

SEVEN SEALS: A Summary Overview of Salvation

“...in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” [Gen. 2:17]

Man did eat, contrary to the counsel of God. The bitterness of death took dominion casting its shadow over our now fallen soul. Set adrift from God and from Life, steadily Man descends into the darkness of form and void from which he came, “ashes to ashes, dust to dust”. In the twilight, with each passing generation the memory of what once was fades into forgetfulness. Each moment of death’s realisation the heart grieves, silently lamenting the loss. It finds no way within itself to return, only knowing the unwelcome but certain truth of what awaits each step forward, death!

Learning the Seven Seals is not just the imparting of information. It is a way of seeing, according to the mind of God that was in Christ. This is what the Apostle Peter referred to where he wrote, “We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts...” [2Pet. 1:19] Note the reference to the “day star”. The words of prophecy are guiding lights to the source, the “day star”. The “day star” is the true Light source. It brings you into its vision enabling you to see things you otherwise would not. The Apostle John wrote, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. [John 1:1-5] Note where it states, “In him was life; and the life was the light of men.” This is talking about that eternal life, not the temporal life we now live as a result of the Edenic fall. The consciousness (light – way of seeing) associated with the eternal life is different from that of the temporal life. We give up the temporal to receive the eternal. This is what learning the Seven Seals (a gift from Heaven) is all about. The Apostle Paul spoke of, “...the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: To whom God would make known what [is] the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory...” [Col. 1:26, 28; compare Gal. 4: 6, 19; 1Cor. 2:16; 2Cor. 3:18] In the Revelation, John was told to eat the “little book”, the knowledge of Salvation. [Rev. 10; compare Jer. 15:16; Ezek. 3:1-3ff; Ps. 119:103] The scriptures hold the key to the mystery of eternal life. [John 5:39; Rev. 10:7] It is understood as a whole, not in part, in order to perceive this.

As in times past, religion today has become a thing of form, as in an art form, with the novelty and appeal of the artistry mistaken for substance. Much like an entertainment show, it plays to the soulless under the genre “religion”. The substance (purpose and meaning) of salvation has long been stripped from it rendering it but a hollow shell without saving virtue. This has been subtle, almost imperceptible; the scriptures speak of it in connection with the five foolish virgins and the sowing of tares, “while men slept”. [Matt. 13:24-25ff; Matt. 25:1-7ff] The continued unfolding reality of salvation is lost sight of,

eclipsed by the dark shadows of religious form and what has already been. The sad part is you are left none the wiser while thinking all is well, evidence of being asleep (spiritual).

Until the Judgement, Salvation was not yet revealed. Through Christ, Man dwelt in the hope of it, hence Faith. The work of Christ did not end at his ascension 2,000 years ago. There were yet aspects of Salvation (relating to people making decisions) still being worked out. The Apostle's wrote concerning this,

"Blessed [be] the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time... Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace [that should come] unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." [1Peter 1:3-5, 10-11]

Note where Peter speaks of an "inheritance...reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time..." The Apostle Paul spoke of the, "...hope which is laid up for you in heaven". [Col. 1:5] This was in connection with the Judgement which centred on the book sealed with Seven Seals, to be unsealed in the last days. [Rev. 4-6ff; 10; Dan. 12:9] Believers were to be watchful of this. For those alive when it came, how we related to it would affect our salvation.

After the fall, God's intervention in this world to redeem lost Man back to Himself and to Life has been a continuing process. This is what the "story" of Salvation has essentially been about, the re-Genesis of the fallen soul. Its purpose is to restore fallen Man back to his former immortal state (Life) from his now mortal state (Death). The effect of this changes everything about the condition of life we now live, replacing it with something astonishing. This includes how we are positioned in relation to the Laws of Matter. We see an example of what this looks like with Moses and Elijah when they appeared to Christ on the Mount of transfiguration long after their day. [Matt. 17:1-9ff] The scriptures provide us a record of this for our learning, including understanding the process. [2Cor. 3:7-18; Ex. 34:29ff; 2Pet. 1:19; Col. 1:26-27; Gal. 4:19] Much like the sun's energy powers the earth, the need for such an external intervention is clearly seen. Having separated from Life, Man does not have the power within him to redeem his soul from death. Where in the history of Mankind has this ever been achieved? For the most part Man has become ignorant to his existing condition of bondage to death. Rather than perceiving it as a curable sickness he accepts it as a norm. Despite his boast to the contrary, this further shows how far removed he is from the true knowledge of his nature and being.

At the heart of the Divine intervention is God's love for His creation. Like parents who in love bring forth children, are they then willing to see them die? How much less then God

(the very source of life and love) in whose image Man was created. [Gen. 1:26-28ff; 2:7; John 3:16; Jer. 31:3; Zeph. 3:17] Stretching the imagination you can see what it must have been like for God to witness the fall of Man. Not to mention seeing His Son, Christ, so despitely treated when He came 2,000 years ago – His sole purpose to save lost Man. [Matt. 21:33-46; 22:14]. It is on the basis of His love, eternal as He is and underpinning existence, that God seeks to draw Man to Himself. This is inexplicably more than sentiment or emotion, rather an enduring principle that knows no bounds and strong enough to uphold all things. In his fallen state, where he measures everything by his own finite mind, Man has difficulty grasping such Divine Love.

The Flood

On the basis of His love, God's intervention in the world to save Mankind has taken various forms at different times throughout history. Before the fall, Adam and Eve were counselled not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of God and Evil for they would surely die. After the fall they became subject to good AND EVIL, death being a part of evil. God clothed and counselled them how to order their lives in order to mitigate the adverse effects. [Gen. 2:15-17; 3:1-19] In their children (Cain and Abel) the effects of disobedience and death would continue to be revealed. Placing his own will above God, Cain in his wrath would kill his younger brother Abel, because Abel obeyed God. [Gen. 4:1-16ff] In just a few generations the downward slide of disobedience and death would bear its harvest of evil. We read,

“And GOD saw that the wickedness of man [was] great in the earth, and [that] every imagination of the thoughts of his heart [was] only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.” [Gen. 6:5-7]

Further,

“And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.” [Gen. 6:12-13]

Was the creation of Man and the Earth a mistake? Pointing to these failures this has been the argument of the Devil against God, even while he ignores his role in the fall of Man. God created Man upright, the Devil brought his fall. He saw Man as a threat to his rebellion against God and Heaven. The fall of Man would serve his cause. Having now corrupted itself beyond responding to the entreaties of God's Spirit, God could no longer bear with them.

The text earlier stated, "...the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also [is] flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. [Gen. 6:3] This is the same Spirit (Holy Spirit) who you will recall, "...moved upon the face of the waters" in the beginning bringing forth creation. She is the female part of the Godhead in whose image woman is created. [Gen. 1:1, 26-27; compare Prov. 1:20-33; 8:22-36] Although sentence was passed upon Man, instead of abandoning him God gave that generation 120 years of grace. The text stated, "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD." [Gen. 6:8] Noah heard and was obedient to God. This turned to be an argument for God and for Man. On this basis God intervened to save Mankind from extinction at so early a stage in what would be a long history. Salvation would take the "form" of the ark. For 120 years while building the ark, Noah bore witness for God to that generation. It did not matter what your philosophy or religious preference. If you did not believe the voice of God for that time through Noah and get into the ark you would be lost. The story of Noah and the flood is now history. [Gen. 6-8] The earth became a different place following the death and destruction it caused. We who live to day in the post-flood world find this hard to imagine, just as we also do the pre-fall state of Man. Noah, his sons and their wives knew first-hand what the earth looked like before the flood. Looking at the earth as they left the ark would have been a cause of much sorrow and grief. Still, as it was in the beginning with Adam and Eve, they were now given the task to replenish the earth. [Gen. 1:26-28; 9:1]

The Tower of Babel

It was not long after the flood that the seed of disobedience would again emerge. The children born to Noah and his sons after the flood were no doubt told the story of the earth prior to the flood. They would not however have known first-hand the nature of God's workings in the earth during the pre-flood world. As in the lead up to the flood where man walked according to the imagination of his own mind and heart, the same would again become true in the generations after the flood. We read where the scriptures state,

"And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top [may reach] unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. [Gen. 11:1-4]

The destruction caused by the flood and the introduction of rain was a new phenomenon in the earth. Prior to the flood there was no rain. The earth was watered from a mist that came up from the ground each morning, not through "water from the sky". [Gen. 2:4-6; Ps. 24:1-2] The science of that day had ridiculed Noah's message. After the flood God told Noah he would not destroy the earth again in this way and gave the rainbow as a sign each time rain would fall. [Gen. 8:20-22; 9:8-17] Despite the rainbow of promise, they didn't believe God's word. Instead they trusted in the science of that day to build this city and tower to

secure themselves against a flood that would not come. This unbelief could not be left unchecked. The text continues,

“And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. And the LORD said, Behold, the people [is] one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech. So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.” [Gen. 11:5-9]

Where it states, “...from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth...” this helps explain why the story of the flood is known among the nations. Many, many generations down to today these stories are forgotten. Yet they remain on record as a warning to those who would live at the end of the world when the existence of Mankind would again be threatened. [Dan. 12:1; Isa. 24; Matt. 24:21-22, 38-39]

The Calling of Abraham

We see what happens when Man, separated from God, is left to his own devices. Given his now fallen nature and sinful flesh, his tendency leans towards evil rather than good, death rather than life. Yet in his delusion he thinks himself moral. In Abraham God sought to raise up a seed through whom the knowledge of God would be kept alive in the earth preventing its destruction. Abraham was called of God to leave his country and his father’s house. The scriptures state,

“Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram [was] seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran. And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother’s son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.” [Gen. 12:1-5]

This would have been quite a test. Having to uproot everything and move to a foreign land. But like Noah, who obeyed God in the building of the ark, Abraham also obeyed. This would not be the only test that he would go through in order to be fitted for the purpose to which God called him. As in Noah’s case, this purpose also had to do with the Salvation/blessing of Mankind. Notice where the text states, “And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.” This was not just

about the seed of Abraham but "...all families of the earth...", in other words Mankind. This was a great responsibility placed upon him and his descendants.

Abraham would be further tested. Even today there are many who have difficulty with the account of Abraham being called to offer his son, Isaac, as a sacrifice. [Gen. 22:1-19; 21:1-8] Who wouldn't? Isaac was a goodly child born of promise. I am sure Abraham struggled greatly within himself, yet he obeyed. There is a deep truth to this that few are able to grasp. Not getting ahead of myself, how else would Man be made to know the depth of meaning and love in God giving His only begotten Son, as ransom to save Mankind? [John 3:16; 15:12-14] Here the story of Christ as sacrifice was being foretold. Etched in the human psyche long before it would become symbolised in the "daily" evening and morning lamb sacrifice and made manifest 2,000 years ago. This went beyond the unconscionable scenes of the betrayal, trial and crucifixion. It goes far deeper than that. God GAVE His only son to Mankind – the reason he became incarnate, embodied in human form. This meant Christ would give up His equality with God to become Man. [Phil. 2:5-8ff] He is to dwell with the saved among men, albeit in a glorified form, for ever. Perhaps had the Jewish leaders grasped this solemn truth in the story of Abraham there may well have been a different outcome 2,000 years ago, and the world a different place today.

The Nation of Israel

So, Abraham was faithful to God in his house. But what of his seed that followed. We know the story of Isaac, who being born of promise inherited and continued the mantle of Abraham. This then passed to his son Jacob whose name was later changed to Israel. Jacob had given birth to twelve sons, the forefathers of the twelve tribes of Israel. We also know the sojourn of Israel and his family of 70 souls into Egypt during the time of famine. The story of his son Joseph is well told. [Gen. 37ff; Ex. 1:1-7] Here we see the promise God had made to Abraham, "...I will make of thee a great nation" in the making. Fitting the children of Israel to carry out God's purpose would be a lengthy ordeal. They would remain in the "iron furnace" of Egypt for over four hundred years. [Ex. 12:40, 41; Gen. 15:13]

When the appointed time came, God raised up the man Moses. He would be fitted to lead Israel out of Egypt into the Land God promised Abraham. The story of his birth, the bondage of Israel, the plagues on Egypt, the deliverance and Exodus wondering and finally the entry into the land of Canaan are well known. God gave them Laws, Statutes and judgements shaping their conduct and governance. Their establishment in the Land would be based in a covenant relationship with God. Their nationhood was to be entirely different from other nations. The whole reason for their existence was in service to God, the fulfilment of His purpose promised to Abraham for the salvation of Mankind. The gravity of this was impressed upon them,

"See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments

and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it. But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, [and that] ye shall not prolong [your] days upon the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it. I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, [that] I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, [and] that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he [is] thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.” [Gen. 30:15-20]

A more detailed account of the “blessings and the curses” are described in Deut. 28. After the death of Moses it was Joshua who led the Children of Israel into Canaan. Some of you will recall the period in the wilderness when the twelve (one from each tribe) were sent to spy out the Land. [Num. 13-14] Ten of the spies returned and gave an evil report which discouraged the tribes of Israel. God was displeased with Israel on account of their unbelief and sent them back into the wilderness to wander for 40 years until the carcasses of the men of that generation dropped. The other two spies, Caleb and Joshua, gave an encouraging report. Caleb was of the tribe of Judah and Joshua of the tribe of Ephraim. These two tribes rose to prominence in Israel. Here they showed faith in God to bring them victory. The mantle would also pass to Joshua to lead Israel into the Promised Land following the death of Moses. Under his courageous leadership and faithfulness Israel prospered. Nevertheless, like it was with Moses during the Exodus this was not without setbacks, you will recall the story of Achan. Still, God established them in the Land and gave them rest. The period of the Judges which followed the death of Joshua was more fraught. We read,

“And the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD, that he did for Israel. And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, [being] an hundred and ten years old. And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnath-heres, in the mount of Ephraim, on the north side of the hill Gaash.” [Judg. 7-9]

Further

“And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim: And they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that [were] round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the LORD to anger. [Judg. 2:10-12]

Successive generations came on the scene who had not known God's past dealings with Israel. As they turned from the covenant and forsook God, God in turn would give them over to their enemies. However, as they returned to God, He would deliver them. You will recall the story of Samson and Gideon. This continued on a downward trend throughout the period of the Judges down to the time of Samuel.

Increasingly Israel turned from the covenant and forsook God. Towards the end of the period of the Judges they sought to be ruled over by a king, like the other nations. [2Sam. 8] Reluctantly God gave them over to their wish. Saul was anointed the first King. Two successive kings later (David and his son Solomon) saw Israel at the heights of its power only to be followed by becoming a divided nation. Under Solomon's son, Rehoboam, Israel was divided into the Ten Northern tribes of Israel and the Two Southern tribes of Judah and Benjamin. A succession of kings later, the Ten Northern tribes would be removed from the Land by the Assyrians. The Southern kingdom of Judah and Benjamin remained but it too would later be removed. The Assyrian had sought to take Judah as well as Israel but God delivered them miraculously during the reign of King Hezekiah. Seven Kings later spanning a period of around 135 years down to the reign of Zedekiah, the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar would take Judah captive also. The nation of Israel would no longer reign in the Land. The rule of the Gentiles had taken over, but without an understanding of God and His Salvation promised to Abraham. The Gentile rule in the Land was only as punishment of Israel because they had turned from the covenant and forsook God. Speaking of the rulers of Judah before they were removed we read,

"Moreover all the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen; and polluted the house of the LORD which he had hallowed in Jerusalem. And the LORD God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place: But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till [there was] no remedy. Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age: he gave [them] all into his hand. [2Chron. 36:14-17; compare Isa. 58-59; Jer. 5:20-31; 23 & 24]

The prophet Jeremiah prophesied that the captivity of Judah would be for a period of 70 years. A way would be made for a return to the Land but this would be conditioned on them returning to God. We read,

"For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find [me,] when ye shall search

for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the LORD: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the LORD; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive.” [Jer. 29:10-14]

The 70 years were accomplished during the reign of King Cyrus of Persia. The Medes and the Persians took over Babylon during the reign of Belshazzar the son of Nebuchadnezzar. [Dan. 5] King Cyrus gave a decree for the Jews to return to the Land. [2Chron. 36:21-23] This was short lived however and never really amounted to a wholehearted return to God. [Dan. 9]

The Prophets

During the period of Israel’s decline God spoke to them and gave warning through the ministry of the prophets. This began with the early prophets such as Elijah and Elisha whose ministry was characterised with miracles and displays of divine power. The later prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel prophesied while the tribes were still in the Land. Daniel was raised up while in captivity after Judah was taken by the Babylonians. The other Prophets Hosea through to Malachi prophesied at various stages from shortly before the 10 northern tribes of Israel were taken captive by the Assyrians down to the reign of the Medes over the Babylonians. The removal of Israel from the Land because of rebellion from God left a void in the salvation narrative. We noted God’s promise to Abraham on behalf of Mankind. With the Nation of Israel now removed from the land by reason of rebellion and apostasy, how then would Mankind be saved? God, of course, had not abandoned His creation or His promise to Abraham. There needed to be therefore, another means by which the salvation of Mankind would be achieved. The period following the fall and removal of Israel left the world adrift. The writings of the prophets provided a bridge for this period taking the world down to the end of time. They spoke in great detail of what God would now do to save mankind. The prophet Isaiah encapsulated this where he stated,

“Wherefore hear the word of the LORD, ye scornful men, that rule this people which [is] in Jerusalem. Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves:

Further,

Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner [stone,] a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste. Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place. [Isa. 28:14-17]

Where God states, “...I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner[stone,] a sure foundation...” this was a prophecy of the coming of Christ. Where it further states, “...he that believeth shall not make haste” this gave an indication Salvation

would be based on Faith (in Christ) rather than the works of the Law. Where the text states, "...Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet..." we see a further aspect to this plan, beyond the Christ event 2,000 years ago. There was also the Judgement. Not getting ahead of myself, Christ spoke of this himself. It had to do with the Judgement at the end of the world and the opening of the book Sealed with Seven Seals revealing the Mystery of God. [John 16:7-15; Rev. 4-6ff; 10:1-7] All of this was written of in greater details throughout prophetic writings. [Gen. 3:15; Ex. 29:38-39; Num. 28:3-4; Isa. 11:1-12ff; 28:2; 40:9-11; 41:25, 27-28; 42:1-7, 18-21; 52:7-15; 53:1-12; 55:1-4; 57:1-2; 59; 61:1-3ff; 66:5, 7; Jer. 23:1-6; 30:9, 21-24; Ezek. 34:22-24; 37:24; Dan. 2:34-35, 44-45; 7:13-14; 8:9-11, 23-26; 9:24-27; 11:18, 22, 31-35; Hos. 3; Ps. 2; 18:1-19ff; 22; 40; etc.] Like the Jews who rejected God's messengers, the Christian world would, in its primary focus on the gospels, also neglect the message of Salvation contained in the writings of the prophets. This caused blindness to the big picture of God's work of Salvation. The Revelation was given as a way to understand what is contained in the writings of the Prophets. It is significant that it was given to the Apostle John at a time when, as it was with Israel in the past, apostasy was taking hold in the early church. [Rev. 2-3; 4ff; 2Peter 2; Acts 20:28-30] As I noted, the scriptures are to be understood as a whole if we are to know the full Truth what it contains.

The Christ Event

We all know the story of the birthing into humanity of Christ 2,000 years ago. The Gospels records this event for our learning. But there is more to this than just the historical narrative of his birth, ministry, resurrection ascension and promised return. The greater issue concerning the context, significance and reason for this event eludes many. The full reality of Christ becoming Man did not end with Him taking our sinful flesh via the virgin birth. 2,000 years ago. He would take both our sinful flesh and our fallen human nature becoming fully Man like the fallen sons of Adam. Through the Grace made available to fallen Man He would rise above this proving its effectiveness. This would also remove any excuse to those who would fail of salvation through unbelief. In this second phase, unlike the virgin birth He would be born of both male and female seed. This would occur subsequent to His appearing 2,000 years ago, but before His return in glory. This event has now also taken place.

Knowing the reason for the Christ event, God giving His Son as ransom, is an important part of understanding Salvation. The Nation of Israel was established as God's instrument for salvation of Mankind. They had turned from God in a perpetual rebellion and so God removed them from the Land and scattered them throughout the earth among the nations. In their state of rebellion while scattered among the nation the Prophet Jeremiah wrote,

"Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Behold, I will send upon them the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, and will make them like vile figs, that cannot be eaten, they are so evil. And I will persecute them with the sword, with the famine, and with the pestilence, and will deliver them to be removed to all the kingdoms of the earth, to be a curse, and an astonishment, and an hissing, and a reproach, among all the nations whither I have driven them: Because

they have not hearkened to my words, saith the LORD, which I sent unto them by my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending [them;] but ye would not hear, saith the LORD.[Jer. 29:17-19; compare Jer. 23-25; 26:1-6]

Note where the text states, "...and will deliver them to be removed to all the kingdoms of the earth, to be a curse, and an astonishment, and an hissing, and a reproach, among the nations..."

Ezekiel also wrote,

"Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, they defiled it by their own way and by their doings: their way was before me as the uncleanness of a removed woman. Wherefore I poured my fury upon them for the blood that they had shed upon the land, and for their idols [wherewith] they had polluted it: And I scattered them among the heathen, and they were dispersed through the countries: according to their way and according to their doings I judged them. And when they entered unto the heathen, whither they went, they profaned my holy name, when they said to them, These [are] the people of the LORD, and are gone forth out of his land. But I had pity for mine holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the heathen, whither they went." [Ezek. 36:16-21;]

Note where the text states, "And when they entered unto the heathen, whither they went, they profaned my holy name..." The Jews being scattered throughout the nations was not as a blessing to Mankind, but rather a curse. This is what is depicted as the woman, "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH" shown sitting on the beast in the wilderness. [Rev. 17; compare Ezek. 16.] They would have remained in the Land as a blessing had they been faithful to God. In their rebellion they were scattered into the "wilderness" of the Gentiles as a curse due to their unfaithfulness.

The question remains however, how then would God now save Mankind, Jew and Gentile alike? It was integral to God's promise to Abraham that salvation was for all the families of the earth. You will recall in the Laws of Moses provision was made for those not of Israel to enjoin themselves in the covenant God made with Abraham. [Lev. 19:33-34; Num. 15:14-16] A perfect example of this is seen in the story of Ruth a Moabite. She would bear Obed, the father of Jesse, the father of David through whose lineage Christ would come. We also see in the book of Revelation the 144,000 of the tribes of Israel as well as a, "...great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues..." saved before the throne of God in the kingdom. [Rev. 7:1-10ff] With Israel now having fallen how would this be accomplished? God must therefore institute a new way of Salvation.

After Israel and Judah were removed from the Land a succession of Gentile empires ruled over it. The Babylonians were followed by the Medes and the Persians. After them came the Grecians on down to the Roman Empire. It was not until the time of the Roman Empire that

what God would now do to save Mankind began to manifest itself. It took form as the Christ event 2,000 years ago. As noted this was written about in the Law of Moses and in the prophets and in the Psalms long before its actual manifestation. The leaders of the Jews failed to understand the deeper mysteries in these writings concerning this. As they did in following their own minds (rather than the Word of God) causing them to be removed from the Land, so too here they would end up rejecting the Word of God made flesh and fulfil the prophecies against themselves. Remarkably, the wise Men from the east that came to Christ at his birth were able to discern these things. [Matt. 2:1-12ff; Jer. 32:17-20; Acts 10: 34-35]

It is sometimes overlooked that the purpose of Christ coming 2,000 years ago was in the first instance to gather Israel. At the end of His ministry, the Jews of His day having rejected Him, He stated,

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, [thou] that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under [her] wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed [is] he that cometh in the name of the Lord.” [Matt. 23:37-39; compare Isa. 49:1-6]

By rejecting Christ, the Jewish leaders prevented the Jewish nation from being gathered. This would result in the emergence of a new movement to carry out God’s purpose for the saving of Mankind. In His parable of the “wicked husbandman” we read further what Christ had to say about this,

“Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country: And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast [him] out of the vineyard, and slew [him.] When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out [his] vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons. Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. [Matt. 21:33-44; compare Isa. 49:1-6]

Notice where the text states, "But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance." Note also, "Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." What does this mean for what the Jews are doing in the Land today? This parable of the wicked husbandmen is an echo of what Isaiah also wrote. [Isa. 5:1-7; note also Matt. 3:7-10ff] God's purpose will be accomplished regardless. He raises up new instrumentalities and ways and to carry it forward.

The Church

During its deliverance from Egypt to embark on its journey, Israel was blessed with dramatic divine intervention. After the resurrection and ascension of Christ, the disciples who formed the church that would emerge from this event, also experienced divine intervention. Christ had promised they would receive power from heaven to bear witness of Him throughout the world. This took form as the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. [Acts 1:6-7; 2:1-8ff] Earlier we alluded to the presence and work of the Holy Spirit at the dawn of creation back in Genesis. The ending of Christ's ministry on earth gave way for the behind the scenes work of the Holy Spirit to begin in earnest. Christ had described this work,

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. [John 16:7-11]

As it was with Christ, the early church in the beginning of its work would be met by much opposition from within and without. [Acts 4-8:1-4] We are also given glimpses of this from Christ in heaven through the letters to the Seven Churches noted in Revelation 2 & 3. There is a comparison here too with the children of Israel. Like Israel, the church would follow a similar course throughout its experience. After the passing of the disciples who were with Christ, successive generations would depart from the faith. The beginning of the 4th Century saw the Church unite with the Roman State paving the way for what would become Roman Catholicism. This enmeshing of Church and State was not the Kingdom of God Christ taught. The world would see the fall of Rome, the dark ages and the inquisition a protracted and convulsed period of much cruelty. It was noted how by forsaking God, rather than a blessing to Mankind, the Jews became a curse. The same would be true of the church as it too turned from God. We noted earlier, how Man, given his now fallen nature and sinful flesh, left to his own devices his tendency leans towards evil rather than good, death rather than life. God's intervention during this dark period gave rise to the Protestant Reformation. A new era of renewal and progress would emerge leading to the modern world of today. But here too, there would be setbacks and failure.

We see in Israel as we also do with the Church, though men fail the Truth continues on. Christ exemplified this 2,000 years ago. He remained steadfast to Truth in the face of shame, betrayal, rejection and death. The failure of Israel and its removal from the Land did not stop the truth contained in the writings of the Law and the Prophets. Similarly, the failure of the “Christian” church does not prevent the advancement of the Truth contained in these writings, nor in the Gospels or the Revelation. Whereas the Jews became absorbed by the letter of the law without the spirit (thereby rejecting the living voice of God through the prophets) the Christians became caught up in a limited grasp of the scriptures, religious moralising and their own traditions. These were not in and of themselves the essence of salvation. They had to do with being a “good” person according to the measure of Man. [Matt. 15:1-9; Isa. 4:1] The scriptures teach, “There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof [are] the ways of death.” [Prov. 14:12; 16:25] A religion of form without substance is antithetical to its very existence. The reason it is called “false” religion.

The Judgement

We read in the prophet Daniel,

“I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment [was] white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne [was like] the fiery flame, [and] his wheels [as] burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.” [Dan. 7:9-10]

Here the Judgement is now brought to earth. This event occurs at the opening of the Sixth Seal. [Rev. 6:12-17] The Judgement takes place in heaven first before being revealed here on the earth. Notice where it states, “...the judgment was set, and the books were opened.” The books spoken of here relate to the book Sealed with Seven Seal shown in the right hand of the One sat on the throne. [Rev. 5] Imprisoned on the Isle of Patmos, the Apostle John was taken to heaven to see this Judgement at the end of the world. [Rev. 4-6ff] He saw the Lamb receive the book Sealed with Seven Seals where it was first opened.

In our brief review of the prophets we touched on what was written concerning Christ. You will recall where Isaiah wrote,

“Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner [stone,] a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste. Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place.” [Isa. 28:16-17]

It was noted that the first part, concerning the stone, was fulfilled as the Christ event 2,000 years ago. The second part related to God’s end-time Judgement of the world, “Judgement

also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet..." When would this occur and what would it look like? This would be the second phase Christ's mission.

In the broad schema of Salvation, Abraham brought Faith, Moses brought Law, Elijah and the other prophets brought Prophecy, Christ brought Grace. After Grace comes Judgement. We read where Christ had stated concerning the work of the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment..." [John 16:8] Making known the Judgement in the earth was an event to occur prior to the coming of the Ancient of Days. A central element of this is the book sealed with Seven Seals as noted in Rev. 5, Dan. 7 above, and the angle of Rev. 7&10. The knowledge of the Judgement is in now in the earth. The work of making it known was committed to David Koresh. The Waco event was the visible announcement of it on the earth. David Koresh is shown as the "young man" who goes to Jerusalem in Zechariah's vision. [Zech. 2:1-5ff] He is also shown elsewhere in the scriptures, for instance the one raised up from the north who calls upon the name of God from the rising of the sun (the east). [Isa. 41:25] We see him again as the "carcase" where the eagles gather together. [Matt. 24:27-28] At the coming of the "Ancient of days" he is seen as the "one like the son of Man" who is brought before the Ancient of days with the clouds of heaven. [Dan. 7:13] This occurs at David's resurrection, the next event. [Isa. 26:19-21; 57:1-2; Rev. 6:9-11, 12-17] It was while on a trip to Jerusalem that David was met by the angel of Christ. This angel is shown as the one who comes to earth at the end of the world with a, "little book open". [Rev. 10] This is how David learned the Seven Seals. This same angel is also shown "ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God". He proceeds to seal the 144,000 who play a key role in the saving of the Great Multitude of all nations, which no man can number. [Rev. 7:1-8, 9-17] As the "time of trouble" looms God intervenes to save Mankind. [Dan. 12:1-3; Matt. 24:21-22; Rev. 3:10-12]

The things concerning David Koresh and what was done at Waco were done for a reason. This was all in relation to the Judgement. You will recall the story of King Solomon and his Judgement of the two harlots. [1Kings 3:16-14] This was a "type" of the Judgement. The way it works is akin to where Solomon asked for a sword and commanded the living child be cut in two. This elicited a response from the two women by which they judged themselves. The Waco event is similar in its workings. In their judgement of Waco, people unwittingly judge themselves. The attack on our faith community showed Protestant America had also fallen, becoming a persecuting power. When the Ancient of days comes (Sixth Seal) and the books are opened, it will be seen whether or not their judgement is true, according to the book.

The Judgement itself is a precursor to the coming of the Kingdom. The long looked for return of Christ in glory and therewith the setting up of the kingdom could not occur until the Judgement had taken place. There is a further and final Judgement that will occur after the 1000 year reign of the Messianic kingdom. [Rev. 21:4-15]

The Messianic Kingdom

“Behold, the day of the LORD cometh...And his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which [is] before Jerusalem on the east...” [Zech. 14:1, 4]

What then is Salvation for this time? We read where Isaiah wrote,

“Hearken unto me, ye stouthearted, that [are] far from righteousness: {46:13} I bring near my righteousness; it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry: and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory.” [Isa. 46:12-13]

Further,

“And in mercy shall the throne be established: and he shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging, and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness.” [Isa. 16:5]

What form will this take and what will it look like? The scriptures speak in great detail about this. Clearly, this is something heaven wanted us to know. So then, what God thought to do through establishing Israel in the Land, He will still do but through other ways. Instead of the natural, it will be done by “supernatural” means. God tells Man of this ahead of time that we might know what is happening and that this is the work of God.

You will recall the prayer Christ taught His disciples, “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as [it is] in heaven.” [Matt. 6:10] Further, “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. [Matt. 6:33] What did all this really mean? The Prophet Daniel interpreting King Nebuchadnezzar’s dream of the image pertaining to events at the end world wrote,

“Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet [that were] of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.” [Dan. 2:34-35]

He proceeded to give the meaning thus,

“And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, [but] it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.[Dan. 2:44-45]

The prophet Isaiah wrote concerning this stating,

“And it shall come to pass in the last days, [that] the mountain of the LORD’S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. [Isa. 2:2-4; compare Isa. 11:6-9; 25:6-9; 62]

The prophet Zechariah describes the “Day of the Lord”, the setting up of the Kingdom on the Mount of Olives east of Jerusalem and the supernatural events surrounding this. Note where he states,

{14:1} Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. {14:2} For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. {14:3} Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle.

{14:4} And **his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which [is] before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof** toward the east and toward the west, [and there shall be] **a very great valley**; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.

{14:5} And ye shall flee [to] the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, [and] all the saints with thee.

{14:6} And it shall come to pass in that day, [that] **the light shall not be clear**, [nor] dark: {14:7} But it shall be one day which shall be known to the LORD, **not day, nor night**: but it shall come to pass, [that] at evening time it shall be light. {14:8} And it shall be in that day, [that] **living waters shall go out from Jerusalem**; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be. {14:9} And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.

{14:10} All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem: and **it shall be lifted up**, and inhabited in her place, from Benjamin’s gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and [from] the tower of Hananeel unto the king’s winepresses. {14:11} And [men] shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited. [Zech. 14]

We see this Mount Zion in the book of Revelation with the Lamb and the 144,000 already gathered, ahead of the Great Multitude that no Man can number, “And I looked, and, lo, a

Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty [and] four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads." [Rev. 14:1; compare Rev. 7:1-8, 9-17]

A final note

Misinformation and falsehoods are tools of subversion. They are often used in a deliberate and calculated way to undermine knowledge and faith in God. This is an attack on the mind with the intention of robbing the soul. We saw this first deployed by the serpent against Adam and Eve in the Garden to usurp dominion over Mankind. Notice,

"Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which [is] in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree [was] good for food, and that it [was] pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make [one] wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they [were] naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. [Gen. 3:1-6]

We see here how the serpent deployed his own narrative of misinformation and falsehood to usurp power over Eve. Eve in turn was then used to usurp power over Adam. Mission accomplished. This tactic has been used ever since at varying levels by the devil and his cohorts among men to achieve the same end. It may take varying forms and expression but is the same underlying evil. The only real defence (or offence) is Knowledge and Faith in the Truth of God. We see this in the encounter with Christ in the Wilderness of Temptation,

"Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in [their] hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give

thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him. [Matt. 4:1-11]

Important to note here, despite being the Son of God, Christ did not trust in himself, rather in God the Father. Even with the hindsight of Adam and Eve this still remains a hard lesson for Man to learn. Trusting to ourselves is no match for the devil. The very act of you doing so is evidence the devil has already overcome you. You would in essence be separated from God acting in your own will. We read,

“Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.” [Dan. 12:10]

Christ also states,

“Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, [which is] new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and [I will write upon him] my new name.” [Rev. 3:10-12]

Whether we know it or not we are all in this cosmic warfare between good and evil. [Rev. 12] The question is which side are you on. Coming into the Knowledge and Faith of God is evidence of His love and favour affirming our faith and position with God.

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Livingstone Fagan is one of a few remaining survivors of the US government assault on a church community outside Waco, Texas in 1993. He met David Koresh while completing post-graduate studies at a seminary west of London. He was among a small number of survivors detained and tried a year later in 1994. Although acquitted of the false charges brought against them they were nevertheless given 40 year prison terms. This was subsequently overturned by the US Supreme Court. He returned to England in the summer of 2007 after almost 15 years.