

*Prophecy is like a lamp shining in a dark place. 2 Peter 1:19*

JAN/FEB 2026

# LAMPLIGHTER

A LAMB & LION PUBLICATION



## THE CHURCH AGE: GOD'S STRATEGIC PAUSE





**LAMB & LION**  
MINISTRIES

**JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2026**

A bi-monthly publication produced  
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Founder

**Dr. David R. Reagan**

Executive Editor

Director | Sr. Evangelist

**Tim Moore**

Associate Editor

Creative Director

**Jana Olivieri**

Assistant Editor

Creative Designer

**Adam Jordan**

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**Lamb & Lion Ministries**

PO Box 919

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# OBSERVATIONS FROM THE EDITOR

Does it seem to you that time itself is accelerating? Looking back, 2025 went by in a blur, with high points and lows that pointed to heightened hopes and fears.

Those who are not grounded in the Living Word are bound to be blown to and fro like leaves in a whirlwind. But those who sink deep roots into the Source of all Truth are able to understand the times. Like the sons of Issachar, they know what to do because they know Who they serve.

Despite the recent discrediting of misled date-setters, there is a truth that Rapture enthusiasts seize upon: Jesus is coming again. Signs of His return are indeed increasing in frequency and intensity and multiplying like never before. Tragically, the scoffing world jeers at false alarms and turns back to its worldly pursuits. Some Christians wince to see yet another hopeful prediction dashed and resolve not to get caught up in the Rapture ruckus.

At Lamb & Lion Ministries, we readily confess the need to stay on task, fulfilling the Great Commission. We strongly support growing in the Spirit, discipling Christ followers, and accomplishing good works. Key to those spiritual disciplines is rightly dividing the Word of God—by studying the whole counsel of Scripture, including His prophetic Word.

With that in mind (and knowing that Scripture has much more to say about the culmination of human history than the beginning), we are excited to offer a new resource to promote understanding of End Time prophecy. This edition of the *Lamplighter* introduces an exciting new chart that provides an Overview

of End Times Events. The four-page addition to this magazine comprises the booklet that is available as a stand-alone handout.

The key to this chart is the wealth of accompanying material available online. Each major event will be explained in great detail in a series of videos that can be accessed on our website (or through the embedded QR code).

This edition will dive into the first major division on the Chart—The Church Age. All the other major events highlighted in our prophecy chart will be expounded in future *Lamplighter* editions. But all the videos tied to the chart will soon be available online for anyone who wants to get ahead.

Do not listen to the naysayers and do not let your heart be troubled. Jesus will return just the way He departed from His disciples almost 2,000 years ago. Until He does, we've got work to do—and very little time to do it!



*Tim Moore*

Tim Moore  
Executive Editor  
Director | Sr. Evangelist  
Lamb & Lion Ministries



**Charity**  
**Navigator**



The *Lamplighter* will utilize the NASB or LSB translations interchangeably, and note when other translations are referenced.

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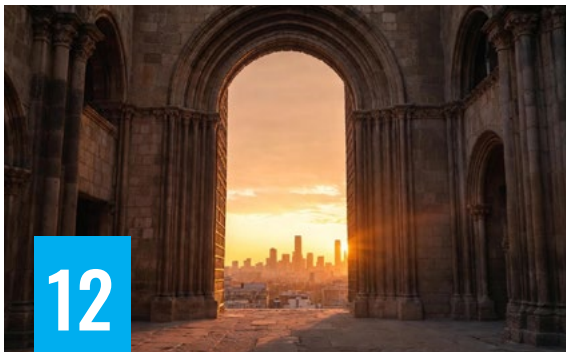
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**JUN**  
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**Lamb & Lion Annual Bible Conference**  
Brookhaven Church - McKinney, TX

**JUN 20**  
**JUL 1**

**Israel Pilgrimage Tour**  
Combining elements of the "Footsteps of Jesus" and the "Battle for Israel"

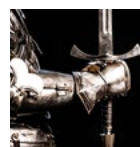
## COMING SOON

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**END TIME  
EVENTS**

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### CALLING A FEW GOOD MEN

Video Podcast with Tim and Chris Moore  
Beginning Tuesday, January 13<sup>th</sup>



- See if you can find the hidden lion located  
in this edition of the *Lamplighter*.



# RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD

THE PROPHETIC WORD MADE MORE SURE

Tim Moore

*Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth. - 2 Timothy 2:15*

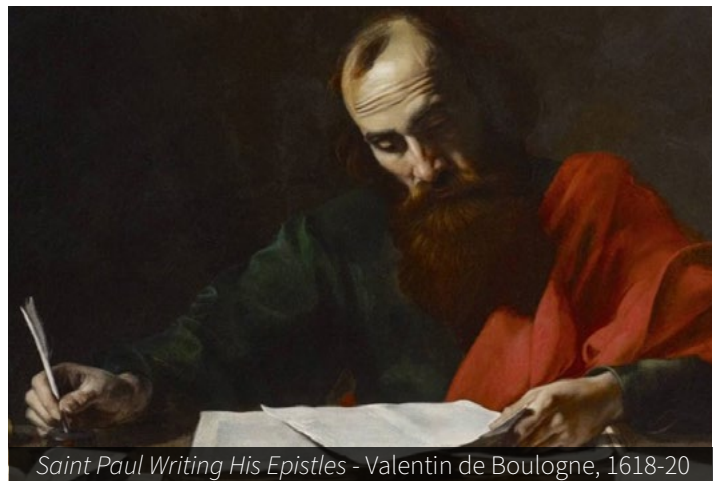
Paul's admonition to his protégé, Timothy, offers wise counsel to followers of Christ still today: rightly divide the Word of God. The challenge throughout the Church Age has been to remain true to God's Word—contending earnestly for the Truth it reveals *in order to* hand down the faith once delivered to future generations of saints.

The key to applying that wisdom lies in approaching the Word with fear and trembling—and without preconceived ideas sprung from the mind of man. That is especially true regarding the End Times.

Without besmirching the position of those who hold non-Pre-Tribulational and Pre-Millennial viewpoints, my experience is that most of them were taught to come to the Bible with a framework already established. For the Amillennialists, that tends to be an expectation that any prophecy dealing with Jesus' Second Coming should be spiritualized. Some go so far as

to say that although the First Advent prophecies were fulfilled *literally*, none of the Second Coming prophecies will be fulfilled in the same manner.

The same is true of Post-Millennial advocates. They elevate the role of the Church to the point that they believe the Church will usher in a golden age of peace,



*Saint Paul Writing His Epistles - Valentin de Boulogne, 1618-20*



righteousness, and holiness on the earth—*forgetting* that while those characteristics should mark individual Christians and the Bride of Christ as a whole, the still-unrestrained Devil will continue to deceive and devour until Christ commands that he be confined for 1,000 years.

At the heart of the disagreement between the various eschatological viewpoints lies the Millennium. We have addressed the theological variance in those perspectives many times, but suffice it to say that anyone who simply opens the Book and reads God's prophetic revelations will tend to come to a Pre-Tribulation, Pre-Millennial understanding.

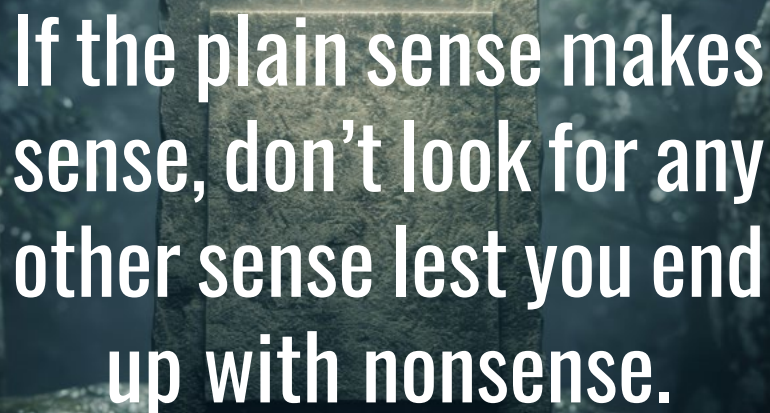
**Eschatology** – the study of the End Times, including the judgment and final destiny of mankind.

## Plain Sense Meaning

The golden rule of Bible interpretation is this: **If the plain sense makes sense, don't look for any other sense, lest you end up with nonsense.**

This method of interpretation makes a few key presumptions:

1. God intended to communicate with mankind.
2. In addition to His revelations about Himself and His plan of salvation, He provides prophetic insights into what lies ahead in His plan for the Ages.
3. God wants everyone who opens the Bible to have access to His truth—regardless of their education level or pedigree.



If the plain sense makes sense, don't look for any other sense lest you end up with nonsense.

Those presumptions play out in a clear pattern of understanding. Let's explore each in turn and be encouraged by God's lovingkindness and self-disclosure.

## He Knows How to Communicate

Ours is the God who speaks. Unlike the mute gods of wood and stone, and the false demonic gods who cannot gaze into the future, the living God speaks authoritative words that convey His power and intentions.

*For as the rain and the snow come down from Heaven, and do not return there without watering the Earth and making it bear and sprout, and furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater; so will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; it will not return empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it (Isaiah 55:10-11).*

He revealed His intentions through His prophets. And, He sent His only Son to testify to the truth—namely, the Gospel of the

Kingdom (John 18:37). Over 1,600 times in the Old Testament alone, the writers prefaced their God-ordained remarks with, "Thus saith the Lord." Paul affirmed Him as the Source of the sacred writings handed down from on high: "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

The question is not whether God communicates, but whether we hear His voice—and are listening.

## He is Close, and Will be Found by All Who Seek

Too many Christians have been infected by the same insidious poison that infected the ancient Israelites, metastasized throughout the Catholic and Orthodox churches, and spreads like a cancer even today. People believe that only men with lofty titles or advanced degrees can understand the Word of God.

Things got so bad in the Medieval period that merely owning a Bible (especially one printed in a language the common people could

**For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there without watering the earth and making it bear and sprout, and giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; it will not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what pleases Me, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.**

**Isaiah 55:10-11**

read) was a capital offense. Priests lorded over their congregations—isolating them from their actual Lord and Savior. Bibles were chained to the altar of the church, lest some inquisitive parishioner dare to take and read for themselves.



In such an environment, biblical understanding was limited, and abuses abounded. That is one of the reasons Martin Luther and others instigated the Reformation. We can rejoice that today the Bible is the most-published book in human history. Over 5 billion copies have been printed and distributed, in virtually every language in the world. The message of the Gospel—foolishness to those who are perishing but the power of God to those who are saved (1 Corinthians 1:18)—can be understood by a child. It can be communicated to people who are illiterate. And it continues to be studied and pondered by men and women with multiple advanced degrees. In short, it is for every sheep who will hear the voice of the Shepherd and respond in believing faith.



## **He Reveals Things to Come**

God seems to delight in revealing what lies ahead. This is not only a source of encouragement and blessing for us, it is also a clear demonstration of His omniscience and power.

We can be encouraged by the fact that none of the pathologies of this world are a surprise to God. He foreknew them, just as He foreknew the fact that mankind would require a Savior. That is why it was His intention from the foundation of the world to offer salvation through the shed blood of the Lamb—His only begotten Son (Revelation 13:8). So, even as the world grows darker around us, we can be assured that God is still in control and that He will orchestrate every stray thread into a beautiful tapestry to His own glory.

The LORD God rightfully boasts about His foresight and power. Contrasting Himself with the deaf, mute, blind, and dumb gods that mankind fashions and follows, He mockingly challenged the false gods, saying,



*“Let them come and tell us what will happen. Tell us the past events, so that we may reflect on them and know the outcome, or tell us the future. Tell us the coming events, then we will know that you are gods. Indeed, do something good or bad, then we will be in awe when we see it. Look, you are nothing and your work is worthless. Anyone who chooses you is detestable” (Isaiah 41:23-25).*

As Daniel said to King Nebuchadnezzar, “There is a God in Heaven who reveals mysteries, and He has made known... what will take place in the last days” Daniel 2:28).

In addition to revealing what will take place, God also chose to provide warning signs for those with eyes to see. I’m reminded of the rumble strips cut into a road as it is nearing an end, or the warning track at the edge of a baseball field that is designed to alert outfielders that they are approaching the wall before a dangerous collision. Woven into His prophetic Word are signs that can be recognized. It’s as if God was absolutely determined that there would be ample indications that His patience will not

abide forever and His Son is coming soon.

Jesus expressed great disappointment that the supposedly religious Jews He encountered were oblivious to the Signs of the Times. Reminding them of age-old signs of nature evident in the color of the sky in morning or evening, He said:

*“Do you know how to discern the appearance of the sky, but cannot discern the signs of the times?” (Matthew 16:3).*

## Do You Know What You are Reading?

At Lamb & Lion Ministries, we are great advocates of simply opening the Book and studying for yourself. We believe the Holy Spirit is faithful to guide us into all truth. Jesus promised as much:

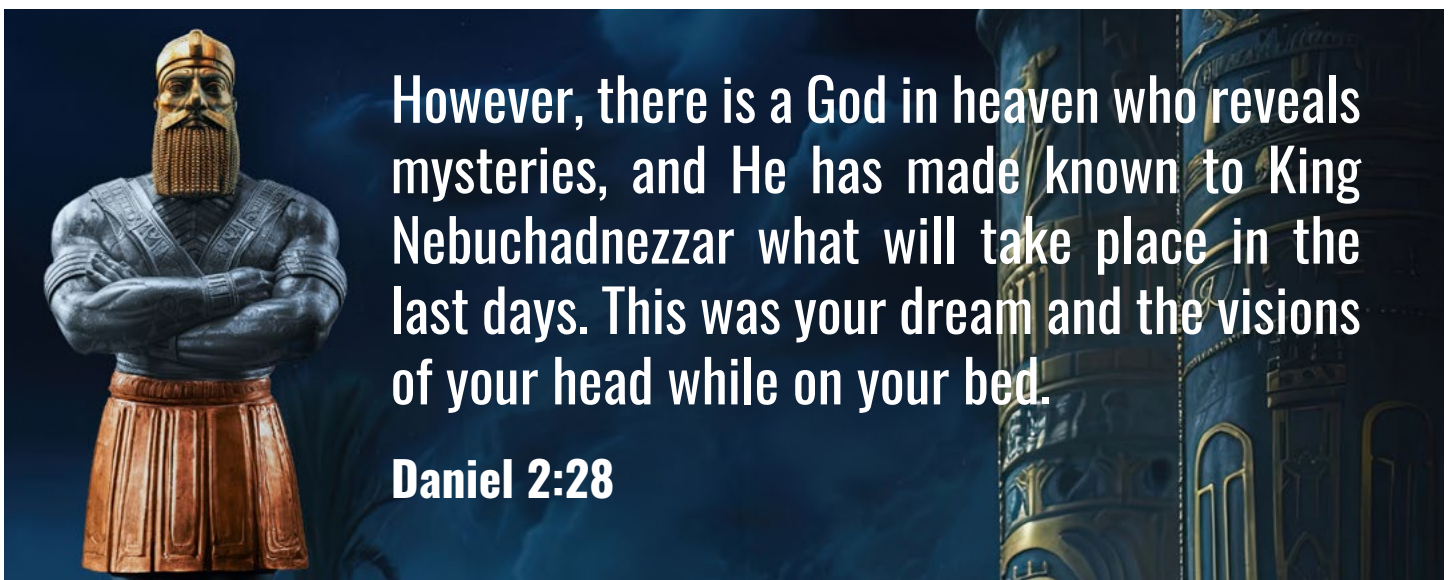
*When He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you” (John 16:13-14).*

I can attest that there is a great blessing in coming to the Word of God with no preconceived notions, no skeletal preformed “outlines” or man-made eschatological systems. When I began studying God’s prophetic Word, the basic outline of what lies ahead was plain enough to see: Jesus promised to return, reign upon the Earth, and institute a thousand years of peace, righteousness, and holiness.

Some nuances and details remain mysterious, but some of them have become more obvious over time—like the provision for the regathering of the House of Israel from the four corners of the world.

Having said that, there are points at which any student of Bible prophecy can be stumped. This too is recognized and recorded in Scripture.

For example, when the Ethiopian eunuch was returning to his home country after coming to Jerusalem to worship (marking him as a man loyal to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob), he was reading from the book of Isaiah (Acts 8). The Bible does not clarify whether the man was Jewish or Gentile, but





# RIGHTLY

# DIVIDE

the lack of specificity (contrasting with the account of Cornelius in Acts 10) suggests that he was likely Jewish. Led by the Spirit, Philip had traveled from Jerusalem down the desert road toward Gaza. The Spirit then commanded him to approach the eunuch and ask, “Do you understand what you are reading?” The eunuch’s answer, “Well, how could I, unless someone guides me?” offered an opening for Philip to share Jesus with him.

Because Philip was obedient to the Holy Spirit and willing to engage, the eunuch accepted his of-

fer of illumination and was saved that day. It is in obedience to the same Holy Spirit that Lamb & Lion shares Gospel-focused prophetic truths and seeks to illuminate God’s prophetic Word.

## Our Gift to You

I always advocate studying God’s Word for yourself. Find a translation you trust and ensure that nothing interferes with the Holy Spirit opening the eyes of your heart as you dive into His Word. The only resource I encourage is a very thorough concordance, because it will

direct you to other passages so that you interpret Scripture with Scripture.

Having studied and welcomed the revelations the Holy Spirit illuminates in my heart, I then turn to other trusted commentaries, books, sermons, and study guides. Which brings us to the new teaching aid we are unveiling this month.

It is in that spirit that we are providing you with a new resource. Written like a typical *Lamplighter* article, our new 4-page bi-fold entitled “Overview of the End Times” contains a full-color Prophecy Study Chart (also at the center of this edition). This stand-alone resource can be shared with family and friends to introduce them to Bible prophecy and expose them to the style and content of a typical *Lamplighter*.

Our next article will explain how we hope this handout and Prophecy Chart will be a blessing to you—and to anyone you share it with. ⌚

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A selection of Tim’s personal stories and some of the cherished, weekly “Moore Musings” that have blessed the Lamb & Lion staff and board. These poignant devotionals will lift your spirit and draw you closer to the Lord who calls us to soar with Him “on laughter-silvered wings.”

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# STANDING ON THE BRINK OF ETERNITY

(The Purpose and Value of Our **Overview of The End Times** Chart)

## THE END CAME GRADUALLY, AND THEN SUDDENLY.

(Paraphrased from *The Sun Also Rises* by Ernest Hemingway)

**H**ow do you compress 45 years of teaching—let alone the totality of Bible prophecy—into a single book focusing on “things to come”?

J. Dwight Pentecost’s book by the same name ran to 670 pages on the subject. John Walvoord’s *Revelation* spanned 400 pages. And David Reagan’s wonderful *God’s Plan for the Ages* addressed the End Times in 383 insightful pages. At 32-36 pages each, the *Lamplighter* magazine is only able to scratch the surface of this urgent topic.

Now imagine conveying the synopsis in a single visual summary of End Times events. That is exactly what we set about to do in recent months.

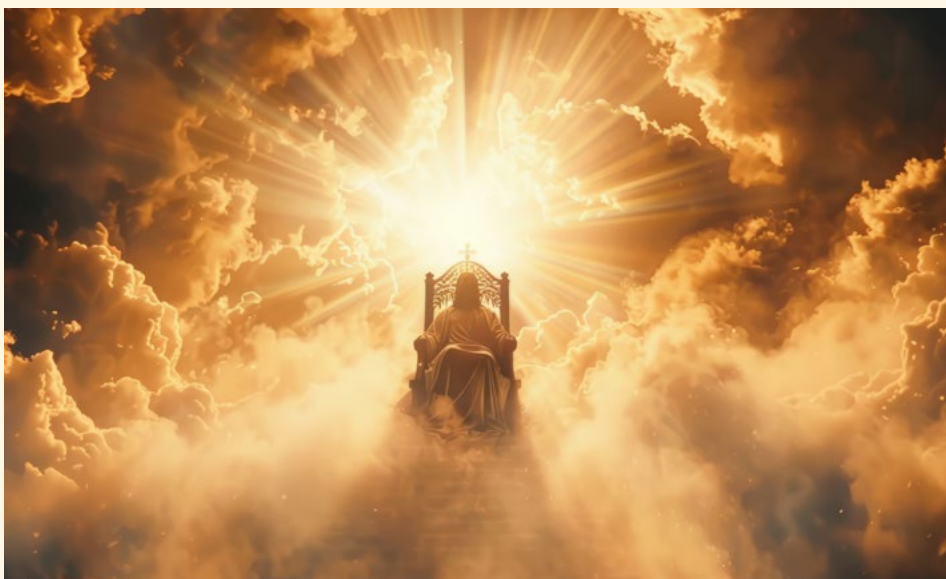
At Lamb & Lion Ministries’ headquarters, we have a 3-foot-by-8-foot chart painted by Clarence Larkin over 100 years ago on canvas that seeks to capture some of the details of the Rapture and Christ’s return to reign on the Earth. Weaving in many of those details and building on a black-and-white chart Lamb & Lion Ministries produced in the 1980s, we turned our graphic design team loose to capture the beauty and grandeur of what will soon take place.

### Know the Times You Live In

Our next article will explain how we hope this hand-out and Prophecy Chart will be a blessing to you—and to anyone you share it with. Standing in the stream of time with the “present” flowing past us into history, it is a daunting task to understand the moment we are







living through—let alone to try and understand “things to come.”

From a biblical perspective, we are living in the Church Age. Some will protest that the term “Church Age” does not appear in the Bible. But the word “Bible” does not appear in the Bible either. The Church Age merely describes the period of time from the founding of the Church (classically understood as Pentecost following Christ’s ascension) to the moment when the Church is taken out of the world at the Rapture.

Jesus said that He would build His Church on the foundation—the rock—of revelation that Peter testified to at Caesarea Philippi. That “rock” was the confession that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God (Matthew 16:16), not the passionate, impulsive man Jesus renamed Peter, as Roman Catholicism has asserted. The Lord has been doing that ever since, reforming and calling His beloved Church (and the individual sheep it contains) to repent—turn back—as necessary throughout the centuries.

*\*\* Jesus’ renaming of Simon to Peter is seen as an affirmation of the solidity of his faith. But*

*Peter’s three-time denial after Christ’s crucifixion undermines that understanding—as was his impulsive rebuke of Jesus just a few verses later that compelled Jesus to turn to Peter and say, “Get behind Me, Satan!” I am convinced instead that Peter’s new name reflects Jesus’ loving sense of humor, given Peter’s notoriously hard head.*

Scripture alludes that this will be known in hindsight as the “Time of the Gentiles”—revealing prophetically that the Church will take on a predominately Gentile consistency. Clearly, soon after the Jewish Diaspora began in AD 70, the Church began to expand dramati-

cally in Gentile nations. Even as the Jewish people suffered the punishment described by Moses for their rebellion against God and their widespread rejection of His Messiah, the new Gentile branch grew and flourished.

The Lord is not done nourishing that branch. The Church continues to add souls (Gentile and Jewish) to the Kingdom. But the growth has transitioned to previously pagan parts of the world, while the light is fading in formerly Christian nations. Meanwhile, the return of the Jews and their reacquisition of Jerusalem signals that the Time of the Gentiles is coming to an end. God’s Spirit has drawn the House of Israel to begin streaming back home, setting the stage for the prophesied culmination of human history.

Added to that, a Jewish pastor in Israel recently told me that while the growth rate of the Gentile Church is slowing or reversing, Messianic Jewish followers of Christ are multiplying at an accelerating rate. Those Jewish believers are part of the contemporary body of Christ we refer to as the Church, but that trend alone indicates that we are on the brink of a major transition.





## What's Coming Next

While we may see other prophesied events take place if Jesus tarries, the next major event on the timeline of End Times events is the Rapture itself. That glorious gathering of all the Church Age saints is something that the Apostles anticipated even in their day. Because they knew that Jesus' return would be imminent—and could be “soon” from an eternal perspective—they were highly motivated to endure any hardship and share the Gospel.

As Jesus tarried, scoffers began to doubt the validity of Jesus' promises or redefine them with fanciful spiritualized interpretations. Those same scoffers now dismiss those who eagerly await the Lord's return with cynical accusations, charging them as:

- Too heavenly minded to be any earthly good
- Having their heads in the clouds
- Unconcerned with growing violence and wickedness
- Unengaged with the world as they retreat to a mountaintop to await the Lord
- Consumed with date-setting

To the contrary, Christians who fully appreciate the nearness of Jesus' coming are committed to urgent evangelism, holy living, and keeping our eyes on Jesus Christ—in the here and now and in anticipation of His imminent return.

## More to Come

The rest of this January/February edition will focus on the first of the series of events our Prophecy Chart

And we have as more sure the prophetic word, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts.

**2 Peter 1:19**

summarizes: the Church Age. Subsequent editions over the next 12 months will successively touch on the rest of the chart. In addition to the print material contained within the *Lamplighter*, we have created a series of video-based teachings tied to the Prophecy Chart. Just click on the QR code contained within the chart graphic (or visit [ChristInProphecy.org](http://ChristInProphecy.org)) to access those extensive resources.

Whether reading, watching, or studying—individually or in small groups—we pray that this chart will be a blessing to you and all who receive a copy.

As we live out the Church Age, we have the great blessing of seeing the prophetic Word “made more sure” and even being fulfilled before our eyes. Heeding Peter, we certainly should “pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the Morning Star arises in [our] hearts” (2 Peter 1:19).

Let's purpose to do so together in the coming months!

## Are You Ready?

Lamb & Lion Ministries has been proclaiming Jesus' soon return for over 45 years. That message grows more timely by the day. He may burst from the heavens before this edition of the *Lamplighter* reaches you electronically or by mail. But here is the other truth: some who receive this magazine may be called Home before the next edition is even written.

Similarly, people all around you—and in your own family and friend circle—are standing on the brink of Eternity. In that instant when an unbeliever passes from this life, the years that seemed to pass so gradually will come to an end all too suddenly.

For their sake—and for God's sake, because our Heavenly Father does not wish for any to perish—it is imperative that we seize every opportunity to urge them to flee from the wrath to come. For *your* love of God (and His great love for us), make sure everyone you know is ready—before it is too late! ⌚



# THE CHURCH IN PROPHECY

## PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE PROMISES

Dr. David Reagan

### Editor's Comment:

*Having introduced our new "Overview of the End Times" Prophecy Chart, we want to focus most of the rest of this edition on The Church Age. In effect since Pentecost when the Holy Spirit dramatically energized the Apostles' evangelism, the Church Age will end when Jesus calls all those who have trusted in Him to "Come up here."*

*This classic article by David Reagan captures the promises fulfilled (and being fulfilled) during the Church Age. These prophecies to the Body of Christ will soon run their course. And when the Church is removed from the world, another series of prophecies will be unleashed.*

There is much talk going around these days about how unified, triumphant and glorious the Church will be in the End Times right before the return of Jesus. This Pollyanna image of the Church is certainly attractive, but it only partially corresponds with what the Bible prophesies.

But before we look at End Time prophecies regarding the Church, let's take a look at the Church in Bible prophecy in the past and present.

### Old Testament Prophecies

Some theologians take the position that the Church is not mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures. This is both right and wrong. It is correct that there is no specific mention of the Church. But, on the other hand, a number of Old Testament prophecies certainly intimated the Church.

**Intimate** – hint at, foreshadow, prophesy

The Apostle Paul referred to five of these prophetic passages in Romans 15 where he justified his preaching of the Gospel to Gentiles. He specifically quoted:

1. **2 Samuel 22:50** and **Psalms 118:25** — both of which speak of a time when God will be praised among the Gentiles (Romans 15:9).
2. **Deuteronomy 32:43** — which says a time will come when Gentiles will rejoice with the Jews (Romans 15:10).
3. **Psalms 117:1** — which says there will be a day when the Gentiles will praise the God of the Jews (Romans 15:11).
4. **Isaiah 11:10** — which says when the Messiah ("the root of Jesse") comes, Gentiles will find hope in Him (Romans 15:12).
5. **Isaiah 52:15** — which says that one day the Gentiles will come to know and understand the Messiah (Romans 15:21).



And these are only a few of the Old Testament prophecies about the future inclusion of Gentiles into God's Plan for the Ages. Isaiah 42:1 says the Messiah will bring "justice to the nations [Gentiles]." A few verses later, Isaiah proclaims that the Messiah will be "a light to the nations [Gentiles]" (Isaiah 42:6). Isaiah repeats this prophecy in Chapter 49 where he quotes God as saying that He will make the Messiah "a light to the nations [Gentiles]" so that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth" (Isaiah 49:6b).

One of my favorite prophetic references to the future inclusion of Gentiles in God's kingdom is found in Isaiah 9:1-2 where the prophet says that one day God will make glorious the "Galilee of the Gentiles." Specifically, he states that "the people who walk in darkness will see a great light [the Messiah]." Another is found in Isaiah 54:1 where the prophet declares that a time will come when "the sons of the desolate one [the Gentiles] will be more numerous than the sons of the married woman [Israel]."

The cornerstone prophecy about the inclusion of Gentiles in God's plan of salvation is to be found in the Abrahamic Covenant, which is first enumerated in Genesis 12:1-3. In this passage, Abraham was told by God that through his descendants "all the families of the earth shall be blessed." That promise certainly included the Gentiles.

## Fulfillment of the Prophecies

Although it was always possible for Gentiles to be saved during Old Testament times by responding to the Creator in faith (Joel 2:32 and



Romans 2:14-15), their specific inclusion in God's Plan for the Ages did not occur until the Day of Pentecost in about 30 AD. This was when the Church was established. The Apostle Peter preached the first Gospel sermon (Acts 2:14-36), and three thousand souls responded.

It is true that all of these were Jews. It is true that the Church began with Jewish people responding to a Jewish message about a Jewish Messiah. And thus, the Church began as what appeared to be a Jewish sect. But within a few years of its establishment, the Church was opened up to Gentiles in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies.

This began when the Apostle Peter was given a vision by God that made it clear that Gentiles were to be included in the Church (Acts 10:9-15). That same day, Peter was summoned to Caesarea Maritime to preach to a Roman soldier named Cornelius (Acts 10:19-22). When Peter shared the Good News of salvation with this soldier, he and all his household received Jesus as Lord and Savior. The Holy Spirit fell on them, and they were baptized in the name of Jesus (Acts 10:34-48).

This turning-point event caused a crisis in the Church. Some questioned whether or not pagan Gen-

tiles should be included. Others argued that if they were to be included, they must be required to submit to circumcision and the laws of the Torah.

These controversies resulted in a conference in Jerusalem where it was decided that it was God's will to include Gentiles (Acts 15:6-29). It was also determined that Gentiles should not be compelled to become practitioners of Jewish laws. In the process, Peter quoted a prophecy from the Hebrew Scriptures that envisioned a day when "the rest of mankind would seek the Lord," including "all the Gentiles" (Acts 15:14-18 in reference to Amos 9:11-12).

Near the end of Paul's second missionary journey, after his arrival in Corinth, he became upset with the persistent resistance of the Jews to the Gospel. This frustration prompted him to declare, "From now on, I shall go to the Gentiles" (Acts 18:6). And over the next few years, the whole complexion of the Church changed from a Jewish sect to a Gentile congregation.

## New Testament Prophecy

The first specific mention of the Church in prophecy is found in the New Testament in Matthew 16:18 where Jesus is recorded as having





said: “Upon this rock I will build My Church; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it.” The context of this statement makes it clear that the “rock” Jesus was referring to was Peter’s confession of Him as “the Christ [Messiah], the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16).

This prophecy has, of course, been fulfilled throughout history since the time Jesus spoke those words. Satan has tried in every way possible to destroy the Church, first through persecution, and then through internal corruption. But Jesus has sustained His Church to this day and continues to do so today in the midst of growing apostasy and increasing worldwide persecution.

I believe Jesus prophesied rather specifically about the future of His Church in the seven letters that He dictated to the Apostle John in Revelation, Chapters 2 and 3. The letters were directed to seven churches located in the area of western Turkey today. There were many more churches than these seven. I think Jesus selected the ones He did because they were representative of seven types of churches and seven periods of church history. In each period, all seven types of

churches would exist, but one type would predominate.

The church at **Ephesus** is representative of the apostolic period from 30 AD to 95 AD, when the Church was concerned about organization and doctrine to the point that it became legalistic.

The church at **Smyrna** represents the persecuted church or the martyr church that existed from 95 AD to about 312 AD. It’s the Church that existed at the time that the book of Revelation was written.

Then we have the liberal church of **Pergamum** representing the apostate church that existed from 312 to 590 AD. This period developed after the Emperor Constantine was converted and the Church and the state were welded together. As is always the case in such unions, the state began to corrupt the Church.

The church at **Thyatira** represents the dark, pagan period from 590 to 1517 when the papacy developed and the Church became full of Babylonian occultic practices.

When we come to the Reformation in 1517, we think of it as a time of life. But it was only partially so. The Reformation produced the

Protestant state churches of Europe — churches that had a reputation for being alive but were really dead because of their union with the state. So the church of **Sardis**, the dead church, with the reputation for being alive, represents the post-Reformation period from 1517 to about 1750.

The opposite of Sardis is the church at **Philadelphia**, the alive church. It represents the period of church history from about 1750, when the Church began to send missionaries out all over the world, until about 1900, when the German School of Higher Criticism invaded seminaries worldwide and destroyed many people’s faith in the Word of God. As a result, people began to look upon the Bible, not as the revealed Word of God, but as man’s search for God, and therefore they decided it was full of myth, legend, and superstition.

The Church of today is represented by the church of **Laodicea**, a church that says to the world, “I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing” (Revelation 3:17). But Jesus says to that church, “You are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked” (3:17). It is a worldly, apathetic, apostate church that will not even let Jesus in the front door (3:20).

The best summary of these letters I have ever encountered is the one penned by John Stott in his book, *Basic Christianity*. He sees the message of Jesus as threefold in nature. To a sinful Church, He is saying, “I know of your sin, repent!” To a doubtful Church, He is saying, “I know of your doubt, believe!” To a fearful Church, He is saying, “I know of your fear, endure!” Repent, believe, and endure — that’s



a very relevant message for the Church today.

## End Time Prophecies

The Bible contains both negative and positive End Times prophecies related to the Church. On the negative side, the Church was warned of:

- **Apostasy**, as “many will fall away” (Matthew 24:10) and “men hold to a form of religion but deny its power” (2 Timothy 3:5)
- **Cultism**, with many following after deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, and even falling away from the faith (1 Timothy 4:1)
- **Heresy**, as people will refuse sound doctrine but will want to have their ears tickled by teachers to satisfy their own desires (2 Timothy 4:3-4)
- **Worldliness**, the inevitable result of a Church compromised and corrupted by the world (Revelation 3:14-22)

*Worldliness is whatever makes sin look normal and righteousness look strange.*

– Kevin DeYoung

- **Judgment**, as God reprove and disciplines those He

loves (Revelation 3:19). This is one End Times prophecy most Bible teachers are eager to ignore.

Not all the prophecies about the Church in the End Times are negative in nature. In fact, there are many more positive ones—some seen today and some still anticipated—and their glorious nature more than overshadows the negative ones.

- **Latter Rain**, the promise of a great outpouring of God’s Spirit in the End Times to empower those who are receptive to stand against the onslaught of Satan (Joel 2:28-30 and cited by Peter in Acts 2:14-21)
- **Rapture**, Jesus’ promise to appear in the heavens at the end of the Church Age—resurrecting the dead in Christ and snatching away all living believers, then giving them all glorified, eternal bodies (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)
- **Rewards**, based on service in this life (2 Corinthians 5:9-10 and 1 Corinthians 3:13-15; 4:5)
- **Celebration**, as the Church (Bride) experiences union with Jesus (our Bridegroom)

at the marriage feast of the Lamb (Revelation 19:6-9)

- **Second Coming**, when the Church will return to Earth with Jesus and will witness His triumph over the Anti-christ and his forces (Revelation 19:11-21)
- **Coronation**, we will witness Jesus crowned King of kings and Lord of lords after He enters the Eastern Gate and begins to reign from the Temple Mount in Jerusalem (Psalm 24:7-10, Isaiah 2:1-4)
- **Millennium**, when glorified Christians will reign with Jesus for a thousand years as the Earth is flooded with peace, righteousness, and justice (Revelation 20:1-10 and Isaiah 11:9)
- **Eternal State and New Jerusalem**, our “forever home” that Jesus has been preparing and will be placed on the New Earth at the end of the Millennium (John 14:1-4), where the Redeemed will live forever with their Creator and Savior (Revelation 21:1-7 and Revelation 22:1-5).

## Conclusion

So, as you can see, there is both bad news and good news for the Church in the End Times. But the good news is so much better than the bad—so incredibly glorious—that the Apostle Paul was motivated to declare:

*I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us (Romans 8:18).*

Hallelujah and Maranatha! ⌚





# WAKE UP!



*“Wake up, and strengthen the things that remain, which were about to die; for I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of My God. So remember what you have received and heard; and keep it, and repent. Therefore if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you.” – Jesus, the Alpha and Omega, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty. - Revelation 3:2-3*

**A**s the Church Age approaches the completion of its second millennium, Bible literacy is at an all-time low in the formerly Christian West—including in many churches and among many church leaders who ought to know better:

**“Can Christians believe in evolution?**  
The short answer is, ‘Yes.’ ” – prominent Baptist pastor

**“Do [you] teach about the other civilizations of humanity that survived the Flood as well?”** – Pastor who had just visited the Institute for Creation Research Discovery Center museum in Dallas (as quoted by James Gadberry, ICR’s director of development and donor relations in Acts & Facts, July/August 2025, page 19)

**“Was Mary, the mother of Jesus, also Moses’ sister?”** – pilgrim on Lamb & Lion Pilgrimage to Israel

According to a recent Barna Group survey, more Americans are reading the Bible than at any point, but fewer recognize its authority. 36% of Americans say **“the Bible is totally accurate in the principles it teaches”**—down from 43% just 25 years ago. And only 43% of self-identified Christians believe the Bible is inerrant.

**“Love is love.”** – the homosexual marriage-affirming statement cited as Eugene Peterson’s position. Peterson is the Christian pastor who wrote The Message, a widely used paraphrase of the Holy Bible.

**“We are living in the midst of the Tribulation and the Millennium right now.”** – respected pastor in Louisville, KY.

**“...when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?”** – A rhetorical question by Jesus or a prophetic foreshadowing of a tragic trend? ⌚



# Coming Soon on **CHRIST** *in* **PROPHECY**



**TIM MOORE**



**NATHAN JONES**

In addition to the articles focusing on the Overview of the End Times and our new Prophecy Study Chart over the next several editions of the *Lamplighter*, we will feature a series of *Christ in Prophecy* episodes tied to that same theme.

*Christ in Prophecy* can be found on a host of cable, satellite, and broadcast television stations, but you can also access every program via the internet and our YouTube channel.

Over time, we anticipate a greater number of our followers to be watching via a streaming platform, which offers several advantages:

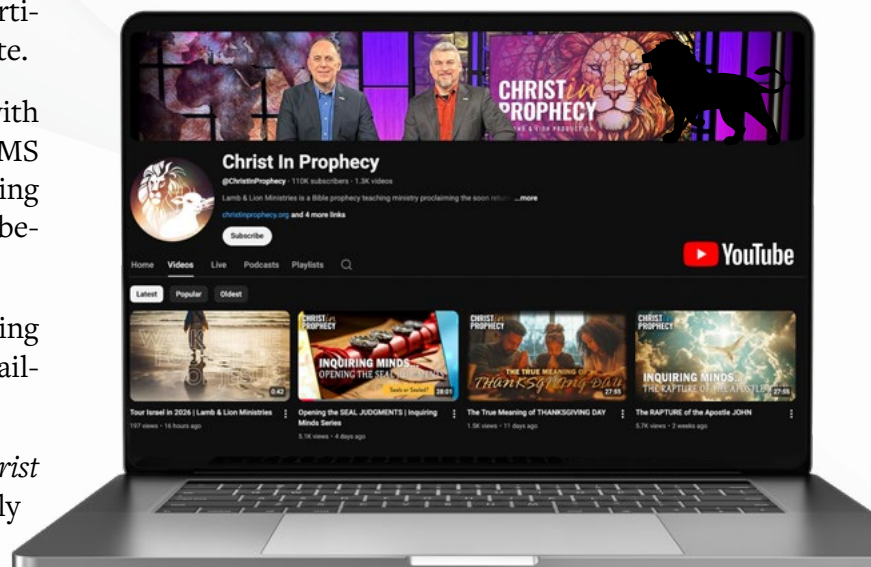
- Viewers can watch, pause, reverse, and resume watching at their discretion.
- Our audience can interact with the Ministry directly, as well as link to further educational articles, programs and information at our website.
- Supporters can share *Christ in Prophecy* with family and friends through links shared via SMS messaging, email and social media, extending the blessing our program seeks to offer far beyond just television viewership.
- Additional content that encourages ongoing biblical education and spiritual growth is available at the fingertips of our online viewers.

While we intend to continue broadcasting *Christ in Prophecy* for the foreseeable future, it is candidly our most significant ministry expense. Our own

mission statement conveys the urgency of our task: sharing the Gospel-centered, glorious news that Jesus is coming soon with as many people as possible, as quickly as possible.

Demographic trends already indicate that more and more people stream most of the content they watch on television. We believe that over time, we will reach even more people in an increasingly cost-effective way. We hope that *Christ in Prophecy* will remain (or become) a cherished part of your regular viewing—and that you will be encouraged by the prophetic truths we proclaim.

**CLICK HERE** or visit **ChristInProphecy.org** for more information and viewing options.





# AN OVERVIEW OF



**Legend:** ● Heaven & Earth ● In Heaven ● On Earth ● In Hell

## 1. The Church Age

Matt. 16:18; Col. 1:26-27; Heb. 1:1-3

## 2. The Rapture

1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:51-55

## A. Bema Seat

Rom. 14:8-12; 2 Cor. 5:10; 2 Tim. 4:8

## 3. Seals

Rev. 6 & 8:1-6

## B. War in Heaven

Rev. 12:7-13

## 4. Trumpets

Rev. 8:7-13; 9:1-21; 11:15-19

## 5. Bowls

Rev. 15-16

## C. Marriage of Jesus & Bride

Rev. 19:7-9

## 6. Second Coming

Zech. 14:1-4, 9; Ps. 24

## X. Satan Bound in the Abyss

Rev. 19:20-20:3

## Y. Great White Throne Judgment/Lake of Fire

1 Cor. 15:24-28; Rev. 20:11-15

## 7. Millennial/Eternal Kingdom

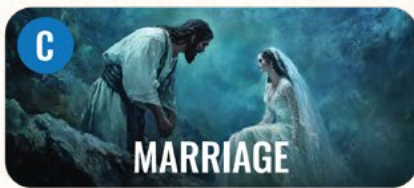
Rev. 20-22



# END-TIME EVENTS



ANGELS IN HEAVEN



C

MARRIAGE



5 BOWLS

THE GREAT TRIBULATION

THE GREAT TRIBULATION (7 Years)

Revelation 15-16



6

SECOND  
COMING

Revelation 19



7

MILLENNIAL/ETERNAL KINGDOM

THE MILLENNIUM (1000 Years)

Revelation 20

Revelation 21-22

7-10  
the Pit  
the  
ire  
20:7-15  
Kingdom

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HELL



X

SATAN BOUND  
IN THE PIT



Great White Throne  
Judgment



Y

LAKE OF FIRE



# 10

## CHARACTERISTICS OF A HEALTHY CHURCH

Bob Russell

Over the past 20 years, I've had the privilege of visiting hundreds of churches across the country. Recently, I've highlighted several exceptional examples in this space. While there are many more I could have named, these congregations serve as reminders of what it means to be a healthy church. Below are ten characteristics these churches share, regardless of their size or location.

### 01

#### A Respected Pastor who Leads with Integrity

A winning football team has a good quarterback. A thriving church is usually led by a qualified pastor whom the congregation loves and respects. While not perfect, he is recognized as a genuine Christ-follower whose leadership inspires trust. Respect isn't built overnight—it grows through faithful service over time. For this reason, the healthiest churches are often

led by pastors who have served for a decade or more, offering stability and continuity. Frequent turnover in the pulpit may signal deeper issues within a congregation.

### 02

#### Supportive Elders who Reinforce the Pastor's Vision, while Holding Him Accountable

A healthy church is not a one-man show. It is dangerous for a church when the pastor has no accountability. Strong and supportive elders play a crucial role by partnering with the pastor to cast vision, advance the church's mission, and provide spiritual and fiscal accountability. When elders reinforce the pastor as the primary leader while providing guidance and oversight, they form a unified leadership team. This partnership fosters confidence within the congregation, ensures wise decision-making, and allows the



church to navigate challenges with strength and clarity.

## 03

### Courageous Biblical Preaching with a Focus on Expository Teaching

While already in prison for preaching, the Apostle Paul requested others to pray for him to be bold in proclaiming the Gospel, knowing that its message was offensive to the world. There is incredible power in courageous, Scripture-based preaching. Diluted, feel-good sermons from timid preachers produce an uncertain and feeble church. Healthy churches are fed by pastors who teach and apply biblical truths with conviction and love. Such preaching convicts sinners, uplifts the discouraged, and spiritually nourishes the congregation. A good shepherd tends to and feeds his sheep, knowing the Bible is water, bread, milk, meat, and honey for the soul.

## 04

### Meaningful Congregational Worship

In a healthy church, the worship music exalts Christ, praising Him for His holiness and goodness. While excellence on the platform matters, it should not be seen as a performance by those on stage but as a congregational act of glorifying God. When worship is God-centered and Spirit-filled, the entire church senses God's presence and responds with joyful participation, declaring, "Surely the Spirit of the Lord is in this place."



## 05

### A Compassionate Heart for the Hurting

A healthy church ministers to those in need, both inside and outside its walls. It starts with providing prayer support, benevolence, and encouragement for members, then extends outward to the broader community. Whether through addiction recovery programs, food drives, or disaster relief efforts, compassionate churches reflect the Good Samaritan by meeting people where they are and offering Christ's love in tangible ways. The community often recognizes them as a church that genuinely cares.

## 06

### A Contagious Spirit of Joy and Harmony

David wrote, "I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord.'" In a healthy church, this joy is palpable. From warm greetings in the lobby to heartfelt laughter and engaging conversations, a spirit of love and unity draws people in. As Jesus said, "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" (John 13:35, CSB).

## 07

### Steady Numerical Growth

A healthy church, like any healthy organism, grows. Growth may look different depending on the church's size and setting, but a steady in-





crease in attendance, baptisms, and spiritual maturity is a common marker. Whether in a rural community or an urban center, healthy churches guide new believers into deeper relationships with Christ. A healthy church makes disciples who make disciples.

## 08

### Balanced Doctrine over “Denominational Distinctives”

I first heard this phrase expressed at a church-growth conference 50 years ago and have increasingly come to understand its validity. Almost every denomination or movement has a pet doctrine they overemphasize because it’s distinctive to that group. It may be free will, sanctification, spiritual gifts, eternal security, or baptism by immersion. While doctrinal integrity is vital, healthy churches avoid overemphasizing denominational distinctives at the expense of the Gospel. They focus on allegiance to Christ above all else, fostering unity among believers and ensuring sound doctrine is taught in balance. In these churches, Christ increases while secondary labels fade into the background.

## 09

### Diversity that Reflects the Beauty of Heaven

A healthy church reflects generational, racial, and socioeconomic diversity. A church that doesn’t reflect the ethnic or racial demographics of its community or consists only of young adults, the elderly, or the wealthy is not in top condition. The ground is level at the foot of the cross.

Churches that preach the Gospel with authenticity and extend genuine hospitality often find that people of all backgrounds respond. The result is a congregation that mirrors the diversity of God’s kingdom.



## 10

### An Unapologetic Commitment to Evangelism and Discipleship

Jesus commissioned His followers to go and make disciples of all nations and then teach them everything He had shared with them. (See *Matthew 28:18-20*.) The primary mission of the Church is to evangelize and make disciples. However, many churches stray from this primary purpose because, as John Stott wrote, “Evangelism is prickly because it calls people to repentance.” As a result, these churches become focused on meeting social needs, avoiding conflict, and keeping everyone happy.

However, even when it’s uncomfortable or unpopular, healthy churches ensure that evangelism and discipleship remain central to their identity. Whether through local outreach, global missions, or expository preaching and teaching, these churches are passionate about seeing lives transformed by the Gospel. As a result, the waters of the baptism are constantly stirring.

Years ago, David Foster, a pastor of a megachurch in Nashville, shared an observation after visiting many growing churches. He said,

“Bob, I’ve visited almost all the cutting-edge churches and discovered they are markedly different in many ways. But there is one thing that is common in each.” I asked, “What’s that?” He said, “Go into any of those church worship services 15 minutes early and just sit and watch people and feel the atmosphere. There’s always a sense of anticipation among the people. There’s a feeling that God is going to show up here and lost people are going to be saved. Broken people are going to be mended and hungry people are going to be fed.”

*“So, the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers” (Acts 16:5, CSB). ⌚*



Bob Russell served as the beloved pastor of Southeast Christian Church in Louisville for forty years. He continues to encourage pastors and ministry leaders (including Tim Moore) through Bob Russell Ministries.

## Editor’s Comments

One of the most frequently-asked questions Lamb & Lion Ministries has received over the years is whether we can recommend a solid, Bible-believing church in a particular city. Unless we’ve developed a relationship with a specific church, we are unable to declare which church or churches are vibrant and committed to proclaiming the whole counsel of Scripture. And there is simply no way to make such a judgment based on surveys and remote spot-checking.

Bob’s article hit on one sure sign that a church is attuned to the Signs of the Times and encouraging its members to serve as watchmen and women while anticipating the Lord’s return: *There’s a feeling that God is going to show up.* That does not just mean through the presence of the Holy Spirit on a given Sunday (although that expectation is critical). It also means living with real and motivating anticipation that Jesus is coming soon.

Churches with that kind of expectancy are far more likely to engage in serious evangelism, promote authentic discipleship and holy living, and encourage their congregation to keep their eyes on Jesus.

Find a church like that and become actively engaged in what God is doing there. If there are no churches like that in your area, seek out other like-minded Christians and gather for a Bible study to form a new church. Small home churches follow the model of the early church most closely and will grow as they seek to glorify the Lord and edify the saints.

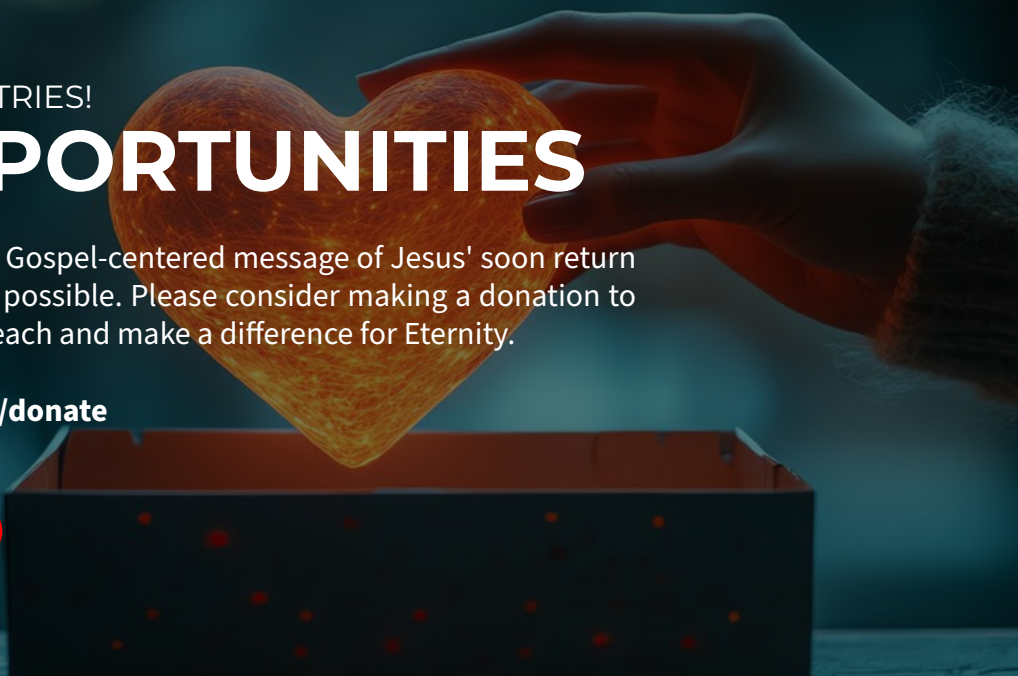
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# TIMES OF THE GENTILES

Tim Moore



*...and Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. - Luke 21:24*

It is often difficult to recognize where you are or what is happening “in the moment.” We can reflect on the past, gaining additional insight through hindsight. And we can ponder and anticipate what lies ahead. But in that continually transiting instant we call the present, perspective can slip away.

Even in the flow of Church history, significant developments and key transition points are best recognized in hindsight. Whether Luther’s 95 Theses, various sweeping revivals, or a slide into apostasy, Christians living through those moments did not initially realize the import of the times they were experiencing. Consider the testimony of Scripture regarding the sons of Issachar. Although all of Israel was living through the same moment in time, they were lauded for their ability “to discern the times, to know what Israel should do” (1 Chronicles 12:32).

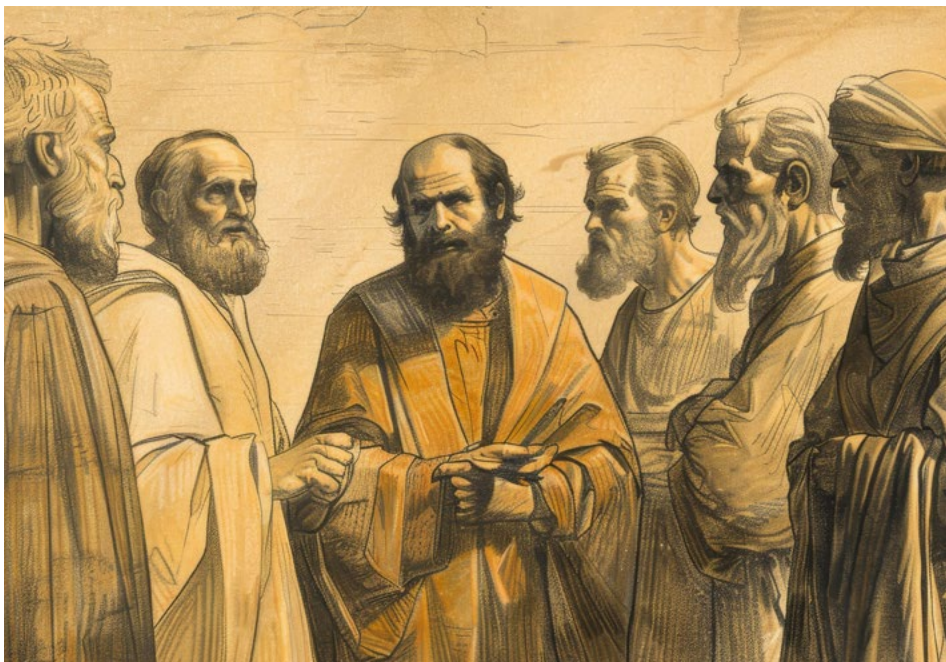
Reflecting on the past 100 years, most of the Gentile Church has been asleep. Although the Signs of

the Times have been multiplying before our eyes—increasing in frequency and intensity, and converging like never before—most faithful followers of Christ seem oblivious that the hour is growing prophetically late.

## Jewish or Gentile

Is the Church Jewish or Gentile? In fact, it is both. But over its nearly 2,000 years history, the Church has morphed from a solely Jewish body to a predominantly Gentile body. Following the introduction of the Gospel throughout the Roman Empire, the Church grew exponentially among the Gentile nations of the world. Sadly, the number and percentage of Jewish believers dwindled over the years.

Clearly, there have always been some Jews who believed in Yeshua Hamashiach. But over time, as many Gentile Church leaders expressed disdain for the Church’s Jewish heritage, Jewish resistance to what



*The Council at Jerusalem with Apostles Discussing Gentile Believers*

Jews came to see as a Gentile religion grew more entrenched. In that cauldron of increasing division and mistrust, Satan sowed seeds of persecution and antisemitism—driving the wedge even further.

Ignored by Jews and Gentiles alike were the words of Jesus to the Canaanite (Gentile) woman: “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matthew 15:24). The fact that He then responded to her faith (and that of other Gentiles) affirmed that He also offers grace to all who come to Him. Paul later clarified that the Gospel is for “the Jew first and also to the Greek (Gentile)” (Romans 1:16 and 2:10). He also urged us not to be uninformed of a mystery: “that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in” (Romans 11:25). I have personally witnessed an accelerating thawing in Jewish receptivity to the Gospel, which tells me that we are nearing the “fullness of the Gentiles” Paul wrote about.

During the Church Age, Paul emphasized that Gentile follow-

ers of Christ should be intentional about “making the Jews jealous” of the faith they now have in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Romans 11:11). The entirety of Romans 9-11 points to God’s continuing plan of salvation for the Jewish people—and their primacy as a chosen nation according to the irrevocable covenant He sealed by His own oath.

Simply put, many Gentile Christians misinterpret the discipline of God as an invalidation of His promises. In doing so, they neglect the clear teaching of Bible prophecy and undermine their own claim to take God at His Word.



## Moses' Warning... and Promise

In Deuteronomy 28 and 29, Moses warned what would happen if the Children of Israel wandered away from God. Delivered shortly after Israel’s 40 years of wandering in the wilderness due to their disobedience at Mount Sinai, his words resonated deeply with the people. They thought, surely our children and our grandchildren will learn from the hard lessons we’ve experienced. Surely they will remain faithful to the Lord our God. But they did not.

The curses Moses foretold were much more lengthy and descriptive than even the blessings promised for faithfulness:

- Dispersion
- Persecution
- Desolation

All the curses Moses foretold (much more lengthy and descriptive than even the blessings promised for faithfulness) came to pass following the Jews’ widespread rejection of the Messiah 2,000 years ago. They were scattered “from one end of the Earth to the other end of Earth” beginning in AD 70 (Deuteronomy 28:64). In those varied





foreign lands, they found no rest in their persecution, but were given “a trembling heart, failing eyes, and despair of soul” (Deuteronomy 28:65). By the middle of the 20th Century, millions of Jews were living out the prophecy of Deuteronomy 28:67: “In the morning you shall say, ‘Would that it were evening!’ And at evening you will say, ‘Would that it were morning!’ because of the dread of your heart which you dread, and for the sight of your eyes which you will see.”

Even the Land became desolate as Moses prophesied. Bereft of its God-ordained inhabitants, it became “a burning waste, unsown and unproductive” (Deuteronomy 29:23).

But Moses also prophesied blessings that would flow in the fullness of time—not because Israel had earned God’s providence, but because He is faithful and will keep all His promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as well as David and others. The blessing would follow the curse as described in passages such as Deuteronomy 30, Ezekiel 36 and 37, and Isaiah 43 and 54.

*“For a brief moment I forsook you, but with great compassion I will gather you. In a flood of fury I hid My face from you for a moment, but with everlasting lovingkindness I will have compassion on you,” says the LORD your Redeemer. (Isaiah 54:7-8, NIV)*

Why did the Lord promise to regather, restore, rejuvenate, and redeem the House of Israel (a prophetically accurate term from Ezekiel 36)? To vindicate the holiness of His own great Name (Ezekiel 36:23). God has kept and will keep His promises because He gave His Word and He is God. Evidence of His promise-keeping mounted throughout the 20th Century.

## End of the Church Age

As I’ve spoken to churches around the nation, I’ve asked seasoned Christians who were alive in 1948 and 1967 if they remember the excitement surrounding developments in Israel. Specifically, were Gentile followers of Christ aware of the prophetic significance of the re-establishment of Israel and the Jews’ repossession of their ancient capital, Jerusalem?

Almost everyone who lived through those times consistently testified that there was no celebration, no sense of “Aha!”, not even faint awareness that God’s prophetic time clock was moving into overdrive. Without a clear understanding of God’s promises to Israel—most people had no real awareness of what was coming to pass before their eyes.



**“For a brief moment I forsook you, but with great compassion I will gather you. In a flood of fury I hid My face from you for a moment, but with everlasting lovingkindness I will have compassion on you,” says Yahweh your Redeemer.**

**Isaiah 54:7-8**





David Ben-Gurion proclaiming the State of Israel under the portrait of Theodor Herzl, 1948

Certainly, some Gentile Christians did realize the prophetic significance of those events. And in Israel, some Jews were also keenly aware of what God was doing in their midst.

When IDF paratroopers captured the Old City of Jerusalem from the Jordanian Army during the Six-Day War, they had to ask Arab shop owners for directions to the Western Wall. They stood in awe before the symbol of Jewish heritage and longing—the most holy site in Judaism today short of the Temple Mount itself. Tears streamed down their faces, but even they were unaware of the prophetic importance of their accomplishment. One man was not.

David Reagan described that moment poignantly:

*Rabbi Shlomo Goren, the chief Rabbi of the Israeli Army, rushed to the wall and blew a shofar. Then, he lifted his hand and said, "I proclaim to you the beginning of the Messianic Age."*

Raised as an Orthodox Jew, Goren understood from Scripture that when the Jews gained control of their ancient capital of Jerusa-

lem, the time of the Gentiles is drawing to a close and the Messiah will be coming soon. Regarding the Jews, Dr. Reagan concluded, "They are not going to be surprised by His appearance. They are going to be surprised by His identity."

While we may not discern a clear line of demarcation dividing the Church Age from the Messianic Age in this life, there is little doubt that the transition from one to another has already started.

## A Prophetic Acceleration

After almost 20 centuries, God's righteous anger (His description) toward the Jewish people began to abate. He heard their cries in the

death camps of Germany and Poland. His heart was moved by their persecution in Russia and all the other places they had been scattered. And He began to bring them back to their longed-for homeland.

With the Jews' reacquisition of their ancient capital, the times of the Gentiles seem to be drawing to a close. Jerusalem will see more drama and trauma when the Antichrist demands worship in the rebuilt temple and as the nations of the world surround the city. To paraphrase Winston Churchill, June 1967, is not the end, but perhaps rather the beginning of the end.

Until the trumpet sounds and Jesus descends from Heaven with a shout to gather His own (the dead in Christ and the living who remain), the Church Age will continue. Jews and Gentiles alike who express believing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ will be added to the Church. And His final standing order remains in effect: occupy until relieved, evangelize while there is still time, and remain watchful for our Redemption is drawing near.

Whether you are a Jew or a Gentile, I pray that you are ready to receive our soon-returning Bridegroom. ⌚





# THE RESTORATION, REDEMPTION, AND REASCENDANCY OF ISRAEL IN THE LAST DAYS

Mottel Baleston



*Mottel leads Messengers Messianic Jewish Fellowship—a Lamb & Lion sister ministry.*

Imagine you have just seated yourself in a fine opera theater, anticipating the start of the production in about 20 minutes. You hear the sounds of scenery being moved into place behind the curtain, and before long, the shuffle of feet as actors and singers all begin to take their various places. The orchestra members in the pit are tuning up their instruments. But the orchestra conductor hasn't taken his place on the podium yet, and there's still the occasional shifting of props heard behind the curtain. While you are eager to have things start, you understand that it won't until all the necessary components are in place and everything is ready.

Friends, we are all anticipating the dramatic events of the “Last Days” foretold in Scripture, and we are seeing the participants in that grand drama starting to take their place. Even though we can't predict the start time, we know things are close because most participants weren't here years ago, but now they are!

Here are two key verses that lay out a general timeline for the events of the Last Days:

*“... Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled” (Luke 21:24, LSB).*

*“Lest you be wise in your own sight, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And in this way all Israel will be saved, as it is written, The Deliverer will come from Zion, he will banish ungodliness from Jacob; and this will be my covenant with them when I take away their sins. As regards the gospel, they are enemies for your sake. But as regards election, they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers. For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable” (Romans 11:25-29, ESV).*

While careful Bible students might have slightly differing understandings of how these two verses might be fulfilled, or a timeline for when they will be fulfilled in the future, it's important to understand that many things in the Bible happened during a ‘transitional period’, rather than all at once. A well-known exam-



ple is the pronouncement of death upon Adam and Eve for their disobedience. Through the Bible, we know a period of many years until they actually passed. But in God's reckoning, the moment that they disobeyed, they lost eternal life and entered into the dying stage. Another example is the transitional nature of the Book of Acts, marking the beginning of the "Dispensation of Grace" at the Cross. Yet, another 40 years during which sacrifices continued to be offered at the Temple in Jerusalem, only then came its prophesied destruction.

So, let me suggest that there are three ongoing trends that characterize this transitional period in which we find ourselves. I'm going to organize these trends using three keywords suggested by Tim Moore of Lamb & Lion Ministries: they are **Restoration, Redemption, and Reascendancy.**

## Restoration

The American novelist Mark Twain had occasion to visit the Holy Land in 1867 and wrote a detailed account of what he found. Twain described the landscape as a "silent, mournful expanse" with a "hopeless, dreary, heart-broken" feeling. He wrote that the hills were barren

and the valleys "unsightly deserts". Regarding the people, he described them as "disfigured wretches" and "squalid humanity" in villages, with many children appearing "in all stages of mutilation and decay". He described Jerusalem in very negative terms. Earlier European pilgrims described similar or even worse conditions. Compared to the positive portrait the Bible paints of the Messianic Kingdom, what Twain observed was the exact opposite. This is what led many churchmen of the time to dismiss the literal notion of these prophecies and minimize them to being allegorical statements or even as having been fulfilled in a spiritualized form in the Church.

Yet the same literal sort of language which prophesied that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, something fulfilled literally, is the same prophetic language found in these passages about the regathering of Israel:

*"Then I Myself will gather the remnant of My flock from all the lands to which I have banished them, and I will return them to their pasture, where they will be fruitful and multiply. I will raise up shepherds over them who will tend them, and they*



*will no longer be afraid or dismayed, nor will any go missing, declares the LORD" (Jeremiah 23:3-7, BSB).*

*"This is what the Lord GOD says: 'I will take the Israelites out of the nations to which they have gone, and I will gather them from all around and bring them into their own land. I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel..." (Ezekiel 37:21-22, BSB).*

While these two passages are multilayered and extend beyond our current concern, they do specifically predict a **RESTORATION** of the Jewish people from out of the nations in which they were dispersed, back into their land of promise. While Jewish people continued to live in the land of Israel after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., during the Byzantine era before the coming of Islam, through the years of conquest from Arabia, and then living under Turkish rule for hundreds of years, they were always a subjugated people in their own land. Yet the Scriptures predicted they would be restored,



Jews at Western Wall by Felix Bonfils, 1870s





and so around the year 1900, we start to see waves of Jewish people from outside the land joining those ancient Jewish communities which had survived. Curiously, the British takeover in 1917 not only meant greater religious freedom, but the growth actually attracted tens of thousands of Arab laborers from outside the land of Israel. Ironically, many of the grandchildren of those Arab laborers now falsely claim to be indigenous “Palestinians” and want to deny legitimacy to the actual indigenous people of the Holy Land, the Jews.

Ultimately, the plan of God moves forward, and in 1948, the re-born State of Israel is recognized by the nations. Immediately, the Islamic nations surrounding them pounced on them violently in an attempt to wipe them out, but their restoration was prophetic, and their preservation guaranteed by the eternal Abrahamic Covenant.

The plan for restoration would move forward in the liberation of the city of Jerusalem in 1967, as it came back under Jewish control. Even more recently, not only is Jerusalem still in Jewish control, but many areas adjacent to the city have been added to the municipal

boundaries with large Jewish communities residing there. Plus, new Jewish communities and towns in nearby Judea and Samaria are enlarging Jewish presence and control there as well.

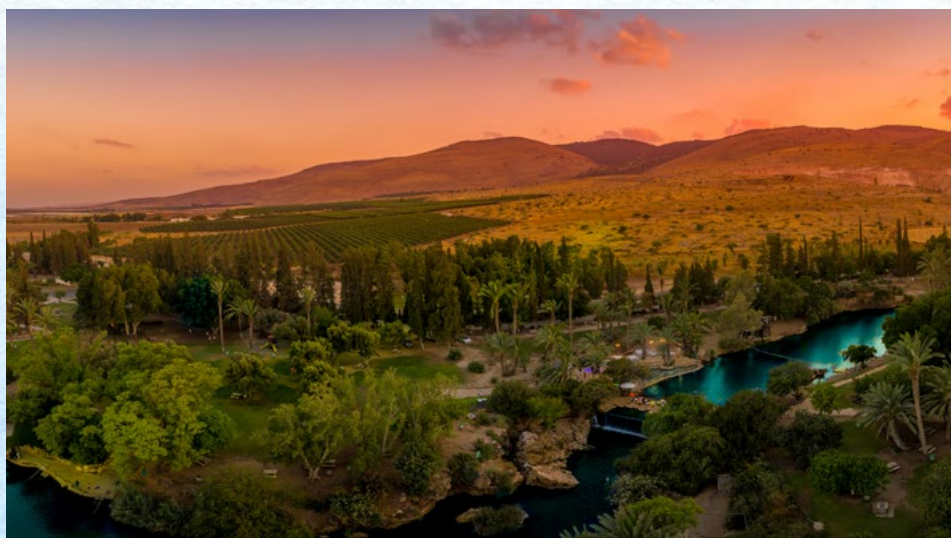
So yes, the first stage of the **RESTORATION OF ISRAEL** is one we are seeing with our own eyes.

## Redemption

Not only is the physical return to the land by the Jewish people prophesied, but even more importantly, the return of the Jewish people to the God of Israel is really the ultimate goal. Scripture lays that out over time through a period of transition. I have been privileged to witness the early parts of

this. Large numbers of Jewish people came to faith in Messiah Jesus on the heels of Jerusalem’s liberation. I saw that shortly after the 1967 Six-Day War, even in my own New York City Jewish community, numbers of young Jewish people began coming to sincere faith in Messiah Jesus and were born again, as many as a quarter million. I am one of them, coming to faith in the late 1970s at age 21, having grown up in a traditional Jewish home in Brooklyn. Again, these “first fruits” only hint at the greater fulfillment of this redemption of Jewish hearts as they come to faith in the Messiah Jesus, with Scripture indicating that a vast number come to faith during the future Tribulation.

Being in regular contact with several Jewish outreach groups, I am very aware of the increased number of Jewish people who have made serious inquiries, especially after the horrific events of the terrorist attack of October 7, 2023. This past summer, it was my privilege to sit down with two Jewish women who had recently come to faith in Messiah out of an Orthodox Jewish background. The discussions that several others and I in the group had with them resulted in the two of them, one from the Northeast





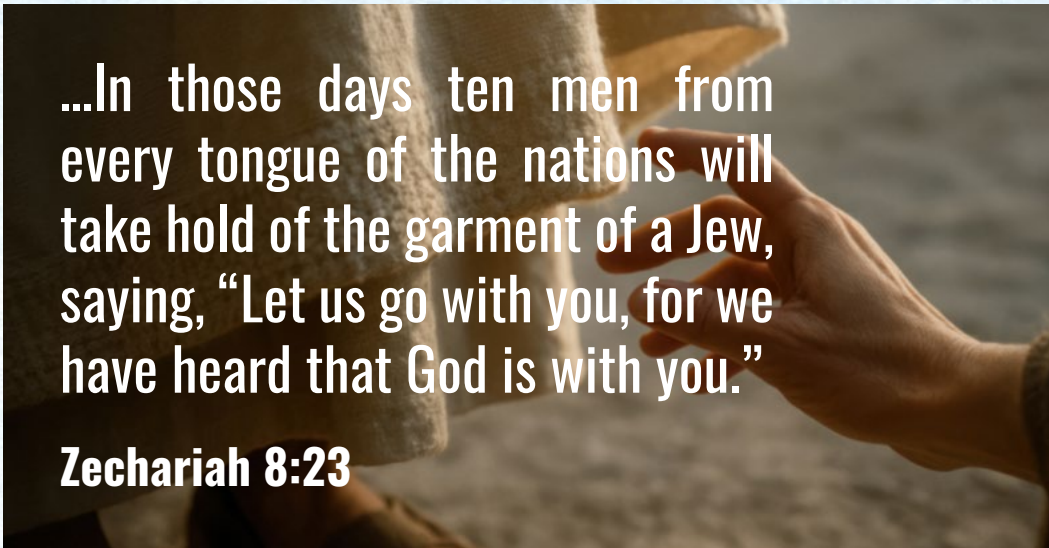
and the other from the Midwest, professing their faith publicly by immersion at the Messianic Jewish gathering we were all involved with. The spiritual redemption of the Jewish people is absolutely central to God's plan for the ages.

## Reascendancy

A careful study of Church history reveals that for the first hundred years in the existence of the believing assemblies, local congregations looked to Jerusalem as their spiritual Mother. The Apostles and, later, their direct appointees were seen as having authority to determine doctrine. This is seen sharply in the book of Acts, and historian Eusebius records the names of the first 15 leaders of the Christian Church—all Jewish believers in Messiah Jesus, based in Jerusalem. With the second revolt against Rome in 132 A.D. and the subsequent dispersal of the Jewish believers from Jerusalem, that time period came to an end. Just one generation later, doctrinal truth started to go off the rails, and we see the spread of supersessionism, replacement theology, and the growth of an apostate, institutional church.

**Supersessionism** = the belief that the Church has superseded the Jews as God's covenant people.

Yet Scripture looks forward to a time when once again "the law will go forth from Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (Isaiah 2:3), a time when the Remnant of Jewish believers will be "the head, and not the tail" (Deuteronomy 28:13). A time is coming when 10 Gentiles will grab hold of the Tallet/prayer fringes of a believing Jew and say, "We want to go with you,



...In those days ten men from every tongue of the nations will take hold of the garment of a Jew, saying, "Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you."

## Zechariah 8:23

for we have heard that God is with you" (Zechariah 8:23).

But here's the difficulty we all have in understanding the reality of the plan. It centers on the fact that God's timetable is much longer and more stretched out than we would like. The majority of us have lived most of our adult lives within the last seven decades, when all the events mentioned were "current." They form our present reality; they are not new developments. But when we take the long-term view, biblically speaking, for all of these events to come about in a very short period is truly prophetic. We read in 2 Peter 3:8 (KJV): "But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day." So let's get on God's timetable.

We need to consider this sharply defined event of just the last 50 years, the scheming of some "Kings of the North" as they plan military attacks on Israel. This has only increased in these last decades as countries such as Iran, Syria, and Iraq have actually attacked Israel, with Russia and China having military contingency plans on file for an attack on Israel from the north.

Friends, these things are very real and very much in our daily news.

It was Messiah Jesus Himself, speaking directly to each believer, yes, to us, when He said in Luke 21:25-28 (ESV),

*"And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth distress of nations in perplexity because of the roaring of the sea and the waves, people fainting with fear and with foreboding of what is coming on the world. For the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, straighten up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near". Lift up your eyes all the more as you see the day drawing near."*

## Eyes Up!!

Brothers and sisters, the evidence for the 'Times of the Gentiles' is starting to draw to a close, and the growing nearness of our Lord's return is all around. Are you watching?

Maranatha! ⌚





# HOW TO BE READY! FOR THE RAPTURE

Nathan Jones

## Editor's Comment:

*Our focus in the next edition of the Lamplighter will be the Rapture. We'll emphasize the glorious homegoing Jesus has promised the Church and touch on the unimaginable glories that await individual believers when we are called heavenward.*

*But the urgency of being ready for Jesus' call to "Come up here!" is too great to wait. With that in mind, we want to ensure that every reader of the Lamplighter knows how to be ready for the Rapture that is coming soon...*

How can one prepare to be raptured up to Heaven and so be with Jesus Christ forevermore?

When it comes to the Rapture, it's often said that a person must prepare, and so, "Be ready!" Jesus Himself implies this saying in Luke 21:28: "Now when these things begin to happen..." ("things" meaning the signs of the End Times, then "look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near." In other words, Jesus was commanding His followers to "Be ready!" because He will indeed return, and we are to "look up" because His return will be swift.

Society has been looking warily at the signs of the End Times Jesus gave in Matthew 24 and Luke 21: false prophets and messiahs,

plagues and diseases, shattering earthquakes, fearful socio-economic events, wars and rumors of wars, surprising signs in the sky, and many more. All these signs Jesus mentioned would mark the time leading up to His return. Well, they are inarguably happening today, and in greater frequency and intensity, just like birth pangs.

Then there's what's known as the "super sign"—the sign of the fig tree. When Israel, symbolized as a fig tree, rebudded and became a nation once more, then that would be the generation that would see the return of Jesus Christ. Israel did indeed become a nation once more in May 1948. The fig tree has rebudded, indicating that the world now finds itself living in the final days leading up to Christ's return.

Since all these End-Time signs Jesus laid out are happening in this day and age, we can be sure that our Lord is coming soon. And, because He's coming soon, we need to "Be ready!"

## What One Must Do to Be Ready

Knowing Christ's return is imminent, we each must ask: "What must I do to be ready?" Jesus answered this question in Luke 21:34-36 (NKJV).

*"But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch*



*therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."*

In this passage, Jesus gave us five things to do to "Be ready!" for His return in the clouds to rapture the Church up to Heaven.

**1** **Number one is to avoid sinning.** If you are a Christian, then you obviously should be living a holy life as an ambassador of our Savior. So, avoid sinning at all costs.

And, if you have yet to have placed your faith in Jesus Christ as your Savior, then you're continuing to live a life of sin, and that means you are nowhere ready for when the Lord returns. Why is that? Because being prepared for the Lord's return requires having accepted Jesus as one's Savior. "He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him" (John 3:36, NKJV). But, once saved, your sins will be forgiven and forgotten, and you can stand before God blameless and holy, no longer abiding under His great wrath.

**2** **Number two is to keep watching.** Jesus commands us to look out for His return. You'll hear some people ignorantly claim that Bible prophecy is all nonsense. And yet, Jesus Himself has said that when we see these signs of the End Times, then keep watch. Therefore, Jesus wants us to watch for His return expectantly.

**3** **Number three points out that since we are living in evil times, we should pray to escape evil.** Pray for the Lord to protect you, your family, your church, your friends, and your nation. We need all the protection we can get living in these dark days.



**4** **Number four, put your hope in the fact that Jesus is returning.** Jesus will rapture all those who believe in Him as Savior, taking them all up to Heaven, before He pours His terrible wrath and judgment upon the world for its continued rebellion. The Rapture is what's called our "blessed hope" (Titus 2:13). Knowing that Christians will not have to face the worst period in all human history—the Tribulation—is meant to provide us hope for today. So, grab hold of that hope!

**5** But how does one grab hold of that hope? **Number five, accept Jesus Christ as your Savior.** If you have not yet accepted Jesus as your Savior, pray in faith and repentance from your heart. Express your belief that Jesus is the Son of God and acknowledge that He died for your sins, then beat death by resurrecting Himself from the grave. When you put your faith and trust in Jesus Christ, He will forgive you of your sins, your guilt will be swept away, and you will inherit eternal life with your Heavenly Father forever.

So, how can one "Be ready!" for Christ's return? In summary: avoid sinning, keep watching, pray to escape evil, hope for the Rapture, and accept Jesus Christ as your Savior. If you do these five things, then you will indeed "Be ready!" for the Rapture. ⌚



# SIGNS OF THE TIMES

JAN/FEB 2026

## NATURE

Following a milder and wetter summer than normal, many Americans have been advised to prepare for a colder and snowier winter than normal, with few alarmists continuing to cry wolf about global warming or climate change. At long last, the jig is up.



A 29-year-old man was charged with starting the deadly Palisades Fire that scorched vast areas of Southern California, illustrating the link between human depravity and natural disasters. Compounded by local government incompetence, thousands continue to suffer.



## SOCIETY

In a dangerous and foreboding turn of events, roving bands of feral youth are wreaking devastation in major American cities. Unparented, undisciplined, and unrestrained, they threaten to render whole cities into no-go zones.



Despite alarming statistics showing higher incidents of child sexual abuse, a Canadian court quietly ruled that multi-partner homosexual men (known as “throuples”) must be given equal rights with other parents; a liberal US state is sure to follow soon.



## SPIRITUAL

The Church of England has elevated Sarah Mullally, a self-described feminist who trained as a nurse and supports LGBTQ rights and homosexual marriage to the role of Archbishop of Canterbury—causing yet another rift with global Anglicans determined to stand on biblical truth.



Major teachers' unions have openly embraced socialism, unrestricted abortion, and virulent anti-Americanism. These groups, which claim to represent our children's educators, make a resurgence of godliness in America far less likely.





This section could be called “Times of the Signs,” because we are living in a season when the signs are multiplying before our eyes. Even as we study and seek understanding about an overview of the End Times following the Rapture, let’s not miss the clear indications that we are on the brink of the Lord’s upward call. How blessed will those be who have longed for His appearing when they hear, “Come up here” (Rev. 4:1) and are caught up in the clouds in the twinkling of an eye. Are you watching and listening?

## WORLD POLITICS

Demonstrating the danger of welcoming thousands of immigrants who have no intention of adopting host-country values, investigators have discovered that Minnesota’s Somali population is sending millions of taxpayer welfare dollars overseas to support African terrorism.



With the four-year war in Ukraine grinding on, President Trump has decided to re-engage and attempt to impose what he says is a least-worst resolution: allowing Russia to keep some ill-gained territory, but saving lives in (and offering a future to) Ukraine.



## TECHNOLOGY

Deep-fake videos are becoming so commonplace and advanced that public figures are increasingly susceptible to false evidence. Our own friend Jonathan Cahn had to denounce a counterfeit video contradicting his true belief in a Pre-Tribulation Rapture.



Electric grids are straining to support the data centers that are popping up as AI and bit coin computing proliferates. Some communities have taken a NIMBY (not in my backyard) attitude, while others embrace the fraught future that is racing toward us.



## ISRAEL

The worldwide handwringing over Gaza ceased as soon as a cease-fire was in place, despite murderous blood-letting by Hamas terrorists against the Palestinian population—proving once again that the world’s outrage is reserved only for Israel. Even Greta Thunberg moved on to seek publicity elsewhere.



President Trump continues to pursue agreements with Middle East countries (even offering an olive branch to former terrorists) in an effort to sow peace and prosperity throughout the region. Time will tell whether he has learned not to divide the Land promised to the House of Israel.





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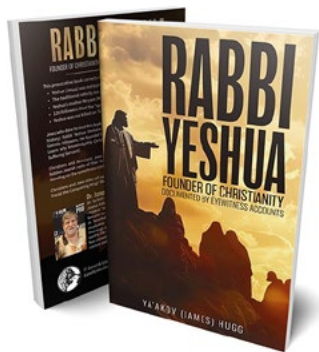
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