

## Jesus Rescues His Saints

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The fifth trumpet marks the appearing of the devil and his angels. God permits the devil and his angels to occupy the nations of Earth and torment people who have not made a decision for God or the devil. For a five month period, God will allow the devil to inflict great suffering upon the remaining people who have not accepted salvation, but have defied the devil's authority. In this way, God continues to encourage them to repent and be saved. (For awhile, there will be two types of wicked people during the Great Tribulation: The "religious" wicked and the "nonreligious" wicked. The religious wicked are those who *believe* the devil is God and submit to his dominion. The nonreligious wicked are those who *refuse* to submit to the devil, God, or any authority.) When the five months have expired, God permits the devil to do something unbelievably horrible. Satan will be allowed to kill one-third of mankind. This great slaughter will remove most of the devil's adversaries, i.e., the nonreligious wicked and many of the saints. With most of his enemies dead (some saints will escape), the devil will have undisputed dominion over the Earth. When this occurs, the devil will then divide Earth into ten sectors and appoint ten "puppet" kings to take care of day to day business. By doing this, the devil will claim to be king of kings and lord of lords. Survivors will have no option; either submit to the commandments of the devil or suffer death. How ironic, those who submit to the commandments of Jesus may suffer temporary death, but they will live again!

God permits Satan to kill the nonreligious wicked at a very precise moment in time. Notice what John says, "**The sixth angel blew his trumpet . . . and the four angels (bound at the great river Euphrates) who had been kept ready for this very hour and day and month and year were released to kill a third of mankind. The number of mounted troops was two hundred million. I heard their number . . . A third of mankind was killed by the three plagues of fire, smoke and sulfur that came out of their mouths. The rest of mankind that were not killed by these plagues still did not repent of the work of their hands . . . nor of their murders, their magic arts, their sexual immorality or their thefts.**" (Revelation 9:13-21)

What Satan cannot achieve through deceit, he accomplishes through force. Force is always the last resort of false religion. The sixth trumpet war will decimate all of the nations of the world. This is why I call this period of time World War III. Satan will send his angels throughout the Earth and they will slaughter hundreds of millions of people who stand in opposition to Satan's control of Earth. This great slaughter will accomplish two things. First, it will force everyone to take a side. Every living person will be forced to choose whom they will worship – the "lamb-like" beast on Earth claiming to be God, or the Lamb of God who will soon appear in clouds of glory. Second, when the devil gains control of Earth, he will be in a position to force everyone to receive his mark. "**He also forced everyone, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on his right hand or on his forehead.**" (Revelation 13:16, italics mine)

## Lucifer Claims He is God and Leads the Rebellion

The Bible predicts the devil will lead a majority of the world to rebel against God's law. When

the devil establishes his kingdom and implements the mark of the beast, he will require the world to worship on a day of the week that stands in direct opposition to the law of God. I am convinced the devil will declare a day of the week to be holy which opposes all religions of the world. In other words, a "new day" of worship will level the playing field for all religions of the world proving the devil shows no favoritism. Masquerading as God, the devil will be able to do anything he wants to do! No wonder Paul calls him a man of lawlessness. (2 Thessalonians 2) The devil will pronounce stringent laws requiring everyone to worship according to his desires. (Revelation 13:15-17) Of course, the devil's deepest desire is to have complete control and great adulation. He wants the same authority as God and he wants to be worshiped as God. The devil is very bold. He even dared to tempt Jesus to worship him. (Matthew 4:9,10) Satan may be incredibly beautiful in appearance, but he will be grossly vile in character. He is sin personified. The devil is self seeking and self centered in the extreme. The devil wants power, fame, popularity, respect, wealth, glory and honor. He will allow nothing to stand in his way of gaining these. In fact, he wants everything that rightfully belongs to God! What an example of sin's decadence. Remember, God created Lucifer as a perfect being. However, sin corrupted Lucifer's heart and he assumed prerogatives belonging only to God. Ultimately, Lucifer will claim before the world that he is God. He will receive the worship that God alone deserves and he will gloat in his deception. Paul says, "**He [Satan] opposes and exalts himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, and even sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God.**" (2 Thessalonians 2:4)

## Jesus' Offer of Salvation Ends

When the slaughter of World War III ends, everyone will have made a decision about worship. For the sake of survival, millions will submit to the commandments of the Antichrist even though they know the mark of the beast is a curse. Remember, worship is defined as submitting to a requirement commanded by God. It is hard to believe that people would submit to the mark of the beast rather than put faith in God, but this will be the case. Consider the wisdom behind this coming test of faith: If our worship of God is not based on faith and love for Jesus, it will be impossible to refuse the mark of the beast. The saints will lose every form of earthly support. It is easy to see how many people who claim to be Christians will give up their religious beliefs because their faith is not grounded in God. They will voluntarily receive the mark of the beast and justify their actions because it is the only way to survive. I have heard people say many times that they cannot keep Sabbath because they cannot give up their job! If a person loves his life more than God – he does not love God most – he loves self! Jesus said, "**Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.**" (Matthew 10:37-39)

Everyone who chooses to receive the mark of the beast will be a coward and considered an enemy of God. (Revelation 21:8) When the sixth trumpet war draws to a close, everyone will have made their decision and nothing more can be done to save a single human being. Consequently, the door to salvation closes in Heaven and Jesus concludes His intercession on behalf of the people of Earth with this decree: "**Let him who does wrong continue to do**

**wrong; let him who is vile continue to be vile; let him who does right continue to do right; and let him who is holy continue to be holy." (Revelation 22:11) Then, "The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: 'The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever.' . . . Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and within his temple was seen the ark of his covenant. And there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake and a great hailstorm." (Revelation 11:15,19)**

The seventh trumpet marks the end of God's redemptive judgments. (Do not confuse the seventh trumpet with the trumpet call that sounds from the sky at the Second Coming. 1 Corinthians 15:52) The seventh trumpet also marks the beginning of God's destructive judgments (the seven bowls). Notice, the *same* phenomena that marks the beginning of the seven trumpets also marks the end of the seven trumpets. (Revelation 8:5) However, the phenomena at the end of the seven trumpets will be greater in intensity and more destructive than at the beginning of the Great Tribulation. In addition to these physical phenomena, God will do something at the close of salvation that is amazing. He will enable everyone on Earth to see the ark of "His covenant" in Heaven's temple! God shows the Ark of the Covenant to the human race because He wants everyone to see the lawful basis for His wrath. He is about to destroy every wicked person with one or more of the seven last plagues. God wants the wicked to see that His wrath is legally justified. This is a marvelous thing about God. In God's realm, faith *always* precedes evidence. Paul wrote, "**When perfection comes, the imperfect disappears.**" (1 Corinthians 13:10) In other words, whenever God commands something that requires faith, He eventually displaces that faith with the evidence or reason faith was necessary. Said another way, faith always makes sense when viewed in reverse. Jesus said, "**I tell you the truth, until Heaven and Earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.**" (Matthew 5:18) This is why salvation comes only through faith! God says, "You just have to trust Me until I can show you the reasons."

## **Only God's Saints will Survive Through Faith**

Standing firm for truth and worshipping God as He commands regardless of the cost will be the all encompassing test for the human race. Hundreds of millions of people will die for their faith. Relatively speaking, only a few saints will survive to see Jesus appear in clouds of glory. John is very clear – the devil's forces will kill a large number of God's people. Mercifully, when the seventh trumpet sounds, God ends the martyrdom of the saints. (Daniel 12:1) Can we, like Job, say, "**Though He slay me, yet will I hope in Him**"? (Job 13:15) A real testing time is just before us. The coming test will reveal our true condition. Will we stand firm even though everyone else may join the ranks of the enemy? I pray God will give us the faith, resolve and strength to stand firm. Isaiah said it well when he spoke to King Ahaz, "**If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all.**" (Isaiah 7:9)

## **The Seven Bowls of Revelation**

The seven bowls will begin shortly after God reveals the Ark of the Covenant in the sky and last

for about 75 days. The seven bowls will be progressively destructive and end with Jesus appearing in clouds of glory. Jesus will kill the wicked by a command that comes out of His mouth. Only the saints who remain will survive that awesome day. The seven last plagues will be a horrible *payback* for the wicked. The seven *last* plagues contain God's wrath without mercy – God's wrath full strength. God will repay the wicked at the same level of cruelty they demonstrated towards God's people during the Great Tribulation. Compare the seven trumpets with the seven bowls:

Trumpets	Bowls
Fiery Hail	Terrible Sores
Asteroid Impact (Sea)	Sea Turns to Blood
Asteroid Impact (Continent)	Springs of Waters Turn to Blood
Darkness (Volcanos)	Sun Scorches People With Fire
Devil Appears	Satan's Kingdom Plunged into Darkness
Devil Conquers World	Armageddon
Close of Mercy	Second Coming/Great Fiery Hailstones

Remember, these seven plagues do not affect God's people. **"A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you. You will only observe with your eyes the punishment of the wicked."** (Psalm 91:7,8)

Three points need to be made:

1. Some of the seven bowls are somewhat similar to the destruction caused by the seven trumpets. For example, a third of the seas turn to blood during the second trumpet, but all of the seas turn to blood during the second bowl. Perhaps God designed the trumpets as harbingers of things to come. In other words, even though the trumpets are sounded with mercy, God uses the trumpets to warn the human race with some physical evidence of what He intends to do during the seven bowls, a time when there is no mercy! Remember, God spares two-thirds of Earth during the time period of the seven trumpets, but He annihilates the entire world with burning sulfur at the end of the seven bowls.
2. Notice this turn of events. The *fifth* trumpet marks the physical appearing of Satan claiming to be God and the *fifth* bowl marks the exposure of the devil for who he really is. When Jesus pours out the fifth plague upon the throne of the devil, the world will see that this creature, who claims to be God, is not really God – for God would not destroy His own throne! (See Revelation 16:10,11.) The light of truth will shine brightly, and the deception of sin will be removed. The religious and political leaders of the world will realize they have been worshiping the ancient enemy of God. This realization starts a domino-like collapse of Babylon. John says, **"The beast [Babylon] and the ten horns you saw will hate the prostitute [the image or the one world church/state]. They will bring her to ruin and leave her naked; they will eat her flesh and burn her with fire."** (Revelation 17:16)
3. In a final attempt to control a collapsing kingdom, Satan will rally the world one last time and send powerful demons to encourage the ten kings he chose to rule over Earth. These demons will lead the kings of the Earth to do two things. First, they will agree that a universal death

decree is needed to destroy the saints. Second, they will unite to wage war on Jesus when He appears in the clouds. Notice what John says of these demons, **"They are the spirits of demons performing miraculous signs, and they go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them for the battle on the great day of God Almighty. . . . Then they gathered the kings together to the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon."** (Revelation 16:14, 16)

## The Final Battle of Armageddon

World War III occurs during the sixth trumpet. The battle of Armageddon occurs during the sixth bowl. (Remember, there are similarities between the trumpets and bowls.) A large amount of misinformation has been shared about Armageddon. The word, Armageddon, comes from two Greek words,

*"har megiddon"* and they are transliterated in English as one word: Armageddon. The two words mean "the mountain of God," or "the exalted place of God." There is no mountain in the Middle East called Meggido; however, there is a small plain called Meggido that is not far from Jerusalem. (Joshua 17:11) Long ago, King Josiah's foolish actions led to his death on the Plain of Meggido. He engaged Pharaoh Neco in a battle that should not have been fought. (2 Chronicles 35) The plain of Megiddo is not very large, but many scholars are convinced this is where Earth's last battle will be fought.

The battle of Armageddon parallels the contest between Elijah and the 450 prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel. (1 Kings 18) A showdown is coming between the Lamb of God and the lamb-like beast, who is the devil. This great showdown will occur "on the mountain of God," hence the two words, *"har megiddon."* The world's leaders will see, just as the leaders of Israel did in Elijah's day, which God is Almighty God.

Here is the scenario: After God unmasks the devil in the fifth bowl, the devil's empire will begin to disintegrate. The religious and political leaders of Babylon will recognize they have been duped into worshiping the devil. Then, *the cloud* will appear in the sky – the sign of Christ's return. **"At that time the *sign* of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn."** (Matthew 24:30, italics mine) When the kings of Earth see the sign in the sky, they will tremble. The devil preys on their anxiety and will invite them to join him in a two pronged attack. He insists they can kill the remaining saints at an appointed hour and then attack Jesus as He draws near to Earth. (Once again, truth is stranger than fiction.) To convince the kings of Earth this is their last chance to save themselves from destruction, the devil sends three powerful demons to help persuade them. **"They are spirits of demons performing miraculous signs, and they go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them for the battle on the great day of God Almighty."** (Revelation 16:14) When the kings of Earth see the miracle working powers of these three demons, the leaders will be compelled to trust their power and will agree to join forces with the devil. (What choice do they really have?) They will make plans to destroy the people Jesus is coming to save and ultimately to kill Jesus Himself. If you think that it is far fetched that men would try to kill God, remember the cross. If you think it is far fetched that angels would war against an omnipotent God, consider Lucifer's expulsion from Heaven. When sin is allowed to reach its vilest maturity, it will seek to destroy God. Sinners would attempt to kill God (if they could) if pushed to worship Him! This is why God has to

completely eliminate sin from His universe. Sin is a cancer from which there is no recovery – except through the "born again" experience.

The battle of Armageddon occurs at the place of God's choosing – the mountain of God. It will be the last battle of Earth's final generation. The wicked will see this as their only chance to destroy God. John describes the scene this way: **"The seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and out of the temple came a loud voice from the throne saying, 'It is done.' Then there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder and a severe earthquake. No earthquake like it has ever occurred since man has been on earth, so tremendous was the quake. The great city split into three parts, and the cities of the nations collapsed. God remembered Babylon the Great and gave her the cup filled with the wine of the fury of his wrath. Every island fled away and the mountains could not be found. From the sky huge hailstones of about a hundred pounds each fell upon men. And they cursed God on account of the plague of hail, because the plague was so terrible."** (Revelation 16:17-21)

John also describes the behavior of the wicked: **"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! For the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?'"** (Revelation 6:16,17) Paul says Jesus will destroy the physical body of the devil with a single command: **"And then the lawless one [the man of sin] will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming."** (2 Thessalonians 2:8, insertion mine) What a sight this will be – fire falling from Heaven and consuming the physical body of the devil and his angels! Zephaniah says, **"Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to save them on the day of the Lord's wrath. In the fire of his jealousy the whole world will be consumed, for he will make a sudden end of all who live in the Earth."** (Zephaniah 1:18) What a dramatic rescue! What an amazing God! What a Savior is Jesus our Lord! What a Friend the saints have in Jesus. Is it possible that some of Satan's forces perish on the plain of Meggido? Perhaps, since one of Satan's thrones may be located in Jerusalem (Daniel 11:45), but remember, Satan will have ten kings fighting against Jesus. These kings will represent *all* of the nations of the world.

## The Gospel of Jesus Christ

There are several powerful stories in the book of Revelation that have not been addressed in this small book. This book has briefly addressed the seven trumpets and the seven bowls. There is much more. Therefore, I hope you will consider this book to be a first step toward a better understanding of Revelation.

Because the book of Revelation is about the revelation of Jesus Christ, I am compelled to close with a review of the gospel of Jesus Christ and an invitation to worship Him. Reviewing the gospel is necessary because it confronts us with an all or nothing proposition. Before the seventh trumpet sounds, all of the inhabitants of Earth will either accept or reject the gospel of Jesus. Some people avoid difficult decisions by putting them off into the recesses of

consciousness. They say, "I will think about this tomorrow." However, postponement is really a decision, too. Suppose you are a young man who asked your sweetheart to marry you. Any answer other than "yes" is actually a "no," isn't it? The danger with postponement is that it hides our rejection until we are trapped by our own inaction. In the case of the gospel, we must listen and respond to the Holy Spirit promptly or the Spirit may turn away from us. We must be "born again" today and this transformation cannot be accomplished on our own. Only through the ministry of the Holy Spirit can we overcome the rebellion of our carnal nature. Therefore, it is important to remember that there is a limit to the Holy Spirit's promptings. He will not wrestle with rebellion forever. (Hebrews 3:7-15; 10:26)

If the Holy Spirit has impressed you that this message is important, you need to restudy it carefully for two reasons. First, your understanding will increase 100% the second time you read this book. Details will become clearer and more meaningful. Second, now that you understand the general picture of Revelation, you need to find an interested friend and discuss this message. You may want to obtain some of the study materials listed in the back of this book. The better we understand God's Word, the stronger our faith will be. Jesus is coming soon. Until the seventh trumpet sounds, the door of mercy is open. Walk through it! **"The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come!' And let him who hears say, 'Come!' Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life."** (Revelation 22:17)

## The Gospel of Jesus Christ is Proclaimed

The gospel of Jesus Christ will reach every person before Jesus comes. John said, **"Then I saw another angel flying in midair, and he had the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the Earth to every nation, tribe, language and people."** (Revelation 14:6) Jesus said, **"And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come."** (Matthew 24:14) What gospel will be preached into all the world before the end of salvation comes? In three sentences, the eternal gospel of Jesus Christ is this: *All people have sinned and come short of the glory of God (everyone has violated God's Ten Commandments at some point in time); therefore, God's law condemns us to death (the wages of sin is death). The good news is that Jesus took our place on the cross and paid the price for our sins. If we obediently submit to God's commandments and put our faith in Jesus for salvation, we will be saved.* Look at salvation from God's perspective. Many people honestly live up to all they know to be right and Jesus understands this. In His great mercy, He accepts everyone who is sincere in heart even though they may not know or understand the great truths of the gospel. Jesus does not hold a person responsible for truth he does not know or cannot know. On the contrary, James tells us that sin is held against us when we know better and then refuse to do it! **"Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins."** (James 4:17) The Lord loves the people of Earth with a love beyond human understanding. He died for every one of us. People who live up to all they know to be right glorify God and He is pleased with them. Peter says, **"For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."** (1 Peter 3:12) Because the devil is extremely intelligent, Satan has cleverly obscured God's truth from most of the world, but Jesus will soon remove the veil of

ignorance that covers the gospel. People who are sincere in heart will rejoice to learn more, and they will embrace the gospel as it reveals more about the will of our Creator and Savior. Thus, a remnant from all religious systems will be gathered into one body under the leadership of King Jesus. Jesus said, **"I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd."** (John 10:16)

So, the net effect of the gospel in the last days will be to save and unify all people who hear and respond to the voice of Jesus. Jesus will accomplish this ingathering of His sheep during the 1,260 day time period allotted for the seven trumpets by separating His sheep from the goats over the issue of worship. (Matthew 25:31-46) People will either receive the gospel and through faith, obey the commandments of Jesus or they will reject the gospel and eventually choose the mark of the beast. The controversy over worship will remove all middle ground. A rapid sequence of events, coupled with rigorous laws requiring that people disobey the law of God will push everyone into a decision.

## What Must I Do to be Saved?

As we might expect, Satan has a counterfeit gospel. The devil has led many people to believe that salvation comes either through perfect obedience to God (as in human performance) or by intellectual assent to what is true. Satan's deceptions are very subtle. He has led many evil people to think they are righteous when they are far from it! Nevertheless, the Bible is clear, the righteousness necessary for salvation is not found on Earth! **"For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: 'The righteous will live by faith'. . . . This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus."** (Romans 1:17; 3:22-24) Satan ever leads people astray and away from God. The Pharisees thought they were righteous in God's sight even though they were not a part of the kingdom of God. Jesus said, **". . . on the outside you [Pharisees] appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness . . . For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of Heaven."** (Matthew 23:28; 5:20, insertion mine) The Pharisees were known for their love of self righteousness. They could not see their own sins but they could see sin in a sinless Jesus. (John 9:16) Isn't it ironic that religion can lead a person to condemn God and justify self! This is ever the human dilemma. Religion tends to blind people to their true condition in God's sight. Given enough time, all religions eventually distort the truth about God – history proves this is the way of mankind.

God is pleased when we love to do what is right, but contrary to what the Pharisees believed, right doing does not save us! So, how are we saved? We are saved through faith in Jesus. True worship stems from a Spirit given desire to please God. (John 4:23,24) True worship includes doing all that we understand God wants us to do, not to be saved, but to please God! *The worship of Jesus Christ is the way to salvation and this is why God's final test of mankind*

*centers on worship!* (John 10:7; 14:6) People who worship God with all their heart, mind and soul are willing to go, to be and to do all that God requires – no holds barred. *Jesus has designed the events of the Great Tribulation so that only those who love and trust Him completely will be able to worship Him on His holy day.* "The just will live by faith." True worshipers worship God in Spirit and in Truth. All who worship God are given the righteousness necessary for salvation and the amazing aspect of this is that salvation is free! (Ephesians 2:8,9)

Jesus said, ". . . **every good tree bears good fruit, a good tree cannot bear bad fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit.**" (Matthew 7:17,18) A counterfeit gospel causes sinners to think they are righteous. The carnal heart will say one thing in public, but do evil in secret. Jesus said, "**Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God.**" (John 3:20,21) So, we must test ourselves from time to time to see if we are in Christ! Paul wrote, "**Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you – unless, of course, you fail the test?**" (2 Corinthians 13:5)

## Trust and Obey

James Sammis and Daniel Towner wrote the old gospel hymn, "Trust and Obey." The words are printed below because they summarize the essence of the gospel of Jesus very well:

"When we walk with the Lord  
In the light of His Word,  
What a glory He sheds on our way!  
While we do His good will,  
He abides with us still,  
And with all who will trust and obey.  
Trust and obey,  
For there's no other way  
To be happy in Jesus,  
But to trust and obey."

It never ceases to amaze me that so many Christians scoff at the suggestion that the Lord will return soon. They see no reason for this warning message. They say, "All things continue as usual – why all the fuss?" Unfortunately, these people have become content in their spiritual poverty. They have put blinders on and inserted earplugs because they are comfortable and do not want to hear about God's plan. Many Christians follow after religious programming, i.e., the entertainment gospel presented by talented singers and gifted speakers with clever ideas. They do not want to hear about the cross they will bear during the time of God's wrath. Before we can wear a crown, we have to carry the cross. Millions of people believe in a pretribulation rapture. Satan has convinced many Christians they are safe from the scenes described in Revelation. This terrible deception is widely accepted because it is so easy to swallow. It is time

for Christians to wake up and understand that Revelation will be fulfilled soon!

People who truly understand Revelation's story are not focused on gloom or doom. This may seem strange, but it is true. Instead, they are focused on the greatest and most awesome event in Earth's history: The revelation of the gospel of Jesus Christ during the Great Tribulation and His physical appearing at the Second Coming. We need to know that a testing time, a purifying time is coming, and it precedes the Second Coming. We need to know about the rise of Babylon and the appearing of Satan claiming to be God. We need to know about World War III and Armageddon. And yes, we need to fill our hearts and minds with God's Word because our faith in God will be fully tested in days to come. We have every reason to be positive about our relationship with Jesus for it is this relationship that fills our hearts with peace and joy. **"For everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God."** (1 John 5:4,5) Believers in Christ have a wonderful opportunity to become overcomers for Christ. We carry God's promises within our hearts and listen to His voice because we "have ears to hear what the Spirit is saying to us." Believers walk by faith, not by sight.

I am often asked how a person should reconcile the nearness of these events with everyday decisions in life. For example, what does a person do about plans for college, marriage, building or buying a new home, the expansion of a business, retirement savings, career requirements, etc.? I have found one response for all of these questions: Seek the Lord for wisdom *about your own personal situation*. He has promised to direct us. If we patiently seek answers from Him, God will show us what He wants. (Proverbs 3:5-6) So, learn to live by faith now. Worship the Creator! Keep God's Sabbath holy. Doing so will provide a whole day each week to study God's Word. Put your confidence in God and watch what He will do through you and for you. The ultimate test of having a relationship with Jesus is being able to hear His voice. Jesus said, **"My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me."** (John 10:27)

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