

Restoring Original Christianity—for Today![®]

Christian Biblical Church of God

Post Office Box 1442

Hollister, California 95024-1442

(831) 637-1875

truthofgod.org • churchathome.org • biblicaltruthministries.org
afaitfulversion.org • theoriginalbible restored.org

Fred R. Coulter
Minister

May-June Letter

May 16, 2024

Dear Brethren,

Thank you for your ongoing help in distributing copies of the Bible to brethren in other churches of God. This program has been a tremendous success! Even a number ministers have requested the Bible for themselves, and several independent churches of God have requested them for their groups. We still have a lot of Bibles left. This means that you can request additional copies to give to those who have a sincere desire to learn about the truth of God. This is the greatest gift we can give—the whole Bible! As Jesus told the disciples, “Freely you have received, freely give” (Matt. 10:8). You can order copies individually or by the box—calfskin, 8 in a box; paperback, 8 in a box; vinyl, 6 in a box; and Interlinears, 4 in a box. We will continue this program of distributing the Bible without cost until the inventory has been greatly reduced. So keep up the good work!

Caravan to Midnight: On April 30 I was a guest on the radio program *Caravan to Midnight*, hosted by John B. Wells, from 10:30 PM to midnight, EST. It turned out to be a great success! They reported that they had a record number of listeners. Also, on their live *Rumble* and *Facebook* productions of the program, there was a great deal of listener feedback and sharing the presentation. I was able to cover many topics and the overall response was excellent. We offered to the listeners, at no cost, a special pack consisting of *The Holy Bible In Its Original Order* (paperback), *Occult Holidays*, and *Why Were You Born?* We have received nearly 100 requests so far.

After they edit this program, the session will air on the *Salem Radio Network*—over 900 radio stations. We expect a good number of additional requests for our special pack at that time. They were so pleased with my presentation that they have already invited me back for another session on May 30. On this coming program I plan on covering the “secret rapture,” the return of Jesus Christ, and the first resurrection.

The actual teachings concerning the return of Christ and the first resurrection are amazing revelations from God’s Word. However, many churches of God still do not understand the complete truth about Pentecost, the first resurrection, and Jesus’ return. Why is this? Because they are stuck on the incomplete teachings of Hebert W. Armstrong concerning Pentecost. For over forty years the WCG kept Pentecost on Monday, the second day of the week—instead of the day *after* the seventh Sabbath, the first day of the week, during the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

I was there at a special ministerial conference in Pasadena in 1973 when the *truth* of the correct day of keeping Pentecost was made known to Mr. Armstrong. He finally accepted it, with great reluctance. On the other hand, he never repented of having the Church keep Pentecost on the wrong day for 40 years. Rather, because he thought he was an apostle, he declared, which I heard him say, “God bound a Monday Pentecost for 40 years.” But that was impossible—that was not

true! God did not bind on the WCG a Monday Pentecost any more than God was obligated to bind Sunday-keeping as the weekly day of worship because the Pope of Rome declared that Sunday replaced the seventh-day Sabbath of God!

When and How Will Jesus Christ Return to the Earth?

There are many Old Testament prophecies foretelling the first and second comings of Jesus the Messiah. During Jesus' three and one-half year ministry, He taught the disciples that He was going to establish the Kingdom of God and that they would rule with Him. However, it was not until after Jesus had risen from the dead, and appeared to them for forty days, that they began to realize that He would first ascend to heaven and *later* return to establish the Kingdom.

But the apostles and disciples did not know *when* or *how* He would return. Some thought Jesus was going to establish the Kingdom immediately. In the book of Acts, Luke writes this summary of Jesus' appearance to His disciples for forty days and His final ascension to heaven: "The first account I indeed have written, O Theophilus, concerning all things that Jesus began both to do and to teach, until the day in which He was taken up, after giving command by *the* Holy Spirit to the apostles whom He had chosen; **to whom also, by many infallible proofs, He presented Himself alive after He had suffered, being seen by them for forty days, and speaking the things concerning the kingdom of God.**

"And while *they* were assembled with *Him*, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem but to 'await the promise of the Father, which,' *He said*, 'you have heard of Me. For John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with *the* Holy Spirit after not many days.' So then, when they were assembled together, they asked Him, saying, '**Lord, will You restore the kingdom to Israel at this time?**' And He said to them, '**It is not for you to know *the* times or *the* seasons, which the Father has placed in His own authority.** But you yourselves shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be My witnesses, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto *the* ends of the earth.'

"And after saying these things, *as* they were looking at *Him*, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. Now while they were gazing intently up into heaven as He was going up, two men [angels] in white apparel suddenly stood by them, who also said, 'You men of Galilee, why do you stand *here* looking up into heaven? This *same* Jesus, Who was taken up from you into heaven, shall come in exactly the same manner as you have seen Him go into heaven' " (Acts 1:1-11).

Ten days later, on the Day of Pentecost, when they were assembled at the Temple, God poured out the Holy Spirit in great power and the apostles preached Jesus as the Christ in numerous languages. Three thousand people repented and were baptized and likewise received the Holy Spirit. Yet Jesus still did not establish the Kingdom of God.

The apostles did not realize that Jesus was not going to return until God's *set time* in the future—as shown by what Peter preached after he and John had performed a miraculous healing of a crippled man: "Therefore, repent and be converted in order that your sins may be blotted out, so that *the* times of refreshing may come from *the* presence of the Lord; and *that* He may send Him Who was before proclaimed to you, Jesus Christ, **Whom *the* heaven must indeed receive until *the* times of restoration of all things, of which God has spoken by *the* mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began"** (Acts 3:19-21). However, they did not know *how* or *when* this would happen.

After decades of preaching and teaching, and having seen the events leading up to the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem, the apostles began to understand that Jesus was going to return in the *distant* future. This is why God led them to compile their inspired writings into what became the New Testament, which was finalized by Paul, Peter, and John. It was the apostle John,

with the help of Andrew and Philip, who canonized the New Testament in 98 AD in the form we now have, originally written in Greek.

When John received the Revelation of God from Jesus in approximately 95 AD, this was the first time a sequence of prophecies and events was given to show *how* and approximately *when* Christ was going to return. However, it was nearly impossible to understand the book of Revelation at the time John wrote it. Even today, most people cannot understand the Bible, let alone the book of Revelation. Over the centuries, many scholars and theologians have tried and failed.

Many Bible students and scholars recognize that many of the prophecies in the book of Daniel provide an “introduction” to end time events while the book of Revelation provides the “conclusion” to such prophecies. Although Daniel was given specific prophecies, he did not understand them. In fact, Daniel was told that it was not for him to understand: **“But you, O Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, even to the time of the end. Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.** Then I, Daniel, looked; and behold, there stood two others, the one on this side, and the one on that side of the bank of the river. And one said to the man clothed in linen who was above the waters of the river: **‘How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?’** And I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, when he held up his right and his left hand to heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever, *saying*, ‘It shall be for a time, times, and a half *a time*. And when they have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.’

“And I heard, but I did not understand. Then I said, ‘O my lord, what shall be the end of these things?’ And he said, **‘Go your way, Daniel, for the words *are* closed up and sealed until the time of the end.** Many shall be purified, and made white, and refined. But the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand’ ” (Dan. 12:4-10).

God told Daniel that the prophecies were only to be understood at the time of the end. Until then, they would be closed and sealed. In the end times, God will give the understanding of these prophecies *only* to those who love and obey Him and have the Holy Spirit.

Indeed, from the time of Christ and the apostles, many have tried and failed to understand these prophecies. Down through the centuries—whenever there are great catastrophes of war, famine, drought, pestilence, earthquakes, and natural disasters—religious leaders begin to proclaim that Christ’s return is at hand. And they even use the Scriptures to do so—but their prognostications have come to naught. This happened in 70 AD with the destruction of the Temple. In the year 1000 AD, because of misinterpreting the Scriptures, the Catholic Church convinced Europeans that Jesus would return at that time, but He didn’t.

During the 14th century when the bubonic plague was devastating Europe, fearing that the end of the world was coming upon them, scholars again proclaimed that Jesus was about to return. But He didn’t. In more recent times, various ones proclaimed on the authority of the Bible that the return of Christ was at hand. This happened in 1844-45, 1918 (WWI), 1945 (WWII), 1975, 1988, 1989, 1997, 2008-9. But again, Jesus didn’t return. Because of these failures, the prophesy of the apostle Peter has been fulfilled many times over: “Knowing this first, that in the last days *there* will come mockers, walking according to their own personal lusts, and asking, ‘Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the forefathers died, everything has remained the same as from *the* beginning of creation.’ But this *fact* is hidden from them—they themselves choosing *to ignore it*—that by the Word of God *the* heavens existed of old, and *the* earth came forth out of water and amid water, by which the world at that time, having been deluged with water, had itself been destroyed. **But the present heavens and earth are being held in store by His Word, and are being reserved for fire in the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly”** (II Peter 3:3-7).

Why have so many been so wrong about the return of Jesus Christ? **Because it was not to be understood until the time of the end—the actual end—not an apparent end, as seen through the eyes of misguided men!**

Two Major Events That Must Happen First

While it is true that many times in history from the first century AD until now, many signs that Jesus said would precede His return have occurred over and over again. As He explained to His disciples, this would include false prophets, wars, rumors of wars, famine, pestilence, earthquakes, persecutions, and martyrdom. These all have happened, are happening, and will happen. But there are *two major events* that signal the beginning of the end—the Great Tribulation and the visible *sign* of Jesus' return.

Number 1—The “abomination that makes desolate” must stand in the holy place: Jesus was very specific in describing this event, because the Great Tribulation of the end cannot begin until the Temple in Jerusalem has been rebuilt and the “abomination of desolation” stands in the holy place. Notice what Jesus warned: “Therefore, when you see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (the one who reads, let him understand)... For then shall there be great tribulation, such as has not been from *the* beginning of *the* world until this time, nor ever shall be *again*” (Matt. 24:15, 21).

The parenthetical phrase “(the one who reads, let him understand)” was not spoken by Jesus. Rather, John was inspired to *add* in the phrase. When John was given the prophecies of Revelation in 95 AD, the Temple had already been destroyed, back in 70 AD. Yet at that time there was *no* “abomination of desolation” that stood in the holy place. Moreover, in the prophecy of the Two Witnesses in Revelation 11, John was given a vision of the Temple in Jerusalem. So he knew that before the end would come the Temple had to be rebuilt. This is why God inspired him to add this phrase in Matthew 24—to let us know that the end cannot come until the Jews rebuilt the Temple.

John also knew from Paul's second epistle to the Thessalonians that the “abomination of desolation” would be in the *person* of the anti-Christ—proclaiming that he himself was God: “Now we beseech you, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, that you not be quickly shaken in mind, nor be troubled—neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by epistle, as if from us, *saying* that the day of Christ is present. **Do not let anyone deceive you by any means because *that day will not come unless the apostasy shall come first, and the man of sin shall be revealed—the son of perdition, the one who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is an object of worship; so that HE COMES INTO THE TEMPLE OF GOD and sits down as God, proclaiming that he himself is God!***”

“Do you not remember that when I was still with you, I told you these things? And now you understand what is holding *him* back in order for him to be revealed in his own set time. For the mystery of lawlessness is already working; only *there is* one Who is restraining at the present *time* until it arises out of *the* midst. **And then the lawless one will be revealed (whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth, and will destroy with the brightness of His coming); even the one whose coming is according to *the* inner working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders,** and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in those who are perishing because they did not receive the love of the truth, so that they might be saved. And for this cause, God will send upon them a powerful deception that will cause them to believe *the* lie, so that all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but who took pleasure in unrighteousness” (II Thess. 2:1-12).

In the end time, this is the “abomination that makes desolate.” These scriptures also tell us that in addition to the Temple being rebuilt, the anti-Christ—the Beast of Revelation 13—must come on the scene *before* the return of Christ.

This event, in addition to all the others, must occur first!

The anti-Christ sitting in the Temple proclaiming himself to be God is the event that triggers the Great Tribulation. Again, it cannot begin until then: “Therefore, when you see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (the one who

reads, let him understand)... For **then shall there be great tribulation**, such as has not been from *the* beginning of *the* world until this time, nor ever shall be *again*” (Matt. 24:15, 21).

Number 2—The sign of the Son of Man appearing in heaven: While the first event originates from the efforts of men, the second key event comes directly from Jesus Christ Himself! As we will see, this *second event* signaling the end is colossal, actually taking place over a period of time. While it begins at a set time, it is not a single day’s event—neither is it a “secret rapture”! In order to better understand, we will need to look at certain events in sequence based on the framework of the holy days—particularly Pentecost and Trumpets.

The Sixth Seal of Revelation 6: When Jesus opens the sixth seal, He dramatically reveals Himself by an awesome display of power. The whole world will see it—but they won’t believe it! “And when He opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as *the* hair of sackcloth, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree casts its untimely figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. **Then the heaven departed like a scroll that is being rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place.** And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the powerful men, and every bondman, and every free *man* hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains; and they said to the mountains and to 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, because **the great day of His wrath has come**, and who has the power to stand?’ ” (Rev. 6:12-17).

As God of the Old Testament, Jesus prophesied that He is going to shake the heavens and the earth at His second coming: “For thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘Once *again*—it is yet a little while—I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land. **And I will shake all the nations**; and the desire of all nations [Jesus, the true Messiah] shall come...’” (Hag. 2:6-7).

Isaiah also wrote of this event. Notice how similar this is to Revelation 6: “And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth for fear of the LORD and for the glory of His majesty, **when He arises to shake terribly the earth.** In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made *each one* for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats; to go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the LORD and for the glory of His majesty, **when He arises to shake terribly the earth**” (Isa. 2:19-21). (As we will see later, God shakes the earth several more times.)

What happens when the heavens are “rolled back like a scroll”? Instantly, the heavens all around the world will be changed. The heavens, the earth, the oceans, and all nations will be shaken! An event like this has never before happened in the history of mankind. Everyone will experience it and see it. But what will people *see* as they look into the heavens?

Jesus tells us how these events will unfold, beginning with the Great Tribulation: “For then shall there be great tribulation [it begins when the “abomination of desolation” stands in the holy place], such as has not been from *the* beginning of *the* world until this time, nor ever shall be *again*. And if those days were not limited [to three and one-half years], there would no flesh be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days shall be limited. Then if anyone says to you, ‘Behold, here *is* the Christ,’ or, ‘*He is* there,’ do not believe *it*. For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and they shall present great signs and wonders, in order to deceive, if possible, even the elect. Behold, I have foretold *it* to you. **Therefore, if they say to you, ‘Come and see! He is in the wilderness’; do not go forth. ‘Come and see! He is in the secret chambers’; do not believe *it*’** (Matt. 24:21-26).

Clearly, Jesus is not coming as an ordinary man. Rather, He is coming in power and glory as God and King to rule the world!

To understand what Jesus’ return will look like, we must combine the passage in Revelation 6 dealing with the heavens “rolling back as a scroll” with the following scriptures of Matthew 24. It will be an awesome and fearful event, never before seen. “**For as the light of day** [the sun], **which comes forth from the east and shines as far as the west, so also shall the coming of the Son of man be....** But immediately after the tribulation [of two years of punishment against the twelve

tribes of Israel] of those days, **the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and THE POWERS OF THE HEAVENS SHALL BE SHAKEN. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven;** and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming upon the clouds of heaven with power and great glory” (Matt. 24:27-30).

Luke records additional details: “And there shall be signs in *the* sun and moon and stars, and on the earth distress and anxiety among *the* nations, *the* seas roaring with rolling surges; men dying of heart attacks from fear and dread of the things that are coming on the whole world; **for the powers of heaven shall be shaken**” (Luke 21:25-26).

When the heavens “roll back as a scroll,” the entire world will suddenly see what appears to be a *new sun*, never before observed in the heavens. It will shine, as does the sun, from east to west. Thus, this “new sun” will appear to be some new element of our solar system. This will be alarming, indeed! **This will be the sign of the coming of the Son of Man!**

The prophet Malachi prophesied of the *sign* of the Son of Man shining as the *sun*: “ ‘For behold, the day is coming, burning like a consuming oven; and all the proud, and every doer of wickedness, shall be stubble. And the day that comes shall burn them up,’ says the LORD of hosts, ‘and will leave them neither root nor branch. **But unto you who fear My name, the Sun of Righteousness shall arise, and healing will be in His wings...**’ ” (Mal. 4:1-2).

From these scriptures we can see that the return of Jesus Christ does not take place in one single day, but the whole world will continue to see the *sign* of the Son of Man—the “new sun” shining in the heavens—for nearly a *year* as He comes closer and closer to the earth.

The awesome event of the heavens “rolling back as a scroll” will take place approximately two years into the three and one-half year Great Tribulation, as shown by the prophecy in Hosea 5:15-6:2. This prophecy reveals that the first two years of the Tribulation is the time of God’s punishment against the twelve tribes of Israel for their sins. At the start of the Great Tribulation, when God begins to punish Israel, He says, “I will go; I will return to My place until they confess their guilt and seek My face; in their affliction they will seek Me earnestly” (Hosea 5:15).

While in captivity, for grievously departing from the Lord, the tribes of Israel will repent when they witness the events of the sixth seal and the heavens being “rolled back as a scroll.” **They will know that this is the hand of God!** Notice, as Hosea continues, that there is a time period defined in the terms of *days*. However, each day in prophecy equals a *year* in fulfillment (Num. 14:34). “Come and let us return to the LORD, for He has torn, and He will heal us; He has smitten, and He will bind us up. **After two days [two years] He will revive us; in the third day [at the beginning of the third year] He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight**” (Hosea 6:1-2).

From these scriptures we can observe that God’s correction on Israel will last for two years. Then, at the beginning of the third year, He will end their time of punishment and will begin to raise them up. For the remaining year and a half, the Tribulation will continue with greater intensity upon the rest of the nations.

How can we determine this?

The Sealing of the 144,000 in Revelation 7: The sequence of events from Revelation 6 continues in chapter 7 with the sealing of the 144,000, which depicts God beginning to raise up the children of Israel from their captivity in the third year, after two years of punishment.

Immediately after the heavens are “rolled back as a scroll,” when the heavens and earth are shaken, the *sign* of the Son of Man appears as a “new sun” in the heavens. Then, suddenly, there is a great calm. John writes: “And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, so that the wind might not blow on the earth, or on the sea, or on any tree. Then I saw another angel ascending from *the* rising of *the* sun, having *the* seal of *the* living God; and he cried out with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to damage the earth and the sea, saying, ‘Do not damage the earth, or the sea, or the trees until we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.’

“And I heard the number of those who were sealed: **one hundred forty-four thousand, sealed out of every tribe of the children of Israel.** From *the* tribe of Judah, twelve thousand *were* sealed; from *the* tribe of Reuben, twelve thousand *were* sealed; from *the* tribe of Gad, twelve thousand *were* sealed; from *the* tribe of Asher, twelve thousand *were* sealed; from *the* tribe of Naphtali, twelve thousand *were* sealed; from *the* tribe of Manasseh, twelve thousand *were* sealed; from *the* tribe of Simeon, twelve thousand *were* sealed; from *the* tribe of Levi, twelve thousand *were* sealed; from *the* tribe of Issachar, twelve thousand *were* sealed; from *the* tribe of Zebulun, twelve thousand *were* sealed; from *the* tribe of Joseph, twelve thousand *were* sealed; from *the* tribe of Benjamin, twelve thousand *were* sealed” (Rev. 7:1-8).

Combined with the prophecy of Hosea 6, it is apparent that God begins to raise up the children of Israel by sealing the 144,000. Since this is the beginning of the third year of the three and one-half year Great Tribulation, that means there is another one and one-half years of the Great Tribulation left, which comes against the rest of the world.

Not only are the 144,000 of the tribes of Israel sealed—that is, they are given the Holy Spirit for salvation—a great “innumerable multitude” is also sealed. Notice: “After these things I looked, and behold, **a great multitude, which no one was able to number, out of every nation and tribe and people and language,** was standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and *holding* palms in their hands; and they were calling out with a loud voice to Him Who sits on the throne and to the Lamb, saying, ‘The salvation of our God *has come*’ ” (verses 9-10). This shows that they will also receive the Holy Spirit for salvation.

Continuing: “Then all the angels stood around the throne, and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying, ‘Amen. Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power and strength *be* to our God into the ages of eternity. Amen.’

“And one of the elders answered *and* said to me, ‘These who are clothed with white robes, who are they, and where did they come from?’ Then I said to him, ‘Sir, you know.’ And he said to me, ‘**They are the ones who have come out of the great tribulation; and they have washed their robes, and have made their robes white in the blood of the Lamb**’ ” (Rev. 7:11-14).

Based on the framework for the time of the end, this sealing takes place on the next-to-the-last Pentecost during the three and one-half year period. This is God’s own personal harvest. Just as the apostles and new converts were sealed with the Holy Spirit on that first Pentecost, as recorded in Acts 2, the 144,000 and the “innumerable multitude” are likewise sealed on this Pentecost—one year before the first resurrection, which takes place on the *next* Pentecost.

These are the ones who receive salvation as depicted by the parable of the workers hired at the eleventh hour by the vineyard master, as described in Matthew 20:6-16.

After the 144,000 and the “innumerable multitude” are sealed on that Pentecost, the next holy day is the Feast of Trumpets. At this point, the Great Tribulation picks up again. Then the seven trumpet plagues begin the final year of the Great Tribulation—from Feast of Trumpets to Feast of Trumpets.

As we will see, and it is important to grasp, the “Day of the Lord” begins a short time prior to the next-to-the-last Pentecost (Rev. 6:12-17) during the three and one-half year Great Tribulation. However, the day of God’s wrath, which begins in Revelation 8, does not culminate until the Feast of Trumpets, when Christ and the resurrected saints descend from the Sea of Glass and return to the earth for the final battle of Armageddon. The duration of time from Revelation 6:12 until Revelation 19:11-21, with the destruction of the Beast and the False Prophet and their armies, is approximately a year and a half.

The Seven Trumpet Plagues: On this day, Jesus opens the seventh seal: “[*T*]here was silence in heaven *for* about a half hour. Then I saw the **seven angels** who stand before God, and **seven trumpets** were given to them. And another angel, who had a golden censer, came and stood at the altar; and much incense was given to him, so that he might offer *it* with the prayers of all the

saints on the golden altar that *was* before the throne. And the smoke of the incense went up before God from *the* hand of the angel, ascending with the prayers of the saints. And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire from the altar, and cast *it* into the earth; and there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings, and an earthquake” (Rev. 8:1-5).

The trumpet plagues begin a more intense phase of the Tribulation, pitting the angels of God against Satan and the demons and men. The *first four* plagues accelerate in rapid succession (Rev. 8:7-12). The *last three* plagues again escalate in intensity and power, so much so that they are called “three woes.”

In Revelation 9, when the fifth angel sounds his trumpet, which is the first woe, demons “like locusts” are loosed out of the Abyss (a prison for demons) and join with men to fight the armies of the east. They use a secret weapon that inflicts men with great pain, as if stung by super powerful scorpions, for five months (Rev. 9:1-12).

When the sixth angel sounds his trumpet, which is the second woe, it is even more horrific. Men and demons combine to retaliate with an army of two hundred million, using super powerful weapons as they counter-attack against the Beast and False Prophet and their armies in the Holy Land. Four angels bound in the river Euphrates are loosed and the river dries up, opening the way for the hordes from Asia (Rev. 9:13-19).

While these two great battles are being waged, the sign of the Son of Man—the “new sun” shining from the east to the west—is coming closer and closer to the earth. Suddenly this “sun” will streak toward the earth. When it reaches the upper clouds, it will suddenly spread out into a “great Sea of Glass.” Then people will *see* Jesus coming in the clouds as He reaches the atmosphere of the earth. Jesus will come in the clouds to a point right over Jerusalem. When the great Sea of Glass appears, the seventh angel will sound his trumpet—*on the final Pentecost*—and the dead in Christ will be raised to immortality. Next, those who are alive will be changed and caught up into the air by the angels and brought to the Sea of Glass. Notice: “And I saw a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, *and* over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having *the* lyres of God. And they were singing the song of Moses, *the* servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, ‘Great and awesome *are* Your works, Lord God Almighty; righteous and true *are* Your ways, King of the saints. Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For *You* only *are* holy; and all the nations shall come and worship before You, for Your judgments have been revealed” (Rev. 15:2-4). Other passages also describe the first resurrection (Rev. 11:15-19; I Thess. 4:13-17; Matt. 24:30-31; Rev. 14:14-16).

Later, after the first resurrection has been completed and we are all standing on the Sea of Glass, John writes, “Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and awesome: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is filled up.... And the seven angels who had the seven *last* plagues came out of the temple; they were clothed in linen, pure and bright, and girded about the chest with golden breastplates. And one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden vials, full of the wrath of God, Who lives into the ages of eternity. And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from His power; and no one was able to enter inside the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled” (Rev. 15:1, 6-8).

From the time of the first resurrection on the final Pentecost—during the last three and one-half years—to the Feast of Trumpets is a period of four months. During this time seven angels will pour out the seven last plagues, which are the wrath of God against the nations that continue to fight against Christ and the saints on the Sea of Glass in the clouds over Jerusalem.

When the sixth angel pours out his plague, the great river Euphrates is again dried up “so that the way of the kings from the rising of *the* sun might be prepared” (Rev. 16:12). In one last desperate attempt to defeat Jesus and the saints, Satan, the Beast, and the False Prophet send out demonic spirits to persuade the nations and their armies to come and fight against Christ and the resurrected saints: “Then I saw three unclean spirits like frogs *come* out of the mouth of the dragon,

and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet; for they are spirits of demons working miracles, going forth to the kings of the earth, even of the whole world, to gather them together to *the* battle of that great day of the Almighty God” (verses 13-14).

They are all gathered at Armageddon for the final battle—where they are utterly defeated: “And he [the sixth angel] gathered them together to the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon. **Then the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air;** and a loud voice came out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, “IT IS FINISHED.” And there were voices and thunders and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were on the earth, so mighty an earthquake, *and* so great. And the great city was divided into three parts; and the cities of the nations fell; and Babylon the Great was remembered before God to give her the cup of the wine of the fury of His wrath. And every island disappeared, and no mountains were found; and great hail, *each stone* the weight of a talent, fell down from heaven upon men; and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, for the plague was exceedingly great” (Rev. 16:16-21).

God’s judgment against Babylon the Great is described in Revelation 17 and 18. The results of the great, final battle at Armageddon are described in Revelation 19: “And after these things I heard *the* loud voice of a great multitude in heaven [all those of the first resurrection standing on the Sea of Glass], saying, ‘Hallelujah! The salvation and the glory and the honor and the power *belong* to the Lord our God. **For true and righteous are His judgments; for He has judged the great whore, who corrupted the earth with her fornication, and He has avenged the blood of His servants at her hand.**’ And they said a second time, ‘Hallelujah! And her smoke shall ascend upward into the ages of eternity.’ And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God, Who sits on the throne, saying, ‘Amen. Hallelujah!’

“And a voice came forth from the throne, saying, ‘Praise our God, all His servants, and all who fear Him, both small and great.’ And I heard a voice like that of a great multitude, and like *the* sound of many waters, and *the* sound of mighty thunders, saying, ‘Hallelujah! For *the* Lord God Almighty has reigned. Let us be glad and shout with joy; and let us give glory to Him; for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.’

“And it was granted to her that she should be clothed in fine linen, pure and bright; for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints. And he said to me, ‘Write: Blessed *are* those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.’ And he said to me, ‘**These are the true words of God.**’ And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said to me, ‘See *that you do not do this!* I am a fellow servant of yours, and of your brethren, who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.’

“Then I saw heaven open; and behold, a white horse; and **He Who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He does judge and make war.** And His eyes *were* like a flame of fire, and on His head *were* many crowns; *and* He had a name written that no one knows except Him. And *He was* clothed with a garment dipped in blood; and His name is The Word of God. **And the armies in heaven were following Him on white horses;** *and* they were clothed in fine linen, white and pure.

“And out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He might smite the nations; and He shall shepherd them with an iron rod; and He treads the winepress of the fury and the wrath of the Almighty God. And on *His* garment and on His thigh He has a name written: **King of kings and Lord of lords.**

“Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in *the* midst of heaven, ‘Come and gather yourselves together to the supper of the great God, so that you may eat *the* flesh of kings, and *the* flesh of chief captains, and *the* flesh of mighty *men*, and *the* flesh of horses, and of those who sit on them, and *the* flesh of all, free and bond, and small and great.’

“**And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies, gathered together to make war with Him Who sits on the horse, and with His army.** And the beast was taken, and

with him the false prophet who worked miracles in his presence, by which he had deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. **Those two were cast alive into the lake of fire, which burns with brimstone;** and the rest were killed by the sword of Him Who sits on the horse, *even the sword* that goes out of His mouth; and all the birds were filled with their flesh” (Rev. 19:1-21).

Finally, Satan and the demons are bound and locked up in the abyss: “Then I saw an angel descending from heaven, having the key of the abyss, and a great chain in his hand. And he took hold of the dragon, the ancient serpent, who is *the* Devil and Satan, and bound him *for* a thousand years. Then he cast him into the abyss, and locked him *up*, and sealed *the abyss* over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer until the thousand years were fulfilled...” (Rev. 20:1-3). Where Satan is bound, his demons will also be bound with him.

Now the world is ready for a *new beginning*—and we, as the immortal children of God, will help Jesus Christ rescue this world from sin and corruption and vanity: “And I saw thrones; and they that sat upon them, and judgment was given to them; and *I saw* the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and those who did not worship the beast, or his image, and did not receive the mark in their foreheads or in their hands; and **they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years....** This *is* the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is the one who has part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power. But they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years” (Rev. 20:4-6).

The apostle Paul writes of this *great spiritual inheritance* of the resurrected saints: “Now if *we are* children, *we are* also heirs—truly, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if indeed we suffer together with Him, so that we may also be glorified together with Him. For I reckon that the sufferings of the present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory that shall be revealed in us. **For the earnest expectation of the creation itself is awaiting the manifestation of the sons of God;** because the creation was subjected to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who subjected *it* in hope, in order that the creation itself might be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God” (Rom. 8:17-21).

Thus, the prophecies concerning the return of Jesus Christ, the resurrection of the saints, and the establishment of the glorious Kingdom of God are fulfilled.

Brethren, because of God’s wonderful plan and purpose for us and all the saints, we need to continue to draw close to the Father and Jesus Christ in heartfelt prayer and in the daily study of God’s Word—so that we can grow in grace and knowledge and always be overcoming. We thank God daily for His goodness and mercy for all His people. We thank you personally for your continued love and faithfulness to God and each other. We thank you for your prayers for us and all the brethren, and your faithfulness in your tithes and offerings. We pray that God will continue to bless you and keep watch over you in every way. We continue to pray for your health, your healing, and for God’s love and grace to be upon you in all circumstances.

With love in Christ Jesus,

Fred R. Coulter

FRC