

QUESTION: Why Did Jesus Curse the Fig Tree?

ANSWER: First of all, we need to understand that Bible Prophecy is made up of many symbols and **hidden meanings**. God provided His servants with knowledge that no-one else could understand, and He did this for a specific purpose. When human beings argue against what God has specifically stated in the Bible, then they become worthless for any purpose, and this applies doubly for the House of Israel. Today the churches comprise what one might call fair-weather friends, who serve God only for the benefits they might derive from doing so and not out of service to God. They decide for themselves how they will worship God and what part of God's Word they will believe.

Indeed, most of this world's churches have abandoned the very Scriptures that Christ used (called the Old Testament today) and opted only to observe selective verses from the New Testament. Consequently, their knowledge base is restricted to emotional and meaningless nonsense that dispenses with the purpose of God's Plan. Such people couldn't fail to notice that there is much more to God's Word than their selective reasoning would indicate. From childhood most of the Western World is aware of Bible stories like the story of Samson, David and Goliath, Noah's Ark and many others. All of these are a part of God's Word and have special meanings, which are **not** portrayed in the mere telling of the story.

The same is true of the parables that Jesus told. Church-goers are very familiar with the explanations given from the pulpit. What they are universally unaware of though, is that Jesus spoke these parables in order to hide the real meaning and He was very specific about this. **Luke 8:9-10** "His disciples asked him what this parable meant. ¹⁰ He said, "**The knowledge of the secrets of the Kingdom of God** has been given to you, **but to others I speak in parables**, so that, 'though seeing, they may **not** see; though hearing, they may **not** understand.'" And this is the way it is today! God's gives **the knowledge of the secrets of the Kingdom of God** to His faithful servants, who believe and serve Him. It was foreshadowed generations before in the Scriptures that this would be the case: **Psalm 78:1-3** "**O my people**, hear my teaching; listen to the words of my mouth. ² **I will open my mouth in parables**, I will **UTTER HIDDEN THINGS, things from of old** – ³ what we have heard and known, **what our fathers have told us.**" '**O my people**' is a reference to God's people Israel – **all twelve tribes to whom He gave His Law**, and commanded that it be taught to all His people and their children for generations to come and this is clearly stated in **V5-8**.

Immediately after this, in **V9**, a new dimension is added. Joseph's youngest son **Ephraim** is spoken of in rather derogatory terms: **V9-10** "The men of Ephraim, though armed with bows, turned back on the day of battle; ¹⁰ they did not keep God's Covenant and refused to live by His Law." It was much later, in the days of Solomon's son Rehoboam, that the **men of Ephraim** rose up in rebellion against God and His Holy City Jerusalem. The whole rebellion was orchestrated by the **Ephraimite** called Jeroboam, whom God speaks of again and again in the Bible in derogatory terms. God actually gave Jeroboam Ten Tribes of Israel, and counseled him to rule wisely. Jeroboam, of course, didn't! He was a cunning manipulator who sought only his own glory. The obvious first thought about this is that God made a mistake in doing so. Nothing could be further from the truth. God had already decided to scatter the House of Israel around the earth and to learn some very hard lessons. Those who were most prone to disobedience had to learn some severe lessons.

Jesus actually told a parable about this. It concerns ***the prodigal son***, which is **Ephraim, the Prince over the 10 Tribes**. It was Ephraim that persuaded his father to give him his inheritance and let him leave. Ephraim actually got the inheritance of all Ten Tribes in their allotted portions of the Holy Land and abandoned God and His Holy City Jerusalem. After years of riotous living in paganism, suddenly they were swept away and carried off in slavery. In time they migrated to Europe and settled. Judah however, remained faithful to God and His City Jerusalem, and in the parable, the father comforts him and says he was always with him, but his errant and prodigal brother has squandered his inheritance and has suffered greatly, and now must be brought back amid rejoicing. What this parable demonstrates is that there is a **hidden meaning** concerning **the knowledge of the secrets of the Kingdom of God**.

The parable of the prodigal son has been told many times throughout Christianity, and evoked many emotional responses, but never was the **hidden meaning** revealed. All parables and all prophecy concern the **Kingdom of God** and the purpose of God's Great Plan ***for the House of Israel***. Indeed, the Lord Christ confirmed that He had come ***only*** to the '***lost sheep of Israel*** and no-one else! (**Matt 15:24**) The '***lost sheep of Israel*** are **Ephraim and the Ten Tribes God gave to him**.

And just to confirm that the knowledge of the secrets of the Kingdom of God concerns prophecy, and that the parables are an integral part of prophecy, when asked why He spoke in parables, Jesus said this: **Matt 13:11-15** "He replied, "The **knowledge of the secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven** has been given to you, **but not to them**.¹² Whoever has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does **not** have, **even what he has will be taken from him**.¹³ **THIS IS WHY I SPEAK TO THEM IN PARABLES:** "Though seeing, they do **not** see; though hearing, they do **not** hear or understand.¹⁴ **In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah:** 'You will be ever hearing but **never** understanding; you will be ever seeing but **never**

perceiving. ¹⁵ For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them." So what Jesus said and did was in fulfillment of the prophecies of the Prophets (Nevi'im). And if this wasn't enough, we learn that Jesus' parables reveal secrets from the creation of the world: **Matt 13:34-35** "Jesus spoke all these things to the crowd in parables; He did not say anything to them without using a parable. ³⁵ So was fulfilled what was spoken through the prophet: "I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter things hidden SINCE THE CREATION OF THE WORLD." So there is a lot more to the parables than the mundane and emotional rhetoric given in the churches today! At a later time, perhaps we'll explain all the parables, and when we do the reader will be in for some shocks when they learn they are not what they seem. In fact, a great number of them relate to the 'lost sheep of Israel' and Ephraim in particular. Ephraim is a son of God (**Jer 31:20, Hos 11:1-3**). As for Ephraim's dominance and importance in these end times, Moses prophesied concerning the Tribe of Joseph and his two sons Ephraim and Manasseh: **Deut 33:13-17** "About Joseph he said: "May the LORD bless his land with the precious dew from heaven above and with the deep waters that lie below; ¹⁴ with the best the sun brings forth and the finest the moon can yield; ¹⁵ with the choicest gifts of the ancient mountains and the fruitfulness of the everlasting hills; ¹⁶ with the best gifts of the earth and its fullness and the favor of Him who dwelt in the burning bush. Let all these rest on the head of Joseph, on the brow of the prince among his brothers. ¹⁷ In majesty he is like a firstborn bull; his horns are the horns of a wild ox. With them he will gore the nations, even those at the ends of the earth. Such are the TEN THOUSANDS OF EPHRAIM; such are the THOUSANDS OF MANASSEH." This indicates that Ephraim is more powerful and richer than Manasseh by a factor of ten. There can be no doubt which nation gores nations to the ends of the earth and endeavours to bring peace to the world. Ephraim is like a big brother to all the nations of the earth, either with kindness and humanitarian aid, or with overwhelming force! And in all major wars across the globe, who dictates the rules of the play and brings nations to their knees? It's Ephraim – the United States of America.

God is a jealous God and He doesn't take kindly to the House of Israel taking lovers of His enemies. God made Ephraim what they are, yet Ephraim loves His enemies more than Him – the One who dwelt in the burning bush; the very One who favoured Ephraim and made him greater than his brothers. Ephraim has gored many evil nations, but never for profit or reward! Rather, America only sought to bring peace and stability to each of these regions. And this is a huge departure from the mindset of most nations who seek only conquest and gain.

It's a pity that America hasn't listened to the One who dwelt in the burning bush and who instructed Moses to attack and wipe out the heathen

in the Promised Land. And all Bible students will be aware that no mercy was to be shown to these pagan hordes, neither young nor old! And in some cases even their animals had to be destroyed. God had no desire to see these hordes proliferate and become a thorn in the side of the House of Israel. He made it clear that He wanted them **wiped out!** And what we are seeing today is the proliferation of these degenerate creatures amassing on all sides of the Holy Land and threatening the keepers of the Holy City Jerusalem and the Promised Land. What is more, they are constantly threatening **the Jewish people to whom God entrusted His very Words (Rom 3:2)**. And the Western nations are only interested in placating Islam, these enemies of God, against the best interests of God's people Judah. In Moses' prophecies **concerning Judah**, in the very chapter quoted above concerning Ephraim, Moses said this: **Deut 33:7** "And this he said **about Judah**: "Hear, O LORD, **the cry of Judah**; bring him to his people. **With his own hands he defends his cause. Oh, be his help against his foes!**" And this about sums it up, doesn't it? America will go to the ends of the earth in the defense of Islam, but the Israelis must defend themselves. Even worse, America **insists** that the Israelis stand by while suicide bombers blow up busloads of their children, and watch as similar events occur among their civilian population, yet **not** retaliate. They must endure daily attacks by rockets launched against their citizenry, but remain passive. And why? Because America believes they know the way to peace! By protecting Islam they think peace will result out of gratitude. So the Jews must continue **to turn the other cheek!** What hypocrisy! Did America turn the other cheek on September 11, 2001?

It's funny how America gets all churchy about the Israelis, but it doesn't apply to them. Why does Christianity feel superior to those to whom God entrusted His Words? Have the Christian nations upheld the Laws of God as commanded by **the One who dwelt in the burning bush**? Has America listened to this One who gave His Laws to Moses to be obeyed forever? No, only the Jews have done this. **Rom 2:8-13** "But for those who are self-seeking and **who reject the truth** and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger.⁹ There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil: **first for the Jew**, then for the Gentile;¹⁰ but glory, honor and peace for everyone who does good: **first for the Jew**, then for the Gentile.¹¹ For God does **not** show favoritism.¹² **All who sin apart from the Law will also perish apart from the Law, and all who sin under the Law will be judged by the Law.**¹³ For it is **not** those who **hear** the Law who are righteous in God's sight, **but it is those who OBEY the law who will be declared righteous.**" So it comes down to the question of who obeys God's Law and who doesn't! America doesn't! In fact, there are moves afoot to remove all references to the Commandments of God from all public places, and in a symbolic manner, this says it all!

God really had no expectations that the mighty Ephraim would uphold His Law and Testimony. But He knew the Jews would! And this is why He entrusted them with His very Words. What is more, God demonstrated that

the Jews would remain faithful to Him regardless of what happened to them. I'm afraid the same cannot be said for America. At the height of their prosperity, about half of them have turned away from God and espoused heathen traditions and ideas. And when anything goes horribly wrong, there is always someone waiting to blame God. And the media always makes sure that he or she gets to be heard.

So God made provision of a select group of people who would stand their ground in the face of adversity, and like the Lord Christ, would give their lives in the defense of God's Word. Like the Jews, they had to be faithful to God's Commandments, and hold fast to the Testimony of Jesus. With this in mind, God raised up a shepherd – just one shepherd! And this is how God describes him: **Zech 11:15-17** "Then the LORD said to me, "Take again the equipment of a foolish shepherd. ¹⁶ For I am going to raise up a shepherd over the land who will not care for the lost, or seek the young, or heal the injured, or feed the healthy, but will eat the meat of the choice sheep, tearing off their hoofs. ¹⁷ "Woe to the worthless shepherd, who deserts the flock! May the sword strike his arm and his right eye! May his arm be completely withered, his right eye totally blinded!" In some ways this is reminiscent of Jeroboam the Ephraimite, to whom God gave Ten Tribes, and who was supposed to shepherd His people Israel. Instead, Jeroboam quickly turned away from following God and led the nation astray. And although the foolish shepherd mentioned above was made a shepherd over the land, his commission was to restore the Church that Jesus founded to obedience to God. And this the foolish shepherd achieved – more or less. He raised the consciousness of the congregation to obedience to God, but also insisted on obedience to himself as well. He began to talk about the '**government of God**' on earth – of which he was the head. He had absolutely no concept of the **Kingdom of God** and how it would be established. Consequently, his '**government of God**' collapsed in disarray and the flock was scattered. In fact, God predicted this outcome in the same prophecy when this shepherd became worthless. There had to be a shake-out, a falling-away of the arrogant and the insincere.

It should have been obvious to all that something was seriously wrong. The high-roller lifestyle of some of these ministers, particularly at the top echelons, did not in any way reflect the lifestyle of the Apostles or the prophets. At least half the articles they produced leaned towards these men being worthy of having the finest of everything and double the honour of everyone else. As for who this shepherd was that God raised up, the answer can be found in the Q&A section of our website: ***What is the Worldwide Church of God and who is Herbert Armstrong?***

So God raised up a shepherd in the period just before He empowers the Jewish nation to begin striking the nations that surround the Holy Land (**Zech 12:4-6**). And as the Scriptures confirm, **salvation is of the Jews** – not the Worldwide Church of God! (WCG) Salvation will come to the WCG provided that they do what God requires of them. Those who still obey the

Commandments of God are on track to receive the **Testimony of Jesus**, only this time it will be given by the **Spirit of Prophecy** (**Rev 19:10**) and **not** through the fanciful ideas of men.

When Jesus was on earth He cursed a fig tree that bore no fruit, and it withered and died. **Matt 21:18-19** "Early in the morning, as he was on his way back to the city, he was hungry. ¹⁹ Seeing a fig tree by the road, he went up to it but found nothing on it except leaves. Then he said to it, "**May you never bear fruit again!**" Immediately the tree **withered**." This tree produced no fruit and was therefore judged worthy of death – and it withered and died! So who then is the fig-tree? The **fig tree** is planted in a **VINEYARD**: **Luke 13:6** "Then he told this parable: "**A man had a FIG TREE, planted in his VINEYARD, and he went to look for fruit on it, but did not find any.** ⁷ So he said to the man who took care of the **VINEYARD**, 'For three years now I've been coming to look for fruit on this **fig tree** and haven't found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?' 'Sir,' the man replied, '**leave it alone for one more year**, and I'll dig around it and fertilize it. ⁹ If it **bears fruit** next year, fine! **If not, then cut it down.**'"

Two important points here! Firstly, the **identity** of the **VINEYARD**: **Isa 5:7** "The **VINEYARD** of the LORD Almighty is the **HOUSE OF ISRAEL**, and the **men of Judah** are the **garden of his delight**. And He looked for justice, but saw bloodshed; for righteousness, but heard cries of distress."

And secondly, the identity of the fig tree. The **FIG TREE** is **planted in the VINEYARD**, but is **not** the **VINEYARD**. The fig tree doesn't produce grapes but figs. Grapes produce wine and wine can lift the spirits of a man and make him feel joyful, or it can be a comfort to him when he is about to perish. But wine is also a weapon of Satan by which he deludes the nations. By getting **drunk** on **Satan's wine** (**his propaganda**) people can go completely mad and totally irrational.

Joel 1:5-8, 15 "**Wake up, you DRUNKARDS, and weep! Wail, all you DRINKERS OF WINE**; wail because of the new wine, for it has been snatched from your lips. ⁶ **A nation has invaded my land, powerful and without number; it has the teeth of a lion, the fangs of a lioness.** ⁷ **IT HAS LAID WASTE MY VINES and RUINED MY FIG TREES.** It has stripped off their bark and thrown it away, **leaving their branches white.** ⁸ **Mourn like a VIRGIN in sackcloth GRIEVING FOR THE HUSBAND OF HER YOUTH.** **V15** "**Alas for that day! For the DAY OF THE LORD is near, it will come like destruction from the Almighty.**" Because of these **DRUNKARDS**, the **DAY OF THE LORD** will bring great **destruction from the Almighty!** (There is some real meaning behind stripping the bark and throwing it away **and leaving the branches white!** But it's too soon to go into detail on this!)

So who are the **DRUNKARDS**? God tells us and even identifies their city where most of this appalling nonsense is generated: **Isa 28:1-6** "Woe to that wreath, the pride of **EPHRAIM'S DRUNKARDS**, to the fading flower, his glorious beauty, **set on the head of a fertile valley** – **TO THAT CITY, the pride of those laid low by wine!**" ² See, the Lord has **one who is powerful and strong**. Like a hailstorm and a destructive wind, like a driving rain and a flooding downpour, he will throw it forcefully to the ground. ³ That wreath, **THE PRIDE OF EPHRAIM'S DRUNKARDS**, will be **trampled underfoot**. ⁴ That fading flower, his glorious beauty, **set on the head of a fertile valley**, will be **like a fig ripe before harvest** – as soon as someone sees it and takes it in his hand, he swallows it. ⁵ **In that day the LORD Almighty will be a glorious crown**, a beautiful wreath **for the remnant of his people**. ⁶ **He will be a spirit of justice to him who sits in judgment, a source of strength to those who turn back the battle at the gate.**" Obviously, this city is the pride of Ephraim where all the decisions are made on behalf of the people. It has great history concerning the American people and is the Capital of the nation. It's where some appalling decisions have been made concerning the evil hordes that are set on their destruction. They know very well that these evil creatures are from the nations that surround the Holy Land and they have personally witnessed their murderous ways. Yet they want to bring them peace and prosperity. This **city of drunkards** in Bible prophecy is **Washington DC**. And '**the one who is powerful and strong**' is a ruler of the heavenly realms, and one who is dedicated to the destruction of America and the entire Western World – including the little nation of Israel.

Almighty God is calling for disaster for His people Israel and Ephraim in particular. Because of Ephraim's drunken stupor they have allowed Satan's brood to grow in strength and now they threaten the whole world. Every nation is now arming, and every nation is against America and **blaming them for their failure to contain Islam**. Nations that once enjoyed relative peace now find themselves enduring terrorist attacks and they consider it to be America's fault. Instead of crushing them like ants, as the Crusaders of old would have done, America, in their drunken stupor sought to bring them peace. Initially, they set out well with operation '**shock and awe**', but soon the drunkards started mouthing off about collateral damage. And as we all know, the Democrats were at the forefront of this madness.

When God destroyed the world with a flood in Noah's day, did He worry about collateral damage? When the armies of this world attacked God's people Israel down through the centuries, did they worry about collateral damage? So why is the Western World so worried about destroying those whom God hates? As a matter of fact God has some '**shock and awe**' for them Himself! And you are going to learn that God doesn't distinguish between combatants and civilians in war! Though it is true that His wrath is **against all the armies of the world**, those who dared to assault His people Israel, and He intends to take them to task with overwhelming force and destruction. **Isa 34:2-8** "**The LORD is angry with all nations; His wrath is upon all**

their armies. He will totally destroy them, He will give them over to slaughter. ³ Their slain will be thrown out, their dead bodies will send up a stench; the mountains will be soaked with their blood. ⁴ All the stars of the heavens will be dissolved and the sky rolled up like a scroll; all the starry host will fall LIKE WITHERED LEAVES FROM THE VINE, LIKE SHRIVELED FIGS FROM THE FIG TREE." I'm sure everyone has an opinion about what this means, but in this particular case, it's a parable. It also just happens to be quoted in the Book of Revelation but we'll get to that shortly.

We'll also come back to **V5-8** of **Isa 34** in a few minutes, but first of all, the stars of heaven are described as the Tribes of Israel by the prophet Joseph: **Gen 37:8** "His brothers said to him, "Do you intend to reign over us? Will you actually rule us?" And they hated him all the more because of his dream and what he had said. ⁹ Then he had another dream, and he told it to his brothers. "Listen," he said, "I had another dream, and this time the sun and moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me." ¹⁰ When he told his father as well as his brothers, his father rebuked him and said, "What is this dream you had? Will your mother and I and your brothers actually come and bow down to the ground before you?" ¹¹ His brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the matter in mind." Jacob understood the meaning and kept it in mind. He realized whom he and Rachel were in this dream (the sun and the moon) and who the stars were. The stars were the sons of Jacob (Israel). The 12 stars represent the 12 Tribes of Israel with Joseph ruling over all of them, which didn't enamor the other brothers towards Joseph at that time, or even today. But this is the reality! So this starry host will fall like withered leaves from the vine, and like shriveled figs from the fig tree.

But there is another starry host of a completely different caliber. These are called the rulers of the heavenly realms (**Eph 6**) and once enjoyed a close relationship to God until they rebelled against Him, taking with them a third of all the angels. God is seeking a replacement for these treacherous creatures, and this replacement will be magnitudes greater than all the spirit beings that presently exist of that order. In fact, they will call God *'my Husband* – because they will be the Bride of Christ. God numbers them at 144,000, or 12,000 from each of the Tribes of Israel.

Jesus took on Himself the sins of the whole world – for which Satan was responsible – when He suffered the penalty, which was death. And so He qualified for rulership above every other name that exists, with the exception of course of the Father. Now we come to one of the great mysteries of God which the Apostle Paul even alluded to (**Eph 5:32**). The 144,000 of the Tribes of Israel are to be the Bride of Christ, and will replace the starry host of the rulers of the heavenly realms.

It's quite a coincidence that today we think of human beings as *stars* in Hollywood and on the sports field. I don't know how this term came to be

coined, but it perfectly reflects the importance of the House of Israel in the future rulership of the universe. What is more, there are certain advisors to God who will cast their crowns at God's feet and surrender their positions to the stars of Israel. Now it should surprise no-one that as Jesus gave His life to qualify for His position of rulership, it seems perfectly logical that God would require it of others who would aspire to eternal life and a position of rulership. This applies even more so to those who will replace the present starry host of rulers in the heavenly realms. And this is what God has in mind for the House of Israel. The House of Israel must become more like the Son of God Jesus if they hope to qualify. And just to give an example of this, let's continue where we left off with **Isa 34:5-8** "**My sword has DRUNK ITS FILL IN THE HEAVENS; see, IT DESCENDS IN JUDGMENT ON EDOM, the people I have totally destroyed.**" ⁶ **The sword of the LORD is bathed in blood,** it is covered with fat – the blood of lambs and goats, fat from the kidneys of rams. For the LORD has a **sacrifice** in Bozrah **and a great slaughter in Edom.** ⁷ **And the wild oxen will fall with them, the bull calves and the great bulls.** Their land will be drenched with blood, and the dust will be soaked with fat. ⁸ **For the LORD has a DAY OF VENGEANCE, A YEAR OF RETRIBUTION, TO UPHOLD ZION'S CAUSE.**" You'll find a fuller account of this slaughter in **Isa 63:1-6**, where the Mighty Christ unleashes His wrath on the Muslim hordes in **Edom**, the home of the cities of Mecca and Medina. The verse above: '**My sword has drunk its fill in the heavens**' is a reference to **Rev 12:7-11** "And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. ⁸ But he was not strong enough, **and they lost their place in heaven.**" ⁹ The great dragon was hurled down – that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, **who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.** ¹⁰ Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: "**Now have come the salvation and the Power and the Kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ.** For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down. ¹¹ They overcame him by the **Blood of the Lamb** and by the **Word of their Testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.**" Perhaps some will remember the words of the '***Lord's prayer***' about '***thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven***' and '***for yours is the Kingdom, the Power and Glory, forever and ever...***' Well now you know what will happen **at the time the Kingdom of God is established.** And once again we are reminded that **Satan has led the whole world astray!** This is the time when **salvation** begins! So you can understand the futility and the stupidity of believing that you are already 'saved'. For those who believe this, they have no idea what it is they will be **saved from!** But the next verse gives a clue: **V12** "Therefore rejoice, you heavens and you who dwell in them! **But woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has gone down to you! He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short.**" And who is the object of his hatred? **It's the House of David that gave birth to the man-child Jesus.** Yes, it's the same House that established David's kingdom that will establish the Kingdom of God. This House is described as a '***woman***' in the

same way that the City of Jerusalem is in the Scriptures. And this woman, like Jerusalem, is also described as a beautiful bride because she is the embryo of the Bride of Christ.

This woman is completely separate from the functions of the Church, and her commission is different. But she does have offspring, and these are the Churches to whom the Book of Revelation is addressed. They keep the Commandments of God and will have the Testimony of Jesus, and this is why they are called the offspring of the woman. **Rev 12:13-17** "When the dragon saw that he had been hurled to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child.¹⁴ The woman was given the two wings of a great eagle, so that she might fly to the place prepared for her in the desert, where she would be taken care of for a time, times and half a time, out of the serpent's reach.¹⁵ Then from his mouth the serpent spewed water like a river, to overtake the woman and sweep her away with the torrent.¹⁶ But the earth helped the woman by opening its mouth and swallowing the river that the dragon had spewed out of his mouth.¹⁷ Then the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to make war against the rest of her offspring – those who obey God's commandments and hold to the Testimony of Jesus.¹ And the dragon stood on the shore of the sea." Though it may appear as foolishness to those who are perishing, those who hold to the Testimony of Jesus will be so glad they did. As we all know (I hope), the Testimony of Jesus is all about Bible prophecy (**Rev 19:10**), and without the Spirit of Prophecy no-one can understand this Testimony.

So who are these offspring? It's perfectly obvious that the House of Israel is going through a phase of favouring God's enemies. Bible prophecy shows that this is a fatal mistake. God holds the mighty Ephraim responsible for this, because through their efforts to introduce such stupidity as 'political correctness' and 'multi-culturalism' they have merely emboldened those who are not God's people. So although these offspring live in the vineyard, they are, in fact, the fig tree. But as prophecy shows in this endtime, they are not producing any fruit. And as Jesus did while on earth, God plans to destroy this fig tree and leave them few in number! The fig tree is already in a rapid state of decay because they failed to believe God in matters of Bible prophecy. Instead they chose to listen to a certain foolish and worthless shepherd, whom God appointed, in much the same way as He appointed the Ephraimite Jeroboam to take the 10 Tribes of Israel, and who succeeded in making them 'the lost sheep of Israel'. As the end-time rapidly approached, 'the lost sheep of Israel' were without a shepherd, so God raised up a shepherd to tend His flock – the House of Israel. This shepherd began well, and actually instituted a return to obedience to God and His Laws. He even reestablished the keeping of God's Holy Days, and the observance of Passover. Then came WW2, and this shepherd began to flange together some prophecy – mostly plagiarized from other writers – and purported to show that Hitler was resurrecting the Roman Empire, and Mussolini and Rome factored in as the Babylon of old. The Western nations

were going to lose this war he proclaimed. Babylon had arisen! As it happened he was wrong in everything, including the fiction that the Simeonites (Germans) were the ancient Assyrians. And this silly fiction had no support from any source – including the Bible!

Well, the fig tree was given seventy years – the lifespan of a man – to come to their senses. And as it is appointed to all men once to die at the end of their lifespan, so the Church is appointed to die in preparation for **a new birth** – just like Jesus! The **offspring** of the faithful '**Woman**' must stand out as **a beacon in the vineyard** and as a refuge for Truth: **Isa 1:8-9** "The **Daughter of Zion** is left like a **shelter in a VINEYARD**, like a hut in a field of melons, **like a city under siege**.⁹ **Unless the LORD Almighty had left us some survivors**, we would have become like Sodom, we would have been like Gomorrah." So this **offspring** or **daughter** will be the light or beacon to prevent the total destruction of the **VINEYARD** – just as Sodom and Gomorrah were totally destroyed. What is more, the circumstances of their existence will be **like a city under siege**.

Lamentably, the Churches of God believed they had it made. Although they did **what God required of them** in the way of obedience to His Laws, **they remained unworthy servants**: **Luke 17:10** "So you also, **when you have done everything you were told to do**, should say, '**We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty**.'" There is **more** to becoming **worthy servants** and this does **not** involve **teaching lying prophecies**! And the folly of all the failed prophecies is going to haunt those who must now face reality.

Obviously, the Church was appointed to a very important task. You'll recall that Jesus came only to the '**lost sheep of Israel**' because God's promise to Abraham must be fulfilled. And God has in mind for the House of Israel to be worthy servants if they are to enter the Kingdom of God. As it currently stands, the House of Israel are **not** worthy servants, and **neither** have they done everything they were told to do, **which is obedience to God's Law**. So who is God going to call to instill obedience into an ungrateful nation and set them on the course of obedience to God? Well, it should be obvious to all that this was the **real duty** and the commission of **the Church**. And until they do their duty, the destruction of the House of Israel will go on unabated. **Eph 3:10** "His **intent** was that now, **through the Church, the manifold Wisdom of God should be MADE KNOWN TO THE RULERS AND AUTHORITIES IN THE HEAVENLY REALMS**,¹¹ **according to His eternal purpose** which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord." Presently, there is no sign that the Church is about to do this any time soon. They have absolutely **no** concept of **the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms**. As for making anything **known** to these creatures, the **reverse** has been the case! The Church has been hoodwinked by them! **Jesus Christ is the Wisdom of God (1Cor 1:24)**, and the **Testimony of Jesus** is the manifestation of that Wisdom. And we all know what the **Testimony of Jesus** is, don't we? (**Rev 19:10**).

God speaks of calling just **one shepherd** (**Zech 11:16-17**) and this was immediately prior to the Sons of Jerusalem coming along and clearing the Holy City of Islamic vermin (**Zech 12:4-9**). Together with Judah, they will clear the entire Holy Land and start **destroying the surrounding nations**. It's against this background and at this time that the **Churches of God** in the **vineyard** will be struggling for survival **like a city under siege**. Then they will realize just how foolish they were for **not** believing God and for failing to exercise some faith in Him. Their fake prophecies really were outrageous! But at that time, they'll be brought kicking and screaming to the **knowledge of the Testimony of Jesus**, and they **will hold to it**. Then they will know that this is their only hope for eternal life. At that time, they will make the transition from **unworthy** to **worthy** servants – or they will face eternal death.

It's fashionable, even in the Churches of God, to believe that God will forgive everyone for everything and that Jesus will sort everything out when He returns. This type of stupidity is only transcended by those in the former Worldwide Church of God who suddenly believed, after years of faithful obedience, that God no longer requires obedience to Him. It was with euphoria that many abandoned Sabbath observance and were even seen eating plates of lobster in restaurants. '***Freedom from the shackles of tyranny***', they proclaimed. Liberty to do as they please without the shackles of God's Law! What a costly mistake this was! It was obvious they didn't understand the Scriptures, though they certainly should have known. They must have read these verses many times: **Heb 6:4** "It is **IMPOSSIBLE** for those who have once been **enlightened**, who have tasted the heavenly gift, **who have shared in the Holy Spirit**,⁵ who have **tasted the goodness of the Word of God** and the **powers of the coming age**,⁶ **IF THEY FALL AWAY, to be brought back to repentance**, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again **and subjecting Him to public disgrace**." For **those who fell away** into **disobedience** it is **IMPOSSIBLE** to bring them **back to repentance**! There is no way back for such people. They will face the lake of fire!

In the space of a little over three years as of this time of writing, the Babylonians have swept around the earth wreaking havoc on the Western nations. They've become unified in their desire to see the House of Israel totally destroyed. The whole world is aware that the earth teeters on the verge of global war, and there is a flurry among the nations to rearm. It seems now that every nation is equipping and strengthening their armies, and the buzz word is war. And all the while, the House of Joseph is talking about peace, peace, when there is no peace.

The Almighty Creator God made the universe, and He is well aware that the stars as we know them **cannot** fall to earth. But at the time of the Sixth Seal, He seems to indicate that they will. In the lead up to this Seal, we find the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse making their ride. As Daniel clearly identified them, we don't have to doubt who they are. And which nations are

the **target** of this behemoth that controls the Babylonians? It's the House of Israel, and the Babylonians have stated it clearly! Disaster after disaster will come on the House of Israel like waves of the sea **until the whole House falls like a pack of cards**. The **stars in the sky**, as identified by both Joseph and Jacob, **are the Tribes of Israel**. Now during this horrific period the figs from the fig tree are going to fall to the ground, that is, be killed! And as we learn from the **Fifth Seal**, these will be housed and clothed after being **rescued after they were killed**, and they'll have to wait until their brothers are killed just as they were (**Rev 6:11**).

Most prophecy concerning the House of Israel focuses on **Ephraim** the son of Joseph. But when Ephraim is purged, so will **all** the **stars** or **nations** of **Israel**. **And they will fall just as the figs have fallen and hit the ground**. Amid all the gloom of dust and smoke, with destruction everywhere, the sky will clear to reveal the Glory of God, and men will seek to hide from the face of Him who sits on His Throne and from His Son Jesus. **Rev 6:12-17** "I watched as he opened the Sixth Seal. There was a great earthquake. The sun turned black like sackcloth made of goat hair, **the whole moon turned blood red** (when dust and smoke are in the air this is what happens to the moon), ¹³ **and the stars in the sky fell to earth, AS late figs drop from a fig tree when shaken by a strong wind**. ¹⁴ The sky receded like a scroll, rolling up, **and every mountain and island (continent) was removed from its place**. ¹⁵ Then the kings of the earth, the princes, the generals, the rich, the mighty, and every slave and every free man hid in caves and among the rocks of the mountains. ¹⁶ They called to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of **Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!**" ¹⁷ **For the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?**" So the stars or nations of Israel will fall **like** the **figs from the fig tree**, and there will be few of them left.

Almighty God went to a lot of trouble to warn us of what lies ahead. He spoke through the prophets and warned us of what to expect. And as a late arrival, the Book of Revelation was delivered to the Apostle John as the last remaining Apostle. This Book confirms that there will be a final showdown against the forces of evil. Ephraim could have gotten an early start and hammered them into the ground, but they failed to recognize them as the forces of evil and tried to do them good! Ephraim wanted to bring them peace! And now God is going to show the House of Israel that He means business, and few will be standing after this onslaught. **Isa 24:1-6** "**See, the LORD is going to lay waste the earth and devastate it; He will ruin its face and scatter its inhabitants**" – ² it will be the same for priest as for people, for master as for servant, for mistress as for maid, for seller as for buyer, for borrower as for lender, for debtor as for creditor. ³ The earth will be **completely laid waste** and **totally plundered**. **THE LORD HAS SPOKEN THIS WORD**. ⁴ The earth dries up and withers, the world languishes and withers, **the EXALTED OF THE EARTH languish**. ⁵ The earth is defiled by its people; **they have DISOBEYED THE LAWS, VIOLATED THE STATUTES** and **BROKEN THE EVERLASTING**

COVENANT. ⁶ Therefore a curse consumes the earth; its people must bear their guilt. Therefore earth's inhabitants are burned up, and very few are left. **THE LORD HIMSELF SPOKE THIS WORD** as the prophet says, and it's clear that it was directed at those who were instructed to obey His Law, uphold His Statutes, and observe the Everlasting Covenant. And because they failed to do so, even though God exalted them above all the earth (*a reference to Ephraim*) the whole earth will be demolished and left in ruins. And it's against this background that the survivors of the House of Israel will finally be rescued. The House of Israel carries the burden of guilt for all this because they failed to obey God and uphold the Everlasting Covenant. They didn't want to serve a merciful God, so now they will serve a ruthless enemy that will have no regard for the old or the young, or for anyone else. It would be foolish to underestimate what God plans to do.

God adds more **V20-23** "The earth reels like a drunkard, it sways like a hut in the wind; so heavy upon it is the guilt of its rebellion that it falls – never to rise again." ²¹ In that day the LORD will punish the POWERS IN THE HEAVENS ABOVE and THE KINGS ON THE EARTH BELOW. ²² They will be herded together like prisoners bound in a dungeon; they will be shut up in prison and be punished after many days. ²³ The MOON will be abashed, the SUN ashamed; for the LORD Almighty will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before its elders, gloriously." Just a quick word of clarification: the moon is represented by Rachel – *the mother of Joseph*, and the sun is Jacob or Israel, the father of the 12 Tribes. You'll notice that the powers in the heavens above are linked to the kings on the earth below. The Apostle Paul made this clear distinction that the kings who are flesh and blood are dominated by those who *aren't*. **Eph 6:12** "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against THE RULERS, against THE AUTHORITIES, against THE POWERS OF THIS DARK WORLD and against THE SPIRITUAL FORCES OF EVIL IN THE HEAVENLY REALMS." Well these creatures are going to be punished after they have spent many years in prison. They will be burned up in the Lake of Fire along with all those who once had God's Holy Spirit and then turned away in disobedience to the Commandments like dogs to their vomit – as Peter puts it in **2Pet 2:21-22.** God will make sure that rebellion never arises again.

But beyond all this, and in the harmony of God's Kingdom, it will once again be a time for sheltering under the spreading branches of the fig tree. And God makes this specific reference to show the importance of the fig tree, both now, and in the future. **Hos 9:10** "When I found Israel, it was like finding grapes in the desert; when I saw your [founding] fathers, it was like seeing the early fruit on the fig tree." The Book of Hosea is Ephraim's Book, and it deals almost exclusively with him. When God says 'when He 'found Israel' – this is a reference to the 'lost sheep of Israel'. God was very pleased with the founding fathers, and noted that it was like seeing the early fruit on a fig tree. These men were completely different to those men who ruled in Britain and Europe. It was a refreshing change to

see a nation developed under righteous principles instead of power and greed. And this foundation has held **Ephraim** (**America**) in good stead for these many generations – until just recently. Then we began to see the madness of Democrats trying to remove all references to God from everywhere. They no longer trust in God and they don't want to see the Commandments in any public place. The Democrats want to obliterate everything the Founding Fathers established.

The early fruit on the fig tree was a good start even at the time of the worthless shepherd, until he decided that the government or Kingdom of God should start with him. He never quite proclaimed himself king, but he unmistakably made himself the head honcho and didn't hesitate to cast out anyone who disagreed with him. And he fed his fantasies by mixing with kings and royalty and the rulers of degenerate nations, and finally settled on the title of Ambassador for Peace. Ambassador for Arrogance would have been more appropriate!

But some fruit survived on the fig tree; they weren't blown around by every wind of doctrine and remained faithful to God. There are plenty of trees, but in terms of Bible prophecy, there is only **one** Fig Tree, though there is a division of branches, and the final division will be seven. Jesus elaborated on this: **Luke 21:29** "He told them this **PARABLE**: "**Look at the fig tree** and all the trees.³⁰ When they sprout leaves, you can see for yourselves and know that summer is near.³¹ Even so, when you see these things happening, **you know that the kingdom of God is near**. I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly **not** pass away until all these things have happened.³³ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.³⁴ "Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with dissipation, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, **and that day will close on you unexpectedly like a trap**.³⁵ **For it will come upon all those who live on the face of the whole earth**.³⁶ **Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen**, and that you may be able **to stand before the Son of Man**." God has provided a way **to escape all that is coming on the face of the earth**, but it's **not** the mythical '**place of safety**' proposed by the worthless shepherd. And what a laugh that he proposed Petra in Jordan as this '**place of safety**'. Safe? In Jordan? **The Sons of Jerusalem**, together with the faithful Jews, are going to attack Jordan and leave it a ruin like Sodom and Gomorrah! Apart from the fact that they laugh at the calamities of Israel, they are one of the many nations that surround the Holy Land, all of which are Muslim!

No, the only 'escape' is with the Sons of Jerusalem, and you will have to **pray**, as Jesus said, to gain the faith to join us. It means divesting of the nonsense of former beliefs and start **believing** God. Of course escaping anything shouldn't be the priority because those who escape **out of the serpent's reach** (**Rev 12:13-14**) are those who will take the fight to his hordes. And they know what their role is, just as David knew his role in establishing his kingdom and the House of David. David fought many battles

before he was able to establish Jerusalem as the City of God and **David was a man after God's own heart** (**Acts 13:22**).

With all that is happening in the world today, it should be obvious, even to the Churches of God, that things are wholly different to all they formerly believed, and the fables they taught as prophecy have nothing to do with the Bible. So it's obvious that their knowledge base is a little sparse, wouldn't you say? Were the **false** prophets taught by God? Of course they weren't! Remember when Jesus said that **all His sons would be taught by God**? Did He say that all the mainstream churches scattered around the world were also taught by God? Of course not! None of them can agree on anything. So unless they speak in accordance with the Scriptures concerning the **Law and the Testimony** they have **no light of dawn** (**Isa 8:20**). The **dawning of a new day** is mentioned by Peter in **2Pet 1:19-20**.

So who is it that has been taught by God? This is what Jesus said: **John 6:45** "It is **written in the Prophets: 'They will all be taught by God.'** Everyone who **listens** to the Father and **learns** from Him comes to me." And where is it written in the Prophets? Well, it's written in the Book of Isaiah, and it's speaking of the Sons of Jerusalem: **Isa 54:11-15** "O afflicted City [**Jerusalem**], lashed by storms and **not** comforted, I will build you with stones of turquoise, your foundations with sapphires. ¹² I will make your battlements of rubies, your gates of sparkling jewels, and all your walls of precious stones. ¹³ **ALL YOUR SONS WILL BE TAUGHT BY THE LORD,** and great will be your children's peace. ¹⁴ **In righteousness you will be established: Tyranny will be far from you;** you will have nothing to fear. **Terror will be far removed;** it will **not** come near you. ¹⁵ **If anyone does attack you, it will not be my doing; whoever attacks you will surrender to you.**" So **all the Sons of Jerusalem** will be **taught by God**! Those who **don't listen to the Father and learn from Him cannot** come to **Christ**! God had the expectation that the **only Tribe He took as His very own – the Tribe of Levi** (**Num 8:13-18**) – **would listen and learn from Him,** just as John the Baptist did. And it's for this reason that the Tribe of Levi – the Priesthood Tribe – has been called to duty.

Nations that attack other nations don't generally **surrender to them** – except when they are met with such overwhelming force that they have no hope of winning! In days of old, the vanquished were enslaved so it was never a good idea to attack another nation unless there was a good chance of winning. God has made it clear that any nation that attacks the Sons of Jerusalem will quickly surrender to them. As slaves, there will be plenty of work for them! They can start by breaking their backs repairing the damage they have done to the Holy Land!

About 180 years before the birth of Christ, a man arose called Judas Maccabee. The name Maccabee was given to him because of his exploits and means 'Hammerer' or 'Blacksmith'. Unfortunately, tyranny was **not** far from him, and he fought the marauding forces that surround the Holy Land for

years. The enemy was predominantly Syria and the nations east of the Jordan. The exploits of Judas Maccabee can be found in the Apocrypha. By a remarkable coincidence, God makes mention of a **blacksmith** in the next verse of **Isa 54**. This chapter would seem to be a reference to Judas Maccabee, except that those who attacked him didn't surrender to him. A couple of hundred years later Jesus was still speaking of those who would be **taught by God** as a **future** event. So it's these Sons of Jerusalem who are taught by God and who quickly put down any attacks. **V16** "See, it is I who **created the BLACKSMITH** who **fans the coals into flame** and **forges a weapon fit for its work**. And it is I who have **created the destroyer to work havoc**; ¹⁷ **no weapon forged against you will prevail, and you will refute every tongue that accuses you. THIS IS THE HERITAGE OF THE SERVANTS OF THE LORD**, and this is their **vindication** from me," declares the LORD." Yes, and this is what Jesus was speaking about when He said that all God's Sons would be taught by Him. It was a reference to the Sons of Jerusalem who were created for the very purpose of hammering the hordes that surround the Holy Land and **establishing the Heritage of the servants of the LORD**. But because they have been taught by God they have the ability **to refute every tongue that accuses them** – optionally! Optionally, because who'd waste their time arguing with morons? And especially those who are **twice dead** – so to speak (**Jude 1:12**)!

Obviously, the role of the Sons of Jerusalem is a little different to that of the fig tree. While the fruit of the fig tree are **enduring tyranny**, the Sons of Jerusalem will be **combating tyranny**! Jesus warned of this time in **Matt 10:34-35** when He warned about trusting anyone, including close family. He was saying that no-one should think He came to bring peace **but a sword**! But Christianity in general have never believed Him! Jesus was actually quoting from **Micah 7:1-7** "What misery is mine! I am like one **who gathers summer fruit at the gleaning (after the harvest) of the VINEYARD; there is no cluster of grapes to eat, none of the EARLY FIGS that I crave**. ² **The godly have been swept from the land; not one upright man remains**. All men lie in wait to shed blood; each hunts his brother with a net. ³ Both hands are skilled in doing evil; the ruler demands gifts, the judge accepts bribes, the powerful dictate what they desire – they all conspire together. ⁴ The best of them is like a brier, the most upright worse than a thorn hedge. **THE DAY OF YOUR WATCHMEN HAS COME, THE DAY GOD VISITS YOU. Now is the time of their confusion**. ⁵ **Do not trust a neighbor; put no confidence in a friend. Even with her who lies in your embrace be careful of your words**. ⁶ **For a son dishonors his father, a daughter rises up against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law – a man's enemies are the members of his own household**. ⁷ But as for me, I watch in hope for the LORD, I wait for God my Savior; my God will hear me." The day God visits you will be a very dangerous time and it will seem to go on forever.

In the land where God says **the founding fathers** were **just like seeing early figs on a fig tree, the fig tree was planted**. God figuratively calls

this land the **vineyard** because they produce products that make them drunk. Political correctness, multiculturalism, affirmative action, and a whole range of other brain-washing techniques that turn the people into cretins, are the mainstay of their drunken stupor. Presently, we have quite a number of people in a drunken stupor over the so-called 'global warming' delusion. In order for the icecaps to melt – as they suggest – the temperature must rise above zero degrees Celsius (or 32 degrees F.). This is one of the most fundamental principles of physics. They say that a rise of even one degree can cause catastrophic change to the polar icecaps. Quite apart from the fact that the temperatures are consistently well below zero, and often up to 40 or 50 degrees below zero, they say that this one degree variation can cause the snow to melt (what science books are they reading?). And to support their madness, they show footage of excessive snow collapsing under its own weight, and then they claim its melting. Every year in snow-covered mountains in the U.S. avalanches occur because of the excessive weight and volume of snow. The same thing occurs in the Polar regions, and it has nothing to do with global warming! How can any sane person believe their lying nonsense?

'Global warming' is big business, and Washington is beginning to throw big money at those who support it. Naturally enough, people like Al Gore are milking it for all its worth. He's come to the realization that there is no money in protecting the Spotted Owl or the Caribou, but 'global warming' is a potential cash-cow to rob the people of massive amounts of their tax dollars. And this is the man that turned the looney Democrats into mindless maniacs in trying to elect him as president. 'Count the chads, the dimpled chads, the hanging chads and the chads on the floor'. All this was after Gore conceded electoral defeat and then changed his mind. This lack of character is **not** the stuff the **founding fathers** were made of!

All this is just a part of the conditioning process to make the people believe anything; even that which is against all logic! If people are prepared to be swayed by such nonsense, what hope have they of understanding that which pertains to the Creator God? And of course, this is the other thing! The theory of evolution has become even more vehement than the 'hanging chad' fiasco that turned normal men into ferocious animals. Suddenly, everyone wants to be a 'scientist' and believe that all the design in living things came about by randomness. Their idea of 'chance' is remarkable. They claim there is **no design** in nature, and **no Designer**. Their mythical 'chance' somehow managed to put eyes on the head instead of on the sole of the foot, and not just once but for every creature. And why would 'chance' create ears when, without ears sound cannot be heard. Did 'chance' do it just in case sound existed? This mythical 'chance' seems to have the ability for **intelligent design**, yet they propose it as a non-entity – an unintelligent nothing that has no reasoning ability, and yet through randomness actually achieved perfection. Even though these 'scientists' don't want to acknowledge God, you would think they would have the brains to see the **intelligent design** in everything. But in their madness they say there is **no intelligent design**,

only **randomness**. Don't even let one of these lunatics design your house, because randomness doesn't work where design is concerned! It only exists in their demented minds. How different these creatures are from the **founding fathers** of the nation of America. Having regard for the fact that God is a jealous God (**Exodus 20:5**) how do you think He reacts to these morons that cannot recognize **intelligent design** when they see it?

God plans to make His existence known to all flesh, and as we saw earlier, men will hide in caves and in rubble to hide themselves from the face of God and His Christ (**Rev 6:15-16**). But this is not the end of the matter, but only the beginning of many woes to come. What follows are seven trumpet plagues followed by the seven last plagues. And if anyone still has any uppity ideas about whether God exists or not, they'll quickly change their mind. At that time everyone will acknowledge God's existence, but they will see Him as the enemy and assemble to fight Him. And God will welcome the challenge! They'll find themselves in God's great winepress and it will squeeze the life out of them, **and the blood will flow to the depth of a horses' bridle** (**Rev 14:19-20**).

Surely no one thinks that God is going to apologize to humanity for anything. He's made His position clear from earliest times that humanity either obeys or else! I know how fashionable it is among some people to believe that God owes them something. And some even presume they are going to heaven when they die, yet these are the type of people who never obeyed God all their lives! If God required the innocent life of Jesus, then why should anyone have any other expectations for themselves when they have spent their lives repudiating God's Law?

In a few years there won't be many people left on earth, and it will be a thousand years before the population regenerates. In the same chapter of Micah God gives some more detail about this, and even gives the final outcome. **Mic 7:8-11** "**Do not gloat over me, my enemy!** Though I have fallen, I will rise. Though I sit in darkness, the LORD will be my light. ⁹ **Because I have sinned against Him, I will bear the LORD's wrath, until He pleads my case and establishes my right.** He will bring me out into the light; I will see His righteousness. ¹⁰ Then my enemy will see it and will be covered with shame, **she** (the daughters of the Great Harlot) who said to me, "**Where is the LORD your God?**" **My eyes will see her downfall;** even now **she will be trampled underfoot like mire in the streets.** ¹¹ **The day for building your walls** (of Jerusalem) **will come, the day for extending your boundaries.**" When Jesus quoted from **Micah chapter 7** He was giving some good information by way of warning. This chapter takes us from misery and widespread murder and chaos in the **VINEYARD** to the downfall of the great harlot and her daughter harlots and their gloating over the destruction of the **VINEYARD**. The Great Harlot is Satan, and his offspring are all harlots as well (**Rev 17**). And what is the taunt cited above? It's '**Where is the LORD your God?**' These people's god is Allah the Oak ('allah' or means 'oak' in Hebrew), hence their contemptuous taunt! So while

the **VINEYARD** is sitting in darkness and awaiting the new dawn, preparations for **building Jerusalem's walls** will be underway. It will be a time of utter desolation and destruction: **V13 "The earth will become desolate because of its inhabitants, as the result of their deeds."** This is speaking about global conflict throughout the earth; in other words: another World War! And just look at all the nations arming themselves now. The growth industry of the world is now weapons production.

The prophet gives the answer to the outcome in a prayer: **V14 "Shepherd your people with your staff, the flock of your inheritance, which lives by itself in a forest, in fertile pasturelands. Let them feed in Bashan and Gilead as in days long ago."** Bashan and Gilead are the lush pasturelands in the territories of the Tribe of Joseph. **V15-17 "As in the days when you came out of Egypt, I will show them my wonders."** God's wonders were against Israel's enemies; at that time, the Egyptians! **V16 "Nations will see and be ashamed, deprived of all their power."** They will lay their hands on their mouths and their ears will become deaf. ¹⁷ **They will lick dust like a snake, like creatures that crawl on the ground** (this is the same description God gives for Satan and his brood in the Garden of Eden: **Gen 3:14-15**) They will come trembling out of their dens; they will turn in fear to the LORD our God **and will be afraid of you.** ¹⁸ Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of **the remnant of His inheritance?** You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy. ¹⁹ You will **again** have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea. ²⁰ **You will be true to Jacob, and show mercy to Abraham, as you pledged on oath to our fathers in days long ago."**

So when Jesus pointed us to this chapter of **Micah 7**, He was pointing us to a whole lot more detail than He expressed at the time. But as we learned earlier, He used various devices, including parables, to hide the meaning until the right time – **the time for the healing of the House of Israel** and **the fulfillment of God's promise to His friend Abraham.**

So there is hope for the **VINEYARD** and there is peace ahead for the **remnant** who survives. But first **the brood that licks dust like a snake** will have to be taken care of. I hope you realize that the Lord Christ **didn't** come to bring **peace** – but a **sword**! The very nature and being of the Lord Christ is that of a great Warrior, and the Champion and Son of the Almighty God. He knows that peace is not attainable through talkfests and placation. He knows that peace must be established by the sword. And as we previously pointed out, the crawling, snake-like vermin will be the first to taste the sword of this Mighty Warrior Jesus and **their blood will flow on the ground** (**Isa 63:6**).

I know that most people don't share God's views, and most don't agree with Him on anything! Such people are too busy emulating Satan and projecting their image as 'angels of light': **2Cor 11:14-15 "And no wonder, for Satan**

himself masquerades as an angel of light. ¹⁵ It is not surprising, then, if **his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve.**" You need to ask yourself if this describes you. Flowery words might deceive some people, but they certainly don't deceive God!

Most people believe that Jesus brought a happy message but they seem to miss His real message. One of these real messages was to proclaim the coming Kingdom of God. No-one in their right mind would suggest a seamless transition for the establishment of the Kingdom of God. The Scriptures are full of the violent opposition that will ensue in order to prevent it. And we are seeing it now! The rulers of the heavenly realms know where the Kingdom of God will be established, and they are determined to populate the Holy Land with their own brood. This of course means that the Jews must be driven out completely. So any possibility of a peace deal between the Israelis and the Islamic hordes is out of the question. Satan and his spirit rulers tried to wipe out the Jews in Europe seventy years ago but failed to complete the task.

Some years earlier, at the conclusion of WWI, Major Allenby and British PM Lloyd George successfully proposed a homeland for the Jews and set about implementing this after the conquest of the Holy Land. This was like a red rag to a bull in Satan's eyes, and immediately he set about to destroy the Jews in Europe and to prevent their return, and 20 years later, the Holocaust began to take its toll on the Jewish population. Satan was determined to wipe out the Jews and so prevent the establishment of the Kingdom of God.

God knows the course of history from beginning to end, and He reveals it to His servants the prophets – in advance! Concerning the Jews, Christianity seemed oblivious to the importance of their survival and did virtually nothing to prevent the Holocaust. Christianity didn't need the Jews and they were seen as an embarrassment at the time. They certainly weren't prepared to start a war to preserve the Jews. They happily appeased the powers of the Nazi Regime in hopes of preventing war, and no consideration whatsoever was given to the plight of the Jews. Consequently, and in so doing, they quickly found themselves fighting for their own lives. At the destruction of the Nazi Regime, and in the aftermath of the war, the Allies were shocked to realize how little they had suffered in comparison to the Jews. When such men as General Eisenhower visited the concentration camps, they were utterly appalled at the horror of it all. Once again, Satan's plans backfired, and quickly plans were underway to gain world assent for the establishment of a Jewish homeland in God's Holy Land. None could have failed to notice from where the main opposition came from! **Immediately**, the Muslim nations started a war to wipe out the Jews. The Encarta Encyclopaedia gives us a clear view of this history:

Initially, Britain took several steps **to aid the Arab side**. For example, before World War II the British did **not** allow large numbers of Jews to move to Palestine from Europe, **where they were often persecuted**. Nonetheless,

Zionists gradually gained the upper hand through steady land purchases and slow but continual immigration. **After World War II the world became aware of the murder of millions of Jews in the Holocaust**, and opinion began to favour **creating an independent Jewish state**. Arabs in Palestine and elsewhere continued to resist the idea, but on November 29, 1947, the United Nations (UN) passed Resolution 181, which called for a partition of Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab states. The Jews accepted the resolution, **but the Arabs opposed it**. On May 14, 1948, the British mandate was terminated and at midnight **the Jewish State of Israel declared its independence**. The new State **came under immediate attack** from **the Palestinian population and Arabs of the surrounding countries, including Egypt, Syria, and Lebanon**. *Microsoft ® Encarta ® Encyclopedia 2005 © 1993-2004 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.*

Why warning bells failed to ring out after the Second World War is something that remains inexplicable. The Islamic hordes have always been troublesome and murderous – even to each other! It's all a part of the insane and satanic mindset of these creatures that they can't get along with anyone. Remember the now famous book called '**Satanic Verses**' by Salman Rushdie? Rushdie attacked the Koran, Mohammed and Islam, and being a Muslim, was in a position to know just how satanic they all are. He cited the Koran in order to prove his contentions and referred to it as '**Satanic Verses**'. This resulted in Ayatollah Homeini of Iran putting a five million dollar bounty on his head. They made **no** attempt to **refute** Rushdie's claims – and how could they? What Rushdie said is exactly what they teach! What Rushdie exposed were their murderous instincts that remain boundless. Their fanatical, crazy religion is clearly the teachings of satanic forces, and Rushdie was clearly stating this. The problem was that Rushdie's book might have gotten Muslims reflecting and thinking clearly for once, and this couldn't be permitted.

As we've said before, people see the enemy as being only human, but God makes it clear that the **real enemies** are those of the spirit realm who are **not** flesh and blood (**Eph 6:12**). So when you see a clown like Ahmadinejad of Iran globe-trotting and appearing as '**an angel of light**' and winning the favour of other heathen nations, and who believes that he emits a blue aura – in his view a sure sign that he is a god – then you need to take stock of what we're dealing with. The fact is he is a god; he's possessed by a powerful ruler of the heavenly realms who is every bit as deceptive as Ahmadinejad. And this spirit ruler has chosen his man well! When we see such a man with his meteoric rise to prominence, and one who can keep a beaming smile on his face while he breaths fire and brimstone against Israelis and Americans and predicts they will both be wiped off the map, you realize that this is something other than a mere human being. The surprising truth is that this man was a virtual nobody on the world scene until America began to provoke the Persians as a career move to assuage the Sunnis by threatening the Shia homeland. It was thought that the Sunni nations – by far the most populous of the Islamic religion and traditional enemies of the Shia – would stand

beside America in a conflict with Iran. In comparison with the Arab Sunni hordes, the Persian Shiite Iranians have been passive. Not perfect or even cooperative, but passive! They were quite happy to see Saddam Hussein and his hordes bombed back to the stone age and had hoped to see Iraq turned into a wasteland in retribution for Saddam's eight-year war against them. The Persians were even prepared to provide governance to the people of Iraq and provide stability through transition.

Then America hit a brick wall. The Arab Sunnis didn't like the way things were shaping up, and declared Iraq to be an Arab nation even though the Persians were the most numerous of the population. The Arabs saw **the writing on the wall**, but America failed to notice. Even after 'democratic' elections were held, it was clear that the Persian Shiite were numerically superior. America had to reverse the situation if they were to 'win the hearts and minds' of Sunni Islam, and so the first provocative moves were begun against the Persians.

At a time when Pakistan was selling nuclear secrets to any nation who wanted to develop a nuclear bomb, including North Korea, Libya, Egypt, Iraq, and who knows who else, and with scarcely a peep out of America, suddenly it was Iran who was to blame for the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Sunni Pakistan remains virtuous and a friend of the USA – but **not** Iran! How do you figure it? Well, in human terms, it goes against all reasoning! But in terms of Bible prophecy this is the way it has to be. The term '**the writing on the wall**' is a reference to Daniel's prophecies when the Persians took over the Babylonian Empire. As Daniel indicated in his prophecies, the Persian Empire will take over the former territories of Babylon and will rise as a behemoth, and eventually dominate the entire Middle East.

Quietly waiting in the wings was a powerful ruler of the heavenly realms, passively awaiting the outcome of the Iraq war knowing they could take over Iraq anytime even through democratic process – and America had done all the work for them. And then, quite inexplicably, America turned against them with all sorts of accusations; principally, they intended to develop nuclear weapons and had to be stopped. Compared with the Sunni nations that represent 90% of Islam, the Shiite Persians were a soft target, and capitalizing on the age-old rift between Sunni and Shia, it was thought that a war against Iran would bring 90% of Islam on side for this conflict.

Then suddenly everything changed! This powerful ruler of the heavenly realms made his move and appointed his human protégé. Suddenly this man is as well known as the President of the United States, and wields far more influence. All the despots of the world love him and want to cooperate with him. He's held in great admiration for his face-off with the USA. No other ruler of the heavenly realms has been prepared to openly challenge God's mighty nation of Ephraim. This spirit ruler has acted with great haste to appoint his protégé and he seemed to arise out of nowhere! From the moment this man came to power he was full in the face of all the powers of the Western World

and threatening destruction of them all – but with special emphasis on the destruction of the Jews.

Now you will notice that the Churches of God have gone almost completely silent on their versions of prophecy but they exhibit no signs of shame at all. Instead, they are projecting their image as '*angels of light*'. Their leadership is literally clutching at straws to hold their deceived congregations together with promises of good outcomes. The chances of them getting their act together are fading fast as the Middle East and their outreach terrorists reach boiling point, but still they don't see any relationship to Bible prophecy in all these events. And this shows the state of their minds! They're so hooked on the fiction that the Church is going straight into the Kingdom of God and eternal life that they've become blind in their delusions. Why can't they understand simple Scriptures? Who is it that is gathered into the Mothership and clothed and housed under the altar **until their brothers have been killed as they were?** (**Rev 6:9-11**). It's the figs from the fig tree! The very ones that God loves and craves! Why have the Churches of God never understood that they are as sheep to be slaughtered just as Jesus was? The Scriptures are very clear on this! **Rom 8:35-39** "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ³⁶ As it is written: "**FOR YOUR SAKE (Christ's sake) WE FACE DEATH ALL DAY LONG; WE ARE CONSIDERED AS SHEEP TO BE SLAUGHTERED.**" ³⁷ No, in all these things we are **more than conquerors through Him who loved us.** ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." You'll recall that Jesus appeared to the rulers of the heavenly realms **after** His resurrection – **as a Conqueror.** **Col 2:13** "And having disarmed **the powers and authorities, He made a public spectacle of them, TRIUMPHING OVER THEM** by [*His death on*] the cross." So you too, can be a **conqueror** if you are willing to die as a sheep to the slaughter just as Christ did. In so doing you have God's promise that you will be raised to life and gathered under the altar to await the killing of other brothers (**Rev 6:9-11**).

And who is the Book of Revelation addressed to? Well, it was **delivered** to the **God's servants (the prophets)** – of whom John was one) and this is made clear in **Rev 1:1-3**. But it is **addressed** to the **Churches of God (V4)** who keep the Commandments of God (**Rev 12:17**). **Rev 22:16** "**I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony FOR THE CHURCHES. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star.**"

God is merciful towards anything that's been done in ignorance, and this includes the teaching of false prophecy as long as it genuinely was in ignorance. But the days of ignorance are fading, as more and more evidence mounts of the reality of God's message to the Churches. There is nothing in the Book of Revelation that contradicts anything in the Scriptures that the

Lord Christ used (the Old Testament) while He was on earth. And the older testimony supports the new.

So from where did Paul quote when he said they were **considered as sheep to be slaughtered**? It's found in the Book of Psalm, and these verses actually state that it was not for punishment! Note: **Ps 44:17-22** "All this happened to us, though we had **not forgotten you or been false to your Covenant**.¹⁸ Our hearts had **not turned back**; our feet had **not strayed from your path**.¹⁹ **But you crushed us and made us a haunt for jackals and covered us over with deep darkness**.²⁰ If we had forgotten the name of our God or spread out our hands to a foreign god,²¹ would not God have discovered it, since he knows the secrets of the heart?²² **Yet for your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered**."

Paul knew this applied to the Church and this is why he quoted it. He knew the sheep had to go as sheep to the slaughter – but **not** for anything they had done wrong! Jesus also went to the slaughter but it was **not** for anything He had done wrong either! A sheep goes to the slaughter innocently. It's true that both innocent and guilty will go to the slaughter, but the difference is that only the innocent will be resurrected to life everlasting. And even then, **only those who have God's Holy Spirit**. The same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead will raise His saints also: **Rom 8:11** "And **if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you**." You'll notice that this is found in the same chapter where Paul speaks of **going as a sheep to the slaughter**. And there is no escaping this! There is no resurrection and no eternal life for anyone who doesn't fit these criteria.

Those who are naturally hostile to God and His Word should not expect anything different in return. Whatever measure you use, the same measure will be used on you. **Matt 7:2** "For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, **and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you**." And this counts doubly for how you treat God! Those who pompously appear as angels of light and even use fancy dress in the form of elaborate religious robes and regalia to achieve this effect have no favour with God. We have **no** examples in the Bible for Christians to be acting in this manner. In fact, Jesus was scathing towards those who wore religious garb in order to be noticed, and who loved to be seen standing on street corners praying to draw attention to themselves. These are weak and ungodly people who prey on others with insincerity. They've made it their life's work to deceive others with feigned righteousness and egotistical behaviour. The only thing that is real to them is their own importance. And their importance is unfulfilled unless they have others fawning over them. And believe it or not, these are the most treacherous of all people. They lack Godly knowledge and understanding and have nothing in common with the servants of Almighty God – nor with the figs that God so fondly speaks of.

When Jesus cursed the fig tree, He was making it clear that when the fig tree no longer produces fruit, then it is worthless for any purpose. **The fig tree is the Church**, and **the figs are the individual members of the Church body**. If they fail to produce further fruit then the time will come when they will be no more! Remember Jesus warning, which He quoted from **Micah chapter seven**, about a son dishonouring his father and a daughter her mother, etc. The prophet warns not to trust a neighbour and not to put confidence in a friend, and even with her who lies in your embrace be careful of your words. And of course, this is speaking of trying to **glean the remnant** of the summer fruit, **including figs**, but there were **none** to be found (**Mic 7:1**). God desires **early figs**, that is, those **who go early** without procrastination. It's called faith, and without faith it is impossible to please God: **Heb 11:6** "And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must **believe that He exists** and that He **rewards** those **who earnestly seek Him**." And this is the type of faith for which the ancients were commended (**V1**).

Suspicious people and those who are easily deceived don't fall into the category of **early figs**. When God says the **early figs** have been swept from the land, He really is speaking of the earliest of believers who earnestly sought Him and **believed** Him. The **late figs** will be left to their own devices, and believe it or not, Satan is going to ensure that they are hunted down, and with unmitigated fury! (**Rev 12:17**).

The world has become an extremely dangerous place and no-one could fail to notice this. In keeping with His custom, God sends prophets to warn of impending disasters, and their function is to **warn** God's people. Naturally enough, God forearms them with the knowledge to do this, and by its very nature, it cannot be a pleasant message! But those **who earnestly seek Him** will understand the message, even though as God puts it, **the understanding of this message will bring sheer terror** (**Isa 28:19**) but **not** to those **who earnestly seek Him** – and seek Him **early**!

This Brotherhood comprises people who went **early** in faith and believed God long before we saw the physical evidence of our teachings. This is the type of faith the ancients were commended for, and this is the type of faith that God desires. Now with the evidence of our teachings proliferating all over the world for all to see, the time of the **early figs** is almost over. As Jesus says, He reaps where He has **not** sown (**Luke 19:20-22**). Most of the sowing has been done in the House of Joseph and among the 'lost' Ten Tribes – to whom Jesus came exclusively: **Matt 15:23-28** "Jesus did not answer a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, "Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us." ²⁴ He answered, "**I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel**." ²⁵ The woman came and knelt before him. "Lord, help me!" she said. ²⁶ He replied, "**It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it [to dogs]**." ²⁷ "Yes, Lord," she said, "**but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table**." ²⁸ Then Jesus answered, "**Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted**." And her daughter was

healed from that very hour." So here we see how **faith** can override God's predetermined position on the exclusivity of the only people **He ever chose of all the families of the earth** (**Amos 3:1-2, Deut 7:6, 14:2**). God hasn't changed His mind on His promise to Abraham nor on His selection of the Tribes of Israel as His Bride and premier nation, but neither does He reject Gentiles **who step out in faith**, and especially those who have lived among and have assimilated with the 'lost' Ten Tribes. By **faith** they can reap the same rewards.

So I'll repeat what I've said so many times before: We are **not** the Church of God! Our commission is to deliver a message to the **Churches of God**, the **Tribes of Israel** and the **world**. And while some of our membership has had associations with the former Worldwide Church of God, many have not. We have **no** associations with other churches anywhere – and most particularly in Nigeria, Rwanda, and other African nations; nor in India, Pakistan or even Israel. We don't sponsor any church groups anywhere! If any individual among them wants to **return to God** then they must follow God's instructions for doing so (**Mal 3:6-9**). God certainly knows how to separate the sheep from the goats! And if I can make it even clearer – if you have **not returned to God** then you are no friend of ours. My advice to such people is to stay where you are and take your chances. The feel-good variety of worship is past, and God is sending out His call for all men to repent and to start taking His Words seriously. God is **not** interested in lip-service **nor** any form of service that fails to comply with His explicit instructions. And most important of all: You must **believe** Him!

Righteousness is doing what God says is right – **not** what your local preacher has been telling you, because it's certain that he is **not** teaching you what **God has taught His sons – the Sons of Jerusalem!**

Nevertheless, at the end of a long dark night there will be a new dawn and some hoped-for peace. And there will be a remnant still alive to experience it. In that day: **Mic 4:4-7** "Every man will sit under his **own vine** and under his **own fig tree**, and no one will make them afraid, **for the LORD Almighty has spoken**.⁵ All the nations may walk in the name of their gods; we will walk in the name of the LORD our God for ever and ever. ⁶ "**In that day,**" declares the LORD, "I will gather the lame; **I will assemble the exiles and those I have brought to grief**.⁷ I will make the lame a remnant, **those driven away a strong nation**. **The LORD will rule over them in Mount Zion from that day and forever.**"

I hope this answers your question.

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