



# *“The Future History of the Church, Part 1”*

by James Jacob Prasch

*“Your word is a lamp to my feet  
And a light to my path.”  
Psalm 119:105*



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Everyone wants to know the future. For this reason, people will go to fortunetellers, the occult, and all kinds of other sources to try to discover it. Jesus, however, told us the future.

Before I was a believer, I used to go to a witch who read my tarot cards; she was quite skilled at it, and one day she saw in the cards that I was going to become a follower of Jesus. When she saw it, she began saying "Don't come back and burn me when this happens; it's going to happen, but don't come back and burn me". She was quite accurate. The occult can often be very accurate in its predictions of the future. However, Deuteronomy 18 says that "quite accurate" is not good enough; a true prophet must be **exactly** right **every** time. I see many people today who claim to be prophets and build prophetic ministries around themselves, yet they make outlandish predictions that fail to happen. When this occurs, people defend the false prophet by saying that he is "usually right". That may be so, but the witch in New Jersey who used to read my tarot cards was also usually right. Deuteronomy 18 is very clear: if you speak a word in the name of the Lord, it had better happen or you are a false prophet. (Deut. 18:20-23) This is dangerous; people are better off keeping these "prophecies" in their mouths rather than speaking them when they're not of God. We should never suppress the Holy Spirit, but if a word is truly from the Holy Spirit it will surely happen.

There was an occasion where I witnessed a true prophet: About 40 people were in a room in Mount Carmel, Israel with this man who came from the Soviet Union (as it was called then). There were no diplomatic relations or direct air flights between Israel and the Soviet Union in those days; he had to fly via Europe. He flew into Tel Aviv where someone picked him up at Ben Gurion Airport and brought him up to Galilee. He began speaking in English, making prophesies and predictions. When I heard what he was saying, I decided that either this man was a true prophet or not only was he a false prophet, but he was also out of his mind. This gentleman wrote a book and in it he told of taking the Lord's Supper in Red Square. He said that the Lord told them to throw the communion cup into the Moscow River after which they stood in Red Square and predicted that God would do to the Soviet Empire what He did to Egypt because their government was persecuting the church and refusing to allow Jews to immigrate to

Israel; they proclaimed "'Let My people go', and 'Let My Gospel be preached', or God will destroy your empire. We proclaim a curse on your land – God is going to curse your land." Immediately after that Chernobyl happened and they had the worst harvest of all the bad harvests they'd had. These Christians also said, "God is going to destroy the Soviet war machine"; right after that, the Soviets withdrew from Afghanistan and the Warsaw Pact collapsed. Next these believers turned around to face the Tomb of Lenin in which Lenin was kept permanently embalmed and on display and they said, "This is the spirit of death; God is going to destroy the spirit of Lenin-worship." There were about eleven factories in the Soviet Union that manufactured nothing but statues and busts of Lenin; every one of them closed and on the evening news we saw all these busts and statues with their heads cut off. The believers then turned around to the Kremlin and said, "God is going to destroy your empire; the Soviet Union will collapse, and no one will be able to believe how fast God will judge it. 'Let My people go, and let My Gospel be preached!'"

To say these things in 1984 or 1985 would have been unfathomable, totally unthinkable. You would either have to really be hearing from God or crazy. These were outrageous things to say, but they all happened. I have never met that brother since, and I never even read his book, but I know what he said and I saw it happen right in front of me.

After that I came to Britain to go to Bible College and I saw some people from Kansas City and California calling themselves the Kansas City Prophets and the Vineyard. They came before tens of thousands of people and predicted a great revival and a great Latter-Day Rain was going to come to the United Kingdom in October of 1990. In the years since the "great revival" more mosques have been built in England than churches.

### *Infiltration of the Church*

Deuteronomy 18 says that a false prophet is a "*neve sheqer*"; we don't stone them to death any more, but the sin is no less serious. Jeremiah 5 and 28 make it very clear what false prophets are and Jesus said they would come during the Last Days. One of the biggest mistakes born-again Christians make is this: when we read the Olivet Discourse in Matthew 24 and Luke 21 where Jesus repeats Himself four times regarding

false teachers and false prophets in the Last Days, most of us automatically say, "That's the Jehovah's Witnesses, the Moonies, the Mormons, the Hare Krishnas, Christian Science, etc." While there is no doubt that these people are false prophets and false teachers, and also no doubt that the proliferation of these cults over the past 100 years is in itself a sign of the Last Days and certainly emblematic of the time we live in, if you read the context of Matthew 24, Luke 21, Acts 20, and Matthew 7, those were not the false prophets and false teachers that Jesus and the Apostles were warning about. The ones they warned about are the ones that deceive the elect.

The unsaved are already deceived by the devil; he is out to deceive two kinds of people: the nation of Israel and the Bible-believing church. The nation of Israel is under a spiritual darkness. We see their signs in many places, including Jerusalem, Stamford Hill in London and Crown Heights in Brooklyn, saying "We want the Mashiach now!" Jesus gave a double prediction in John's Gospel that the Jews would believe another who came in His name, though they did not believe Him. (Jn. 5:43) This was fulfilled in the early church's time by Simon bar Kochba but it is certainly also a symbol of the Antichrist who will deceive the Jewish people into thinking that he is their Messiah. The Jews are being set up for this.

So we see that the devil has the world deceived and the Jews deceived; who is he out to deceive now? You and me. Read Matthew 7, Acts 20, Matthew 24, and Luke 21. The false teachers and false prophets that we are warned about in these passages are the ones who get into the church to deceive the elect.

I am very concerned about cults such as the Mormons and the Jehovah's Witnesses, because if born-again Christians were as zealous for the truth as the cults are for their lies, a lot more people would be getting saved rather than joining these cults. The fact that they are so zealous for a lie while the Bible-believing church sits around is in character with the church of Laodicea. It shows what has become of the church in the West. Nonetheless, very few Christians get sucked into the Mormons or Jehovah's Witnesses. If you see a Christian who does, he is either a brand-new believer whom they sheep-napped, or he is a very weak, awkward believer to begin with. Those are not

the false prophets with whom we must be primarily concerned, though we are responsible to warn the unsaved about them. The ones we have to worry about are the ones coming into the church. Spiritual deception increases in the Last Days.

### *Biblical Interpretation from the Jewish Perspective*

There is a Biblical principle understood from a Jewish perspective called “*Qol veh Homer*”, which in English means “light to heavy”. It is the first of the Migdoth of Rabbi Hillel, who was Rabbi Gamaliel's grandfather. Rabbi Gamaliel was tutor to the Apostle Paul when Paul became a rabbi. Rabbi Hillel had seven Migdoth, or principles, of interpreting Scripture. The New Testament uses these repeatedly. *Ool veh Homer*, or light to heavy, is again the first of these. One example of it is in Hebrews 10:25:

*“. . . not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.”*

Something that is true in a light situation becomes especially true in a heavy situation. In this passage we are dealing specifically with the subject of fellowship: fellowship is always important, but in the Last Days it becomes **especially** important. If we cannot stand together, we'll never be able to stand alone when persecution comes.

Another example of “light to heavy” concerning the Last Days is false prophets and teachers. They've always been around – that's the “light”; but in the Last Days, they multiply – that's the “heavy”. Things that are always true become **especially** true in the Last Days, and things that are always dangerous to the church become even more so during the Last Days.

Jewish people in the time of Jesus did not interpret Scripture the way we do. Jesus was a rabbi who taught the same way other rabbis did; He used Midrash. He also used something called the *mashla* and the *nimshal* format. The *mashal* is a description of something from everyday life, from nature, and the *nimshal* is the spiritual meaning in back of it. The book of Proverbs is called in Hebrew “*Mishla*”, the book of *mashlas*. For

example, Proverbs 11:22: "As a ring of gold in a swine's snout," – that is the *mashla* – "so is a lovely woman who lacks discretion." – that is the *nimshla*. A parable is simply an elongated *mashla*.

Our Western concepts of allegory and typology are basically Western repackaging. We need to understand the way Jews thought about the Bible because in Daniel 12:9 it says this:

*"Seal these things up until the time of the end."*

When you see people who write books about Revelation and claim to have it all figured out, be careful. We're told directly in Daniel that these things are sealed. There is no new truth, and no new revelation; however, in the Last Days the Holy Spirit will give understanding to God's people regarding the deeper things of Scripture. We will have no new doctrine, no new truth, and no new revelation, but we **will** have a deeper and clearer understanding of what is already in Scripture. What liberals do is try to interpret the Bible out of its *Sitz im leben*, its cultural context. Evangelicals do the same thing because we use Greek methods of hermeneutics and exegesis to try to understand a Jewish book. There is a lot more that could be said about this subject, but concerning the Last Days I'll simply give you the most important aspect.

### ***How Biblical Prophecy Really Works***

Western Protestant exegesis interprets prophecy in one of four different ways: Preterism, Historicism, Polemicism, or Futurism.

Liberals love Preterism; they say, "There is no God, and even if there was He wouldn't know the future, and even if He did He certainly wouldn't tell Isaiah." Therefore, in their minds when Isaiah predicts events concerning King Cyrus 200 years before their occurrence, (Is. 44:28; 45:1) it proves automatically – *prima fasci* – that Isaiah actually wrote it after the fact, or rather that the book of Isaiah was not written by Isaiah but by someone after the Captivity. Their basis for this is that Isaiah could not possibly have known about King Cyrus 200 years ahead of time. This is an ex-Vaticina interpolation, if

you like theological terms. Liberals cannot believe in a supernatural knowledge of the future, so they embrace Preterism.

The second, Historicism, is what Kingdom-Now people prefer. The Reformers were also greatly inclined toward this view. Historicism says, "The eschatological prophecies of the New Testament were completely fulfilled in the Early Church." The Early Church identified Rome with Babylon; when Peter closes his first epistle he says, "She who is in Babylon greets you." (1 Pe. 5:13) False religion begins in Babylon with Nimrod, finds its way through Asia Minor (particularly the city of Pergamum), and from there, into Greco-Roman civilization. From there it comes into things such as Roman Catholicism, Freemasonry, etc.; however, the root of it all is in Babylon, the false religious system of the world in confederation with the corrupt political system.

The Babylonians destroyed the first Temple on *Tisha ba'v*, roughly the 9th of August on the Hebrew calendar. Under what were nearly identical military circumstances, Rome destroyed the second Temple on the same date, *Tisha ba'v*. Therefore the early Christians began identifying Rome with Babylon; it is the same false religion.

The example I generally use to explain this is Scotland Yard. Scotland Yard is the name of an alleyway between two buildings running from Whitehall to Victoria Embankment in London; it was the original headquarters of the metropolitan police. Now, unlike in the days of Sherlock Holmes, the metropolitan police are located a half-mile away on Victoria St. However, their headquarters is still called Scotland Yard although it is no longer located on that little street off of Whitehall. In other words, the name of the institution has taken the name of its original location. With Babylon it is the same idea. Therefore, in the book of Revelation, when the early church saw the woman on seven hills, representing the Capitoline, since the woman is a city, it would have been Rome to them. (Rev. 17:9)

Therefore, when Rome burned under Nero, it fulfilled the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah that predicted the fall of Babylon. This is the way the early Christians thought. When Mount Vesuvius exploded. Volcanic ash accumulated in the ionosphere and the

upper stratosphere, thus preventing solar and lunar radiation from giving their light over much of the Roman Empire. This actually does happen; I believe the last time it happened was in Iceland during the 1960's. Next, in roughly 70 A.D., the Temple is destroyed and the Romans set up pagan images and worshiped them on the Temple Mount; the Christians of the day believed that was the Abomination of Desolations – *ha shikutz ha meshomen*. Thus these things have been fulfilled; that view is called Historicism.

The Protestant Reformers **loved** Historicism, because they said that it was the Roman Empire, Imperial Rome, which stopped the medieval papacy from blossoming. After Constantine moved his capitol to Constantinople and the Visigoths moved in, then Rome blossomed. When Scripture says that “He who restrains them will be taken out of the way”, (2 Th. 2:6) they interpreted that as Imperial Rome restraining Papal Rome and then being taken out of the way. This is why the Kingdom-Now proponents say that the “Last Days” only refers to the events leading up to 70 A.D., usually denying any future meaning to the book of Revelation and so on.

The third way of interpreting prophecy is Polemicism. Polemicism says: “The book of Revelation is only given to encourage Christians during times of persecution. It reminds them of the glory to come and the judgment of their persecutors, and is thus designed to encourage them.” This is a true point: Revelation opens by stating that there is a blessing on anyone who reads it, and apocalyptic literature will certainly always encourage a persecuted church. That is part of its purpose, but not in entirety.

The fourth method of interpreting prophecy is Futurism, which states that these things are going to happen in the Last Days.

### ***Which Method is Right?***

To a Western Gentile mind using Protestant hermeneutics which are Hellenistic in orientation for reasons I cannot go into here, one of these four methods is the true one. The question is concerning which one you support: are you a Preterist, a Historicist, a

Polemicist, or a Futurist? A Jew in the 1st Century, however, would have been **all four** simultaneously, as Jesus was Himself.

In Matthew 24:15-33 Jesus says that when you see the Abomination of Desolations spoken of by the prophet Daniel, then you will know the End is near. The problem is that the Abomination of Desolations spoken of by Jesus in Matthew 24 and in Luke 21, the Olivet Discourse, had already happened before He mentioned it. Jesus celebrated Hanukkah in John 10, the Feast of Dedication. He knew all about Antiochus Epiphanes setting up the image in the Temple, the pigs being slaughtered in the Temple, and the Temple being re-consecrated by the Maccabees. The Abomination of Desolations prophesied by Daniel had **already** happened during the intertestamental period, but Jesus took that event and prophesied that it would happen **again**. Jesus used Preterism: He took a past event and spoke about it in the future tense.

Then there is Historicism: Once again, look at the Abomination of Desolations as prophesied by Jesus in the Olivet Discourse. When you read Josephus and discover how the Romans destroyed the Temple and set up pagan ensigns on the Temple Mount and worshiped them, you see that it was an Abomination of Desolations. Then, in the 2nd Century, the Emperor Hadrian built a city called the Aerialis Capitolina, putting a temple of Jupiter on the Temple Mount. Yet **another** Abomination of Desolations. Julian the Apostate, the nephew of Constantine who tried to re-paganize the Roman Empire, tried to rebuild the Temple, and all these mysterious fires broke out on the Temple Mount; **another** Abomination of Desolations. Today on the Temple Mount, we have the Mosque of Omar, the Dome of the Rock. On the outside of it, around its periphery, is inscribed a quotation from a surah in the Koran, which is translated: "God has no son". That is still **another** Abomination of Desolations.

Yet there is **still** an Abomination of Desolations to come. All of these preceding ones typify the one that is coming. The point is this: Western ideas of prophecy involve prediction and fulfillment. The Hebrew idea of prophecy is a pattern that is recapitulated; multiple fulfillments with one **ultimate** fulfillment – that is how Jewish prophecy was

understood. Each of the multiple fulfillments is a type of and teaches something about the ultimate one.

Let me continue with another example: When Matthew writes his Nativity narrative he says of Jesus, "*Out of Egypt I have called My Son,*" (Matt. 2:15) quoting from Hosea chapter 11:1. The problem with this is that when you read Hosea chapter 11, you find that Hosea was talking about the Exodus, when the children of Israel came out of Egypt under the leadership of Moses. Yet Matthew takes this, seemingly out of all context, and applies it to Jesus. However, the problem is not that Matthew took it out of context, but that the Western church has taken a Jewish book and constructed its own rules of context. Matthew thought *midrashically*; he thought of prophecy as *pattern*. Let me explain:

### *Midrash*

It begins with Abraham. God judged Pharaoh, and Abraham came out of Egypt along with his descendants in Genesis; Abraham is the archetype, the father of all who believe. Then, in Exodus, God again judges Pharaoh – the wicked king gets judged – and once again Abraham's descendants come out of Egypt. Thus the pattern begins; what happened to Israel replayed what happened first to Abraham. Just as Abraham received money from Pharaoh, so the Israelites plundered the Egyptians in Exodus.

Next, Jesus comes out of Egypt, after once again the wicked king – Herod this time – is judged. Midrashically, Israel alludes to Jesus. When you see things in Scripture such as "Israel My glory, Israel My first-born son", (Ex. 29:43) it is a midrashic allusion to the Messiah as even the rabbis know. Therefore Jesus, the embodiment of Israel, also comes out of Egypt.

Just as the church is the Body of Christ, so is Israel in some sense. Then, in 1 Corinthians 10, we come out of Egypt ourselves! Egypt is a figure of this world; Pharaoh is a figure of the devil, who is the god of this world. And just as Moses goes onto the mountain and makes a covenant with blood on behalf of the people, so does Jesus. Moses led the children of Israel out of Egypt, through the water, and into the Promised

Land. Jesus leads us out of the world, through baptism, and into Heaven. One is a type of the other; we all have an Exodus experience.

But the ultimate meaning is the resurrection and rapture of the church: the same judgments that take place in the book of Exodus are replayed in the book of Revelation. In the same way that Pharaoh's magicians were able to counterfeit the miracles of Moses and Aaron, the Antichrist and his False Prophet will be able to counterfeit the miracles of Jesus and His witnesses. Why is the song of Miriam ("I will sing unto the Lord, for He has triumphed gloriously – the horse and the rider are thrown into the sea!") – sung in Revelation? (Ex. 15:1; Rev. 15:3) The book of Exodus shows us that the destruction of Pharaoh was a typology of the destruction of the devil. Why did the Israelites bring Joseph's bones with them out of Egypt at the front of the procession? As the scriptures tell us in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, "*the dead in Christ will rise first*", and we will shall come out together.

Once again, the Hebrew idea of prophecy is that of a pattern being recapitulated. It is **not** a prediction, but a **pattern** with an ultimate fulfillment. That is the Hebrew concept of eschatological prophecy. In order to really begin to understand what the Bible teaches about the Last Days, we have to stop thinking with a Western, Gentile, Hellenistic mind and begin thinking of the Scriptures in the way the Early Church did. Remember that in Revelation 2 and 3, the church of Ephesus had a lamp stand that the other churches did not have;

*"Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path," (Ps. 119:105)*

The virgins needed oil in their lamps in order to see in the night (Mt. 25:1-13) – we'll come back to that.

In the Last Days, understanding and faithfulness become very important. Remember that the wise virgins of Matthew 25 had the oil in their lamps so that they could see in the night, representing the illumination of the Holy Spirit in our understanding of Scripture. Laodicea needed salve with which to anoint the people's eyes, so that they could see.

(Rev. 3:18) Understanding of Scripture is going to be very closely associated to faithfulness in the Last Days. It says in Daniel that none of the wicked will understand. (Dan. 12:10) Now, it is very easy for God to take somebody who has a pure heart and an empty head and give that person wisdom. However, it is much more difficult for Him to take somebody with a big head and a big intellect and give him a pure heart. Spirit and Truth; God wants us to have both. Simple people are much more likely to get saved than are sophisticated people; but after they do get saved, those simple people are not supposed to stay that way.

### *God's Timeframe*

Now, with these things in view, let us look at Matthew chapter 10, beginning in verse 1:

*"And when He had called His twelve disciples to Him, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease. Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus; Simon the Cananite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him."*

Do you know what "Judas Iscariot" really means? "Jude the Suburbanite". Continuing in verse 5:

*"These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: 'Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans. But rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand'. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give. Provide neither gold nor silver nor copper in your money belts, nor bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor staffs; for a worker is worthy of his food. Now whatever city or town you enter, inquire who in*

*it is worthy, and stay there till you go out. And when you go into a household, greet it. If the household is worthy, let your peace come upon it. But if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. And whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet. Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the Day of Judgment than for that city!*

*"Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. But beware of men, for they will deliver you up to councils and scourge you in their synagogues. You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you. Now brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved. When they persecute you in this city, flee to another. For assuredly, I say to you, you will not have gone through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes. A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master."*

When Jesus sent out the apostles in pairs, were they brought before governors and kings for His name's sake? No. Did the Holy Spirit give them utterance when they were on trial in Matthew 10? No. Did brother deliver up brother and parents deliver up their children? No. Were they hated by all nations for His name's sake when He sent them out in pairs? No. None of it happened. Jesus had been training them, and before that they had been trained by John the Baptist; now He sends them out for their first dry run, saying 'Here is what is going to happen', but none of it did. What happened is that in verse 16 Jesus totally changed time frames.

We have today the Restorationists, who claim they are going to conquer the whole world for Jesus Christ and set up His kingdom before He comes back. They say these prophecies were fulfilled in the Early Church, that **we** are going to be the “Church Triumphant”, etc. etc.; this is total rubbish. The Kingdom is **now**, but **not yet**. There are two terms: One is “inaugural eschatology” and the other is “over-realized eschatology”.

Inaugural eschatology means that the Kingdom has broken in, Satan's powers are being thrown back, he can't possibly win, but the ultimate victory does not come until Christ returns. Look at Daniel chapter 7:21:

*"I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom."*

That replays the story of the Maccabees, so the Restorationists would say that this was fulfilled with the Maccabees or with the Early Church, but that we are the Kingdom Now. That is over-realized eschatology, and it is totally wrong. There will be a falling away, there will be a persecution, and there will be an Antichrist. The church will be victorious, but that ultimate victory depends on the return of Jesus.

### ***The Issue of the Cross***

The other thing is that Matthew 10 says we will be brought before governors and kings, persecuted for the sake of the name of Jesus Christ, and that a servant is not above his master.

I have a friend who was involved in Christian Science for 20 years before he was saved. E. W. Kenyon admitted that Mary Baker Eddy, the founder of Christian Science, influenced him. The whole line of thinking begun by Kenyon – “My body is lying to me”, etc. – was begun by Christian Science, which also does not believe in the medical profession. The things you hear being taught by Kenneth Copeland and Kenneth Hagin were all learned from Kenyon, who admittedly got it from Christian Scientist doctrine.

Every false cult and every distortion of the Gospel of Christ will deny the Cross of Jesus in some way, without exception. The Jehovah's Witnesses don't even like to call it a "cross"; they call it a "torture stick", and they say that salvation is obtained through their organization and each individual's commitment to it.

It is the same with Roman Catholicism: Jesus said from the Cross, "It is finished". Roman Catholicism, however, says that the Mass is the same sacrifice as Calvary, that it happens over and over and over again. Roman Catholicism is a fundamental denial of the Cross of Jesus; it is a false religion. There may be true believers in it, but if they are true believers they need to come out of it. You cannot believe or participate in those doctrines and be in the will of God.

Then you have the teaching of the faith-prosperity preachers that teach Jesus died spiritually. Kenneth Copeland, Kenneth Hagin, E.W. Kenyon, and all who follow them say that Jesus got the victory not on the cross but by going to hell and becoming a satanic being of one nature with Satan. That is what they teach, and it is a fundamental denial of the cross. So what happens as a result? "A servant is not above his master." (Mt. 10:24) Because the cross of Jesus is made unimportant to His ministry, living the crucified life becomes unimportant for us also. Instead we are told, "God wants you rich, you'll never get sick, God wants you to have this and that and the other", etc. The cross becomes factored out of the equation.

Again, every distortion of Christianity in the world will reject the cross of Jesus in some way. Paul, conversely, says, "I glory in it (the Cross)". Like the old hymn says – "I will cling to the old rugged cross, and one day exchange it for a crown." We get the crown on that day, not this. Kingdom Now denies this and says we get the crown now. The Bible says the Kingdom is now but **not yet**, the proponents of Kingdom Now say it is **all** now.

### *Switching from the Present to the Future*

Nonetheless, let us return to the basic problem: In Matthew 10 Jesus sends the apostles out, warns that these things will happen, but then they do not come to pass. Look at

Matthew 24; Jesus begins by talking about the Temple in verses one through four. Jesus speaks about the prophecies of Daniel 9, that the Messiah would have to come and die before the second Temple was destroyed. However, He then speaks of events which happen in the lifetimes of some of the apostles and the destruction of the Temple. Jesus does here once again what He did in Matthew 10 – He changes the timeframe in the middle of a conversation. Matthew 24 is the same way – He begins talking about 70 AD, but then He changes timeframe and talks about the end of the world.

The same thing happens in Acts chapter 2, when the Holy Spirit is outpoured and Peter explains it. Peter quotes from Joel chapter 2 in Acts 2:15:

*"For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:*

*'AND IT SHALL COME TO PASS IN THE LAST DAYS, SAYS GOD,  
THAT I WILL POUR OUT OF MY SPIRIT ON ALL FLESH;  
YOUR SONS AND YOUR DAUGHTERS SHALL PROPHECY,  
YOUR YOUNG MEN SHALL SEE VISIONS,  
YOUR OLD MEN SHALL DREAM DREAMS.  
AND ON MY MENSERVANTS AND ON MY MAIDSERVANTS  
I WILL POUR OUT MY SPIRIT IN THOSE DAYS;  
and they shall prophesy.'"*

Were there any prophecies made on the day of Pentecost? No. Verse 19:

*"I WILL SHOW WONDERS IN HEAVEN ABOVE AND SIGNS IN THE EARTH  
BENEATH:*

*BLOOD AND FIRE AND VAPOR OF SMOKE.*

*THE SUN SHALL BE TURNED INTO DARKNESS,*

*AND THE MOON INTO BLOOD,*

*BEFORE THE COMING OF THE GREAT AND AWESOME DAY OF THE LORD.'"*

Was there any great sign in heaven or on earth, any blood, fire, or vapor of smoke on the day of Pentecost? No. Did the sun then turn to darkness or the moon to blood? No. Remember that the sun is a type of Jesus, who is the Son. As it says in Isaiah,

*“Arise and shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the risen LORD is brighter than the sun”. (Is. 60:1)*

All four gospels tell us that the resurrection of Jesus happened at sunrise. The rising of the sun is a metaphor for the rising of the **Son**. The moon, on the other hand, has no light of its own; it only reflects the light of the sun, just as the church has no light of its own but reflects the light of Jesus. I am not denying that these astral phenomena will happen; I am simply saying that if and when they happen, they will simply be a reflection of something deeper. The light of Jesus will no longer be reflected by the church onto the earth and the church will have blood on it – will be persecuted. I don't say that the literal astral events will not occur, only that we must understand the meaning of the metaphors. Verse 21:

*“AND IT SHALL COME TO PASS THAT WHOEVER CALLS ON THE NAME OF THE LORD SHALL BE SAVED.”*

This is called Peter's “*charigma*”, and in Greek it literally states, “This is like that”.

So in Matthew 10, Jesus sends the apostles out in pairs, telling them that some things will happen that don't happen to them. In Matthew 24, He tells the church about something that will happen, which does not happen to them fully, but only partially. Then, in Acts 2, Peter describes what is happening, but none of it actually happens.

But let us take another look at Matthew 10: To whom do these things happen? Jesus sends out the apostles in pairs, telling them they will be brought before governors and kings, they will be persecuted, the Holy Spirit will give them utterance, and they will be betrayed by their families, but to persevere to the end and they will be saved. That didn't happen to the apostles in Matthew 10; but to whom did it happen? Every one of those

things happened to Jesus. What happened to Him in **His** last days will happen also to the church in **our** last days. Betrayed, brought before governors and kings, people selling each other down the river and stabbing one another in the back, but the ones who persevere will be saved; it will happen to us as it happened to Him.

### *It Begins to Be Replayed*

But then there is something else: in the early chapters of Acts, these things do happen to the apostles. For example, let us look at Acts 4:18-23:

*"So they called them and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said to them, 'Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.' So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding no way of punishing them, because of the people, since they all glorified God for what had been done. For the man was over forty years old on whom this miracle of healing had been performed. And being let go, they went to their own companions and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them."*

So we see the apostles brought before governors and kings, scourged in the synagogue, given utterance by the Holy Spirit, which no one can refute. Then they go on to quote Psalm 2, in Acts 4:25-26:

*"WHY DID THE NATIONS RAGE,  
AND THE PEOPLE PLOT VAIN THINGS?  
THE KINGS OF THE EARTH TOOK THEIR STAND,  
AND THE RULERS WERE GATHERED TOGETHER  
AGAINST THE LORD AND AGAINST HIS CHRIST."*

The Bible frequently represents the tribulation of the church at the hands of the world in the End times by a raging sea.

Psalm 2 happened to Jesus; the Gentiles took counsel against the Lord and against His anointed; now, in Acts, they begin doing it to the church also. Yet then the pattern increases. Let's look at Acts 5:19-25:

*"But at night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out, and said, 'Go, stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life.' And when they heard that, they entered the temple early in the morning and taught. But the high priest and those with him came and called the council together, with all the elders of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought. But when the officers came and did not find them in the prison, they returned and reported, saying, 'Indeed we found the prison shut securely, and the guards standing outside before the doors; but when we opened them, we found no one inside!' now when the high priest, the captain of the temple, and the chief priests heard these things, they wondered what the outcome would be. So one came and told them, saying, 'Look, the men whom you put in prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people!'"*

It is fairly obvious what we have here. Let's look at Matthew 27:65:

*"Pilate said to them, 'You have a guard; go your way, make it as secure as you know how.' So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone and setting the guard."*

Down to Matthew 28:11-14, after the resurrection of Jesus:

*"Now while they were going, behold, some of the guard came into the city and reported to the chief priests all the things that had happened. When they had assembled with the elders and consulted together, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers, saying, 'Tell them, "His disciples*

*came at night and stole Him away while we slept." And if this comes to the governor's ears, we will appease him and make you secure."*

So we see that just as an angel made the way for Jesus to come out of the tomb, so an angel also led the apostles out of prison. Next, the chief priests feared the people in Acts 5:26, just as it says in Luke 22:22.

Once again, in Matthew 10 we see Jesus sending out the apostles in pairs and telling them what will happen; it doesn't happen to them at that time, but it **does** happen to Jesus, and **then** it begins to happen to the apostles and the Early Church. So we know that what happens to Jesus and what happens to the Early Church will be replayed again and will happen also to us. How do we know that? Again, let's look at Matthew 10:17:

*"But beware of men, for they will deliver you up to councils and scourge you in their synagogues. You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you. Now brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against their parents and cause them to be put to death. And you will be hated by all for My name's sake."*

This does not happen in Matthew 10, but let's look at Luke 21:12:

*"But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for My name's sake."*

Notice that He says "before all these things"; the church will be persecuted before the end comes. Continuing in verse 13:

*"But it will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony. Therefore settle it in your hearts not to meditate beforehand on what you will answer; for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist. You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relatives and friends; and they will put some of you to death. And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But not a hair of your head shall be lost. By your patience possess your souls."*

The timeframe then changes again to 70 A.D. What Matthew 10 predicts did not happen then; it did happen to Jesus and to the apostles and to the Early Church, and it is going to happen again to the church in the Last Days. He uses the same words, and I read it from Luke intentionally to show that it is not only Matthew's attempt to construct that idea, but the Holy Spirit put the same thing in Luke.

Then, however, it becomes very conspicuous. We must realize that when we read Acts we are not merely reading the history of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century church, but also the history of the last century church.

### ***First to Christ, Then to Paul***

In John 9:4-6, the rabbis make false charges against Jesus to the Roman authorities. In John 19:4-6, however, Pontius Pilate wants no part in judging Jesus. This is the beginning. The ministry of Paul and **his** last days replayed what happened to Jesus in His last days. False charges were made by the rabbis against Paul to the Roman authorities, but the Roman governor wanted no part of judging Paul either as we see in Acts 18:12-18. What happened to Jesus also happened to Paul.

In Mark 14:12-15, prior to His arrest, Jesus met with His disciples at Passover in an upper room to break bread. In Acts 20:6-8 Paul met with his disciples in an upper room to break bread before he was arrested.

In John 10:15 and in Mark 10:32-34 Jesus predicted His death to His followers, accepting it as God's will for His life. In Acts 20:24-25 we see Paul doing the very same things.

In John 18:11 Jesus' disciples attempted to convince Him to avoid this death, not to go to Judea in order to spare His life. In Acts 21:11-13, Paul's disciples also try to persuade him not to go to Jerusalem in order to save his neck.

Matthew 7:15, 24:11, Mark 13:6, and Luke 21:8 contain warnings from Jesus about wolves that would come to devour the sheep once He left, and He did this at the end of His three-year relationship with them. Acts 20:29-30 shows Paul at the end of three years warning his disciples about false prophets who would come in among them.

Mark 15:12-15, John 19:15, Luke 23:21, and Matt. 27:21-23 record that the multitudes cried out for the death of Jesus, having been incited by the rabbis. In Acts 21:36 and 22:22 we find the multitude demanding Paul's death after having been incited by the rabbis.

Matthew 26:59-61 shows the rabbis trying to obtain false testimony against Jesus; He was falsely accused of teaching against the Torah and the Temple. Acts 21:28 records the same thing happening to Paul – the rabbis falsely accused him of teaching against the Torah and the Temple.

In Luke 23:8 we see how Jesus aroused curiosity, then intrigue, with the civil Roman government; in Acts 22:30 we find that Paul, too, aroused curiosity and then intrigue with the civil Roman government. We will see this happening in the Last Days as well: governments will become infatuated with Christians just as they were in the Early Church, wondering what makes us different.

In John 19 and Matthew 27 the Roman government tried to release Jesus, but then turned the entire affair over to the rabbinic authorities once they were unable to free Him, knowing He was innocent. In Acts 22:30 and 18:15 it happened to Paul.

Matthew 27:24 reveals that the Roman authorities were forced to re-intervene in the case of Jesus in order to prevent rioting; Acts 23:10, 21:34-36 records that the Roman government also had to intervene in Paul's case to prevent rioting.

The Roman governor in Matthew 26:4 came from Caesarea to Jerusalem to judge Jesus when the rabbis formed their conspiracy to kill Him; the Roman proconsul came from Caesarea to Jerusalem to judge Paul under the same circumstances, in Acts 23:12, 21.

Jesus was delivered by His Jewish brothers into the hands of Gentiles and the governor in fulfillment of a specific prophecy as seen in Luke 23:1, Matthew 27:2, Luke 18:32. In Acts 10:18 Paul underwent the same ordeal, again in fulfillment of a specific prophecy.

John 18:22 tells of Jesus being struck for the way He spoke to the high priest; Acts 23:2 tells of Paul also being struck for the same reason.

In Matthew 23:27 Jesus called the religious hypocrites "whitewashed tombs", alluding to the whitewashing of sepulchers for the Pesach. In Acts 23:3 Paul calls the priest a "whitewashed wall".

Jesus used the Resurrection to counter-manipulate the Pharisees and Sadducees against each other when they had come together against Him, in Luke 20:26-40. In Acts 23:9, Paul uses the same strategy.

If you've ever heard the joke that says if you have two Jews you have three opinions, that comes from something known as "*pilpul*". Pilpul is a manner of Rabbinic argumentation which allows you to quote various rabbinic authorities who have commented on other rabbis in order to justify any opinion or condemn any position you choose. It is argument for the sake of argument, and Jesus would not engage in it. At the end of the Sermon on the Mount, when it says the people were amazed because Jesus taught as one with authority and not like the scribes or Pharisees, what it means is that He would not engage in pilpul; He simply said, "This is it", and would not get into all the

theological haggling and nit-picking of the rabbis of His day or the liberals of today. There was one exception to this: Jesus used pilpul in order to get the Pharisees and Sadducees to fight with one another; Paul did likewise, refusing to engage in pilpul except with the aim of causing infighting among the Sadducees and Pharisees.

Once again: Matthew 10 did not happen at the time Jesus spoke those words, but it did happen to Him, then to the apostles, and then to Paul in very conspicuous detail – there is much more to it than I have listed here. Then, in Matthew 24 and Luke 21 we see that it is going to happen to us as well. What happened to Jesus happened to the Early Church, and both of those things together teach about what is going to happen to us. Jewish prophecy is a pattern recapitulated; multiple fulfillments, with each fulfillment teaching something about the *ultimate* fulfillment. If you want to know how we will end up, look at how Jesus ended up; if you want to know what will happen to the church in the last century, look at what happened to the church in the 1st Century.

### *The Typology of the Hebrew Calendar*

Again, when you read the book of Acts, you are reading not only past history, but future history as well. The early church experienced a mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit, corresponding to the spring rains. The Hebrew term “*maim haim*”, or “living water”, is a term for the Holy Spirit. Outpourings of rain are representative of outpourings of the Holy Spirit. There is a spring rain and a latter or autumn rain; there was a mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Early Church, and there will be again on the church of the Last Days. That is one of the reasons you see such an abundance of the gifts of the Spirit in the Early Church and why they return during the Last Days; it has to do with the seasons of rain. This is also why you see Jewish people getting saved in large numbers again – the harvest.

Jesus fulfilled the Spring Feasts of Israel during His first coming. He fulfilled Passover as the Passover lamb that was slain, He fulfilled Firstfruits as the firstfruit of the Resurrection, and He fulfilled Pentecost when He gave the Holy Spirit. Those are the spring holidays, when the spring rains come and prepare the harvest. The long, hot summer corresponds to the age of the Gentile church, but then Jesus fulfills the autumn

holidays upon His return. The rainy season begins again in the autumn, and another harvest comes. Acts 2 quotes Joel 2, saying directly that what was seen in the Early Church will be replayed in the Last Days.

This is one of the most powerful arguments against the error of Cessationism. The Cessationist error that the gifts of the Spirit ended with the apostles, never to be seen again, is just as false on one extreme as Charismania is on the other extreme. The truth is the *via media*. These things are seen in the Early Church, and then you have an outpouring on the church in the Last Days and these things are seen once again.

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit was accompanied by signs and wonders. Acts 2:16-21 predicts that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the Last Days will also be accompanied by signs and wonders. Unfortunately, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the resulting signs and wonders was followed by false doctrine, experiential theology, carnality, and misuse of spiritual gifts – read 1 Corinthians. What happens today? The gifts of the Spirit are followed by experiential theology, carnality, immorality, people substituting the gifts for the Giver, crazy doctrines; the very same thing they had in the Early Church.

The relevance of the law of Moses became a divisive issue among the early Jewish believers as seen in Acts 15 and Galatians 5. Once again, among Messianic Jews, this is happening. Tens of thousands of Jews have been saved during the past 15 years, and we now have the same kinds of issues that were around in the Early Church coming around to us again.

### *The Move of the Gospel*

The known world during the time of the Early Church was the Roman Empire, the Mediterranean Basin, and so on – not much beyond that. Yet we are told in Acts 17:6 that the Gospel turned the world upside down in that time. Matthew 24:14 states that in the Last Days God will shake the earth one more time; the Gospel will go to the ends of the earth and in the Last Days God will shake the earth once more.

We have seen whole Buddhist nations like Korea turn to Christ within one generation. In the largest Muslim nation on earth, Indonesia, two to three million Muslims give their lives to Christ every year, turning their backs on Mohammed. As the Gospel and Christianity decline in the Western world, they explode in the developing world. As the Gospel declines in Protestant countries, it explodes in the Roman Catholic nations. And as the Gentiles turn away from the truth and the grace given to them, the Jews are returning to it.

In the early church, we see in Acts 1: 8, God used the Jews to bring the Gospel to the Gentiles. We see in Revelation 7 possibly, Romans 11 certainly, "What will their restoration be but life from the dead?" – that there can be no mistake about it; God is going to bless the church through the Jewish people. He is going to use Jewish people to evangelize Gentiles as well. Just as God used Jews to bring the Gospel to the Gentiles in the 1st Century, so He is using Gentiles to bring the Gospel back to the Jews in the end. When that happens, God will use these Jewish believers to bless the church.

### *The Resurgence of Anti-Semitism*

Acts 19:33, 34 shows that in the time of the early church there was growing anti-Semitism. In the Last Days, we will again see growing anti-Semitism. The two kinds of people that the Bible calls God's chosen are Jews and born-again Christians; it all goes back to Genesis chapter 3, where God addresses the serpent to say that He will put enmity between it and the woman, between its seed and hers. Anti-Semitism and persecution of the church is like a coin, heads and tails: you can distinguish between them, but you cannot separate them.

Who do Moslems hate the most? Jews and born-again Christians. Under the Communists, behind the Iron Curtain, who was persecuted most? Jews and born-again Christians. Who did the Roman Catholic Church persecute the most over the centuries with its Crusades and its Inquisitions and pogroms? Jews and born-again Christians. Who did the Russian Orthodox Church persecute the most? Jews and born-again Christians.

It all goes back to the Early Church: after the Roman government turned against the church it went after the Jews. That's what happened in 70 A.D. and again in 120-132 A.D. with Bar-Kochba's rebellion, and that is exactly what is going to happen again in the Last Days with the Antichrist. He will come after us first, and then he'll go after the Jews. Anti-Semitism will increase, and through certain Restorationists, it is even coming into the church.

Martin Luther, as an early example, was a man of God if there ever was one; but how he could end up the way he did is a shocking tragedy: he said that peasants should be stabbed in the back, that Jews should be herded into corrals and forced to confess Christ at the point of a knife, and that the German people were to blame for not murdering them to prove they were Christians. This is what is re-entering the church now.

Corrupt political leaders who have tried to exterminate the Jews have always attempted to justify it theologically by quoting people such as Chrysostom and Luther. Today we have the same situation; just read some of the books being published in our time, such as *Whose Promised Land?* or *Blood Brother* – very biased against Israel. People are trying to find Christian preachers who will justify their hatred of Israel and their denial of God's end-times purpose for the Jews, and they are succeeding. Yet God's plan for world redemption will ultimately depend on the redemption of Israel; His plan for the salvation of the world is prophetically bound up with His plan for Israel's salvation. Israel is God's timepiece. This does not mean that the Jews are higher, better, or anything else, but it is true nonetheless.

### *The Resurgence of Rome*

Daniel 7:19,20, Revelation 17:9 – Rome ruled the world in the time of the Early Church. I have no doubt in my mind that the fourth beast of Daniel has to be some kind of a re-confederation of the Roman Empire; we have not heard the last of Rome. The council of Europe was founded by the Treaty of Rome. We must remember this: the emperor was head of the Pantheon of Rome; you could have any god you wanted, as long as you also bowed the knee to the Emperor of Rome. The Hebrew word for “to worship” and “to bow

down” is the same word – “*hasta kovo!*”. When you see Roman Catholics genuflecting before a statue of Mary, that is an act of idolatry.

All gods came into the Pantheon which was headed by the Emperor, who allowed the people to worship any god they wanted as long as they acknowledged him as the spiritual guide of all religions and the political head. He was called Pontificus Maximus, the Pontiff. After Constantine removed his capitol to Constantinople, the Pope became the Pontiff. It amounted to the same thing – someone had a pagan god of gift-giving, so the Pontiff decided he would be called Saint Nicholas; someone else had a pagan god of love, and he was dubbed Saint Valentine. Artemis, Minerva, and all these other goddesses became Mary. Essentially, it remained the same false religion. This is what will happen again in the Last Days.

The Romans had *religio licita* and *religio illicita*; a licensed religion was fine so long as it acknowledged the Pontiff as the guide. Unlicensed religions were those that refused to bow the knee to the emperor and there was only one religion which ultimately fits into this category: ours. The Pontiff condemned it. Pope John Paul II has met with the Dalai Lama, a man worshiped as God by Tibetan Buddhists; he has met with Zoroastrian priests, witch doctors, Moslem imams, orthodox rabbis, and the Archbishop of Canterbury. He says that he respects all religions, and receives the Dalai Lama as a “great spiritual leader” – a man worshiped as God! That is antichrist. He only asked that all these people acknowledge him as the Pontiff.

However, there was one religion that the Pontiff, John Paul II, did not approve of. In Bolivia about six years ago and again in Santo Domingo less than one year ago, the Pope called born-again Christians “rapacious wolves”. *Religio licita* and *religio illicita*; every religion is all right except ours. That is what the Pontiff did two thousand years ago, and that is what he still does today.

Looking at the Greek word for Antichrist, we find that it does not simply mean “against Christ”, but “in place of Christ”. The Pope's title is *Vicarius Christus*, the Vicar of Christ; translated into Greek, the “Vicar of Christ” is “Antichrist”.

That is what was happening in the Early Church, and that is what is happening today. Pope John Paul II has said openly that he wants to see one Europe with one church. He knows very well that with a confederated Europe they have only one thing in common: Roman Catholicism. The Church of England is dropping dead, going back under Rome. George Cary, Archbishop of Canterbury, wrote a book called *The Meeting of Waters*, urging the Anglican church to go back under the papacy. Across Europe, the only thing those people of different languages, different cultures, and different anthropological heritages have to unite them is Roman Catholicism, and the Pope knows that. He wants one Europe with one church; in other words, to go back to what existed before the 16th Century and the Reformation. The Pontiff came after the early Christians, and if the Pontiff gets his way – which he is – he will come after us again. Saved Catholics need to get out of Babylon.

In the time of the Early Church, pagan Rome was the capitol of the world's false religious system. I have no doubt in my mind when I see interfaith meetings that Rome will in some way be representative of the center of the world's false religious system in confederation with its political system in the end. False religion persecuted believers; Acts 19:23-29 shows an example of this, based on the worship of Artemis. Today we have the same thing throughout the world with Mary-worship. Though Mary herself proclaimed her need of a Savior, (Lk. 1:47) Roman Catholicism denies this and worships her.

Mary was the greatest woman who ever lived. The angel Gabriel, whose name means “mighty man of God” in Hebrew, told her,

*"Blessed are you among women" (Luke 1:28).*

What did the greatest woman who ever lived say about herself?

*"My soul magnifies the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my Savior"(Luke 1:46, 47)*

She said, "I need a Savior." Rome, however, denies this, saying that she was conceived without sin. This is very typical behavior that we will see frequently. †††