

Prophetic Time Designations

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This study is a summary of the prophetic time designations found in Scripture. The student of Scripture would do well to learn these time references to gain a better understanding of God's dispensational and prophetic program for the future. Bible prophecy needs to be studied and learned by using a literal hermeneutic, so one can arrive at proper conclusions regarding the prophetic time designations found in the New and Old Testaments.

I. The Last Time

1 Peter 1:5 declares that we “are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” Peter speaks of the “last time” or final time (Greek. – kairos). This does not refer to an extension of time but a designated time when something is going to take place (1 Pet. 1:5 with Rev. 1:3; 22:10). This regular occurring Greek word translated for “time” means “*the right, proper, and favorable season*” for Christ’s return which will eventually usher in a new age. Peter would then be referencing a *set and proper time or fixed and special occasion* (the final episode) which relates to the exact and decisive moment of the Rapture, our final redemption, and the end of human history as we know it. Compare the following time designations.

- 1 John 2:18 = “last time” (Greek – horah) - “the day, hour, season” of Christ’s return for the Church.
- 1 Timothy 4:1 = “latter times” (Greek - husteros which includes postapostolic times – a later time period than when Paul was writing, which Paul viewed as still future though casting its shadow already).
- Romans 13:11 = “knowing the time” – (Greek - kairos) – these time designations refer to the “later times” on God’s prophetic calendar and imply the right, proper or favorable time or season for Christ’s return.

Note: Kenneth Wuest adds that kairos can refer to "seasons" which represent the critical epoch-making periods (fore-ordained of God) when all that has been maturing (slowly, often without observation, ripening) through long ages comes to a head in grand decisive events

which constitute at once the close of one period and the commencement or beginning of another. Kairos speaks of those strategic times in the calendar of God during which events come to a culmination and ripen to usher in a new age.

- Jude 18 = “last time” (Greek - chronos) – this refers to a particular period of time or a chronological point in God’s calendar of events that began with Christ’s ascension/Pentecost and lasts until His return for the Church.
- Romans 13:11 = “high time” (Greek - hora) – this refers to the hour, day, and instance one decides to live for Christ in light of the Rapture.

Generally speaking, and looking at the broader picture of the New Testament expressions such as “last time” or latter times,” they reference the present age in which the Church lives today which is coming to a conclusion. The expressions refer to the time between the first and second comings of Jesus Christ, or the pre-messianic period of time in which we live today, prior to the post-messianic period of Christ’s rule begins (the Millennium). We are not only living in the last days related to the Church Age but on a broader scale, the last times before Messiah begins His rule.

II. The Last Days (Related to Church Age)

All of the above words (last time and latter times) are in some way looking ahead to the specific event of the Rapture which concludes the period of time known as “the last days.” To state succinctly, the phrases that refer to the last time or later times are included in the period known as the last days. They are a synonym for the last days. The word “last” (eschatos) used in connection with “days” refers to the period of time before Christ returns (2 Tim. 3:1; 2 Pet. 3:3; Heb. 1:2; James 5:3). The “last days” specifically refer to the time period that exists between the formation of the Church at Pentecost (the Church Age – Eph. 3:1-10) and the specific event of the Rapture (“that day” – 2 Tim. 1:12; 4:8).

The “last days” vocabulary is very important in Scripture. Ever since the formation of the Church the earth has entered into the period of time known as the “last days” which would occur up to the return of Jesus Christ in the Rapture for His Church Age saints. The Church Age exists in the period of time known as the “last days” and the Bride of Christ lives with the prophetic

anticipation of the Rapture (Phil. 3:20; 1 Thess. 1:10; 1 Cor. 16:22; Titus 2:13), which will end the last days for the Church, but thrust planet earth into a period of time Jesus referred to as “the end of the age” (the seven-year Tribulation Period).

The Last Days (Related to Israel in the Millennium)

The “last days” is not an expression that only applies to the Church Age. Scripture will bear this out. The last days can also point to Israel’s last days of blessing that she will experience during the Millennial Kingdom (Isa. 2:2-4; Micah 4:1). There are “last days” related to the Church Age (2 Tim. 3:1) and last days related to the Millennium. Don’t mix up your days! After hundreds of years of persecution and Gentile dominance over Israel (“the time of the Gentiles” – Luke 21:24), Israel will enter her last or final days of blessing on earth. The “last days” for Israel envision a time when Jesus Christ will rule on the throne of David in Jerusalem (Luke 1:32-33) with Israel being abundantly blessed and the center of all the earth.

Isaiah 2:2-3 predicts:

“And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord’s house (the rebuilt Millennial Temple) shall be established in the top of the mountains (in Jerusalem), and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.”

The mountain of the house of the Lord (the Lord’s temple) refers to the mount in Jerusalem where the millennial temple will be built for the last days of Israel’s blessing as promised by the prophets (Ezek. 40-43). In the future day of the Millennial Kingdom Jerusalem will be established as the religious and political capital of the world. The Gentile nations will make pilgrimages to Zion for worship and for divine instruction.

Isaiah 2:4 reveals:

“And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.”

Of course this has never happened before but it will happen in the future in connection with Messiah's reign as the King during the blessing of Israel's last days on earth. Jesus Christ will bring 1,000 years of peace on planet earth (Rev. 20:1-3). Isaiah 2:4, minus the opening words about God, is inscribed on the United Nations Building in New York City. Although this has never happened historically on earth, it will be literally fulfilled in the Millennial Kingdom.

Micah 4:1

“But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it.”

This verse is not historical; it is prophetic and looks forward to the time when Jerusalem will once again be established as the center and naval of the earth, when Messiah rules on the throne in Jerusalem. The prophets clearly foretold and envisioned a time when Israel will once again be blessed in the land in answer to the Covenants that were given to her (Deut. 4:27-31; Isaiah 11:11-16; 14:1-3; 27:12-13; 43:5-7; 48:8-16; 60:20-21; 66:20-22; Jer. 3:17-18; 16:14-16; 23:5-8; 30:3, 10-11; 31:8, 31-37; Ezek. 11:17-21; 20:33-38; 34:11-16; 37:1-4; 13-14, 21, 24-25; 39:25-29; Hosea 1:10-11; 3:4-5; Joel 3:17-21; Amos 9:11-15; Micah 4:4-7; 7:20; Zeph. 3:14-20; Zech. 8:4-8; Matt. 24:31; Rom. 11:25-26).

Israel during the Millennial Kingdom will experience great blessings that are said to occur during her “last days.” The last days is a period of time that follows centuries of persecution and hostility against Israel which previously occurred during the “times of the Gentiles” (Luke 21:24). Israel has not yet entered her “last days” of blessing on earth. Joel 2:28-29, which Peter referenced on Pentecost (Acts 2), anticipates the glorious future day of the Millennial Kingdom when Israel will be blessed in the land of Palestine and when Jerusalem will be the center of the earth.

Acts 2:17

“And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.”

What happened on the Day of Pentecost was a foretaste and foreshadowing of what would happen to Israel in the future Millennial Kingdom. Pentecost

was similar to what would occur in the future time period of the Millennial Kingdom. This is what Peter was implying when he said in Acts 2:16, “But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel.” Of course, this could not possibly be a literal fulfillment of what would occur during the Millennium but Peter was comparing the similarities of the two events.

The point is this; the “last days” in Acts 2 cannot be interpreted as the “last days” for the Church Age, since Joel is referring to the “last days” of Israel’s blessings after the Tribulation Period and into the Millennial Kingdom. It would be a serious error to associate the “last days” related to Israel and apply them to the last days of the Church. These are different days or times.

III. The End Times

The period of time that Jesus spoke about in Matthew 24 (a beginning of sorrows and great tribulation – Matt. 24:8, 21) points to the time frame of Daniel’s “one week” or seven-year time frame (Dan. 9:27), which is based upon His own words and interpretation (Matt. 24:15). This places Matthew 24 in the realm of prophecy. Therefore, Matthew 24 cannot have any reference to events occurring today, prior to the Rapture, but to the exact signs relating to “the tribulation of those days” (Matt. 24:29). This time of tribulation or judgment over the earth occurs during a time frame that is described as “the end of the age” (Matt. 24:3) and which leads up to the “end” (Matt. 24:6, 13, 14; Mark 13:7; 13:13) after dramatic events have occurred on planet earth. In this context, Jesus is teaching that “the end of the age” refers to a specific time period of seven years that is filled with intense tribulation being unleashed on planet earth which ends with the Second Coming of Christ to earth (Matt. 24:29).

Although the pre-messianic Age began during Jesus’ earthly ministry and carries through into the Church Age (already 2,000 years), Jesus was focusing on the prophecy that was related to the future Tribulation Period (seven years), which is the time frame that is linked to “the end of the age” and actually brings us to the Second Coming. Therefore, when the Tribulation Period begins the world enters the final drama and period of seven years that will result in various judgments, which will ultimately bring planet earth to the end of a long pre-messianic era, the time that precedes the Millennium and messianic reign of Jesus Christ over the earth (Matt. 24:3, 6, 14; Matt. 13:39, 40, 49).

Since Jesus spoke about the seven-year Tribulation Period (Dan. 9:27; Matt. 24:15), as portraying events that lead to a specific end (Matt. 24:6, 14; Matt. 13:39, 40, 49), the events associated with this time period are often termed as End Time events or the End Times. Therefore, we can conclude that the *End Times* specifically refer to events that occur in the future and encompass a final period of time over the earth known as “the end of the age” which leads up to the Second Advent. This is a seven-year time frame, where specific events transpire on earth that serve as signs (Matt. 24:32-33) and result in the Second Coming (Matt. 24:29), the event that closes out the pre-messianic age.

Once again, these “end time” events occur during an era of prophetic fulfillment that revolves around an intense time of judgment which is termed the Tribulation Period (Matt. 24:21, 29). These specific judgments will be unleashed upon planet earth following the Rapture of the Church and prior to the Second Coming. Since this is true, they are often coined as “End Time” events that transpire between the closing of the Church Age and Second Coming. The time reference for the “the end of the age” would then refer to the final seven years leading up the close of the pre-messianic era.

It’s interesting to once again note that this specific time of judgment on planet earth, the seven years or period of time known as “the end of the age,” in one sense officially closes the Church Age. This is because Jesus taught that He would be with His Church to the “end of the age” (Matt. 28:20), or until the final seven years begin to transpire on the earth, which follows the Rapture of the Church (1 Thess. 5:1-11; Rev. 3:10). Therefore, the final seven years of the pre-messianic age can be viewed as a time frame that officially closes the Church Age, which is portrayed as a time of intense judgment.

Remember that every dispensation ends in a display of judgment (Gen. 3:14-19; 7-8; 11:5-9; Exodus 1; 2 Kings 17, 25; Rev. 3:10; 17:16; 2 Pet. 3:10-11). The same will be true regarding the Church Age. The entire world (Rev. 3:10), along with the apostate church (Rev. 17:16), will experience intense judgment as this present age that preceded the Messiah’s coming comes to an official end or close.

It’s worthy to note that some dispensationalists actually make the Tribulation Period an eighth dispensation. However, since the Church Age takes us up to the beginning of that period of time known as “the end of the age” (Matt.

28:20), or the final seven years before Messiah returns to earth, it's better to view the Tribulation Period as a specific time of judgment that officially closes the Church Age. The Rapture of the Church is the key prophetic event that unlocks the door for End Time events to take place, which were prophesied to occur during the "end of the age," a final period of seven years that leads the earth into the golden age of the Millennial Kingdom.

It is also important to recognize that Jesus' teaching in this discourse is in reference to Israel and not the Church. Christ was speaking of God's future program for Israel during the coming Tribulation Period since the context is completely Jewish and the events revolve around the Jewish people (Matt. 24:1, 15-20, 30-31). There is no mention of the Church existing on earth during the period of time described by Christ as "the end of the age" (Revelation 6-19) since the Church is raptured prior to this time of judgment (1 Thess. 1:10).

We have then discovered that the "end of the age" events spoken about in the Olivet Discourse, as recorded in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, occur during a narrow period of time (seven years) just prior to Christ's Second Coming. Great care must be taken to not associate the specific events of the End Times (the Tribulation Period) with present-day events taking place on the earth right now. Many Christians believe that what is occurring in the world today is an actual and literal fulfillment of what the Bible predicts in Matthew 24. However, this is an impossibility.

All End Time events have their prophetic fulfillment in that period of time known as the "the end of the age" (Matthew 13:39, 40, 49; 24:3, 18), or the final seven years of the pre-messianic era, just prior to the reign of Jesus Christ. Events foretold to come to pass in a future time period, such as the Tribulation Period, during the time frame of Daniel's "one week" or seven years (Dan. 9:27), cannot be fulfilled during the present Church Age. Beware of newspaper exegesis! Although coming events often cast their shadows on earth before they are fulfilled, don't mistake the shadows for the real thing.

In summary, the "end of the age" is actually the climax of a long time period that began with Christ's earthly seed-sowing ministry (Matt. 13:37) and ends with His Second Coming of Christ (Matt. 24:29) to planet earth, which results in the Judgment of the Living Nations (Matt. 13:39-40, 49-50; 24-25), or the survivors of the Tribulation Period, and takes planet earth into the Messianic Age or Millennial Kingdom.

IV. Latter Years & Latter Days (Old Testament Prophetic Time Texts)

The expressions “latter years” in Ezekiel 38:8 (later years or future years) and “latter days” (Ezekiel 38:16) is mentioned in connection with the Russian/Islamic invasion of Israel at the beginning of Daniel’s 70th or final week of seven years (The Tribulation Period). Nothing in the historical records resembles an invasion of this type. No invasion on the magnitude or scale of Ezekiel 38-39 has ever taken place in Israel’s history. Furthermore, this unique alignment of nations has never occurred in the past. Therefore, this is a prophecy that occurs in the “latter years” (Ezek. 38:8) and “latter days” (Ezek. 38:16) which is an expression that relates to Bible prophecy. The repeated expression in the Old Testament of “latter days” prophetically references the ultimate time of the Tribulation Period (Deut. 4:30; 31:29; Jer. 30:24; 48:47; Dan. 10:14) which takes place during the 70th week of Daniel (Dan. 9:27).

For a detailed analysis of Ezekiel 38-39, see the author’s study entitled, “God versus Gog” (Russia and the Islamic Nations in Bible Prophecy).

V. Time of the End (Old Testament Prophetic Time Text)

The prophetic time phrase termed as the “time of the end” (Daniels 11:40; 12:5) is connected with the Antichrist’s movements during the End Times (Tribulation Period), particularly the conquests of the Antichrist in the middle of the Tribulation, as he begins his worldwide political takeover. The expression “the time of the end” (Dan. 11:40) coincides with the middle of the Tribulation Period, when Israel is persecuted (Dan. 12:1). It’s during this time when a chain of military events will occur which leads to Antichrist’s world dictatorship.

Daniel 11:40 speaks of a coalition of nations contesting Antichrist’s bid for world dominance and power: “And at the time of the end shall the king of the south (Egypt and her coalition of countries) push at him (Syria – the king of the north - an extension of Antichrist’s military arm, power, and future kingdom): and the king of the north (Syria – under the Antichrist’s leadership and backing who is the Gentile Syrian king of the End Times) shall come against him (king of the south) like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships (in a joint invasion); and he (Antichrist) shall enter into the countries (a coalition of countries with Egypt), and shall overflow and pass over.”

Daniel 11:44 then envisions a second coalition coming against Antichrist: “But tidings out of the east (Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan – Islamic countries immediately east of Israel), and out of the north (Lebanon, Turkey, Russia or some other nation that is not yet linked to his military machine), shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many.”

For a dispensational and detailed analysis of the identity of the king of the north, see the authors study entitled, “The Time of the End” (A Study of Daniel 11:40-45).

Daniel 11:45 then concludes:

“And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.”

In order to have a more strategic military location in the Middle East, the Antichrist will, at some point, plant himself in Jerusalem, which is “between the seas” (the Mediterranean and Dead seas – vs. 45). He will establish his military palace and position in this strategic location for the rest of the Tribulation Period (three and one half years) and control the major oil reserves of the world which are linked with his Revived Roman Empire in Europe and the Middle East. His military location in Jerusalem will also set the stage for the Antichrist to begin His persecution of the Jewish People (Dan. 9:27; Matt. 24:15-21; Rev. 12). One thing is certain; Jerusalem will become his military palace or headquarters (Dan. 11:45), while Babylon will be his political and economic palace or headquarters (Zech. 5; Rev. 17-18).

The Bible says “he shall come to his end, and none shall help him” (Dan. 11:45). This will occur sometime after the divine time clock of the seven years has run its course (Matt. 24:29). This means the Antichrist will eventually be destroyed along with all the armies of Armageddon with the brightness of Messiah’s return (Rev. 19:17-21). Although no other world power could defeat him, the KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS will defeat him at His Second Coming.” Later revelation reveals that Jesus Christ will return from heaven and destroy him (Rev. 19:19–20; Zech. 14:1–4).

Once again, the “time of the end” (Daniel 11:40) refers to the midway point of the Tribulation Period, when Israel will begin to be persecuted (Dan. 12:1) and when Antichrist makes his bid for world dominance and dictatorship. The

converging armies will attempt to defeat his power in the Middle East but will not avail. After the defeat of the coalition of armies in the Middle East, the king that comes down from the north will be the undisputed power of the ancient land of Assyria, and in a much broader sense, become the new Caesar of the restored Roman Empire in Europe and the Middle East (Dan. 7:24). His power, riches, and close proximity to the rich oil fields of the world, along with housing the commercial capital of the world (Rev. 18) will make the Antichrist the greatest military and economic power on the planet. As a result, the world will be submissive to him and actually worship him (Rev. 13:4).

The chronology of this prophetic scenario, at the midway point of the Tribulation Period, seems to be part of an ongoing campaign of battles that will result in the Antichrist becoming world dictator. This is a chain of events that will take place during “the time of the end” (vs. 40), or the middle of the Tribulation Period (Dan. 12:1), which leads up to Antichrist’s world dictatorship.

Daniel’s study of “the time of the end” (Dan. 11:40; 12:9) simply includes various events that will occur at the middle of the Tribulation Period and during the last three and one half years of this terrible time of judgment. We learn that it will be a time of intense war (Dan. 11:40-45), great persecution for Israel (Dan. 12:1), revival in the study of Bible prophecy (Dan. 12:4), and the time of Israel’s discipline and purging (Dan. 12:8-10). All these events will transpire during the middle and final three and one half years of Daniel’s 70th week which leads up the final Battle of Armageddon (Rev. 19:17-21).

Daniel uses a cluster of “latter day” terms that all refer to the Tribulation Period, which prepares the way for the Kingdom reign of the Messiah (Dan. 8:17; 12:4, 9 = “the time of the end” and 12:13 = “till the end be”). These references are prophetic phrases that project us into the Tribulation Period, the time when prophecy is once again being fulfilled in the world. All of the above prophetic terms (“latter years”; “latter days” and “time of the end”) correspond to the seven-year Tribulation Period and actually *follow* “the last time” and “latter times” or “last days” mentioned in the New Testament epistles that are references to the time period of the Church Age, which precedes the Rapture and Tribulation Period.

The correct prophetic order of these time events would be as follows:

1. The last time, latter times, and last days which are linked with the present Church Age (a period of time before the Rapture – approximately 2,000 years have already occurred in this dispensation);
2. The Rapture;
3. The latter years/days and time of the end (a period of time linked with the seven-year Tribulation Period or actual End Times);
4. The Second Coming of Christ and Millennial Kingdom.

VI. Last Day (Old Testament Perspective on Resurrection)

John 11:24

“Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.”

The prophetic time reference of the “last day” speaks of the final resurrection that occurs in conjunction with the Second Coming of Christ to earth.

Job 19:25 has the same time reference in view:

“For I know *that* my redeemer liveth, and *that* he shall stand at the latter *day* upon the earth.”

The “last day” and “latter day” are time references dealing with the bodily resurrection of all people. This was the view of resurrection from an Old Testament perspective. Job, Martha, and the Jewish saints had a very limited understanding of God’s resurrection program. Through the progressive revelation of the Church epistles we discover much more truth about God’s resurrection program for both the saved and unsaved.

Of course, the covenant theologians who reject very clear dispensational distinctions, deny any divisions in the resurrection program of God and only speak of a general resurrection on the “last day” in connection with Christ’s Second Coming to earth. In other words, they claim that there will be only one, generalized resurrection, a resurrection of both the saved and unsaved of all ages, which occurs at the same time at the end of history. They base their findings on verses like John 5:28-29, 11:24; Daniel 12:2, and Acts 24:15. However, the Bible never uses the phrase “general resurrection.”

Jesus said in John 5:28-29, “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.” What Jesus taught in these verses was true from the perspective of Old Testament saints and what they knew or understood regarding the resurrection program. The Old Testament saints were given a *large picture* but *limited revelation* concerning the resurrection program.

Old Testament saints viewed the resurrection as occurring only in conjunction with Christ’s Second Coming on a final “last day” connected with end of time or recorded history. However, the epistles, which are directed to the Church, give us new and added revelation regarding the resurrection program. The Bible actually teaches there will be a separate or distinct resurrection that occurs in conjunction with the Rapture which was a hidden secret from the standpoint of all previous prophetic revelation (1 Cor. 15:51-53).

Jesus’ statement in John 5:28-29, of both saved and unsaved being resurrected, merely points to the overall picture of the resurrection program of God, as revealed to the Old Testament saints. Jesus spoke from an Old Testament perspective on the resurrection program. In John 5:28-29 Jesus revealed that all would be raised (both saved and unsaved). However, there is not the slightest implication that both classes (Old Testament and New Testament saints). or that the saved and unsaved, will be raised at the same time. At this point, Jesus was not yet teaching the new revelation regarding Christ’s coming for His Church Age saints (John 14:1-3), the resurrection program (1 Cor. 14:51-52; Rev. 20:5) and the different time elements involved between the resurrection of the saved and unsaved (John 5:28-29). These details are filled in later.

Revelation 20:4-5 makes it very clear that there are at least two resurrections and between these two bodily resurrections there is 1,000 years (the Millennium). The idea of a "first resurrection" implies there must be two resurrections. The first resurrection involves a resurrection of the saved Old Testament saints (Isa. 26:19; Dan. 12:2) and martyrs of the Tribulation Period (Rev. 20:4) and precedes the second resurrection, which is termed as the “second death” (Rev. 20:6). This second resurrection is outlined in Revelation 20:11-15. It is a resurrection to final judgment in the eternal Lake of Fire.

The epistle of I Corinthians 15:20-23 also reveals there is division in the resurrection program of God. Every man is raised “in his own order” (1 Cor. 15:23). Different ranks of people are raised at different times or stages in God’s resurrection program. There is no such thing as a general (one-time event) resurrection.

It can then be observed that all believers, Old Testament and New Testament, are resurrected prior to the second resurrection, in a series of stages and at their appropriate times (1 Cor. 15:23). In my studies, I have made the resurrection of Church Age saints, occurring in connection with the Rapture (1 Cor. 15:51-53), as a “stand alone” or separate resurrection which has nothing to do with the first resurrection of Old Testament saints or Tribulation martyrs, since the timing of this resurrection was previously revealed in the Old Testament (Dan. 12:2-3) and was no secret.

There is no continuity between a previously revealed resurrection program and the unrevealed or secret program of God’s resurrection for Church Age saints. Therefore, the revised resurrection order according to the New Testament revelation would be: 1) The *hidden or secret resurrection* of Church Age saints – a new truth revealed in the epistles 2) The *first resurrection* of Old Testament saints and Tribulation martyrs – a time of resurrection revealed in the Old Testament 3) The *second resurrection* – a resurrection of only sinners or unsaved people.

One thing is certain, there is no such thing as a “general” resurrection of the saved and unsaved, which occurs at the same time on the last or final day in connection with the history of mankind. This was the view of Old Testament saints who had a very limited revelation and understanding regarding God’s resurrection program. God has given us much more light on this subject.

For more details on God’s Resurrection Program, see the authors study entitled, “The Program of Resurrection” (As Outlined in Scripture).

VII. The Times and Seasons

Acts 1:6-7

“When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto

them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.”

The Jewish disciples were thinking that Jesus was about to restore the earthly kingdom that was promised through God’s covenant program with Israel (2 Samuel 7:16). However, Jesus did not initially come to restore this kingdom but to give His life a ransom for many (Matt. 20:28). The long-awaited messianic Kingdom would be restored at a later time, after the earth would pass through a long chronological period of time and experience many “seasons” where different events would transpire on the earth. Actually, it would be accurate to conclude that “the times and seasons” represents the same time period of “the mysteries of the kingdom” (Matt. 13:11).

The kingdom *will* be restored to Israel, but the question as to *when* is a divinely kept secret that would be revealed later on. The disciples should have known that the kingdom was not to be established "at this time" (Acts 1:7) from the Lord's former parables which He taught, particularly those that related to the timing about Kingdom (Matthew 21:33; 25:14; Mark 12:1, Luke 15:13; 19:12; 20:9) and conditions on earth prior to the Kingdom (Matthew 13).

A prophetic gap of time would transpire before the end of the age would come to its conclusion and Christ’s messianic rule would be established over the earth (“After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David” - Act 15:16). A new age, the Church Age, a stewardship and time when God was calling out a new “people for his name” (Acts 15:16) had to intervene before the Kingdom could be restored to Israel, which would end with a climactic period of seven years of judgment on the earth.

The reference to “times” (chronos) in Acts 1:7 would refer to *when* the Kingdom would arrive whereas the “seasons” (kairos) would refer to *what* the specific conditions on earth would be like before the Kingdom arrives. The Greek word for “times” (chronos) refers to chronological time, to clock time or calendar time. God has His own prophetic clock for the arrival of the Millennial Kingdom. This word basically describes a chronological duration and space of time that would include the Church Age and the seven-year Tribulation Period, which would then be followed by the Second Coming of Christ with the establishment of the Kingdom or Millennium (Rev. 20:1-6).

The word for “seasons” (kairos) refers to the specific kinds of times or the features, characteristics of eras, and events that would transpire during a specific period or epoch of time. This would include such things as hard or difficult times that the world would face.

At this particular time, just prior to the Lord’s ascension, the disciples were not expected to know about the timing of the Kingdom or the specific critical periods of time that would come to pass on planet earth, which the Father had set or determined by His own sovereign authority. Later or further revelation would be made concerning these times and seasons.

Paul wrote in 1 Thessalonians 5:1, “But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.” This is because the later revelation in the epistles filled in the specific chronological details about the times and seasons that would transpire on earth (the Church Age, the Tribulation Period with the Antichrist, Israel’s chastening, the Battle of Armageddon, etc.) before Jesus returns to establish His Kingdom. The times and seasons were eventually taught and understood through the progressive revelation of the epistles.

VIII. End of the Age and Mysteries of the Kingdom

When Jesus spoke of the “end of the world” (“end of the age” – Greek - aion) in verses such as Matthew 13:39-40; 24:3 and 14, He was referring to the end or climax of a specific period of time on earth. The “end of the age” represents the conclusion of the present pre-messianic age before the Kingdom arrives on earth, the age or era when the *mysteries* or *secrets* about the kingdom are running their course (“the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven” - Matt. 13:11).

From a Jewish perspective, all of world history is divided in two ages. There was a pre-messianic stage that precedes the time when Messiah will be physically present on earth administering God’s worldwide rule of righteousness (the Millennium). The rabbis taught that the coming rule of Messiah was “the Messianic era” and “the age of the Messiah.” The Bible seems to depict this as well when it speaks of “the world (age) to come” (Heb. 6:5) and “that which is to come” (Eph. 1:21). In Matthew 24:3 the disciples were asking what sign would indicate the “end of the world” (age) or era of time that precedes the messianic reign of Jesus Christ over the earth (Acts 1:6).

The “end of the age” (pre-messianic age) would include the closing of the Church Age (Matt. 28:20) with the seven-year Tribulation Period (Matthew 13:39-40; 24:3), which is the time period that occurs on earth prior to the establishment of Messiah’s Kingdom (the messianic age). The Church Age closes with seven-years of judgment (The Tribulation). The kingdom parables (the mysteries or secrets about the kingdom) focus on the time between Jesus’ earthly ministry and Second Coming and encompass the time and events that transpire on earth before the Kingdom arrives. But the ending of the Church Age with the seven years take us into the period of time known as the “end of the age” and the End Times.

The term “mysteries” (sacred secrets) as discuses by Jesus in Matthew 13:11 means there is new prophesied revelation which must be learned in connection with the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom over the earth. It is truth that was not revealed about the Kingdom in the Old Testament. The new revelation has to do with the events and conditions that would transpire on earth before the King returns. Hence, they are termed as “the mysteries of the kingdom” or what was not revealed in relation to the establishment of the earthly Kingdom. It is during this time that the actual establishment of the Kingdom is postponed (Matt. 22:43) and it will not be inaugurated until the Second Coming (Rev. 20:1-3).

The mystery or secrets about the Kingdom is not some kind of new spiritual form of the Kingdom but the very same kingdom of which Jesus spoke about earlier in the day, the Kingdom that had come upon a generation in unbelief (Matt. 12:28). It must be the same Kingdom of which John was a forerunner (Matt. 11:10-14) and the same Kingdom of Matthew 10 which the disciples were to announce to Israel (Matt. 10:5-7). This was the same Kingdom that Jesus was born to rule (Matt. 2:2). There is simply nothing in the text of Matthew 13 that leads us to believe that Jesus was using the word “kingdom” in some kind of altered sense.

It’s very clear that the “mystery form of the kingdom” is not designed to overrule or redefine the Kingdom in any way, creating some kind of spiritual Kingdom. The parables are communicating new truth regarding the old Kingdom. Jesus taught that there would be things “new” and “old” regarding the same Kingdom (Matt. 13:52). The disciples new about the old truths regarding the kingdom but Jesus was introducing the new truths that somehow are connected with the arrival of the earthly theocracy. The parables focus on the new truths that were related to the prophesied

Kingdom, which reveal the events that would occur in an era which follows the departure of the King and precedes His later return to restore the kingdom to Israel.

The kingdom parables focus on a new time frame that would attend the establishment of the prophesied Kingdom. The Millennial Kingdom would be delayed or postponed but during an intervening time, prior to the Kingdom's restoration (Acts 1:6), specific events would transpire on earth before the actual establishment of the Messianic Kingdom. This is the mystery or sacred secrets about the kingdom that Jesus references in the parables.

The new things about the kingdom (Matt. 13:52) would include the *seed and the soils* (the sowing of the truth up to the establishment of the kingdom), the *wheat and the tares* (false imitation up the kingdom's arrival), the *mustard seed* (a visible abnormal growth representing Christendom), the *leaven in the meal* (apostasy that eventually leads to total corruption in the harlot church – 2 Thess. 3:3; Rev. 17), the *treasure* (Israel's hidden position or unrecognized status among the nations while her kingdom is postponed), the *pearl of great price* (the Church and Church Age – Eph. 3:9-10), and the *dragnet* (the judgment of the nation's postponed until after the Church Age; it occurs at the Second Coming – not the first advent of Christ).

Of course, it's also true that Israel as God's treasure (Ps. 135:4) was an older truth about the Kingdom. Christ would die for His people to purchase or redeem them was not previously hidden (Isa. 53; Ps. 22). Also, the fact that there would be a judgment that precedes the establishment of the Kingdom was nothing new (Dan. 7:21-27). However, there were particular secrets connected with these old truths regarding Christ's Kingdom. The new things are what is emphasized in the parables.

To show respect and honor for God, the Jews avoided saying the name of God out loud. Instead, they often used the word *heaven* as an alternate way to refer to God. This is why in Matthew's Gospel, which was written from a Jewish viewpoint to a Jewish audience, we often read about the "kingdom of heaven" (the kingdom coming down from heaven) and not the "kingdom of God" or the kingdom that belongs to God (Mark 4:11, 26, 30). Although the "kingdom of God" is mentioned in Matthew's Gospel (Matt. 6:33; 19:24, 21:31, 43) it never references the mystery form of the "kingdom of God." However, the "mysteries of the kingdom of God" is mentioned in Luke 8:10. In summary, it's best to understand the "kingdom of heaven" (coming down

from heaven) and “kingdom of God” (of God) as two phrases that are apparently used interchangeably within the Gospel records. The two phrases indicate that the messianic kingdom was going to be established over the earth. In the epistles, even Church Age saints were taught to anticipate their place in the Millennial Kingdom (1 Thess. 2:12; 2 Pet. 1:11; Heb. 1:8). They would not only experience the Rapture (“his appearing”) but also His “kingdom” (2 Tim. 4:1).

The Kingdom parables are stories that Jesus shared to illustrate truths by means of comparison. The repeated phrase, “the kingdom of heaven is like” (Matt. 13:31, 33, 44-45, 47, 52; 20:1-2) means that elements in the story illustrate truth regarding the mystery or secrets about the earthly kingdom that were not previously taught by the prophets. Also, other parallel passages look back and recount the secret aspect of the kingdom by giving more information about the same events (“then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened to” - Matthew 25:1, 14).

The Kingdom parables cannot just speak exclusively of the Jews in the Millennial Kingdom, as some suggest, since there is the sowing of the good seed and the bad (Matt. 13:38), something which will not occur during the Millennium (Matt. 13:41) and since the judgment recorded in the parables occur at the end of the pre-messianic age, at the Second Coming, and prior to the Millennium (Matt. 24:30-31; 25:31-32).

The writer of Hebrews taught that there would be an age that would occur before the Messiah returns to rule over the earth. Hebrews 1:8 calls this “the world to come” (Heb. 2:5; 6:5). This pre-messianic age began with the sowing of the Son of man during His earthly ministry (Matt. 13:37). It extends into the Church Age and the events that immediately follow or close this pre-messianic age - the seven-year Tribulation Period. The entire period of time would include Jesus’ seed sowing ministry and the time Israel rejected the Messiah (Matt. 13:33-38). It would be the time period that continues up to the Second Coming, when Israel receives her Messiah (Matt. 23:39), which encompasses the mystery period of the Kingdom parables.

These Kingdom parables are spoken by Christ in the context of the Kingdom’s rejection. It’s interesting that the same day (Matt. 13:1) Jesus introduced the kingdom parables, Christ’s message abruptly turned from “nearness” of the kingdom (Matt. 3:2; 10:7) to His impending death (Matt. 16:21). Rejection of the King by Israel was rejection of the messianic

Kingdom. In light of Israel's sure rejection, Jesus addressed the Kingdom parables to the public at large (Matt. 13:2) and the disciples privately (Matt. 13:36). They were designed to hide truth from those in Israel who were confirmed in unbelief (Matt. 13:13-15) and reveal truth related to the Kingdom to those who do believe (Matt. 13:16-17). The Kingdom parables that Jesus gave are then designed to explain what happens to the Kingdom during Israel's time of rejection and while Jesus is gone. In essence, they convey what is going to take place on earth while the King is absent. In the Kingdom parables Jesus reveals conditions and events that transpire on earth before the Kingdom arrives. They reveal previously unknown data related to the Kingdom. This the mystery form of the Kingdom.

At this point we need to once again reflect upon the phrase the "end of the age" (Matthew 13:39, 40, 49; 24:3, 18; 24:3), which according to Jesus, concludes the time frame of the mysteries of the kingdom. According to Jesus' teaching, the end of the age focuses on the final seven years which coincides with Daniel's prophecy being fulfilled (Matt. 24:15) and this specific time would be identified as the seven-year Tribulation Period. Elsewhere this period of time is known as the "day of the Lord" (1 Thess. 5:2-3). When God's judgments of the Tribulation are being unleashed on the earth, the world will have officially entered the "end of the age" or the final drama of seven years that leads up to the Second Coming of Christ.

A Bible student should understand the time frame of the present "age" (the pre-messianic age) refers to the era before Christ establishes His Messianic Kingdom. It points to a period of time leading up to the Second Coming and Christ's Kingdom glory. In summary, the present "age" that Jesus was referring to would include the entire interim period between Christ's first coming and Second Coming (the time frame of the mysteries of the kingdom – when the earth is preparing for the arrival of the Kingdom – Matt. 13:11). However, from a prophetic standpoint and more narrow perspective, the phrase "the end of the age" (the pre-messianic age) would more specifically be identified as the final or closing seven-years (the Tribulation Period) of this long period or era of time, with the termination point at Christ's Second Coming.

It should also be noted that when looking at all the Biblical data from the perspective of Dispensationalism (God's plan of the ages) that "the end of the age" recorded in Matthew 13:39, 40, 49; 24:3, and 14 is a reference point in time when the Church Age will come to its official close with the Tribulation

Period of judgment. Therefore, the ending of the Church Age (the seven years of judgment) is the time when all the prophecies related to the final seven years occur on planet earth. Jesus said to His disciples, "I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world (age) Amen" (Matt. 28:20). This means that the disciples were given the promise of Christ's presence up the time when the final seven years (the end of the age) begins. Christ would promise to dwell with His disciples up to the Rapture (Rev. 3:10).

Again, the pre-messianic "age" would point to that entire period of time when "the mysteries of the kingdom" (Luke 8:10) were coming to pass. The mystery period began with the Lord's earthly sowing ministry (Matt. 13:11) and includes the present Church Age (some 2,000 years), which is then followed by seven years of judgment predicted in Daniel 9:27, and finally ends with Jesus' Second Coming to earth. Since Jesus links "the end of the age" with the close of the Church Age (Matt. 28:20) and the seven years (Matthew 13:39-40; 24:3), this means that the final seven years of the Tribulation Period closes out the Church Age, which in return is followed by the seventh and final Dispensation of the Millennial Kingdom (Eph. 1:10) which merges into the eternal kingdom and state (1 Cor. 15:24-28).

The Second Advent is the time Christ will judge the unbelieving Jews and nations (Matt. 13:39-40, 49-50; 24-25). When Jesus spoke of the "end of the age" He was referencing the immediate time that precedes the messianic age (the Kingdom Age). The entire "age" (pre-messianic age) would reference the time period when the Gospel seed first began to be sown by our Lord during His earthly ministry (Luke 8:5), which would eventually merge into the Church Age, and then finally close with the seven-year judgment of the Tribulation Period in conjunction with Christ's Second Coming (the end of the age). Afterward comes the glorious Messianic Age (Millennial Kingdom).

Christ repeatedly spoke of the "end of the age" while He was here on earth (Matthew 13:39, 40, 49; 24:3, 18; and 28:20). This means the "age" He was referring to had already begun in His own day and would continue to exist until the conditions and events transpire that He carefully outlined in Matthew 13, 24, and other various texts. The age began during His earthly ministry and would continue to exist until the Second Coming. In summary, from Christ's own words and perspective, the "end of the age" is linked to the close of the Church Age (Matt. 28:20) and the seven years, since the Church Age

occurs just before the final seven years of the Tribulation Period and leads up to the Second Coming.

Prophetically, the phrase “end of the age” would have a more narrow emphasis and meaning in relation to the final closing years of the pre-messianic age (the seven years of the Tribulation Period) which is the final stage of a long period of time that has occurred between Christ’s First Advent and Second Advent. The terminating point of the “end of the age” will be Christ’s Second Coming to earth.

There is an important question we must once again ask in light of what Jesus taught about “the end of the age” and Tribulation Period. When will prophecy be fulfilled in relation to the events of the world? Jesus taught that it would be fulfilled during the “end of the age” (Matthew 13 and 24), which is connected to a specific seven-year period of intense and unprecedented tribulation that will be unleashed on planet earth. What is occurring in the world today are trends and signs of the “last days” (2 Pet. 3:3) which point toward the end – but they are not the end of the age as Jesus taught. We are moving toward the end but we are not living during the actual End Times. The Rapture of the Church is the next prophetic event that occurs on God’s prophetic calendar that will indicate that the “end of the age” or Tribulation Period is soon to begin. The events taking shape in our world today are preparing the earth for the seven-year time period that Jesus predicted would come.

Again, we must reiterate that Jesus taught He would be with His Church until this time period (“the end of the age”) begins (Matt. 28:20). This means that the Church will be absent during this specific time period (Rev. 3:10). It also means that after the Rapture occurs the earth will at one point enter into that period of time known as “the end of the age” or the final seven years of the pre-messianic age that occurs in conjunction with the Second Coming (Matt. 24:27-29).

How can End Time events associated with “the end of the age” (the seven-year Tribulation Period) occur or be fulfilled when we are not living in the End Times? Today we are living in the “last days” (2 Tim. 3:1) that take us up to the Rapture of the Church and the commencement of the End Times or “end of the age” as Jesus taught. During the “last days” many sign markers and trends would occur that show us we are moving closer to “the end of the age” (the last seven years before the Second Coming) and many events will be

taking shape preparing the earth for “the end of the age” to begin. The events transpiring in the world today are comparable to ominous dark clouds that are gathering which precede the thunderstorm of the Tribulation Period.

Prophecies are said to occur ONLY during the time references of “the end of the age,” the “time of the end,” the “latter times,” “latter days” (Tribulation Period) and the “last days” related to Israel’s blessings (the Millennium). To associate the actual fulfillment of Bible prophecy to the time in which we live today argues against the imminent return of Christ (1 Cor. 16:22; Phil. 3:20; James 5:8) and does not align with God’s prophetic clock regarding the fulfillment of Biblical prophecies.

For a further explanation and overview of the timing of prophetic events in relation to the Tribulation Period, see the author’s study entitled, “The Fulfillment of Bible Prophecy” (Focusing on the End Times - Tribulation Period).

IX. Church Age

The Church is another “mystery” or sacred secret that was withheld from Old Testament revelation (Eph. 3:1-10). It is a time when God is forming a new people that He terms as the Church (Jews and Gentiles sharing the same blessing before God – 1 Cor. 12:13). Peter began calling out a new Gentile group of people during His earthly ministry which would be the larger component of the Church (Acts 15:14).

We can conclude that the Church Age exists in connection with the extended time frame known as the “mysteries of the kingdom” (Matt. 13:11), which once again refers to events that would transpire on earth while the King is absent (Luke 19:12-27) and before His Second Coming to establish the earthly Kingdom (the pre-messianic age). The Church Age is also part of the broader pre-messianic age or era that started with Christ’s earthly ministry and which ends at the Second Coming.

The Church Age fits into the overall time span of the pre-messianic era. The “end of the age” (the pre-Messianic age) that Jesus spoke about in conjunction with the Church Age running its course (Matt. 28:19) means that the Church Age would officially end with seven years (the climactic judgment of the Tribulation Period) which completes the broader pre-Messianic Age and ushers in the Messianic or Millennial Age. With the Rapture of the

Church and the commencement of the Tribulation Period, the earth will enter into the final global drama of its closing days before the Second Coming. Therefore, both the Rapture and Tribulation Period brings us up to the “end of the age” (the ending of the pre-messianic age), or the closing of the time period that began with the earthly ministry of Jesus and which extends up to the Second Coming.

Once again, the closing of the Church Age (Eph. 3:1-10; Matthew 16:18; Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:24) is somehow connected to the phrase “end of the age” which is Jesus’ description of the pre-messianic age or era of human history before the Millennium is established and Messiah reigns on earth (Matthew 28:20). Why is the Church Age mentioned in conjunction with the ending of the pre-messianic age? It’s because ever since Christ died on the cross the earth entered the period of time known as the “end of the age” (Heb. 9:26).

It’s also interesting that in Hebrews 9:26 we discover that Christ died on the cross “at the end of the world” (age). This phrase once again points to the closing of the pre-messianic age on earth which precedes the Messianic Age of the Millennial Kingdom. With a broad paint brush the writers of Scripture viewed the “end of the age” (the pre-Messianic Age) as consisting of the time period that would include Christ’s death (Heb. 9:26), the Church Age (Matt. 28:20), and conclude with the seven-year Tribulation Period. Jesus specifically and repeatedly points to the seven years as to the “end of the age” (Matt. 13:39-40; 24:3) and uses this phrase in a narrower sense. However, with Christ’s death on the cross, the “end of the age” begins, which includes the Church Age, and Tribulation Period, afterward the Messianic Age beings (the Millennial Kingdom).

Of course, the writers of Scripture could not tell you how long the “end of the age” (the pre-Messianic Age) would exist until the Second Coming occurs and begins the Messianic Age. This would be revealed later through the progressive revelation of God’s plan, as found in Scripture. Also, looking back, today we can say that the end of the age has already existed for some 2,000 years while the Church Age runs its course.

Once again, the Church Age would most definitely be included in the reference to the parabolic mysteries or untold secrets about the kingdom (Matt. 13:11), which refer to the sovereign conditions and events which develop on earth before the Second Coming and Millennial Kingdom. These events and conditions would include the sowing of Gospel seed, the mingling

of truth and error, tares among the wheat, the expansion of wickedness on earth, Israel's rejection and lost blessing, the formation and expansion of the Church, the leavening and apostasy over the earth (Matthew 13), and a judgment that occurs in connection with the Second Coming – not Christ's first coming. All of these conditions and events essentially prepare or set up the world for the Second Coming, the arrival of the earthly theocracy, and the end of the present age as we know it, which is the end of that long era of time that has existed between Christ's first coming and Second Coming.

X. Times of the Gentiles

In the Olivet passage of Luke, Jesus returned to the disciples' original question (Luke 21:7) about when the temple in Jerusalem would be destroyed. Luke 21:20 says, "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh." Luke paints both a *near* and *far* prophetic view of Jerusalem's fate. In Luke 21:20-24, Jesus clarified that Gentile domination, including the destruction of Jerusalem, would occur when the city was surrounded by armies. The destruction of the Jerusalem that occurred in A.D 70 under Titus was a *foreshadowing* of the destruction during the End Times (Tribulation Period) but both would occur during a period of time known as the Times of the Gentiles.

Luke 21:24

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

According to this verse, the Gentile domination would continue until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled or finished. This entire phrase describes the period when Gentiles, rather than Jews, would control the fate of Jerusalem (Dan. 2; 7). The times of the Gentiles began when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem in 586 B.C. and the Babylonians took the city and the nation into Captivity. The expression "shall be trodden down" refers to a continuing condition. It envisions the Gentile domination of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, and all other persecutors of Israel up to this present day.

These times of Gentile domination will continue until Jesus Christ returns to establish His earthly Millennial Kingdom which is pictured as "the stone cut out without hands" (without human hands or the assistance of human power

- Dan. 2:34–35, 45). Christ's Second Coming will destroy the final form of Gentile domination over Israel and establish the Millennial Kingdom which is pictured as a mountain filling the entire earth ("the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth" - Dan. 2:25).

Throughout this entire long period of history, from the days of Babylonian captivity to the present, Gentiles have at various times and in many ways controlled the Jews and the fate of Jerusalem. However, the "times of the gentiles" or the dominance of Gentiles over Israel does not mean that the Jews would never control Jerusalem and parts of the land for brief periods of time. The thought is that it would be continually subject to Gentile invasion and interference until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. On June 7, 1967, Israel regained control over the city of Jerusalem; however, the "times of the Gentiles" were NOT completed at this time, as some suggest. Israel is once again in God's spotlight but she is still under Gentile influence and powers that are seeking to destroy, overcome her, and wipe her from the face of the earth.

Some of the darkest days Jerusalem has ever known still lie ahead. In the future the armies that surround it will take the city and slay many of its inhabitants. Jerusalem will again fall under Gentile domination in the Tribulation (Zech. 14:1–2) just before the Messiah returns to restore Jerusalem. It is this rescue and restoration of the Jews to the place of millennial blessing which Jesus spoke about in Luke 21:25–28. Therefore, we know that the terminating point of Gentile domination over Israel will come when the King (Jesus Christ) returns in His Second Advent, as the man of war, who will destroy both the armies surrounding Israel and the Antichrist (Zech. 14:3; Rev. 19:11-21), which will be the final expression of "the times of the Gentiles".

The New Testament distinguishes between the riches of the Gentiles, the fullness of the Gentiles, and the times of the Gentiles. Let's review them briefly.

- The **riches** of the Gentiles (Rom. 11:12) refers to the place of privilege which the Gentiles enjoy at the present time in the Church, while Israel is temporarily set aside by God, and when God is focusing on building His Church (Acts 15:14).

- The **fullness** of the Gentiles (Rom. 11:25) is the time when Christ's Church will be completed and taken from the earth through the Rapture.

Romans 11:25

"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in."

This speaks of Gentile salvation and blessing during the Church Age. The fullness or filling up of the blessing of Gentile salvation will end when the last Gentile individual turns to saving faith in Jesus Christ during the Church Age and completes His body – the Church (Eph. 5:23; Col. 1:18). After the final salvation of Gentiles is recorded, Jesus will return in the Rapture and the scene will once again shift to Israel during the Tribulation Period, when God is chastening His beloved ancient people in order to restore them to Himself (Isa. 59:20-21; Jer. 30:7, 11; Dan. 9:24; 12:5-7; Mal. 4:5-6).

God's future dealings with Israel is pictured as being grafted back in the place of blessing for the Millennial Kingdom (Rom. 11:23 – "God is able to graff them in again"). However, presently the unbelieving nation of Israel is portrayed as no longer having the predominant place and privilege of God's spiritual blessing. The expressions such as "the fall of them" (Rom. 11:12), "the casting away of them" (Rom. 11:15), "broken off" (Rom. 11:17, 20) and "cut off" (Rom. 11:22) all refer to Israel's present position in God's eyes while He blesses the predominantly Gentile Church that was "graffed in among them" (Rom. 11:17), who are the believing Jews in the Church Age, identified as the "remnant according to the election of grace" (Rom. 11:5).

In other words, the saved Gentiles today share the position of favor that had originally been given to Israel; however, this place of blessing is still shared by the believing remnant of Israel who are part of the Church (1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 2:14). Nevertheless, it's also true that someday Israel will once again be brought back into the full place of special favor and blessing as is suggested by the phrase "graff them in again" (Rom. 11:23). This refers to the time national Israel will be saved and blessed during the Millennial Kingdom.

- The **times** of the Gentiles (Luke 21:24) began with the Babylonian captivity in 586 B.C and will extend to the time when Gentile nations

will never again assert control over the Jewish people and the city of Jerusalem. This is pictured as the time when “the God of heaven set(s) up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed” - Dan. 2:44).

Some added notes and explanation of Luke’s Olivet Discourse:

Luke’s account does refer to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus and the Roman army in A.D. 70, which occurred just forty years from the time Jesus spoke (Luke 19:41–44). The Jewish historian Josephus claimed that nearly a million people were killed by the Romans, and over 100,000 taken captive, when Titus captured the city. However, this terrible event was in some sense a “dress rehearsal” for what will happen when Satan vents his anger on Israel during the last half of the Tribulation (Rev. 12:7–17; Zech. 14:1-2). In other words, this same terrible event will happen again during the End Times. In fact, earlier Luke recorded Jesus’ teaching about the destruction that would come on Palestine and Jerusalem just before the Second Coming (Luke 17:22–37).

The siege of Jerusalem under Titus in A.D. 70 is the “near fulfillment” but what happened then was a *foreshadowing* of another great siege of the city in the time of the end, just preceding the coming of the Son of man (Zechariah 14:1-3). In Luke’s account and record, we see the combining of the two events together, the A.D. 70 judgment under Titus, and the End Time judgment of Jerusalem under the Antichrist’s armies.

Prophetic discourses sometimes present a near and far view in their predictions. In other words, they give a closer fulfillment in the events surrounding the present day but also describe prophetic events that will occur right up to the Second Coming of Christ to earth without putting any time element between these prophetic events (Isaiah 9:6-7; 13; 61:1-12; Dan. 2:40-44; 11:36-45; Zechariah 9:9-10; Luke 4:17-18). Some prophecies move from a closer prophetic fulfillment to a much more distant prophetic fulfillment in the End Times (Tribulation Period) just prior to Christ’s Second Advent to earth. This might be viewed as a “prophetic skip” in God’s eschatological program.

Such is the case in Luke’s account. It moves from the A.D. 70 judgment right to the End Times and the corresponding judgment that falls upon the Jews and Jerusalem. However, we can be sure that the nearer A.D. 70 judgment is in view in Luke 21:20 for it is the time when Israel was “led away captive

into all nations” (Luke 21:24) as Jesus predicted (James 1:1). But the far view (a broader prophetic view) is given that reflects the End Times and which parallels directly to Matthew’s record concerning the events of the Tribulation Period.

Nevertheless, those prophecy students that try and limit the teaching of the Lord to only the event of A.D. 70, must, when reaching Luke 21:25-27, be forced to interpret the remainder of the sermon as referring to the End Times that occur in conjunction with the Second Coming. For this reason, it’s better to view Luke’s entire account as encompassing both a near and far view of Jerusalem’s destruction. The A.D. 70 judgment is a preview of another end-time judgment that would come upon the city.

Some students of the prophetic word have also used Luke's account to interpret the teaching found in Matthew 24. As a result, they arrive at the conclusion that there is also historical fulfillment in relation to the events described in Matthew’s record, such as Israel fleeing into the wilderness and great distress in the land of Israel during the A.D. 70 judgment. However, there is nothing in Matthew 24 that can be given a "near" interpretation of the events surrounding the A.D. judgment.

Jesus only mentions the temple destruction in A.D. 70 (Matt. 24:1-2) and then immediately launches into a description of the Tribulation Period, after the temple destruction, by dividing the Tribulation Period in two parts – the “beginning of sorrows” and “great tribulation” or birth pangs (Matt. 24:4-25). However, Luke combines the "near" view (A.D. 70 judgment view) and the "far" view (End Time judgments) of Jerusalem. Most of the material in Luke’s material and account is yet future. The events of Luke 21:8-19 are what Matthew has called, "the beginning of sorrows" (Matt. 24:8) which aligns with the first half of the Tribulation Period.

XI. The Fullness of Times

Ephesians 1:10 declares:

“That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; *even* in him.”

This important prophetic expression points to the “dispensation” or administration, order and economy (Greek - oikonomia) of God, which is

further identified as the “fullness” (Greek – pleroma – the filling up or completion) of the “times” (Greek – kairos – the seasons and times that relate to God’s dispensational purposes). The “dispensation of the fulness of times” statement is a clear reference to the Millennial Kingdom, when Christ will return to the earth to reign as “KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS” (Rev. 19:16) and establish the Kingdom for 1,000 years. The 1,000 years is the allotted time that Jesus has to take back the earth for God, a time when He establishes the earthly theocratic rule of God (“For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet” - 1 Cor. 15:24-28). All that is past, present, and future is moving toward the time when every knee must bow and every tongue must confess that Jesus is Lord! This is the time when everything is going to be brought under the rulership and authority of Jesus Christ (Phil. 2:10).

The expression “the fullness of times” speaks of the completion or culmination of all God’s previous dispensational programs or plans. The Millennium is a culminating stewardship or program that merges into the final dispensation which is the eternal Kingdom or Eternal State (Isa. 9:6; Rev. 21; 1 Pet. 3:12). The Bible seems to tell us that all of God’s “times” or “seasons” are heading toward the kingdom era of 1,000 years (Revelation 20:5). All of God’s past stewardships are moving in the direction of the earthly theocracy. When the completion of history comes, the Kingdom arrives, eternity begins, and the new heaven and new earth are established. The Millennial Kingdom is the link between the past and future (eternity).

This dispensational finale of the ages (the Millennial Kingdom) is designed to bring the earth under the rulership of God. In the coming day, the earth will be ruled by King Jesus. The Millennial Kingdom will be the culminating dispensation to which all of history was pointing and moving toward throughout the ages. From the very beginning God announced that His Kingdom would come through the promised covenant program with Israel. All the covenant promises that are given to Israel (Abrahamic, Palestinian, Davidic, New) have four characteristics.

First, they are *literal*. Second, they are *eternal*. This is seen in the Abrahamic (Gen. 17:7-8, 13, 19; 1 Chron. 16:17; Psalm 105:10), Palestinian (an extension of the Abrahamic Covenant - Ezekiel 16:60), Davidic (2 Sam. 23:5; Isa. 55:3; Ezek. 37:25), and New (Isa. 24:5; 61:8; Jer. 32:40; 50:5; Heb. 13:20) Covenants. Third, they depend entirely on the integrity of God. Fourth, they are made with a distinct covenant people called Israel. All of these

covenants were pointing to the coming day of the Millennium, which would be the culminating point of God's previous purposes and bring earth to its final goal, when Jesus Christ would rule as King on the throne of David (Luke 1:32-33).

This kingdom program is destined to come upon the earth someday ("thy kingdom come" – Matt. 6:10) and when it does Christ will bring everything under His authority which includes every created being in the universe (Phil. 2:10; Rev. 5:13).

Tom Constable is correct when observing this about Ephesians 1:10:

"The dispensation in view is the millennial reign of Christ on earth during which everything will be under His rule (1 Cor. 15:27; Col. 1:20). Even though in one sense everything is under Christ's authority now, Jesus Christ will be the head of all things in a more direct way in the messianic kingdom. Everyone and everything will acknowledge and respond to His authority then (Isa. 2:2-4; 11:1-10)."

God is moving everything toward the earthly theocratic Kingdom. The long awaited Millennial Kingdom is the grand finale in God's previous dispensation dealings which were pointing to this coming time and golden age. During the 1,000 years (Rev. 20:1-6) God will "gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; *even* in him" (Eph. 1:10). Again, this speaks of the time when Christ will bring all created creatures under His own sovereign rule (Heb. 2:8). What a day this will be!

Philippians 2:10 looks ahead to this coming and glorious reign:

"That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth."

During the Millennial Reign, all things in heaven and on earth will be gathered and condensed under the absolute rule and dominion of Jesus Christ. Today the Lord Jesus is rejected and disowned. He is nothing more than a curse word to many people. But someday He is going to be the preeminent One, the Lord of all, and the object of universal worship.

Zechariah 14:9

"And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one."

Zechariah 14:20 also looks ahead to the Millennium and says:

“In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the LORD'S house shall be like the bowls before the altar.”

Jeremiah 23:5 adds:

“Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.”

Isaiah 11:9 concludes with this:

“They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.”

Ruling planet earth is God's goal. He wants to set up Christ as Head over all things, both the heavenly saints and angels, and earthly inhabitants who will enter the earthly Kingdom, but even the wicked spirit will be locked inside the earth and banned from the Millennium (Phil. 2:10; Rev. 5:13, Rev. 20:1-2; Zech. 13:2). During this time they too will be forced to bow to the King. The earth and future belongs to God!

Dr. J. Vernon McGee states:

“Heaven and earth are not in tune today—we are playing our own little tune. We have our rock music going down here, while the only Rock up there is the Lord Jesus. He is *the* Rock: He is that precious Stone that is the foundation upon which the church rests today. And the day will come when heaven and earth will be in tune and all things will be gathered together in Christ.”

Jesus taught in Matthew 8:11:

“And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.”

Once again, the “kingdom of heaven” is not a reference to Heaven but the time when Jesus Christ comes back from Heaven to rule the earth. The phrase “kingdom of heaven” speaks of the time when God's heavenly rule is extended over the earth during a specific time period, the Millennial Kingdom of 1,000 years. The time is fast approaching when Heaven will rule planet earth!

XII. The Times of Refreshing

This same time period of the Millennium is foretold to be “times of refreshing” (Acts 3:19) that will be experienced on planet earth. These refreshing times (Greek – kairos – the favorable seasons) are connected with Israel’s blessing during the Kingdom Age which will ultimately result in eternal righteousness being established over the earth (“to bring in everlasting righteousness” - Dan. 9:24).

Peter’s invitation to the Jews to repent and to return to a proper relationship to God with the result that “times of refreshing” (Acts 3:19) might come from the Lord’s presence is a valid offer the Kingdom. It is a direct reference to the inauguration of the messianic Kingdom (Zech. 12:10–14). But there is an important question to ask. If the Jewish nation as a whole had believed in Jesus during this day, how could Jesus’ predictions about the destruction of Jerusalem have taken place? The answer is not difficult to understand. The Romans would have invaded Jerusalem sooner than they did, the Rapture would have happened (John 14:1–3), the seven-year Tribulation would have followed, and Jesus would have returned to set up His Kingdom.

All of this could have logistically happened in about 10 years from the time Peter extended his invitation to the Jews (the times of refreshing). Of course, God extended the actual fulfillment of these times and events far out into the distant future. The offer of the “times of refreshing” (the earthly theocracy or Kingdom) was a bonafide offer to the Jews but God proved by this offer that His people were not ready to accept His Son (John 1:11) and therefore another generation of Jews would accept His Son as the coming King at His Second Coming (Matt. 23:39).

XIII. Time Designations in the Book of Revelation

The reason or purpose for writing the Book of Revelation is to reveal those prophetic events “which must shortly come to pass” (Rev. 1:1). This would include the Rapture and all that would follow the Rapture on God’s prophetic calendar. The word “**shortly**” (tachos – Rev. 1:1; 22:6) and the word “**quickly**” (tachu - Rev. 2:16; 3:11; 11:14; 22:7, 12, 20) are important words in this book which possess a similarity in meaning within the Greek language. They can mean “**soon**” in relationship to God’s timetable, “**suddenly**” in relationship to the starting of these prophetic events, and “**speedily**” in the way the prophetic events are carried out and fulfilled in the earth.

The time fulfillment and designations regarding the events of the Book of Revelation are very important. When will these events be fulfilled and how will they be fulfilled? We know they will be fulfilled in the future but when and how? Let's break down the study of the two similar words - "shortly" and "quickly" as they appear in the Book of Revelation.

What does it mean when events will be fulfilled shortly and quickly?

1. The events will be fulfilled SOON in relation to time.

The words "shortly" (*tachus*) and quickly (*tachu*) can take on the meaning of happening soon. It won't be long until they are fulfilled. This is certainly true from the standpoint of prophetic revelation. God's future events are seen to be "soon" in relation to their starting point. The time when they will occur is soon upon us.

Preterists (those who look for historical fulfillment of the book of Revelation) conclude that since the word can mean "soon" then the events had to be fulfilled in the AD 70 judgment. They suggest that the word "soon" would not refer to a long period of time but a shorter period of time. Thus, if the book was written in AD 66, then only four years would elapse for these events to be fulfilled historically. They would *soon* be fulfilled in the AD 70 judgment of Jerusalem. However, there is a fly in their ointment. There's a hole in their bucket.

First, the Book of Revelation was written in AD 96 – not AD 66. Preterists must tenaciously fight for an early date of the Book of Revelation to fit it into their scheme of interpretation. Second, in the normal understanding of language the word "soon" would not indicate even a four year lapse of time. If I told someone I was going to be married soon, I would not expect to wait four years to be married! If I told you that I will soon arrive at your house to take you out to a restaurant for supper, you would not expect to wait four years to get there! It's obvious that we must view the word "soon" in its Biblical language which is taken from God's perspective of time.

God wants us to understand the word "shortly" (Rev. 1:1) or soon in the Book of Revelation in relation to His timetable – not the preterist timetable. God views time differently than we do (Ps. 90:4). 2 Peter 3:8 says, "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

God does not see a thousand years as being a long period of time in His sight. Putting it in human terms, a thousand years is “like” a day, according to God’s timeless existence and timetable. He does not say it is a day. He does not change the meaning of a thousand years. He merely states that it is *like* a day. Therefore, when the prophetic events in the book of Revelation are described as coming “shortly to pass” (Rev. 1:1; 22:6), they are not necessarily going to happen in four years from now, or in one thousand years from now. The point is this; it’s already been approximately 2,000 years, since these prophecies were given, and these prophetic events have not yet begun to transpire. However, they are still viewed as happening “soon” for the simple reason that God’s timetable is different than ours. What is soon to God may not be soon to us!

So, it is proper to translate the words “shortly” (tachos) and “quickly” (tachu), as meaning soon, when we understand that these events and Christ’s coming will be soon in relationship to God’s timetable and the way He views time.

John Walvoord states:

“Behold, I come quickly,’ it means that from the divine point of view, end-time events are impending.”

2. The events will be fulfilled SUDDENLY without any delay of time.

In Revelation 22:6 an angel told John that these events “must shortly (tachos) come to pass” which means the events are also impending and ready to occur.

The words “shortly” (tachos) and “quickly” (tachus) can also have the meaning of suddenness or surprise in relationship to the way they occur. In other words, the prophetic events recorded in this book, including the Rapture and judgments of the Tribulation Period, are seen to be *impending* events. They are *imminent*. They are *near* and ready to occur. In other words, all of these events are ready to suddenly occur and be fulfilled in relationship to God’s prophetic timetable. The point is this; these future events can occur with suddenness and surprise because they are impending or seen to be ready for fulfillment, in accordance with God’s timetable.

1 Thessalonians 5:2 is a case in point: “For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night” (suddenly, with surprise,

and without warning). This refers to the commencement of the Tribulation Period upon those who are left behind (unbelievers). A thief does not call you up and tell when he is coming and what he is going to take when he arrives at your home. No, his coming is sudden and without warning when he wants to rob your home. This is the way all the events of the book of Revelation are viewed. They are something that can occur suddenly (without notice). They are near, impending, forthcoming, approaching, looming, and ready to occur. My friend, the prophetic clock stands at 11:59.

This means the Rapture and events to follow are ready to take place. From the standpoint of God's prophetic calendar, the prophetic destiny of the Church and End Time events associated with the Tribulation Period are about to begin, as God's plan of the ages begins to unfold. God's entire prophetic program is seen as a whole, and it's viewed as impending, ready to begin without notice and delay.

The future is viewed, in God's reckoning of time (2 Pet. 3:9), as something that is imminent and which possesses no intervening time periods. After the Church age, which is followed by the Rapture of the church, comes the seven-year Tribulation Period, which is followed by the Second Coming, the Millennium, Great White Throne Judgment, and Eternal State. In one sense, all of these events are ready to begin, or as Peter states, "the end of all things is at hand" (1 Pet. 4:7), since they will occur in a successive and chronological fashion. From a Biblical standpoint and God's viewpoint, the end of everything is not far away, such as the Rapture and the glorification of His Church (1 Peter 1:7) and the ending of the world and the creation of new heaven's and earth (2 Peter 3:3-11).

If something can occur suddenly (without warning) then the event is impending. It is imminent. The emphasis of the words "shortly" and "quickly" (suddenly) have a certain element of expectancy attached to them. Christ's return in the Rapture and the transpiring of all the future prophetic events, as outlined in Revelation, have a certain sense of imminence attached to them. They stand in readiness to be fulfilled. They can happen suddenly (without notice) and begin their fulfillment at their successive stages. This may be the primary understanding of the words "tachos" (shortly) and "tachu" (quickly) in the Book of Revelation.

This is how the early church viewed and anticipated Christ's return in the Rapture. Jesus Christ was returning soon, suddenly, and without any delay

("he that shall come will come, and will not tarry" - Heb. 10:37). Paul was looking for Christ in his day ("We look for the Saviour" – Phil. 3:20). The Lord's return was "at hand" during Paul's day (Phil. 4:5). The early Christians were instructed "to wait for his Son from heaven" (1 Thess. 1:10). The early church expected Christ to return in their generation and lifetime as they greeted one another with the word "Maranatha" – "Our Lord Comes" (1 Cor. 16:22).

The words "shortly" (tachos) and "quickly" (tachu) would then speak of suddenness and have the meaning of imminence (Rev. 1:3 – "the time is at hand" and Rev. 22:10 - "the time is at hand"). Christ can come suddenly or without any delay which would begin the fulfillment of all Bible prophecy. In Revelation 2:16 Jesus warned the church at Pergamum to repent or else He would come "quickly" (suddenly in judging them), while in Revelation 3:11 He comforted the faithful church at Philadelphia by telling them that He would come "quickly" (imminently or without delay). Revelation 11:14 declares that God's third woe of judgment was coming "quickly." In other words, it was impending and imminent. It was going to happen at any time. It could suddenly be unleashed upon planet earth.

These verses speak of a sudden event that occurs at a given time without warning. They refer to events that are impending and ready to be unleashed upon society from a prophetic standpoint. In other words, when these prophetic events occur, they will come with suddenness and surprise. They will suddenly and without warning unleash themselves upon planet earth.

The Lord Jesus Christ declared three times, "I am coming quickly" (Revelation 22:7, 12, 20). In all these cases "tachos" (or words related to it - tachu) clearly refer to the imminence or nearness of an event. The tachos word group is used in a similar sense throughout the New Testament (Acts 17:15; 25:4; Rom. 16:20; 1 Cor. 4:19; Phil. 2:19, 24; 1 Tim. 3:14; 2 Tim. 4:9; Heb. 13:19, 23; 2 Pet. 1:14).

Again, the word "quickly" (Rev. 22:7, 20) means that Christ's will return soon, speedily, suddenly, without delay or warning. The word connotes the nearness, imminence or the any-moment return of the Lord to take His Church (the Bride of Christ) back to Heaven (John 14:1-3). Jesus Christ is returning soon, suddenly, and without any prior warning for His Church in accordance with the divine reckoning of God's timetable. Therefore, the things (the prophetic events of the Book of Tribulation) which must "shortly

come to pass” (Rev. 1:1) are imminent and impending events that are ready to occur. They are knocking on the door and ready to be fulfilled. Christ’s coming is at the door (James 5:9) and the events that transpire following His coming are seen to be impending judgments of doom that are about to be unleashed upon planet earth. We are living in the prelude to the End Times, which is the time when Bible prophecy will be fulfilled. The stage is being set for God’s prophetic word to come to pass which is “a more sure word of prophecy” (2 Peter 1:19).

3. The events will be fulfilled SPEEDILY or in a quick manner of time.

The words “shortly” (tachos) and “quickly” (tachus) can also have the meaning of speed, quickness or swiftness and is often translated this way (Luke 18:8; Acts 12:7; 22:18; 25:4; Rom. 16:20; Rev. 2:16; 3:11; 11:14; 22:7, 12, 20). Christ’s coming in the Rapture and the prophetic events of the book of Revelation will not only occur suddenly (they are impending) but they will also occur quickly or speedily. In other words, the idea of coming to pass “shortly” or “quickly” can also speak of the speed and intensity in which these prophetic events will occur. The events of the book of the Revelation, beginning with the Rapture of the Church, will be like a rapid-fire sequence of events. In some sense, they will occur with great speed and swiftness as they take place one right after the other and unfold God’s prophetic program in the world.

The entire Book of Revelation with its prophetic unfolding of events (Rev. 1:1) is like a speedy roller coaster going down the tracks that cannot be stopped once it starts its descent. The events of the book are seen to gain momentum and transpire quickly as the book progresses through the prophetic future. All of these prophetic events are seen to transpire very rapidly when they begin to unfold, starting with the Rapture of the Church, which will actually take place in the twinkling of an eye (1 Cor. 15:51-52). This prophetic event, which is the blessed hope of the Church (Titus 2:13), is portrayed as occurring quickly (Rev. 2:16; 3:11; 22:7, 12, 20). The Rapture is the event that starts up God’s prophetic clock. After the Rapture, God’s prophetic program will begin to unfold and be unleashed on the earth in a quick and speedy fashion, as the world races toward the Millennial Kingdom.

The Rapture is going to happen quickly (Rev. 22:7) and acts as a starting point for the other prophetic events of the Book of Revelation to occur rapidly in their own sequential order (seal, trumpet, and bowl judgments, Millennium,

Great White Throne Judgment, Eternity). Once these prophetic events begin, as outlined in the Book of Revelation, they will occur rapidly, like a gun firing a round of ammunition. They will occur quickly and without interruption.

My mother recalls the time when I walked up the meadow hill with my little plastic motorcycle. I put my legs out and went down before she could come and get me. It was a fun ride and there was no way I could stop the momentum once I got started! The same is true regarding the prophetic events of the Book of Revelation. There is no stopping them once they begin to occur. They will quickly come to pass in relation to God's prophetic timetable, one right after the other, until the earth meets its final prophetic destination – the Millennium and Christ's eternal kingdom!

In summary, all of the prophetic events of the Book of Revelation will in one sense occur “shortly” (tachos) and “quickly” (tachu) which means they will occur **soon** in respect to God's timetable, they will occur **suddenly** or without any delay (they are impending, imminent) in respect to their occurrence, and **speedily** in relationship to the manner they are carried out and fulfilled. All these are valid meanings of the words “shortly” and “quickly” as they appear in God's prophetic Word.

XIV. The End of All Things

Peter reminds us that “the end of all things is at hand” (1 Pet. 4:7) which means the Rapture is approaching and is imminent (James 5:8; Phil. 3:20; Col. 3:4; 1 Cor. 16:22; Titus 2:13). The coming of Christ in the Rapture will trigger many events. The “time is at hand” (Rev. 1:3) when Jesus will return and all the prophetic events recorded in the Book of Revelation will begin to rapidly occur. The Church Age will come to its climax, life as we know it will be no more, we will stand at the Judgment Seat of Christ (2 Cor. 5:10), the earth will be judged during the Tribulation Period, the Millennium will finally be inaugurated, which is then followed by the Great White Throne Judgment and the commencement of eternity or “the day of God” (2 Pet. 3:12).

The end is fast approaching “for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh” (James 5:8). Are you ready for the end or the grand finale of the ages? Do you know Jesus Christ as your personal Savior? Furthermore, are you living a sanctified life in view of your final examination before Jesus Christ at His coming (1 Cor. 3:12-15; 1 John 2:28)? Friend, will you be ready for the coming of the Lord? Are you prepared for what lies ahead? The end of all

things is about to come. There is no time to delay your salvation and sanctification.

“Just a tiny little minute
 Only sixty seconds in it.
 Forced upon me
 Can’t refuse it
 Didn’t seek it
 Didn’t choose it.
 But it’s up to me to use it
 Give account if I abuse it.
 Just a tiny little minute
 But eternity is in it!”

Below is a chart summary of the prophetic time designations that we have studied.

Pastor Kelly Sensenig							Prophetic Time Designations						
Period of “the mysteries of the kingdom” (Matthew 13:11) and “the times and seasons” (Acts 1:6-7; 1 Thess. 5:1) *Kingdom is Postponed (Matt. 21:43)													
Old Testament PREDICTION Latter Years Latter Days Last Days Time of the End	Earthly Ministry of Christ “The sower” Matt. 13:37	Church Age Israel Set Aside “cut off” Rom. 11:22 Latter Times Last Time Last Days 1 Jn. 2:18; 4:1 2 Tim. 3:1	Rapture “quickly” & “shortly” Rev. 1:1; 2:16; 3:11; 22:6, 12, 20; “the time is at hand” (Rev. 1:3); “the time is near” Rev. 22:10	Seven-year Tribulation Period (End of The Age) Matt. 13:39-40; 24:3, 14; 28:20 Day of the Lord 1 Thess. 5:2-3	Second Coming Judgment of the Living Nations Matt. 13:39- 40; 49-50; 24-25	Millennial Kingdom Israel Blessed “graft them in again” Rom. 11:23 “Every knee shall bow” Phil. 2:10							
	“The end of all things is at hand” – 1 Pet. 4:7												
Russian/Islamic Invasion (Ezek. 38-39) Antichrist’s Rise to World Power (Dan. 11:36-45) Israel’s Blessing in Millennium (Isa. 2:2; Micah 4:1)	Start of the New Age & Secrets about Kingdom	“riches of the Gentiles” Rom. 11:12 “fulness of the Gentiles” Rom. 11:25	The Mystery or Secret Teaching about Rapture & Resurrection of Church Age Saints - 1 Cor. 15:51-52 John 14:1-3	FULFILLMENT Latter Years Latter Days Time of the End Daniel’s 70 th week (Dan. 9:27)	Resurrection of O.T. Saints Dan. 12:2 Isa. 26:19 Job 19:25 John 11:24 Rev. 20:4-5	“fulness of times”- Eph. 1:10 “The times of refreshing - Acts 3:19 FULFILLMENT Israel’s “last days” (Isa. 2:2; Acts 2:17) Messianic Age Merges into Eternal State – “The Day of God” - 2 Pet. 3:12							
The Extended Time Frame of the Pre-messianic Age							Period of “the times of the Gentiles” (Luke 21:24)						
Start is 586 B.C. Babylonian Captivity							*God’s Prophetic Clock Begins* Period of Time When Prophecy is Being Fulfilled						

