

THE SEVEN CHURCHES IN PROPHECY

CHAPTER FIVE

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New International Version used throughout unless otherwise stated.

Almost seventy years have passed since God called a shepherd to gather His flock together and prepare them for a special task. As Christ always said, 'Prophecy must be fulfilled', and God has ensured that Herbert Armstrong fulfilled it perfectly (see the article '**Who is the flock marked for slaughter**'). All prophecy has a purpose and it must be fulfilled exactly as God has stated. Well, it should surprise no-one that *most* prophecy is directed to the endtime – the beginning of the Great Day of the Lord – the Millennial Sabbath.

Seventy years after the beginning of Christ's ministry another message was delivered, this is the Book of Revelation. This book begins with a message to the Churches of God, and is given to an apostle and prophet – John. It's a message for seven Churches that then existed in Asia Minor, so obviously these seven Churches have a crucial role to play in the prophecies of this Book.

The Book concludes with a special message in **Rev 22:8** "I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I had heard and seen them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who had been showing them to me. But he said to me, "**Do not do it! I am a fellow-servant with you and your brothers the prophets and of all who keep the words of this Book. Worship God!**" John was an old man at this time. But no doubt he had some brothers with him (not the apostles who had already died), and it was these who had to convey this written message to the Churches and the Tribes of Israel. And it's obvious that they fulfilled their commission because we have this Book today.

Many famous people of the Bible fell down before mighty angels to pay them homage, including Daniel, but John was forbidden to do it. The angel explained that he was a fellow-servant with John and **all his brothers the prophets**. The status of human beings is a little lower than angels and God made them so. But when the Day dawns, this status will be elevated for the people of God. Those who do the work of God's mighty angels will be considered to be fellow-servants with them.

In reference to *another* John – John the Baptist – Christ said he was more than a prophet. What could be more than a prophet? Well David was a prophet – and more! He was also a king and a warrior! David was also the man that God entrusted to the planning of the first Temple (even though his son Solomon built it).

At the end of this period of seventy years, which began in 1933, and which was given by God for the re-establishing of truth and to prepare a people, God will again identify the one who will be more than a prophet. As in the days of Moses, this man will be a Levite from God's own Tribe. He too, will prepare a people for the task that God has set before them.

What is that task, and what is its purpose? Well this raises a great many questions, because God's overall purpose is not always clear throughout the passage of the past six thousand years. In fact, so obscure is God's purpose that many have concluded that God's mission failed, and it was left to Christ to do away with it all. Yet Christ gave no hint of such ambitions, and further, he firmly stated that He had *not* come to **abolish anything**.

The odd thing about the rationale of all this is that the Church has always struggled to understand the meaning of the Temple sacrifices. They understand that Christ was the supreme sacrifice – yet they also understand that they are the body of Christ. What they have failed to understand is that all the sacrifices pointed to them as well as to Christ. They, like Christ, represent some of the sacrifices. This is the meaning of such statements as 'living sacrifices' and 'like sheep to the slaughter'. Most are content to concede that Christ had to be slaughtered, but in regard to

themselves, they see a 'spiritual' fulfillment of these things. Even though God sanctioned the murder of His Son, the Churches reason that God would never permit this of them, but live in hope that God will only require those 'others' like the wicked 'Laodiceans' to be killed. Where do they get such a twisted and myopic view? Certainly not from the Bible!

For those who think Christ did it all for them, some of these things seem a little hard to understand. But why? After all, haven't the Churches of God preserved and established much truth? And haven't they obeyed all God's requirements according to Christ's instructions and teachings? The truth is they have diligently searched the Scriptures to learn what God requires of them and have exercised their duty in a meaningful and faithful way. Unfortunately, many entered the Church by default rather than a sincere desire to serve God. God is in the process of stripping away the dead wood and establishing a core flock of faithful people. These people have a very important role to play in the events immediately ahead. It will require the faith of men like Abraham to believe God and to realize that He is in control and is able to do all that He has said.

Abraham is particularly remarkable for one great act of faith. God demanded the life of Abraham's *only* son Isaac (Ishmael was not considered by God to be Abraham's son), and so he rose up early to do what was required of him. Few men who have walked the earth had the faith of Abraham, and God calls him the father of the faithful. Abraham reasoned that he had no right to question God's judgment in anything, and he was prepared to obey. He also reasoned that God had the power to raise his son from the dead: **Heb 11:17** "By faith Abraham, when God **tested** him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had received the promises was about to sacrifice **his one and only son**, even though God had said to him, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned." **Abraham reasoned that God could raise him from the dead**, and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from the dead."

So these words establish the meaning of Godly faith. The evidence of faith is not merely in lip-service but in actions (see also **James 2:20-24**). And just as God **tested** Abraham, so He intends to test every son He receives. There is no hope that anyone is going to 'fall over the line' by exercising lip-service! It will require the very faith of Abraham – the **father of the faithful**. Those who stepped down into the waters of baptism did so with the expectation that they were giving up their lives. They were literally burying the 'old man', and arising again as regenerated. Baptism is a symbolic gesture – a demonstration of faith that God can raise us from the dead. Baptism is a commitment to God and one which should not be taken lightly.

God has given us an example of whom He considers to be good fruit. When God called upon His holy nation to serve the ruler of the heavenly realm, those who submitted to this ruler were considered to be the good fruit. This was in relation to the King of Babylon – the same Babylon that is being rebuilt today and which will rule over the world. This is what God has recorded for our example today: **Jer 29:15** "You may say, "The LORD has raised up prophets for us in **Babylon**," but this is what the LORD says about the king that sits on David's throne, and all the people who remain in this city, your countrymen who did not go with you into exile – yes, this is what the Almighty says: "**I will send the sword, famine and plague against them** and **I will make them like poor figs that are so bad they cannot be eaten**. I will pursue them with the sword, famine and plague and will make them abhorrent to all the kingdoms of the earth and an object of cursing and horror, of scorn and reproach, among all the nations where I drive them. For they have not listened to my words," declares the LORD, "**words that I sent to them again and again by my servants the prophets**. And you exiles have not listened either," declares the LORD."

Some may argue that all this happened long ago to Judah and Jerusalem, but they overlook the fact that it also speaks of the great and evil city **Babylon** which corrupted the earth immediately after the flood. This is the same city that will feature prominently in the endtime (**Rev 17:5**) and which will be destroyed and left in ruins once more (**Jer 51:6-8, Rev 18:1-3**). The problem arises when people think they can invent their own rendition of the meaning of the name 'Babylon'. Christianity in all its forms is not the enemy of God, and neither are they 'Babylon' even though many deceivers have arisen who claim they are!

Gentile Christianity has much to answer for, including their flagrant disregard for the **Word of God** (**John 1:1**), which they claim to worship. They've attempted many times to pollute and destroy all that God has spoken. But all this fades in obscurity against the background of the influence of Babylon, which is soon to be thrust on the earth. The influence of this city of Babylon will be so well orchestrated that many people will accept its powerful influence and enjoin with their trading bloc. And this is the purpose of Babylon – to exercise authority over all the nations of the earth and to align them with the authority of Satan the devil.

This earth is populated with two races of people – the human race and the spirit race, yet everything is done on a human level. Satan has called to his service many people – rulers and authorities of his realm. Saddam Hussein is one of these, and the biography of this man makes for interesting reading. It might be thought that this man had an expedited passage to his rulership, but the facts tell us otherwise. Great strategy and battles and murders were necessary to propel this man to his

present status. Satan chose the man and brought him through the ranks to fulfill his purpose. Primarily to establish his 'glorious' Babylon!

Anciently, Babylon came to power in the space of less than 20 years. Jeremiah was one of the prophets that God called to service at that time. Through Jeremiah, God proclaimed that His stated purpose was to destroy Babylon (**Jer 51:11**), yet all this was to happen in the distant future. Jeremiah made this very plain with these words: **Jer 51:60** "Jeremiah had written on a scroll about **all the disasters that would come upon Babylon** – all that had been **recorded concerning Babylon**. He said to Seraiah, "When you get to Babylon, see that you read all these words aloud. Then say, 'O LORD, you have said you will destroy this place, so that neither man nor animal will live in it; **it will be desolate forever.**' When you finish reading this scroll, tie a stone to it **and throw it into the Euphrates**. Then say, 'So will Babylon sink to rise no more because of the disaster I will bring on her. And her people will fall.'"

Well men and animals lived in Babylon for centuries after this. And this destruction had still not come upon Babylon even at the time when the Mighty Christ delivered the Book of Revelation to John.

In the meantime, Jeremiah foretold great destruction by Babylon and even foretold the captivity of all the people in the land and the destruction of the Holy City Jerusalem. Many others tried to thwart the prophecies of Jeremiah by inventing their own good outcomes. One of these was a man called Hananiah. Hananiah said this: **Jer 28:2** "This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: 'I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon. Within two years I will bring back to this place all the articles of the LORD'S House that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon removed from here and took to Babylon. I will also bring back to this place **Jehoiachin son of Jehoiakim king of Judah** and all the other exiles from Judah who went to Babylon,' declares the LORD, "for I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon.'"

Well, here's a man who thought he was the spokesman for the LORD Almighty! He was a lying deceiver whose only motive was to contradict a true prophet. As evidence of this, he claims that **Jehoiachin** would be brought back to Jerusalem. He was well aware that God, through Jeremiah, has said otherwise: **Jer 22:24** "As surely as I live," declares the LORD, "even if you, **Jehoiachin son of Jehoiakim king of Judah**, were a signet ring on my right hand, I would still pull you off. I will hand you over to those who seek your life, those you fear – to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and to the Babylonians. I will hurl you and the mother who gave you birth into another country, where neither of you was born, **and there you both will die**. You will **never come back** to the land you long to return to."

False prophets are childish egotists who are so inflated with their own importance that they will go to any lengths to contradict God's messengers even if they have to contradict God Himself! Hananiah was such a man! He knew that by raising the hopes of the people he would gain popularity. Unfortunately, his intelligence didn't match his ego, but he chose the moment well, when all the priests and the people were present. No doubt Jeremiah was appalled by the madness of this self-proclaimed 'prophet'! **Jer 28:5** "Then the prophet Jeremiah replied to the prophet Hananiah before the priests and all the people who were standing in the House of the LORD. He said, "Amen! May the LORD do so! May the LORD fulfill the words you have prophesied by bringing the articles of the LORD'S House and all the exiles back to this place from Babylon. **Nevertheless**, listen to what I have to say in your hearing and in the hearing of all the people: From early times the prophets who preceded you and me have prophesied war, disaster and plague against many countries and great kingdoms. **But the prophet who prophesies peace will be recognized as one truly sent by the LORD only if his prediction comes true.**"

After this, Hananiah engaged in some theatrics to reinforce his lying position (**V10**), and Jeremiah went on his way (**V11**). Jeremiah demurred from debating with this arrogant fool, but God decided to vindicate His prophet Jeremiah! **V12** "Shortly after the prophet Hananiah had broken the yoke off the neck of the prophet Jeremiah, the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah: "Go and tell Hananiah, 'This is what the LORD says: You have broken a wooden yoke, but in its place you will get a yoke of iron. This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel says: I will put a iron yoke on the necks of all these nations to make them serve Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and they will serve him. I will even give him control over the wild animals.'"

It should be noted that Jeremiah had many accurate predictions to his credit at this time, but Hananiah had none! But it's the nature of false prophets to utter many 'prophecies' in the hope that one of them might come true and propel them to greatness. But a prophet is a true prophet only if all his predictions come true. God is never pleased with anyone who speaks lies in His Name! And in this instance, the man who deceived all the people got what he deserved: **V15** "Then the prophet Jeremiah said to Hananiah the prophet, "Listen, Hananiah! The LORD has **not** sent you, **yet you have persuaded this nation to trust in lies**. Therefore, this is what the LORD says: 'I am about to remove you from the face of this earth. This very year you are going to die, because you have preached rebellion against the LORD.'" In the seventh month of that same year, Hananiah the prophet died."

Among the Churches of God many people have arisen who have dared to make predictions that are not based on God's Word. They love to titillate and invent scenarios based on their own imaginations. **God doesn't permit it!** Yet they continue year after year and become emboldened by the lack of any restraint or adversity from God. As long as they get away with it they are without any conscience whatsoever. When their predictions fail to materialize, they ignore it and go on to make other predictions – and all this without the slightest qualm or conscience. Instead of going trembling before Almighty God and begging forgiveness and publicly admitting their guilt, they boldly surge forward with even more bizarre predictions.

In the Churches of God, these people are supposed to be teaching the fundamentals of God's requirements and on the broad foundation of the teachings of the Apostles, and they are supposed to be building a solid structure! But apparently this is not enough; they want to be known as prophets. Since they don't have the Spirit of Prophecy they can't understand prophecy, but then many of them **don't even have the Holy Spirit of God (Jude 1:19)**. It's surprising how many people are fooled by them, and particularly those men **who teach lawlessness**, whom Peter warned to be on guard against (**2Pet 3:17**). These **lawless men** are the ones who claim to be so righteous! And what fantasy they teach! The Great and Righteous God made righteous Laws for all His people that would hold them in good stead and ensure happiness, but these **lawless people** insist that only the House of Israel was required to keep them, and they themselves are exempt.

But their fantasy goes much deeper than this! These same **lawless men who don't have God's Holy Spirit** will go to any lengths to pervert the Word of God. For instance, God made the seventh day holy! The seven day cycle has continued ever since then, and Christ Himself confirmed that the Sabbath was still known and identifiable in His time on earth. Never did He, or for that matter, any of the writers of the New Testament, **ever say that this day is no longer holy!** Instead, Christ confirmed that the Sabbath was made for man. And what possible objection could any man have for resting on a day that God has set aside for the purpose? It's not resting they object to, it's resting on the day **that God made holy** that they're so violently against. They'll happily rest on any other day of the week – but **not** God's Sabbath.

If these people are so perverse to claim the Sabbath is no longer holy (*and without a shred of evidence*, I might add), then why are they so demented in their objection to anyone else resting on it? But this is the nature of **lawless rebels** who they despise the things that God has made holy. God, in His mercy, has made it easy to identify such people. Those who love lawlessness will follow them; those who love God's ways will withdraw from them.

Peter says these lawless wretches are already condemned: **2Pet 2:1** “But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will **secretly introduce destructive heresies** even **denying** the Sovereign Lord who bought them – bringing swift destruction on themselves. Many will follow their shameful ways and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. In their greed these teachers will exploit you **with stories they have made up**. Their **condemnation** has long been hanging over them, and **their destruction has not been sleeping.**” God is not pleading with those who should know better! And any Christian who thinks his tenure is secure – even though he may obey God's Law – yet they are still unprofitable servants! And in this they had better believe Christ: **Luke 17:9** “Would he thank the servant because he did what he was told to do? **So you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, ‘We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty.’**”

You can believe this or not, but if Christ had lived His life perfectly in accordance with all of God's Laws, and then died peacefully in His sleep, then He too, would have been an unprofitable or unworthy servant! Most Christians realize that it was paramount that Christ die in martyrdom. His death is what has set Him aside as the perfect example of Godly servants. When Christ built His Church He gave many people the opportunity to follow Him and reap the same reward.

It's almost beyond belief that Herbert Armstrong was unable to get a single point of prophecy right, yet he recaptured hidden truth and imparted this knowledge in such a way that those whom God called were able to serve as His servants and were blameless. They honoured the Ten Commandments and recognized them as the means by which all mankind must serve the Father. They recognized the requirements of keeping the annual Holydays and made every effort to understand where they pointed and why. They understood that God made certain animals for food and believed Him, and continued to believe Him where He says all other animals are **not** fit for food. They developed a genuine brotherly love for all those God called. They endured adversity and persecution gladly; counting it all joy. They also recognized that Jesus is **the Christ** today – not the mere carpenter which all the rest of Christianity depicts Him as. In short, they loved the Word of God.

In relation to Jesus being **the Christ** today, perhaps the Church of God didn't quite get it right, but at least they didn't go the way of Gentile Christianity in demoting Jesus to a mere man. Today, the Christ is no longer a man but a God – the very Son of the Almighty God. Under the Father, there is no one greater! His enemies today like to just call Him 'Jesus' (usually pronounced Jeeeeezus). Perhaps you'd like to ask a Jewish person the **meaning of the Christ or Messiah**. They'll tell you! It seems that Christianity has already forgotten. They Apostles knew though! This is what they said: **Luke**

24:20 “The chief priests and our rulers handed Him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified Him; but *we had hoped* that **He was the One who was going to redeem Israel.**” Obviously, Christ **didn’t** *redeem* Israel at that time even though all the former Scriptures say that this was part of His expressed purpose.

But Christ made it clear that He first had to undergo **the baptism of death**. **Luke 12:49** “**I have come to bring fire on the earth**, and how I wish it were already kindled! But I have **a baptism to undergo**, and how distressed I am until it is completed! *Do you think I came to bring peace on earth?* **No**, I tell you, but **division**.” So the Christ is to **divide** the nations and kindle a great fire. He **didn’t** come to bring peace but a sword! And anyone who tells you differently is the antichrist: **1John 2:22** “Who is the liar? It is the man who denies that Jesus is **the Christ**. Such a man is the antichrist – **he denies the Father and the Son**.” Yes, these liars insist on demoting Jesus to the status of a mere man and refer to Him in an over-familiar manner by calling Him ‘Jeeezus’. Neither do they worship the Father or even honour Him, but rather they denigrate both Him and His Laws. And John rightly identified these people as the antichrist, and the antichrist are those who will oppose the Mighty Christ when He returns. When He returns to marshal His forces, to kindle a great fire and to remove peace from the earth with His mighty sword, exactly as He stated, the antichrist will fail to recognize Him.

And speaking of the antichrist, these are the ones who make mindless claims about New York or the U.S. being the beast or Babylon, and who dream up all these bizarre scenarios from their own minds. They don’t fear to make these assumptions and deceive many, and neither do they recognize the monstrous insult to the Father and His Son in claiming the House of Israel – **God’s only chosen people** - are the beast or Babylon who will destroy the world. No wonder John calls them **liars** (he was altogether too kind!). I would describe them a little worse than that! Such people will certainly get what they deserve! **Unless they admit their guilt** there is a fearful fire awaiting them, and they will die a second time. These people should never have set themselves up as teachers (**James 3:1**).

When Christ first appeared He came to His own, but they refused to receive Him. This was the Tribe of Judah – the southern kingdom. When He returns He will inherit **God’s own tribe, the Levites** (**Num 8:15-18**), and it’s the Levites who will be **purified** to receive Him (**Mal 3:1-3**).

And of course, it’s the Levites that God has appointed to uproot and to tear down whole nations and to build and to plant. The **Levite** Jeremiah (**Jer 1:1**) was given this instruction: **Jer 1:7** “But the LORD said to me, “Do not say, ‘I am only a child.’ You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you,” declares the LORD. Then the LORD reached out and touched my mouth and said to me, “Now, I have put my words in your mouth. See, **today I appoint you over nations and kingdoms to uproot and tear down, to destroy and overthrow, to build and to plant.**”

Contrary to the teachings of Herbert Armstrong and his fanciful renditions of ‘prophecy’, Jeremiah **didn’t** fulfill these things. And if he did, then the Bible does us a disservice by not recording them. And neither did God reveal the meaning of these prophecies to Armstrong – he merely plagiarized the teachings of others who didn’t know what they were talking about. But God doesn’t leave us guessing, nor does He require us to inquire of other ‘scholars’ who dreamed up interpretations from their own minds. And neither does God allow us to guess the meaning of prophecy! He alone is the revealer of secrets – a point that Daniel strongly made (**Dan 2:27-28**), and God reveals His Plan to His servants – **the prophets** (**Amos 3:7**).

Like all the prophets of old, Jeremiah spoke of the endtime, yet he also gave on-the-ground advice to his contemporaries. In confronting Hananiah’s foolish predictions, Jeremiah made it plain to all that God doesn’t appreciate self-proclaimed prophets speaking for Him. Jeremiah did predict the downfall of Babylon but not in the two year time-span of Hananiah’s prediction. Hananiah paid with his life for his madness. Jeremiah clearly predicted the destruction of Babylon – but he referred to the distant future: **Jer 51:24** “Before your eyes I will repay **Babylon** and **all who live in Babylonia** for all the wrong they have done in Zion,” declares the LORD. I am against you, O destroying mountain, **you who destroy the whole earth**,” declares the LORD. “I will stretch out my hand against you, **roll you off the cliffs**, and make you a burnt-out mountain. No rock will be taken from you for a **cornerstone**, nor any stone for a **foundation**, for **you will be desolate for ever**,” declares the LORD.”

Well this never happened in Jeremiah’s time! And Jeremiah knew that it wouldn’t! But God did require Jeremiah to predict its demise and utter destruction, so he did: **Jer 51:60** “Jeremiah had written on a scroll about all the disasters **that would come upon Babylon**. He said to Seraiah, “When you get to **Babylon**, see that you read all these words aloud. Then say, ‘O LORD, you have said you will destroy *this* place, so that neither man nor animal will live in it; **it will be desolate forever**.’ When you finish reading this scroll, tie a stone to it **and throw it into the Euphrates**. Then say, ‘**So will Babylon sink to rise no more** because of the disaster I will bring upon her. **And her people will fall**.’”

2,500 years later, this still has not been fulfilled. The ancient ruins are being rebuilt today by Saddam Hussein. But God has predicted that the whole city of Babylon will be rolled off the cliffs, and if you look at Babylon today there are no cliffs. However, God has made provision! A giant earthquake will open up and the whole city will be pushed off the cliff into the abyss to be buried

forever and never to be found again. God has confirmed this in the Book of Revelation: **Rev 16:18** “Then there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder and a severe earthquake. No earthquake like it ever occurred since man was on earth, so tremendous was the quake. **The great city split into three parts**, and the cities of nations collapsed. **God remembered Babylon the Great and gave her the cup filled with the wine of the fury of His wrath.**” It’s a little embarrassing for the false prophets that none of these verses mentions Rome – or New York! What lying deceivers they are! They can’t bring themselves to believe God; instead they deny everything the Father and the Son have said.

Even though they are *not* prophets they still prophesied – and blatant lies at that! But are they blameless because they didn’t believe God or because they didn’t understand? No, they are guilty because they **refused** to **believe** God! A little child could understand which city this refers to, and which city resides on the Euphrates River. No, these deceivers wanted to invent their own object of hatred – and Rome or New York was the perfect choice!

Satan’s only choice for a capital city is Babylon. If he wants to rule over all the nations this is his only option and he can do nothing else. Edom (predominantly Saudi Arabia) may attempt to build a comparable city to counter the influence of Babylon, and God warns them: **Mal 1:4** “Edom may say, ‘**Though we have been crushed, we will rebuilt the ruins.**’ But this is what the LORD Almighty says: ‘**They may build, but I will demolish.**’ They will be called ‘The Wicked Land’, a people always under the wrath of the LORD. You will see with your own eyes and say, ‘Great is the LORD – even beyond the borders of Israel.’”

Satan has tested virtually every powerful nation on earth to see if they would serve his purpose, but all of them lacked the ruthless qualities that he demands. And always God crushed his aspirations in defeat. Ultimately he had no choice but to choose the Babylonians – the most ruthless of nations. And of course, **the people of Babylonia**, that is, those who dwell in the former territories of the Babylonian Empire, are the most ruthless people on earth. Whether you want to believe God in this is up to you, but God Himself has said it (**Hab 1:6**). It’s these Moslem hordes that Satan has held in reserve for the moment when he launches his final bid for world conquest. But the leaders of these nations will pale into nothingness compared to Satan’s trump card – the King of Greece! This king will unify the two great factions of Moslems – the north and the south. This king is the very embodiment of one of the basest creatures that ever lived.

If you think Ivan the Terrible was bad, or Attila the Hun or even Hitler, you’ve seen nothing yet! Perhaps you could start by developing a healthy disrespect for the city God hates – Babylon! When it becomes the commercial center for all world trade, you will see all the nations of the earth drinking from her cup, and it will send people mad. And it’s from Babylon on the Euphrates that the three evil spirits will arise to go and gather all the nations of the world, including the eastern Orientals (the dragon-worshippers) for the final showdown against Jerusalem (**Rev 16:12-14**).

Ultimately, every nation will drink from Babylon’s cup, including the House of Israel: **Jer 51:7** “Babylon was a gold cup in the LORD’S hand; she made the whole earth drunk. The nations drank her wine; therefore they have now gone mad.”

Jeremiah recorded a time in the future when God would again gather the **House of Israel** and the **House of Judah**, and remember that the House of Israel had gone into captivity nearly two hundred years before this in 721BC. Only the House of Judah remained in the Holy Land, and they were already under the iron fist of Babylon. With Babylon at their very gates, God predicted death and destruction for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, but spoke of a future time when the situation would be changed. **Jer 33:6** “Nevertheless, I will bring health and healing to it; I will heal my people and will let them enjoy abundant peace and security. I will bring **Judah** and **Israel** back from captivity and will rebuild them as they were before. **I will cleanse them from all the sin they have committed against me and will forgive all their sins of rebellion against me.** Then this city will bring me renown, joy, praise and honour before all nations on earth that hear all the good things I do for it; and they will be in awe and will tremble at the abundant prosperity and peace I provide for it.”

It’s God’s purpose to restore the fallen cities in the Holy Land and to establish Jerusalem as the Capital of the earth – but only at the appointed time. God owns the earth, but there are rulers here who try to control everything, and God permits many of their activities (but with some restraint), and their tenure is secure for an allotted period of 6,000 years. But they are never satisfied unless they reach out their hands to take from what is God’s. These rulers know who God’s elect people are, and they also know that God has set a wall around them to protect them. Every attempt to violate God’s people or God’s territory is a violation against God Himself. As the rulers of all the rest of humanity, these ‘**rulers of the heavenly realm**’ (to use the Biblical term) are required to offer their own people consideration, peace and prosperity. But it never works this way! Instead they are utter tyrants whose domineering cruelty knows no bounds. God knows that many of the people of these tyrants do not agree with all that has been done, and He has made provision for a sprinkling of these people to become fully Israelites with all the entitlements.

It goes without saying that final events will result in all the nations of the earth banding together against the Capital of the earth – Jerusalem – for the great final showdown. God didn’t

hesitate to bring destruction on the whole world in the days of Noah, and neither will He again. We can pontificate to the contrary, but God has made His position abundantly clear. Unfortunately, those who should know better have continued to teach a myopic and foolish approach to God's purpose. Christianity has had their head in the sand for nearly two thousand years. Yet even this has suited God's purpose even though this sounds a little bizarre. While each faction of Christianity struggles to appear more righteous than the others, and to manipulate Scripture to depict themselves as more 'correct' than the others and to gain a following, they have ignored the weightier points that clearly outline their specified purpose.

So what we have today are millions of people trying to gain ascendancy over others in the 'righteousness' stakes. Many of those who obey God's Law *strain* over picky little issues – a point that Christ clearly made – and discouraged! Such people are usually very vigilant to find fault in others. For instance, God made the Sabbath for man as a day of rest, but many people want to make it a day of burden. How hard is it to rest?

Then there are those who say it's impossible to rest on the Sabbath, so they refuse to do so. Of course these adopt the legalist approach of the Jewish leaders of Christ's time who sought to define what was work and what was not. They use these standards to find fault with others – even though Christ counseled against it! Christ and all His disciples remembered the Sabbath and rested on it, and there is no suggestion in the Bible that they didn't! But this doesn't satisfy the hypocritical 'legalists' today who, while refusing to obey the fourth Commandment, find fault with those who do! And what possible excuse could they have for finding fault with someone who obeys the very words **spoken by God** and which **He wrote on tables of stone?**

So God has planned a big clean-up! He is about to use force to get the attention of those who called themselves by the Name of His faithful Son – Christian! If you want to call yourself by this Name, then you had better be following Christ's example. Well the struggle is almost over for the differing factions of Christianity today. None will triumph over the others in the manner in which they had hoped. Instead they will lose their ascendancy and face the grim reality of what God has called them to. But not all! Just a tiny core of a few thousand people will spearhead the fulfillment of God's Plan and purpose, and these will set the example for countless others; not just from the Tribes of Israel, but from every tribe, people, nation and language. The hope of God's Kingdom covers a broad variety of people, but each and everyone of them must become Israelites and follow God's instructions. For those who do, their reward will be great.

Contrary to everything Christianity has believed, and the Churches of God in particular, God has not called them to prepare the way for Christ. This responsibility has been given to a Levite (**Mal 3:1**), and the sooner they wake up to this fact, the sooner they will experience some spiritual enlightenment. It's been stated again and again in all these articles that the House of David is to feature prominently in the endtime (see all of **Zechariah, chapt. 12**), and Jeremiah also spoke of it: **Jer 33:12** "I will make the **descendants of David** my servant and **the Levites who minister before me** as **countless as the stars of the sky** and as **measureless as the sand on the seashore.**"

Doesn't it seem a little odd that God specifically mentions the **descendants of David** and **the Levites** as being the most numerous of all people in the future? For this prophecy to be fulfilled virtually all of humanity must one day become **Levites**. Now the Churches of God are thoroughly convinced in their own minds that they are the center of the universe in all things spiritual. They are soon to learn a bitter lesson in humility! And to be perfectly honest, they have a lot to be humble about! Although to a lesser degree than others, the Churches of God have continuously taught that God's only purpose is to get them saved, and so the emphasis has been narrowly focused on serving themselves. Little do they realize that obeying God is merely the training ground for a greater service that God requires of them. It should be patently obvious to all who have searched the Scriptures to know what that service is. Unfortunately, because of the foggy minds of the Church leaders, this truth never materialized.

Since there are no prophets in the Churches of God (remember the joke about them being a non-profit [prophet] organization?) they could scarcely fulfill the role of prophets. And since their every attempt to prophesy has failed, there remains a need for two prophets to arise in the last days. Clearly, one of these is a Levite just like John the Baptist. This prophet must arise before the great and dreadful Day of the LORD (**Mal 3:1-2**). And in this context, God is going to **purify the Levites** (**V3**).

There is no necessity for anyone to become **Levites** – **yet!** The option is open to you to wait until you see if all that God has said comes true. And until you are thoroughly convinced in your mind and **BELIEVE GOD** you can *never* be a **Levite!** There's no point in quoting **Mal 3:16-18** again, but it wouldn't hurt to read it again. These are the people of Levi (with whom God's Covenant continues – **Mal 2:4**) who are equal brothers and sisters with God's appointed servant, and **who fear God and stand in awe of His Name.**

One of the first obligations of the Churches of God is to get it out of their minds that they must save their lives. If anyone wants to save his life then he will lose it – so says Christ! Most of the faithful in the Churches of God have been around for a while and have been extensively trained. They have considerable knowledge of what God requires of them, even though that knowledge is heavily

interlaced with error. Your job is to rightly divide the Word of Truth, and to establish truth from error. When all this is sorted out, you must prepare yourself for service. And just as the Levites were properly prepared and clothed for Temple service, so must you be properly clothed for your service, just as Paul stated in **Eph 6:10-20**.

It may be if you faithfully execute all your duties towards our Heavenly Father then you may be chosen by God to join the ranks of **the woman who gave birth to Christ** – the House of David (**Rev 12:13**). And then you will have many offspring (**V17**), and you will be trained and empowered (**V14**) to rescue these offspring at the appointed time.

Many people seem troubled that I make many references to Levi but not much about the son of David. A son of David must come and he will be the second witness. Christ said Elijah **must come first** and precede Him (the Son of David), and this was fulfilled in His day. There are many things that must be done in a certain way in order that prophecy is fulfilled. Every prophet, including Christ, is very careful to ensure that prophecy is fulfilled perfectly. They have great pride in their Heavenly Father and desire above all things that everything He has stated is honoured and fulfilled.

I don't want to alarm anyone, but **Levi is the Father's appointee**, and **the son of David is Christ's appointee**. However, let me state **emphatically** that both are the servants of the Father and His glorious Son. For a variety of reasons **this is the way it is!** John the Baptist said he was unworthy to unlace Christ's shoes and every Levite feels the same way! Nevertheless, the Father has appointed His servant, and Christ will soon appoint His. The reasons for this will be obvious at a later date.

Just because Levi must come first, it doesn't mean that the son of David will be assigned a lesser role – both are of equal importance. God has described it this way: **Jer 33:14** “The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will **fulfill the gracious promise** I made to the **House of Israel** and the **House of Judah**. “In those days and at that time I will make a **righteous Branch** sprout from **David's line**; he will do what is just and right in the land. In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. This is the name by which it will be called: **The LORD our Righteousness**.” Later, Jerusalem will be called **'The LORD is there'** (**Eze 48:35**).

Jeremiah continues in **V17** “For this is what the LORD says: ‘David will never fail to have a man to sit on the throne of the **House of Israel**, nor will the priests, **who are Levites**, ever fail to have a man to stand before me continually to offer burnt offerings, to burn grain offerings and to present sacrifices.’” The word of the LORD came to Jeremiah: “This is what the LORD says: ‘If you can break my covenant with the night, so that day and night no longer come at their appointed time, then **my covenant with David my servant** – and **my covenant with the Levites who are priests ministering before me** – can be broken and David will no longer have a descendant to reign on his throne. I will make **the descendants of David my servant and the Levites who minister before me** as countless as the stars of the sky and as measureless as the sand on the seashore.” So clearly there is a descendant of David somewhere who is a rightful *heir* to the throne of David.

Then God adds more. This time He says He will choose one of David's descendants to rule over the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob: **V25** “This is what the LORD says: ‘If I have not established my covenant with day and night and the fixed laws of heaven and earth, then I will reject the descendants of Jacob and David my servant and will not **choose one of his sons** to rule over the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. For I will **restore their fortunes** and have compassion on them.’” Obviously the prince of Judah will come at the time when the **fortunes** of the **whole House of Israel** are to be **restored**. This closely resembles the role of Zerrubbabel who was given governorship over the Holy City.

God knows that all intelligent creatures need an object of focus apart from the pursuit of worldly pleasures, otherwise the pursuit of pleasure becomes an obsession. Without this balance the pursuit of happiness is an illusion. God used the wisest man who ever lived to demonstrate this very point – Solomon! Sometimes we find ourselves careening down the road to personal gain, oblivious to everything else, and then the sun sets on Friday evening and we are snapped back to reality. We remember we are here by the grace of God and our purpose is to serve Him. Christ counseled that it is ***'more blessed to give than to receive'***. Paul reiterated this to the overseers in Ephesus (**Acts 20:35**).

As wise as Solomon was, he gave himself over to the pursuit of pleasure. He quickly forgot that he was merely a human being. Caught up in the trappings of wealth and power he quickly lost sight of the purpose of his existence. It seems he experienced bouts of depression and became suicidal in his pursuit of happiness. He recorded this: **Eccl 2:17** “**So I hated life**, because the work that is done **under the sun** was grievous to me. All is meaningless, a chasing after the wind. **I hated all the things I had toiled for under the sun**, because **I must leave them to the one who comes after me**.”

Solomon raises an important question then answers it: **V26** “To the man who *pleases* Him, God gives **Wisdom, knowledge and happiness**, but to **the sinner** he gives the **task of gathering and storing up wealth to hand it over to the one who pleases God**.” Apparently it worried Solomon that all that he had stored up would be given to a righteous man – one who *pleased* God. He needn't have worried, his son Rehoboam was certainly not righteous! In reality, Rehoboam was an evil, self-serving despot whose first act was to dishonour his father. He followed this advice from his advisers: **2Chron**

10:10 "...My little finger is thicker than my father's waist. My father laid on you a heavy yoke; I will make it heavier. My father scourged you with whips; I will scourge you with scorpions."

It's quite amazing how many people there are on this earth – and even in the Churches of God – who have the same mentality as Rehoboam. And this mentality will persist until people discover the final conclusion of Solomon: **Ecl 12:13** "Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep His Commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every deed into judgment, including the hidden thing, whether it is good or evil."

So mankind has a duty to their Creator! Not only must they obey His Commandments or they will never find Wisdom, knowledge and happiness, but they must also fear Him! And this latter requirement is the one that causes many to balk. One man said, 'I wouldn't serve a god who I had to fear', and he never did! He only *thought* he served the Almighty God, but God never knew him, and neither did he know the Father. This man decided he would judge God by human standards and demand that God comply with his 'righteousness'. In spiritual terms this man is less than a mendicant!

But Solomon was right! All that he built and achieved was given to a man who *pleased* God. This man was Nebuchadnezzar. God gave it all to him and called him His servant for the service he performed. One of the services he performed was to sack Jerusalem and loot and burn it. **Jer 25:7** "But you did not listen to me," declares the LORD, "but you have provoked me with what your hands have made, and you have brought harm to yourselves." Therefore the LORD Almighty says this: "Because you have not listened to my words, I will summon all the peoples of the north and my servant Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon," declares the LORD, "and I will bring them against this land and its inhabitants and against all the surrounding nations. I will completely destroy them and make them an object of horror and scorn, and an everlasting ruin. I will banish from them the sounds of joy and gladness, the voices of the bride and bridegroom, the sound of millstones and the light of the lamp. This whole country will become a desolate wasteland, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon for seventy years." For the underlined phrases here, see **Rev 18:22-24**, which refers to Babylon – the same land that Nebuchadnezzar ruled. In the Book of Revelation, God turns this same curse back on the Babylonians.

So God's servant Nebuchadnezzar performed this task exactly as God required. It may seem strange that God would call such a vile man to His service, but here again we learn that our own perceived righteousness is no guarantee that God will spare our lives. God will punish His own people by whatever means He sees fit. In this case He chose Nebuchadnezzar who was a '*ruler of the heavenly realms*' until the beast was cast out of him and his sanity returned. The man Nebuchadnezzar became completely different in the absence of insanity. Daniel records this: **Dan 4:34** "At the end of that time, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes towards heaven, and my sanity was restored. Then I praised the Most High; I honoured and glorified Him who lives for ever. His dominion is an eternal dominion; His Kingdom endures from generation to generation. All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. He does as He pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No-one can hold back His hand or say to Him: 'What have you done?'"

It seems many people think they can demand of God: "What have you done?" If God doesn't conform to their expectations, then they demand answers. Yet here we have a perfectly sane man called Nebuchadnezzar who praised and honoured and glorified God, and recognized that all the people of the earth are regarded as nothing!

This is a quantum leap from his former self. The beast that was within him also feared and trembled before God as all demons do (**James 2:19**), but when called to service to destroy God's own people, they did it with ferocity and cruelty of enormous proportions. They should have remembered Solomon's words: "For God will bring every deed into judgment, including the hidden thing, whether it is good or evil." After 70 years God turned their cruelty and treachery back on them (**Jer 25:12**), but the man Nebuchadnezzar was spared this.

Though Nebuchadnezzar died in peace and with his sanity restored, and even though he acknowledged the Great God of heaven, yet God had vengeance in mind for the desecration of His Temple. **Isa 51:6** "Flee from Babylon! Run for your lives! Do not be destroyed because of her sins. It is time for the LORD'S vengeance; He will pay her what she deserves. Babylon was a gold cup in the LORD'S hand; she made the whole world drunk. The nations drank her wine; therefore they have now gone mad. Babylon will suddenly fall and be broken. Wail over her! Get balm for her pain; perhaps she can be healed. We would have healed Babylon, but she cannot be healed; let us leave her and each go to his own land, for her judgment reaches to the skies, it rises as high as the clouds." Most Bible students will recognize some of the phrases in these verses as being quoted in the Book of Revelation. When her judgment rises as high as the clouds, God will exact His vengeance.

As in days of old, God's purpose is to destroy Babylon: **V11** "Sharpen the arrows, take up the shields! The LORD has stirred up the Medes, because His purpose is to destroy Babylon. The LORD will take vengeance, vengeance for His Temple."

We've all seen the pathetic arguments advanced by those who don't serve God. Most have a repertoire of about 20 verses which they quote endlessly in their efforts to show they don't have to obey Him. And they endlessly quote other 'scholars' who agree with them. But they don't believe the

rest of the Bible! Little wonder they struggle with this: “To the man who *pleases Him*, God gives **Wisdom, knowledge and happiness**”. It’s patently obvious that they lack **Wisdom and knowledge**, and they can never know *true happiness*! Don’t be deceived by them; there is no substitute from true service to God. And God makes it clear that there is **a distinction between those who serve Him and those who don’t!** (Mal 3:18).

One of the greatest leaps the Churches of God must now make is to recognize that God is not dependent on them! They are dependent on Him! There are no rights or privileges for them – only God’s grace! All the cleverly orchestrated lip-service and outward appearance counts for nothing. You will never fool God! He looks on the heart and mind and knows what you are, but He is always receptive to those who make the necessary changes in their lives – and this is called **repentance**!

Yet there is an element of ‘Babylon’ in all the nations of the earth. All will drink from her cup. Those whose minds are not oriented to God’s way of thinking will drink from this cup and go mad. And if they don’t understand who and what Babylon is, how can they possibly avoid it? Those who lack **Wisdom and knowledge** will deceive you and try to convince you that God doesn’t know what He is talking about. They will sweep aside all that God has said concerning Babylon and try to invent their own scenarios. And this has been going on for centuries! Surely all these ‘scholars’ can’t be wrong – surely it’s God that’s wrong! And haven’t you drunk from this cup of lies? Why don’t you believe God?

Do you really believe that God is impressed with the lying stories that have been made up – and in defiance of all that God has said? Now you have the opportunity to quietly acquiesce to all that God has said in this matter and believe Him, and prepare yourself for the fulfilling of all that He has told us.

Now those who *think* they know God would do well to consider what it is they know about Him. Christ came **to reveal Him** but most of Christianity has chosen to ignore Him. Speaking of the time **when God’s Covenant will continue with Levi** (Mal 2:4,8), God says this: **Mal 1:6** “A son honours his father, and a servant his master. **If I am a Father, where is the honour due to Me? If I am a Master, where is the respect due to Me?**” says the LORD Almighty.” And to further reinforce the time setting, Jeremiah also spoke of this time and circumstance: **Jer 3:17** “At that time they will call Jerusalem The Throne of the LORD, and all nations will gather in Jerusalem to honour the Name of the LORD. No longer will they follow the stubbornness of their evil hearts. In those days the **House of Judah** will join the **House of Israel**, and together they will come from a northern land to the land I gave your forefathers as an inheritance. I Myself said, **How gladly would I treat you like sons** and give you a desirable land, the most beautiful inheritance of any nations’. **I thought you would call Me ‘Father’ and not turn from following Me.** But like a woman unfaithful to her husband, so you have been unfaithful to Me, O **House of Israel.**”

No matter how you look at it, there has been very little respect and honour shown to the Father by the House of Israel – and even by the Churches of God. They’ve been too busy trumpeting their own righteousness and demanding salvation even from the first death. It’s given to all men once to die! Accept it! It’s the second death you need to be concerned about. If your only motivation is to cling to this life, then you will lose it!

It’s very convenient for many to believe they are **not considered sheep to be slaughtered** – even though this is in defiance of what the Bible says (**Rom 8:36**). You will recall how Christ was forced to carry the cross-beam on His way to His death. But before this He gave this advice: **Matt 16:24** “Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone would **come after me**, he must **deny himself and take up his cross and follow me**. For **whoever wants to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for me will find it.**” So it’s those who **lose their life for Christ** that will find it.

Christ explained this even better in **John 12:23** “Jesus replied, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. I tell you the truth, *unless* an ear of wheat falls to the ground **and dies**, it remains only a single seed. **But if it dies, it produces many seeds. The man who loves his life will lose it**, while the man **who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life**. Whoever serves **me must follow me**; and **where I am, my servant will also be. My Father will honour the one who serves me.**” At the time of the fifth seal John saw many people in the vast expanse beneath the altar. They were **with Christ** and **the Father honours them** with clean white linen (**Rev 6:9**), and **they were told to wait until their brothers had been killed as they were** (V11).

And just to create the link to where all this is pointing, Christ said this: **Luke 17:30** “It will be just like this on the day the Son of Man is revealed. On that day no-one who is on the roof of his house, with his goods inside, should go down to get them. Likewise, no-one who is in the field should go back for anything. **Remember Lot’s wife!** Whoever tries **to keep his life will lose it**, and whoever **loses his life will preserve it**. I tell you, on that night two people will be in one bed; **one will be taken and the other left**. Two women will be grinding grain together; **one will be taken and the other left.**” “**Where Lord?**” they asked. He replied, “Where there is a dead body, **there the [eagles] will gather.**”

Of course many lightweight and misinformed theories have been advanced in the Churches of God concerning these things. All these theories were designed to cast the Church in the most

favourable light and to mollify any suggestion that they were indeed 'living sacrifices'. They, like wheat, must fall to the ground **and die**, and in so doing will **produce many seeds**. Up to this time the Churches have taught that no-one has to follow Christ because He did it all for them. He paid the penalty and they get the reward. Why would God do this? After you have done all that is required of you, you are unprofitable servants! But if you go as sheep to the slaughter – just like His faithful Son – then **the Father will honour you**.

And of course, Christ was pointing to **Rev 12:13** "When the dragon saw that he had been hurled to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child (Christ – **V5**). **The woman was given two wings of a great eagle**, so that **she might fly** to the place prepared for her in the desert, where she would be taken care of for a time, times and half a time." But the *offspring* of this woman is mercilessly pursued by the dragon – and these people are the faithful people of God who **obey the Commandments of God and hold to the Testimony of Jesus (V17)**. Clearly, they are not being pursued because of disobedience, but because **they are faithful and obedient servants of God!** It's absolutely monstrous that the Churches of God teach that these people are worthless 'Laodiceans' when God says otherwise!! But let me make the point that **those who SAY such things ARE the worthless Laodiceans** and will get what they deserve!

The Churches of God would be well advised to realize that God requires some service from them. You've been very busy serving yourselves, now you need to get your priorities straightened out. Right now we are in the calm before the storm. The winnowing process has begun to sort the wheat from the chaff. If you want to be like **Lot's wife** and cast your eyes back to the halcyon days of peace and plenty and self-satisfaction and the promises of peaceful outcomes, then quite frankly, you are *not* God's servants.

God's true servants despise the things of this world and like Abraham, look to a better country – a Godly one! All the faithful people of God have thought the same way! They are described in this way: **Heb 11:13** "All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. And they admitted they were aliens and strangers on the earth. **People who say such things show they are looking for a country of their own**. If they had been thinking of the country they had left (like **Lot's wife**), they would have had opportunity to return. Instead, they were longing for **a better country** – a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared **a City** for them."

The **better country** they are looking for is God's own country – the beautiful land that He promised Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. And the **City** is Jerusalem!

The ministry of John the Baptist was one of repentance. The ministry of the Levite **messenger (Mal 3:1)** is the same. Now many in the Churches of God are convinced they have nothing to repent of. To a large extent they hold fast to the doctrine of men – even if it contradicts God! It's become very commonplace to quote men rather than God. For some reason, they believe that past 'scholars', who wrote of biblical things, carry more weight than the Words God has spoken. Do you really believe that God preserved the writings of some of these obscure, so-called 'scholars' so that we can understand His Word? Who cares what these Gentiles believed; do you honestly believe we need to be taught by Gentiles? Salvation is of the Jews and you had better believe it! The Gentiles need to be taught by the servants of God, and indeed, they must become Jews.

In the time of Christ there were authorities of God's Law. These people were given the responsibility of determining God's requirements concerning the Law. They were the custodians of the Temple of God, which Christ referred to as '*My Father's House*'. Of these people, Christ said this: **Matt 23:2** "**Then Jesus said to the crowds and to His disciples:** "The teachers of the Law and the Pharisees **sit in Moses' seat. So you must obey them and do everything they tell you**. But do not do what they do, for they **do not practice what they preach**. They tie up heavy loads and put them on men's shoulders, **but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them.**"

Now, in reading the rest of this chapter you will find that Christ had many criticisms of these men who, while they were appointed by God for a specific purpose, failed to perfectly obey God themselves. Yet Christ instructed the crowds **AND His disciples** that they must **obey their instructions**. You will notice that the accent was on **Moses' seat**. Christ's instruction was to obey what Moses decreed and not all the peripheral requirements that were added in self-righteousness to burden the people and to make them feel inferior to their own *perceived* magnificence. And of course, for those who choose to disregard those who sit in **Moses' seat**, God gives further warning in **Mal 4:4**. God is telling you that someone will be sitting in **Moses' seat**.

And Christ added more: **V5** "Everything they do is for men to see..." **V8** "But you are not to be called 'Rabbi' for you have only one Master and **you are all brothers.**" **V11** "The greatest among you will be your servant. For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted."

The same situation exists today. And while there is no Temple today, a Temple does exist in *fleshly* form. The Temple of old was the place of sacrifices and service to God. Christ was the true Master and Teacher yet He had no part of Temple service. And He certainly was *not* a Temple priest! In fact if He were on earth today He would **not be a priest!** (**Heb 8:4**). Christians are supposed to

understand that they are living sacrifices, and sacrifices are an important part of the Temple, which are offered on the altar. In the absence of the true Temple of God Christians are required to fulfill the role of a temple. Yet Christ was scathing in His criticism of those who considered the offered gifts to be greater than the **physical Temple: V16** “Woe to you, blind guides! You say, ‘If anyone swears by the Temple, it means nothing; but if anyone swears by the gold of the Temple, he is bound by his oath.’ You blind fools! Which is greater: the gold, or the Temple that makes the gold sacred? You also say, ‘If anyone swears by the altar, it means nothing; but if anyone swears by the gift on it, he is bound by his oath.’ You blind men! Which is greater: the gift, or the altar that makes the gift sacred? Therefore, he who swears by the altar swears by it and everything on it. **And he who swears by the Temple swears by it and by the One who dwells in it.** And he who swears by heaven swears by God’s throne and by the One who sits on it.”

The faithful people of the Churches of God stand as a memorial of the dwelling-place of God. Christ Himself represented both the Temple and the Sacrifice.

When the supreme Sacrificial Lamb was offered, the Temple was destroyed – in the form of the Body of Christ. And this Temple was raised up after 3 days. God allowed the space of **40 years** for the destruction of the physical Temple (from 30AD to 70AD).

As an aside, it’s interesting to note the fanciful nonsense being presented by the Worldwide Church of God to desecrate the True Passover Lamb. They try to wring out obscure verses to prove that Christ didn’t fulfill the sign of Jonah – of **three days and three nights (Matt 12:40)**. There are many Hebrew Calendars available today that will instantly calculate the day and date of any event right back to the time of Christ. How hard is it to check what day of the week the Passover fell on in 30AD? **For the record – it’s Wednesday!**

Christ had great zeal for the Father’s house: **John 2:16** “To those who sold doves He said, “How dare you turn my Father’s House into a market!” His disciples remembered that it is written, “Zeal for your House will consume me.” Then the Jews demanded of Him, “What miraculous sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?” Jesus answered them, “**Destroy this Temple, and I will raise it up in three days.**” The Jews replied, “It has taken 46 years to build this Temple, and you are going to raise it up in three days?” **But the Temple He had spoken of was His body.** After He was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what He had said. Then they believed the Scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.” And as far as God’s teachings are concerned, no true Christian requires the *opinions* of men to understand Scripture. So notice what else Christ said: **V24** “But Jesus would not entrust Himself to them, for He knew all men. **He did not need man’s testimony about man,** for He knew what was in a man.” But endlessly, it seems, Christians continue to quote man’s opinions, and *to them* this is evidence in support of their beliefs. **How unlike Christ they are!**

The disciples didn’t clamber for man’s testimony or opinions, rather they remembered what was written in the scrolls – the only Scripture that existed at that time. What they remembered was what is written in **Ps 69:7** “For I endure scorn for your sake, and shame covers my face. I am a **stranger to my brothers, an alien to my mother’s sons; for zeal for your house consumes me,** and the insults of those who insult you fall on me. When I weep and fast, I must endure scorn; **when I put on sackcloth, people make sport of me.**” What the disciples remembered was the Messenger has great zeal for the House of God, and this zeal is all-consuming. They acknowledged that the Scriptures spoke of this. What we do know is that Christ was *not* wearing sackcloth when they killed Him. The soldiers would hardly cast lots for a garment of sackcloth. But the messenger that *precedes* the **True Messenger of the Covenant (Mal 3:1)** will be wearing sackcloth (Rev 11:3) at the time of his death. Like Christ, this Levite will be a stranger to his own brothers – the offspring of his biological mother. Like Christ’s own brothers and sisters (the children of Mary), this man’s brothers will be ashamed of him. God Himself foretold this: **Deut 33:8** “**About Levi** he said: Your Thummin and Urim belong to the man you favoured. You tested him at Massah; you contended with him at the waters of Meribah. He said of his father and mother, ‘I have no regard for them.’ **He did not recognize his brothers** or acknowledge his own children, but **he watched over your word and guarded your Covenant (See Mal 2:4).** **He teaches precepts to Jacob and your Law to Israel.** He offers incense before you and whole burnt offerings on your altar. Bless his skills, O LORD, and be pleased with the work of his hands. Smite the loins of those who rise up against him; strike his foes till they rise no more.”

No Levite can claim virtue or righteousness because of his own efforts, but **ONLY** because of God’s favours. God chose the **Tribe of Levi** as His own (**Num 8:15-16**) and imparted to them their zeal for the things of God. Those whom God favours have this zeal living in them. It’s a gift from God so no man can boast. God knows it’s very hard for a man *not* to acknowledge his own children. While these verses primarily emphasize Levi’s zeal for God, he must offer whole burnt offerings on the altar. Most Christians acknowledge that Christ was the Sacrificial Lamb even though He was *not* killed according to Temple procedures. Instead He was delivered to the beast that then was, and died in agony on a tree. Christ was a living sacrifice through hours of torment until He finally died.

God has been preparing other living sacrifices to be handed over to the beast, and they will be **defeated** (**Dan 7:8**). These are the **children** or **offspring** of the House of David, which gave birth to Christ (**Rev 12:17**). These are sacrifices that must be offered. What is worse, these are **the beloved children** of the **House of Levi** and the **House of Judah** – regardless of their ethnic background. Their only qualification is that they **keep the Commandments of God** and **hold to the Testimony of Jesus**.

For this reason, Christ emphasized a family relationship among His disciples that was equal to being blood brothers. Their parenting was hardly an issue, but their relationship was that of a brotherhood. While the Temple of Christ's Body is being destroyed – again - another Temple will be in the process of being built. And this is the Temple where God will live forever! **Eze 43:7** “He said, “Son of man, **this is the place of my Throne and the place for the soles of my feet. This is where I will live among the Israelites for ever. The House of Israel will never again defile my Holy Name – neither they nor their kings – by their prostitution and the lifeless idols of their kings at their high places. When they placed their threshold next to my threshold and their doorposts beside my doorposts, with only a wall between me and them, they defiled my Holy Name by their detestable practices. So I destroyed them in my anger. Now let them put away from me their prostitution and the lifeless idols of their kings, and I will live among them forever.**”

So God's primary concern is still to uphold the promises He made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. To this end, He intends to bring their offspring back to the Promised Land and there they will be His people and He will live among them forever.

Christ came to reveal the Father and to reveal a time in the distant future when the Father would empower His Son to act in the affairs of human beings. Christ demonstrated His zeal for the Father, and also His bravery and His resolve not to shrink back even in the face of death. Like Abraham (**Heb 11:19**), He knew that God could raise Him from the dead. He knew He had to undergo the baptism of death before the fire was kindled (**Luke 12:49-50**). And He also knew that He had to remain in heaven until the time came to restore everything: **Acts 3:21** “Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, and that He may send **the Christ**, who has been appointed for you – even Jesus. **He must remain in heaven until the time comes to restore everything**, as He promised long ago through His holy prophets.”

Peter brought to **remembrance** the meaning of what the holy prophets said. He told the disciples **not to forget** the instructions. He spoke of the ultimate fulfillment of the Sabbath Day – the Day we are to **remember** (**Ex 20:8**). **2Pet 3:8** “But **do not forget** this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord **a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day**. The Lord is not slow in keeping His promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. But the **Day of the Lord** will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar, the elements will be destroyed by fire, **and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.**” Clearly, we are still awaiting the events described here. Christ confirmed He is **Lord of the Sabbath** (**Matt 12:8**) and **the Sabbath** represents the **Day of the Lord**.

Christ was constantly being accused by the very ones who killed Abel (**Matt 23:35**). For the astute, you may want to reference **Heb 11:4** and **12:24**. This evil seed has continued down through the ages, and they constantly emerge where they can do the most damage to God's truth. Remember that Christ told the crowds and His disciples they must respect the instructions of those **who sit in Moses' seat** – but not to do as they do **because they don't do as they teach!** These appalling hypocrites have a modern counterpart in Gentile Christianity today. And the **Worldwide Church of God today** is the very essence of this hypocrisy through the evil lechers that control it. They say that if anyone remembers the Sabbath and honours God's instructions concerning it, then they must stay in their houses on this day and not move. They promote the same Pharisaical hypocrisy yet they themselves refuse to obey God. What is more, they refuse to acknowledge that Christ is Lord of the Sabbath, instead they stop just short of saying that Satan is lord of the Sabbath. The venom they spew concerning God's Sabbath reflects the activities of **their father the devil** – a point that Christ made to the Pharisees.

Concerning the Pharisees criticism of Christ over Sabbath regulations (**Matt 12:5**), Christ gave them fair warning. He said this: **Matt 12:7** “If you had known what these words mean, **'I desire mercy and not sacrifice,**' you would not have condemned the innocent. **For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.**” In another place He told them **to go and learn** the meaning of this (**Matt 9:13**). I wonder how many people have followed this instruction? If we are **to go and learn**, then we need to go to **Hosea 6:4-6** “What can I do with you, **Ephraim**? What can I do with you, **Judah**? Your love is like a morning mist, like the early dew that disappears. **Therefore I cut you to pieces with my prophets, I killed you with the words of my mouth; my judgments flashed like lightning upon you. For I desire mercy, not sacrifice.**”

The Churches of God would do well to thoroughly learn the meaning of these words. Things are soon to be wholly different to all you have imagined. By all means prattle on endlessly about picky little issues of doctrine if this is what amuses you, but be aware that God is calling you to a far great service that merely boasting and bragging about how knowledgeable you are. Those who think they

are great are soon to learn they are nothing at all! They are still unprofitable servants. And all those who boast they have 'much love' are soon to learn the meaning of real love.

Christ told you! He said: **John 15:9-17** "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you **obey my commands**, you will remain in my love, **just as I have obeyed my Father's commands** and remain in His love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that **your joy may be complete**. My command is this: **Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no man than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command**. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead I have called you friends, for everything I have **learned from my Father** I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you to go and bear fruit – fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my Name. This is my command: **Love one another.**"

God intends to call you on this one! He required it of His Son, and Christ requires it of you. When the time comes, you will have opportunity to express the **greatest love** there is – **to lay down your life for your friends**. If you have resolved this in your innermost being, then it will be credited to you as righteousness. And like Abraham you will **believe** God. **James 2:23** "And the Scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham **believed** God, and it was **credited to him as righteousness**," and he was called God's **friend**."

Now as the Churches come to the realization that they did **not** give birth to Christ – but rather the House of David did, perhaps they will now come to the realization that their service to God is about to begin. It seems there is a whole plethora of people beginning to believe they are the **House of David**. The **key** to this **House** is held by Christ – not pretend Jews – who claim to have the **Testimony of Jesus** (which is the **Spirit of Prophecy** – **Rev 19:10**). The **House of David** is described in **Zech 12:7-14**, and the function of this **House** is vastly different from that taught by pretend Jews! If you don't have the **Spirit of Prophecy**, then neither do you have the **Testimony of Jesus**. Both are the same thing! Presently, none of the Churches of God have the **Spirit of Prophecy**, otherwise they would not have been prophesying lies as they have done so often in the past! But the time will come when they will – and they will hold to it (**Rev 12:17**). Because of **their brotherly love**, and their willingness **to lay down their lives for their friends**, one Church will be the advance guard.

This is how Christ describes them: **Rev 3:7** "To the angel of the Church in Philadelphia write: These are the words of Him who is holy and true, who holds the **key** of David. What He opens, no-one can shut; and what He shuts no-one can open. I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you an open door that no-one can shut. I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and have not denied my Name. I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, **who claim to be Jews though they are not, but are liars** – I will make them come **and fall down at your feet** and acknowledge that **I have loved you**. Since you have kept **my command to endure patiently**, I will keep you from the hour of trial that is going **to come on the whole world** to test those who live on the earth."

God will spare them from the trial that is to come **on the whole world**. **Ps 116:12** "How can I repay the LORD for all His goodness to me? I will lift up the **cup of salvation** and call on **the Name** of the LORD. I will fulfill my vows to the LORD **in the presence of all His people**. **Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of His saints**." Their trial will be over – but not for the whole world. For the whole world, their trial will be just beginning! And the other Scripture that speaks of these things: **Isa 57:1-2** "The righteous perish, and no-one ponders it in his heart; **devout men are taken away**, and no-one understands that the righteous are taken away **to be spared from evil**. Those who walk uprightly enter into peace; **they find rest as they lie in death**."

But those who claim to be Jews, **but are not**, will wage a deceptive campaign. They'll try (among other things) to trump everyone with their pseudo-righteousness by using only Hebrew in relation to Names. They overlook the fact that Christ's final words were uttered in **Aramaic**: **Mark 15:34** "At the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "**Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?**" – which means, "**My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?**" When some of those standing near heard this, they said, "Listen, he's calling Elijah." Those who spoke Hebrew and heard His words thought He was calling to Elijah! They didn't understand what He said! So much for the 'righteousness' of using sacred names! You'd think that people could come up with something a little better than this for magnifying their self-proclaimed righteousness. Surely such people don't think they are the messenger of God! If they were, they would believe God.

This is what God says: **Eze 3:4** "He then said to me, "Son of man, go now to the **House of Israel** and speak my words to them. You are **not** being sent to a people of **obscure speech and difficult language**, but to the **House of Israel** – **not to many peoples of obscure speech and difficult language, whose words you cannot understand**. Surely if I had sent you to them, they would have listened to you. But the **House of Israel** is not willing to listen to you because they are not willing to listen to me, for the **whole House of Israel** is hardened and obstinate." You might have noticed that the **whole House of Israel** doesn't understand Hebrew – only English! And English is the language of the covenant people – Berith-ish (British).

So Christ warned us against those who *claim* to be Jews *but are not!* Obviously, there are some who claim to be Jews *and are Jews!* How can we tell the difference? Well, in the first instance, Christ also said they were liars! Every Christian should know what a liar is. Of primary importance here is the lies they tell in God's Name. And since the primary consideration is the Testimony of Jesus, these people will attempt to prove they have the oracles of God because they *claim* to be Jews. Already they are crawling like vermin out of the woodwork in an attempt to destroy the branches.

Paul spoke of these branches: **Rom 11:17** "If some of the branches have been broken off, and you, as a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root, do not boast over those branches." Paul showed his great concern for the branches, which represent the House of Israel. He said this: **Rom 9:1** "I speak the truth in Christ – I am not lying (unlike some others who claim to be Jews), my conscience confirms it in the Holy Spirit – I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. For I wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, those of my own race, the people of Israel." While Paul spoke of the House of Israel, he broadly referred to them as Jews – the parlance of the day. He confirmed that salvation was first to the Jews and then to the Gentiles (**Rom 1:16**). And he asked this question: **Rom 3:1** "What advantage, then, is there in being a Jew? Or what value is there in circumcision? Much in every way! First of all, they have been entrusted with the very words of God."

God tells us not to learn the way of the Gentiles. He tells us we must learn the way of the Jews because they have been entrusted with His very words. The House of Israel abandoned God long ago, and only Judah remained faithful to the Holy City and the Holy Land. Even today, the Jewish people remain faithful to the City that bears God's Name – Jerusalem! God plans to reward them for their faithfulness in this. There is a marked contrast in them and the rest of the House of Israel, however. The Jewish people continue to plead for their God-given rights as custodians of the Holy City, but their pleas fall on deaf ears among the House of Israel who feel the need to placate the Palestinian scum that surround it – and demand it!

Ephraim (U.S) is prepared to forsake the Holy City; apparently they don't see any need to honour God! Paul then goes on to reveal a very great truth: **Rom 3:5** "But if our unrighteousness brings out God's righteousness more clearly, what shall we say? That God is unjust in bringing His wrath on us? (I am using a human argument.) Certainly not! If that were so, how could God judge the world?!" So God is using the unrighteousness of His people Israel to provoke a situation where He will judge the world. He will bring His wrath down on His own people for their unrighteousness, and then turn His wrath on those who destroy His people. And Paul poses the question about whether God is unjust for doing this, and answers, "Certainly not!"

For the House of Israel, the Holy City which they abandoned and rejected, is to become their salvation but not through their efforts! The House of David will be the most powerful nation on earth, and what is more, God says this: **Zech 12:8** "On that day the LORD will shield those who live in Jerusalem, so that the feeblest among them will be like David, and the House of David will be like God, like the angel of the LORD going before them. On that day I will set out to destroy all the nations that attack Jerusalem."

This show of force is what it will take to convince the leaders of Judah that God is with the House of David. Notice **V4** "On that day I will strike every horse with panic and its rider with madness," declares the LORD. "I will keep a watchful eye over the House of Judah, but I will blind all the horses of the nations. Then the leaders of Judah will say in their hearts, "The people of Jerusalem are strong, because the LORD Almighty is their God."

The leaders of Judah will see these things and acknowledge that the people of Jerusalem are strong because of their God. Then the leaders of Judah will be instructed by the people of Jerusalem and will acknowledge their God. Together they will become joint heirs to the Promised Land, but the seat of power will remain with the sons of Jerusalem – the House of David.

God adds this: **V6** "On that day I will make the leaders of Judah like a firepot in a woodpile, like a flaming torch among sheaves. They will consume right and left all the surrounding peoples, but Jerusalem will remain intact in her place. Then the LORD will save the dwellings of Judah first, so that the honour of the House of David and of Jerusalem's inhabitants may not be greater than that of Judah."

Long ago God foretold of a day when He would comfort Jerusalem and her protectors. He promised forgiveness for their sins: **Isa 40:1-2** "Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for, that she has received from the LORD'S hand double for all her sins." These are God's people who received double for all their sins, and finally their sins are paid for. God calls them His people and Jerusalem! (**See Dan 9:19**). No-one has suffered like Judah for these past two thousand years! Every despot that arose sought them out to kill them right up to this present day!

Well God has some comfort for them! And the next verse tells us *when*. This is the beginning of the ministry of John the Baptist: **V3** "A voice of one calling: "In the desert prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the wilderness a highway for our God. Every valley shall be

raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain. And the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all mankind together will see it. For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.” John preached these words at the beginning of his ministry (see **Luke 3:3-6**). Another, just like John is prophesied to arise who will prepare the way for the True Messenger (**Mal 3:1**).

Paul wrote these words to the Ephesians: **Eph 3:10** “His *intent* was that now, through the Church, the manifold Wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities of the heavenly realms, according to His eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Paul pointed out who he was referring to: **Eph 6:12** “For our struggle is *not* against flesh and blood, but against rulers, against authorities, against the powers of this dark world, and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.” Now I think we can all see a problem here! What on earth would the Churches of God have to say to the rulers and authorities of the heavenly realms concerning the Wisdom of God and His eternal purpose? Of course they would have nothing to say since they don’t understand themselves. So it’s better that they keep their mouths shut and go silently like sheep to the slaughter. Remember that Christ remained silent before the ruler (Herod) that then existed. So clever arguments and pleadings are out!

If you do as Christ commanded, the rulers and authorities of the heavenly realms will make the same mistake again, and God will bring His judgment on them. Had they known what they were doing when they killed Christ – they would never have done it! So they will be doubly guilty! **1Cor 2:6** “We do, however, speak a message of Wisdom among the mature, but *not* the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. No, we speak of God’s secret Wisdom, a Wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory. However, as it is written, ‘No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him’ – but God has revealed it to us by His Spirit.”

Well, it seems God anticipated the need for two prophets to arise on earth to take care of His business while the Churches of God are busily hacking on each other and trying to gain ascendancy among the people of God. It’s become a real shoot-out! Oddly enough, the people of God seem to have their eyes firmly focused on the battling leaders to see who emerges victorious. God has already declared the winner – it’s the House of David! **The rest of the saints must be defeated!** And contrary to all that your leaders have been telling you, the saints in the Churches of God are the ones predestined by God to go as sheep to the slaughter. If this is *not* so, then *neither* will you inherit the Kingdom of God! Notice what Daniel says: **Dan 7:25** “He will speak against the Most High and oppress the saints and try to change the set times and the Laws. The saints will be handed over to him for a time, times and half a time. But the court will sit, and his power will be taken away and completely destroyed for ever. Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be handed over to the saints, the people of the Most High. His Kingdom will be an everlasting Kingdom, and all rulers will worship Him and obey Him.”

And if you don’t like the Scripture that Christ used, the only Scriptures that existed at the time, the New Testament says basically the same thing: **Rev 13:7** “**He was given power to make war against the saints and to conquer them**. And he was given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation. All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast – all whose names have *not* been written in the Book of Life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world. He who has an ear, let him hear. If anyone is to go into captivity, into captivity he will go. If anyone is to be killed with the sword, with the sword he will be killed. **This calls for patient endurance and faithfulness on the part of the saints.**”

But there is an alternative! This is not to say that if you seek to save your life you won’t lose it – because you will! But if you *believe* God, and *honour* Him, and *fear* Him, and *stand in awe of His Name*, then God may choose you for a different mission. You will be taught and trained by Him – not by fools who don’t know what they are talking about. You will have a zeal for the House of God, and you will be outraged by the wicked things that are being done to God’s Holy Mountain, Zion.

If you set your heart and mind on the things of God and walk in His ways and refuse to be deceived by stupid emotional appeals by people who ‘appear’ righteous, and if you stand your ground and stand ready for service, and learn to trust in God for all outcomes, then God will choose you for the greatest calling of all time. God has promised to renew our youth, and **the feeblest among us will be like David** – a king and a warrior – and like the angel of the Lord going before Him.

Mentally and emotionally we must not be ‘reeds shaken in the wind’. Though we may be physically weak in our bodies, yet God will restore our strength. This inner strength is what transforms us, and it is by the Power of God. God speaks of a brotherhood, which will seize a country – God’s country – and this country will be taken from others and given to the brotherhood who will bear fruit. Their zeal for the sacred things of God will enable God to empower them and bring destruction to many nations and peoples. If you don’t believe that God gave many victories into the hand of His servant David, then you will not believe that God is capable of giving you the same.

So you must be strong and courageous! You must believe that God has made provision to rescue the Body of Christ and the whole House of Israel from captivity – not with enormous numbers of people, but with enormous Power – the Power of Almighty God.

And for fear that some may accuse God's prophets of forming a secret army, nothing will be done in secret. God's army will be trained by God and in a place where there can be no haunting doubts in the minds of detractors. The servants of God will see their God – the Mighty Commander Himself. They will be taught and empowered by Him.

In the past you have lived by selective words of God – the bits that you found acceptable. The servants of God live by every word of God and earnestly seek His instruction from all Scripture! Time and again throughout all these articles you have been drawn to the words, '***It is written..***' This is a warning that where this is mentioned, prophecy is being fulfilled. In most instances you have been taken to the source of the quote. The source of all these quotes is profitable for doctrine. The Mighty Christ never intended for you to ignore His instruction, and at times He said to '***go and learn***'. Most people don't want to '***go and learn***', they prefer to ignore such instruction for fear it will conflict with their own established beliefs. Little wonder that among the Churches of God their lamps are going out, and their former enlightenment is diminishing.

The Churches of God have a little more time to get their act together, and to begin to heed God's instructions. There are many things you don't know and many things you don't understand. Accept it! But resolve to start believing God in all that He has said.

Remember that Nebuchadnezzar stood in both worlds – the world of insanity, and the world in which his sanity was restored. He saw things through the eyes of a beast, and through the eyes of our Heavenly Father – and he acknowledged Him and gave glory to Him, and realized that **all of humanity is nothing in God's sight**. God proved that in the days of Noah, and He is about to prove it again. Humanity generally, is the very embodiment of Satan the devil, and apart from men like Noah and his family, there would be no reason to allow them all to live. But God is faithful to those who are faithful to Him. You need to examine yourselves to see where your loyalties lie. If you can't now make a stand to serve God faithfully, then be assured that you will do it under force and in want of all things.

The Churches of God are in a deep slumber, but God has resolved to wake them up – not with the soothing words of men, but with the reality and the finality of all that He has said. If you want to hear soothing words that will make you feel good, then you will find plenty of teachers who will do just that. But you need to believe Christ when he warns of terrible times just ahead, in fact, the worse time that has ever been or will be.

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