

Theory #7

The “Times of the Gentiles”

Based on the last chapter, it is easy to see that the first 6,000 years of human history is about to end, and the seventh day is about to dawn. If that is the case, certain prophesied things have to happen soon.

Let's take a look. What are they? And are they happening?

Here are some key biblical criteria indicating that the dawning of the seventh day is imminent:

- Travel will increase greatly (Daniel 12:4);
- Knowledge will increase dramatically (Daniel 12:4);
- Wars and sectarian violence will increase in frequency and scope (Matt. 24:6);
- Natural disasters and odd weather patterns will increase in frequency and intensity: hurricanes, tornadoes and cyclones, floods, droughts, famines, tsunamis, volcanic activity, earthquakes, heat waves, cold snaps, large hail, irregular wind and weather patterns (Revelation 11, 16);
- Drug-resistant super-bugs and incurable maladies will spread easily and widely (partly because of international travel, extensive immigration from poorer countries, overuse of antibiotics, and sexual promiscuity): AIDS, SARS, MRSA/Staph, VRSA/Staph, Herpes, TB, various STDs, assorted Flu pandemics, to name a few possibilities already on the table. Scripture also mentions painful boils on those who take the Mark of the Beast and stings from some kind of locust or demon; (Rev. 6:8);
- Progressive and precipitous decline of sea-life will occur (fish, reefs, plankton, whales, etc.) and pollution of the earth's waterways (Rev. 8:9);
- Increasingly dangerous weapons will proliferate, and will be used (Rev. 8, 9);
- Lawlessness and occultism will increase dramatically (2 Timothy 3:1-5; Matthew 24:12; Rev. 9:20,21);
- Increase in solar temperatures (Rev. 16:8,9);
- Degrading of earth's UV-protective atmosphere will accelerate (Rev. 16:8,9);

- Increasing militancy of China (Rev. 16:12);
- Increasing attacks from the animal kingdom against civilization (Rev. 6:8);
- Signs in the heavens will occur more frequently (eclipses, solar storms, comets, meteors, asteroids, atmospheric disturbances) (Rev. 6:12,13);
- Food shortages and inflation will increase exponentially (Rev. 6:5,6);
- Self-esteem and “love yourself first” concepts will be promoted widely (2 Tim. 3:2);
- Materialism and money will reign supreme and motivate men everywhere (2 Tim. 3:2);
- Sociopathy will increase dramatically (2 Tim. 3:3) especially among the youth;
- The younger generation will be increasingly rebellious, foul-mouthed, arrogant and unteachable (2 Tim. 3:2);
- Narcissism will increase dramatically, especially among the youth (2 Tim. 3:2,3);
- Hedonism will reign: love of comfort, pleasure, entertainment, and sexual gratification will be prime motivators for humankind (2 Tim. 3:3,4);
- Slander and gossip will be normative (think gossip magazines) (2 Tim. 3:3);
- Lying, falsehood, treachery and treason will be tolerated, rampant, and overlooked even in our leaders (2 Tim. 3:3,4,13);
- Brutality, violence and recklessness will increase (road rage, terrorism, gangs, vandalism) (2 Tim. 3:3,4);
- Rejection of traditional values will be the norm (2 Tim. 3:2,3);
- Evil will be called good and good evil (Is. 5:20);
- The theory of evolution will take root and flourish (2 Peter 3:3-6);
- Men will scoff at the concept of the last days or end of the world (2 Peter 3:3-4, Jude 1:17);
- Pantheism, witchcraft and Satanism will increase (Romans 1:21,25; Rev. 9:20,21);
- Homosexuality will increase and be accepted (and promoted), even among leaders (Romans 1:26-32);
- Formal religion will be, and will be seen as, increasingly hypocritical and meaningless (2 Tim. 3:5);
- False Christian doctrine will proliferate (2 Tim. 3:8, 13; 4:3,4);

- Israel will return to her historic homeland (Matthew 24:32);
- Israel will regain control of the city of Jerusalem (Luke 21:24);
- Crimes related to identity theft will skyrocket (Rev. 13);
- Commerce will increasingly rely on and promote non-cash forms of payment (Rev. 13:16, 17);
- The public will increasingly accept and participate in electronic funds-management and dispersal (Rev. 13:16, 17);
- Increasing disruption of global economies and currencies (Rev. 13:16,17);
- Increasing government control of privacy information (in order to detect and curb terrorism) (Rev. 13:16, 17);
- Increasing government restrictions on private arms possession;
- Increasing threats of nuclear war (Rev. 8:8-12; 9:15,18);
- Global governance will increase (Rev. 13:8,11,12; 17);
- Increasing emphasis on the global community and brotherhood of man (Rev.13);
- Rise of a worldwide economic system (Rev. 13:16-17);
- Development of a mechanism to track and control all buying and selling (Rev. 13:16-17);
- Bio-chip and biometric recognition development (Rev. 13:16-17);
- A great apostasy (falling away) from true Christianity, whether by the denial of Christ's deity (already happening in some liberal seminaries, demoting Christ to the level of a mere prophet), the rise of a one-world syncretistic religion (comprising adherents of Catholicism, Islam, Judaism and nominal Protestant Christianity), mass conversions from Christianity to Islam, or a combination of all three¹ (2 Thess. 2:3; Matt. 24:10; 2 Tim. 4:3-4; Acts 20:29-30);

¹ Many commentators have asserted that the “apostasy” mentioned in 2 Thessalonians has already happened or that it started back in Paul’s day or at a specific flashpoint in history. Paul did indicate that things would begin to unravel almost immediately after his departure when he warned of “ravenous wolves” coming in to scatter and destroy the flock, “speaking perverse things” and drawing men after themselves. (Acts 20:29-30) But this final apostasy that will be much more radical than a divisive debate over doctrine, as serious and ungodly as those have been at times. This apostasy ultimately causes father to turn against son and daughter against mother. Mere differences in Christian denominational distinctives are not likely to cause such severe rifts in families, especially in this age of tolerance. It is conceivable that the catalyst for the kind of family upheaval prophesied in Scripture is a complete redefining of Christianity and Christ, one that fractures the unity of Western culture and society. As many Christians (or so-called Christians) post-Rapture abandon the fundamental doctrine of Christianity—the deity of Christ—in favor of a “many paths to God” philosophy or unity religion, or turn to Islam (or a whitewashed version of such) partly out of frustration with the liberal, corrupt culture of the West, we will see the final blossoming of this apostasy Paul warned about. As radical Islam becomes more and more threatening, it will also produce in many what has become known as the Stockholm syndrome: a situation in which victims or potential victims of Islamic conquest take on the perspective of their captors or

- An increasing degree of religious form, lacking power, truth and substance, will take over the churches (2 Tim 3:5);
- Increasing persecution, ridicule, marginalization, and ultimately, criminalization of true Christianity (Matt. 24:9; John 9:4);
- Restrictions on religious speech and liberty (hate speech; employment discrimination suits) (Matthew 24:9);
- Increasing anti-Semitism throughout the world (Matt. 24:9);
- The rise of a false version of Christianity that attempts to unify disparate factions and compromises the deity of Jesus Christ² (2 Peter 2:1-2);
- Increase of false Messianic claims and false prophets (some even performing great signs and wonders) (Matthew 24:5);
- The rise of a new (or reprised) world religion that emphasizes the brotherhood of man, a generic God and perhaps Goddess, and tolerance for all lifestyles—Babylon revisited (Rev. 13:3-8);
- Increasing isolation and persecution of Israel by the world community (Luke 21:20-22; Rev. 12) leading to war ala Ez. 38;

torturers and adopt beliefs consistent with them in order to convince them that they are really on their side and no threat, thus staving off further threat or trauma. Siding with the threat reduces the level of inner panic, and also removes the motivation for the perpetrator to continue his assault. But making this choice will ultimately divide families, because those who have converted to Christianity post-Rapture and hold their faith in Jesus dear will not feel safe with those who have defected, either to Islam or some one-world amalgamated faith comprising Islam, Catholicism and mainline Protestantism, and possibly liberal Judaism.

A recent overture by 138 Muslim scholars, clerics and intellectuals representing every denomination and every school of thought in Islam and indeed every Muslim nation, in the form of an open letter to Christian leaders and Christians everywhere, was called “A Common Word Between Us and You.” It is an attempt to provide a common framework of understanding between the faiths (Christianity and Islam) upon which subsequent interfaith dialogue efforts can be built. You can read about it at www.acommonword.com. This document was issued in September 2007 at a conference in Jordan under the patronage of King Abdullah II, son of the late King Hussein of Jordan (and nephew of HRH El Hassan bin Talal, prince of the Hashemite dynasty, former president of the Club of Rome, international board member of the Trilateral Commission, a 2007 UN Champion of Earth, former crown prince of Jordan, and a 42nd-generation direct descendant of Mohammed). As a result of this gesture, the Catholic Church has recently begun sponsoring a World Catholic-Muslim Forum in which 50 Muslim scholars will dialogue with 50 Catholic scholars in an effort to arrive at some workable agreements, the goal of which is, ultimately, religious unity. The Pope has been calling Europe back to its Christian roots and Muslim leaders will not stand by and watch that happen without resistance. This overture can be seen then as an attempt to forestall any such re-Christianizing movement in Europe in light of the fact that it is being overrun with Muslim immigrants, whose birthrate far outstrips that of native Europeans.

It is interesting to note that the Catholic Catechism calls Muslims “separated brethren” and says they worship the same Creator God as Christians do. This is shocking seeing as how Islam denies the concept of a “Son of God” as does Judaism. One might see a future alliance between these two religions post-Rapture once the Christians have been discredited by the “aliens” who took them for reprogramming. Aliens who are no doubt a redux of the Nephilim of Genesis 6 (i.e., fallen angels).

² We are already seeing a falling away from the fundamental doctrines of the virgin birth and deity of Christ as well as the essential uniqueness of the Atonement in some of our more prominent mainline seminaries.

- Return to Babel: reunification of the world under one language and system (computer language? Think Babelfish.);
- Increasing pressure for a lasting peace in Israel (1 Thess. 5:3);
- A movement to rebuild the Jewish temple (Rev. 11:1,2);
- A movement to divide Jerusalem between the Jews and Palestinians or to internationalize the holy city and the Temple Mount for the use of all monotheistic “Abrahamic” religions (Zech. 14:1,2; Rev. 11:1,2);
- Increasing fraternity between the Pope and leaders of protestant Christian denominations;
- Increasing fraternity between the Pope and leaders of Muslim denominations and countries;
- An alliance of 10 countries or states, probably Islamic, that joins hands with the EU in a reprise of the Roman Empire, eastern and western legs. There are currently two options for this entity: 1) the Mediterranean Union which was initiated by the then head of the EU, Nicolas Sarkozy and comprises Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, Israel, Palestine and Jordan, and 2) the League of Arab States (Jordan, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Tunisia, Algeria, Djibouti, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria and Somalia). However, the first option better fits the biblical description as it better aligns historically with the eastern half of the Roman Empire and came out of the head of the Beast via the EU presidential initiative (Daniel 7:7);³
- The rise of a president or governor of these 10 allied (and probably Muslim) states or countries (Daniel 7:8, Rev. 17:12-13), known in Scripture as Anti-Christ, the 11th horn and the eighth head of the Beast.

These are a few of the significant signposts pointing to the fact that the end is near.

But how near *is* it? Can we narrow the focus a bit and try to pinpoint a target date?

³ If you are not familiar with this development, we talk more about this in Theory #12.

It's true Jesus told us that "no man knows the day nor the hour,"⁴ but He also told us, when we see all these things, to "look up" for our redemption draws nigh and we are told repeatedly to keep watch, be ready, and stay alert. So there's nothing wrong with looking at the signs of the times so that we will know when to "look up."⁵ In fact, it's commendable to do so.

As we were studying this issue and discerning the signs, one *particular* sign gained our attention. Its significance only became apparent after we noticed an interesting coincidence which we will detail later. In this section, we want to concentrate on that sign. It could be called the completion of "the times of the Gentiles." (Gentiles are non-Jews.)

THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES

The Bible uses this term only once, without really defining it, in Luke 21:24. In this passage, Jesus is warning his disciples of what was to befall them, the Jewish people and Jerusalem in the days ahead (and indeed in the distant future). He says: "...and they (the Jews) will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles until *the times of the Gentiles* be fulfilled." Various theories have been put forth to explain what this term "the times of the Gentiles" means, when the period began, and when it will end.⁶ This is our version and represents our current thinking on the subject.

We believe, and it's pretty clear, at least to us, that the "times of the Gentiles" Jesus referred to (and prophesied about) began in 70 AD, when Jerusalem and the Second Temple were destroyed by Titus and the Roman army.⁷ Over a million Jews died in the siege and subsequent battles, and over 100,000

⁴ There are 24 time zones and two days in play around the world at any given time. So choosing a day and hour is truly impossible.

⁵ There are two primary passages where Jesus details these signs: Matthew 24 and Luke 21. Both report the Olivet Discourse.

⁶ Many believe that the "times of the Gentiles" extends all the way from 70AD to the beginning or even the end of the Seven-Year Tribulation. Even though the Tribulation corresponds to the 70th week of Daniel in which God resumes His program for the redemption of national Israel, there is still Gentile domination (the EU/MU) in evidence throughout this final seven years. So this is not an unreasonable interpretation, but we don't hold to it.

⁷ Some say it began with the first captivity to Babylon in 605 BC. Others proffer other dates.

fled the region. It was then that the second great diaspora⁸ or “scattering” of the Jewish people began and they were “led captive into all the nations.” From 70 AD forward, Israel’s land⁹ (bequeathed to Abraham by God in Genesis 15:18-21) has often been under foreign domination of one stripe or another,¹⁰ or left to languish as a backwater, mosquito-infested swamp lacking any redeeming credits. And the Jews themselves have been dispersed, just as Jesus prophesied, throughout the world, living for almost 20 centuries as foreigners amongst various people-groups, but still managing to retain their own unique ethnic distinctiveness, culture and religion.¹¹ This is, in itself, an extraordinary feat, and unique in human history, that a nation would be conquered, dispersed to foreign lands, and not ultimately absorbed into those cultures and ethnicities. The strict codes that defined their emergence as a nation,¹² particularly the Mosaic Law¹³ (and the appended Oral Law), which dictated myriad practices unique to Judaism, required them to remain more or less isolated in terms of intermarriage and in their customs. Without these strongly imposed limitations, it is doubtful they would have survived as a distinct people group. It is also extraordinary that these same people would return to their historic homeland nearly 2000 years later and not only return, but literally resurrect their historic language (Hebrew) which had been virtually dead (as far as daily use was concerned) for some two millennia.

So if we are correct that the times of the Gentiles began in 70 AD with the fall of Jerusalem to the Romans, when does this time of Gentile domination end?

Before I answer that question, let me just state that God is not capricious. He is a God of order and He abides by certain legal conventions. And He does not leave us without clues to His prophetic puzzle. One

⁸ There were earlier events which resulted in much of Israel and Judah being vacated. The Israelites were taken captive by the Assyrians in the 8th century BC and Judah by the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar in the 6th century BC. It was during the Assyrian captivity that the 10 northern tribes were “lost.”

⁹ Jeremiah 16:14,15: “Therefore behold, days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when it will no longer be said, ‘As the Lord lives, who brought up the sons of Israel out of the land of Egypt,’ but, ‘As the Lord lives, who brought up the sons of Israel from the land of the north and from all the countries where He had banished them.’ ‘For I will restore them to their own land which I gave to their fathers.”

¹⁰ Not that Israel’s land had not been under foreign domination prior to AD 70. It has fallen many times to various conquerors for various periods of time throughout its history, just not continuously as it was from 70-1948 AD.

¹¹ Various-sized remnants of Jews remained in the land continuously over the centuries, and often formed a majority among those inhabiting the region.

¹² Not just a tribe or family group.

¹³ The Mosaic Law functions as a sort of constitution for the nation of Israel, whether she lives at home or abroad. It also was the basis on which Jesus could be judged as sinless. There had to be a standard of righteousness, and for Israel, the Mosaic Law constituted that standard.

of these clues is *in* this verse 24 of Luke 21. Jesus accounts the taking of Jerusalem by a foreign army as a legal event. Not legal in the sense of law-abiding, but legal in the sense of judicial. God acknowledges man's part in the disposition of historical events and realities (particularly those actions taken by legally constituted governments¹⁴). So if Jerusalem's capture by a foreign army in 70 AD is the starting point, and if Jerusalem would be "trodden down" by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles were completed, then when was Jerusalem liberated from Gentile domination?

Some people would say that hasn't happened yet. Others would say that occurred in 1948, when Israel was reconstituted as a nation and declared its independence. However, this misses one very important legal point. Note Jesus' words: "Jerusalem [not Israel] will be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be completed." Not until 1967, during the Six-Day War did Jerusalem again become the religious capital of Israel and come under Jewish control. It was in response to the impending attack of an Arab coalition that Israel regained legal jurisdiction over her holiest city.¹⁵

(Even though the Jews have allowed the Arabs to continue to administer the Temple Mount throughout this period due to the presence of the Al-Aqsa Mosque, the likelihood of intense violence if they didn't, as well as the absence of the Jewish Temple, they have not given up their legal claim to Jerusalem as part of their country and their religious capital. And various leaders have sworn they will never do so. That resolve has seemed to wane at times, but the current leadership (Netanyahu) seems somewhat more committed than the previous one to that promise.)¹⁶

So, if Jerusalem was taken back into Jewish custody during the Six-Day War, then the Times of the Gentiles, in our opinion, ended in 1967. This was the first time Israel had legal jurisdiction over their holy city since 70 AD.

¹⁴ God established the whole concept of government, so it would be disingenuous of Him to ignore duly constituted authorities when interacting with peoples and nations.

¹⁵ Islam calls Jerusalem its third holiest city, after Mecca and Medina, even though it is not mentioned in the Koran even once and Mohammed is not known to have ever actually been there, despite legends to the contrary. It is Israel's holiest site.

¹⁶ Jewish leaders have actually considered giving the Old City (the City of David) and East Jerusalem to the Palestinians, a shocking prospect. Talk is also being resurrected of Jerusalem being made an international city, perhaps administered by the Vatican. Keep your eyes and ears open for more on this development though we hope Israel will not sacrifice itself on the altar of political expediency. Visit www.evenmore.co.uk for more information.

Okay. So what? Why is that significant, you might ask. And who really cares?

Well, God cares. And here's why.

Messiah's Glorious Return: *Those who have insight¹⁷ will understand¹⁸*

God wants His kids, those who belong to Him, to know approximately when His return is imminent. He doesn't want them to be taken by surprise but to be alert and sober.¹⁹ Consequently, He gives lots of clues and signposts and warnings, so that, if they're paying attention and seeking His wisdom, they can anticipate His return and be ready.²⁰

As we said before, God is a God of order. He's also a God of symbols, types, metaphors, and foreshadowings. These suffuse His entire communication to us in the Bible. He has also designed His *plan* so that these signs and their fulfillment will thoroughly demonstrate the amazing facts of His existence, His sovereignty, His majesty and power, and His incomprehensible love when all is said and done. The completion of His work will leave every mouth agape, and every tongue silenced, in heaven and on earth.

Jesus describes some of the signs that will precede His return in Luke 17 and 21 and Matthew 24, and then He says in Luke 21:29-32: "... 'Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; as soon as they put forth leaves, you see it and know for yourselves that the summer is now near. Even so you, too, when you see these things happening, recognize that the kingdom of God is near. Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all things take place."²¹

¹⁷ Insight is not the same thing as knowledge or education. It doesn't take an advanced degree or the ability to read complex and/or voluminous historical data to gain insight. Insight is gotten from the Holy Spirit and it is available to everyone. It is deeper wisdom; not so much practical as spiritual. It is seeing and understanding God's heart.

¹⁸ See Daniel 12, especially v.10

¹⁹ 1 Thess. 5:1-10

²⁰ One of the reasons He wants us to anticipate His return is so that we will be living a righteous life (not in a backslidden condition) and repenting of our sins as we are convicted. If we do not have oil in our lamps (presumably the Holy Spirit), we will not be ready when He comes, and we will miss out on what He has for His Bride. Keep in mind, the first-century Church knew when they received the Holy Spirit. They didn't just have to take it on faith. There was evidence and there should be now also (Some possible signs include: boldness for witnessing, passion for Jesus, tongues, miracles, a "honeymoon" with Jesus, a changed life, fruit of the Spirit.)

²¹ I believe this prophetic verse has a double fulfillment, as do many prophetic verses. Jesus is prophesying that those who were currently living in His day would see the destruction of Jerusalem (which occurred in 70 AD) and many of the signs including persecution, but He was also prophesying about the generation which would be living at the end of the age, and what markers

Which generation will not pass away before He returns?²² The generation that sees *all* these things that are prophesied by Jesus. One of the things He prophesies in Luke 21 is the end of “the times of the Gentiles.”

PUTTING THE PIECES TOGETHER

If we are correct then that the “times of the Gentiles” ended with the legal re-taking of Jerusalem by the Jews in 1967, and if the *generation* that saw that happen would not pass away until all the things Jesus prophesied in Luke 21 and Matthew 24 are accomplished, we need to ask: what is a biblical **generation**? Generations can be measured in various increments. For example, 20-years old and younger was the cut-off point for the generation of Hebrews that was allowed to enter the Promised Land under Joshua after the elders died in the desert (i.e., approximately every 20 years a new generation crops up). A generation is also sometimes said to be 40 years, which is a period the Bible uses frequently to indicate a time of testing or sanctification.

Or it can be measured in 70-year increments, the average lifespan of a typical generation. “Man’s years shall be three-score years and ten.” (Ps.90:10)²³

So which is it?

Well, we know with certainty²⁴ that the 20-year definition does not apply here, because the end didn’t come in 1967 (20 years after the reconstitution of Israel by the League of Nations in 1947), nor in 1987 (20 years after the re-taking of Jerusalem during the Six-Day War in 1967).

would precede that event, one of which was the end of the “times of the Gentiles.” Other markers include “signs in the sun and moon and stars, and upon the earth dismay among nations, in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves, men fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken.” These last signs have not yet happened to the degree they will in the near future, but they portend a coming final fulfillment of the preceding verses (i.e., a second fulfillment beyond that in 70 AD).

²² Some argue that it was the generation that was hearing Jesus speak those words in 30 AD that would not pass away before all was fulfilled. And we would agree that the generation living at the time did see a partial fulfillment of these signs during their lifetime. In 70 AD they saw Jerusalem surrounded and vanquished by armies, and they fled to the wilderness. But not all of the signs Jesus mentioned were fulfilled, particularly those that referred to His return. We would suggest that this was a first partial fulfillment, but, in keeping with the Law of Double Fulfillment, there will be a later, more complete fulfillment. This is still in the future as of this writing. This is the same situation that occurred in Acts 2 when Peter quoted Joel 2 and said that prophecy had been fulfilled in their hearing. But it was not entirely fulfilled, and was in fact a first partial fulfillment. The complete fulfillment is yet to come also.

²³ This is the same psalm that contains the reference to the “thousand years is as one day” passage quoted in the previous chapter.

²⁴ Assuming our theory is correct that the “times of the Gentiles” ended in 1967.

What about the 40-year definition?

This cannot be the correct definition of a “generation” in this context either since the end didn’t come in 1987, 40 years after the reconstitution of Israel in 1947, nor in 2007, 40 years after the recapture of Jerusalem in 1967.²⁵

And there are still several prophesied events of worldwide significance remaining to be fulfilled before it *can* come (i.e., the Ezekiel 38 war, the rise of the 10-nation (or region) confederacy (though that may now be in place in the form of the Mediterranean Union), the rise of Anti-Christ and the false prophet, the fulfillment of the mark of the Beast and the cashless society, the destruction of mystery Babylon, the Great Tribulation, and several other biblical prophecies).

NOTE: Some people say that the word “**generation**” can be interpreted “race” here. That may be the case technically, but to do so obliterates the value of the verse, at least in terms of prophecy. Jesus is *intending* to be prophetic here. If the word translated “generation” actually means “race” and should be translated so, then it is of no use as a clue to the timing of these events and Jesus isn’t saying anything of value prophetically. It is clear elsewhere in Scripture that Israel will not pass away, and that she will, in fact, be rescued in the end by her Messiah. That is a given, scripturally. In fact, the Jewish race will not pass away even *after* these things are accomplished. The Jews are the foundation of the Church. They are the cultivated olive tree into which the Gentile church (the “wild olive tree”) is grafted. It may have been helpful for the Jews during the “times of the Gentiles” to *know* that they would not be exterminated completely by genocidal megalomaniacs despite the way things might have looked. But again, it is not helpful prophetically, though true, to say that this “race” will not pass away until all these things are accomplished. How does that help us identify when these things (as illustrated by the fig tree putting forth its leaves) will happen? It doesn’t. So we will stick with the same interpretation the Bible scholars are wont to use: generation.

²⁵ Even though the end didn’t come in 2007, this last 40 years (1967-2007) does have definite prophetic significance in our opinion. God gave Israel and her leaders 40 years after the Resurrection in 30 AD to repent for rejecting her Messiah and they did not. At the end of that testing period, God allowed Jerusalem and the Temple to be destroyed (in 70AD). We could surmise then, fairly reasonably, that God would allow 40 years after the recapture of Jerusalem for Israel to receive her Messiah and if they don’t, some judgment would fall on them. On June 6, 2007, the 40th anniversary of the Six-Day War (and the recapture of Jerusalem) came and went, and Israel’s leaders did not come to faith in Jesus. So it would not be farfetched to expect some similar judgment on Israel shortly, even if just a spiritual hardening. No one knows what that judgment will look like or what form it will take if it happens; it may be the partitioning of the nation and the installation of a Palestinian state alongside the nation of Israel, or the internationalization of Jerusalem. Or it might be a military strike against the nation by Iran or Syria or a coalition of Muslim nations. Or it might possibly be the Rapture, as if God were saying, “Okay, you foolish virgin, you weren’t ready,” since He does say in Matthew 8:12 that the sons of the kingdom (Jews) will be cast out of the wedding feast. Time will tell. We are of the opinion that there are ten years remaining after this 40-year time of testing (1967-2007) expires, as a second fulfillment of the 40/10 pattern set by Jesus who revealed Himself for 40 days to the nation of Israel after the resurrection and then ascended to heaven 10 days before the Holy Spirit came to indwell the Church at Pentecost.

So how about the 70-year definition of a generation?

Seventy years after Israeli statehood (1948) is 2018 AD. Is it possible that all these remaining prophecies could be accomplished by 2018? Yes, very possibly. The Bible states that those who see the Fig Tree beginning to bud will see the fulfillment of all things. Was the Fig Tree beginning to bud in 1948?²⁶ We think so. If we're right, this date gains tremendous significance. But is this date significant prophetically for any other reason? In other words, does it mesh with a God who values numbers, and certain segments of time as markers and indicators of His plans (i.e., 1000 years = one creation day)?²⁷

Let's see. 2018 is 2000 years from 18 AD. Did anything significant, prophetically-speaking, happen in 18 AD? Not that we know of. Jesus was alive, but not publicly revealed yet (other than His appearance in the Temple at age 12). He was approximately 23 years old and probably working in His father Joseph's construction business.

Let's try adding 70 years to 1967.

We get 2037. This is 2000 years after 37 AD. What happened in 37 AD?

Nothing specific prophetically that we can date with any certainty. We know the Church was just getting going, was primarily Jewish at that time and was centered mostly in Jerusalem. Other than that, we don't know much about that specific date.

However, what if we subtract seven years from 2037 AD to account for a biblically prophesied **Seven-Year Tribulation**? We get 2030. Now subtract our 2000 years? What date do we arrive at? 30 AD.

Hmmm. What happened in **30 AD** (according to our best calculations)? Jesus died on the cross, rose from the dead, appeared to 500+ disciples over the next 40 days, gave final instructions to the twelve

²⁶ There is some rationale for dating this event from the UN resolution, passed on Nov. 29, 1947, that allowed Israel a territory after the horrors of WWII.

²⁷ God has apparently divided His redemptive plan into three 2000-year segments. The first was from Adam to Abraham; the second from Abraham to Jesus; the third will be from Jesus to the end of the Church Age or the Second Coming. See One Day = 1000 Years Chart after this chapter.

apostles, ascended into heaven in full view of His followers and sent the Holy Spirit into His disciples ten days later on the day of Pentecost. Now that's significance.

One reason we believe that Jesus died in **30 AD** is this: God has determined the number 40 to be the number of testing. Moses wandered in the wilderness of Midian for 40 years before God called him in the burning bush incident; Israel wandered in the desert for 40 years before God allowed them to enter the Promised Land; Jesus fasted for 40 days in the wilderness before He was tempted by the devil; it rained 40 days and 40 nights on the earth during the flood of Noah's day; Jesus appeared to His disciples for 40 days after His death to prove the resurrection; and we believe God gave Israel 40 years after the crucifixion to repent and turn to their Messiah. Instead, the leaders hardened themselves against Him and fabricated a lie to explain His resurrection, which they spread far and wide. Thus, at the end of 40 years of rebellion, God allowed the Roman army to devastate Jerusalem. That was in 70 AD.

Another reason is that, according to HebCal.com, in 30 AD Passover (Nissan 14), also known as Preparation Day for the Feast of Unleavened Bread, occurred on a Tuesday/Wednesday (sundown to sundown). This date allows Jesus to be in the tomb a full three days and three nights before His resurrection just as He prophesied He would: "An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and yet no sign shall be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet; for just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." (Mat. 12:39-40). According to this scenario, Jesus was buried Wednesday just at dusk (evening), and rose sometime after dusk on Saturday night, which by Jewish reckoning is the start of Sunday. Sunday was the Feast of First Fruits, and Jesus is our first fruits from the dead.

The **Seven-Year Tribulation** is alluded to in Daniel 9:27 where a description of "the 70 weeks," a prophetic timetable for Israel, is given by the angel Gabriel. Daniel quotes the angel: "And he (the Anti-Christ) will make a firm covenant with the many for one week [literally, one seven], but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate (or causes horror), even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate." At this point, the Anti-Christ will begin his campaign to destroy the Jews and everyone who supports them (which is mainly Christians as stated in Rev. 12:17) and anyone else who won't worship him. In Daniel 12, we are told, "And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your (Daniel's) people, everyone who is found written in the book [presumably the Book of Life of the Lamb] will be rescued...And I heard the man dressed in linen [the angel]...as he raised his right hand and his left toward heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever, that it would be for a time, times and half a time (3 1/2 years prophetically); and as soon as they finish shattering the power of the holy people, all these events will be completed...Many will be purged, purified and refined;...and from the time that the regular sacrifice is abolished and the abomination of desolation is set up, there will be 1290 days."

The first fulfillment of this event came in 168 BC when Antiochus IV Epiphanes ("the visible god") of Syria took over Jerusalem and attempted to Hellenize it by force. He prohibited Jewish Temple worship, forbade circumcision on pain of death, sold thousands into slavery, destroyed all the copies of the Scriptures he could find, and resorted to unbelievable tortures to force Jews to renounce their religion. He eventually defiled the Temple by sacrificing a pig (an unclean animal) on its altar, leading to the Maccabean revolt. It took three years to cleanse the Temple after the Maccabees routed the Syrian rulers. Hanukkah is the feast which celebrates the completion of this cleansing process. Jesus predicts a second fulfillment of this prophecy in the last days (Matt. 24:15).

So, if the ‘times of the Gentiles’ ended, as we suspect, in 1967 when Israel legally regained possession of Jerusalem for the first time since 70 AD, and if we factor in 70 years for the generation that saw that event, we can assume that the end of all things will come by 2037 AD. (1967 + 70 = 2037)

What implications does this have for these last days? It would seem to indicate that:

- 1) the “One Day = 1000 Years” creation week theory is very likely true;
- 2) there have been exactly 2000 years allotted for the Church Age;
- 3) very likely, the Rapture will occur seven years before the Tribulation (2,000 years after the death/burial/resurrection of Jesus); or at the very least the seven-year Tribulation will begin no later than 2030;
- 4) we have a *maximum* of 28 years (at this writing) before the end of all things and the return of Christ. Is this long enough for all the remaining prophecies to be fulfilled? Yes. In view of how quickly things are moving toward global government, a cashless society, restrictions on religious speech and liberty (which have already advanced significantly) and escalating global climate issues (though they are probably not manmade), there seems no doubt that we could easily see the consummation of human history from God’s point of view in the next 28 years.

In Hosea, Ch.6, the prophet says to Israel:

“Come, let us return to the Lord. For He has torn us, but He will heal us; He has wounded us, but He will bandage us. He will revive us after two days; He will raise us up on the third day that we may live before Him. So let us know, let us press on to know the Lord. His going forth is as certain as the dawn; and He will come to us like the rain, like the spring rain watering the earth.”

There is a prophecy here about Israel being chastened for 2000 years (not two literal days) for their sin of rejecting their Messiah, but on the third day (or at the beginning of the third millennium after Christ and the end of the Church Age) being raised back up to sonship.²⁸ This is the obvious prophetic meaning of

²⁸ The third day Hosea mentions did not begin with the current reconstitution of the state of Israel. It refers to the day when God will rescue them from annihilation by the Anti-Christ and raise them up to a place of exaltation as a nation.

the passage. It's not talking about three literal 24-hour days.²⁹ Believing Israel (presumably including the grafted in Gentile Church) will be the ruling nation during Christ's Millennial reign on the earth, no more to be treated as the world's whipping boy. They will call the shots, and the world will listen.³⁰

BUT...hang on a minute

There is one interesting little hitch that God has inserted into His scheme, lest we become too complacent or smug in our predictions. In Matthew 24:21-22, Jesus says a very interesting thing. He is talking about the future, specifically the time of tribulation that will come upon the world at the end of the age. He describes it briefly, saying it will be the worst tribulation the world has ever endured, and then He makes this enigmatic statement: "*And unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect³¹ those days shall be cut short.*"

What days? And cut short from what? Does He just mean that He will intervene in the nick of time and end the Tribulation early (i.e., in less than seven years) or is there more to it than that?

We don't think He means He will shorten the Tribulation, since Daniel gives us a specific number of days that the worst of the Tribulation will last. In our opinion, this appears rather to be a hint that Days 5 & 6 of the creation week (those "days" in which we are now living) will be shortened slightly to save mankind from annihilation, particularly Israel to whom Jesus is slated to return. In other words, Days 5 & 6 will be less than 1000 years each and the final segment of the "do-over" and God's redemptive program will be somewhat less than 2000 years long.

How much less? Jesus doesn't tell us. So let's examine that question from a prophetic standpoint if we can.

²⁹ 2 Peter 3:8 expresses the principle that "with the Lord one day is as a thousand years and a thousand years is as a day."

³⁰ Daniel 7:27 states: "Then the sovereignty, the dominion, and the greatness of all the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him.

³¹ I believe "the elect" in this context refers to saved Israel, particularly those who will come to faith during the Tribulation. God will not let all of saved Israel be wiped out by the Anti-Christ because He has prophesied that He will return when Israel says, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord." (Mat. 23:39) Some must remain alive to make this declaration. Apparently if God waited the full 2000 years there would be no Israel left to return to.

Okay, we've already established that the outside date for the end of the age is 2037, given that the generation that saw the legal retaking of Jerusalem in 1967 will expire (legally speaking) at that point. (Again, $1967 + 70 = 2037$.) It is conceivable that the end could come *anytime* during that generation's 70-year allotted lifespan, depending on how bad things get.³² By what point will Jesus have to intervene to keep the human race from obliterating itself? Fortunately He knows exactly what is coming, how fast it's coming, and how early He needs to intervene to preserve His redemptive plan. He cannot allow the extermination of His chosen people, since He Himself told them they would not see Him again until they say, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord." If He wants (and intends) to return, He has to preserve a remnant that will ultimately repent and to whom He can then return. ³³

Wouldn't it be interesting, though, if God's "shortening of the days" just happened to coincide with (or even precede) the next most judiciously appropriate prophetic date? In our opinion, that date is 2018, when those who saw the fig tree budding in 1948 will be finishing their allotted 70-year generation. ($1948 + 70 = 2018$) That is approximately nine years away at this writing (2009), and since He says that generation will not pass away before all is accomplished, He may even come before that.

Some of you will think, "There's no way." You are too invested in this world and all it has to offer you. You have not accomplished your personal ambitions or made a name for yourself. Perhaps you have not had children yet,³⁴ or married. Maybe you cannot even conceive of a reality like this interrupting your carefully laid plans.

³² Revelation 8 and 9 seem to tell of a nuclear-type holocaust. The Koran says that the Islamic Messiah will come on the heels of massive chaos and destruction. The President of Iran is forecasting the return of the Mahdi (12th Imam or Muslim Messiah) in approximately two years and believes he (Ahmadinejad) must usher in his return by fomenting massive disaster. Is this why Ahmadinejad is so adamant about developing nuclear capabilities and is committed to wiping Israel off the map? We suspect the war (apparently nuclear) prophesied in Ezekiel 38-39 will occur on the heels of the Rapture, setting the world up for the advent of this false Messiah.

³³ If the Jews were wiped out, they would never be able to say this and Jesus could not return. This explains the hatred of the Jews and the atrocities committed against them throughout history. Satan does not want Jesus to return and is intent on wiping out the Jewish race so that cannot happen.

³⁴ Jesus said, "Woe to those who are with child and those who nurse babes in those days." The trauma of the Tribulation will be greater for those who have young children to feed and care for.

To skeptics who say Scripture is very clear that no one will know the day nor the hour³⁵ of Christ's return, remember, God is sometimes very literal. Perhaps we may know the year and we can certainly know the *approximate* time, else God would not have told us to watch and be ready.³⁶

As things heat up in the Middle East and a blistering nuclear war erupts (see Ez. 38), an imminent return of Christ is welcome news for many. Nevertheless, there is still much yet to transpire before His return, including an escalating series of plagues, wars, famines, environmental disasters, political upheavals and the like, culminating in a world government and religion headed by one super-human counterfeit Christ.

It is interesting that Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 15:51-52, speaking of the **Rapture**: "Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep (die), but we (Christians) 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." Some believe that this is a hint that the Rapture or the Wedding of the Messiah will occur on a future Feast of Trumpets, the first of the Jewish fall feasts, prior to which are blown some 100 trumpet blasts, culminating in a final "great blowing" on the last day of the feast. Others think the Feast of Trumpets instead foreshadows the return of Christ in power and glory, also a possibility.

The **Rapture** is a term that is used by the Church to describe an event believed to be spoken of in 1 Cor. 15:51-52 as noted above. Other supportive verses include 1 Thess. 5:9, "For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with Him" and Rev. 3:10 (Jesus speaking), "Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell upon the earth." There are others, but the gist of the doctrine is that believers will be supernaturally removed from the earth prior to God's wrath being poured out on a rebellious and corrupt generation, a period commonly referred to as the Great Tribulation.

Others believe the trumpet mentioned in 1 Thess. 4:16 ("the trumpet of God") is not referring to a trumpet blown by men, but to a trumpet blown by God, like the one blown at the giving of the Law on Mt. Sinai.³⁷ This trumpet was so loud it caused the people to tremble and cower. Scripture hints that the Law was

³⁵ There are 24 time zones and two days in play around the world at any given time, so this is indeed impossible on any level.

³⁶ Matt. 25:13; 1 Thess. 5:6; Luke 12:40.

³⁷ Exodus 19:16-19

given on the Feast of Pentecost and that Pentecost is a sort of divine dispensational marker. Since the Church age also began at Pentecost, it is fitting that the completion of the dispensation of grace would occur then as well,³⁸ and that the Tribulation itself would start in the fall, perhaps on the Feast of Trumpets or Day of Atonement. Whatever the case, it is clear from Scripture that, indeed, we are to be watching and waiting. The angel Gabriel tells Daniel that those who have insight will understand the end-days signs. (Daniel 12:10) And Scripture affirms several times that those who are watching and waiting eagerly for the return of the Messiah will not be caught off-guard. On the contrary, we are warned to keep alert, to be sober, to study the signs, and to work while it's still day, for the time is coming when no man can work. Which leads us to Theory #8.

NOTE: What follows is a Bible Timeline in two pages laying out the essence of this theory and a Chart depicting the "One Day = 1000 Years" principle.

³⁸ The spring feasts of the Jewish calendar were fulfilled at the first coming of Christ (Jesus died on Passover, was buried on Unleavened Bread, rose on First Fruits, and gave the Holy Spirit to the Church on Feast of Weeks or Pentecost). This redemptive coming of Jesus also inaugurated the Age of Grace, a 2,000-year period during which Gentiles and Jews may be saved by repentance and faith in Christ's finished work. It seems fitting that the Age of Grace would be represented entirely in the spring feasts, rather than start with the spring feasts and end at a fall feast.