

## General Topics :: How do you prove the Messiah Jesus from the torah or the first five books of the Bible

### How do you prove the Messiah Jesus from the torah or the first five books of the Bible - posted by deltadom (), on: 201

Genesis 3:15 KJV

And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

Genesis 49:10 KJV

The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come ; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.

With Orthodox Jews who only believe in the Torah how can you prove that Jesus is the Messiah from the first five books of the Bible ?

### Re: How do you prove the Messiah Jesus from the torah or the first five books of the - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 20

I personally see the life of Joseph as a type of the life of Christ. It includes the story of his being betrayed, suffering, death, and resurrection. In it we see not only the rejection of Christ by His brethren, but we also see the story of their eventual salvation and reconciliation with their brother who has become their Savior and King, who has ascended to the throne.

Jews today would just say this is a history lesson, and not see it as a type of Christ and God's historical and eschatological dealings with them as a people. But that is why Paul says they read Moses with a veil covering their eyes. The book of Genesis is the book of Beginnings, showing us not only historical stories, but stories that serve as prophetic models and paradigms for all subsequent redemptive history. Genesis is a book full of types of things that are to come after it, including the Messiah.

Much more could be said. But this is sufficient for now. :-)

### Re: How do you prove the Messiah Jesus from the torah or the first five books of the - posted by sojourner7 (), on: 201

Moses is also a type of the Deliverer and Redeemer promised by GOD to His people. Moses spoke of a prophet to come who would be the Anointed, Chosen One or Messiah!!

### Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/7/31 15:04

Amen Sojourner. In Deuteronomy 18, Moses says that God would eventually raise up a prophet "like me," and that the salvation of the people would ultimately depending on heeding the words of "the prophet" God would raise up. And what were some of the things Moses was chiefly known for?

- 1) Being a deliverer/savior
- 2) Being a prophet
- 3) Working miracles and demonstrating the power of God
- 4) Establishing a NEW COVENANT
- 5) Being an intercessor
- 6) Mediating between God and man.
- 7) Leading the nation.

The thing that always speaks the loudest to me when I meditate on Deut. 18 is the fact that Moses established a new covenant with the nation. Thus, the prophet Moses speaks about must be one who also establishes a new covenant with the people of God. Though the passage does not explicitly say such a thing, such is not hard to deduce, and I would personally reckon it as the first prediction of a new covenant in the Old Testament, even if it is only inferred.

## **Israel and the Messianic Kingdom: A Concise Exposition of Isaiah, on: 2010/8/12 2:20**

Prof. Johan Malan, Mossel Bay, South Africa (January 2010)

Scripture quotations are from the New King James Version (NKJV) unless otherwise stated.

### **Preface**

Isaiah is one of the best known prophets of the Old Testament. His book is extensively read and quoted by orthodox Jews, Messianic Jews as well as Gentile believers. The prophecies of Isaiah are of particular significance in the end-time during the first phase of Israel's restoration from the Diaspora, shortly before the coming of the Messiah, and the revelation in glory of God's kingdom on earth.

Profs. John Walvoord & Roy Zuck emphasise the great importance of this book as follows: "Isaiah spoke more than any other prophet of the great kingdom into which Israel would enter at the Second Advent of the Messiah. Isaiah discussed the depths of Israel's sin and the heights of God's glory and His coming kingdom" (Bible Knowledge Commentary, p. 1029).

However, many Gentile believers do not seriously consider the large body of prophecies referring to the future Messianic state of Israel under the personal rule of the Messiah. They interpret biblical prophecies in a non-literal way by spiritualising them and applying them to the church dispensation. This practice has given rise to kingdom-now theology, or dominionism, which openly disregards the integrity and full implications of God's promises. The following are some of the erroneous tenets held by dominionists, in terms of which they are fervently trying to reform and reconstruct the present world and all its institutions:

• They deny the establishment of a future kingdom on earth after the coming of the Messiah as the King of kings. Instead, they endeavour to become kings now in a manmade kingdom emerging from an expected political and religious takeover of authority by the universal church as God's special representative on earth.

• They deny the importance of Israel's physical, political and spiritual restoration in the land of their fathers. Israel is replaced by the church and the prophesied restoration of Israel is equated with a global wave of revivals which will lead to millions of people from the four corners of the earth entering the kingdom of God by joining the Christian church.

• They expect a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the last days to empower the church for its mandate to establish God's kingdom on earth. They see the rising of the kingdom as successfully countering the present process of falling away from the biblical standards of morality and religious worship. They ignore all prophecies on divine judgements upon a wicked world and do not warn people against the imminent revelation of the Antichrist who will rule over an apostate world after the rapture.

Dominionists unwittingly promote the multireligious new world order of the Antichrist since they are ecumenically oriented with a view to facilitating the emergence of a world church. Their drive towards globalism renders them easy prey to all forms of deception which arise from compromise between different religions and ideologies. The "spirit of unity at all cost" has not been instilled into churches by the Holy Spirit but by the spirit of error (cf. 1 John 4:6).

Theologians everywhere, all Christian believers, Jews of different persuasions, as well as members of other faiths, will do well to make an objective study of the book Isaiah. The remarkable way in which prophecies related to the first coming of the Messiah, Israel's international dispersion due to unbelief, as well as their present restoration from all nations, bear strong witness to the literal fulfilment of biblical prophecies. It leaves us with no choice but to expect the further restoration of Israel, the dawning of the terrible day of the Lord when His wrath and fierce anger will be poured out upon all the wicked, the second coming of the Messiah in power and glory, the salvation of a remnant of Israel and the nations, and the establishment of God's kingdom on earth with Jerusalem as capital.

The suffering Messiah who was born as a lowly Servant in Bethlehem more than 2000 years ago will soon come as the reigning Messiah to reveal the kingdom of heaven on earth. The saved remnant of Israel will play a major part in this kingdom, as well as the resurrected and glorified members of the church of Christ among the Gentiles. That will be the grand culmination of Isaiah's prophecies, and the ushering in of a dispensation of durable peace and harmony among all nations, as well as great blessings in nature. The wicked have all reason to fear the coming day of the Lord, but the righteous will inherit the earth and rejoice in the physical presence of the Holy One of Israel.

Do you have a sound, biblical future expectation – or have you been captivated by the kingdom vision of people who

committed themselves to establishing a kingdom which differs in many respects from the one promised to us in the Bible?

Johan Malan

Summary: Through the prophet Isaiah God clearly reveals His plan for an Israel- and Jerusalem-based kingdom on earth over which the Messiah will rule in righteousness. The coming time of divine intervention in human affairs is referred to as "the day of the Lord." This apocalyptic period will be characterised by great judgements to purge Israel and the entire world of evil. The surviving remnant of Israel and the nations will enter the millennial kingdom in which the Messiah will rule from the restored throne of David. Jerusalem will be made a praise in the earth and the spiritually revived Israel will be the Messiah's special witnesses among the nations. The advanced stage of Israel's end-time restoration is indicative of the imminence of the day of the Lord, or tribulation period, when His wrath will be poured out upon the wicked. This prophetic scenario precludes any public revelation of the kingdom of heaven on earth during the church dispensation before the full restoration of Israel and the end-time judgements of the day of the Lord. The defiant attitude of millions of unrepentant sinners will have to be dealt with and decisively ended before righteousness will prevail in the world.

#### Introduction

The prophet Isaiah is a major prophet to Israel as well as the Gentile world. Various key passages in Isaiah will be considered and interpreted in the light of correlating prophecies from other books in Scripture. Special care will be taken to correctly indicate the dispensational framework for the fulfilment of these prophecies. Some of them are relevant to one or more of the following dispensations and should always be interpreted within this framework:

1. Israel in the Old Testament.
2. The church dispensation after the first coming and rejection of the Messiah, at the end of which Israel is restored to their land.
3. The coming tribulation period under the reign of the Antichrist. This will also be the time of Jacob's trouble because of Israel's unbelief as a nation.
4. The millennial age under the rule of the Messiah, directly following His second coming on the Mount of Olives.
5. Prophetic reference is also made to the new heavens and new earth which will be created after the Millennium.

This article does not offer an exhaustive exegesis of all Isaiah's prophecies but only highlights certain key passages. The main aim is to glorify God and confirm the authenticity of His Word by considering the literal fulfilment of Old Testament prophecies. Much light is shed upon prophecies that will be fulfilled in the near future before, during and after the coming of the Messiah. The review of Isaiah's prophecies is also aimed at countering the present confusion that has arisen from kingdom-now theology (dominionism) which is the result of efforts to bereave Israel of prophecies on future blessings during the millennial age, and erroneously applying these prophecies to the church age. This wrong approach is generally known as "replacement theology" as it seeks to replace Israel by the church.

The unjustified and unbiblical omission of Israel from God's end-time programme gives replacement theologians the excuse to transfer all the promises of Israel's restoration and millennial blessings to the church age. They have already set into motion a global transformations movement to reconstruct societies in accordance with Christian principles and also, by means of strategic spiritual warfare, attempt to rid the planet of Satan's influence. That will give them, according to their own expectations, the opportunity to rule as kings before Christ comes, to do great signs and wonders, and to dispel all notions of impending judgements which are associated with the tribulation period. They are so caught up in positive thinking that they give no recognition to God's judgements.

#### Theological themes

The theological themes of Isaiah revolve mainly around Israel's contemporary and prophetic position; God's judgements upon Israel and the nations because of their persistent sinning, with strong emphasis on the judgements of the coming day of the Lord; God's worldwide salvation through the promised Messiah; the spiritual restoration of Israel and a remnant of the nations at the beginning of the Messianic age; and also future blessings beyond the millennium when God's glory will be manifest in the entire universe.

The book is not chronologically written as it intermittently refers to future blessings and judgements as the long-term consequences of Israel's spiritual status in any given situation. A dark future awaits all sinners who despise God's

authority and offer of forgiveness, while great blessings will be inherited by the righteous.

The retribution of God

In their Bible Knowledge Commentary (pp. 1033-1034) Profs. John F. Walvoord & Roy B. Zuck say: "The Lord... indicted His covenant nation for their breach of the Mosaic Covenant, and offered His complete forgiveness to those who would repent but judgement to those who continued to rebel. In 6:9-13 God pointed out to Isaiah that most of the nation, however, would not repent..."

"In the first major division of the book, Isaiah wrote much about the judgement that was to come on Judah because of her failure to follow the Mosaic Covenant. God's punishment would prove to the nation that He fulfils His Word. This section also speaks of judgement which is to come on the whole world (chaps. 13-24). All nations of the earth stand guilty before the Holy One of Israel.

"In the section on judgement Isaiah also emphasised blessing which will come to the nation because of her covenantal relationship with the Lord. For example, in the Lord's indictment of Judah (chaps. 1-6) 1:24-31 refers to the nation's restoration, 4:2-6 speaks of a remnant of survivors, and 6:13 refers to a 'holy seed' or a remnant. In the prophecies on deliverance (chaps. 7-12) God's people would be delivered from . But also God's glorious empire, the millennial kingdom will rise (chap. 11; cf. Rev. 20:1-6) and the regathered people will sing a song of salvation (chap. 12).

"In chapters 13-24, on God's judgement on the nations, the prophet wrote that Israel will be restored to the land and will rule over the people who have oppressed her (14:1-2)... The worship of the true God will signal peace on earth (19:19-25)..."

"In beautiful and varied language Isaiah made the point that sin must be rooted out of the nation and the world. Eventually, in the Millennium, righteousness will be enforced and the nation will dwell in prosperity and peace because of her renewed relationship with the Lord." (End of quotation).

It is obvious that God's end-time judgements upon spiritually blind Israel as well as the apostate nations have not yet begun. This coming period is referred to as "the time of Jacob's trouble" (Jer. 30:7) and also as "the day of the Lord cruel, with both wrath and fierce anger" (Isa. 13:9). Israel is gathered back to their land, mainly in unbelief, to be tested and purified (cf. Ezek. 22:19-22). The wicked nations will, likewise, be subjected to a time of severe testing and tribulation (Rev. 3:10). Only the true believers will escape the impending time of the worldwide outpouring of divine wrath (Luke 21:36; 1 Thess. 1:10).

The end of the church dispensation is not characterised by kingdom reforms on a global scale, but by a great falling away which paves the way for the revelation of a false christ and his deceptive new world order.

True and false religion

Whatever happens to Israel or the nations is determined by their relationship with God – they are either the objects of His blessing or the objects of His wrath. In the first chapter of Isaiah God makes mention of the all-important aspect of maintaining the right relationship with Him by walking in the light and confessing and forsaking all sin. However, most Israelites persisted with their evil ways and thus actively rebelled against God (1:2-4). They only maintained an outward form of godliness by observing certain laws pertaining to Sabbaths, sacrifices and feasts. Religion is shown to be a false and deceptive practice when it is not accompanied by a vital relationship with God, leading to a pure heart and personal holiness (29:13).

God abhors the outward religious activities of unrepentant sinners and does not even listen to their prayers (1:10-15). True repentance is the only solution to this widespread problem: "Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; put away the evil of your doings... Come now and let us reason together, says the Lord. Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land; but if you refuse and rebel, you shall be devoured by the sword" (1:16-20). It is in God's hand to change the destiny of a person or a nation for the good. All He asks of people is true repentance and faithfulness.

The severity of God's ultimate judgements, as well as the world-wide manifestation of His righteousness and blessings, are so clearly revealed that it is impossible to confine their final fulfilment to Israel's defeat by Nebuchadnezzar, their Babylonian captivity, and their post-exilic restoration. These are clearly end-time events that can only occur when the tribulation had started and also after the Messiah had come and was either accepted or rejected by Israel and the nations. The partial fulfilment of divine judgements in Old Testament times never excludes their final fulfilment in the period after Is

Israel's restoration from the Diaspora.

Judgement comes before the blessing of a remnant of faithful ones on earth during the Millennium. Israel and the nations are still largely characterised by wickedness and are consequently heading for the end-time judgements of the day of the Lord. God's righteousness was offered to humanity by the coming of the Messiah more than 2000 years ago, followed by the preaching of the gospel to all nations.

We are now close to the time when judgement will begin at the house of the Lord (1 Pet. 4:17). After the rapture, all believers will appear before the judgement seat of Christ (2 Cor. 5:10). During that time, the Antichrist will be revealed on earth and give free reign to a culture of sin among the multitudes of deceived and spiritually blind people. That time will also be characterised by the Lamb's judgements upon the wicked (Rev. 6:15-17).

This time of severe judgements will be ended by the second coming of the Messiah as King of kings (Zech. 14:4-5). He will restore the throne of David in Jerusalem (Acts 15:16-17) and institute His millennial reign of peace and justice (Isa. 2:2-4; Jer. 3:17). The kingdom of heaven will only be revealed on earth after the Messiah-King had set foot on the Mount of Olives, judged His enemies, destroyed the Antichrist and the false prophet, incarcerated Satan and his demons, saved the remnant of Israel, and instituted His kingdom to the benefit of all people. The nature will also be blessed (Isa. 11:6-9; 55:12-13).

Kingdom-now theology is completely at variance with this sequence of biblical events since it advances the idea of a physical kingdom during the church age before the second coming of Christ. This is a false religious dogma since it ignores the large body of prophecies by which we are warned against the great falling-away from the truth in the end-time, followed by the rapture of the just and the subsequent judgement of the wicked during the tribulation period.

How can the kingdom of heaven be revealed on earth while the devil still roams the earth like a roaring lion (1 Pet. 5:8), when the Antichrist and false prophet are yet to make their appearance to rule the world, when the vast majority of people still love darkness rather than light (John 3:19), and when the kings of the world are conspiring together against God and His Anointed, saying, "Let us break their bonds in pieces and cast away their cords from us" (Ps. 2:2-3)? During this dispensation, true Christians are sojourners and pilgrims in a dark world which lies in the sway of the Evil One (1 Pet. 2:11; 1 John 5:19). Only Christ can end the influence and global dominance of "the god of this age" (cf. 2 Cor. 4:4) when He comes. Before He comes, only individuals can be delivered from the bondage of Satan and sin – not cities, nations and the entire world. We have never been mandated to expel Satan from the world scene during this dispensation and take full control of nations and their governments.

In view of these realities we will do well to clearly distinguish between the suffering and reigning Messiah as also clearly depicted by Isaiah. We are following the suffering Messiah during "this present evil age" (cf. Gal. 1:4), the One who is still rejected by the majority of people. We will rule with Him on earth after His second coming – not now (cf. Rev. 5:9-10).

Isaiah clearly describes the coming of the Messiah in two capacities – firstly as the suffering Servant and secondly as the reigning King.

#### Birth of the Messiah

"Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel" (Isa. 7:14). This is a very clear statement on the virgin birth and deity of the Messiah, also quoted in Matthew 1:23. Jesus was miraculously conceived by the Holy Spirit and therefore also called "the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). He was not only the Son of God in His humanity but also God Himself who dwelt among His people in a human body. He was rightfully called Emmanuel, which Matthew 1:23 translates as "God with us." The Lord Jesus later confirmed His divine position when He said, "I and My Father are one" (John 10:30).

How utterly wrong are those modern theologians, preachers and their followers who deny the virgin birth and deity of Jesus Christ! In so doing they preach another "gospel" and another "Jesus" (cf. Gal. 1:6-8; 2 Cor. 11:3-4) which only serves the purpose of deceiving naïve people, thereby preparing the way for the revelation and general acceptance of the Antichrist as universal messiah (Rev. 13:3-4).

#### The Son of Man is also Lord and God

Isaiah says: "For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His go

vernment and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over his kingdom” (Isa. 9:6-7). Paul confirmed the fulfilment of this prophecy when he said that the Messiah was born from Israel and that He is “over all, the eternally blessed God” (Rom. 9:4-5).

It is a great and divine truth to comprehend that the “Son” born in the royal family of Israel was not only destined to be their King on the throne of David, but He is also described as “Mighty God” and “Everlasting Father.” Zechariah says of Him: “The Lord my God will come... And the Lord shall be King over all the earth” (Zech. 14:5,9). He is the great God who is one with His Father! John calls Him the “Word” and says: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made” (John 1:1-3). He is God who existed from all eternity. That is why Jesus said to the Jews: “Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM” (John 8:58). “If you do not believe that I AM, you shall die in your sins” (John 8:24; Modern King James Version).

Jesus is also the Creator of the world (cf. John 1:2-3; Col. 1:15-17). Therefore, in a creative and not in a begetting sense, He is the Everlasting Father of creation. But in the fullness of time He “became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14).

#### Saviour and King

Although Isaiah did not specifically write about the church dispensation, he clearly alludes to it when referring to the salvation of the Gentiles: “Indeed He says, It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved ones in Israel: I will also give you as a light to the Gentiles, that You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth” (49:6).

This scripture was the main substantiation given by Paul and Barnabas when moving out to establish the church among the Gentiles. He said to his hostile Jewish contemporaries: “It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first; but since you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles. For so the Lord has commanded us: I have set You to be a light to the Gentiles that You should be for salvation to the ends of the earth” (Acts 13:46-47).

In his prophecies, Isaiah distinguished between the suffering Messiah and the reigning Messiah. From these prophecies it is evident that He first had to come as the suffering Messiah who would be rejected by His own people, and then die to pay the ransom for the sins of the whole world. At a later stage He would return as the reigning Messiah who will be the King of kings on the throne of David. Various prophecies refer to these two offices of the Messiah.

#### The suffering Messiah

The following prophecies refer to the first coming of the Messiah, and His redemptive work aimed at spiritually restoring lost people to God. Members of Israel and the nations have a free choice whether to accept or reject the offer of salvation. The negative response of the majority of people accounts for the widespread hostility towards Christ and his followers during the dispensation of grace. Isaiah says:

1. He will be called before His birth to be the Servant of the Lord (49:1).
2. He will be born from a virgin (7:14).
3. He will be a descendant of Jesse and thus the offspring of David (11:1,10).
4. The Holy Spirit will be upon Him (11:2; 42:1).
5. He will not despise the weak (42:3).
6. He will faithfully accomplish His mission (50:4-9).
7. He will willingly submit Himself to suffering (50:6; 53:7-8).
8. He will be rejected by Israel (49:7; 53:1,3).
9. He will take the sins of the world upon Himself (53:4-6,10-12).
10. He will, spiritually, be the light of the world (42:6; 49:6).

#### The reigning Messiah

The following are prophecies that will be fulfilled at the second coming of the Messiah:

1. He will be exalted (52:13; 53:12).
2. He will console His people and take vengeance on His enemies (61:1-3).
3. He will restore Israel spiritually to the Lord and also physically in their land (49:5,8).
4. He will rule from the throne of David in Jerusalem (9:6-7).
5. He will conclude a new covenant with Israel (42:6; 49:8-9).

6. He will save a remnant in Israel from the oppression of the false messiah (10:20-23).
7. He will restore and establish all nations (11:10).
8. He will be worshipped and honoured by all nations (11:10; 49:7; 52:15).
9. He will rule the world (9:6).
10. He will judge with righteousness and equity (11:3-5; 42:1,4).

It is of the utmost importance that we gain clarity on the two roles of the Messiah as the suffering Servant and the reigning King, and particularly also on the long period in world history which elapsed after Israel's rejection of the Messiah and their end-time restoration to the land of their fathers. After the time of Jacob's trouble they will ultimately also be reconciled with the Holy One of Israel.

#### The faithful city

Jerusalem will play a very important role in the revelation of God's kingdom, and the city will be equally important to Israel and the glorified church in the millennial dispensation. The Messiah will rule there and righteousness will prevail. God says, "I will restore your judges as at the first, and your counsellors as at the beginning. Afterwards you shall be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city" (Isa. 1:26). This is still future because Jerusalem is not yet called the city of righteousness or the faithful city. The Lord says, "In those days Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem will dwell safely. And this is the name by which she will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS" (Jer. 33:16).

Jerusalem will be the spiritual hub of the world and will no longer be trampled by the Gentiles: "Yes, many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem and to pray before the Lord" (Zech. 8:22). Jerusalem needs to awaken and prepare itself for its wonderful future role: "Awake, awake! Put on your strength, O Zion; put on your beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city! ... Shake yourself from the dust, arise and sit down, O Jerusalem; loose yourself from the bonds of your neck, O captive daughter of Zion!" (Isa. 52:1-2).

However, Jerusalem is still shrouded in spiritual darkness because of the absence of the Messiah in people's hearts. He alone is the light of the world. Because of this major problem there are distressing prophecies on Jerusalem that first must be fulfilled before the city will be glorified and dwell safely. God says He will gather all nations to battle against Jerusalem (Zech. 14:2). Apart from judging the nations who will besiege Jerusalem God will also test and judge the city's unbelieving Jewish inhabitants (Ezek. 22:17-22). We should pray for the peace of Israel and Jerusalem but keeping in mind that real peace will only prevail here after the coming of the Messiah.

"Zion shall be redeemed with justice and her penitents with righteousness. The destruction of transgressors and of sinners shall be together, and those who forsake the Lord shall be consumed" (Isa. 1:27-28). The contrast between the fate of the believing remnant and the wicked in Israel is detailed in these verses. The remnant will dwell in the new redeemed city of Jerusalem (Zion) where God's justice will prevail. Wicked members of the nation will be judged by God and perish.

#### The redemption of Israel and Zion after the tribulation

The people of Israel have never even closely complied with the spiritual standards which God has set for them. To the contrary – they failed miserably as the Chosen People of God and actually turned Jerusalem into a city where immorality and unrighteousness were practised from the leaders down to the ordinary citizens. This state of affairs still prevails to day and is the major reason why the judgements of God are needed to thoroughly purge this nation from their sins – including Jerusalem where the seat of government is. Isaiah says: "How the faithful city has become a prostitute... your princes are rebellious and companions of thieves; everyone loves bribes and follow after rewards... Therefore the Lord says, the Lord of hosts, the Mighty One of Israel, I will rid Myself of My adversaries, and take vengeance on My enemies. I will turn My hand against you and thoroughly purge away your dross... Those who forsake the Lord shall be consumed" (Isa. 1:21-25,28).

The moral standards of Jerusalem will further deteriorate to the point where the city will be likened with Sodom and Gomorrah. During the past number of years Jerusalem has even hosted gay parades! Israel will conclude a covenant with the false messiah (John 5:43) and he will wage war against the followers of the true messiah, to the extent of even killing the special witnesses that God will raise up in this time to save a remnant in Israel from complete spiritual ruin. Referring to these two witnesses, John says: "Now when they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified" (Rev. 11:7-8).

But everything is not irrevocably lost for wayward Israel. Zion (Jerusalem) shall indeed be redeemed spiritually to become

the city of the Great King (Ps. 48:2). That will happen at the height of the battle of Armageddon when the heavenly Judge will put His feet on the Mount of Olives (Zec.14:4-5). Paul says, "And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins" (Rom.11:26-27). This prophecy has been derived from Isaiah 59:20-21, which is a comforting promise of the Lord to the faithful ones in Israel: "The Redeemer will come to Zion, and to those who turn from transgression in Jacob, says the Lord..."

Paul continues: "And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. For if you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree, how much more will these, who are the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?" (Rom.11:23-24).

The question is, when will the unbelief of Israel come to an end? Their spiritual awakening will progressively occur during the seven year-tribulation. Initially, 144 000 Jews will be saved (Rev. 7:1-8). During the course of the tribulation, more of them will be saved, but the majority will only be saved on the last day of the tribulation when they see the Messiah on the Mount of Olives. God says, "And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they have pierced; they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a first-born. In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning at Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo" (Zech. 12:10-11).

There will be no true and lasting peace in Jerusalem before its inhabitants have all embraced the Prince of Peace in their hearts. Only the Messiah, who is also the King of kings, can establish heavenly peace in a troubled and sin-ridden world, but that will only happen after unrepentant sinners have been judged and removed from the scene.

#### Judgements of the day of the Lord

The coming tribulation period of seven years (cf. Dan. 9:27), and particularly its second half of 3½ years (cf. Matt. 24:15-22), will see the unprecedented destruction of sinners on earth. Isaiah and other prophets describe this period as "the day of the Lord" when divine judgement will come on the whole world to deliver it from the curse brought about by sin :

"Behold, the day of the Lord comes, cruel, with both wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and He will destroy its sinners from it. For the stars of heaven and their constellations will not give their light; the sun will be darkened in its going forth, and the moon will not cause its light to shine. I will punish the world for its evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; I will halt the arrogance of the proud, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. I will make a mortal more rare than fine gold, a man more than the golden wedge of Ophir. Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth will move out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of hosts and in the day of His fierce anger" (Isa. 13:9-13).

Other similar warnings about the judgements of the Lord on that day have been recorded so that people should not lightly brush them aside and disregard them. The global extent of the destruction and the reason for these judgements, namely an excessively wicked generation of people like that in the days of Noah and Lot, time and again is emphasised:

"Behold, the Lord makes the earth empty and makes it waste, distorts its surface and scatters abroad its inhabitants.... The land shall be entirely emptied and utterly plundered, for the Lord has spoken this word..... The earth is also defiled under its inhabitants, because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore the curse has devoured the earth, and those who dwell in it are desolate. Therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men are left" (Isa. 24:1-6).

"Thus says the LORD of hosts: Behold, disaster shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the farthest parts of the earth. And at that day the slain of the Lord shall be from one end of the earth even to the other end of the earth. They shall not be lamented, or gathered, or buried; they shall become refuse on the ground" (Jer. 25:32-33).

"For this is the day of the Lord God of hosts, a day of vengeance, that He may avenge Himself on His adversaries. The sword shall devour; it shall be satiated and made drunk with their blood; for the Lord God of hosts has a sacrifice in the north country by the River Euphrates" (Jer. 46:10).

Joel says the following about the great battle of Armageddon, which will clearly be God's judgement against the wicked and unruly nations: "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord... For behold, in those days and at that time, when I bring back the captives of Judah and J



Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations, and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; and I will enter into judgement with them there on account of My people, My heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations; they have also divided up My land... Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and moon will grow dark, and the stars will diminish their brightness" (Joel 2:31; 3:1-2, 4-15).

The Lord Jesus also referred to the period of the outpouring of divine wrath when He said: "For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved" (Mt. 24:21-22).

John confirms that this dark period of human history will come to pass during the coming great tribulation, and describes it as the day of the Lamb's wrath: "I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks: Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?" (Rev. 6:12-17).

Apart from the horrors of the great tribulation when millions of people will die in unbelief (cf. Zech. 13:8; Rev. 9:15,20-21; 19:19-21), the everlasting lake of fire awaits all the wicked people of all ages after the second resurrection and the great white throne judgment at the end of the Millennium (Rev. 20:14-15).

Isaiah ends his book with a stern warning by God against this place of eternal condemnation: "And they shall go forth and look upon the corpses of the men who have transgressed against Me. For their worm does not die, and their fire is not quenched. They shall be an abhorrence to all flesh" (Isa. 66:24). This sombre and solemn way in which the book of Isaiah is concluded points to the dire need of unrepentant sinners to turn to the Lord for salvation.

#### The final destruction of Babylon

In his discussion of the judgements associated with the day of the Lord, Isaiah also clearly refers to the final destruction of Babylon. Prophecies that deal with the fall of Babylon are so clearly defined and absolute that no period in the entire history of Babylon and Assyria can be found in which they have been comprehensively fulfilled. There has to be an end-time judgement of God to finally destroy this evil stronghold. Consider the following statement:

"And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldeans' pride, will be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It will never be inhabited, nor will it be settled from generation to generation; nor will the Arabian pitch tents there, nor will the shepherds make their sheepfolds there. But wild beasts of the desert will lie there, and their houses will be full of owls; ostriches will dwell there, and wild goats will caper there" (Isa. 13:19-21; see also Jeremiah 51 and Rev. 18).

In the light of the continued strategies of the kingdom of darkness, God's judgements still rest upon Babylon and its evil ways. God's judgements upon Babylon in the Old Testament were never completely fulfilled; consequently, Babylonian conspiracies to form world governments often recurred in historical times. It is evident that the final judgement upon Babylon and its anti-Christian form of government is still future and will be fulfilled during the coming day of the Lord. It is within this framework that the end-time world religion, world government and world economy of the Antichrist are called Babylon in Revelation 17 and 18. Its destruction during the coming great tribulation will constitute the final eradication of Satan's age-old Babylonian conspiracy against the kingdom of God.

Walvoord & Zuck (ibid. p. 1058) say: "Babylon deserved God's wrath, for that city had long been a rallying point of anti-God activity. From its very beginning (Gen. 11:1-9) it had been characterised by rebellion against God. Over the centuries, as various dynasties ruled over that city, it was viewed as a place of hatred against the God of Israel. Even in the Tribulation it will be a centre of hatred against God (Rev. 17-18)... 'The day of the Lord' refers to the time of the Lord's judgement on the wicked world and/or deliverance of His people. In Isaiah's day that judgement was coming because of the tremendous political turmoil of the next several decades that would culminate with the fall of Babylon to the Assyrians in 689 BC. That political turmoil was similar to the judgement which will come on the whole world just before God establishes His millennial kingdom on the earth."

In the New Testament section of their Bible Knowledge Commentary, pp. 969-970, Walvoord & Zuck further discuss the end-time manifestation of Babylon in their comments on Revelation 17 and 18: "Babylon – the source of so many hea

then and pagan religions which have opposed the faith of Israel as well as the faith of the church – is here seen in its final judgement. These chapters do not fall chronologically within the scheme of the seals, trumpets and bowls of the wrath of God... In chapter 17 Babylon is seen in its religious character climaxing in a world religion which seems to fit the first half of the last seven years preceding Christ's second coming. Chapter 17 also records the destruction of Babylon by 10 kings (v. 16). Chapter 18, by contrast, seems to refer to Babylon as a political power and as a great city and as a seat of power of the great world empire which will dominate the second half of the last seven years before Christ's return. Babylon, referred to about 300 times in the Bible, is occasionally viewed as a satanic religious programme opposing the true worship of God, but primarily it is viewed as a political power with a great city bearing the name Babylon as its capital. The end times bring together these two major lines of truth about Babylon and indicate God's final judgement on it."

Bible scholars are highly divided on how the end-time concept of "Babylon" should be interpreted. Some of them apply it to Rome or even the United States. However, biblical prophets are clear on their reference to the ancient Babylonian empire as being the continued object of God's wrath. The false religions of the world all originated from Babylon, and it is quite likely that they will form an ecumenical alliance in the end-time and re-establish themselves in the rebuilt city of Babylon in Iraq. The Antichrist will probably also promote the restoration of ancient Babylon.

It should further be remembered that the ancient Babylonian empire controlled vast areas of the Middle East, including the present Gulf region where many of the oil-rich Arab states have been established and have risen to fame during the past few decades. They already control an important part of the world economy, and are building illustrious cities such as Dubai. The Antichrist, as "the king of the North" (Dan. 11:31-45) will arise from the region that was historically known as Babylonia and at other times in history also as Assyria.

The final destruction of Babylon will occur right at the end of the great tribulation, when the Messiah returns to Jerusalem to judge His enemies and save the surviving remnant of Israel. John says: "And there were noises and thunderings and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth. Now the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. And great Babylon was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath" (Rev. 16:18-19). That will mark the end of all forms of religious, political and economic rebellion against the kingdom of God.

#### The fall of Satan

In Isaiah 14, the Lord uses the fall of the king of Babylon to describe Lucifer's fall from heaven. Babylon is a well-known symbol of Satan's kingdom on earth. This is evidenced by the fact that Satan took possession of Nimrod after Babylon was first established, and influenced him to become a violent person who was so arrogant and great in his own eyes that he built a city and a tower with its top reaching to heaven (Gen. 11:4). In this way, fallen man could rule over the whole earth, ascend to heaven and declare himself to be God. During the later history of Babylon the city was still the symbol of a mighty kingdom that was violently opposed to the kingdom of God. According to Revelation 18, the city will be rebuilt in the end-time and again impose its dominion upon the nations of the world. The demonic nature of this evil city is clearly evident from prophecies on its final downfall: "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a habitation of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird!" (Rev. 18:2).

Throughout the centuries, Lucifer was the real king of Babylon, also of mystery Babylon, the harlot mother of all the false religions. The human tyrants who ruled in Babylon were all impersonations of him and gave expression to his rebellion, violence, religious self-deification and idolatry in their most extreme form. It is indeed fitting that Lucifer's fall from heaven should be likened to the fall of Babylon's king, as his kingdom is also destined to destruction. From the context of the following scripture it is very obvious that Lucifer's fate is discussed by Isaiah, since the earthly king of Babylon was never described as Lucifer who sat on the mount of the congregation in heaven and exalted himself to be equal with God:

"How you are fallen from heaven, o Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High. Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, to the lowest depths of the Pit. Those who see you will gaze at you, and consider you, saying: is this the man who made the earth tremble, who shook kingdoms, who made the world as a wilderness and destroyed its cities, who did not open the house of his prisoners?" (Isa. 14:12-17).

It must have been a sudden and highly dramatic event when Lucifer and his angels were cast out by God. John says that he drew a third of the angels of heaven with him (Rev. 12:4), which is an indication of his considerable power and influence. The consequences of Lucifer's expulsion from heaven were far-reaching. He swore vengeance on God and His ki

ngdom by incessantly attacking and destroying His creation. This declaration of war finally transformed him into Satan – God’s Enemy and Adversary. He is particularly intent on controlling and destroying human beings who were created in God’s image; therefore, God describes him as a murderer from the beginning (John 8:44).

Satan’s fall from heaven was only the beginning of his humiliation. After that, the opportunity was given him to reveal his true character, thereby filling up the measure of his iniquity. He did that by deceiving and destroying people. Nature also suffers because of the Fall and the destructive acts of the devil and his human henchmen. Satan will launch his most violent attack on mankind during the seven year-long reign of the Antichrist: “Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time” (Rev. 12:12). Many people will die because of wars, pestilences famines and other calamities while the earth and its resources are being ruined.

Satan’s fall, as described in Isaiah 14:12-17 and also in Ezekiel 28:12-17, occurs during different stages. It will assume a further dimension when, at the end of the great tribulation when Christ returns, he will be incarcerated in the bottomless pit for 1000 years (Rev. 20:1-3). Then, it will be said of him: “Is this the man who made the earth tremble, who shook kingdoms, who made the world as a wilderness and destroyed its cities?” (Isa. 14:16-17). After he has been released from the pit at the end of the thousand years, Satan and all his followers will be cast into the lake of fire for ever (Rev. 20:10).

It is important to notice that Satan is progressively revealed in the Bible. In the process, quite a number of descriptive names have been assigned to him. These names are further indications of his motives, strategies and evil character. Satan and his demons arose from the abyss (Luke 8:31) and operate in mystical spheres or heavenly realms, i.e. the supernatural sphere (Eph. 6:12). They prefer to hide their true identity in order to gain easy access to people’s hearts and minds. Initially they assumed the identity of various idols, and even ancestral spirits, to ensure that people would unwittingly serve and worship them through prayers and sacrifices. This practice became very popular throughout human history, but Christians have always been warned not to have anything to do with this.

Paul wrote to the Corinthians: “What am I saying then? That an idol is anything, or what is offered to idols is anything? But I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons” (1 Cor. 10:19-20). Whether the heathen (Gentile) nations know it or not, they are serving the devil through their false religious practices.

During Old Testament times the heathen nations served a large number of Baals (foreign gods) and Ashtoreths (goddesses) (Judg. 2:11-13; 1 Sam. 12:10). They often deceived Israel to participate in worshipping these idols. Idolatry was practised together with occult activities such as consulting the spirits, divining and soothsaying, which are all works of darkness by which Satan deceives people (Deut. 18:10-14). Astrology is also prohibited as one of the works of darkness. Isaiah says:

“Stand now with your enchantments and the multitude of your sorceries in which you have laboured from your youth ... You are wearied in the multitude of your counsels; let now the astrologers, the star-gazers, and the monthly prognosticators stand up and save you from these things that shall come upon you. Behold, they shall be as stubble, the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame. It is not a coal to be warmed by, nor a fire to sit before!” (Isa. 47:12-14).

#### Origin of the Antichrist

Isaiah identifies the Antichrist as the king of Assyria: “Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Lord has performed all His work on Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, that He will say, I will punish the fruit of the arrogant heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his haughty looks. For he says: By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom, for I am prudent; also I have removed the boundaries of the people, and have robbed their treasuries; so I have put down the inhabitants like a valiant man. My hand has found like a nest the riches of the people, and as one gathers eggs that are left, I have gathered all the earth; and there was no one who moved his wing, nor opened his mouth with even a peep ... And it shall come to pass in that day that the remnant of Israel, and such as has escaped of the house of Jacob, will never again depend on him who defeated them, but will depend on the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, in truth” (Isa. 10:12-14,20).

The view of the Antichrist as the Assyrian (or Babylonian) is corroborated by Daniel who describes him as the king of the North (Dan. 11:31-45). He will arise in the modern Arab/Islamic world to the north or northeast of Israel (the present Syria, Iraq and bordering Gulf states), form a northern confederacy and subject the southern Arab states that will be mobilised

ed against him by Egypt (the king of the South). He will also defeat Israel (Isa. 10:20).

It is clear that this end-time dictator can only come from a country directly north of Israel – that is the region where the ancient Babylonian and Assyrian empires were situated. He cannot come from Russia, which is in the “far north” (cf. Ezek. 39:1-2); neither can he originate from European countries such as Italy, France or Britain which are west of Israel – and much less from the USA.

Isaiah says that he will soon remove the boundaries between the nations and institute a new world order of planetary citizens. He will also gain control over the world economy and execute his plans of globalisation without any resistance at all. But “in that day” (referring to the day of the Lord) Israel will be delivered from his yoke by God and dwell in safety (Isa. 10:20). After the kingdom of God has been instituted the Messiah will rule in Jerusalem. He will be recognised and honoured by all nations, including the Assyrians and Egyptians in the Middle East (Isa. 19:23-25).

How can dominionists proclaim the revelation of God’s kingdom now when the King of kings has not yet come, Israel is still spiritually blinded, the hostile Arab states are under the domination of Islam with many of them seeking the destruction of Israel, the spiritual purging of Israel and the nations through divine judgements has not yet started, and all indications are that the world is on the brink of the tribulation period under the leadership of the Antichrist and the false prophet?

The wicked will be cut off

The question is whether we can inherit the kingdom of heaven before the wicked have been cut off, and the answer is an emphatic “No.” Isaiah 1:28 says: “The destruction of transgressors and of sinners shall be together, and those who forsake the Lord shall be consumed.” As for now, the devil is described as “the ruler of this world” (John 14:30), “the god of this age” (2 Cor. 4:4) and “the prince of the power of the air” (Eph. 2:2). His spirit of rebellion is working in the sons of disobedience (Eph. 2:2), which accounts for the fact that we find ourselves in “this present evil age” (Gal. 1:4) where the vast majority of people are treading the broad way which leads to hell (Matt. 7:13-14).

True Christians are ostracised and persecuted by the world (John 15:18-19; 16:33), and it is impossible for them to “inherit” or “control” the world before the evildoers have been judged and removed. These judgements will take place during the seven years of tribulation, and in that time many of the sinners will blaspheme God because of all the plagues which He will pour out upon them (Rev. 16:10-11). When the coming Prince of Peace has established His reign of peace on earth the wicked will be no more and their place will not be found. Only then, the promise of the Lord Jesus will be fulfilled that the meek shall inherit the earth (Matt. 5:5).

Psalm 37 ties up with what Isaiah said about the cutting off of the wicked (Isa. 1:28). David often refers to the time when the wicked will be cut off so the righteous can inherit the earth. Psalm 37 says, among others:

- “Do not fret because of evildoers, nor be envious of the workers of iniquity, for they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb” (v. 1-2).
- “For evildoers shall be cut off; but those who wait on the Lord, they shall inherit the earth” (v. 9).
- “For yet a little while and the wicked shall be no more; indeed, you will diligently look for his place, but it shall be no more. But the meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace” (v. 10-11).
- “The wicked shall perish; and the enemies of the Lord, like the splendour of the meadows, shall vanish. Into smoke they shall vanish away” (v. 20).
- “For those who are blessed by Him shall inherit the earth, but those who are cursed by Him shall be cut off” (v. 22).
- “Wait on the Lord and keep His way, and He shall exalt you to inherit the land; when the wicked are cut off, you shall see it” (v. 34).

Zechariah 14:12-13 and Revelation 19:19-21 describe the large-scale destruction of God’s enemies during the battle of Armageddon when Jesus Christ returns to the earth on the last day of the great tribulation. That will be the culmination of God’s judgments (the seven seals, the seven trumpets and the seven bowls described in Revelation 6 through 19) that will be poured out during the seven years of tribulation.

The judgments of the coming day of the Lord are specifically aimed at destroying the wicked. Isaiah says that God will destroy the sinners from the earth and punish the wicked for their iniquity (13:9-12). The curse of the Lord will devour the earth and few people will be left (24:6). Towards the end of his book Isaiah reiterates this unparalleled outpouring of divine wrath: “For by fire and by His sword the Lord will judge all flesh; and the slain of the Lord shall be many” (66:16).

When the Son of Man comes, the Antichrist and the false prophet will be cast into the lake of fire and Satan bound in a bottomless pit for 1000 years. Christ will reign from the restored throne of David in Jerusalem and peace will prevail everywhere. The wicked will have been destroyed and the just will inherit the earth.

The millennial reign of peace

Isaiah recorded one of the most remarkable prophecies on the Jerusalem-based millennial government of the Messiah which will be established in the last days:

“Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it. Many people shall come and say, come and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths. For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, and shall rebuke many people; they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more” (Isa. 2:2-4). (Micah 4:1-3 is almost identical to the aforementioned scripture).

Great blessings which will follow a time of judgement and repentance are often promised by God in the book of Isaiah. Immediately after the stinging indictment of Israel’s sinful practices (1:2-31) Isaiah introduced a concept which is often repeated and further expounded in his prophecy. A time will come when Jerusalem will be the capital of the Messiah’s thousand-year reign of peace.

There are a few outstanding aspects of this prophecy in Isaiah 2 that need to be emphasised:

1. These wonderful promises will be fulfilled in the latter days, which are often associated with Israel’s final restoration from their international dispersion, their spiritual purging during the time of Jacob’s trouble, the coming of the Messiah, the judgement of the apostate nations, and the establishment of the Messiah’s millennial reign of peace.
2. The mountain of the Lord’s house (the Temple Mount where the millennial temple will be erected) will be the epicentre of Jerusalem, Israel and the whole world. The glory of the Lord will go out from there to all the corners of the earth. “The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea” (Isa. 11:9).
3. Jerusalem will be the capital of the Messiah’s millennial government. The city will be adorned with beauty and glory which far exceeds its former glory during the reign of Solomon. The throne of David will be restored (Isa. 9:7) and the word of the Lord will go out from there to all nations. This is in stark contrast with the church dispensation when Israel was dispersed and Jerusalem trampled by the Gentiles (Luke 21:24).
4. The deity of the Messiah is vindicated. He is described as Lord (Yahweh) and the God (Elohim) of Jacob. Isaiah clearly told Israel that the Son who was to be born among them would be called “Mighty God” and that He would be the Prince of Peace who will rule from David’s throne in Jerusalem (Isa. 9:6-7). Other prophets were also mindful of the deity of the Messiah. Describing the coming of the Messiah when He will set foot on the Mount of Olives outside Jerusalem, Zechariah said: “Thus the Lord my God will come, and all the saints with You... and the Lord shall be King over all the earth” (Zech. 14:5,9). When the full deity of Jesus was revealed to Thomas, he exclaimed: “My Lord and my God!” (John 20:28).
5. The nations will send deputations to Jerusalem to be instructed in the ways of the Lord. There will be no idol-worship and Satan, the deceiver of the nations, will be bound in a bottomless pit (Rev. 20:1-3). “At that time Jerusalem shall be called The Throne of the Lord, and all the nations shall be gathered to it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem; they shall walk no more after the stubbornness of their evil heart” (Jer. 3:17). Zechariah says: “Yes, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem and to pray before the Lord... In those days ten men from every language of the nations shall grasp the sleeve of a Jewish man, saying, Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you” (Zech. 8:22-23).
6. The Messiah shall judge between the nations and shall reprove many people. Although the devil will not be there to actively deceive people they will still be born with a sinful nature and will be particularly prone to sins of omission. Zechariah describes one of the sins during the Millennium that will arise from carelessness: “And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. And it shall be that whichever of the families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, on them there will be no rain” (Zech. 14:16-17). For this rea

son they will have to be ruled with a rod of iron (cf. Rev. 19:15). Any other disputes or problems will be dealt with in a just but decisive manner. The glorified saints will rule with Christ in the Millennium: “Hold fast what you have till I come. And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations – he shall rule them with a rod of iron... as I also have received from my Father” (Rev. 2:25-27).

7. There will be no military training or warfare. The nations will beat their swords into ploughshares and not learn war any more. All national and international conflicts will be settled by sound government institutions and just litigation. There will be no evil spiritual powers to instigate sinners into action since the devil will be bound. Consequently, there will be no need for military powers to defend nations against hostile intruders. Neither will there be any need for weapons. Existing military hardware will be recycled to manufacture agricultural implements and machinery that will only be used for peaceful purposes. There will be an abundance of real and lasting peace on earth.

It is very difficult if not impossible to comprehend how kingdom-now theologians could be so presumptuous as to expect the full revelation of God’s kingdom on earth before the second coming of the Messiah, before the judgement and cutting off of the wicked, before the full spiritual restoration of Israel, before the glorification of the church, and before the removal of Satan and his demons from the scene of human life on earth. Any efforts to proclaim such a kingdom now are man-made and doomed to utter failure.

What we see instead is the proliferation of sin, crime and corruption, religious intolerance, particularly among fundamentalist Islamic groups, escalating tension between nations, and an arms race which is very costly and takes up money that is much needed for humanitarian purposes such as housing, food, job creation, education and poverty relief. Various countries are actively involved with the manufacture of weapons of mass-destruction. The president of Iran has openly stated that he wishes to annihilate Israel and remove it from the world map. Threats of this nature force peaceful nations to join the arms race in order to defend themselves. There is a constant threat of war in many parts of the world.

It is a distressing sign that many people openly adore countries which are militarily strong and are producing more and deadlier weapons. For the same reason they will also adore and even worship the Antichrist: “And all the world marvelled and followed the beast. So they worshipped the dragon who gave authority to the beast, and they worshipped the beast, saying: Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?” (Rev. 13:3-4).

Biblical prophecies state without a shadow of a doubt that the end-time world will experience a great spiritual falling away as preparation for the revelation of the Antichrist as the man of sin (2 Thess. 2:3-8). During and even before the tribulation there will be a dramatic increase in wars and rumours of wars (Matt. 24:6-7). These wars will lead to the great world war of Armageddon (Zech. 14:12; Rev. 19:19).

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