

EXPLANATORY NOTES WILL FOLLOW THIS CHAPTER, BELOW...

Chapter 2
The Passing of First Heaven and First Earth

We're going to take but a short break on our discussion about water baptism in order to get even deeper into our current study – of which I'd like to begin with speaking of the 1st Heaven, and of its demise:

Matthew 5:18 (*Jesus speaking*)

For verily I say unto you, **Till heaven and earth pass**, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the [Old Testament] law, **till all be fulfilled**.

If Jesus came to fulfil everything in the Old Testament world, as I had said quite strongly in the first chapter, then could that have included the first heaven and the first earth? For, and as we see in **Matthew 5:18**, nothing in the Law (that is – and as I had pointed out during the quote – the Old Mosaic Law), not a single jot or tittle of it shall pass away. Though, and seemingly contradictory (that is, if we truly believe the first heaven and earth remain for us today), we see Paul telling us, quite assuredly in his letters, ^{*12} that the Old Law did, indeed, pass from that of Moses to that of Christ – a new and different Law:

Hebrews 7:12

For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.

But, if the Law didn't change, as Paul had so adamantly declared here, then the first heaven and earth should still be in existence, and most of Paul's teachings would be vain – since we still find ourselves under a law that doesn't exist for us anymore:

Romans 3:28

Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law [i.e. it's fulfilled with life in Christ].

Romans 7:4a

Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the [old] law by the body of Christ...

Romans 6:14b

...ye are not under the [old] law, but under grace.

For, again, until everything was fulfilled by Christ (by performing such rituals Himself in the flesh), nothing would cease – *including, perhaps, water baptism*. This is where the rubber meets the road; for confusion certainly springs up when we try to think about the Old Testament Law being fulfilled in comparison to the heaven and earth passing. *Why?* Because, many folks can see that we aren't supposed to be living during the Old Testament times anymore, but they cannot see that the heaven and earth have already passed, too. Unless, that is, we could actually look upon this *metaphorically* as opposed to *naturally*.

When taking into consideration a set of scripture (*that I'll be covering in a few moments*), we are forced to consider an actual date of when the 1st Heaven departed. That is, as it's promised to do in the scriptures (in **Revelation 21:1** and **Revelation 6:14**). Many take this disappearance of the 1st Heaven as a futuristic event; however, if one will but consider my words (*and, please give me a chance to explain*), one just may begin to see that the 1st Heaven actually went away during

the 1st century AD; for, I believe that the 1st Heaven is synonymous with the 1st Covenant/Testament; or, that is, it was the days of the Old Testament – which *technically* ended when Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist – of when the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in the form of a dove (see **Matthew 3:16**; **Mark 1:10**; **Luke 3:22**; and **John 1:32**). This was just before Jesus began to preach a New Testament message (for, *once more*, He had to fulfill the Old [Matthew 5:17], in His own life, before He could begin preaching the New). This is why I believe that Jesus was in Heaven (that is, 2nd Heaven – the beginnings of a New Covenant) when speaking with Nicodemus...

John 3:13

And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, *even* the Son of man which IS [present-tense] in heaven.

...because, He got in there (i.e. into 2nd Heaven) before anybody else could (again, He got in with the descending of the Holy Ghost at John's baptism before He said this to Nicodemus: **Matthew 3:16**; **Mark 1:10**; **Luke 3:22**; **John 1:32**) – *but, NOT because of the natural water baptism, but because of the Spirit of His Father descending upon Him* – and, all the other New Testament saints got in on the *Day of Pentecost* in **Acts 2:1-4** (i.e. the launching of the New Covenant for mankind), but not beforehand; Jesus had to create the way-in for all others to follow. Though, idealistically, the 1st Heaven/Covenant/Testament really ended when Jesus literally died on the cross (or, rather, that it's actual ending “*process*” began at that time, in circa AD 30*¹³), saying that it (i.e. the Old Testament/Heaven) was finished (**John 19:30**). *Why?* Because, and as I've already said, a New Testament cannot commence until the Testator dies (**Hebrews 9:16-17**); for, the death of a lamb, and the spilling of its blood, commences a New Testament (**Hebrews 9:18**). This is also why the 1st Heaven had died, as it says in Revelation:

Revelation 21:1

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were **passed away**; and there was no more sea.

As I had explained thoroughly in my book “*New Jerusalem*,” this scripture was fulfilled on the *Day of Pentecost*, where John the Revelator/Apostle was an *eyewitness* to that event:

Revelation 21:2

AND I JOHN **SAW** [witnessed in the past, in circa AD 30, on the *Day of Pentecost*; **Revelation 1:19** shows us past, current, and future events] the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

For, as I had, again, shown in my aforementioned book on “*New Jerusalem*,” these two verses of Revelation (21:1-2) connects with chapter 6 of that same Holy book:

Revelation 6:12-14

And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great **earthquake**; and **the sun became black as sackcloth of hair**, and **the moon became as blood**; And **the stars of heaven fell unto the earth**, even as a **fig tree casteth her untimely figs**, when she is shaken of a **mighty wind**. And **the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together**; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

Let's quickly analyze these three verses as I speak on the things that I had highlighted therein (in bold letters) – *which have much to say to us* – and, of which we see end on this note: “...the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together...” That is, the 1st Heaven departing. And, also, during

this entire process, please notice that if an actual date *can* be attributed to these events (of chapter 6 in Revelation; that is, with the opening of the sixth seal), and that date can prove to have been in the *past* (as opposed, of course, to most scholars saying that these events are still to happen in our own future – again, see **Revelation 1:19** to see how this book/letter speaks of events, not only futuristically, but in its present-time, and even of past events), then we can actually attribute a date to the departing of the 1st Heaven; for, once again, as it can be seen, at the end of the verses that I just quoted (**Revelation 6:12-14**), the Heaven then departs away, just like a finished scroll when it's done being read (which, of course, I'm equating to the ending of the Old Testament, as if *it* were the scroll that was finished being read) . . . So, let's begin:

First, I connect the **earthquake** in verse 12 with Jesus dying on the cross (**Matthew 27:50-51**). *Really? Isn't that a far stretch, though? And, too naturalistic of a thought when it's surrounded by heavy metaphors?* Well, if this is true (that is, that this earthquake bespeaks of the natural earthquake that occurred when Jesus had died on the cross), then we'll actually have fulfillment of these events, from **Revelation 6:12-14**, in Revelation's *past*. But, let's continue so that I can make that bold statement more clear: next (and, also in verse 12), **the Sun became black and the Moon became as blood**. Peter, in the book/letter of Acts, said that the fulfillment of this was during his own day:

Acts 2:15-20 (a summary)

For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is *but* the third hour of the day. But **THIS** [what you are now witnessing] is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass **in the last days**, saith God [i.e. the last days not being the end of the planet here, but the beginning of the ending process of the Old Testament World/Heaven], I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh [that is, the events of the *Day of Pentecost* being foreseen by Joel]... [and, then, in verse 20 – which includes the things that Joel had spoken on, and of which all the witnesses that day were actually seeing being fulfilled before their eyes] **The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood**, before that great and notable day of the Lord come...^{*14}

That great and notable day being the besieging of Jerusalem in this instance;^{*15} which ended, about forty years later, with the famous Jerusalem Temple being destroyed in AD 70 by the armies of Rome – that terrible judgment of carnal Israel, because of all their decadent deeds during the Old Testament era, up until they crucified Jesus,^{*16} and who were against God (see **Isaiah 2:12; 13:6; 13:9; 34:8; 46:10; etc**) . . . Therefore, we can see that the events spoken of by Joel the prophet were to take place *prior* to the terrible day of the Lord (i.e. prior to the *Wars of the Jews* with Rome); and, so, the *Day of Pentecost* is our perfect candidate (approximately 40 years prior). Again, see **Acts 2:20** just above.

Jesus Himself is the **Sun** in this instance (that is, the Sun that had become darkened to His enemies, *as we see in our continuance of Revelation 6:12*):

Revelation 1:16b

...his [Jesus'] **countenance** was as the **sun** shineth in his strength.

Matthew 17:2

And [Jesus] was transfigured before them: **and his face did shine as the sun**, and his raiment was white as the light.

2 Corinthians 4:6

For God, who commanded **the light to shine out of darkness**, hath shined in our hearts, to *give* the **light** of the knowledge of the glory of God **in the face of Jesus Christ**.

Jesus is compared to the Sun because of His New Testament messages: *New Testament Light; New Testament enlightenment*.

John 1:6-9

There was a man sent from God, whose name *was* John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness **of the Light** [the enlightenment of God through Jesus, the Sun], that all *men* through him might believe. He [John] was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light. *That* was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

Matthew 4:16

[Because Jesus finally came to earth] The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.

However, this Sun/Light, *as bright as it is*, still could not be seen by those 1st Covenant religious leaders (i.e., again, the main ringleaders of Jesus' crucifixion – see, once more, the *Explanatory Note*, called: *They crucified Jesus*16*).

2 Corinthians 3:14-15

But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which *vail* is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart.

If those men couldn't even see through the veil of Moses, in the reading of the Old Testament, how much more with Jesus, and the reading of the New Testament? Therefore, the Sun became as black as sackcloth of hair to their sight. They had no spiritual eye to see. And, secondly, when something bleeds out, as the Moon had done, it loses all of its life (**Genesis 9:4; Leviticus 17:11**). So, the 1st Heaven had died *because it lost all of its blood; it lost all of its life*. the Moon (i.e. the Old Testament) had bled to death: the dying of the 1st Heaven/Covenant.

Hebrews 8:13

In that he saith, A new *covenant* [a New Heaven], he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away [i.e. during the 1st century AD; and, with the tearing down of the Temple – the last standing monument of that Old World].

Therefore, the **Moon**, representing the lesser light (i.e. the Old Testament; and, perhaps even Moses himself, who gave the Law of that Old Testament) was only a *reflection* of the greater light, of Jesus, who came to give greater Light to the world (**Matthew 4:16** and **John 1:4-5;3:19**); and, it (the Old Testament) was ready to roll away like a scroll when it's finished being read.

The stars of heaven fell unto the earth (Revelation 6:13a)... Stars, in some scriptural instances, are metaphorically compared to ministers. That is, those bad ministers of the Old Covenant who fell from their place in the 1st Heaven, and fell back to the earth – or, specifically, back unto carnality; or, back to the ungodly ways of the world; that is, just after their eyes had become blinded to the Sun – of which had become black as sackcloth of hair to their sight. We find that, in Jude, men are referred to as *stars*; especially when Jude is talking about these very same men that I am speaking of myself. That is, those religious leaders of the Old Covenant who couldn't accept Jesus; and, who were (once again) the ringleaders of His crucifixion.

Jude 1:4

For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation [during the prophesies in the Old Testament], ungodly men [who fell to earthen matters of carnality], turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. [verse 11 – speaking of these same men] Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core. [12] These [same men] are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you [showing present-tense people, during Jude's day], feeding themselves without fear: clouds *they are* without water [without the Holy Ghost within them; **John 7:37-39; Isaiah 44:3; and 1st Corinthians 12:13**], carried about of winds [winds of doctrine: **Ephesians 4:14**]; trees whose fruit withereth [fig trees with unripen figs – as I'll speak more on in a moment], without fruit [no fruit of the Spirit about them: **Galatians 5:22-23**], twice dead, plucked up by the roots [dying the second death of Adam]; [verse 13 – these same men are] Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; **WANDERING STARS**, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever [i.e. blackness of darkness of the New Testament Sun].

Learning that men can sometimes be compared, *metaphorically*, in scripture to stars is a key that can unlock other truths from the Bible for us, too . . . However, these 'stars,' of which Jude spoke of wandering (again, wandering away from the truth), not only fell from their place in 1st Heaven, but they fell smack dab into carnality and ungodliness. And, then, if that wasn't proof enough, **Revelation 6:13** continues to say that these stars, that fell unto the earth, were cast down "**even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind...**" *Oh, the picture that forms for us here!* Can we not see the Mighty Wind of Acts chapter 2, verse 2, being represented here – i.e. *the Holy Ghost* – when it came into the house where all the saints were gathered to receive the Baptism of the Holy Ghost on the *Day of Pentecost*?

Acts 2:1-4

And when the **day of Pentecost** was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing **mighty wind**, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. **And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost**, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

It put those upper-room folks into the 2nd Heaven. But, not only did it put those folks into the 2nd Heaven, the Mighty Wind also blew the bad guys away from their place in 1st Heaven; knocking them down to the earth; or, earthen, carnal matters . . . And, not only so, but the picture of the fig tree is brought before us, too. Do we not remember Jesus desiring to see some Good Fruit on the fig tree and found none? And, then, He cursed the fig tree because it could produce no Good Fruit (see **Matthew 21:19**). Can we not see that He found no "Fruits of the Spirit" (**Galatians 5:22-23**) amongst the ministry of the First Covenant?

Hosea 9:10

I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness; **I saw your fathers as the firstripe in the fig tree at her first time:** *but* they went to Baalpeor, and separated themselves unto *that* shame; and *their* abominations were according as they loved.

Luke 13:6-7

He [Jesus] spake also this **parable**; A certain *man* had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years [i.e. the approximate time of Jesus' ministry on earth] I come seeking

fruit [of the Spirit] on this fig tree [amongst this 1st Heaven ministry], and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?

Therefore, when we put all these verses together (again, **Revelation 6:12-14**), we see that they form a picture of Revelation's *past*, rather than that they will be fulfilled in our own future . . . I'll say this once more, that what a lot of folks don't know is that Revelation doesn't only speak of the future, but it also speaks of the recent past, too . . . *Let's see that again:*

Revelation 1:19

Write the things which thou hast seen [witnessed in the past], and the things which are [current events], and the things which shall be hereafter [futuristic events].

These things John was certainly a witness to; that is, things from the recent past, such as Jesus' ministry, His crucifixion and Resurrection, the events of the *Day of Pentecost*, and of what took place during the 40 years that led up to the toppling of the Temple in AD 70. In fact, John the Revelator, as history tells us, lived up until approximately AD 100. So, why not speak of events from the recent past in the book/letter of Revelation? Do we imagine that such events (again, Jesus' Resurrection, and the *Day of Pentecost*, etc.) were small, isolated affairs in Christian history? I dare say that the *Day of Pentecost* was one of the most significant events of the New Testament. *Why?* Because, it was the day on which a whole New, spiritual World had commenced. I've already said that, by Paul's words concerning Jesus, that the New Testament officially began when Jesus both died and rose again (**Hebrews 9:17**); and, then, logically, other folks didn't get in themselves until the *Day of Pentecost*, for that's when the Holy Ghost finally descended in its fullest form, bringing those folks into a New, spiritual Kingdom (a Second Heaven). Therefore, I contend that it's not only possible that Revelation speaks on things of its recent past, but that it would be mighty strange if it didn't because those events helped shape the future of Christianity; and, laying-out what had happened in the past would set the book/letter of Revelation up to speak also of future events, as well. This is why I am stressing that not only is it possible for Revelation to cover important events of the past, but that I see no other possibility for the opening of the sixth seal; because, if what I've just covered isn't those verses' interpretations, then we have a wondrous coincidence on our hands! Therefore, if what I'm saying here is true, then we have proof that not only were those events already fulfilled in Revelation's past, but that it also proves that the First Heaven was synonymous with the Old Testament Covenant; because, it was those events of the sixth seal which had closed-out the Old Testament – all starting with Jesus dying on the cross: which the earthquake painted a historical picture of in **Revelation 6:12**, helping us to place such an event in actual history; then, as **6:12** continued to demonstrate, the Sun and Moon event of Peter's day (which he himself was a witness to) shows us that not only was the Sun shining brightly, but that it was blindly being seen (or, *unseen*) by the adherents to the 1st Covenant, who couldn't and refused to change with the times; they just simply couldn't accept Jesus. Then, it demonstrated the bleeding out of the Old Covenant, in the form of the bleeding Moon – helping us to further understand the passing of one Heaven to another. Or, from an Old Covenant to a New. Verse 13 then continues this picture in the form of those Old Covenant Ministers, *as stars*, falling down to the earth. And, not only, but they fell just like a fig tree that casts its unripen figs to the earth when it's shaken of a mighty Holy Ghost Wind. *How can this not be a picture of the Old Covenant/Heaven passing away whilst the New was coming into effect?* Then, to top it all off, verse 14 called this event the passing of the Heaven . . . We therefore see that the closing of the Old Testament happened at the same exact time that the 1st Heaven had departed.

But, though a temporal distraction from our main topic at hand (*of why Paul stopped baptizing people in water*), I felt that it was a necessary diversion; for, we must not only realize that all Old

Testament rituals had ceased, but that they had ceased with the passing of the 1st heaven – as, again, Jesus said so Himself, here:

Matthew 5:18

For verily I say unto you, **Till heaven and earth pass**, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the [Old Testament] law, **till all be fulfilled**.

As Paul confirms in his letters, the law did indeed pass (or, that is, got *fulfilled* – **Romans 6:14**; *etc.*); and, in connecting that with what Jesus had to say in **Matthew 5:17** – *the verse above what we've just read* – we see that with the Old Law's fulfillment, the 1st heaven actually passes at the same time . . . *Let's now see them both together:*

Matthew 5:17-18

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

But, so too does the first earth pass! And, without getting into a long spill about that here (*for, I do so in my book, called: "New Jerusalem: The Mother of Us All*), I will just quickly say that John no more meant the literal earth than he did the literal heavens/skies. But, that earth was the Old Man – the Old Creature of the 1st covenant – the self-religious son of 1st Man Adam, who himself was made of earth. His ruling and reigning in that Old Regime (which reeked more of the natural than of anything spiritual) had come to a complete stop – allowing the new earth (*spiritually understood, also!*) to rule and reign in his stead – *the new earth being a new creation; a new creature; the Inward Man...*

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is a new creature*: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

...to rule and reign over that foul spirit (the old, carnal man) who had been flying in the midst of the 1st heaven . . . But, again, I go over details in my aforementioned book, *New Jerusalem*, about all of these things. And, too, I will be going into even more detail concerning this New Man in an upcoming book, called: *"Behold, I show you a Mystery: The Inward Man, the Inward Resurrection."*

Explanatory Notes for Chapter 2 *The Passing of First Heaven and First Earth*

***12. Paul telling us, quite assuredly in his letters...** Of which letter, that I'm fixing to quote from Paul, is *Hebrews* ... Now, this present book assumes that Paul himself had written that epistle; however, there seems to be continual debate on who had actually written it. Since unlike the other letters by Paul, which expresses uniform greetings in each, this letter has no such opening, which leads many scholars to believe that Paul really wasn't its author. Some even attribute its composition to Barnabas, the companion of Paul on some of the recorded New Testament journeys. However, I am one of the number who believe in the 'internal' evidence that Paul was, indeed, the author of this celebrated letter. For one, Paul seems very bent (in the book

of Acts, as well as in other letters) on helping his fellow-countrymen learn about Jesus being the only way to the Father (**Romans 9:1-3**, for example), and for that reason, he wrote this letter to the Hebrews; well, to the natural Jews who may or may not have already embraced Christianity; or, to some natural Jews, who did become Christians, but hadn't, as of yet, gone to the length that they needed to go in Christ, since they were still bogged down by the *Carnal Ordinances* of the Old Testament [i.e. the fleshly rituals] – which the letter to the Hebrews seems heavy on teaching against. However, this doesn't exclude the fact that he could have also written this to the *Spiritual Hebrews* as well (see **Romans 2:28-29**) ... But, not only so (and as I've already mentioned) there are at least two internal instances which point a direct finger to Paul as to being its author. First, the author mentions his 'bonds': – “For ye had compassion of me in my bonds...” (**Hebrews 10:34a**) Which is reminiscent of **Ephesians 6:20a** – “For which I am an ambassador in bonds...” Which is also evident in **Philippians 1:7; Philippians 1:13; Colossians 4:3; 2nd Timothy 2:9; Philemon 1:10; and, etc.** And, too, where the author mentions Timothy: “Know ye that *our* brother Timothy is set at liberty; with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you” (**Hebrews 13:23**). Timothy was a companion of Paul, but *not* Barnabas.

***13. It's actual ending “process” began at that time, in circa AD 30...** This thought will certainly be discussed during this book, beginning in this very chapter. I will show that the ending of the 1st covenant/1st heaven did not abruptly stop overnight, but that it took a period of approximately 40 years to do – again, ending *absolutely* by AD 70 after having “officially” begun in and around AD 30 (on the *Day of Pentecost*); though, and as I have also already demonstrated, Jesus Himself began that ending process a couple of years prior to AD 30 [3½ years earlier*] with the beginning of His earthen ministry). This is why I had said that the apostles in Jerusalem were continuing the closing-out of that old period, and I will certainly continue to explain why I say this.

***AD 30; 3½ years earlier...**

I will stress once again that all given dates, from the 1st century, are all of somewhat loose calculations and not necessarily exact (*that is, by the year, the day, or the very minute!*). But, I don't believe that to be of significant importance; for, their *approximate* calculations should suffice for this exercise – though, I really do believe that this fits within a few years of the dates I imply anyway – give or take. This is true, also, of when I had said that the old covenant had ended “absolutely” by AD 70; for, even though that actual date is calculated in history (as, again we shall see soon enough when I discuss the events of that important day in biblical history), I was meaning, though, that by that time the old covenant had come to an absolute close ... I speak, for quite a while, and with much more detail, on both biblical approximations and of exactness of time, in both my books “*In the Beginning: it was spiritual from the very start,*” and in “*New Jerusalem: the mother of us all.*”

***14. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come...**

Joel 2:28-31

And it shall come to pass afterward, *that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh*; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids **in those days will I pour out my spirit**. And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. **The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come.**

***15. That great and notable day being the besieging of Jerusalem in this instance...**

The term “*the day of the Lord*” was definitely a connotation of war and destruction in the Old Testament – even if the situation had dealt with other nations besides Israel ... *For instance:*

Isaiah 13:6 (*against Babylon*)

Howl ye; for **the day of the LORD** is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty ... [13:9] Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it ... [34:8] For it is the day of the LORD'S vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion.

Jeremiah 46:10 (*against Gentiles*)

For this is **the day of the Lord** GOD of hosts, a day of vengeance, that he may avenge him of his adversaries: and the sword shall devour, and it shall be satiate and made drunk with their blood: for the Lord GOD of hosts hath a sacrifice in the north country by the river Euphrates.

Ezekiel 30:3-4 (*against Egypt*)

For the day is near, even **the day of the LORD** is near, a cloudy day; it shall be the time of the heathen. And the sword shall come upon Egypt, and great pain shall be in Ethiopia, when the slain shall fall in Egypt, and they shall take away her multitude, and her foundations shall be broken down.

Etc ... And, certainly, the same was true for Israel themselves – as Peter had specifically named Joel as the prophet that fit their own day and time – which had been called, by Peter, *the last days*. Meaning, again, not the end of the planet earth, but the ending, indeed, of the Old Testament World – in which the Jews had a monopoly on God's religion. A fact that would soon change with the bringing-in of the Gentiles unto the Christian fold.

Joel 1:13-15

Gird yourselves, and lament, ye priests [of the Temple]: howl, ye ministers of the altar: come, lie all night in sackcloth, ye ministers of my God: for the meat offering and the drink offering is withholden from the house of your God [for, with the tearing down of that magnificent Temple in Jerusalem by the conquering armies of Rome – *that terrible event of AD 70 that I had promised to speak on earlier* – the sacrifices and ordinances had ceased!]. Sanctify ye a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders *and* all the inhabitants of the land *into* the house of the LORD your God, and cry unto the LORD, Alas for the day! for **the day of the LORD** is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come ... [2:1] Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for **the day of the LORD** cometh, for *it is nigh* at hand ... [2:11] And the LORD shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp [the armies of Rome – of whom God Himself sent to destroy Jerusalem in approximately AD 66] is very great: for *he is* strong that executeth his word: for **the day of the LORD** is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?

His army? Again, this was the armies of Rome – the executioners of God's wrath in judgment as they began to besiege the walls of Jerusalem in AD 66; and, of whom had ultimately torn down the Temple itself in AD 70.

Zephaniah 1:4a

I will also stretch out mine hand upon Judah, and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place...

That is, and concerning Baal, it's ANYTHING that reeks of the ungodly, heathenistic world that had made its way into the camp of Israel.

Zephaniah 1:7-8

Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord GOD: for **the day of the LORD** is at hand: for the LORD [the Father, in this instance] hath prepared a sacrifice [His own Son], he hath bid his guests. And it shall come to pass in the day [or, days] of the LORD'S sacrifice, that I will punish the princes, and the king's children, and all such as are clothed with strange apparel.

Those princes, those king's children – indeed, all of those who were clothed in strange (ungodly, carnal) clothing – were none other than the Jews who had not only partook in Jesus' sacrifice (of which stark statement I will speak on in an upcoming *Explanatory Note*, called "*They crucified Jesus...*"), but were they who had refused to accept Jesus into their lives when Peter had clearly given them that chance (in **Acts 2:22-23** – *the invitation actually extending until Rome began*

its war against them). These ‘days’ of the Lord not only defined the *Wars of the Jews* (beginning, again, in circa AD 66 – their ultimate punishment from the hand of God), but it had also included a prior period of which had preceded it, beginning in circa AD 30, starting with John the Baptist’s announcement of Jesus, of Jesus’ ministry; and, too, of the *Day of Pentecost* (events only a few years apart from each other) – a very unique period in our earthen history (again, from circa AD 30 until AD 70 – an approximate 40-year period; a biblical generation) that I will speak on at length in this very book – beginning in the next chapter; a short span of time that I have personally dubbed the *Transitional/Overlapping Period*. For, and as the studier digs even deeper, they will see, listed in the text of the Old Testament, that the *days* of the Lord had begun around the time that Jesus’ earthen ministry had begun, proceeding the apostolic age (starting for them on the *Day of Pentecost*), and finally ending in AD 70 with the tearing-down of the Jerusalem Temple.

Joel 2:3

A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them [of both Jesus’ ministry (**Matthew 4:16** “light is sprung up!”) and the *Day of Pentecost* with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit], and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them [these dedicated Christians leaving behind the cares of this world; or, that is, the cares of the Jewish nation that was fixing to face the mother of all wars when the Roman army began to surround Jerusalem’s walls in AD 66].

This was a time period, once more, that I will discuss in great detail in the upcoming pages herein, for it’s extremely important to learn about for this current study ... But, let’s continue:

Zechariah 14:1-2

Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. **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.

According to John Gill, in his *Exposition of the Bible*, this verse cannot mean the Romans, who were to besiege the city of Jerusalem in AD 66, since it says “ALL nations” will gather against them; but refers, instead (according to him), to the upcoming battle of Armageddon, spoken about in Revelation ... However, Adam Clarke, in his *Commentary on the Bible*, offers us this solution:

“I will gather all nations’ – **The Romans, whose armies were composed of all the nations of the world.** In this verse there is a pitiful account given of the horrible outrages which should be committed during the siege of Jerusalem, and at its capture ... ‘The residue of the people shall not be cut off’ – Many [Jews, after the war] were preserved for slaves, and for exhibition in the provincial theatres [of which latter thought had actually been provided by Josephus in his eyewitness account, called: ‘Wars of the Jews,’ from AD 75].”

And, frankly, this can make sense (about the Roman army being “composed of all nations of the world”), since it’s a known, historical fact that the Roman army was not strictly Italian; but, indeed, when they had conquered other lands (as they were conquerors), they began to multiply their number with the addition of those of whom they had conquered – making the nation of Rome more of a diverse people, of different nationalities, than just a people of a single race – especially do we see this diversity beginning in the 1st century AD, just prior to the *Wars of the Jews*.

<https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/classics/warwickclassicsnetwork/romancoventry/resources/diversity/army/#...> “Until the second quarter of the second century when British recruits became more common, legionaries came initially mainly from Italy (81%), but by the end of the first century were mainly from North Africa and the western provinces of Hispana, Gallia, Germania, Raetia (an Alpine province) and Noricum (roughly modern Austria/Slovenia). By this time Italian recruits constituted only about 20% of the number. **Thus the army was ethnically highly diverse.** Auxiliary troops introduced an even greater ethnic diversity, with men from Batavia (part of the modern Netherlands), Tungria (part of modern Belgium) and Thrace (roughly modern Bulgaria).”

<https://ancientworldsmanchester.wordpress.com/2013/03/04/dna-and-the-roman-army-in-britain/> “The claim in ‘The Daily Telegraph’ seems to assume that all the

men in the Roman army were Romans or at the very least Italian. However, detailed research on the Roman army over many years has shown that it was ethnically an extremely diverse organization ... The ‘auxiliaries’ were recruited from peoples who had been incorporated in the empire or who supplied troops under a treaty obligation. After serving for 25 years the auxiliaries received Roman citizenship. One of our best sources of information about ethnicity in the Roman Empire is epigraphy or the study of inscriptions. Gauls, Spaniards, Moors, Germans, Syrians and many other peoples are attested. For example, for a time here in Manchester the garrison of the Roman fort consisted of men from Raetia and Noricum (Switzerland and the modern Styria, Carinthia, Salzburg, and part of Austria and Bavaria in eastern central Europe). Once these men had become Roman citizens their sons would have been eligible to serve in the legions. This being so, we should expect a diverse DNA profile.”

But, even so, would the Bible be so cavalier in its usage of “ALL nations” when dealing with the army that was to besiege Jerusalem? That is, whether it was that 1st century war, or is to be some war in our own future? The final deciding factor on that is how best the scriptures will flow with our subject. Of course, and with how I am treating this subject herein, for me this latter theory would definitely fit. That is, “ALL nations” being the diverse ethnic army of Rome – considering that the term “all nations” wasn’t strictly meant to mean *every single nation or nationality on the planet earth*; but, back then, it was the “known” nations (the “known” world; meaning, the world of somewhat sophistication, non-barbaric) – the ones that were conquered by Rome, and then fine-tuned by them to become a civilized cosmopolitan society. Therefore, Rome, at that time, *was* the known world (the known civilized world), that had reached, during the apostolic age, all the way up to even England.

<https://www.pbs.org/empires/romans/empire/#>

“Two thousand years ago, the world was ruled by Rome. From England to Africa and from Syria to Spain, one in every four people on earth lived and died under Roman law.”

The Biblical Illustrator (for **Zechariah 14:1-2** – our current verses): “In the account given by Josephus of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans we have a record of enormities at which we might stand aghast. The particulars, says **Dr. Wardlaw**,* here noted are such as usually, it might be said, invariably attend the besieging, the capture, and the sacking of cities; especially when, as in this case, the assailing army has been exasperated by a long, harassing, and wasting defence. The entrance of the un pitying soldiery, the rifling of houses, the violation of women, the indiscriminate massacre, and the division of the spoil, are just what all expect, and what require no comment. And never were such scenes more frightfully realised than at the destruction of Jerusalem when God in His providence in judicial retribution gathered all nations against the devoted, city to battle. **‘All nations,’ a correct description of the army of Titus, the empire of Rome embracing a large proportion of the then known world, and this army consisting of soldiers of all the different nations which composed it.**”

John Wesley’s Notes on the Bible (Published in 1755-1766; public domain): “All nations’ – The Romans who at that time had the rule over all the nations of that part of the world. The residue – That small number of the Jews who were spared by Titus. Shall not be cut off – Were not forbidden to dwell about the city.”

Let’s continue:

Malachi 4:5

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet **BEFORE the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.**

The day of the Lord (that is, the end of those *days*) would be right at hand, and just around the corner, when Elijah would appear on this earth for the second time. Well, I’ve actually heard some ministers say that this *HAS* to be fulfilled in our own future, since it’s important to throw all

things, such as what we are particularly speaking of, into future prophecy – not realizing that many things that's considered to be "*End Time Prophecy*" has already been fulfilled in the first century AD – especially since, *and as I have already pointed out herein*, that the Bible speaks of **the end of the Old Testament era** in many areas, rather than the end of the planet – as I will continue to point out, and with such verses as this:

Hebrews 9:26

For then must he [Jesus] often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once **IN THE END OF THE WORLD** hath he [Jesus] appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself [on the cross].

Are we to assume that Jesus will come a second time to die on the cross again? ... Therefore, many obvious scriptures, with an obvious time-frame from our 'past,' has to be ignored by such scholars in order to fit pre-conceived ideas of the Bible. For, surely, Jesus Himself had answered the riddle for us, of how Elijah was to come back:

Matthew 11:13-15 (*Jesus speaking*)

For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John [the Baptist]. And if ye will receive it, this [John] IS Elias [Elijah], which was for to come. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Albert Barnes' Notes on the Bible: "*This is Elias' – That is, "Elijah." Elias is the "Greek" mode of writing the Hebrew word 'Elijah.'*"

No, not Elijah *personally*, as in being the same person, or of he being reincarnated (we need not be so literal here), but of John coming in the SPIRIT of Elijah, to do a similar work.

Luke 1:13

But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John [the future Baptist]. [1:17] And he shall go before him [that is, before Jesus. And, John will be:] **in the spirit and power of Elias** [Elijah], to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

And, once he made this appearance, then the terrible day of the Lord would be right at hand – meaning "soon," and not 2,000+ years later. *It would be within a forty-year period.*

***Dr. Wardlaw...**

This was perhaps a Mr. John Smith Wardlaw (July 25, 1813 – Oct. 13, 1872); whom, and according to <https://www.biblicalcyclopedia.com/W/wardlaw-john-smith-dd.html>, was "an English Congregational missionary," who "early dedicated himself to the Lord, and commenced preparation for his great work." ... "He graduated with honor at Glasgow University and Theological Academy, and at once decided to give his life to missionary work." ... "He was ordained as a missionary July 14, 1841, and sailed for India." "He at once..." did "teaching, preaching ... and superintending the printing press. He translated the Scriptures into the Telugu language, and..." sent "thousands of copies of the New Testament into the mission fields" ... For the full account of this very short biography, please see the aforementioned webpage: "<https://www.biblicalcyclopedia.com/W/wardlaw-john-smith-dd.html>."

***16. They crucified Jesus...** That is, the main ring leaders of Jesus' crucifixion – i.e. the Jewish religious leaders of Jesus' day. But, not only they, but also the people who had followed their example:

Luke 23:23

And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he [Jesus] might be crucified. And the voices of them and of **the chief priests** prevailed.

John 19:6a

When **the chief priests** therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify *him*, crucify *him*...

Mark 15:13

But **the chief priests** moved the people, that he should rather release Barabbas unto them.

John 19:14-15

And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he [Pilate] saith unto the Jews, Behold your King! But they cried out, Away with *him*, away with *him*, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? **The chief priests** answered, We have no king but Caesar.

Acts 2:22-23 (*Peter speaking*)

Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, **YE have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.**