

The Division of The Saints

When God's people flee from Jerusalem just before it is surrounded by the invading armies of the Beast, God's word warns any others not to go there because only slavery will await them.

Luke 21:21 'Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto.'

24 'And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.'

The events of the 6th Seal are arriving, earth shaking events, preceded by awesome signs in the heavens verses 25-26 'And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.'

These events are also spoken of by the prophet Joel:

Joel 2:30-31 'And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the LORD come.'

The pursuing armies of the Beast and the escaping Christians alike will then look to the heavens in amazement, the soldiers in fear, but the Church of God, leading the escape of those who have joined them in Jerusalem, with great joy! Luke 21:28 'And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.'

These are the great events they have read of in Revelation 6 and Matthew 24, and looked forward to with great anticipation as the solution to all their troubles!

Matthew 24:29-31. 'Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: 30. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.'

Behind them now are the horrific events of the first 5 seals – the false Christs, war, famine, pestilence and the martyrdom of many of the brethren at the 5th seal (Rev 6). Three and a half years of the 'tribulation of those days' (Matthew 24: 29) have passed since the angel of Revelation 14 gave those dreams and visions to the world (see the Time Line). Their hopes are high, their spirits lifted, as they see the signs in the heavens!

Now, as they hurry to escape the pursuing armies while the sky darkens above them so that the sun is soon obliterated, an ominous rumbling is heard, causing all to look around in fear. Then the ground beneath their feet begins to tremble, causing everyone to pause and then fall to the ground as the earth begins to violently shake, and rocks begin to tumble from the hills above – Revelation 6:12 'And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood.'

Men and women cry out to God, even as did King David, who experienced these awesome events in a terrible vision for us, recorded in Psalm 18:6-20.

The darkened sky is suddenly rent apart with a great tearing sound, which almost rivals the groans and thunder of the earth's movement, and everywhere men, women and children alike try to hide from the all-encompassing cataclysm that seems to be devouring the earth. Revelation 6:15. 'And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains.'

As the clouds seem to roll back like waves on each side of the awesome blue light that has appeared above, their jaws drop as there appears a throne in the midst of the light, and sitting on that throne one who could only be Divine, glowing white as snow but surrounded by what looked like flames and a glorious rainbow. (Compare Ezekiel 1:26-28, Revelation 1:14)

At this sight, a great cry of joy erupts from God's people, but confusion and fear strikes the army of the Beast, still some way behind, and this is heightened as the awesome figure leaves His throne and begins to descend towards the cowering troops – a bright light surrounded by rolling, dark tumultuous clouds

Psalm 18:9-11 ' He bowed the heavens also, and came down: and darkness was under his feet. 10. And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind. 11. He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies.'

The Church of God and the following Christians begin to rise from their knees as the tremors still, and see what seems to be a great storm of hail and fire, accompanied by lightening, poured out upon the distant army. It is too far away to see individuals, but not a one doubted the effect this would have upon any human being present. Verses 12-15. ' At the brightness that was before him his thick clouds passed, hailstones and coals of fire. 13. The LORD also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice; hailstones and coals of fire. 14. Yea, he sent out his arrows, and scattered them; and he shot out lightening, and discomfited them. 15. Then the channels of waters were seen, and the foundations of the world were discovered at thy rebuke, O LORD.'

But that was not the end. The earth itself was torn apart under the feet of the troops, and with a great roar, the army disappeared under clouds of dust, and as people stared in horror, the dust gradually cleared and not one sign of the distant army remained! Revelation 12:16 'And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.' [the flood here is a biblical symbol of an army]

At that point the earth was filled with the sound of a great trumpet, blown by the Lord himself –Zechariah 9:14 'And the LORD shall be seen over them, and his arrow shall go forth as the lightning: and the LORD God shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south.' Angels were seen descending from the clouds above, taking many of God's people by the hand as their bodies changed before the eyes of the onlookers into glowing forms, still recognizable, but somehow quite different. (compare Matthew 24:31, 1Thess 4:15-17, 1 Cor 15: 51-52).

Tears filled the eyes of many of those remaining Christians who had escaped captivity and finally made it to Jerusalem to join God's people, as they realized that not all of them would be ascending to that glowing crystal sea above, which supported God's Throne, and now was growing full of figures.

"What shall we do?" cried many to the angels.

"Go into the mountains across the Jordan, for God will provide for you there" was the reply.

This biblical scenario is based upon Isaiah 16:4-5, and other scriptures which will be discussed later.

'Let mine outcasts dwell with thee, Moab; be thou a covert to them from the face of the spoiler: for the extortioner is at an end, the spoiler ceaseth, the oppressors are consumed out of the land.

And in mercy shall the throne be established: and he shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging, and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness.'

In Isaiah 16:1-3, lambs are sent from Petra (Sela) to Jerusalem, for the daughters of Moab have fled across the Arnon into Edom where both Petra and Bozrah are found. These wandering Moabites, now dwelling in the mountains of Edom, are requested to receive God's outcasts (verse 4) who are escaping from the fury of the Beast or Antichrist after his armies take Jerusalem. (Jordan, the most western of the Arab nations now encompasses Ammon, Moab, and Edom.)

God's people – those who were left behind at the resurrection, at the 6th Seal, as we have just read, will flee across the Jordan river into South Jordan where the Beast's armies never go, probably because they fear that they too would be swallowed up! (Daniel 11:41) – 'He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon.'

There, God's people will be protected from the face of the 'spoiler' until 'devastation ceases' and 'the oppressors are consumed out of the land' [meaning Israel] Isaiah 16: 4
Verse 5 reveals that this is an end time event when 'the throne' of Christ will 'be established: and he shall set upon it in truth,' 'judging and seeking justice and hastening righteousness.'

Isaiah adds a little more instruction for us in chapter 26:20-21 'Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.'

Once again this end time prophecy implies protection for some of God's people until the indignation (God's wrath or the Great tribulation of the final 3½ years) is complete.

In Isaiah 33, a further vision of the final years before and just after Jesus Christ's return, provides us with extra information about God's outcasts, verses 15-17,19.

'He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from the holding of bribes, that stops his ears from hearing of blood, and shuts his eyes from seeing evil; 16. He shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure. 17. Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off. 19. Thou shalt not see a fierce people, a people of deeper speech than thou canst perceive; of a stammering tongue that you cannot understand.'

Here the righteous are defended in the 'fortresses of the mountains' [of Jordan, South east of the Dead Sea]. Food will be provided by God, just as it was in the Exodus, and water will be assured v.16. From these mountain heights their eyes will see the final return of Christ to Jerusalem with His Saints - verse 17, and they will not be troubled by the foreign armies, v. 19. It is in this region that the rose red city of Petra is found, long thought by some to be that place of protection. It is also the site of the ancient city of Bozrah, to be mentioned in part 4 (Trumpets Fulfilled).

Remember as you read these things that you must see if what is written here matches the scriptures. We are told by the Apostle Paul that we see through a glass darkly. We do our best to put the scriptures together to build our understanding and I believe that God has guided that understanding through the Holy Spirit, but yours is the responsibility to "prove all things" through God's Word.

If we cannot afford to be dogmatic about those left behind [and remember, both groups have their equivalent *around the world*, for not all of God's people are asked or even able to go to Jerusalem] we can be much surer about those gathered by the angels – Matthew 24:31 'And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.'

Both groups from Jerusalem are rescued and preserved for the next 3½ years, Revelation 12:14 'And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.'

Revelation 3:10. ' Because you have kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.'

But where do those carried by the angels go, whether they are resurrected from their graves, or just changed in the twinkling of an eye? [Please note that the resurrection cannot occur on any of God's Holy Days, when no work is allowed - Matthew 24:41]. 'Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.'

Well, first they join Jesus Christ in the clouds, where His throne was visible to all, mounted upon the 'terrible crystal' of Ezekiel 1:22.

'And the likeness of the firmament upon the heads of the living creature was as the colour of the terrible crystal, stretched forth over their heads above.'

This is where the saints are taken, now immortal spirit beings, still marveling at the sight of each other with their glorious spiritual bodies, now with all physical blemishes removed, 1 Corinthians 15: 44-49. 'It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body ... 47. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the LORD from heaven ... 49. and as we have borne the image of the earthy we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.'

This throne and its environs appeared in the heavens and will also disappear, for it is mobile. We next hear of the saints in Mount Zion in heaven, Hebrews 12:22, 'But you are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, **the heavenly Jerusalem** and to an innumerable company of angels.'

Revelation 14: 1,4. 'And I looked, and, lo, a lamb stood upon the Mount Zion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his father's name written in their foreheads. 4. These are they which were not defiled with women, [false churches] for they are virgins. These are they which follow the lamb wherever he goes. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the lamb.'

There, the now immortal saints are nourished for 3 ½ years, but as they are now no longer physical, and need no physical food, that nourishment must be spiritual – that is, they are given the knowledge and gifts which they will need for their role as kings and priests, sharing rule with Christ on His return to rule here on the earth. Revelation 5:10 'And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.'

There in heaven, upon this 'sea of glass,' Revelation 15:2-3 the Saints come before Jesus Christ and His heavenly father. 'And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. Verse 3 And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.'

Christ sits on His throne which is at the right hand of His Father's throne, Luke 22:69. 'Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God.'

Just as Christ's original disciples needed to learn from Christ for over 3 years, so will the Saints. Each will be prepared for the position for which they have qualified, Revelation 22:12 'And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.'

King David for example, will be King over Israel, Ezekiel 34:23-24. 'And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. 24. And I the LORD will be their god, and my servant David a prince among them; I the Lord have spoken it.'

The Apostles will rule over the individual tribes of Israel, Matthew 19:28, 'And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.'

Some of us may rule over cities, Luke 19: 17! ‘And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because you have been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.’

This whole parable pictures Christ’s return from heaven to claim His Kingdom.

At some point during those 3½ years, during the anniversary of the original marriage of Christ at Sinai, at Pentecost, will come the marriage of Christ and His Bride – Revelation 19: 7-9 ‘Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.’

Finally the 3 ½ years of the great Tribulation here upon the earth will pass, and the Saints will then be fully prepared to follow Christ as part of His great spiritual army, on His return to become King of Kings verses 14 -15. ‘And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen white and clean. 15. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.’

Let us strive to be part of the 144,000 saints who join that army, and return with Christ to share rule with Him in His glorious Kingdom!