of in Revelation 21:4: "And God (are you serious?) shall wipe away all tears from their eyes and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow or crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for former things are wiped away – and he that sat upon the throne said, 'Behold I make all things new'. And he (the King of Kings who died for us) said to John, 'Write, for these words are TRUE and faithful'". That is the purpose of this book – to assist as many as possible to enter this realm, which is unbelievable. BUT IT IS TRUE.

I fully go with the title of this chapter; there is just no way this could or should be, but nevertheless, it is. Just as 1,800 plus Biblical prophecies have already come to pass, so it is with anything God initiates; nobody can stop God's purposes. It is true, as Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes 3, that anything God does cannot be added to or taken away from, and it shall last forever.

To touch on something mentioned earlier in this chapter...God said these things will be revealed (will take root and grow in our minds) by the Spirit. We do need help if this miracle seed is to have its full potential realised. God doesn't want a Bonsai tree; he wants a fully grown masterpiece. As Jack (from "Jack and the Beanstalk") realized the potential of his magical seeds when the giant beanstalk sprouted from them, this potential can now be achieved in any person with Holy Spirit assistance.

After Jesus rose from the dead, he mixed with, talked with, and ate with people for forty days. After this, he was raised up to go home. He had completed that most horrendous task, he could not have done any better than he did. When the moment came for Jesus to speak the last words he

ever spoke to the disciples (in person), of everything he could have said, he told them to wait in Jerusalem for the promised Holy Spirit of God – not only to receive him, but to be empowered. Jesus had told the disciples earlier that the time would come when they would do the works he did and even greater works.

The greater works would be that the disciples (and ALL true believers) would be able to pray for people to receive the Holy Spirit, which was something Jesus never got to do. The Bible tells us that when you receive the Holy Spirit, which is synonymous with being baptised by the Holy Spirit (Acts, Chapters 2, 10 and 19), you are received into God’s family. At this point, death is 100% neutralised, and your name is written into the Book of Life and you – little earth-dwelling you, who are living out your three score and ten years – will live forever and ever. Isn’t that amazing, crazy-good? God thinks so, and so does the Holy Spirit.

When a person receives, or is baptised in the Holy Spirit, they receive a language to pray with. It is called speaking in tongues or praying in the Spirit, and it is the outward manifestation of receiving the Spirit. This miracle of the ages is mentioned in Isaiah 28 approximately 750 years before it occurred. The apostle Paul connected the stammering lips and “another tongue” of Isaiah 28 with the New Testament experience of speaking in tongues (1 Corinthians 14:14). Isaiah 28:11 informs us that this is THE REST and THE REFRESHING. This is the experience that Jesus strongly encouraged the disciples to have, and this is the rest that we are told to labour to enter. This is the refreshing of Acts 3:19; when we receive Christ, it is just so very important to understand this. As soon as this experience is accomplished in your life, God sees you as absolutely worthy to receive ALL that Jesus obtained by his death. After the baptism of the Holy Spirit, you are complete IN CHRIST. Being a Christian is realising how comprehensive this mammoth victory is, and with thanks, rejoicing in it. As a friend once told me, all the hard work is done; this is a lazy man’s religion, and in many ways that is correct.

There is a great work that the Holy Spirit desires to do for every person who receives him, and it is a work that only the Holy Spirit can do. This is the miracle which prevents a person’s Christian experience paralleling the dreaded Bonsai Tree dilemma. This great miracle is mentioned in Romans 5:5; it is the spreading of God’s love in our hearts. God’s love is

special, and totally different from human love. Although sometimes they may look similar, God’s love is what Jesus openly displayed through his life and his death so that people might notice its superiority when compared to man’s version of love.

This essential ingredient is that which is spoken about in 1 Corinthians 13. This *AGAPE* love is the weapon that literally guarantees success in God’s sight. It can be identified by the following traits. It exalts God and his truth first and always. It will be longsuffering towards his word and kind; it won’t envy alternatives. It will not vaunt itself against it, will not be proud towards it, will not behave in an unseemly way toward it, will not seek its own before it. It will not be easily provoked against it, will think no evil of it, will not rejoice in iniquity (the thoughts of man that oppose God) but will rejoice in the truth (God’s Word is truth). It will not be a coward when standing alongside it, because this type of love can bear all things (amazing). It believes all that God speaks, it hopes through everything, and please don’t ever forget this major-major attribute, (this is the perfect icing on the perfect cake), this NEVER, EVER fails – it is God’s *AGAPE* love. This is the key to eternity, this WONDER-LOVE which is shed abroad in our heart-mind, by the amazing Holy Spirit.

So, “what is *agape* love?”, you may – and should – ask. It is the type of love that God only can provide. It is not part of our natural being, but because of what Jesus obtained with his death, it is now available to any person. This version of love is God’s own, and it is this version that Romans 5 (mentioned earlier) speaks of, the love that is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. In John 7, Jesus speaks of it as the “living water”. It is critically important that anybody enquiring about the Bible knows and understands this.

We all should know that in the Greek language there is more than one Greek word for English word, “love”. In simple terms, the love that God gives is *agape* love; this is the type of love that Jesus displayed. The Bible states that God is love, and this refers to the unfailing, *agape* love. The love that we as humans manifest normally is what is termed as “*phileo*” love. This type of love is limited and under pressure, can buckle. It can be dominated all too easily by self-will and seems to have trouble grasping the enormity and certainty of God’s plan. We were created with *phileo* love in us; we can love friends, our dog, our passions, and it can be impressive. As



history reveals, it can be very committed to a cause and very courageous (which are great attributes), but it can also be irrational, illogical, and unreliable. For those reasons, God has provided a perfect love for those



Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed...

And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free

(John 8:31-32)



If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

(John 8:36)

upholding the full gospel. His perfect love, *agape* love, is this love, which he says can never fail.

I apologise if my explanation sounds a bit gobbledegook; it is not an easy topic to explain honestly without sounding offensive. Please don't think I am being dismissive of exceptional efforts, because I am not. What I am hoping to convey is that when it comes to upholding God's truth, *agape* love is necessary. I don't want to let anyone down who is genuinely seeking this strength in their being but is unaware of how to obtain it – or is even unaware that it is available. Even beyond this, I don't want to let the Lord down; He has done so much to make it available to us.

When Jesus was asked about the signs of the end of the world (Matthew 24), he did say that it would be a time when many would claim to represent him and that they would deceive many. The return of Christ does appear to be imminent, so this is a time to be circumspect and careful as to what we embrace. As I mentioned earlier, Jesus did speak of *AGAPE* Love in Matthew 24, saying that in this time (our time), people will allow *AGAPE* LOVE to wax cold. (Remember, the Greek meaning of this is to “gently chill”). Be wary of this; it is a sign of our time, it is yet another prophecy that must be fulfilled, and it appears as if it is being fulfilled before our eyes. Like all Biblical prophecy, it will be completely fulfilled.

In the Old Testament times, the Holy Spirit did empower people to become exceptional as we read on several different occasions. Sometimes it would be a miraculous event, sometimes it would be to prophesy about a future event. But the difference between these and the New Testament events is that Holy Spirit empowerment was not permanent. Hence people like David (who slew Goliath) asked that God not take the Holy Spirit from him. Because that is how it was, the Spirit came to empower for a certain time, but also left.

Now the situation has radically changed. Now when you receive the Holy Spirit, he will NEVER leave or forsake you, which is astounding in the extreme, but that is how it is. Peter wrote of this mind-boggling marvel in 1 Peter 1:9–12, stating that this New Testament salvation (which was announced by the Old Testament prophets and spoken of by Jesus Christ), the salvation which required the death of somebody perfect so that lost man could be awakened by a miracle that lasts forever – this amazing salvation is now fully available to all. Just to assist us to grasp how spectacular this

salvation is, Peter writes that even the angels in heaven desire to observe this realm where the eternal Holy Spirit of God has been sent from heaven to be received by lost mankind.

This is big-time (on steroids) times a zillion – and even that is a massive understatement.

As mentioned earlier, understanding prophecy fulfilment and possessing a knowledge of the Bible are both very commendable. But God wants those attributes combined with the Holy Spirit-inspired ingredient of *agape* love. Together they will generate the spiritual rocket fuel that will propel you into eternity.

In this New Testament period in which we are living, those with *agape* love and power being generated in their souls by the Holy Spirit should take deliberate time out to consider how marvellous this phenomenon is. We should honestly evaluate if the traits of the Spirit are abounding in us. The more obvious traits include things like upholding God's truths way above man's alternatives, rejoicing in all things Jesus-related, and to consciously repel opinions of lost man that contradict God's truth. We all should build up our MOST HOLY faith (as mentioned in Jude), praying in the Holy Ghost. Do this, and God will make sure the rest falls into place.

# 10

## There is a Tide

When I was in my teens, I somehow concluded that myself and anything Shakespeare were not going to connect – and that was what transpired. I had no interest whatsoever in Shakespeare and I was happy to keep it that way. For some reason I convinced myself this would be best for me. It was not based on any due diligence, it was just an assumption that for some unknown reason, I made.

Now, many years later I marvel at Shakespeare, not so much the man himself, but what he achieved with the English language. His skills are sublime, yet goofy me gave him the flick because of an assumption that proved how dumb I was. I didn't know he invented over 1,700 words, that he wrote at least two plays a year for twenty years, weaving history, comedy, and tragedy. They are all very good, but some, I would say, are incredible. He wrote over 150 poems, invented many sayings, some that we still use today, such as: "the skin of my teeth", "measure for measure", "all's well that ends well", and many more.

So, when it came to Shakespeare, I definitely threw the baby out with the bathwater. My reasoning was shaped by a mixture of laziness and ignorance (which are never a good team), and as a result, I missed out on knowing how brilliant he actually was.

I mention this because laziness and ignorance often team up in a person's mind when assessing Jesus Christ. All too often, we convince ourselves of something that kills our ability to enquire about him without bias. The Bible tells us that it is the glory of God to conceal a matter, and

it is the honour of kings to search it out. In God's sight, you are seen as a king if you will search out biblical truth. Don't allow society's bullying to defeat you and don't let dumb and dumber (laziness and ignorance) rob you of the pinnacle of this life. We should all know there is Almighty God, and we should all know the potential for our lives if we will embrace this knowledge.

This chapter title, "There is a tide", is a quote from one of Shakespeare's plays. It was spoken by Brutus in the play, "Julius Caesar", which was Shakespeare's shortest play. The sentence is from Act IV, Scene Three. It is as follows: "There is a tide in the affairs of men, which taken at the flood, leads to fortune; (but if) omitted, all the voyage of their life is bound in shallows and miseries". As is so typical of the Shakespeare's skilful writing, the application to real life is there for anyone to grasp.

The way I read this is that during our lives, certain opportunities will come our way, and the ability to grasp (or flow with) them is the key to success. It reminds me of Forrest Gump in the movie. When he bought the shares in Apple, he had no idea that buying those shares would make him a millionaire, but his timing was right, and he won big-time. In this life in which we find ourselves, there is a parallel. Sometimes an opportunity beckons us to true fortune, but it comes at a time of "flood". This implies that it occurs at an inopportune time, perhaps with an element of danger associated with it. In almost fifty years of encouraging people to turn to God, to be baptised and to receive the Holy Spirit, I do not recall a time where there was not some kind of inconvenience associated with the decision to mean business with the gospel. It is as though it is *always* flood time. To find God, you have to take a risk, to jump into floodwaters that might look threatening – nothing like the idyllic shallows of everyday life.

In my case, the ducks were definitely not in a row. I was completely absorbed with surfing for pleasure and competition, smoked and sold a lot of marijuana, fully enjoyed tripping on LSD, swore in every sentence, was starting to drink alcohol often, and enjoyed partying. My only visit to a church in the previous five years was when a couple of friends and I went there to be disruptive – and we were.

In saying all that, I was agitated that one of my best friends (who was NZ surfing champion at the time), had gone religious – well that is how I saw it. I was agitated because, while he continued to do some of the things

I was enjoying, he had completely changed. He kept surfing but gave up partying and the chemicals that went with it.

We talked because I think I was keen to get him back to what we had been doing together. But he had an interest in getting me to at least check out what he was saying. He showed me from the Bible what I should do (Acts 2:38), but as I recall, it pretty well went in one ear and straight out the other. The turning point for me was that he asked me to go to a church meeting with him, which I did, and while there, I noticed a couple of things. The first thing I noticed was that the people appeared normal-ish; there were even other people who surfed which was an eye-opener. I don't recall understanding what the speaker was saying. But I could see that to him, this wasn't waffle for waffle's sake; what he was talking about was important to him.

But what happened next really rattled my cage. The speaker invited anybody who wanted to receive God's power into their lives to be baptised by full immersion in water. Two girls, who looked about twenty years old, said they wanted to do that. It may sound a bit strange but what made an impression was that they were normal-looking people, certainly not "churchy" looking. After being baptised, one of the girls surfaced and started to speak in tongues – something I was not ready for. That afternoon I talked with my friend, and he again showed me the Bible requirements of Acts 2:38. For reasons I cannot clearly remember, I decided I would get baptised at the evening meeting. I do recall agreeing with someone that I had everything to gain and nothing to lose, so I went ahead and got baptised. I did not receive the Holy Spirit as the girl had in the morning meeting, but three days later, while praying by myself at home, I also spoke in tongues. It was the same evidence of the Holy Spirit coming to me as the girl had experienced. I remember saying to my friend that I felt like I had done something that was the right thing to do. I know that sounds cliché and corny, but to me, at that time, it was very significant.

To go back to Shakespeare, I had jumped into the flood. I can say now without fear of contradiction that it was the beginning of a fortune that I never knew even existed. I didn't try to change, I just did! I never smoked another joint, not even one, and I never dropped another LSD trip. One day I drank two glasses of beer and decided "no more of that", and the foul language that had naturally rolled off my tongue just stopped.



Now, forty–eight years later, none of this has changed – this is absolutely true and not exaggerated. In saying all that (which I still marvel at), by far the greatest miracle was what happened to my mind. Yes, traits that ruled my life were cut loose, but the miracle above all others was that I started to think about Jesus, which I had never done up to this time. (Maybe even worse, before this, it was something that I had no interest whatsoever in.) More and more, my mind and thoughts have increasingly focussed around Jesus and the things of God. That process has never stopped; it is as the Bible says in Romans 12, that I have had my life transformed by the renewing of my mind.

I love my life, love wonderful nature, treasure friends, still surf but far above all those pearls, I love how gracious God has been to me. I love the true enrichment he has given my life. But what I have to acknowledge (without trying to sound like Mr Spiritual), is that none of this could have been possible except for the ineffable offering of Jesus Christ for all of us.

I have thought often on how (and why) he could possibly have endured what he did. To this day, more than ever before, I marvel in complete awe at the phenomenal resolve, fortitude and courage which enabled him to achieve what he did.

Jesus Christ, you are the ultimate Champion! And what a Saviour! Thank you, Jesus, thank you so very much. You are the best friend a person can have in this life and in the one to come – the one that is eternal.

Getting back to Shakespeare and the idea of the flood. There is comment about a flood in the Bible that God desires us to be part of. It is mentioned in that great chapter of Isaiah 28. Verse two proclaims a great truth that every person should know: “Behold, the Lord has a mighty and strong one, which as a tempest of hail and a destroying storm, AS A FLOOD OF MIGHTY WATERS OVERFLOWING, shall cast down (the proud) to the earth with his hand”. Verse 5 says: “In that day (period of time) shall the Lord of Hosts be for a crown of glory and for a diadem of beauty, to the remnant of his people ... for a SPIRIT of judgement and strength”. (Read on!)

Maybe Shakespeare got his flood thought from the Bible – who knows? But I am certain that the God of the Bible yearns for as many people as possible to encounter and enter this flood, the flood that restores your

soul and renews your mind. This fortune does not fade away and then eventually disappear; it is not about becoming rich in the world’s eyes. This is the fortune that God speaks about, this is the Bobby Dazzler, always–increasing, “can’t–be–taken–from–you” fortune. Even dirty, rotten death can’t separate you from it; this is real, literally everlasting fortune.

In verses 10–13, some precious explanation is provided. Every single Bible believer should know and understand what is being spoken of here. The apostle Paul identifies this text as referring to the New Testament experience of speaking in tongues (1 Corinthians 14:21), described here by Isaiah (over 750 years before) as stammering lips and another tongue (language).

This is the flood, the flood that does what no other type of flood can do. Verse 17 clearly declares what to expect – this flood sweeps away lies and even the refuge of lies which is the heart of man (Jeremiah 17:9), and the waters of this flood will overflow this refuge. Our covenant with death, (which we all naturally have), will be disannulled and our agreement with hell shall not stand.

And yet the people Isaiah addressed here referred to this flood as the overflowing scourge. They were called scornful men, because when offered this astounding hope, these men scorned it, somehow seeing it as a snare that would take them captive. How could they get it so very wrong? How could they see it so negatively? The answer is because it would do to them exactly as they said it would.

The Son of God was rejected by scornful people. It really is quite simple – you either go with the flood and rejoice in its crazy good benefits or you classify it as an overflowing scourge. This mighty flood will make you righteous in God’s sight; it will gift you with wise judgement, not scornful man’s judgement, but a judgement that won’t back away from God’s perfect standard.

There is only one hurdle we have to jump, and it is mentioned in verse 19. It is God himself who rightly holds the key, and the key is that we need to understand the report, to join the dots. We need to comprehend it to the point that we marvel in awe, firstly because it is available, and secondly because of its limitless potential to deliver, God–style.

What is the report? In a nutshell, - going back to the garden in Eden, Adam and Eve did what has become all too common today. They casually neglected God's advice and replaced it with their views, and without realising, created what has become the problem of the ages.

They chose the tree of good and evil rather than the tree of life, a decision which still affects us today. Basically speaking, our lives are all about choosing whether anything is good or evil, and these decisions determine our life-direction. (Note it was not just the tree of evil). Whatever happened then seems to have manifested itself in what was spoken through Jeremiah. As far as God is concerned, the problem now is the condition of our heart (better translated as "mind"). In Jeremiah 17:9 we are informed that our hearts are deceitful and wicked, especially when it comes to God. It is as Jesus himself said in John 3:19 - that man prefers darkness to light. This was made glaringly obvious many times through Jesus's ministry, but especially at his crucifixion where we are told the whole city came out and cried, "Crucify him...crucify him".

Addressing this failing (which is in everyone), God spoke through Ezekiel the prophet (around 587 BC), stating that God would create the opportunity for us all to receive a new heart (mind) with (by) a new Spirit (Ezekiel 36:26). For this to happen, the Spirit (the Holy Spirit) had to be made available. According to God's ways, for that to happen, someone perfect had to lay down their own life for mankind. It could only be through this death that people could receive this new Spirit. And it is this Spirit that renews our heart, manifesting as a renewed mind.

This is the report - but where are the takers? Basically nowhere, because as the Bible states, there is no-one who understands, no not one - hence the imperative to be born again. Jesus said that except a person be born of water and of the Spirit they cannot enter the everlasting Kingdom of God. Being born of water is consistent with water baptism by immersion, which possibly symbolizes going into the flood of Isaiah 28. Being born of the Spirit is clearly described in Acts, Chapters 2, 10 and 19. But what is extremely important is that you MUST be born again (John 3:3). The Holy Spirit will enrich your understanding; you will get it, the penny will drop, the vexation will be removed, and you will marvel.

I'm reasonably sure that for some this will sound like boring religion. But this is nothing like religion, let alone boring religion. It is eternal God's

plan for the redemption of mankind. This is the creator of the nature of our earth and universe that we all marvel at; it is mind-boggling. I have no trouble saying that this redemptive plan for mankind is way beyond my comprehension.

But this I do know, to God, this is a huge issue. Jesus didn't die for nature or the universe, he died for fallen people. I don't know why he loves us, but he does. I don't know why there is a plan for our salvation, but there is. It is mega above what we deserve, but it is available, it is real and factual. There is God in the equation of life and pretending there is not, is plain stupid.

Also, nearly fifty years after receiving the Holy Spirit, I can tell you this is the exact opposite of boring religion. This is life abundant with bells on. The renewing of your mind is the most beautiful thing that can happen to a human, and this combined with *agape* love, the love that God wants to give, is better than the best dream you can possibly have. It is just soooo good to have truth on your side, to have a God who cannot fail you as your closest friend, to have everything work together for good. God spoke these things through the apostle Paul, and like all prophecy, it becomes reality.

I know how easy it is to walk away from this offer. I fully get the way that people who say they represent God can act like twits and put many people off. Even a simple check to see if this is real, not because you think it is, but just in case it is...I get it, I've been there. For anyone who is still unsure, all I hope is that you don't just walk away and think this doesn't apply to you, because it does.

I know this is a cliché (it has almost been made nauseating and corny), but the Lord DOES love you, whoever you are, whatever you have done. Receive the Holy Spirit, my friend, and allow your maker the opportunity to make you whole.

In closing, try to understand this: in Isaiah 28:21 the Spirit calls this amazing work of God a "strange act", and also a "strange work". And so it is. It is not easily grasped because it IS strange when evaluated by our minds. When Jesus healed people, it was strange; when he raised Lazarus from the dead four days after he died, it was strange; when the disciples received the Holy Spirit, it was strange. When I got baptised by full immersion, it was

strange; when I received the Spirit of God, it was strange – but it is still the most amazing way to live. We do need help, but fortunately it is available.

And please don't forget that the God who called this "stammering lips and another tongue" strange, also reiterated in the last words of Isaiah 28: "The Lord is perfect in counsel and excellent in working". King David said of the Lord: "Your gentleness has made me great".

That same God loves you as much as David. Let him make you great – it is his fort e.



This moment was THE tide for David. It was a moment when David showed great courage. The slaying of Goliath changed his life.

(*David and Goliath*, a 17th Century oil painting by Guido Reni – a Baroque Italian painter.)

# 11

## Answers To Common Questions

### *Is it possible that I am not good enough to become a Christian?*

Yes, it is possible. In fact, it is certain you are not worthy, as it is with every human being. And that is why true Christianity is so amazing. Because of Christ's death, the Holy Spirit is now available, and anybody can receive him. Your past is 100% irrelevant. If you approach God as Acts 2:38 requires, and endeavour to keep (get to know and treasure) his Word, your future will be incredible. God promises to renew your mind (Romans 12); he will make you worthy with joy, and he promises to do exceedingly, abundantly above what you could ask or even think. Jesus said if we love God, we will keep (and treasure) his Word. My observation over almost fifty years is that if you treasure his Word, he will treasure you forever.



Could it be that Jesus, the son of God, died for me and I can now receive the Holy Spirit?

### *Why does something this great elude so many people?*

It may sound a bit tough, but it is as the Bible states: God resists the proud. We might not be perceived as proud by our friends, but all of us



need to be careful about our attitude towards God; we may think we know better, but we really do not. In Isaiah 29:14, it says that God will do a marvellous work and a wonder where the wisdom of the wise shall perish, and the understanding of the prudent will have no place. Like prophecy, God's Word is perfect and always right. God promises to renew our minds by giving us his Spirit (Ezekiel 36:26), the most astounding promise which is offered to everybody. Having had a proud, lost heart myself, and now having a new mind, I fully rate the renewing of our minds as a precious miracle.

### ***How should I pray to God?***

The best way to pray is to with a simple humility, realising you are praying to the Eternal Creator of all things, but also realising your life is precious to him. As you do that, God will hear your prayer and he will begin to act on his his yearning desire, which is to bring your life into the realm of the miraculous. God literally does love you and he gave his Son to die for all of us, that we might be blessed by him. This is beyond our brain's comprehension, but it is what it is.

There are two ways to pray, and we should all do both. We can pray in our own understanding and the language we know, but we should also pray to God in the new language he gives his people, which is called "praying in the Spirit". The apostle Paul said he prayed in tongues more than all those in THE Church in Corinth. He wrote in Ephesians 6:18 that praying in tongues like this is like using a sword in a battle – it puts you on the offensive. This is how God desires his people to be. (Jesus said that believers would speak in tongues (Mark 16:15), which is praying in the Spirit. (See also 1 Corinthians 14:14)

### ***Is it ok to be disappointed in our leaders and in the direction that our world is heading?***

Not only is it ok, I tend to think you are lacking a few common-sense cells if you are not bothered. Jesus spoke of our time in Matthew 24 and Luke 21, describing it as troubling – and it is. Jeremiah said, "Cursed is the one that trusts in man", and he described the knowledge of man as brutish. One of the main problems with the way we think is our inability to envisage the ramifications of our decisions, both politically and personally.

Politically, many are a disgrace. Personal gain and being bought by people who want you to do them a favour is rampant. On a personal basis, the lust for *more* can ruin what was originally good.

It is of enormous advantage to have God in your team; he knows what trips us up and desires to assist us to be smart when certain things come our way. God sees whatever comes at us in its full potential, for good or for bad. However, we often only see what something (or someone) offers with a short-term perspective.

If you embrace God's wisdom (in his Word), he promises to do you good (Deuteronomy 8:16) in the latter end. Our world, as we know it, will end at the return of Christ. The days of being led by brutish politicians are almost over; God invites all to be part of the Kingdom that never ends. It does sound too good to be true, but it is true.

### ***Why are there so many different churches?***

In a nutshell, there are so many different churches because people often think they know better than God.

It sort of goes back to the day when Adam and Eve slipped up by being too casual. They didn't listen to what God had said to them. I tend to think it wasn't a blatant rebellion, it may have even been quite innocent, but the result was disastrous (now, every minute 120 people die).

We humans don't seem to learn that easily. It is a similar situation with churches today. We are not wanting to do church God's way. We are too casual, and as a result of trying to improve on what has been presented to us in his Word, we have a similar result.

In reality, there are only two types of church – biblical, and those that have veered away from being biblical. In Jeremiah 23, this condition we witness before our eyes is addressed. The problem it identifies is that leaders will speak a vision from their own hearts (verse 16) – and there lies the dilemma.

Jesus said certain signs would follow true believers (Mark 16:15). The book of Acts, chapters 2–10 & 19 clearly describes people receiving the Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Holy Spirit are commanded to be used in a church meeting, see 1 Corinthians 14:26–28. The apostle Paul stated that we have access into THE CHURCH by the baptism of the Spirit (1

Corinthians 12:13). These are fundamental biblical truths that we must all uphold if we claim to represent the God of the Bible. Only a few churches adhere to these truths, which is very disappointing. It is prophesied, so it must be this way, but it is sad – especially for the Lord.

William Shakespeare said it well in King Lear: “Striving to better, oft we mar what’s well”. Unfortunately, that is the end result for many, who for whatever reason, have marred that which was well. Trust me, if God said to do things a certain way, you cannot better it. So today we have churches everywhere who no longer want to emulate the picture of the church presented to us in book of Acts, which is God’s Church, the only Church.

The New Testament letters sent to people in that church apply to us right up to the return of Jesus Christ.

### ***Why would I want to be a Christian?***

To answer the question, it is because there are only two options regarding the way we live our lives, and one is far superior to the other. In embracing Christianity, there is the natural attraction of what you gain: healing for sickness (physical or mental), soul satisfaction for emptiness, the promise that our names are written in God’s Book of Life, as well as the opportunity to bypass the sting of death. These are all good and positive, but you know what is even better? You get to know the person who died for you.

Jesus said, “Come to me all you that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke (like oxen) upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light”. This is the winner of all the benefits offered. The Lord is spectacular. As mentioned in the Song of Solomon, he is ALTOGETHER LOVELY, the most amazing person. The way he suffered for us is unfathomable and to live life without knowing or comprehending this person is wrong.

That is the beauty of prophecy fulfilment – it proves there is God, it proves he loves us and died for us, and it proves there is a truth of life. With the Holy Spirit’s assistance, you can literally get to know him, and if you do, you will find there is nothing in all of life to compare with this magnificent person. The apostle Paul claimed in Philippians 3:8 that he

“counts everything as loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord”. To know him is to be a king – not to know him is tragic.

### ***Will coming from a background where there was no interest in God be a hindrance to the successful life that Christianity offers?***

You would think so, wouldn’t you? But in fact, it makes no difference. Ironically it can even be an advantage – I can speak personally here because my upbringing was exactly like this. I actually found it to be a benefit because I had no preconceived ideas about how to be the way God wanted me to be. I just read my Bible, prayed, and learnt. I didn’t go to a Bible college but became a pastor of a Bible-endorsing church, a happy, balanced, successful group. We preached the gospel, and the Lord gave his increase.

As I said before, treasure God’s Word and he will treasure you; your upbringing is irrelevant. In the twenty-five years of pastoring, we endeavoured to not veer to the left or the right of biblical measures. Everyone was baptised in water by full immersion and virtually all received the Holy Spirit within two weeks in the same manner as the people did in the book of Acts. The few who didn’t receive the Holy Spirit in that time either went away (consider the parable of the seed–Luke 8) or took a little longer, dotting the I’s and crossing the t’s, but, within a short time they all received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, as it is written. Point being, God will bless the sincerity of anybody wanting to align with him.

### ***What does it mean to be BORN AGAIN?***

The terminology “born again”, was used by Jesus in John 3 when he spoke to a person called Nicodemus. Jesus told him something we all should know and understand, which is that you cannot enter the Kingdom of God unless you are born again. Jesus then clarified this, saying that you must be born of water and the Spirit. The most reasonable explanation of these words is to see an obvious parallel between “born of water and Spirit”, with what Peter spoke on the day of Pentecost, in Acts 2. He was asked “what shall I do to be saved?” He answered, “You must repent, be baptised and receive the Holy Spirit”. To be born of water is almost certainly a reference to water baptism (full immersion at an age where you can make the choice to believe – See Mark 16:15), and being born of the Spirit is a reference to receiving (or being baptised with) the Holy Spirit.

Your Christian experience today should be the same as what the apostles experienced in the book of Acts. In Romans 8, the Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of adoption. When a person is born of the Spirit, they are like a baby being born into a family – except they become a member of God’s family. When you are physically born, you cry, which reveals the life within you. When you are born of the Spirit, you will cry out with God’s language, as in Acts, Chapters 2, 10 and 19. When you are baptised in the Spirit, you become a member of THE CHURCH, which is the ELECT.

### ***Should Christians be politically active?***

To the surprise of many, I believe that not only should you ease out of being politically active, but my observation is that you should literally become politically inactive. This is because of two reasons – both New Testament pillars.

The first is mentioned in Philippians 3: we are God’s elect after we receive the Holy Spirit, we have no confidence in the flesh. The “flesh” is the biblical term for the thinking of a person without the Spirit of God. This type of thinking often offers much but delivers little, can change like the wind, can be deceitful, and have no regard for the plan and victory of God. The prophet Jeremiah got it right when he said, “Cursed is the one that trusts in man”.

The second reason is stated in Colossians 3:1–3 where it says, “If you be risen (filled with the Spirit) with Christ, seek those things that are above”. These include things like being found faithful to the truth, preaching the full gospel, setting your affections on things above, NOT on things of the earth, for you are dead (to the world) and your life is hidden (covered) with Christ in God. The time is coming where nothing of this world will matter. It will ultimately be the way we responded to the gospel which will determine our eternal status.

Politics, and such-like are like leaven. Initially they can be quite insignificant, but potentially they can consume your mind and minimise how important it is to keep your heavenly vision clear.

### ***Before the return of Jesus, will there be a rapture and then great tribulation?***

There is a commonly held view (which many churches believe) about the sequence of events before the Lord’s second coming. They say events will occur in the following order. Firstly, there will be a “rapture”, or removal from the earth of Christians, then the exposing of the Antichrist, followed by three and a half years of tribulation, and finally the end of the world (as we know it) with the return of Christ. I have looked closely into this theory and do not think it aligns with the Word of God. What many people do not realise is that this is a relatively recent interpretation of Revelation.

In the year AD 1585, a Catholic Jesuit priest – Franciscus Ribeira – invented this idea to protect the Papacy, because all Reformers held the view that the papacy was the Antichrist on the city of seven Hills of Rome (see Revelation 17:9) that spoke blasphemies and harassed the Christians.

The Jesuit’s argument was that the Pope could not possibly be the AntiChrist because the rapture of Christians had obviously not yet taken place. And so the doctrine of an early (pre-tribulation) rapture took root and was embellished by Evangelicals in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Ribeira’s rapture may have been an invention but the heresies were real enough. One of them was their doctrine of sprinkling a baby with water and calling it water baptism whereas Mark 16 says that baptism follows belief and a child cannot believe. Also, the Greek word for baptism is “baptizo”, meaning to FULLY immerse or submerge, not to sprinkle with water. Other heresies: Mary as co-redeemer with Christ (in contradiction, to 1 Timothy 2:5 in which Jesus Christ is named as the only mediator between God and man), the Apostle Peter as the first Pope (though they do not preach the gospel Peter preached), receiving of the Spirit at a religious confirmation ceremony with no confirming evidence (unlike the evidences in the Book of Acts). The Catholic church has always been, and still is very political; they literally blessed Hitler’s Third Reich, and these days have a serious paedophilia problem with priests.

Reformers like Martin Luther and William Tynsdale courageously identified the Antichrist spirit in the Catholic church in that era and withstood their heresies. They (and many more) refused to ignore the



persecution to death of millions of believers by the Roman Catholic church over centuries.

Finally, the theory of a rapture three and a half years before the return of Christ contradicts 1 Corinthians 15:52 which says that at that moment (the moment of Christ's return) all the people who were faithful to the FULL gospel will be raised to meet the Lord. What a day that will be!

***When people die, do they go directly to Heaven?***

A lot of people ask this question and are very often surprised to hear what the Bible has to say. More often than not, they have heard from somebody (who says they are Christian) that you go to heaven as soon as you die. The Bible informs us that we sleep after we die; those who have upheld the gospel will be awakened at the return of Christ (1 Thessalonians 4:16). Any who are still alive will be raised up to be gathered with the faithful people who had died, then together, we will meet the Lord in the air. This is prophecy and like all prophecy, it will be fulfilled. Then the kingdom of God on earth will be ruled by the magnificent King of Kings. At that time, there will be judgement for those who ignored God's wonderful offer of salvation. The faithful New Testament saints will forever be with the Lord, in a place of no more tears, no more sorrow, no more death and no more mocking. It will be!!!

***Is there a guaranteed biblical pattern for eternal success?***

I do think there is. What is necessary is a tenacity that God loves to bless and to give his increase to. But it is dependent on one spiritual quality. This quality is mentioned in 2 Corinthians 8:11-12, which says, "Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have. For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not."

As you progress and grow in the New Testament way, God will only see you for what you have, rather than what you may lack. The condition that God is mesmerised by is called "a willing mind". A willing mind is a predisposed mind, one that remembers what they are doing and why they are doing it. It is written in Hebrews 12: 1-3 that we should consider him that endured such opposition lest we be wearied and faint in our minds.

When Jesus healed people, he often got them to do something they could not do (because of their ailment). As they did what they previously could not do, they received what they hoped for. It is like that in the Lord; if you want God to give you mental tenacity, just do it and God will increase your efforts. This applies to your whole walk with the Lord, spiritually and naturally. I know it sounds a touch crazy, but we can have the mind of Christ, the mind that stays fixed on God's mega victory. This is the exact same victory that we are called into (see Luke 20:21). If we will be like this (and it is fully achievable for all of us), the Word of God informs us that it will be known by God, and just as death could not hold Jesus, it will not be able to hold us. Yo!! We are eternity bound, and we are going to meet the Lord who died for us! This is all prophesied by Holy Spirit-inspired people, so therefore (as Daniel said) it is certain, and it is sure.

***What type of person does God want us to become?***

This is a good question which deserves a good, HONEST answer. Well, I think an accurate adjective would be "dynamic". Maybe not quite as the world sees dynamic, but God's version of dynamic. A person who is honest with God's Word is dynamic. By that, I mean to accept it for what it says, don't ignore the bits you don't like, and don't add bits that aren't there. Every Biblical hero had this attribute and as a result was helped by God. In the parable of the seed (which Jesus taught in Luke 8), it was the person with an honest and good heart that was undefeated. Our test, so to speak, is to be the same.

Do we agree with John 3 about being born again or Mark 16:15 about the signs that characterize believers? Are we baptised by the Spirit to enter the Church, the Body of Christ? Do we see the baptism of the Spirit as Acts 1 and 2 or Acts 10 and 11? Do we pray in the Spirit (tongues) and with our understanding (1 Corinthians 14)? Do we run a meeting as 1 Corinthians 14:26-37 commands us? Is *agape* love growing in us? And, as just mentioned, where is our tenacity at?

Honesty is required to really gauge this in ourselves.

If we are lacking in any area, God wants to create the awareness and then provide the solution; it is not a condemning thing, it is an exaltation thing. Always remember, there is NO CONDEMNATION to them IN Christ Jesus, who are going forward. Ephesians 6:11-18 tells us how to

be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, to put on the full armour of God.

But remember, you never win any battle with defensive armour only. You are given a sword to go on the offensive. That is just such an important key to grasp. This, sword of Praying in the Spirit, is what will project you into the power of HIS MIGHT: pray in the Spirit (Ephesians 6 and Philippians 3), pray in the Holy Ghost (Jude 20), pray in tongues (1 Corinthians 14:14). This will spread *agape* love in your heart, and *agape* love cannot fail. It will create God's version of tenacity, and the power of his might will be infused into your being.

# 12

## Understanding the Holy Spirit

*But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father shall send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring all things, whatsoever I have said to you to your remembrance (John 14:26)*

The Spirit of God was involved with God in the creation of all things on the earth as well as in our universe's 200 billion galaxies. He began with an earth that was without form and void, and with God, brought forth a planet of absolute magnificence.



How could anyone in their right mind justify this atrocity? (*The Christian Martyrs' Last Prayer*, a painting by Jean-Léon Gérôme)

It was the Holy Spirit that inspired the prophets of the Old Testament to prophesy of events of the future. All of these have come to pass, except for those concerning the return of Christ and the establishing of his Kingdom. Of course, in his timing, these will also 100% come to pass.

Jesus received the Holy Spirit when baptised by John; the Spirit was with Jesus through his whole ministry, and it seems he was there with Jesus from the time of his betrayal (by Judas) up until his death. We are told Jesus was raised from the dead by the Spirit and God (Romans 8:11).

Jesus spoke often of the Holy Spirit – see the book of John, Chapters 3, 7, 14, 15 and 16. In John 14:17, when speaking of the Spirit, Jesus said something arresting, stating that although the Spirit was working (dwelling) with the disciples, the time was coming where he would DWELL IN them. After Christ's resurrection, he commanded the disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit, whom he would send. This most amazing time is recorded in Acts 2, on the day of Pentecost. This was the baptism of the Spirit that Jesus mentioned in Luke 12:50. Here Jesus explained that he was restricted in his working with people until they had experienced this baptism, that would be made available after his Resurrection, as Acts chapter 1 explains.

The disciples preached this miracle (as we should); Acts 10 and Acts 19 confirm this. In Acts 8, apparently NONE had received the Spirit even though people believed, were baptised in water, had received the Word of God, and had miracles taking place. How then would they know when they had received the Spirit unless there was an obvious and distinct manifestation? It had to be speaking in tongues, which is called the REST and the REFRESHING. Acts 3:19 states that a person receives Christ at the time of the refreshing.

The speaking in tongues manifestation comes in three forms. Firstly, it comes when you are baptised by the Spirit into the church, the body of Christ. Secondly, it is called praying in the Spirit; this is spoken of in 1 Corinthians 14 which discusses praying where our understanding is unfruitful. This ability stays with EVERYONE who is baptised in the Holy Ghost, and you can pray in this new language, anywhere, anytime. You do not lose control at any time; the ability is always subject to your control. The apostle Paul (who was spectacular as a believer), said he spoke in tongues more than ALL the saints in Corinth. Thirdly, it is what is called

the “gift of tongues”. This is for operation in a church meeting, where we are commanded that two (or at the most three) will speak out in tongues, and they will be interpreted. Not everybody does this, but all can.

In conclusion here, I thought it may be helpful to mention how we go about receiving the Holy Spirit ourselves, and how we pray for others to receive the Holy Spirit. We are told that the Spirit is received by faith, believing that God will assist – and he does.

I have been involved with over 1,000 people who have received the Spirit, and all these occasions have included the evidence of speaking in tongues. Most received the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues at the time of full immersion water baptism, however others did not receive tongues at that point in time. Some received tongues as we prayed with them later, some took a bit longer, as mentioned earlier, and some received before being water baptised, as occurred in Acts 10. The one consistent ingredient for those who received was that they worked up the courage to speak out a word or two in a language that was alien to them, and the miracle just continued from there.

This can be likened to the way that when Jesus healed people, he asked them to do (IN FAITH) what they could not naturally do, and then the healing happened. A striking example of this occurred when the man with the withered hand was healed. Jesus asked him to stretch forth his withered hand, and as he did (what he could not do), he was healed. This “receiving by faith” in the way the man was healed is identical to the receiving of the Spirit by faith. Anyone filled with the Holy Spirit can begin to speak in tongues.

Often when I was with people and they started speaking in tongues, I would encourage them to let the new words just flow like a river. Jesus likened the Spirit to a river in John 7. I did not receive the Holy Spirit when I was baptised, but later someone told to me that I had to intentionally start speaking myself. I can't clearly remember the exact event, but I think I sat in the baptism tank with my mouth tightly closed. When I realised that you actually SPEAK in tongues, the penny sort of dropped, and a few days later, while praying by myself, I spoke out a couple of words and then it did just flow. That was forty-nine years ago, and it has never left me. In the process of time, with no pressure from anybody, I have found that the



more I use the miracle of tongues, the more I have clarity and appreciation for the wonderment of Jesus the Christ.

LOVE FAITHFULNESS PATIENCE  
JOY GENTLENESS KINDNESS  
PEACE SELF-CONTROL GOODNESS

The Holy Spirit is the great gift from God offered to everyone. He brings these fruits into the lives of believers.

# 13

## True Israel today.

*It is the Glory of God to conceal a matter and the honour of Kings to search it out. Proverbs 25:2*

I have decided that this chapter, and the letter that follows, could be beneficial for some. I have checked and double-checked the claims and must say that the more I have evaluated the claims, the more I marvel. If it is what it appears to be, the way that God has worked this great miracle is absolutely mind-boggling. If it *is* as it appears, how the mighty have fallen.

Many years ago, a good friend introduced me to the idea that the true Israelite nation (the descendants of Abraham), is not the State of Israel in the Middle East. Instead, he claimed that they are in a new land that has been appointed by God. When I first heard this idea, I thought it to be extreme and ridiculous. I mean who would say such a thing when you can literally see Israel on a modern map of the world?

Many years ago, when my good friend told me that he believed in God, I had very little idea of what he was on about even though I made out that I did. But what did make an impression on me was how he showed me from the Bible (rather than his opinion) the scripture in Acts 2:38 that explained what I should do to be saved. Later I discovered that this was often at loggerheads with modern-day church doctrine, which teaches that you give your heart to the Lord, or make a decision, for Christ, and that's it. That sounds good, but it's nowhere near what God asks of us in Acts 2.

I mention this because as I pressed on in the Lord, I came to realise there is a lot of opinion in church circles that differs from the plain meaning

of the Bible. What is even stranger is that people in church circles often don't scrutinise what they hear by checking it against the Bible. As a result of those observations, I found I became quite wary of people who claimed to be Bible followers but were (unwittingly) more concerned about the narrative accepted by their group, rather than what the Bible actually stated. I am not wanting to belittle anybody or point the finger at anybody by saying this. But I certainly want to impress the importance of being careful with what we embrace, because there is so much that is at stake.

One topic in the Bible that I initially underestimated (but have since found to be of immense interest), is that of the "children of Israel", and especially where they are to be found today. It is worth mentioning that when I first heard of this, I actually thought it was blatantly racist. This was not a good start and was definitely one of the reasons I had minimal interest. But as I had developed the habit of double-checking people's opinions, I did the same with this subject of where the true Israel is today. To my absolute surprise, I have found it to be fascinating beyond all expectation.

Other than the prophecies concerning Christ, the next most prophesied topic is that of the people of Israel. For that reason alone, I consider this issue to be of significant importance. But it has only been as I have delved a bit deeper that I have come realise how important it actually is, because there are so many precise scriptural prophecies that have to be fulfilled. I will keep this segment as simple as I can; it is not complicated, but some detail is necessary to prove how amazing the fulfilment of prophecy has been.

So, sit back, relax, and hopefully enjoy. It may challenge some preconceptions, but that is OK, as long as what is being mentioned is based on fact. You may be surprised, as I was. But it is good to have your awareness raised so you can mull it over. If nothing else, it motivates us to understand the Bible, which is always good.

A good starting point is obviously the people who live in modern-day Israel. Most believe that the true children of Israel live in the state of Israel in the Middle East. That is all good until we discover through prophecy, that they (modern Israelites) do not fulfil the prophecies spoken about Israel in the Bible. So, if the Israelites in the Middle Eastern country of Israel are not the fulfilment of prophecies about Israel, what is?

## **An introduction to present-day Israel**

It is in the first book of the Bible that God found a person he loved and rejoiced in. His name was Abraham, and it was to Abraham that God made promises, especially promising that his descendants would be blessed. God said they would become a great nation and a company of nations. This promise was also spoken to Abraham's son, Isaac, and to his grandson Jacob, who later had his name changed (by God) to Israel. This promise of what the children of Israel would become is given scripturally twelve times with similar wording.

This is most unusual because most prophecies were seldom mentioned more than once. But the descendants of Abraham, who settled in the Middle East under the leadership of Moses and Joshua, never became a company of nations. They established themselves in that land until the invasions of Assyria (722 BC), and then Babylon (604 BC), who not only took the Israelites captive, but also resettled them outside Israel, never to return. A small percentage of the captives in Babylon did return to the land they were removed from, and it was through these people's descendants that Christ was born. However, never has this group of Jews living in the ancient land of Israel fulfilled what was spoken to Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob.

One quite exceptional prophecy of the Old Testament is in 2 Samuel 7:10 where the prophet Nathan states that the people of Israel would be planted in an appointed place of their own, and that they would not be moved from it. (These would be isles, northwest of Palestine as Isaiah prophesied about in Isaiah 41 and 49).

Another identification of true Israel is found in the unique symbols of the lion and the unicorn. Some translations of Numbers 23:22-24 say that Israel will have the strength of a UNICORN and shall rise up as a great LION. The lion and the unicorn are the most predominant symbols on the British coat of arms. Also on the coat of arms is a crown with a lion standing on top of it, symbolising the dynasty connected with the lion. It is interesting that the same country that possesses the lion and unicorn symbols also has a dynasty (the House of Windsor) in which the emblem of the lion is most common.

It is worth noting that the God of the Bible promised David (the person who slew Goliath and who later became King over Israel) that his throne



The British Coat of Arms shows a lion (symbol of England) and a unicorn (symbol of Scotland), both linked by some attributes of strength and power given to early Israel and symbolised by the unicorn and the lion

precious stones embedded in it. Those twelve stones were the identical twelve stones that represented the twelve tribes (families) of Israel.

Into this picture comes the Arbroath Agreement (AD 1317), a Scottish national document which is spoken of as the Scottish Declaration of Independence. Some see it as the greatest letter written in Scottish History. It was written to the pope at the time England was attempting to conquer the Scots. In it the Scottish hierarchy (whose people had originally arrived from Ireland), traced themselves back through through 113 kings to biblical lands. The document even states their connection to the crossing of the Red Sea and to reaching their destined home in the west after much toil, (Isaiah 49:12).

Although it is not mentioned in the agreement, the toiling of the people not only took them west, but also to Isles (islands) which are mentioned in Isaiah 41 and Isaiah 49. (The land of Israel was never made up of islands.) Numbers 23 also states that this people would dwell alone (separately) and not be reckoned among the nations (of Middle East and Europe). The Bible also said they would not be removed from there – and those who live in the

would endure and that it would be the throne that Jesus Christ would receive at his return. So, it should not be surprising that the emblem of David's family was the lion (of Judah). The Israel of the Middle East has no dynasty (let alone one dominated by the lion) and has no symbolism connected with the lion and unicorn. In closing here, it is of interest that when Queen Elizabeth II was crowned (1953), her crown had twelve

British Isles never have been removed. More to the point, the occupants of the land of Israel were (removed) by Assyrian and Babylonian armies.

### Some Etymology<sup>1</sup>

It is of interest that the word "Britain" is derived from the Hebrew words "Brith-ain", meaning "covenant land", as well as "Brith-ish", which is Hebrew for "covenant man". Simon Perlman in *English Words of Hebrew Origin* says that origins of the English language had a significant connection to Hebrew and that the Anglo-Saxon language was one third identical to the Hebrew language. In his book *Comparative Vocabulary of Forty-Eight Languages*, Jacob Tomlin mentions not only a connection in words between the two languages, but a very near agreement in the arrangement of ideas and the simple structure of sentences.

Canon Samuel Lysons (1806-1877) compiled a list of 5,000 Hebrew words from the English Lexicon to demonstrate either Hebrew or Chaldean roots to the English language. (Chaldea is where many Hebrews were taken as captive after the defeats by Assyria and Babylon.) Beale Poste, author of *Celtic Inscriptions on Gaulish and British Coins*, claims there are as many as 6,000 Hebrew word-roots in English. Even William Tyndale (1494-1536), the first to translate the Hebrew and Greek Testaments into English, remarked that the Hebrew tongue agrees 1,000 times more with English, than it does with Latin. All very interesting.

Centuries ago our forebears named England "Engalond", which meant "Land of the Angels".

Sir Winston Churchill, when referring to the Scots, said they were the Irish. This is a fact, and a fact we should remember.

<sup>1</sup> Information in these two sections is drawn from the following sources, with thanks:

*Today, Tomorrow and the Great Beyond*, by John S Fox  
*The Covenant People*, by William J Cameron  
*God's Company of Nations*, by B R Parkinson  
*The Declaration of Arbroath*, National Records of Scotland



### Traditions of Israelite settlement in Ireland

The records begin to mingle with ancient traditions and it is difficult to test their truth but not many people are aware that in Ireland, you can go to Devenish Island in Lough Erne, and visit what Irish tradition claims to be the tomb of Jeremiah, the Old Testament prophet of Israel.

Irish records tell of a ship called *Iberian Danaan*. Danaan refers to Danites of the tribe (or family) of Dan. The tribe of Dan was, of course, one of the tribes of Israel. It is recorded that this ship was shipwrecked at Carrickfergus, and that on board was a royal princess, a person they referred to as Ollamh Fodhla (who is thought to be Jeremiah), and his servant Bruch.

Ptolemy's ancient map of Ireland mentions a place called Dan-Sowar, which means Dan's resting place. Even more interesting is what is written in the book, *The History of Ireland*, which makes the claim that the ancient Irish called the people of this area, *Tuatha De Danaan*, meaning, the Tribe of Dan.

I have no idea of the odds against this happening to the ancient people of Israel who were decimated by Assyria and Babylon as Biblical prophecies said they would be. But it seems their descendants drifted west, eventually settling in Isles northwest of Jerusalem, in a land separate, never to be removed. They became a great nation (America) and company of nations (the British Commonwealth) in the latter days. They are identified by the emblems of the lion and the unicorn, and have a dynasty connected to King David. Even their law is based on the Old Testament Commandments.

It seems once again that God spoke what seemed impossible...but traces of the evidence are there when we dig for it. And maybe the most amazing thing about it all is that modern Israel seems to be completely completely oblivious to the way her descendants have populated the West.

But, as God himself has said, "There is none so blind as my people Israel." Seeing many things, but thou observest not; opening the ears, but he heareth not (Isaiah 42:20). Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers? Did not the LORD, he against whom we have sinned? For they would not walk in his ways, neither were they obedient unto his law (Isaiah 42:24).



*The Mayflower in Plymouth Harbour* by William Halsall 1(882) This painting is on display at Plymouth in Massachusetts - and some would say represents another thrust westward of the descendants of the biblical Israelites from England to the New World

## 14

**Letter to Westerners**

Dear Fellow Westerners,

This letter is to those of you who can trace your family tree back to folks who left the British Isles to travel to the unknown world to see how they might prosper. This following information is intended to assist you to grasp truths about your heritage that you should not be ignorant of. In fact, if I were to be brutally honest, it really is your God-given duty not only to know, but to understand with clarity who we have descended from and to understand why we have had the success we have. More important than any of our accomplishments, we need to comprehend the most amazing, unconditional promises that have enabled our exceptional prosperity, as well as what the future holds for those with this unexpected connection.

This letter is not about acclaiming a race of people, in fact, it is more accurately a questioning of a race of people. But the issue I hope to draw to your attention is not so much the qualities (or lack of qualities) of these people, but rather the most incredible faithfulness of God toward those who seem to continually reject him. This race of people are the people of Israel, the descendants of Abraham. These are the people who God wanted to utilise, bless, and exalt, so that through them the other nations of the world would, by their choice, become beneficiaries of what God desires to give every person.

These TRUE descendants of Abraham (and I stress “true” descendants), in time (almost always), proved to be ungrateful and unreliable in their attitude towards the power that was responsible for their extraordinary

success. The Bible records the actions of these people, and it is reasonable to conclude that generally speaking, they were self-obsessed and God-despising. Most of the lessons they learned were in the school of hard knocks. They definitely fulfilled what was prophesied about them by many of the Old Testament prophets, which in general was: “There is none so blind as MY PEOPLE Israel”. Yes, God still referred to them as HIS people, and HIS inheritance, obviously not because of the way they lived, but because he made specific and unconditional promises to Abraham – meaning the true Israel.

In attempting to identify these people and what became of them, we can look at the many signs and promises that were given to them – unique, special promises.

God promised Abraham, Isaac and Jacob that their descendants would become a great nation and a company of nations, that they would be separate from the nations of Europe/Asia Minor, that they would finish their aimless wandering through Europe (of several hundred years) and eventually settle in the isles (islands) that are northwest of Palestine. The Bible said this would be a NEW, appointed place (2 Samuel 7:10) especially for Abraham’s seed, who would be able to be identified by the emblems of a lion and a unicorn (Numbers 23:22). All this would happen as they wandered, with no idea why they were going west, or what awaited them.

But again, against crazy odds, it happened. Everything that was prophesied came to pass and again, God’s Word proved flawless, perfectly fulfilled. But what I hope you realise is that we who trace ourselves back to these people (who ended up in the British Isles) are STILL the seed of Abraham. Nothing can change this: it is we who have become the great nation and company of nations that was prophesied about almost 2,000 years ago.

This is confirmed by the Arbroath Agreement (which is viewed as the Scottish declaration of independence) and signed by the Lords of Scotland in 1320 AD. This document declares the connection of these people in the Isles with those who left Egypt miraculously under Moses. They walked through the Red Sea on dry ground, and after many hundreds of years of toil, arrived in this new and God-appointed place.

Basically, two little Islands (not much bigger than Alabama) have produced the most influential people of the world, especially when you consider what has transpired in the last 400 years. This is not because of any personal attributes of the people, but because God promised it. As for the British Commonwealth, the United States of America (yes, I know, they could be a lot more united), and for us, the present inhabitants – the true descendants of Abraham – I would say that not even one percent of us has an inkling of who we are or what our future entails.

This is not a political book, and is not intended to be so, but today, these same people support the destruction of over a million babies per annum while they are still growing in the womb. They say, “My body, my choice”, which is not hard to agree with. The issue is that the baby’s body is not your body. Often the reason for such action is to cover up immorality or laziness, but there are just so many issues that are similar. We are Abraham’s seed, and we should do much better.

We, more than any others, have the magnificent gospel of Jesus. He loved us and died for us, was raised from the dead and made available the eternal Holy Spirit of God which we can all receive as the apostles did. And what have we done? We have an insipid version of the gospel which holds a form of godliness but denies the power of the Spirit (read Acts 1 and 2). How dare we? Who do we think we are?

The question that God asked Israel through Ezekiel was, “How weak is your heart?” That same question demands an answer from Christian leaders. Open up your Bibles and align yourself with the book of Acts. Get away from carnal pacifism; don’t be a Chamberlain, be a Churchill. Be strong in the Lord and the power of his might. Agree with John 3 and acknowledge that you MUST be born again. Agree with the signs a believer must have, as Mark 16 stipulates and give the abominable church of Revelation – the one on seven hills, the political monster – the kick. If you don’t, its influence will make you lukewarm, and more importantly, it makes God sick (Revelation 3).

### A word to political leaders

Do you have any idea at all about the people you have been appointed to govern? It seems many of you are more interested in accepting backhanders or getting voted back in during the next election.

We, the people have been conned into thinking that the more we get of something we like, the better. But this is not so. The Word of God tells us that he who loves silver will NOT be satisfied with silver. Life is not about how much we acquire; it is about fully utilising the abundance which has been made available by the death of Jesus. We are absolutely consumed with wanting more – none of which we can take with us when we die. Yet ironically, we reject God’s gift which gives us victory over death, and then life in eternity. All of us should thoroughly check if these claims are true because it is ignorance (on steroids) not to do so.

The Covid episode is also a disgrace and a debacle. How could our so-called leaders mandate an unproven injection – still in an experimental stage and be so callous about investigating detrimental side effects or investigating other therapeutics? How can they do this while at the same time mouthing platitudes about how much they care for the people?

I could rabbit on like this for ages, but I won’t. However, I will tell you this for your own good – especially those of you influential in the West: the people of the Commonwealth and the States – we are Abraham’s seed. Therefore, discipline yourselves to tread carefully. We are God’s inheritance and are loved by him.



The further the West drifts from God the more confused and lost we will become. Without God’s hand on our affairs we become fools, no matter how clever and progressive we think we are.



To those of you who seem bent on telling us what we should do, my advice is to butt out, don't play God, and don't treat us like imbeciles. If we want bugs to become our main food, we will let you know, but don't think for a minute you have the right to tell us. As with many other things (the same applies to anything you push) – God has already declared his PERFECT truth. To oppress Abraham's seed is risky. For any who would dare to do so, this is to your absolute peril. You may hoodwink people around you and you may hoodwink yourselves, but you will never ever hoodwink God.

One other thing: a statement by some senior spokesman in the "We will make them eat bugs" brigade. He confidently asserted that they would be eliminating misinformation from the narrative they were going to feed us "plebs"). He graciously gave an example of what he meant; he was not pressed to do so, he just offered it. His example was to say that the statement that Jesus was raised from the dead is misinformation. Therefore, to be eliminated – not allowed.

In reply, I can only recommend that he checks out the fulfilment of Bible prophecy before he decides to oppose the Creator of the universe. I don't know how I would label his folly, but be assured, his arrogance has made him stupid. As I have mentioned several times in this book, the heart of man is desperately wicked and deceitful above all things. Be careful, this is dangerous territory.

When Elizabeth 1 became queen in November 1558, she was apparently sitting in a bush clearing and is recorded declaring the scripture from Psalm 118:23, which is: "This is the Lord's doing and it is marvellous in our eyes". It has proved to be just that – that people from a place the size of Alabama have spread throughout the world. Surely only someone with eternal perspective would say such a thing.

### **The colonial period**

As with every nation, there will always be twits, and there definitely have been within true Israel. They initially approved of slavery, along with everybody else at that time, including the Africans. But it was the British who finally brought about the banishment of slavery – no one else.

Several countries became part of the Commonwealth, and I don't notice any who are worse off; I am also unaware of any who have left,

and become better for the experience. The basic intent of most colonial masters was to assist, but as is always the case, 20/20 hindsight can reveal wiser ways to do things, especially when dealing with people whose ideas change. But I know of no other country that has exceeded the efforts of the British. In the process of time, many nations have become independent, but there are none that can claim vast improvement after their departure from the Commonwealth.

On the subject of slavery, there are still many countries that endorse slave labour, and yet I don't see any one of consequence (politically speaking) speaking out against it. It makes you wonder what's truly motivating these political leaders – who also intensely dislike Abraham's seed. Some observers have suggested they don't care about slavery but are prepared to make people think they do - something called "virtue signalling." But one truth is for certain, God knows.

### **The United States**

When the *Mayflower* arrived, the new colonists literally referred to THEMSELVES as the seed of Abraham, calling themselves "a vine out of Egypt into the wilderness". They said about themselves, our people came out of Egypt, they walked with Moses through the Red Sea, and they endured the wilderness experience before they eventually settled in the promised land.

Before any of the *Mayflower* crew set foot on America, they drafted what is called the "Mayflower Compact" which is far more important than the constitution. It reads as follows: "In the Name of God, Amen. We whose names are underwritten, having undertaken for the Glory of God and the advancement of THE Christian Faith, a voyage to plant the first colony ... do by these presents, solemnly and mutually, in the presence of God, combine ourselves into a civil body politic". This document was followed by the Articles of Federation and then the Declaration of Independence, all based on a pure commitment to the God of the Bible and his truths of life. None have been amended, or indeed can be. The constitution is far more political and has since been used by some to erode the original intent for America.

I don't live in the USA but do observe what is happening. To be honest, I am saddened by what you have become and where you are heading,

especially in a spiritual sense. What will happen in the days between now and the return of Christ is up for debate, but it does seem that there may be a confrontation with Russia, Iran, Turkey and others.

This is mentioned in Ezekiel, chapters 38 and 39. Many people think the West will be attacked by Russia (Gog) who will go over the North Pole into Alaska. Let's hope not. Zechariah 12 also speaks of an horrendous event (which does not appear to have happened yet), which involves Jerusalem because that is specifically mentioned. However, some think these two events may be simultaneous. Whatever the case will be, be ready.

### Jesus words about his return

When Jesus was questioned about signs that would precede his return, he said it would be a time of distress of nations with perplexity, with men's hearts failing them for fear. He mentioned famines, earthquakes, and pestilences (Luke 21 and Matthew 24), which all sound familiar for those of us living today. Jesus also spoke about how true, powerful Christianity (of which there is only one version) will be replaced by a man-pleasing alternative. Then Jesus actually went on to ask the question: "When I return, will I even find faith?"

We are living in troubled times, but they are also very exciting days, because what is happening around us is exactly as prophesied. Jesus stipulated that being ready for his return is important for all of us.

We may see more oppression from governments led by people who seem to have become intoxicated by their own ambition. We may see people who have NOT been elected wanting to control not only our future direction but also our numbers. Whatever happens, remember that God is far bigger and far better than anything misled mankind tries to force upon us. There are many options we can choose for our lives, but the one that Jesus died for – the one that is available to all – is the only one that matters, regardless of how you are tempted by the accolades of men. Remember the words that Jesus spoke to the disciples: "Take heed lest any man deceive you". Read Acts, Chapters 1 and 2, 10 and 11.

Even if your lineage connects fully with the descendants of Abraham – true Israel – you still must align yourself with what is written in Acts 2:38. Here Peter was asked the greatest question a human being can ask, "What shall I do to be saved?". The answer was – and still is – that you

must repent (stop being mesmerized by the world you're living in), be baptised (in water, by full immersion as a believing person), and be filled with (or baptised by) the Holy Ghost. This miracle is accompanied with the tangible evidence that is mentioned in Acts, Chapters 2, 10 and 19. It is also mentioned in Isaiah 28, 750 years before it first happened.

This most amazing promise is for every person in this world. Unfortunately it will be ignored by most. But whether it is ignored or not, this is the ultimate pauper-to-prince opportunity for any person. The few who respond and remain faithful, and those who have since died, will be raised out of the grave (whaatttt!!!) and will be clothed with immortality. And those who are still alive and standing strong for THE GOSPEL, will also be immortalised and will literally be with the Lord.

It will be these fully redeemed people who will rule and reign with Christ for the 1,000 years of peace, the time referred to as the Millennium. During this time another super-amazing happening takes place regarding the descendants of Abraham. It appears that Christ's first mission is to redeem back these people, working with those who were seen faithful by God, during the 2,000 years of the gospel age.

When you read scriptures like Ezekiel 37:16–19 and Hosea 13:14, you will see why it is reasonable to assume this redemption could be of major significance. During this time (and if so, won't that be incredible?), God will again become their King. But this time it will be forever.

In finishing this chapter, with its USA connection, I would like to touch on a couple of lyrics sung by famous rock singer, Tom Petty<sup>2</sup>. I don't know what promises Tom was referring to in *American Girl*, but there is nothing better than being raised on the promises that Christ brought into being for the descendants of Abraham. I also appreciate what Tom Petty sang in *Don't Back Down*. If you can have that attitude regarding the gospel, you will be exalted by God.

This is our time, pauper-to-prince; it doesn't get better than that. If you don't believe these things, that is OK. But you are robbing yourself blind to not at least check them out. It's a challenge for sure, but the reward far exceeds that of any other challenge that the world can throw at us.

<sup>2</sup> Firstly, let me state that I've always enjoyed his music; at Live Aid I still think that he and the Heartbreakers were the best.

You have nothing to lose and everything to gain!

God bless,

Mike

# 15

## In Closing

THIS MAY BE HELPFUL; I HOPE SO

Just for the record, people have suggested that the book would benefit from this last chapter. Here it is.

Firstly, regarding the title of the book. I am convinced that the fulfilment of Bible prophecy gives us infallible proof that not only does God exist, but that he also has a definite plan for mankind, and that plan includes eternity. Bible prophecy fulfilment is only the beginning of the marvel that is available to us all. It is a rock-solid foundation which is meant to be built upon, and what can be built on it – by any person – is spectacular.

Bible prophecy can be basically divided into two main categories. The first is the fulfilment of events regarding empires, countries, cities and the like – basically non-living entities. The second category, which is of far greater importance, involves people like us who can enter a newness of life that is beyond staggering. If we decide to embrace it, there is a limitless potential available for our lives NOW.

I am fully aware that this book discusses only a small percentage of the 1,800 plus prophecies that are in the Bible. The reason for this is that we are not merely wanting to create people who know more facts about Bible prophecy and just leave it there. We are wanting to attract people into the extraordinary life that Bible prophecy speaks of – that renews minds, sets free, exalts the believer, and beckons ordinary people into everlasting life.



If you are a church-goer, this book will strengthen your appreciation of how marvellous the Bible is. It will also hopefully spark your desire to be courageous in God's sight. It will encourage you to be a partaker of the same miraculous experience that the Old Testament prophets talked about, the experience which became reality as described in the book of Acts when it powerfully transformed the apostles.

If you are still sceptical, no worries – Bible prophecy is not bothered by scepticism. All I would ask is that you try to be honest with facts.

My hope is that this book will help you see that when you are dealing with the fulfilment of Biblical prophecy, you are dealing with certainty. It is not a vague hope, it is not hocus-pocus, it is not the guesswork of soothsayers and clairvoyants, or uninformed fortune tellers.

This is what our soul yearns for: certainty and confidence. For those who have embraced the great salvation proclaimed by Acts 2:38 (you who are filled with the Holy Spirit), this book should rejuvenate you. It should help you realise that you are called to be strong in the Lord and the power of his might. It should enable you to become fully conscious of the most amazing miracle ever – that the eternal Spirit of God is in you, causing you to understand that you are special and able to become dynamic.

The Holy Spirit will be a wonderful friend to you as he reminds you of the staggering price Jesus paid for sin – yes it has been paid. The Spirit will spread *AGAPE* love in your heart. He will cause us to truly grasp that this love never fails, ever; this love bears all things, it endures all things. Unless you deliberately block it out, it will relentlessly remind you that Jesus Christ loves you in a way that is beyond your powers of imagination. The goal of the Spirit of God IN YOU is that you might also marvel with the apostle Paul when he stated: HE LOVED ME and died FOR ME!!! The Holy Spirit will comfort you and he will NEVER leave or forsake you. It will be the baptism of the Spirit that provides access into the body of Christ, THE CHURCH. You will be complete in HIM.

If you have read this book before reading this final segment, you will have noticed that besides the fulfilment of general prophecy, we emphasise two areas of prophecy that are seldom mentioned even in church circles. The first is the critical importance of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and the second (which some may view as a bit left field), is the identifying of

true Israel, the descendants of Abraham in the latter days. I can say that when both topics were introduced to me, my initial thoughts were weary and sceptical. However, I still went ahead and evaluated their scriptural merit, and in both cases, now find their importance to be of mammoth worth. Salvation and the baptism of the Holy Spirit go hand in hand. While the identity of true Israel is not a salvation issue, the way it has come to pass is certainly amazing.

I believe that we are now living in the days that precede the return of Christ. These days are often spoken of in the Bible; the perilous state of the world is as prophesied, the rejection of gospel truths is as prophesied and the over-confidence of lost mankind is as prophesied. It is not unreasonable to consider that the return of Christ is imminent.

### **The Great reset**

In the western world we have a group of people who tell us to get ready for the “great reset”. But this is only their version of reset – one which they believe is compulsory for us all. It includes health mandates, digital currency, and access to only the information that they deem acceptable. We will have to accept standards the Bible rejects, and they will try to force us to reject truths it teaches. They say they will increase bug food for nutrition as they minimise farm-based foods. We will see if it happens.

The reset we should be fully aware of is the one that definitely will happen. This is the reset the prophets and Jesus spoke of, the one where the Kingdom of God will be set up on earth, the one that the Creator of the universe is committed to. What will be, will be. What is prophesied will happen. In the meantime, our focus should be on getting out of the mess which has been 100 percent dreamed up by hoodwinked mankind. We should stand with and esteem God's Word. If any person treasures the Word of God, God will treasure him or her. If, per chance, you are in the “treasured by God” category, be resolute for the truth with joy unspeakable. There is nothing to which that privilege compares.

You will experience an ever-increasing appreciation of the commitment of Jesus to all, but especially to you. You will be a partaker of the first resurrection, when the Lord returns as the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. You will literally meet the others who stood strong for what is absolutely right. And, as is prophesied in the Word of God, you will meet

Jesus Christ and forever be in his everlasting kingdom. This is THE marvel and we want as many as possible to partake of it. Victory is guaranteed!!!

So, for my final words, may I say:

“Thank you Almighty God for coming to my life. Thank you for dying for me, Jesus – you really must love me. Thank you, great Spirit of God, for baptising me into the body of Christ, THE Church. I honestly am in awe, and now, almost 50 years on, I think I am more grateful than any time before.

“Without wanting to sound like a gooey twerp, may I also thank you for the way you have transformed my mind. I call it the oyster miracle. It is the way that a minute piece of foreign matter can be transformed into a pearl. When I first heard of you, it was as if an irritant had entered my mind. Through a miracle, one that is reserved for you alone, that foreign thought has formed into the pearl of greatest price. Thank you for allowing me to have an awareness of your wonderful grace. Thank you for the precious insight into the Person you are. Thank you, for some way, somehow, enduring what you did for us, so that we might marvel in humble adoration.”

And to all of you who want the Son of God to set you free: God bless you and keep you, the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you, the Lord lift up his countenance on you and give you peace (Numbers 6:24–26) as you stand strong for the truth of life. Know that if the Son of Man sets you free, you shall be free indeed.

Fight the fight! Run the race! Keep the faith! Don't surrender to futility and endure whatever you have to, until the end of this world.

Kindest regards,

*Mike*

Writing this book has affected me very positively. The research I did reminded me again of the certainty of God's existence and his magnificent plan for mankind. My desire for this book is that it impresses on as many people as possible the limitless potential that is available to enhance their life for good.

If you want to know more, feel free to check out our simple website below.

<https://www.these facts change everything.com/>

I also acknowledge these sources:

*Halley's Bible Handbook*, by Henry H Halley

*Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, by Josh McDowell

*Christ in the Scriptures*, by A M Hodgkin

