

Three Reasons

Why

Jesus ~~Won't~~ *Didn't*

Come Back

on

October

~~May~~ 21, 2011



HASTENING THE DAY OF HIS COMING?

*What sort of people
ought you to be in lives
of holiness and godliness,
waiting for and hastening
the coming of the day of God?
(2 Peter 3:11)*

The Christian media is becoming increasingly obsessed with anticipating the second coming of Christ. Harold Camping, who for 50 years has answered listeners' Bible questions on his well-known radio program, speaks with confidence of Jesus' return on May 21, 2011, based on his calculations using Bible facts. Thousands of billboards announcing Judgment Day dot the American landscape in anticipation of that day.

However, it is worth noting that Mr. Camping has made this sort of prediction before. According to him, Jesus was supposed to have returned on September 6, 1994, and thousands of his listeners were greatly disappointed when that date came and went without the tumult one would expect from the sudden disappearance of all true Christians. Certainly many will profit from the opportunity presented by this latest prediction, but who really believes that Jesus will return? And if they do believe, how are they living their lives in anticipation of His return?

Will Durant, in his history of world civilization, writes,

"... few were the Christians who took seriously the notion that the world would end in the year 1000. At the beginning of the tenth century a Church council had announced that the final century of history had begun; at its close a small minority of men so believed, and prepared themselves for the Last Judgment. The great majority went on their wonted ways, working, playing, sinning, praying ..."

And so it is today. To most people, the possibility of the Son of God actually returning as the Bible says He will seems unreal, too fantastic to take seriously, let alone act upon.

There is good reason for people to feel that way. It is because they are totally unconnected to the vital events that will bring about the Messiah's return. Oh, some believe that He will return when Christian missionaries succeed in getting the Bible translated into every language and delivered into the hands of people of every nation and tribe and tongue. Others believe that He will return at a fixed date in history that one can calculate by gathering all the right numbers from the Bible and human history. Still others see human society crumbling and crashing down all around them and fear that the world can't go on much longer, so Jesus must be coming back soon. But very few people on the earth today realize that He is waiting for certain things to happen...

What is He Waiting For?

1 He is waiting for His Bride to be ready:

*That He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, **having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless.** (Ephesians 5:27)*

*Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and **His bride has made herself ready.** (Revelation 19:7)*

2 He is waiting for His enemies to be made a footstool for His feet:

*But He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God, **waiting from that time onward until His enemies be made a footstool for His feet.** (Hebrews 10:12-13)*

The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool." (Psalm 110:1)

3 He is waiting for the restoration of all things:

*Repent therefore and return, that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; and that He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you, **whom heaven must hold until the period of restoration of all things** about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time. (Acts 3:19-21)¹*

None of these things has happened, nor are any of them likely to be fulfilled any time soon. In fact, oddly enough, we who write this paper do not know of any Christian teacher or group that even recognizes the significance of these verses. *Do they seem significant to you?* ✱

¹ See page 20.

WHERE IS



THE BRIDE?

*Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory,
for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride
has made herself ready. It was granted her to clothe herself
with fine linen, bright and pure, for the fine linen
is the righteous deeds of the saints.
(Revelation 19:7-8)*

The most obvious reason why Jesus will certainly not come back on May 21, 2011, is that His Bride has not yet made herself ready. So we have to understand what that means, and even more fundamentally, who she is.

In both the Old and New Testaments, God's holy people are characterized as a bride being made ready for her king. Her betrothed husband and king is the Son of God, whose true name is Yahshua.¹ Paul's letter to the Ephesians makes it very clear what this king is looking for in His bride:

*Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.
(Ephesians 5:25-27)*

These qualities cannot be considered optional or out of reach, as though they will only be hers in heaven. No, they have to describe her actual condition *before He returns* — at least according to her king, Yahshua. He Himself set the standards to which His bride must attain in order to show that His sacrifice was not in vain.

The Bride is in Perfect Unity

One of the most essential attributes is the perfect unity she must have within herself:

*I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one **even as we are one**, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, **so that the world may know** that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.* (John 17:21-23)

This unity cannot be the least bit mystical, because real, observable unity is what it takes for the world to believe. After all, that is why He came — so that the world might believe. It is nonsense to say that all “true believers” everywhere are in unity, regardless of the 41,000+ Christian denominations that exist today,² with two more being formed every day. The unity Yahshua described is something the *world* must be able to *see* in order to *know* that He actually came the first time. The mystical unity that Christians claim to possess is merely an abstract theological concept that has no concrete reality, and therefore cannot be perceived by the world. It doesn’t cause anyone to believe in Him and keep His word.

The Bride Loves just as her King Loves

Furthermore, Yahshua said that His bride would be known to the world by her self-denying love:

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another. (John 13:34-35)

And there was to be nothing mystical about that love either. Rather, it was to be the practical reality of their daily lives, as the description of the early church in the Book of Acts shows,³ and as the Apostle John wrote many years later:

By this we know love, that He laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. But if anyone has the world’s goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God’s love

¹ See *The Name Above All Names* on page 11.

² <http://www.gordonconwell.edu/sites/default/files/IBMR2010.pdf>

*abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or talk but **in deed and in truth.*** (1 John 3:16-18)

There can be no excuse based on “human nature” or fantasies about all being one in heaven, for the apostles who walked with Yahshua brought it right home to the here and now:

*... but whoever keeps His word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may be sure that we are in Him: whoever says he abides in Him ought to walk **in the same way in which He walked.*** (1 John 2:5-6)

*By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as He is so also are we **in this world.*** (1 John 4:17)

So let’s dismiss once and for all the absurd notion that anyone is going to be “raptured” who has not been perfected in love so as to be *just like Yahshua*. Instead, such presumption will cause them to shrink back in terror at His coming, for they are not righteous as He is righteous.⁴ But Yahshua’s bride will be like Him, for because her hope is in Him, she purifies herself just as He is pure.⁵ And He will only return for a *compatible* bride.

The Bride is Twelve Tribes

*And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband... Then came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues and spoke to me, saying, “**Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb.**” And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. It had a great, high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel were inscribed.* (Revelation 21:2,9-12)

Regardless of whether any individual person considers himself to be “ready to meet the Lord,” if he has not entered through one of the twelve gates so as to be grafted into one of the twelve tribes of Israel, then he is definitely not part of the Bride.

“Twelve tribes?” you may wonder. “What do tribes have to do with being a true believer?”

Everything, actually!

The Bride is characterized as a city with twelve gates, one for each of its twelve tribes, but this is not simply a colorful metaphor. It is a practical reality. Yahshua purposefully chose twelve apostles and told them, “*You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.*”⁶ Of course, just those

³ Acts 2:42-47; 4:32-35 ⁴ 1 John 2:28-29 ⁵ 1 John 3:3; Revelation 19:7-8

⁶ Matthew 5:14

twelve men were not a city, but He chose them to be the *nucleus* of a new, spiritual Israel of twelve tribes.

The Twelve Tribes of the First-Century Church

After the first church was born on the day of Pentecost, it grew and spread throughout the Mediterranean world under the oversight of the apostles. In his defense before King Agrippa, Paul described the composition and occupation of the church about 25 years after it began:

*And now I stand here on trial because of my hope in the promise made by God to our fathers, to which **our twelve tribes** hope to attain, as they earnestly worship night and day. And for this hope I am accused by the Jews, O king!* (Acts 26:7)

“Twelve tribes?”
you may wonder.
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true believer?”

Some, in reading this passage, jump to the conclusion that Paul is speaking of the Jews in saying “our twelve tribes,” but that is impossible, since the Jews were his accusers. Besides, Israel had not been twelve tribes “earnestly worshiping night and day” since the days of King Solomon, a thousand years earlier.

They divided after Solomon’s death, and the northern ten tribes were later carried away into exile by the Assyrians. There they lost their identity and merged with the nations around them.

No, Paul was speaking of the restoration of the tribes of Jacob prophesied by Isaiah, and he understood his commission as an apostle in terms of that very prophecy:

It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel; I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.

(Isaiah 49:6)

And Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly, saying, “It was necessary that the word of God be spoken first to you. Since you thrust it aside and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles. For so the Lord has commanded us, saying, ‘I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.’”

(Acts 13:46-47)

As Paul labored to preach the gospel among the Gentiles, he understood that they were being grafted into the faith of Abraham, into the same spiritual root system from which old Israel had been severed,⁷ in order to make them jealous.⁸

⁷ Matthew 3:9-10; 21:43 ⁸ Romans 11:14; Deuteronomy 32:20-21

But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, although a wild olive shoot, were grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing root of the olive tree... (Romans 11:17)

Remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

(Ephesians 2:12-13)

And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise. (Galatians 3:29)

With that spiritual identity, the apostles labored in their different geographic regions within the Mediterranean world to establish a close-knit network of messianic communities where all who believed lived together as a commonwealth, sharing their lives and possessions.⁹ When one tribe was suffering financially, the others gave generously to meet the needs of their poorer brothers, under the administration of the apostles:

I do not mean that others should be eased and you burdened, but that as a matter of equity your abundance at the present time should supply their need, so that their abundance may supply your need, that there may be equality. As it is written, "Whoever gathered much had nothing left over, and whoever gathered little had no lack." (2 Corinthians 8:13-15)

This tribal life of love, care, and devotion to their God grew into a spiritual nation.

This tribal life of love, care, and devotion to their God grew into a spiritual nation dwelling in the midst of the political nations of their day, insulated but not isolated from the surrounding culture. The Apostle Peter described it this way:

*But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, **a holy nation**, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.* (1 Peter 2:9-10)

Because all of the members of this holy nation of twelve tribes took their priesthood seriously, their gatherings were characterized by a lively spontaneity and outspokenness. This was sharply distinct from the rote and ritual of the established religion of their day — and from what would soon overtake the generations following them.¹⁰ There was no professional

⁹ Acts 2:44; 4:32; 1 Ths 2:14 ¹⁰ 1 Corinthians 14:26-33; Colossians 3:16; Ephesians 5:19

clergy, no pews, not even any church buildings. Following the pattern their Master Yahshua had established, they gathered together in a circle in their homes or courtyards,¹¹ so they could look into one another's eyes as they sang or spoke whatever was on their hearts.

The Fall of the First Church

Thus the bride began to grow and develop over the first few decades after she was born on the day of Pentecost, 50 days after Yahshua's resurrection. But sadly, it was not long before signs of decline began to appear, such as the Apostle Paul addressed in the Corinthian church:

I feel a divine jealousy for you, for I betrothed you to one husband, to present you as a pure virgin to Christ. But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ. For if someone comes and proclaims another Jesus than the one we proclaimed, or brings a different spirit from the one you received, or a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it readily enough.
(2 Corinthians 11:2-3)

Obviously, Paul was very concerned that this betrothed Bride was in danger of falling far short of her high calling, and committing spiritual adultery.

In the last decade of the first century, Yahshua delivered to the Apostle John letters to seven key churches of the tribe that dwelt in the province of Asia (present-day Turkey). All but one of those letters, which are preserved in Revelation chapters 2 and 3, depict churches in an advanced state of decline, in imminent danger of losing their lampstand. In other words, the Holy Spirit who gives illumination was grieved, quenched, and nigh unto departing if they did not quickly repent and go back to their first love and first works.¹²



History tells a sad tale of the subsequent centuries. Their fervent communal life of love, unity, and equity¹³ disintegrated into rich and poor,¹⁴ living separately and "going to church" one day a week. Their once-lively gatherings descended into stale rote and ritual, with a professional clergy

¹¹ Mark 3:34-35; Acts 8:3; Romans 16:5; 1 Corinthians 16:9; Colossians 4:15; Philemon 1:2 ¹² Revelation 2:4-5 ¹³ Acts 4:32 ¹⁴ James 2:2-4 (The letter of James was written early in the second century.)

and a passive laity — the works of the Nicolaitans, which Yahshua hated.¹⁵ The virgin bride-to-be became a harlot, giving herself to “another Jesus, a different spirit,”¹⁶ and eventually marrying the Roman state under the Emperor Constantine. Then the bloodbath began as the once-persecuted became the persecutor, cruelly suppressing all dissent within and equally cruelly making converts at the point of the sword.

Where is the Bride Today?

Although there have been many promising movements of sincere people over the centuries, desiring to be obedient to the Scriptures, none have proven to be the Bride for whom Yahshua would return. All have either been eliminated through persecution or declined into compromise after one or two generations.¹⁷



So where is the Bride today? Certainly she is not to be found within the ranks of Christianity. There is nothing that even comes close to meeting the requirements of Yahshua, as they are uncompromisingly laid out in the Scriptures. Therefore, there is not the slightest possibility of Yahshua coming back any time soon.

There is, however, a bride in the making. Twelve tribes are emerging in twelve different geographic regions of the earth. They are in embryonic form, just beginning to develop into networks of vibrant communities that are living out the Scriptures, striving with all that is in them to be obedient from the heart to the greatest commandments:

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets. (Matthew 22:37-40)

When she has grown to full stature, and been perfected in her love, fulfilling all the Law and the Prophets by living out the gospel of the kingdom as a witness before all the nations, then the end will come.¹⁸ Only when the Bride has made herself ready *by doing those righteous deeds prepared for her*,¹⁹ by the grace God provides, will Yahshua the Messiah return for her.

¹⁵ Revelation 2:6,15; the word *Nicolaitan* is derived from *nikao*, meaning “to conquer,” and *laos* (from which comes *laity*), meaning “people,” hence, “people conquerors” — preachers who do all the speaking. ¹⁶ 2 Corinthians 11:4 ¹⁷ See our freepaper, *The Black Box*, for a revealing survey of Christian history: <http://twelvetribe.org/publications/black-box/> Write or call us for a free copy. ¹⁸ Matthew 24:14 ¹⁹ Revelation 19:7-8; Ephesians 2:10; 4:15-16

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them... We are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love. (Ephesians 2:10; 4:15-16)

If you want to be a part of the Bride, which is the Body of Messiah on earth, you must enter in through one of the twelve gates.²⁰ Come and visit one of the clans of the twelve tribes of spiritual Israel. You will find our addresses in the back of this freepaper. ✱

The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life freely.²¹
(Revelation 22:17)

²⁰ Revelation 21:12 ²¹ Freely means without any cause to hold you back from drinking the water of life.

THE NAME ABOVE ALL NAMES

In the days of John the Baptist and the Son of God, the preserved language of the devout Jews was Hebrew. So, when the angel Gabriel brought the good news to the Hebrew virgin, Miriam (or *Mary* in English), that she would give birth to the Savior of the world, and told her what His name would be, what language do you suppose he spoke? Hebrew, of course! And certainly Miriam and Yoceph (or *Joseph* in English) named the child just as the angel had commanded them — *Yahshua*.



In Matthew 1:21, your Bible probably reads, "... and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." But the name *Jesus* is a modern English adaptation of the Greek name, *Iesous*, which is itself a corruption of the original Hebrew name *Yahshua*. The name *Jesus* or *Iesous* has no meaning of its own, but the Hebrew name *Yahshua* literally means *Yahweh's Salvation*,¹ which makes sense out of what the angel said in Matthew 1:21, "... and you shall call His name *Yahshua*

¹ *Yah* is the personal name of God, and *shua* is from a Hebrew root word that means "to save." God identified Himself to Moses as *YAH* (meaning "I AM") in Exodus 3:14, as in Psalm 68:4 ("whose name is *Yah*"), and as most familiar in the word Halleluyah ("Praise *Yah*"). And in John 5:43 and 17:11, *Yahshua* says that He came in His Father's name, "the name which You have given Me" (NASB), so it is not surprising that the Father's name would be incorporated into the Son's name, *Yahshua*.

[*Yahweh's Salvation*], for He shall save His people from their sins."

If you look in an old King James Bible, you will find the name *Jesus* in these two passages:

*Which also our fathers that came after brought in with **Jesus** into the possession of the Gentiles, whom God drave out before the face of our fathers, unto the days of David...* (Acts 7:45, KJV)

*For if **Jesus** had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.*

(Hebrews 4:8, KJV)

However, if you look in any modern translation of the Bible, including the New King James, you will find that in place of the name *Jesus* they use the name *Joshua*, for in the context it is clear that it is speaking there of Moses' successor and not the Son of God. But in the Greek manuscript the name in both of these verses is *Iesous*.

You see, *Joshua* is the popular English transliteration of the Hebrew name *Yahshua*. Joshua of the Old Testament had the same name as the One called *Jesus* in the New Testament, for Joshua was the prophetic forerunner of the Son of God, bringing Israel into the Promised Land and leading them to victory over their enemies. But since

the translators obviously know this fact, why do they only translate *Iesous* as *Joshua* in these two verses, and as *Jesus* everywhere else?

The NIV New Testament even has a footnote supporting this fact under Matthew 1:21: "*Jesus is the Greek form of Joshua.*"

But the fact is, the name of God's Son was not even written or pronounced as "Jesus" in English until the 1600s, simply because there was no "J" sound or letter in English before then.² The modern letter "J" evolved from the letter "I" which

began to be written with a "tail" when it appeared as the first letter in a word. So in Old English the name now written as *Jesus* was actually written and pronounced much like the original Greek *Iesous*. Eventually the hard "J" sound crept into the English language to ac-

company the different way of writing the initial "I" in the name.

You may also find it interesting that in Acts 26:14-15, it says that the Apostle Paul heard the name of the Son of God pronounced "in the Hebrew tongue" by the Son of God Himself, so he certainly didn't hear the Greek name *Iesous* or the English name *Jesus*, but rather the Hebrew name, the name above all names — *Yahshua*.³ ✱

The name of God's son was not written or pronounced as "Jesus" in English until the 1600s.

² *Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford University Press, 1971), pp. 1496,1507 ³ Philippians 2:9; Acts 4:12

FULFILLING ALL PROPHECY



Cracking the mysteries of Bible prophecy doesn't depend on anyone's meticulous calculations, rigorous examination of the Scriptures, or knowledge of ancient languages. There have been many crackpots over the years, claiming some special insight into the mysteries of the Scriptures. At best they have amounted to nothing, and at worst, they have launched crusades and inquisitions. It is not God's fault. He has placed the key to fulfilling all the prophecies right in plain sight, where anyone can read it.

Yes, there are many exciting prophecies that wait for their fulfillment, including the restoration of the twelve tribes of Israel, the valley of dry bones rising to life, the return of the Messiah, the promise to Abraham that his descendants would dwell in an enemy-free land between the Euphrates and the River of Egypt, to name a few. It could be tempting to believe that it will all happen in a dramatic display of divine intervention in the otherwise bleak landscape of today's world.

Yet the fulfillment of all that is in the Law and the Prophets depends on a humble people who have the

heart to lay hold of one special treasure and spend it lavishly in two ways. It requires neither great learning nor wealth nor power — nothing that men call great. Yet no one has laid hold of it for long enough to achieve its full effect — the restoration of all things that have been in our Creator's heart from the beginning.

Here is the secret key, the special treasure:

You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.

(Matthew 22:37-40)

Yes, the only thing necessary to fulfill all prophecy is *love*. Not just any love, but love for God and your neighbor expressed with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. This truth has been in billions of people's hands over the past 2,000 years, yet the lack of this love on the earth is what has kept Yahshua, the Messiah, in heaven — nothing more, nothing less. ✨

THE LAST DAY

***For this is the will of my Father,
that everyone who beholds the
Son and believes in Him
may have eternal life;
and I myself will raise him up
on the last day.
(John 6:40)***

The last day is an actual day in the future. It is the day that Yahshua the Messiah will come back to this earth in the same way He left.¹ He will claim His bride and will establish His kingdom, His rulership over the earth. He told His disciples He would do this when He was with them on the Mount of Olives, just before He went up into the heavens and disappeared in the clouds. On the day He returns, He will come down to earth through the clouds in flaming fire, accompanied by His mighty angels.

On *that* day He is going to give relief to His people on the earth who are all being persecuted and afflicted — to His strained and stressed ones who have endured to the end.² He will give His faithful ones rest — those who have proved their love for Him by their patient endurance and their obedience to Him.

At the same time, He is going to deal out tribulation and vengeance to those who have suppressed the truth in their consciences (what they know about God), and also to those who have heard and have not obeyed the gospel of our Sovereign, Yahshua the Messiah. That is the day when He brings an end to this wicked and perverse generation.³

He is *not* going to give relief to His people by taking them up in the sky sometime *before* the last day. Relief to His disciples will come on the *same* day He deals out retribution to His enemies.⁴ When is this *last day*? It is on the last day of the seven years of the Great Tribulation⁵ when the *last* trumpet sounds.⁶ At this moment the Sovereign Yahshua will descend with a shout, and the dead in Messiah will rise out of their graves. Those who are alive and have remained faithful to Him will be caught up together with those disciples who come out of their graves to meet their Master Yahshua in the clouds. From that time on they will always be with Him.⁷

Who will He come for?

Our Master Yahshua made it clear in John 6:39,40,44,54 that the resurrection of His people would come on the *last day* of this age. This is the true “rapture.” This is the second coming of Messiah for His elect, His bride who

¹ Acts 1:11 ² 2 Thessalonians 1:7; Matthew 24:13 ³ Acts 2:40; Galatians 1:4

⁴ 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10 ⁵ Matthew 24:29-31; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

⁶ 1 Corinthians 15:52 ⁷ 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17

is crying out for Him in the wilderness day and night.⁸ The bride who will be raptured is depicted in Revelation as a woman clothed with the sun, with a crown of twelve stars on her head, and with the moon under her feet.⁹

Midway through the tribulation period, she will flee to the wilderness to a place prepared for her.¹⁰ There she will be cared for during a period of 1,260 days.¹¹ She will have been persecuted and forced out of society, because her way of life was a testimony against the world that its deeds were evil.¹² She will be hated by all men, just as her Bridegroom promised.¹³ She will be hated by all nations and persecuted — not because she has committed mass murder (like the *Crusades*) or molested children (as some “priests” have done) or isolated herself in some far-away compound or armed herself (as doomsday cults) to fight against the evil empire of the Beast — but because she had the love of her Bridegroom, her Sovereign Yahshua, filling her, producing the unity and peace that qualified her as the true witness of God’s salvation.¹⁴



Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. (1 Corinthians 15:51-52)
For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17)

As a restored twelve-tribed nation she fulfills the prophecy of Isaiah 49:6. She becomes the witness of the kingdom¹⁵ that He is waiting for as the sign heralding His second coming.¹⁶ This woman in the wilderness is the Stone kingdom cut out of the mountain of the world in Daniel 2:34,45. There will be no more room for this Stone in this evil age. She will be in her final moments of crying out to Him, longing for His ap-

⁸ Luke 18:7 ⁹ Revelation 12:1-2

¹⁰ Revelation 12:1-14 ¹¹ Revelation 12:6,14; a time, times, and half a time.

¹² John 16:1-3,8 ¹³ Matthew 10:22; 24:9; Mark 13:13; Luke 21:17; John 7:7; 15:18,19,23; 17:14 ¹⁴ Isaiah 43:12

¹⁵ Matthew 24:3,14 ¹⁶ Acts 1:8,11

pearing,¹⁷ just before her Bridegroom calls for her and takes her with Him to destroy all the kingdoms of the world.

From the beginning, when she first fell in love with Him, she knew that she would have to go *outside the camp* of the established religion to be with Him.¹⁸ She could no longer be comfortably conformed to the way of the world. She lives only to please her Bridegroom. Soon He will come for her, and He will not delay long. She can even count the days: 1,260 of them.¹⁹ At that time, she knows when to expect Him. He will come on the *last* of the 1,260 days.²⁰

So, who is the bride? The bride is the “we” that will be “changed in a moment ... at the last trumpet,” and the “we” who will be “alive and remain [when we are] caught up in the air to meet Him in the clouds.” So, who are the “we”? Are you the “we” or are we the “we” ... or are we *both* the “we”? Our eternal destiny depends on how we answer these questions.

Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.
(Matthew 24:29-31)

What will be Happening on the Earth at that Time?

Just before the woman flees to the wilderness, she gives birth to a generation of pure young virgin men.²¹ This means they are sent out from her, 12,000 from each of her twelve tribes. After she flees, the Man of Lawlessness, who is Satan incarnate, goes after these 144,000 pure ones who will be warning all the inhabitants of the earth of the coming judgments of God. As the plagues of the Great Tribulation come upon the earth in the midst of their preaching, they let the people know that the strange occurrences of Isaiah 24:6 and Revelation 16:9 are a result of men breaking the age-lasting covenant with God.²²

They will preach their message for 1260 days and will be killed one by one.²³ When the last one is slain, the spiritual mask of the Beast’s magnificent civilization will be ripped away, the dark covering of the earth will be peeled back, exposing the leader as the embodiment of Satan himself. He will be responsible for the death of those 144,000 innocent men, along with the two witnesses whose bodies will lie in the streets of Jerusalem as the

¹⁷ 2 Timothy 4:8; Hebrews 9:28 ¹⁸ Hebrews 13:13-14 ¹⁹ Revelation 12:14

²⁰ Revelation 17:14 ²¹ Revelation 12:1-6 ²² Genesis 3:16-19 ²³ Revelation 6:9-11

whole world rejoices. After 3½ days these two witnesses will come back to life and, in so doing, give witness to the salvation of our God just as the *LAST TRUMPET* sounds! The dead in Messiah will rise from their graves, and those who are alive and remain in the wilderness will be caught up in the air to meet Him as He comes in the clouds on the *LAST DAY*.²⁴

What will He do when He Comes?

When His people are caught up in the air to meet Him, He will go with them to the Valley of Meggido in Israel to fight the Battle of Armageddon. All the armies of the earth will be gathered there to wage war against Him.²⁵ They know He is coming because the 144,000 will have sacrificed their lives to proclaim it for 1260 days.²⁶ Satan, through the Man of Lawlessness, will actually think his armies can destroy the Sovereign Yahshua. He will convince all the kings of the earth²⁷ to join him because, at this point, the only ones still remaining are the unjust and filthy — liars who pay attention to the father of liars.²⁸ Instead of being destroyed, our Master Yahshua will wage war and defeat the armies of the earth. This battle will last 30 days and will be like no battle ever before or since. The blood of those slain will be up to the bridles of the horses.²⁹ Our Master Yahshua's cloak will be stained red from the blood of His enemies. Then He will place His feet down on the Mount of Olives to begin His reign of peace with His bride for 1000 years.

And as you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, it shall be a divided kingdom... And as the toes of the feet were partly iron and partly clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly brittle. As you saw the iron mixed with soft clay, so they will mix with one another in marriage, but they will not hold together, just as iron does not mix with clay. And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever. (Daniel 2:41-44)

What keeps Him from Coming Today?

Our Master Yahshua cannot come back now because many of the prophecies of the Bible are not yet fulfilled. One example is the rise and seven-year reign of a world leader variously known as the Antichrist, the Beast,³⁰ or the Man of Lawlessness.³¹ He will come to power through an alliance of church and state that will bond the whole world together. This alliance is symbolized in

²⁴ Revelation 17:14; John 6:40;
²⁵ 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 ²⁶ Revelation 19:11-21 ²⁷ Revelation 19:20
²⁸ Proverbs 17:4; 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12 ²⁹ Revelation 14:20 ³⁰ Revelation 13:3-7 ³¹ 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12



Daniel 2 as the ten toes of the statue, made of iron mixed with clay.³² The iron is the beast of Revelation 17 and the clay is the other woman,³³ the unfaithful bride who has become a harlot.

This harlot is also depicted in Revelation 17 as a woman drunk with the wine of her immorality, riding on the back of the Beast. She used to be the betrothed Bride of Messiah but has become a harlot by not being faithful to follow the Bridegroom. The description in Revelation 18:2,4 says she has *become* (i.e., her nature gradually changed into) the dwelling place of every unclean spirit. After the Man of Lawlessness (the Beast) comes into power, he turns on his former ally, the harlot, and destroys her with fire in one

hour.³⁴ After that he will establish his absolute authority over the earth, since the restraint of the harlot's religious principles will be lifted.³⁵

Messiah can't just return "any day now." Many things must happen before that last day. His bride is only now being formed, as a baby still in the womb. She is not yet fully formed into the spiritual nation of twelve tribes that the prophets have foretold.³⁶ The tribes of Jacob must be raised up, and everything must be restored that the first-century disciples lost when they left their first love, staining the white garment they had received at their baptism.³⁷ The pure message that Messiah brought in the beginning has to be proclaimed once again. The witness of the coming kingdom has to spread to the ends of the earth.³⁸

You may have heard some say that the Bible indicates a day when Messiah will rapture His people like a thief in the night, at some arbitrary time that is not based on a bride being prepared for Him. But actually, the last day is still a long ways off, and this fact is part of the good news. Our Master

³² Daniel 2:41-43 ³³ Revelation 17:3,18 ³⁴ Revelation 17:16 ³⁵ 2 Thessalonians 2:7

³⁶ Isaiah 49:6; Revelation 7:4-8; 12:1; 21:9-12 ³⁷ Revelation 2:4-5; 3:4-5; Galatians 3:27

³⁸ Matthew 21:43; 24:14; Malachi 1:11; Acts 26:6-8

told the story in Luke 14 about two kings who would one day have to face one another in battle.³⁹ The lesser king with the smaller army considered whether he could stand against the one who was coming. Realizing that he had no hope of victory, he sent a delegation to ask for terms of peace while the greater king was still far away. He knew that if he waited until the last day to submit, then the conquering king would have no mercy on him.⁴⁰

So this is our message of hope for you — that you would realize that our Master, the Messiah, is the greater king, and that He is coming for His bride, and when He comes for her, He will bring this fallen world and everything that it stands for to its deserved end. There is no hope of resisting Him who conquered death itself. But now, while He is still a long ways off, you have the opportunity to meet His terms of peace. If you do, then you will become a part of the we who eagerly await His return.⁴¹

You can be as the king in Luke 14:31-32 who became (as we all did ourselves) His disciples by doing what all who are His disciples must do in order to belong to Him — give up your life, including all your possessions.⁴² Only in this way can you become one of the “we” in 1 Thessalonians 4:17. Then we (that could include you also), together with all the faithful ones who have gone before us, will be taken up to meet Him in the air, and so shall we ever be with our Master.⁴³

Or what king, going out to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and deliberate whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? And if not, while the other is yet a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace. So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple. (Luke 14:31-33)

What We Need to Know

The last day is at the very end of this age, the day when the Messiah will return to earth.⁴⁴ This present evil age comes to an end only when He returns.⁴⁵ When His holy nation of twelve tribes produces the fruit of the kingdom He will return and establish His kingdom on the earth.⁴⁶ This fruit can only be produced when brothers and sisters are allied together in the same cause, working and living together in communion (not in division), standing as one man, one body, serving one Master.⁴⁷

Messiah will rule here on earth for a thousand years with His people who have become a kingdom and priests.⁴⁸ They are His holy nation, the same nation Isaiah prophesied would be restored,⁴⁹ the same common-

³⁹ Luke 14:32-33 ⁴⁰ Revelation 19:11-21 ⁴¹ Hebrews 9:28 ⁴² Luke 14:33; see also John 12:25-26 ⁴³ Revelation 17:14 ⁴⁴ Luke 22:18; 1 Corinthians 11:26 ⁴⁵ Matthew 24:14; Galatians 1:4; 1 John 5:19 ⁴⁶ Matthew 21:43; 1 Peter 2:9; Hebrews 10:13; Daniel 7:18,27 ⁴⁷ Proverbs 17:17; Ephesians 4:1-6 ⁴⁸ Revelation 1:6; 5:9,10; 20:6; Exodus 19:6 ⁴⁹ Isaiah 49:6

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes. And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the land with a curse. (Malachi 4:5-6)

At the appointed time, it is written, you [Elijah] are destined to calm the wrath of God before it breaks out in fury, to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and to restore the tribes of Jacob. (Ecclesiasticus 48:10)

wealth of Israel that Paul reminded the Ephesians they had been grafted into.⁵⁰ This nation is also the wife of the Lamb⁵¹ and the twelve tribes that James wrote to in his epistle.⁵² It is the same twelve tribes that Paul spoke of in Acts 26:6-7, who earnestly serve God day and night.

The Restoration of All Things

It is during Messiah's thousand-year rule on earth that the promise to Abraham is going to be fulfilled. Israel will be *resurrected*. The dry bones of the natural seed will come up from their graves and return to the land of Israel⁵³ at the same time that the kingdoms of this world become the

kingdom of our Sovereign Yahshua.⁵⁴ At this time the twelve apostles of the Lamb will sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.⁵⁵ Thus the promise to Abraham will be fulfilled — to give him the land from the river of Egypt to the great river Euphrates. Israel will become a majestic nation and bring about all that God promised to Abraham. This will be fulfilled during our Master Yahshua's millennial reign.⁵⁶

In that day Israel will be an enemy-free land, and all of its inhabitants will dwell together in peace. But before that physical restoration can come in the next age, a spiritual restoration has to come first to His spiritual nation in this age⁵⁷ — not a *reformation*, but a *restoration* of the very way of life that was in the beginning in Jerusalem after Peter preached on the day of Pentecost.⁵⁸ The restoration of His people can be no other way. That means the church can be no other way. The world needs to see the hearts of fathers restored to their children and the hearts of children restored to their fathers.⁵⁹ The world must see husbands and wives living together as one, thus restoring families, clans, and tribes to become that holy nation.⁶⁰

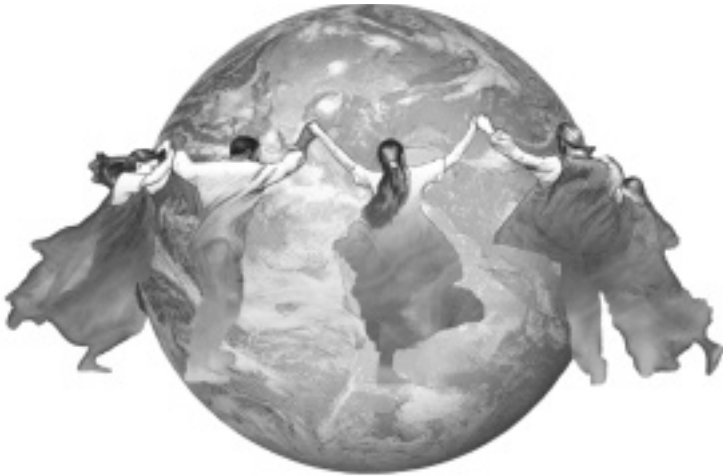
The prophet Jeremiah spoke of this restoration of spiritual Israel in this age when God would "restore the fortunes of Jacob's tents, have mercy on his dwelling places — rebuilding the city on her ruins." It is a time when "their *community* will be restored."⁶¹ God promised that "at that time" He will be the God of all the families of Israel.⁶² The Hebrew word translated

⁵⁰ Ephesians 2:12; Romans 11:17 ⁵¹ Revelation 21:9,12 ⁵² James 1:1 ⁵³ Ezekiel 37:11-14 ⁵⁴ Revelation 11:15 ⁵⁵ Matthew 19:28 ⁵⁶ Genesis 15:18; 17:3-8; 18:19 ⁵⁷ Matthew 17:11; Mark 9:12 ⁵⁸ Acts 2:37-47 ⁵⁹ Malachi 4:6 ⁶⁰ 1 Peter 2:9-10 ⁶¹ Jeremiah 30:20 ⁶² Jeremiah 30:17-31:4

community or congregation in Jeremiah 30:20 is actually *edah*, which means *witness*. This witness spoken of by the prophet Jeremiah is the same witness spoken of by our Master Yahshua as the sign of the end of the age. This witness must be restored as a demonstration to all nations before the end of this present evil age can come.⁶³ Jeremiah also prophesied that these restored families who make up this witness, the true church, will be the ones who “survive the sword” (i.e., government onslaught), “find favor in the wilderness,” and will be “given rest [or relief].” This prophecy is talking about the true church, the woman who flees to the wilderness,⁶⁴ who survives the sword of the Man of Lawlessness and finds relief or rest on the day our Master Yahshua returns.⁶⁵

God’s holy nation are the merry-makers and circle dancers,⁶⁶ the forerunners of that coming age of peace. We are the harbingers in this age who overcome all the spiritual enemies that keep this life from being demonstrated to the world. We put our spiritual enemies under the feet of our Master Yahshua. Once these spiritual enemies have been defeated by the royal priesthood and holy nation in this age,⁶⁷ our Master Yahshua will return to establish His kingdom,⁶⁸ and then the land can be restored to the physical descendants of Abraham in the next age. When He comes back, He will punish those who oppressed His bride,⁶⁹ the restored twelve tribes of Israel, and will contend with those who contended with them.⁷⁰

This full restoration is what we are living for, which will be carried out by the spiritual nation⁷¹ that is now being raised up in these last days to bring about the *LAST DAY*. ✱



⁶³ Matthew 24:3,14 ⁶⁴ Revelation 12:1-17 ⁶⁵ 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10 ⁶⁶ Jeremiah 30:19; 31:4 ⁶⁷ Hebrews 10:13 ⁶⁸ Daniel 7:18,27 ⁶⁹ Jeremiah 30:20 ⁷⁰ Isaiah 49:6,25,26 ⁷¹ 1 Peter 2:9; Revelation 1:6; 5:9-10



Every so often, when things get really bad, or when a new theory comes along about Bible prophecies, an old cycle gets repeated. Someone rises up, all excited, saying that the time is near for Jesus to return. People listen, a movement begins, and the faithful wait expectantly for Jesus. But He doesn't come.

When this happens, reactions differ. Some people scramble frantically to reinterpret the Bible. Others become bitter and reject religion altogether. But most are simply puzzled. After all, Jesus did so many good works and said so many wonderful things, He obviously wasn't just another huckster. So why hasn't He returned as He promised? Didn't His disciples ask Him, point-blank, "What sign will announce your coming and the end of this age?"¹ And didn't He give them a point-blank answer? You've probably heard some of the things He talked about: false prophets, false messiahs, false miracles, wars, famines, earthquakes, persecution of His followers, many deserting His cause, people betraying even their own family members, and so on. Most of these things have happened repeatedly, but He never showed up, and the world didn't end. How come?

Well, for one thing, He said very clearly that when those things happened it wouldn't be the end yet. Those events would only be like a pregnant woman's first mild contractions. The hard labor pains would still be a long way off. So if someone predicts the second coming based on an increase in earthquakes, wars, famines, or cult leaders, you can know he wasn't paying attention when he read the Bible.

¹ Matthew 24:3-13

But if none of those things is the sign, what is? Is it increased lawlessness and lack of love? Hasn't humanity *always* suffered from a lack of love? Did the Savior just sidestep the issue, refusing to give His followers the sign they asked for, leaving them with a general warning against worry?

No, He actually went on to tell them when the end would come. And yet, His answer is usually overlooked, even though it's listed right there along with all the other prophecies. You've probably never even heard about it. The writers of Christian end-time books don't mention it, maybe because they don't understand it — or maybe because it's not sensational enough to sell any books. Here's what He said:

"This Good News of the Kingdom shall be proclaimed throughout the whole world to set the evidence before all the Gentiles; and then the end will come."²

Well, there it is. You'll have to admit, it doesn't sound like much of a sign — *unless you understand what it means*. Then it is earth-shaking. It explains exactly why the eagerly anticipated Second Coming hasn't happened for 2000 years. The sign is made up of 1) the particular message, 2) its proclamation, and 3) the evidence it produces. It has to be *this* Good News — a *specific* message — not just any old "gospel," but the *Gospel of the Kingdom*. It has to be proclaimed in the whole world. And it can't just be a bunch of words; it has to actually produce some *evidence*. Then, finally, the end will come.

That message obviously hasn't been proclaimed everywhere yet, because the end hasn't come. In fact, as historians have pointed out, the Kingdom has hardly even been mentioned in the last 2000 years (see box at right). And since the Son of God *always* meant *exactly* what He said, He's not going to show up until *His* message gets preached *and* obeyed³ *and* all the people who don't know God get to take a look at the evidence.

² Matthew 24:14

³ Matthew 28:19-20

THE MESSAGE OF THE KINGDOM

"The Kingdom of Heaven, which was the main teaching of Jesus, and which plays so small a part of the Christian creeds, is certainly one of the most revolutionary doctrines that ever stirred and changed human thought. It is small wonder if the world of that time failed to grasp its full significance... For the doctrine of the Kingdom of Heaven, as Jesus seems to have preached it, was no less than a bold and uncompromising demand for a complete change and cleansing of the life of the struggling race, an utter cleansing without and within."

— H.G. Wells, *The Outline of History*, Vol 1, page 422 (1961).

Evidence

Many people know the story of “doubting Thomas.” He was the disciple who wouldn’t believe that Yahshua had risen from the dead until he saw Him with his own eyes. Not many realize, though, that Thomas wasn’t alone. None of the disciples believed He was alive when they merely heard the testimony of others.

It’s amazing — and significant — how He responded to their unbelief. Do you know what He did? He showed Himself to them and gave them many convincing proofs of His resurrection.⁴ Yes, that’s right, He *didn’t* curse them for not believing. Instead, He gave them *visible evidence* of His triumph over death. And He isn’t going to treat the rest of the world any different. He’s not going to require them to believe unless He shows them something.

***Yahshua didn’t
curse them for not
believing.***

***Instead,
He gave them
visible evidence
of His triumph
over death.***

So, how is this evidence supposed to be produced? It’s simple. Messiah Yahshua’s message is made up mainly of commands.⁵ That is why the Bible speaks of obeying the gospel.⁶ Those commands teach His disciples how to love each other the way He loved them. Only when His disciples love like He loved, will the world “get the connection.” Only then will the world *know* that He was sent from heaven to take their place in death. Only then will they be *convinced* that God loved them just as much as He loved His own Son.⁷

What is so convincing, then, about doing what Yahshua said? Well, obeying His commands results in a radical life, one that differs starkly from the self-centered existence of the world.⁸ You see, for all men, even the best of them, self-preservation is the bottom line. It’s almost inescapable. The evil spirit who rules the world holds all its people under his power by the fear of death, but obeying Messiah frees a person from that power. So, when all of Yahshua’s disciples are set free to love as He loved, the world will sense that death has been conquered. They will understand that Yahshua has been given all authority in heaven and on earth.

Seeing the disciples loving one another is what it will take for the world to believe that God loves them as much as He loves His Son Yahshua. It’s all connected to the fact that human beings were made in God’s image. Our concept of God depends a lot on our experience of humanity. A person can accept an idea or doctrine that “God is love” easily enough, but he won’t *know* that God loves him until he sees human beings loving that way. When there is evidence of real people forgiving one another and overlooking each other’s shortcomings in order to have one heart and one way — only then will the world truly understand that God has that same love in His heart for them as well. When His love is made real to them, they, too, will begin to obey Yahshua’s commands, for true obedience is based on love.

An Unshakable Kingdom

Such a life of obedience actually brings a person into another kingdom — placing him under the authority of heaven.⁹ When the world sees the disciples of Yahshua the Messiah dwelling together in unity, denying themselves for the good of their brothers, it proves something. It shows that there is a power at work on the earth greater than man's natural ability. Man can naturally be tolerant of others, or even help those less fortunate than himself, especially in an emergency, but he can't forsake his own interests enough to live entirely for others the way Yahshua did. The spirits that work in the unseen realm won't let him.

***God is love,
and whoever abides
in love abides in God,
and God abides
in him.***

***By this is love
perfected with us,
so that we may have
confidence for the day
of judgment, because
as He is so also are we
in this world.
(1 John 4:16-17)***

The power to love as our Master Yahshua loved is the power of the age to come. It is the power of an unshakable kingdom that is going to bring this present age to an end.¹⁰ This kingdom will fill the earth in the next age, but that age can't start yet. It can't start until that power is demonstrated in this age¹¹ so that people can choose what power they want to be under — the power of love¹² or the power of death. That is what our Master is waiting for. He is the invincible King who rules the unshakable kingdom.

By the power of love, He took the sin of all mankind on Himself and suffered the agony of death we all deserved. By the power of love, He shook off the shackles of death and rose victorious. By that same power He is coming to take over the earth. When He finally comes, no one will be able to withstand His power,¹³ no matter how hard they try. They also won't have any excuse for refusing to believe the evidence set before them.¹⁴ ✱

⁴ John 20:25-31; Acts 1:3 ⁵ John 3:36; 7:17; 8:51; Acts 5:32; Romans 1:5; 10:16; 15:18; 16:26; Hebrews 5:9 ⁶ Matthew 7:24-27; 2 Thessalonians 1:8; 1 Peter 4:17

⁷ John 3:16; 13:34-35; 17:22-23 ⁸ Luke 9:24 ⁹ 1 John 5:19; Colossians 1:13

¹⁰ Hebrews 12:26-29; Daniel 2:44 ¹¹ Hebrews 10:13 ¹² 1 John 4:18 ¹³ Luke 14:31-32

¹⁴ 2 Thessalonians 2:11-12



“YOU MEAN, WE ACTUALLY HAVE TO DO SOMETHING?”

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them... We are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love. (Eph 2:10; 4:15-16)

These works are what *all who call upon the name of the Lord* are engaged in doing (if they have the *same Lord Paul* had¹), as they earnestly serve Him night and day² *where He is*.³ *There* they are made ready for His return by doing those works. *There*, in the places where He has caused His name to dwell, are the only places where all who believe can be to receive eternal life — where brothers and sisters *dwell together in unity* — for *there* is where God commands the blessing of *life everlasting*.⁴

All who believe live together.⁵ They *must* live together in order to obey the Son.⁶ “Love one another as I have loved you” is the Lord’s commandment,⁷ and that love fulfills all the Law and the Prophets.⁸ Of course, we know love by this: He laid down His life for us, therefore we ought to lay down our lives for one another.⁹ So those who “believe in His name” must believe *enough* to love one another as He commanded.¹⁰ Only by this can anyone *know* and have *confidence* from the Holy Spirit¹¹ that he has indeed passed out of eternal death and into eternal life,¹² since he is actually laying down his life *daily*¹³ for his fellow believers.

God is love. Abiding in His love causes all who believe to live together in unity like the Father and the Son, just as the Lord prayed the night before He was crucified.¹⁴ Love and unity is *the sign and the witness* of the kingdom that will be seen by the eyes of all the unbelieving nations. As they *observe our behavior*¹⁵ *in every place* (locality or township), they will come to know and believe in the love God has for them, that He “so loved the world” as His own Son:

¹ 1 Corinthians 1:2 ² Acts 26:7 ³ John 12:26 ⁴ Psalms 133:1-3 ⁵ Acts 2:44

⁶ 1 John 3:16,36 ⁷ John 13:34-35 ⁸ Matthew 22:37-40 ⁹ 1 John 3:16 ¹⁰ 1 John 3:23 ¹¹ 1 John 3:24 ¹² 1 John 3:14 ¹³ Luke 9:23; Hebrews 3:13 ¹⁴ John 17:21-23

¹⁵ 1 Peter 2:12

*I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one **even as we are one**, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, **so that the world may know that you sent me** and loved them even as you loved me.* (John 17:20-23)

This is His commandment: "Love one another as I have loved you." And this commandment, as all His commandments, can only be obeyed in the Body of Messiah, where all members certainly obey the head:

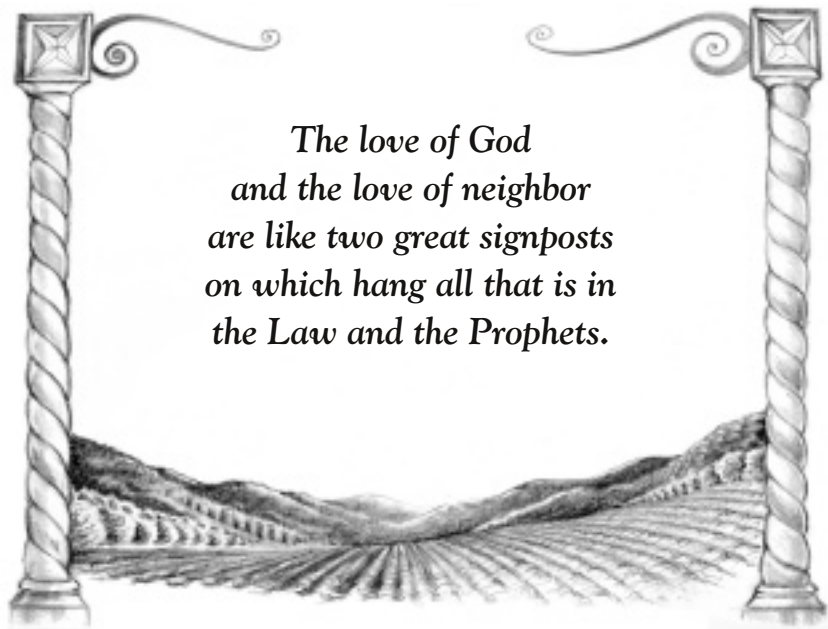
... holding fast to the head, from whom the entire body, being nourished and knit together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God. (Colossians 2:19)

His body is where brothers and sisters live together in unity, in *community*. The Body of Messiah is a *community*. "All who believe live together."¹⁶ That's what love loves to do, and that is what love requires.

*For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by **one Spirit** we were all baptized into **one body** — whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free — and have all been made to drink of **one Spirit**.*

(1 Corinthians 12:12-13)

¹⁶ Acts 2:44



*The love of God
and the love of neighbor
are like two great signposts
on which hang all that is in
the Law and the Prophets.*

All the members of His body *submit to one another* out of reverence for Him.¹⁷

"If you love Me, you will keep My commandments."¹⁸ But only *there*, where brothers dwell together in unity, can you obey all of His commandments.

If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there will My servant be also. If anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him. (John 12:26)

If anyone does *not* serve Him *there*, where brothers dwell together in unity, the Father will *not* honor him with abundant grace,¹⁹ or with eternal life.²⁰

*To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, **both their Lord and ours...** I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in **the same mind and the same judgment.***
(1 Corinthians 1:2,10)

All those who have the *same* Lord are of *one* mind. They have *one* head, therefore they have the *same* understanding of the Scriptures. There are no divisions in a human body, therefore Messiah's body is not divided either.

Knowing their thoughts, He said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and no city or house divided against itself will stand."
(Matthew 12:25)

Paul pleaded with the Corinthians because he had heard that there were actually *divisions* among them. How could that be possible if they had one head?

Each one of you says, "I follow Paul," or, "I follow Apollos," or, "I follow Cephas," or, "I follow Christ." Is Christ divided?
(1 Corinthians 1:12-13)
Denominations! (Or is it demonizations?)

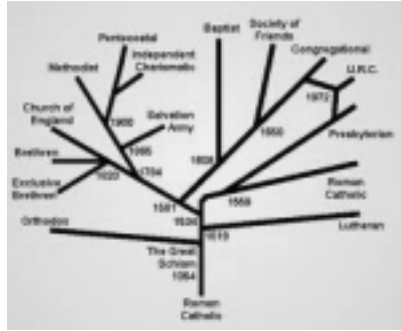
In Chattanooga alone, "the buckle of the Bible belt," there are 750 different denominations that disagree in their understanding of the Bible. Everywhere it is the same. A divided kingdom is the witness of Christianity today, and is it not laid waste as the Master said?²¹

Denominations represent divisions. The factious man in Titus 3:10-11 started another denomination according to his own warped understanding of the Bible. That is how *all* denominations were started, in contempt of the Master's prayer in John 17:21-23.

*They went out from **us**, but they were not of **us**; for if they had been of **us**, they would have continued with **us**. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of **us**.*
(1 John 2:19)

¹⁷ Ephesians 5:21 ¹⁸ John 14:15 ¹⁹ Acts 4:32-33 ²⁰ Psalms 133:3 ²¹ Matthew 12:25

So who are the “us” in Christendom today, when one like the man in Titus 3:10-11 leaves one denomination and starts another one? Who was the “us” he went out from? So that man goes and starts what he would regard as the true “us” and if anyone leaves *his* “us” he would say “they were not of us.” So it is with each of the 41,000+ denominations of Christianity today.



A few of the 41,000 denominations of Christianity today

However, 1 John 3:14,16,23 describes who the “us” really is, and also John 17:21-23 and John 13:34-35 and Acts 2:44 and Acts 4:32-35...

*We know that we have passed out of death into life because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death... By **this** we know love, that He laid down His life for us, and we ought to **lay down our lives for the brothers**... And **this** is God’s commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as He has commanded us.*
(1 John 3:14,16,23)

*A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: **just as I have loved you**, you also are to love one another. By **this** all men will know that you are My disciples.*
(John 13:34-35)

***And all who believed were together and had all things in common...** Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own... There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold and laid it at the apostles’ feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.*
(Acts 2:44; 4:32,34,35)

*And **this** gospel of the kingdom [the one that produces **this** effect] will be preached in all the world as a witness to all nations...*
(Matthew 24:14)

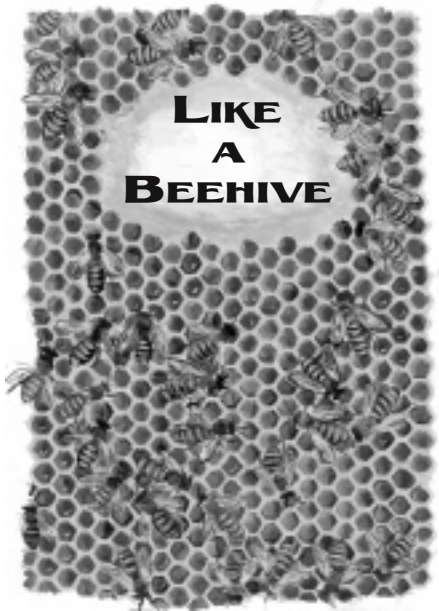
**AND THEN THE
END WILL
COME.**

The word for **community** in Hebrew is **edah**, which also means **beehive**. This word conveys the way a hive of bees live and work together with a common identity. Bees have no concern for themselves, but only for the hive.

So it is with the communities of God.

Have you ever watched a beehive? It is fascinating seeing thousands of little bees working together to produce honey. As you come near the hive, you can hear an exciting buzz as they go about the many tasks necessary to keep the hive alive. The workers are responsible to collect nectar and guard the hive. The young bees keep the hive in good condition, feed the larvae, and support in other household chores. There is never a dull moment in the busy life of a bee.

This is much like the life that we have. No matter what we do, we love to do it together. Daily we gather to thank our Master for His salvation, and to hear Him speak to us through one another. This gathering keeps alive a genuine love and care for each other. As we work, we take advantage of the daily situations, guarding ourselves from the selfishness and pride that would come in to separate us and take away our love. Our children are a vital part of our life. We not only educate them, but we work with them to accomplish the simple tasks necessary to



maintain a family life. Our life is not a dull routine of chores, but is full of the warmth that comes from the sweet fellowship of friends speaking their hearts to one another, celebrating the Sabbath every week, and participating in weddings and festivals.

But there are a few things that differ in our life from that of a beehive. One is that we are not driven by instinct or controlled by something separate from our own will. Each of us is here because we chose to leave behind our own separate lives to increase the life of this hive. Our life is not closed in like the hive of a bee, nor do we have stingers to harm uninvited guests. We welcome anyone to experience our life with us. Please come and see what it is like to be part of a beehive of people expressing the warmth and love of their Creator. ✱

WHERE TO FIND US

(Continued from back cover)

NEW YORK

Common Sense Farm, 41 North Union St,
Cambridge, NY 12816 ☎ 518-677-5880

Common Ground Café & Bakery

10 E. Main St, Cambridge, NY 12816
☎ 518-677-2360

Community in Oneonta, 81 Chestnut Street

Oneonta, NY 13820 ☎ 607-267-4062

Yellow Deli, 134 Main Street

Oneonta, NY 13820 ☎ 607-431-1155

Community in Ithaca, 119 Third Street

Ithaca, NY 14850 ☎ 607-272-6915

Yellow Deli, 143 East State Street

Ithaca, NY 14850 ☎ 607-256-2056

Journey's End Farm, 7871 State Route 81

Oak Hill, NY 12460 ☎ 518-239-8148

Yellow Deli, 7771 State Route 81

Oak Hill, NY 12460 ☎ 518-239-4240

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Community in Lancaster, 12 High Street

Lancaster, NH 03584 ☎ 603-788-4376

VERMONT

Community in Island Pond, P.O. Box 449

Island Pond, VT 0584 ☎ 802-723-9708

Yellow Deli, 28 Cross Street

Island Pond, VT 0584 ☎ 802-723-4453

Simon the Tanner Family Outfitters

Cross & Main Streets
Island Pond, VT 0584 ☎ 802-723-4426

Community in Rutland, 134 Church Street

Rutland, VT 05701 ☎ 802-773-3764

Yellow Deli & Hostel

23 Center St, Rutland, VT 05701
☎ 802-775-9800

Basin Farm, P.O. Box 108

Bellows Falls, VT 05101 ☎ 802-463-9264

CANADA

Community in Winnipeg, 89 East Gate

Winnipeg, MB R3C 2C2, Canada
☎ 204-786-8787

Mount Sentinel Farm, 2915 Highway 3A

South Slovan, BC V0G 2G0, Canada
☎ 250-359-6847

Preserved Seed Café, 202 Vernon Street

Nelson, BC V1L 4E2, Canada
☎ 250-352-0325

Fairfield Farm, 11450 McSween Road

Chilliwack, BC V2P 6H5, Canada
☎ 604-795-2225

Preserved Seed Café, 45859 Yale Road

Chilliwack, BC V2P 2N6, Canada
☎ 604-702-4442

New Sprout Farm, 7191 Howard Road

Merville, BC V0R 2M0, Canada
☎ 250-337-5444

Common Ground Café, 596 Fifth Street

Courtenay, BC V9N 1K3, Canada
☎ 250-897-1111

BRAZIL

Comunidade de Londrina, Caixa Postal 8002

86010-980 Londrina, Paraná, Brazil
☎ 55-43-3357-1212

Café Chão Comum, Caixa Postal 75

86828-000 Mauá da Serra, Paraná, Brazil
☎ 55-43-8812-2280

ARGENTINA

Comunidad de Buenos Aires

Batallon Norte 120
1748 General Rodriguez, Argentina
☎ 54-237-484-3409

ENGLAND

Stentwood Farm, Dunkswell, Honiton

Devon EX14 4RW, England
☎ 44-1823-681155

GERMANY

Gemeinschaft in Klosterzimmern

Klosterzimmern 1, 86738 Deiningen
Germany ☎ 49-9081-2901062

FRANCE

Communauté de Sus, 11 route du Haut

Béarn, 64190 Sus, France
☎ 33-559-66-14-28

BELGIUM

Community in Beveren-Waas

Boerenstraat 201, 9120 Beveren-Waas,
Belgium ☎ 32-360-88-979

SPAIN

Comunidad de San Sebastian

Paseo de Ulia 375
20013 San Sebastian, Spain
☎ 34-943-32-79-83

Sentido Común, C/ General Echagüe 6

20003 San Sebastian, Spain
☎ 34-943-43-31-03

AUSTRALIA

Peppercorn Creek Farm

1375 Remembrance Drive, Picton, NSW
2571, Australia ☎ 61-2-4677-2668

Community in Katoomba, 196 Bathurst Rd

Katoomba, NSW 2780, Australia
☎ 61-2-4782-2131

Common Ground Café, 214 Katoomba Street

Katoomba, NSW 2780, Australia
☎ 61-2-4782-9744

WHERE TO FIND US

Visit our web site: www.twelvetribes.org

Call us toll-free, 24/7: 888-TWELVE-Tribes (888-893-5838)

Or come and visit us at any of our places listed below.

CALIFORNIA

Community in Vista, 2683 Foothill Drive

Vista, CA 92084 ☎ 760-295-3852

Yellow Deli, 315 East Broadway

Vista, CA 92084 ☎ 760-631-1888

Morning Star Ranch, 12458 Keys Creek Road

Valley Center, CA 92082 ☎ 760-742-8953

Yellow Deli & Farm Stand, 32011 Lilac Road

Valley Center, CA 92082 ☎ 760-742-2064

COLORADO

Community in Manitou Springs

41 Lincoln Ave, Manitou Springs, CO 80829

☎ 719-573-1907

Maté Factor, 966 Manitou Ave

Manitou Springs, CO 80829

☎ 719-685-3235

Community in Boulder, 583 Aztec Drive

Boulder, CO 80303 ☎ 303-974-5097

Yellow Deli, 908 Pearl Street

Boulder, CO 80302 ☎ 303-996-4700

MISSOURI

Community in Warsaw, 1130 Lay Ave

Warsaw, MO 65355 ☎ 660-438-2541

Common Ground Café, 145 E. Main Street

Warsaw, MO 65355 ☎ 660-438-2581

Stepping Stone Farm, Route 2 Box 55

Weaubleau, MO 65774 ☎ 417-428-3251

TENNESSEE

Community in Chattanooga, 900 Oak Street

Chattanooga, TN 37403 ☎ 423-752-3071

Yellow Deli, 737 McCallie Ave

Chattanooga, TN 37403 ☎ 423-468-1777

Community in Pulaski, 219 S. Third Street

Pulaski, TN 38478 ☎ 931-424-7067

Common Ground Café & Bakery

219 S. Third St, Pulaski, TN 38478

☎ 931-363-8586

VIRGINIA

Stoneybrook Farm (Washington, DC area),

15255 Ashbury Church Road

Hillsboro, VA 20132 ☎ 540-668-7123

NORTH CAROLINA

Community in Asheville, 9 Lora Lane

Asheville, NC 28803 ☎ 828-274-8747

Community Conference Center

471 Sulphur Springs Road

Hiddenite, NC 28636 ☎ 828-352-9200

GEORGIA

Community in Savannah, 403 E. Hall Street

Savannah, GA 31401 ☎ 912-232-1165

MASSACHUSETTS

Community in Boston, 92 Melville Ave

Dorchester, MA 02124 ☎ 617-282-9876

Community in Plymouth, 35 Warren Ave

Plymouth, MA 02360 ☎ 508-747-5338

Blue Blinds Bakery, 7 North Street

Plymouth, MA 02360 ☎ 508-747-0462

Common Sense Wholesome Food Market

53 Main St, Plymouth, MA 02360

☎ 508-732-0427

Community in Hyannis, 14 Main Street

Hyannis, MA 02601 ☎ 508-790-0555

Common Ground Café, 420 Main Street

Hyannis, MA 02601 ☎ 508-778-8390

Continued on previous page...

THERE IS A PEOPLE who woke up this morning with one thing on their minds: to love their Creator with all their heart, soul, and strength, and to love one another just as He loved them. Being just ordinary human beings, we are far from perfect in our love, yet, in hope, we persevere. Our goal? That the Kingdom of God would come on earth as it is in heaven, so that love and justice can rule on the earth. Sound impossible? It would be, were it not that Yahshua, the Messiah, came to redeem mankind, to set us free from the curse of sin, and to enable us to love. Because we have come to see His worth and our own desperate need, we have surrendered everything in order to follow Him. Our hearts and our homes are open night and day to any who are interested in our life or are weary of their sin and want to know the purpose for which they were created. ♪