

From Jerusalem to the Sea of Glass

After the angel of Revelation 14:6-7, has delivered his worldwide dreams and visions, which will warn the whole world of Christ's imminent return and the need to repent, God's people will flee from the nations of Israel which have acted as Babylon, and arrive in Jerusalem with their God-given instructions, Isaiah 52:6, *'I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the LORD, keep not silence.'* [Read our previous article, 'Come out of her My People.']

Joining others who already recognise the importance of Jerusalem, they are soon ready to publish God's message, but in those months the US and Britain will have been brought low and international travel for civilians will cease. Those who will wish to join them, cannot. Revelation 14:8, *'And another, a second angel, followed, saying, Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, which hath made all the nations to drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.'* ERV.

Then, with the world's policeman removed, the Jews will immediately appeal to the German led EU to honour its coming protective treaty, and the emerging Beast will oblige, rushing a token force to the nation of Israel to deter further Arab invasion, but with ulterior motives, Daniel 11:23, *'And after the league is made with him he shall work **deceitfully**: for he shall come up, and shall become strong with a small number of people.'*

At this point, there will remain less than three years to the return of Christ for His Saints, at the end of which, Matthew 24:29, *'Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give its light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken.'* The **'tribulation of those days'** are years of world war and turmoil as the four horsemen of the Apocalypse ride. (Seals 1-5, Revelation 6:1-8)

Around the world, Israel will be invaded and enslaved, so that less than one tenth finally survive, Isaiah 10:5-6, *'O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation. I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets.'* Jeremiah 30:7, *'Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.'* Isaiah 6:13, *'And though a tenth remains in the land, it will again be laid waste. But as the terebinth and oak leave stumps when they are cut down, so the holy seed will be the stump in the land.'* NIV.

From Jerusalem though, a message of hope will go out from God's Church, encouraging the Jews and those Israelites who failed to repent after the dreams and visions, to now recognise their sins, Jeremiah 3:14, *'Turn, O backsliding children, says the LORD; for I am married unto you: and I will take you one from a city, and two from a family, and I will bring you to Zion.'* Those now deep in slumber in God's Church, (Matthew 25:1-10) will repent then, **and during the following 3 ½ years of the Great Tribulation, the Seventh Seal**, after the resurrection! Revelation 7:13-14, *'And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.'* They join the great multitude of all nations who repent then, encouraged during the last 3 ½

years by the two witnesses, (verse 9) and will serve God before His throne, after the second resurrection, *for the First Resurrection takes place at **the Sixth Seal**, before the Great Tribulation!*

Revelation 14:15-16, *'And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud (cf. Matthew 24:30) thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.'* [This firstfruit harvest is the resurrection]. Revelation 6:16, *'And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us **from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.**'* [This also is the resurrection]. But, Revelation 14:17-19, *'And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.* [This angel brings the Great Tribulation]. *And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the **great winepress of the wrath of God.**'*

The 'tribulation of those days', including the persecution of the saints at the 5th seal, and the last 3 1/2 years of the Great Tribulation, are detailed in an exposition of Daniel 11 entitled, 'The Kings of the North and South', and also in the End Time Series, on the Ozwitness website.

Half way through those last 7 years though, the Beast will arrive at Jerusalem in full power, with His army, Luke 21:20-21, *'And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. 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.'* Matthew 24:21, *'For **then** shall be **great tribulation**, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.'*

God's church will then flee South, to Tekoa, warning believing Jews to join them before the Beast's armies completely surround Jerusalem, Jeremiah 6:1, *'O ye children of Benjamin, gather yourselves to flee out of the midst of Jerusalem, and blow the trumpet in Tekoa, and set up a sign of fire in Bethhaccerem: for evil appeareth out of the north, [Haifa] and great destruction.'* (Jeremiah speaks to Israel and Judah in the future, here, for, 5:15, 20, at that time, ancient Israel itself had been carried away almost 100 years previously.)

They will be closely pursued by the army of their enemy, the Beast, who has hated their warning broadcast from Jerusalem, into the mountains of Judaea, West of the Dead Sea, Revelation 12:15, *'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.'* But armies mean nothing to God. Zechariah 9:16, *'And the LORD their God shall save them in that day as the flock of his people: for they shall be as the stones of a crown, lifted up as an ensign upon his land.'*

The events of the Sixth Seal are arriving! Luke 21:25, *'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.'* 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 the terrible day of the LORD come.**'*

At these signs, the pursuing army will become fearful, but the Saints remember 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 events they have read of in Matthew 24 and Revelation 6, leading up to the resurrection, 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.'*

All will fall to the ground as the earth first trembles and then begins to shake, rocks falling down upon the distant army below. The darkened sky will be suddenly rent apart with a great tearing sound and the clouds roll back like waves, revealing an awesome blue light surrounding a great throne, upon which sits the appearance of the glory of the Lord (Ezekiel 1:26-28).

At this sight, a great cry of joy erupts from God's people, but confusion and fear strikes the pursuing army, as the awesome figure descends towards the cowering troops, Psalm 18:9-11, *'He bowed the heavens also, and came down: and darkness was under his feet. And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind. He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies.'*

As the tremors calm, God's people rise from their knees to see what seems to be a great storm of hail and fire poured out upon the army below, verses 12-14, *'At the brightness that was before him his thick clouds passed, hail stones and coals of fire. The LORD also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice; hail stones and coals of fire. Yea, he sent out his arrows, and scattered them; and he shot out lightnings, and discomfited them.'*

But that is not the end. The earth itself is torn apart, and with a great roar the army is swallowed up in a cloud of dust. As the people stare in horror, the dust gradually clears, but not a sign of the distant army remains, 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.'*

While the people stand in silent awe, the earth is 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 will be seen descending from the throne above, taking those Saints by the hand whose bodies change before the eyes of the onlookers into glowing forms, still recognisable but somehow quite different, and ascend with them to the Sea of Glass in the clouds, along with all the others being resurrected, worldwide, 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.'* 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17, *'For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and **with the trump of God**: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord'*, 1 Corinthians 15:51-52, *'Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, **at the last trump**: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.'* As W E Vine explains in his Expository Dictionary, at the resurrection, "the last trump is a military allusion, familiar [then] to Greek readers, and **has no connection with the series in Revelation 8:6 – 11:15.**"

Tears appear in the eyes of some there, as the realisation dawns upon them that they are not changed, or taken by the angels to the Sea of Glass. Where **they** go then, and how Christ rescues them, will be explained in our next message, 'Christ Goes to Petra'.

This is the resurrection God's firstfruit Saints have long awaited, of course at the very time of the firstfruit barley harvest in Israel, just 3 ½ years before Christ's **final** return at the Feast of Trumpets. **Then, at Christ's return with His Bride**, an angel, not God, will blow the trumpet, Revelation 11:15, *'And the **seventh angel sounded**; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.'*

All the resurrected Saints are gathered by the angels to the Sea of Glass, still visible in the clouds, from where, with Christ, they are carried to God's throne in heaven. Revelation 14:1-3, *'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.'* Hebrews 12:22, *'But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, **the heavenly Jerusalem**, and to an innumerable company of angels.'*

Here they will be prepared for their future role as the Bride of Christ, and Kings and Priests on the earth, educated by Christ Himself, just as were His 12 disciples over their few years with Him, so that they too will experience the maturity we recognise in the Apostles after Christ's ascension.

Will the marriage take place just a few days later, at the Feast of Pentecost, or at one of the other three Feasts of Pentecost which they will experience in Heaven? We aren't told, but it has to be one of them, 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.'*

These years of intense learning will provide all the knowledge His Bride needs, to carry out the various roles for which they have qualified, Luke 19:17, *'And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.'* And Revelation 22:12, *'And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man **according as his work shall be.'***

Finally, some of us will need considerable equestrian education before returning with Jesus Christ, just before Armageddon! Revelation 19:14, *'And the armies which were in heaven followed him **upon white horses**, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.'* At last, the time of preparation is over. Christ's rule on the earth is about to begin! To be continued in
'Christ Goes to Petra' article.