

The Woman in the Wilderness

THE WOMAN FLED INTO THE WILDERNESS, WHERE SHE HAS A PLACE PREPARED BY GOD, THAT THEY SHOULD FEED HER THERE ONE THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED AND SIXTY DAYS. REVELATION 12:5-6

AND THE DRAGON WAS ENRAGED WITH THE WOMAN, AND HE WENT TO MAKE WAR WITH THE REST OF HER OFFSPRING, WHO KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD AND HAVE THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS CHRIST. REVELATION 12:17



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The Woman, the Dragon, and the Beast:

The Bible is loaded with prophecies about the future of the Church, the judgment of the World, and the return of JESUS. In fact, the last book of the Bible is devoted to preparing the Church for those times.

So, once we have peace with GOD through repentance from sin and faith in JESUS CHRIST His Son, we need to learn about what is coming in the future so that we will be able to stand when those difficult days come.

Therefore, let's begin to do this today by learning about one of the most well-described prophetic individuals in all of the Bible; the man who is often called "the beast", "the antichrist", "the man of lawlessness", or "the son of perdition".

Between Daniel's descriptions and the prophecies presented by John in the book of Revelation, we know more about the man we call "the antichrist" than we know about almost any other prophetic figure ever described in the Word of GOD.

John writes that the Beast will ascend out of the bottomless pit.¹

He will also be given his power, throne, and authority by satan the dragon.²

He will be marveled at by the world because of a deadly wound that was healed.³

He will be worshipped by the world.⁴

He will speak blasphemies against GOD.⁵

He will be given authority to rule for 42 months.⁶

He will be allowed to make war against the saints and overcome them.⁷

He will rule over every person on earth during his reign.⁸

He will have a collaborator known as "the false prophet" or "the second beast" who will lead everyone on earth to worship the beast or be killed.⁹

And, with the help of the false prophet, he will institute a branding system most often called "the mark of the Beast".

Understanding the big picture that the Bible explains about this mark is very, very important. So, we must pay careful attention, to John's words, when he explains: **"He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here**

¹ Rev 11:7

² Rev 13:2

³ Rev 13:3

⁴ Rev 13:4

⁵ Rev 13:5, 2 Thess 2:4, Dan 11:36

⁶ Rev 13:5

⁷ Rev 13:7

⁸ Rev 13:7

⁹ Rev 13:12 & 15

is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666.”¹⁰

“Buying” and “selling” are economic terms, so we can see that during the reign of the beast, a global monetary sanctioning system will be enforced on every living individual, and not one person on earth will be able to complete a single financial transaction if they have not accepted the mark of the beast on their right hand or their forehead.

Think about how you would provide your family with food, water, shelter, a place to live, gas, transportation, or anything else if you could not “buy” or “sell”! This is what will surely be coming when the years of the beast arrive! Imagine the pressure you would feel to take the mark in that financial situation. Would you choose to watch your family starve to death or would you take the mark?

Well, the Bible pre-warns: **“If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.”¹¹**

Therefore, taking the mark to survive in those days is completely, totally, and irrevocably out of the question for the servant of JESUS CHRIST! So how will you survive those days?

If you were Noah, and instead of a flood you were warned about this time of the beast, what would you do in the place of building an ark?¹² We will be answering that very important question as we continue, but first, let’s learn what events will precede this terrible time of the beast that JESUS called the “Great Tribulation”.

JESUS told His disciples when they asked about “the signs of His coming and of the end of the age”: **“Therefore when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place”** (whoever reads, let him understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. For then there will be great tribulation, such as

¹⁰ Revelation 13:16-18

¹¹ Revelation 14:9-11

¹² Hebrews 11:7

has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.”¹³

The LORD is clear that the Abomination of Desolation announces the beginning of the great tribulation; an unparalleled time of evil that will lead to the end of the age and lead up to the return of JESUS. Meanwhile, this event that JESUS, Daniel, Paul, and John described involves GOD’s Temple, the city of Jerusalem, the surrounding area known as Judea, and the wicked actions of the Antichrist.

Daniel recorded: **“And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days.”¹⁴**

If you search **“1290 days is equal to how many months”** on Google, you will find the result in whole numbers (the numbers preceding the decimal) is 42 months.

And if you search **“1290 days is equal to how many years”** on Google, you will find the result (to the first decimal) is 3.5 years.

And this is important because these numbers are found in many other places in Scripture, such as in Revelation chapter 13, where it is written about the Antichrist: **And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months.**¹⁵

Likewise, Daniel records: **He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, Shall persecute the saints of the Most High, and shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand For a time and times and half a time.**¹⁶

Because of several other passages, we know that the phrase “a time and times and half a time” is referring to 3.5 years. So, when you see that phrase, know that “a time” is a year, “times” plural is two years, and “half a time” is one half of a year. Therefore, the beast will be allowed to persecute the saints and rule over every tribe, tongue, people, and nation for 1290 days, 42 months, or 3.5 years.

And Paul writes about the Abomination of Desolation that begins that period by saying: **“Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our LORD JESUS CHRIST and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of CHRIST had come. Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition,**

¹³ Matthew 24:15-21

¹⁴ Daniel 12:11

¹⁵ Revelation 13:5

¹⁶ Daniel 7:25

who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called GOD or that is worshiped, so that he sits as GOD in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things?”¹⁷

So, the Abomination of Desolation that introduces the Great Tribulation must occur in the Temple of GOD according to Paul. And JESUS told us it will occur in the holy place, as He warned those in Judea to flee. So, there will be a temple in Jerusalem in Judea at the time of the Abomination of Desolation.

And at this event, the man of lawlessness, the beast, or the Antichrist, will **“sit as GOD in the temple of GOD, showing himself that he is god”**, and this moment will clearly and unmistakably announce the beginning of the 42 months of the “Great Tribulation”.

But if this is the very moment when people in Judea should be fleeing to the mountains, and if this is the time when the mark of the beast will be instituted, if no preparations were made before this time, it would be like Noah not having an ark to ride out the flood, or Joseph not having prepared Egypt for the times of famine by storing up grain in the years of plenty!

In Noah’s situation: he was **warned** *before* the flood came. In Joseph’s situation: Egypt was **warned** *before* the famine came. And in this future situation: the Church was clearly **warned** *before* the mark of the beast came!

And I believe that this is one key reason the book of Revelation explains: **“Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.”¹⁸**

Also, JESUS said: **“Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.”¹⁹**

But if the Abomination of Desolation is too late of a time to prepare for the years of the beast, what earlier sign can we look for that will tell us when the Abomination of Desolation will arrive? Well, the answer to that very important question is something the Bible calls: “the confirmation of the covenant with the many”.

Daniel recorded: **“Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth**

¹⁷ 2 Thessalonians 2:1-5

¹⁸ Revelation 1:3

¹⁹ Revelation 22:7

of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until MESSIAH the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks.²⁰

The street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times. And after the sixty-two weeks, MESSIAH shall be cut off, but not for Himself. And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, and till the end of the war desolations are determined.²¹

Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week, but in the middle of the week, he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. and on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, even until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate.”²²

The angel Gabriel told Daniel that 70 weeks were determined for Daniel’s people and the holy city of Jerusalem; and through hindsight we know that those “weeks” are periods of seven 7 years. So, 70 periods of seven years were determined for Israel and Jerusalem, and all but the final period of seven years has been fulfilled already.

In 454 BC, in the 20th year of the reign of Artaxerxes Longimanus I, the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem was given and Nehemiah led the people to rebuild the walls and the streets even in troublesome times. And if we fast-forward 69 weeks of years into the future from 454 BC (or 483 years), we arrive at the month of “Nissan” (In Babylonian months) or Abib (in Biblical months) of 30 AD. And this was the very month when many scholars agree that JESUS rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, was crucified, buried, and resurrected. And this corresponds to the prophecy that states: “the MESSIAH shall be cut off”; not for His own sins, but for the sins of the people.

Therefore, only one final period of seven years remains to fulfill this prophecy. And this final period of 7 years will begin just as Gabriel described. He said: **“Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week, but in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate.”**

Without controversy, the Abomination of Desolation occurs at the midpoint of the final period of seven years, but that final seven-year period begins when “he” confirms a covenant with the many for seven years. Most scholars agree that the Antichrist will be the “he” who confirms this covenant. And the text is clear that the covenant must involve the people of Daniel and the holy city of Jerusalem.

Therefore, most scholars believe that a peace agreement between the Israelis and their many neighbors is the most likely fulfillment of this prophecy. But the deal cannot just be

²⁰ Daniel 9:24-25a

²¹ Daniel 9:25b-26

²² Daniel 9:27

between two parties alone, because somehow “the many” must be involved in “confirming” the covenant between them.

So, this “confirmation of the covenant with the many” is the next key sign that will indicate that the final seven years before the return of the LORD have arrived. And when it occurs it will mean that there are only 42 months left to prepare for the years of the Beast and the time of his evil mark.

But this should also lead us to ask: “Does the Bible indicate that anyone will be able to escape these years of the Beast?” Doesn’t the Scripture plainly say that **“It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them”**?²³ Well to answer that question we need to look at the very heart of the book of Revelation which can be found in chapter 12!

John writes: **“Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars. Then being with child, she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth. And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth.”**²⁴

And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born. She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to GOD and His throne. Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days.²⁵

And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.²⁶

Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, “Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His CHRIST have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our GOD day and night, has been cast down. “And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. “Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the

²³ Revelation 13:7

²⁴ Revelation 12:1-4a

²⁵ Revelation 12:4b-6

²⁶ Revelation 12:7-9

sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time.”²⁷

Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child. But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent. So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood. But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth.²⁸

And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of GOD and have the testimony of JESUS CHRIST.”²⁹

Obviously, the woman was given **a place in the wilderness** to be protected for the time of the Great Tribulation, but who is the woman? She is described as being clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head, there was a garland of twelve stars. She also was the woman who gave birth to the male Child, who will rule all of the nations with a rod of iron.

Now since it is obvious that JESUS is “the male child”, and we know that He came from the lineage of Israel, many have been tempted to name the woman “Israel” and treat her as separate from “the Church”, but this would be a mistake.

Sadly, over the last two millennia, two main theological perspectives have developed that dangerously cloud the way people read this very important passage. The first systematic theology that is taught in many denominations is called Covenant Theology, and this perspective claims that Israel was replaced or superseded by the Church. Thus, Covenantalism would say that Israel was rejected by GOD and the Church was created to inherit all of the covenants and promises that GOD originally granted to Israel.

Meanwhile, the second systematic theology that is taught in most remaining churches is known as Dispensational Theology. And this perspective claims that we are currently in a period never mentioned in Scripture, which they call “the Church Age”. Also, they claim that GOD is now primarily concerned with the affairs of the Church, which they believe started in the book of Acts.

Also, Dispensationalism would teach that “the Church Age” they invented will end when the Church is secretly raptured out of the world before the Tribulation. Then, they claim,

²⁷ Revelation 12:10-12

²⁸ Revelation 12:11-16

²⁹ Revelation 12:17

GOD will once again be primarily concerned with the salvation of Israel, as He was before their hypothetical Church Age began.

Thus, Dispensationalism sees Israel and the Church as completely separate entities, while it teaches two separate returns of the LORD, two separate resurrections of the righteous before the Millennium, and two separate gospels in the Apostolic Scriptures.

However, both of these systematic theologies are dangerously wrong and they both lead people into twisted and convoluted interpretations of the Book of Revelation.

Meanwhile, regarding the Church and Israel, the Bible clearly states in Ephesians: **Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—that at that time you were without CHRIST, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without GOD in the world. But now in CHRIST JESUS you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of CHIRIST. For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to GOD in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him, we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God.³⁰**

Through the cross, JESUS made both Jew and Gentile “one”! So, we are all children of Abraham, we are all fellow citizens with the saints, and we are all citizens of the commonwealth of Israel through CHRIST!

Additionally, the Apostolic Scriptural quotations of earlier Biblical texts prove that the Apostles and our LORD JESUS CHRIST quoted the Septuagint translation of the Scriptures from Genesis to Malachi. And the Ancient Greek translation that they relied on for 90 percent of their citations uses the same Greek word they used for “Church” 74 times from Deuteronomy 10 to Micah 2! So, the Apostolic perspective supported by the preserved Apostolic manuscripts proves the view that there is one Church, and it began in the Book of Exodus at Mount Sinai according to Moses in Deuteronomy.

Likewise, in Luke’s gospel, the lineage of JESUS is not only traced back to Abraham but it was also traced back to Adam! And we should note that JESUS was very fond of calling

³⁰ Ephesians 2:11-19

Himself “**the Son of Man**” in all four gospels, not “the son of Israel” or “the son of Abraham”.

Without a doubt, Gentiles who repent and follow JESUS CHRIST in faith are “grafted” into the commonwealth of Israel³¹, and they become fellow citizens in the LORD’s “one flock”, with “one Shepherd”!³²

So, not only is the woman the true Israel of GOD, but at the same time, she is also the Church! And the crown of the church is the 12 stars, representing the 12 tribes of Israel, from which were called the 12 Apostles of JESUS!

But, “Why would the Church be clothed with the sun with the moon under her feet?” you might ask. Well, in regards to her being clothed with the sun, I would answer by directing you to Revelation chapter 19, where it is written: “**And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, “Alleluia! For the LORD GOD Omnipotent reigns! “Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.” And to her, it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.”**”³³

In a time without washing machines, laundry detergents, bleach, or other cleaning technologies, the sun was often used in Scripture as a standard of brightness because its light was the highest standard of whiteness available.

To confirm this, we can turn to Matthew’s Gospel, where he wrote: “**Now after six days JESUS took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light.**”³⁴ So, the woman being clothed with the sun is a metaphor for her glorious white righteousness that reflects the stunning perfect righteousness of her Savior!

Now, the question of “What does the moon under the feet of the woman have to do with the Church?” is a little harder to answer. But we do know for certain from Scripture that “putting something under a person’s feet” was a symbolic phrase that means to put something into submission.

For example, it is written: “**For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels. But one testified in a certain place, saying: “What is man that You are mindful of him, Or the son of man that You take care of him? You have made him a little lower than the angels; You have crowned him with glory**

³¹ Romans 11:13-24

³² John 10:16

³³ Revelation 19:6-8

³⁴ Matthew 17:1-2

and honor, And set him over the works of Your hands. You have put all things in subjection under his feet.” For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we do not yet see all things put under him.”³⁵

So, we can say that the moon under the woman’s feet represents the fulfillment of this verse, when GOD puts all of creation under the authority of the Church, while the Church faithfully remains under the authority of the MESSIAH.

The sun is not “put under the woman's feet” because, as she represents the Church, the woman is still submitted to the Son of GOD just as the moon is submitted to the sun and it can only reflect the light the sun produces. So all things except for GOD the Father, Son, and HOLY SPIRIT will be submitted to the woman, and she will remain submitted to GOD in all things.

Thus, Daniel writes about this future situation, by saying: **‘Then the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him.’**³⁶ So, the woman is the Church, individually comprised of “the saints of the most high”, and she is going to rule and reign with JESUS!

Also, Scripture explains about the future: **“Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to GOD the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed is death. For “He has put all things under His feet.” But when He says “all things are put under Him,” it is evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted. Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that GOD may be all in all.**”³⁷

So the outcome of all of human history will culminate with all people who are not in hell being eternally submitted to GOD.

But here is the most important question we can ask about the woman, which is: ***“If the woman is the Church, and she is protected through the Tribulation, who are her offspring that the dragon wars against and overcomes?”***

We know that her offspring **“keep the commandments of GOD and have the testimony of JESUS CHRIST”** and that is most certainly a saint!

³⁵ Hebrews 2:5-8

³⁶ Daniel 7:27

³⁷ 1 Corinthians 15:24-28

In fact, Revelation chapter 14 explains: **“Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of GOD and the faith of Jesus.”**³⁸

So why is the Church protected even while it was granted to the Beast to make war against the saints and overcome them? What is the difference between a ***Saint*** and the ***Church***?

We will answer that question next time, but now we know who the Woman is, and how the Book of Revelation contains a promise for all those who will heed its message!

³⁸ Revelation 14:12

The Woman, Her Offspring, and the Dragon

Previously, we learned that the woman in Revelation chapter 12 represents the Church, and we asked the question: why is the Church protected in the wilderness even while it was granted to the Beast to make war against the saints and overcome them? What is the difference between a Saint and the Church?

So today we must begin by learning: the word “church” in the Bible means “the called-out assembly of the saints”. Therefore, the difference between the protected Woman in the Wilderness and her hunted offspring is simply this: the woman represents those who will remain “**assembled together**” as the Church, and her offspring represents the saints who chose to **separate** from the assembly to face the tribulation on their own.

Please consider the only church JESUS evaluated that was ever promised to be “spared from the hour to trial that was coming upon the earth”. It was the church of Philadelphia, so let us now consider what made them special compared to the other 6 churches.

JESUS said: **“And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, ‘These things says He who is holy, He who is true, ‘He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens’”: “I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name. “Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. “Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.”³⁹**

“Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. “He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the name of My GOD and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name. “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”⁴⁰

This church kept the word of the LORD, they did not deny His name, and they kept his command to persevere, but what else about this congregation led to them receiving the promise that they would be kept from the hour of trial that was coming on the whole world?

³⁹ Revelation 3:7-10

⁴⁰ Revelation 3:11-13

Keeping the LORD's Word is key (without denying Him in word or deed), and persevering through trials is also necessary, but the other key to their final deliverance is hidden in their name.

You see the word "Philadelphia" means "brotherly love", and this church was, and will be, living up to that name! They did not (nor will the assembly they represent in the future) abandon "**assembling together**" in an attempt to escape the years of the beast on their own!

Instead, they will continue in community with the saints in love, like the original Jerusalem church of Acts! So, the Alpha and the Omega promised to protect them just as He has promised to protect the woman in the Wilderness!

You see, Paul used the Greek word "philadelphia" which means "brotherly love" when he wrote: **But concerning brotherly love (literally: "philadelphia") you have no need that I should write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another; and indeed you do so toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, that you increase more and more; that you also aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you, that you may walk properly toward those who are outside, and that you may lack nothing.**⁴¹

Just before teaching about the return of the LORD, Paul commended them for showing brotherly love to each other and all the brethren in Macedonia. And the fact is, the ways we show love to one another often depend on being geographically located near each other!

How can we spend **time** in fellowship with each other if we never assemble in the same place?

How can we use our **talents** to serve one another in love if our brothers and sisters require our talents far away from where we are?

Yes, we can use our **tongues** to build one another up in love from a distance with modern technology, but will we always have access to that technology?

When the mark of the beast arrives, we will no longer be able to share our **treasure** with our brothers and sisters in CHRIST remotely, they will have to be near us to be blessed by our generosity!

If our brothers or sisters face physical difficulties and need the gift of **touch** to help them up, or tend to them in sickness or infirmity, how can we do that from a distance?

⁴¹ 1 Thessalonians 4:9-12

Yes, brotherly love involves being **assembled together**! And the ways we show love and bear good fruit to the glory of our Savior can involve geography just as much as they involve charity!

For this reason, Hebrews commands: **“...let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.”**⁴²

We are warned not to forsake assembling together as GOD’s Church, and we are especially warned to continue assembling **“as we see the Day of the LORD approaching”**! The HOLY SPIRIT knew that we would be tempted to forsake assembling together when the Great Tribulation approached so the Book of Revelation and the Letter to the Hebrews warns us against following that tendency.

As the days of the beast approach, we are to be living “quiet lives”, busy attending to our daily needs, as free from connections to the pagan world as possible. We are to be working with our own hands, separated from the world, walking properly towards those who are outside, in holy self-sufficiency as a Christian community.

Also, because the Church is the Body of CHRIST, we should be serving one another **“joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, cause[ing] growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.”**⁴³

And these principles do not get sidelined by the Tribulation! No, they are highlighted by it! So, we must not forsake assembling together in brotherly love, or we will become **“the rest of her offspring”** instead of **“the woman”** that GOD prepares a place for!

The Woman, who is the Assembly of the Saints, will be protected and nourished in the wilderness, but it will be granted for the beast to make war against the individual saints (referred to as “the rest of her offspring”) and overcome them.

Meanwhile, Scripture tells us: **By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.**⁴⁴

And the Bible most certainly declares: **...the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water.**⁴⁵ So, it is good to prepare for what the Bible warns us is

⁴² Hebrews 10:24-25

⁴³ Ephesians 4:16

⁴⁴ Hebrews 11:7

⁴⁵ 1 Peter 3:20

coming! But we must not forget that our Savior also warned us of another factor to consider.

He said: **“When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. “All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. “And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.”⁴⁶**

“Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: ‘for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; ‘I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’⁴⁷

“Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? ‘When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? ‘Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ “And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.’⁴⁸

“Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: ‘for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; ‘I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.’⁴⁹

“Then they also will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?’ “Then He will answer them, saying, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.’ “And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”⁵⁰

Noah did not have any other righteous families to take with him on the ark! He was a preacher of righteousness, but no one wanted to listen and escape the Judgment of GOD! But if we can find saints who will come out from among the world in obedience to GOD and join us on the ark, we will have the blessing of a Christian community! This

⁴⁶ Matthew 25:31-33

⁴⁷ Matthew 25:34-36

⁴⁸ Matthew 25:37-40

⁴⁹ Matthew 25:41-43

⁵⁰ Matthew 25:44-46

allows us to clothe one another, care for one another, and fellowship with one another! And the love we show to each other, we show to JESUS!

So, we don't want to face the LORD when He returns trying to explain why we abandoned our brothers and sisters and were not there for them in sacrificial brotherly love!

So, with these principles understood, let us begin to apply these truths to our current world and situation to see what the LORD would have us consider in preparation for the warnings of the Book of Revelation.

But first, the key questions someone might be asking themselves at this point are: "How do we know if the confirmation of the covenant is going to happen in my lifetime?", and: "If I knew that it might happen soon, what should I do (if anything) to prepare for the great tribulation?"

The skeptic would reply to these types of questions: "These prophecies were written at least 2,000 years ago and they have not occurred yet, so why should anyone think they will be happening soon?"

But about this attitude, Peter warns: **"...scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation."**⁵¹

At first glance, the scoffers seem to make a sound point. The Church *has* been waiting for the return of the LORD for nearly 2000 years! But the mistake of the scoffer is: not recognizing the signs of the times! To them, JESUS would say: **"...Hypocrites! You know how to discern the face of the sky, but you cannot discern the signs of the times."**⁵²

You see, a lot of signs have appeared since the Bible was completed by John and we now have many clear signs of the times all around us that indicate we are approaching the Day of the LORD and the preceding times of great tribulation at exponentially increasing speeds.

Consider the prophetic significance of Israel being reborn as a nation in their Biblical lands after almost 2000 years of exile! Shortly after the MESSIAH was cut off as Gabriel's prophecy foretold, desolation came over Israel and Jerusalem just as prophesied! But now Israel is back in the land and Jerusalem has now been under their military control for 50 years.

⁵¹ 2 Peter 3:3-4

⁵² Matthew 16:3

This means Daniel 9:26 is at least partially fulfilled and the city of Jerusalem is no longer in desolation! How long will it be until the time when the temple mount will no longer lay desolate because of the transition from Daniel 9:26 to Daniel 9:27, which occurs at the confirmation of the Covenant?

If anticipation for the rebuilding of the temple is any indication, then it won't be much longer! France 24 reports⁵³: **“Boneh Israel ((meaning "Building Israel"), an organization which according to its website works at "bringing the redemption closer".) imported five red heifers from the United States last year.**

The plan is to sacrifice them and blend the ashes with water, a mixture that will be used to brush anyone deemed impure -- for example those who have had contact with a corpse -- before their ascent to the third temple.

The rare cows are crucial, because the inability to perform this ritual is part of Israeli rabbinical authorities' opposition to Jewish visits to Temple Mount.

The animals' "return is a messianic sign", affirmed Berkovits at a farm in northern Israel where they are inspected by vets and rabbis to ensure that every single hair is red.

"We pamper them, we're keeping them for the opportune moment," he added.

Berkovits said Boneh Israel had already acquired land on the Mount of Olives in east Jerusalem, so the animals can be burned facing Temple Mount.

For Yizhar Beer, director of the Keshev Centre for the Protection of Democracy in Israel, these "third temple lovers" are in no way marginal.

From a few dozen adherents two decades ago, their ideology has "spread to the centre of the political level -- to the parliament, to the government", Beer said.

Since December, Benjamin Netanyahu has led a government alongside extreme-right ministers who advocate imposing Israeli sovereignty on the Al-Aqsa mosque compound. France 24 reports

In order to hasten their sought-after redemption, a Jewish group imported five red heifers for sacrifice

The compound (of the Temple Mount) is administered by the Waqf Islamic affairs council of Jordan, whose forces were routed from east Jerusalem in the 1967 Six-Day War.

⁵³ <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20230605-the-israelis-set-for-new-jewish-temple-on-al-aqsa-site>

Defying the ban by top rabbis, some 50,000 Jews "ascended to Temple Mount" last year, according to a nationalist Israeli organisation that carries the site's Hebrew name, Har Habait.

The Jewish visitors include firebrand politician Itamar Ben-Gvir, who has also visited twice this year since becoming Israel's national security minister.

And Chaim Richman of the Temple Institute stated: **"We are ready to restore this place to its former glory, and we have priests who are ready to serve in the Third Temple. That would be a much smaller miracle than the establishment of the state of Israel. Here we are, in our homeland, and we have the power to build the temple whenever we want! GOD must be wondering what we are waiting for."**⁵⁴

At any moment an agreement for the sharing of the Temple Mount could be reached, and that agreement will most likely be: "the confirmation of the covenant with the many for one week"! This Temple Mount issue is one of the sticking points of any peace negotiations between the Israelis and the Palestinians.

And one day it seems a sharing arrangement will be found because it is written: **"Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, "Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there. "But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months."**⁵⁵

So, the exact length of time we have established from Scripture for the tribulation is mentioned in the context of the temple, the altar, and people worshipping there; and it is clear that the outer court will be "given to the Gentiles".

While there have been negotiations between the Israelis and the Palestinians in the past, they normally only involved a U.S. President, and the two parties, but not long-ago President Trump and Prime Minister Netanyahu both spoke of involving many of the Gulf Arab States in the talks to put pressure on the Palestinians to accept a peace agreement, and they even used the word "many" in their press conference. So, for the first time in History, U.S. Presidents have begun vigorously seeking to negotiate peace between Israel and the Palestinians and they are involving many other nations in those discussions.

Currently there are open discussions of Israel and many other nations establishing a "two-state solution" after the conclusion of the Israeli incursion into Gaza triggered by the atrocities of October 7th, 2023.⁵⁶ Israel, the United States, the Abraham Accord nations, and Saudi Arabia have been mentioned so far, as potentially being involved. It

⁵⁴ <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/10287615/The-rabbi-the-lost-ark-and-the-future-of-Temple-Mount.html>

⁵⁵ Revelation 11:1-2

⁵⁶ <https://www.mei.edu/publications/saudi-israel-normalization-still-table>

is worth noting, the October 7th Hamas-led massacre interrupted Saudi Arabia's discussions with the United States and Israel regarding the Islamic nation normalizing diplomatic and trade relations with Israel, and some claim that interruption the reason behind the timing of the Hamas attack.

Meanwhile, as seen in Romans 2, Jude, and many other passages, there is an increasing rejection of even the natural laws of GOD's creation, let alone His moral laws! And this over-the-top lawlessness is manifesting itself around the world as unashamed homosexuality and "transgenderism".

Not one human being has ever been born without having a biological mother and father, and even nature itself teaches it is an unnatural abomination for a man to lie with a man or a woman to lie with a woman. Yet the world is embracing and even celebrating the self-destructive homosexual movement and making it illegal to speak out against it!

According to a 2020 Public Religion Research Institute study⁵⁷, the majority of Christians now support homosexual marriage. 79% of the group labeled "White Mainline Protestant" voiced support for same-sex marriage. 78% of the group labeled "Hispanic Catholic" supported same-sex marriage. 67% of the group labeled "White Catholic" supported same-sex marriage. 68% of the group labeled "Hispanic Protestant" supported same-sex marriage. 57% of the group labeled "Black Protestant" supported same-sex marriage. 34% of the group labeled "White Evangelical Protestant" supported same-sex marriage. 56% of the group labeled "Other Christian" supported same-sex marriage. And 90% of the group labeled "Religiously Unaffiliated" supported same-sex marriage.

However, JESUS said: **"A man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh"**⁵⁸ So, every person polled who claimed to follow JESUS while supporting the perversion of the institution He created is following a demonic deception, not JESUS our LORD!

Scripture plainly states: **"If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood shall be upon them."**⁵⁹ and **"Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God."**⁶⁰

Meanwhile regarding "transgenderism", the PEW Research Center reported in a 2022 poll that 36% of the group they labeled "White, Non-Evangelical" disagreed with the

⁵⁷ https://www.prrri.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/PRRI-Oct-2020-figure_3-12-1024x850.png

⁵⁸ Matthew 19:5

⁵⁹ Leviticus 20:13

⁶⁰ 1 Corinthians 6:9-10

statement “gender is determined by sex at birth”, 28% of the group they labeled “Black Protestant” disagreed with the statement, 37% of the group they labeled “Catholic” disagreed with the statement, 13% of the group they labeled “White Evangelical” disagreed with the statement, 78% of the group they labeled “Atheist” disagreed with the statement, and 67% of the group they labeled “Agnostic” disagreed with the statement.

Also, 32% of the group they labeled “White, Non-Evangelical” responded that “society has not gone far enough in accepting transgender people”, 36% of the group they labeled “Black Protestant” agreed, 34% of the group they labeled “Catholic” agreed, 12% of the group they labeled “White Evangelical” agreed, 71% of the group they labeled “Atheist” agreed, and 65% of the group they labeled “Agnostic” agreed that society has not done enough to accept transgender people.⁶¹

However, JESUS said: **“Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning ‘made them male and female?’”**⁶² So, every person polled who claimed to follow JESUS while supporting the perversion of the two genders He created is following a demonic deception, not JESUS our LORD!

Scripture plainly states: **“A woman shall not wear anything that pertains to a man, nor shall a man put on a woman’s garment, for all who do so are an abomination to the LORD your God.”**⁶³ And Paul wrote: **“Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him? But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her...”**⁶⁴

You see, the Bible is clear regarding these issues, but the majority of so-called “Christians” no longer look to the Bible as the ultimate authority in their lives. Therefore, because the salt is losing its flavor by following after lawlessness and apostasy as JESUS predicted, it won’t take long for it to then be **“trampled underfoot by men”**.

JESUS explained: **“You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.”**⁶⁵

This is why Christian persecution in the world is at record levels and even the most “Christian” of countries are turning against their true Christian populations by penalizing them for publicly practicing their faith in regards to homosexuality and other controversial issues.

⁶¹ <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2022/07/07/attitudes-about-transgender-issues-vary-widely-among-christians-religious-nones-in-u-s/>

⁶² Matthew 19:4

⁶³ Deuteronomy 22:5

⁶⁴ 1 Corinthians 11:14-15a

⁶⁵ Matthew 5:13

And in other nations without Christianity so recently entrenched in their history, Christians are being brutally murdered, imprisoned, beaten, driven out of their homes, and assaulted all around the globe. It will not be long until Christians everywhere are hated by all nations for the name of JESUS.

He warned: **“Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name’s sake.”**⁶⁶

But right before that happened, JESUS explained in the immediately preceding verses: **“Take heed that no one deceives you. ‘For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many. ‘And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. ‘For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. ‘All these are the beginning of sorrows.’”**⁶⁷

We have seen world wars, and rumors of wars. Global famine increasing at an alarming rate, and even global pestilence followed by massive earthquakes! Meanwhile, while all of these other signs are increasing exponentially like birth pains, and headline after headline reveals that lawlessness is at a new all-time high.

Prosecutors are refusing to prosecute those who break the law, criminals are allowed to steal, murder, and assault the innocent, and only good Samaritans are apprehended. Border enforcement is losing the fight and deportation of migrants who entered the country illegally has plummeted on purpose due to lawlessness in Washington.

And at the same time, technology has reached a point of no return and every single ingredient necessary for the mark of the beast to take control has been invented and implemented to varying degrees.

Credit cards have replaced cash in terms of convenience, and central bank digital currencies are just around the corner. A global network of communications can make a credit card scan search out any bank’s database for any individual’s funds in the blink of an eye.

Financially and technologically speaking, there will be very little difference between the way the chip in your credit card works and the way the mark of the beast works, except when your credit card does not work today, you can use cash or another card. When the mark of the beast is deployed, it will be the only form of payment accepted by anyone, worldwide.

⁶⁶ Matthew 24:9

⁶⁷ Matthew 24:4-8

Government will control *when* you can make purchases, *what* you can buy, and *track* every single transaction. But we must not forget, the mark of the beast will also have religious and political connotations as well.

Worship of the beast will be involved with taking the mark. And he will rule over the entire world for 42 months. But the internet, global telecommunications, credit card technology, databases, and artificial intelligence are what will make the mark possible.

And along with these already-present technologies, satellite and laser technology that already exists will combine to make it possible for the false prophet to call down fire from heaven.⁶⁸

Also, satellite technology makes it possible for the whole world to watch the two witnesses as they lie dead in the streets of Jerusalem⁶⁹. Yes, on and on, things that were unheard of 150 years ago are now very easy to understand and imagine. And those of us who lived through COVID can imagine governments requiring things like vaccines or a mark for us to buy, sell, work, or participate in the economy.

But one more interesting sign of the times is the ever-increasing phenomenon of specialized knowledge and global dependency. How many people do you know at this point in history who don't need to go to a grocery store at regular intervals? How many people do you know who almost never need to buy or sell? If you think about the word "store" and what it means, the reason we need "stores" in this new economy becomes obvious.

There was a time when most people did not *have* to go to a store, because they had their own "store" in their back yard. They produced their own food from their flocks and their herds, and they might occasionally trade with others for certain specialty goods they did not have; but in general, they were reasonably self-sufficient and lived in self-sufficient communities.

However, since the industrial revolution, society has pigeonholed every individual into a "career" where we do one specialized task each day, without understanding how food is produced, or how to survive without depending on the larger, global economy.

The knowledge possessed by our ancestors has largely faded away and became a distant memory, and people who knew how to live off the land and thrive from the bounty of GOD's creation became an endangered commodity.

People have become "human resources" to feed the needs of the factory, to be productive citizens, and to serve the state. And the state took over "education" to make sure that repetitive compliance was the primary lesson every student learned.

⁶⁸ Rev 13:13

⁶⁹ Rev 11:8-10

The people who don't know how to treat medical issues, garden, build infrastructure, dehydrate, store food, raise animals, fix broken tools, and so on, are the people who will have to take the mark to survive! But people who know how to do these time-honored tasks can easily become self-sustaining, especially if they have the invaluable resource of a like-minded community with diverse practical skills.

Therefore, we must begin to escape from the compartmentalized interdependent sheeple mentality of today's society and learn the methods and skills of those who have gone before us! This is how we can begin to heed the Bible's warnings, in regards to the coming days of the beast!

And these skills will not only help us be free during those coming dark years, they will also help us be free from the daily treadmill of our modern society, where our time is devalued with every dollar they print, and our day depreciates according to the strength of the value of a dollar.

But now that we understand the world that will be ushered in by the Abomination of Desolation, there are several other issues of everyday life that we need to ponder in light of that understanding.

See us in person for this portion of the message...

So, churches are not ready for what is coming. Many saints who have escaped from the typical errors taught in most churches enough to realize the tribulation is near plan to weather the coming tribulation on their own with their families. And the woman in the wilderness prophecy is typically ignored.

But the Bible warns what will happen if we forsake the assembling of ourselves together. It warns that the offspring of the woman will be hunted and captured. And it promises deliverance to those who walk in brotherly love, and come out of Babylon to escape from the just judgments GOD is preparing for this evil world.

Meanwhile, many people don't want to come out from among the world. They love the world and the things in the world. They pursue earthly things, and think in earthly ways. And they walk according to their own lusts as they scoff and say, **“Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation.”**⁷⁰

But these people are not like Noah! They will not escape with the woman in the wilderness. No, they will keep looking back like Lot's wife, and perish in the tribulation because they did not flee from Babylon when it was still an option. They don't realize why we must come out of Babylon. They don't perceive how the comforts and conveniences of Babylon are there to keep them trapped in sleepy dependency and

⁷⁰ 2 Peter 3:3-4

captivity. They don't comprehend that the changes and preparations that must be made to come out of Babylon take many years to accomplish.

Noah prepared for the flood *long before* the waters came. Joseph prepared for the famine *long before* Egypt faced the struggle of those seven difficult years. They acted as soon as they understood the warning! They did not wait to see the events they were warned of begin to unfold before they acted.

We must imitate such people who walked by faith, not by sight! We must all begin to work towards coming out of Babylon, and show GOD you are His people! Confess that you are **“strangers and pilgrims on the earth.”**⁷¹ Heed the warning of JESUS our LORD, who commanded: **“Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues.”**⁷²

Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near. Revelation 1:3

⁷¹ Hebrews 11:13

⁷² Revelation 18:4