

Sermon to the Saints which are at Topeka, Kansas -- Sunday, May 1, 2022

“And he [Antichrist] shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.” (Daniel 7:25-27)

There is a terrible lot going on in this passage out of Daniel’s vision of the four beasts – Babylonian (lion), Medo-Persian (bear), Grecian (leopard), and Antichrist. I did a series of sermons diving more deeply into this vision in Daniel chapter sevenⁱ, so those are available for you to consider as a backdrop to this beautiful scene. What is an unmistakable takeaway from that vision is that the sequence of eschatology, as it pertains to the Jewish remnant, is pretty well set out: Antichrist is revealed, he is given to assault the saints (including the Jews) for three and a half years, at which point he is subjected to a judgment. That judgment results in his dominion being taken away and given to those saints (including the Jews) in the kingdom of our Lord. It is this language **“the judgment shall sit”** that pulls a discussion about this vision into our current examination.

The expositor John Gill does a pretty simple and clear job on one point in this passage, and I want to share it with you. I have to take care when I quote Gill on matters of eschatology – particularly as it pertains to the character and nature of Antichrist – because he was wholly committed to the notion that it represents the Roman Catholic structure. I’ve addressed the error in that thinking previously, so I won’t go through it again now. However, when Gill gives a clear analysis we should use it for the value it gives to this generation of saints who have the God-given benefit of history and our own portion of providence to inform our understanding of eschatology. Here are his words addressing this judgment prophesied to sit:

“As in Da 7:10, the court shall sit, the Judge shall take the bench, and all things be prepared for the arraignment, trial, condemnation, and punishment, of the little horn or antichrist, when the above time is up;” The reference by Gill to Daniel 7:10 is to show the more detailed discussion of this judgment seat in Daniel’s vision, to wit:

“I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.” (Daniel 7:9-10)

Again, there is a tremendous number of items in this passage – and it will grab hold of the active minds in this house and sprint thoughts down a whole array of paths, so let’s get our focus back. We’re trying to understand the judgment seat of Jesus Christ that is an integral part of His Revelation and the establishment of His earthly kingdom that will exist for a one-thousand-year period. I underlined portions of the passage that bring focus onto that aspect of eschatology. As part of this judgment seat being established, **“thrones [are] cast down”** – I submit as a result of His throne being **“like the fiery flame”**, which is why we’re told **“a fiery stream issued and came forth from before him”**. Such language instills in the reader’s mind the notion that earth judgments are poured out in the preparation for, or establishment of, Christ’s earthly throne.

I ended my last sermon quoting the passage of Daniel 7:25-27, after discussing the import of Christ’s judgment seat – distinct from the final judgment throne of God – that occurs in relationship to Christ’s second advent. That judgment incorporates three expressions of judgment, as outlined previously:

1. Christ's judgment as it pertains to the living and sleeping saints – both Gentile and Jew
2. Christ's judgment as it pertains to the living wicked or reprobate
3. Where Christ's judgment fits within the event sequencing in the Day of the Lord

We covered the subject of Christ's judgment as it pertains to the living and sleeping *Gentile* saints; that work of making the Bride ready for the marriage of the Lamb. Today we will turn our attention first to a discussion of this judgment as it pertains to the Jewish elect who remain in the earth. As I have been encouraged to do in these discussions of eschatology, I will say as plainly as I believe scripture allows it that Christ's judgment includes a brief period of purging, and then a release to an eternity of enjoyment in His presence ... in the earth.

Jews are a unique category of saints, in that we know that as a people they have only freshly been called forth from around 2.5 thousand years of gross spiritual darkness that was brought upon them as referenced by Ezekiel: ***"the day of the LORD is near, a cloudy day; it shall be the time of the heathen."*** (Ezekiel 30:3). A time when Israel will be as the prophet Hosea pronounced:

"For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim [i.e., all things necessary for true worship of God]: Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David [i.e., Christ] their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days." (Hosea 3:4-5)

The prophet Hosea is a contemporary of Isaiah and others who were prophesying in the 7th century BC leading up to the destruction of the northern kingdom of Israel by the Assyrian conquerors. So, an incomplete thinker may take these words of his to refer to the historically brief time when the **southern** kingdom of Judah was allowed to rebuild the city of Jerusalem and the temple under the Medo-Persian rule that overtook the Babylonians who destroyed that temple ... all in the 5th century BC. The problem with that position, and with all similar positions that are pushed by various expositors, is that to this very day the Jews have no KING! And certainly, they do not have David – Christ Jesus – serving as their King. It is an eschatological prophecy, awaiting its fulfillment at Christ's return.

This passage establishes that there is a period of time – called **many days** – where Jews are in darkness. It then describes a time when **the children of Israel return** to seek after the true God and Jesus Christ. That, as we know in this house, is not a human-energized behavior. It is a movement by the Spirit of God toward the spirits of those men who are chosen in the covenant of grace, as our friend Paul reminds us:

"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:" (Romans 8:16)

When that takes place, at the time appointed in God's providence – called here **in the latter days** – those redeemed of the Jews will hear the voice commanding them to **seek the LORD their God, and David their king**, and their spirits will then answer **"Thy face, LORD, will I seek"** (Psalms 27:8). So we must understand that this passage from Hosea is describing the calling forth of redeemed Jews, as the passage in Revelation chapter seven describes in some detail. It articulates how the Jewish remnant will own Christ as their Messiah, as it declares that they **shall fear the LORD and his goodness**, which is the behavior of saints. That carries the discussion only to the Revelation of Jesus Christ – that is, to the time when the Day of the Lord is opened up. The seven-year period that the prophet Daniel refers to in chapter nine, when he says **"he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week [i.e., week of years, or seven]"** (Daniel 9:27). But it doesn't take us further into the timeframe to the day of the judgment seat of Christ.

The passage I opened this sermon with, helps us a bit more because it declares what will happen for the first three-and-a-half years of that last period ... ***“they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time” (Daniel 7:25)***. So, we then are able to see the treatment of the Jews – I submit including both the elect and non-elect Jews – during the first three-and-a-half years prior to the return of Christ. They are undergoing a horrific time of trouble like they have never before experienced through the annals of history. Daniel declares it ***“a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time:” (Daniel 12:1)*** Christ Himself declares that ***“then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be” (Matthew 24:21)*** and goes on to give a more detailed account of the horrors prepared for the Jews in this time. So we have separate visions and prophecies – even a direct declaration from the God that writes providence – that shows an acute time of trouble will lay heavy upon the inhabitants of the land, and uniquely (in some respects) upon the Jews. What that exactly will look like is still somewhat unmined in the words of prophecy, though we are clear that the world will at that time be suffering heavy blows under the opening of the seals and the sounding of the trumpets. I should think that if those traumas are the baseline, how horrific will it be for the Jews who in addition to that will be under the heavy assaults of an enraged Antichrist?

And while I can see that these will be great and awful earth judgments, and that they are imposed by the hand of God, they are not the judgment seat of Christ that we have under analysis in this series of sermons. Clearly not so, because it is *after* the strong words of Christ in describing this tribulation (Matthew 24:21-31) that He reiterates His lessons through parable (Matthew 24:32 through 25:30) and only then comes upon the description of Christ’s judgment seat at the closing portion of His sermon on the mount (Matthew 25:31-46). So to conclude that the tribulation promised against the Jewish saints in the earth is a component of the period of time *after* Christ’s second advent is a plain affront to the language of the Savior. We still have more work to do in seeking this matter out.

Friends, in all of the work that I have been blessed to undertake with regard to eschatology, the nuance that has evaded my complete understanding is this relationship between the seventh iteration of Antichrist, the Jews, the Gentile saints, the second advent of Christ, and the period leading to Armageddon. How these five components of that period relate in time, events, and outcomes. This has to be better understood to grasp the full flavor of many of the detailed expressions from the prophets. So, to answer what seems to be a simple inquiry “Christ’s judgment as it pertains to the living Jewish saints”, there has to be a fairly complex structure built up for us to see it with any clarity at all. I have some confidence with the information, and that is what I will seek to bring forth clearly for you now. So, please bear with me on this.

As I have more extensively preached on before, the Antichrist is plainly said to be a human expression of satanic power that has seven iterations ***prior to*** Christ’s second advent, and then an eighth iteration in that dark period between that advent and when he is put down at Armageddon. This isn’t a sermon about Antichrist, but a bit of clarity regarding his role here is necessary for understanding the issue we’re examining. So, look at these plain words in John’s vision of the beast first shown in Revelation chapter 13, and then described in more detail in chapter 17:

“And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. [Christ’s second advent occurs here] And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.” (Revelation 17:10-11)

Before the time that John lived and wrote the words of prophecy, there had been five expressions of Antichrist: Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece ... five kings under these world empires who were renowned for their horrible maltreatment of the Jewish people. The sixth – Roman – existed in the generation of John the

Revelator and indeed had imprisoned him on the isle of Patmos for his preaching of Christ. That part of the discussion is relatively easy to track. Where it gets a little more complicated is when we speak of the seventh one that ***“is not yet come”*** and what is meant when it says ***“he must continue a short space”***. The passage from Daniel in the opening of this sermon, I believe, is plainly referencing this seventh iteration of Antichrist that is given power over the saints for three-and-a-half years. It is under this tyrant’s hand that the Jews will undergo the tribulation period. He rises to prominence and begins his rampant oppression at sometime prior to the Day of the Lord and takes his position as such a powerful human leader that he is, in practical fact, a deity. It is clear from the passages in Ezekiel 38, that this seventh iteration of Antichrist – there called Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal – is brought to his power and collects his armies. Then, it is said that he ***“shalt think an evil thought” (Ezekiel 38:10)*** which leads him to go up against the nation of Israel that has been ***“gathered out of the nations” (Ezekiel 38:12)***. So, like the traitor Judas Iscariot, this evil human has all the makings of mischief boiling in his Christ-less spirit, and then when Satan enters into him, his deadly betrayal emerges. The language of Ezekiel, and in other places, intimate what might be seen as a two-phased emerging of this seventh Antichrist. He first rises to power and then he moves against the people of God. I submit that it is the second of these phases that includes the tribulation period referenced by Christ and the prophets.

Then Christ returns in His glorious second advent which, as Paul tells us, results in the dissolution of this seventh Antichrist ***“whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.” (2 Thessalonians 2:8)***. So, as this first three-and-a-half years comes to an explosive end with the blowing of the seventh trumpet and the arrival of the conquering Redeemer, the seventh iteration of Antichrist is destroyed, as John states: ***“I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death” (Revelation 13:3)***. The seventh head was wounded to death, which is said to have occurred ***“by a sword” (Revelation 13:14)***.

To follow the timeline of events with some discipline, we can credibly now say that the Antichrist that oppressed the saints – both Jews and Gentiles – for the first three-and-a-half years of the Revelation period has fallen. Christ has returned to begin the process of taking His throne and initiating His millennial reign. It says ***“the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord” (Revelation 11:15)***. The words ***“are become”*** means ***“begins to be”*** though with a certainty of completion. That is, the fall of earthly kingdoms leading to the rise of His kingdom has now begun. This period of time also marks the beginning of the Judgment throne of Christ. The dead saints have been called up to him at the sounding of the trumpet – as discussed in my last sermon. The living reprobate, and the living redeemed Jews are still in the earth. The dead reprobate are still under the earth. This is the period of time that we have to focus on with respect to the Jewish elect.

We have some clear indicators about this time, allowing us to anchor our understanding of our blessed elect brethren. We know that these 144,000 Jews are seen spending time with the descended Christ on the Mount Zion, and that there is a sweet communion taking place:

“¶ And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father’s name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.” (Revelation 14:1-3)

If we could discern nothing more from all of the prophecies about this period of time, I think we probably have a full answer just in these words. There is no suggestion that this rejoicing – singing a new song before the presence of the glorified saints and the angels who all now attend the throne of God – comes to an end during this second three-and-a-half years. We see many other events written of, including the fall of Babylon, the

pouring out of the vials upon a raging earth and population, the shaping of earth's dying kingdoms by the eighth iteration of Antichrist, and the culmination of all these matters in the great slaughter of the armies of the nations at Armageddon. But there seems to be little more referenced within the Apocalypse about these Jewish friends of ours in this period, until they are next expressly referenced:

“I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw [them] which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.” (Revelation 20:4)

There are, however, passages that hint at the conditions of these blessed Jewish saints during this period of time, though I confess a less-than-comprehensive understanding of them to date. I will offer some bit of analysis here because while this may seem a bit of an academic or pedantic discussion, it is in fact a matter that should be of supreme interest to our hearts, minds, and spirits. These are our co-elect. These are persons with whom we can expect an eternity of glorious ministrations. If we don't grieve for the afflictions this little band will undergo, we would be at risk of great offense toward our God. Clarity about the tribulations and deliverances by our King – toward any and all of our fellow laborers – is a matter that should delight our spirits. So I will give a small example of passages and then will leave this matter to your consciences and move to my next analysis.

“Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold. When the Almighty scattered kings in it, it was white as snow in Salmon.” (Psalms 68:13-14)

The use of this incredibly interesting (though rather dense) portion of prophesy will require a simple unpacking to discover the relevance of it to our discussion. The whole of the 68th Psalm is a song written to do two things: rejoice over the deliverance of the Jews from Egypt and the promise of the deliverance of the redeemed Jews from a raging Antichrist. Start there, and then you can begin to form in your minds and hearts how it helps us. The three parts of the passage are these: (1) ***“though you have lien [lain] among the pots”***; (2) ***“yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with gold”***; and (3) ***“When the Almighty scattered kings in it, it was white as snow in Salmon”***.

The symmetry of these words is glorious if you will take the trip through it. We first see the Jews in the state of grotesque misuse. As the expositor John Trapp says: *“like scullions, that commonly lie down in the kitchen among the pots or hearthstones, whereby they are very much discoloured and deformed”*. Scullions, or scullery maids, who survive but barely through the continuous labor and dishonor heaped upon them day to day are left among the blackened filthy pots. These redeemed Jews have freshly undergone the most horrible treatment among those unclean and filthy national brethren who have undergone the great tribulation at the malicious hand of the Antichrist. Even among their brethren, they are considered the offscouring of all things and but for the gentle interventions of God and helps among their Gentile co-elect would have been utterly cut off. Hated among the hated, and betrayed by every kin and kith, they experience a low that is theretofore unknown in the world. Scum among the scum, black among the blackhearted. The word picture paints a most horrid and desperate state.

Yet, what beautiful state follows? Here is a place we have to take care. There is a time referenced here that is quite different from the blessed times of the millennial reign of Christ. This is a time that precedes the slaughter at Armageddon, referenced by the third clause we will consider shortly. This is the period between. Like the period between the calling forth of the Jews – then known as the people of God in a symbol – out of Egypt and the deliverance of them from the raging army of the Egyptians. This, I submit, is a picture of those redeemed that stands along and helps to define how they appear on Mt. Zion as depicted at the opening of Revelation

chapter 14. And oh, what a beautiful picture it is. Like the resplendent beauty of a dove's glistening wings when the light reflects and refracts to present flashes of silver and gold upon the perfect whiteness of her coat. This is how the blessed light of the returning Christ shimmers across the crowd of redeemed Jews standing ***"on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb"*** (Revelation 15:2-3). There they are, blending joyously and perfectly the deliverance from Egypt and the deliverance from Antichrist as they await the coming resolution of the matter and their final placement in their happy land.

Which, of course, leads us to the third leg of this sweet song's passage out of Psalm 68. What curious words are these: ***"When the Almighty scattered kings in it, it was white as snow in Salmon"***? Expositors do a decent treatment of this passage, but without laying it all out here let me articulate what the mind's eye should see. When ***"the indignation of the LORD is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies: he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter"*** (Isaiah 34:2). The result of this slaughter is the carcasses across the mountains and valley at Armageddon. So great the slaughter ... so abundant the carcasses ... they have the appearance of a snow-covered mountain. Pale, lifeless bodies laid across one another to be plucked and consumed by the fowls of the air and the beasts of the fields. A picture of complete attrition, lest there be the first thought enter the minds of those remaining of the human race to swell in pride and war against the conquering Christ.

Yet, these blessed Jews are humans. And in that state, they must cope with the indwelling sins of humans. They have not yet been blessed with glorified bodies or spirits. They continue to observe the outpouring of trauma and slaughter at the hands of Antichrist and those who do his bidding in the earth, and I believe (as will be discussed later) some are slain. Many passages have been brought forth in previous sermons to show what these saved and gentle souls have to see and experience in this period. For this reason, another passage that cannot be dismissed in our examination of them at this period, is from John's Apocalypse – right on the very cusp of the battle of Armageddon breaking forth. And the words come from the very Christ they are singing praises to:

"Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame." (Revelation 16:15)

The final passage that I will bring to bear on this examination is from the plain instruction that flows to us within just a few verses of Christ's second advent being declared.

"And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days. ... 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. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. 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. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. " (Revelation 12:6, 14-17)

Perhaps the most detailed and express of our example passages, these words depict a most frightening scene for this ***"woman"*** who is also here depicted in the individual members of her body, as those who will obey God and give testimony against the wicked Jews and others at the day of Judgment (i.e., ***"which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ"***). She is said here to be in a place of solitude and desolation. Some expositors have hinted that this ***"wilderness"*** refers to Mt. Sinai, where the Jews received

the law after being delivered from Egypt. But that does violence to many scriptures to conclude such. First, Revelation 14 squarely depicts them on Mt. Zion with the Lamb. Second, Paul has told us that we who live under this current dispensation are finished with Mt. Sinai:

“For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:) But ye are come unto mount Zion. (Hebrews 12:18-22)

And it does no harm to see Mt. Zion as a place that has become desolate ... as we know from a multitude of passages that it has been for many years under great assault in an attempt by Antichrist to undo the saints. So, I believe that even with limiting ourselves to the use of prophesies that are clear enough for us to lay hold on them confidently, I think we may safely conclude that for the period of time between Christ’s second advent and the taking of His throne He keeps the redeemed Jews in a state of preservation, though only just outside the reach of full destruction so that they may be purged of any tendency to seek to man for deliverance.

In November of 2016 I did a pair of sermons on the condition of things related to the millennial kingdom of Jesus Christ, which includes the care and treatment of the redeemed of Israel during that period of timeⁱⁱ. Without going through all of that again here, I want to give a quick example of how it is articulated, and then we’ll move to a yet-unexamined component to this portion of the judgment of Christ as it pertains to that group. When I read this, try to put yourself in the exact point in providence that we’ve just left off ... at the utter slaughter of the armies of the kingdoms of men by Christ, and then His entering into His temple (as is exhaustively discussed in Ezekiel chapters 40-44). Now He is set upon his earthly throne and He – in this prophecy – is declaring the condition of things under His rule.

“¶ Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee. The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come: they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall shew forth the praises of the LORD. All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee: they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and I will glorify the house of my glory [i.e., the new temple]. Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows? ¶ Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the LORD thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee. And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee: for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee. Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought. For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted. The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my

feet glorious. The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The city of the LORD, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel. ¶ Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations. Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breast of kings: and thou shalt know that I the LORD am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob. For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron: I will also make thy officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness. Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise. The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the LORD shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the LORD shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended. Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified. A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the LORD will hasten it in his time." (Isaiah 60:1-22)

Three oracles, 22 verses. I chose this example because it serves as one of the most descriptive and exhaustive regarding the state of the Jewish redeemed while they reign with Christ in the earth for a thousand years. This is clearly the judgment of the Jewish remnant from the seat of Christ. They will have peace in the land originally given them in the promise to Abraham. They will have abundance of all things necessary to life and to true godliness in their continual worship of God and Christ. They will have the best of happy servitude and strength from all the nations of the world being brought to them, as the honored of the King of the earth. The redundancy of expression in scripture regarding these truths is significant and serves to fully reveal the scope and nuances.

Remember that I said at the start of this work that the state of these Jews will be to live and reign with Christ forever. The language "forever" clearly extends beyond the thousand years with Christ ruling in the earth. So we must either conclude that "**for ever**", when used in these passages, means "a really long time" or we must conclude that it means literally "without end". There are some very curious words in Revelation chapter 20 that – if you read the expositions of it – you will conclude that no man has confidently spoken to them. Expositor Adam Clarke finishes his best thinking, and then says "*but this also is very doubtful*", as though he is utterly befuddled. Matthew Poole tries desperately to unravel the meaning, and then lands at "*I must confess that this is such a difficulty of Scripture, as I do not understand. I shall proceed with the following verses upon this hypothesis, that this is the sense, though I dare not be positive in it.*" John Gill throws so many options out of the possible meaning that he veritably ties himself into an intellectual knot. Since I think we must understand them, to be able to complete our work in this analysis, I'm going to give it some focused attention, as I believe our blessed God has shown it to me. Here are the words:

"...I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." (Revelation 20:4-6)

There is a very interesting thing going on here. To ensure clarity, please again recall the period of time that we're referencing. This discussion relates to the judgment of Christ toward the Jewish remnant during the three-and-a-half-year period after His second advent, and then through His millennial reign. To understand these words in Revelation 20, I believe that fact is a critical piece of the analysis for understanding it.

These are elect Jews being talked about here. You know that because of the language in the passage. First, Antichrist did not mandate the receipt of his mark until **after** he came forth in his eighth iteration ... which was **after** Christ's second advent. Second, all the dead in Christ and the remnant of elect Gentiles alive at His appearance are out of the earth and beyond the authority of Antichrist. So those people could not be described in this passage as those **"who had not worshipped the beast, neither his image ..."**. The only persons who are elect of God and still within the scope of this decree by Antichrist were those elect Jews earlier discussed. Hence, we must conclude that some of those Jews were beheaded. Indeed, when the eighth Antichrist is revealed, it is specifically stated that those who would not worship him **"should be killed"**, a threat that I have previously treated as only addressing the reprobate, but clearly also includes some of the saints. While this distresses me, and makes me revisit my strong convictions about exactly what happens on Mt. Zion during that three-and-a-half-year period, the language of Revelation 20 demands the conclusion.

For two reasons, however, the conclusion must be drawn that those who were slain are then resurrected. First, the text plainly says so (with explanation). Second, for the complete fulfillment of the promises of God to the seed of Abraham, they must return to life ... and that life must be eternal. Let's break these down.

On the first, the passage here in Revelation says that those same who were beheaded – right along with those who were not killed but **"which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, etc."** – **"lived and reigned with him a thousand years."** Then, as if to clarify the intent of those words, the passage continues **"But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection."** That is to say, those who were killed because of their service to God were resurrected to life so that they could reign with Christ. However, **"the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished"**, at which time the second resurrection will take place. Of course, the second resurrection is described later in that chapter thusly:

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them [i.e., the second resurrection]: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death."
(Revelation 20:12-14)

The first resurrection was for the Jewish saints slain during the reign of the eighth Antichrist, so that they would be returned to their promised life with Christ and then God ... in the promised land. The second resurrection was for the rest of the dead who are judged and cast into the lake of fire. This, the passage says, is **"the second death"**. And, just in case I've not convinced you yet ... remember please that when referencing those under the first resurrection, this passage also expressly states **"he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power"**. I honestly do not think it could be any clearer who is being referenced with regard to this first resurrection.

And this is not unimportant. There's a critical reason why those Jewish saints who are killed under the eighth Antichrist must be restored to life. It has for many years been a point of irreconcilable conflict when I would read of the promise to Abraham – that his seed would dwell ... in the land promised to him ... for eternity. Then, when I read discussions of eschatology, the notion constantly put forth is one of eternity in the heavens. In fact, though, there is no conflict. The distinction that has to be made is in the recipient of the blessings. We know that there are mansions prepared for us (John 14:2) in the building of God that is eternal in the heavens (2 Corinthians 5:1) an entrance to which the saints of God are to be ministered abundantly (2 Peter 1:11). We also

know, as I have spoken at length about previously, that there is a New Jerusalem that is 500 miles cubed, if you credit the description in scripture. This means that it moves 500 miles upward from the earth, which is quite distinct from the land of promise to Abraham. Friends, there are two treatments for the saints. Those who are taken up at the second advent of Christ and those who are appointed to dwell eternally in the earth with Christ and God. Those who are taken up, receive glorified bodies to sustain the commandment that they shall **“ever be with the Lord” (1 Thessalonians 4:17)** in the air. Those who are to dwell in the earth are likewise translated to dwelling without death or sin for eternity.

“¶ And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.” (Revelation 21:1-5)

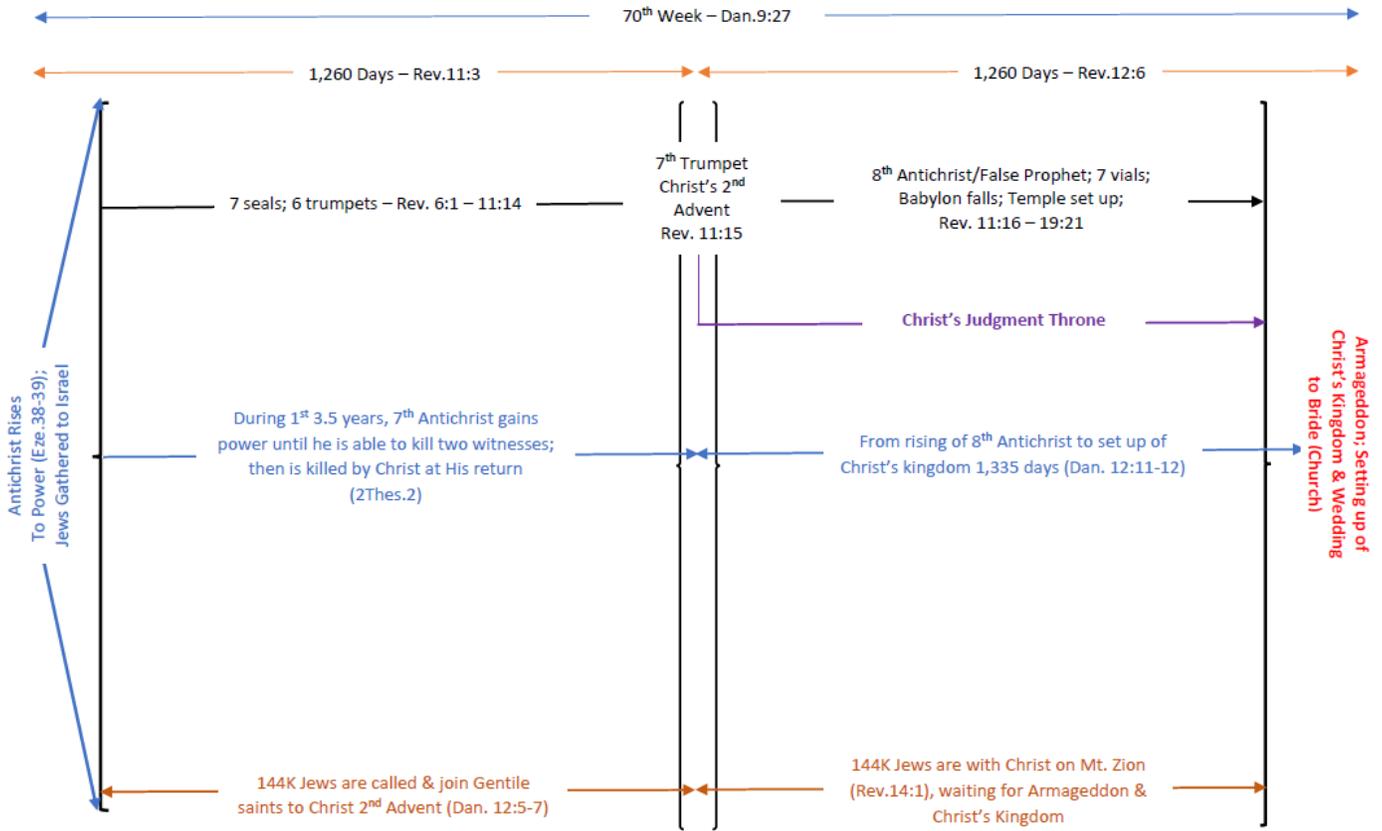
This shows the picture of the presence of God with the children of Israel ... those very ones who reigned with Jesus Christ for a thousand years. How we know that this reign is without death and without sin is that the passage just two verses before this beautiful scene – and I believe a necessary condition precedent to this scene – is the declaration that **“death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.” (Revelation 20:14)** There is no more death, because the millennial reign of Christ closed the seven-thousand-year experiment of fallen man and the creation is purged of that sin and death that entered it at Adam’s fall, and therefore also the consequence of that deadly sin ... hell. Now there is only the redeemed of Israel in the earth and the redeemed of the Gentiles in heaven, dwelling in the presence of Christ and God for eternity.

So, the judgment of Christ ... with respect to the Jewish saints alive at his second advent ... is to sustain them, purge them, resurrect those who were slain by the eighth Antichrist, rule with them for a thousand years in the land, and then bring them to the father to dwell in a perfected state for eternity. The exhilarating joy of this truth will cause the tender heart of the saints to cry out:

“O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!” (Romans 11:33)

I love you. Amen.

Timeline of the Day of the Lord



ⁱ The discussion of Daniel's vision in chapter seven began in a sermon on August 18, 2019, and was covered through sermons on November 10, 2019, January 5, 2020, and March 22, 2020.

ⁱⁱ Sermons on the millennial reign of Jesus Christ on November 20, 2016 tinyurl.com/MillennialPDF, and November 27, 2016 tinyurl.com/Millennial2PDF.