



## Dedication

*This book is dedicated to Him who, by His life death and resurrection, answered the sentence passed on our first parents. The King of kings and Lord of lords.*

Did travailing pains come with sin? We read of the travail of Christ's soul, and the pains of death He was held by.

Did subjection come in with sin? Christ was made under the Law.

Did the curse come in with sin? Christ was made a curse for us, He died a cursed death.

Did thorns come in with sin? He was crowned with thorns for us.

Did sweat come in with sin? He sweat for us, as it had been great drops of blood.

Did sorrow come in with sin? He was a Man of sorrows; His soul was, in His agony, exceedingly sorrowful.

Did death come in with sin? He became obedient unto death.

Thus is the plaster as wide as the wound. Blessed be God for His Son our Lord Jesus Christ.

*Matthew Henry*

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# 01

## *THE ORIGIN OF MAN*

For centuries, a variety of theories have been advanced to explain the origin of humankind. The most widely accepted view is the Theory of Evolution, where man is seen as coming into existence for no intelligent reason and with no meaningful purpose.

The Bible paints a very different picture and says that God created human beings; and completely superior to the rest of His Creation. Clear indications to this can be found throughout Scripture, especially in the Book of Genesis. The first is the dominion God gave man over the natural world when He said:

*Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.*

*(Genesis 1:28-29)*

This Scripture tells us God placed mankind on a much higher level and is in complete opposition with the opinion of those who equate human beings with animals in terms of status and rights. Obviously, this dominion mandate did not mean man was to ruthlessly destroy and abuse the natural world for material gain. Rather, he was to respect and shape it so it would reflect the beauty, order, and glory of our Creator.

The second indication of mankind's superiority is the way in which the creation of the first man and woman is given such emphasis by the repetition of the word *bara* (*create*) in Genesis chapter one:

*So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.*

*(Genesis 1:27-28)*

This kind of emphasis on the word *created* occurs nowhere else in the entire Creation Account. It is difficult to deny the Holy Spirit wants to indicate there is something of greater significance being done here, compared to anything else in the story.

The third indication is even more evident: God created man in His own image! As God is Spirit, and has no material properties, being made in His image has nothing to do with size, shape or weight. To be made in His image means to have a personality; powers of thought; feelings, the ability to reason and the free will to choose between right and wrong.

Being made in the image of God also greatly distinguishes mankind from all other life forms because man has a conscience to aid him in making moral choices instead of acting by blind or irrational instinct.

Human beings also have a capacity to love in relationships and to express themselves in language, a fact that can never be accounted for by the Theory of Evolution.

Finally, man has a spiritual dimension, a unique capacity to relate to God, to worship, serve and live in fellowship with Him in a way that none of the other created beings can.

## **The Disastrous Fall**

In the Creation Account of Genesis we also learn that man came into being with a perfect moral and spiritual nature: “*God saw everything that he had made and, indeed, it was very good.*” For some time, the Bible does not say for how long, faultless people lived in a perfect environment and in a perfect relationship with

each other and with God; rendering Him unqualified obedience. But then things took a drastic turn. At a specific moment in history, they chose for the first time to question God's Word and disobey His directions, with the result that sin entered the world. From that moment on Adam had a new nature; spiritually he became a child of the devil and a partaker of his nature.

There have been many interpretations on the Fall, and the books written on the subject would fill a large library. Many early Christian leaders held the Mosaic Account to be a historical fact and interpreted it literally; believing that an actual fruit of some kind, not definitely known, was eaten by Adam and Eve.

Other theologians prefer to regard the narrative in Genesis as a parable or allegory, because they believe the eating of the fruit, which was "*good for food, a delight to the eyes,*" and was moreover "*to make one wise,*" was an offense too venial for a punishment so severe and so far-reaching.

To such a statement I would say, first, the only source of information on the Fall is the Bible narrative and it contains no indication that it is to be interpreted in a non-literal sense.

Second, such an objection is also not well founded because it ignores the main point that the writer is trying to make. The gravity of the offense did not consist in the act itself, but in the fact that Adam and Eve, in committing it, were consciously and wilfully violating God's explicit and emphatic command. In doing so they displayed an attitude of distrust in His wisdom and goodness.

## **The Penalty**

Whether we choose to take the specific details in the Genesis account of the Fall literally or figuratively, this one thing is clear: God had warned Adam: "*For in the day that you eat of it you shall die.*"

God was not telling him he would die physically, but spiritually; as Adam and Eve lived for many years after their disastrous fall. Spiritual death means separation from God.

When our first parents sinned, their spiritual relationship with God – the purpose of their very existence – was ruined and shattered. They could no longer delight in God’s presence but became alienated, ashamed and afraid.

Yet there was more to follow. The penalty that human sin deserved involved not only spiritual death, the separation of the spirit and soul from God, but physical death, the separation of the spirit and soul from the body as well. God pronounced this second part of the death sentence by telling Adam:

*By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return*

*(Genesis 3:19-20)*

After the Fall Adam and Eve’s body became prone to decay, disease and deterioration. In his original state man was not subject to any form of death – God created him to live not die – but the freedom of choice exposed him to the possibility of it.

Man was made perfect and upright, but his righteousness and holiness were not set in concrete. That is, he was not created as a robot, but as a morally responsible being able to exercise free will.

If Adam had not sinned, he would never have died spiritually or physically. He would have sustained forever in a perfect, unfallen state in a perfect unfallen world.



## Why Give the Power of Choice?

Having made these points clear, the question arises as to why God would give mankind the freedom to rebel and to choose evil instead of good. Obviously, choice that is limited would be no choice at all; the power to say yes would be meaningless without the power to say no. While evil could not exist without a genuine freedom to choose, neither would love be possible.

God's type of love comes from the heart and could never be forced. This would violate His very nature. He created man to share His glory and to live with Him in a relationship of love, but to make such a relationship possible He needed to give us the power of choice. Human beings had to be free to rebel against God, and even hate Him, or we could never truly love Him.

However, it was inevitable the power of choice would make it possible for Satan and man to rebel against God and ruin His Perfect Creation. Our Loving Creator knew the consequences and provided the remedy before He even created the world.

That remedy was the Messiah, Jesus, and each of His Advents play a significant part in the total destruction of evil and the restoration of our earthly Paradise to its former glory:

*He was destined before the foundation of the world, but was revealed at the end of the ages for your sake.*

*(1Peter 1:20-21)*

After the Fall a barrier was set up between God and humanity; God in His holiness cannot look on evil and wrongdoing, (*Habakkuk 1:13*). However, in His love, He desired to forgive and reconcile us to Himself. This process of reconciliation involved removing the cause of that barrier – human sin.

God clothed the first couple with the skins of animals after they sinned. However, these skins (probably blood-soaked) provided only a temporary covering and were a shadow of the Eternal Covenant that was to come.

As we could never pay the penalty that God's justice required, He sent His Dear Son to bear the consequences and pay the penalty for us. Through His shed blood at Calvary the work of reconciliation was completely finished:

*For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.*

*(Colossians 1:19-21)*

Through the Cross God can now offer full pardon and eternal life as a free gift to all who will repent and submit to His Lordship.

## **Why a Virgin Birth?**

Since the Garden of Eden all humanity has been contaminated through the original sin of Adam. The Apostle Paul wrote:

*Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned.*

*(Romans 5:12-13)*

The point Paul is making is that when Adam sinned, he did so as the head and representative of the entire human race. In other words, the whole of humanity has been effected through his sin; we have all inherited his sin nature. Therefore, it was necessary for our Redeemer be totally free from that contamination in order to offer Himself as a perfect sin sacrifice on our behalf.

This would not have been possible without the Virgin Birth. God the Father made this statement to Satan immediately after Adam and Eve had sinned:

*I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.*

*(Genesis 3:16)*

Note that in this passage the woman is emphasized, not the man. This is because the Redeemer, Jesus Christ, was conceived not through the union of a man and woman, but by the power of the Holy Spirit. Again, centuries after the Fall, and before Messiah's First Advent, the Prophet Isaiah spoke of Him saying:

*Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign; Behold a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call his name Immanuel.*

*(Isaiah 7:14)*

## **Objections**

Many humanists and academics have vehemently contested the doctrine of original sin for centuries. They teach people are born in a state of innocence, or moral neutrality, and all manifestations of evil and undesirable behaviour are the result of poor family upbringing, low self-esteem, lack of good education, and the like. Contrary to these views, the Bible makes it clear that before a baby's umbilical cord is cut its nature is already inclined to live independently of God. Sinful tendencies and desires are already in place waiting to express themselves in words, thoughts and deeds. Centuries after the Fall King David acknowledged this:

*Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother  
conceived me.*

*(Psalm 51:5)*

# 02

## *THE ORIGIN OF EVIL*

As with the origin of man, philosophers, psychologists, scientists, sociologists and anthropologists have all tried to explain what evil is and where it comes from, without even coming close to the truth. In the Old Testament the Prophet Isaiah gives us a shocking glimpse into the origin of evil – an indescribable occurrence in Heaven in past ages:

*How are you fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How are you cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God, I will also sit on the mount of the congregation, on the farthest sides of the north, I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.*

*(Isaiah 14:12-14)*

Here we are introduced to Lucifer, the most beautiful, brilliant and powerful being of all God's Heavenly Host (see also *Ezekiel 28:12-15*). Yet, how long ago we do not know, his heart contemplated what would seem unthinkable.

As you may have noticed from this passage of Isaiah, Satan had an I problem. Five times he used the first person singular pronoun. His primary goal was this: "*I will be like the Most High.*"

Here we see it was pride and self-love in Satan's heart that gave birth to his mad passion and selfish ambition to exalt himself in God's place and receive the worship that belongs to Him alone (see *1 Timothy 3:6*). His pride bloated to such an extent that he

even wanted God Himself to worship him, when he tempted Jesus in the wilderness:

*The devil took him up on an exceedingly high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to him: “All these things I will give you if you will fall down and worship me.”*

*(Matthew 4:8-9)*

To say why and how such rebellion could arise in the heart of one who was created so perfect in beauty and full of wisdom is beyond the bounds of human comprehension. According to the Bible, one third of the angels joined the devil in this rebellion and are now demons (*Revelation 12:4*).

## **Consequences of Lucifer’s Rebellion**

We can never over-emphasize the devastating effects of Satan’s fall. Knowledge of the event is of utmost importance if we are to have any understanding as why our world has been plagued with suffering and evil from the dawn of time. Knowledge of the event is also important if we are to understand why God the Son came to Earth as a young baby in a woman’s womb, and why He must return again as a warrior King.

As previously stated, Satan declared five times the words “*I will.*” How bold and audacious! A creature God had created demanded to live independently of his Maker, to have the right to be in control of his own destiny and set his own standards; an ambition Adam and Eve would later embrace and consequently their offspring.

This rebellion brought the devastating birth to self, and its devilish fruit – self-determination, self-image, self-love, self-confidence, self-help, self-realization, self-esteem, self-assertion,

self-worth, and so on – into existence. These “self-qualities” are highly prized and taught in society today as the keys to happiness and success. They are even embraced and taught in many Christian denominations.

But is self-love wrong? Did the Lord not command us to love our neighbour as ourselves? Jesus was not commanding self-love; He was correcting it. He was simply telling us to give the same attention and care to our neighbour that we so generously lavish on ourselves.

The truth is human beings innately love themselves and far too much most of the time. Some people may say they hate themselves, but that is not what they really mean. If it were true that a person really hated himself, then he would not complain about unfair treatment or abuses.

Love of self has been the devil’s lie from the beginning and is the root of all evil. He convinced Eve that God was keeping vital information back from her and her husband. He went on to assure her that liberation from such restrictions would bring self-improvement and self-fulfilment and would even make her like God. The sad truth is that they were already like God, being perfect and without sin.

Dear reader, the way of true fulfilment and happiness is through loving and serving the One True God, and by His power, loving and serving others. It is not through self-worship, but self-denial, exemplified in the life of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

The role self-love played in man’s rebellion against God, and the destruction it can bring to a life, is the reason Jesus commanded that His followers must totally deny self to be His true disciples. Every human being that ever lived has had to make this choice. And every individual will remain on Satan’s side and “*lose his life*” until he declares daily what Christ declared in the Garden on the night of His arrest: “*Not my will, but yours be done.*”

## **No Room for Excuses**

We saw in chapter one that many humanists and modern psychologists have put forward a variety of excuses to explain and justify what the Bible calls sin. But since the fall of Satan marked the origin of evil into our Universe, it must be the pattern by which all wrongdoing is to be understood.

The Bible does not give any negative details of the devil's background before his fall, only positive. He was full of wisdom and beauty, an anointed Cherub and very possibly Heaven's choir leader. He certainly had not suffered any childhood abuses or rejection. Neither can it be said that the devil suffered from an inferiority complex or low self-esteem. His problem was something else; the desire to exalt and assert self.

The same must be said for Adam and Eve. There was no excuse for their wilful and rebellious disobedience. Therefore, looking into an individual's past to explain present behaviour cannot solve the problem.

## **Only the Power to Perform Is Lacking**

We also saw how the free will to choose, which was part of the image of God in which we were made, opened the door to sin and evil. However, both Adam and Eve had the power to make a genuine choice between good and evil. This is evident from the fact that God commanded them not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and punished them when they did.

The same can be said for the whole human race; though we are depraved and enslaved by sin. We still have the ability to choose between right and wrong. Like Satan, and like Adam and Eve, we are not forced by circumstances to behave and react in certain ways. It is the heart, the attitude, not circumstances, no matter



how traumatic the case may be, that determines a person's actions.

Interestingly, the famous scientist Thomas Huxley, known as Charles Darwin's bulldog, because of his strong support of the Theory of Evolution, agreed with the above analysis. He said that the biblical doctrine of original sin, the innate depravity of man, was "Closer to the truth than the liberal, popular illusions that babies are all born good and that the example of a corrupt society is responsible for the failure to remain so."

After the Fall, God did not provide self-help material or visits to a counsellor for Adam and Eve. They had wilfully sinned and personal responsibility for it had to be admitted by each of them and the consequence borne. The same is true for you and I; a choice was made and until that fact is admitted there can be no real solution.

In the Book of Romans Paul revealed the struggles a natural man has in this way: "*I can will what is right, but I cannot do it.*" It was not the ability to choose to do good here that was lacking, but the power to perform. The power to perform is given us by the Holy Spirit when we surrender our will to Him in obedience.

## **The Birth of Religion**

Another devastating effect of Satan's rebellion was the birth of religion. The devil's claim to have the right interpretation of God's Word is the foundation of every cult and false religion in our world today.

A person who joins a cult, or a corrupt religious organization, does so because its perverted interpretation of Scripture appeals to them; it tells them what their itching ears wants to hear. The Apostle Paul said this would be the case even with many who define themselves Christians:

*For the time is coming when people will not put up with sound doctrine, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own desires, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander away to myths.*

*(2 Timothy 4:3-5)*

People mistakenly imagine that by submission to such authority, whether pastor, pope or guru, they can escape personal responsibility to God. Self-interest is always behind the motives of cult members and leaders. On the other hand, whoever truly seeks God with his whole heart, and earnestly desires to know and follow the truth, wherever it may lead, or whatever the cost, will be delivered from deception.

# 03

## *VICTORY OF THE SECOND ADAM*

To record all that the Lord Jesus accomplished for humanity when He first came to Earth would require volumes in itself. Therefore, for the sake of time and space, I will limit this chapter to a brief introduction to a few of His most important accomplishments.

### **Removed the Barrier of Sin:**

We saw in chapter one of this book that since the Garden of Eden all humanity has been contaminated through the original sin of Adam. Original sin was the sin in which all other sin or sins originated. To repeat Paul's words:

*Therefore just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned.*

*(Romans 5:12-13)*

The point Paul is making here is that when the first man sinned, he did so as the representative of the entire human race. When Adam sinned, all humanity sinned in him, and when he was pronounced guilty, all humanity was pronounced guilty.

God's plan of holding each individual guilty because of Adam's sin is much more merciful than if each person had had to stand for himself. If that had been the case, each of us would surely have done exactly what Adam did. We would have sinned and there would have been no hope.

But whereas the first Adam stood as our representative, the Second Adam, the Son of Man, Jesus Christ, could also stand as our Representative:

*Therefore just as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all, so one Man's act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all. For just as by one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.*

*(Romans 5:18-20)*

Jesus did for us what not one of us could have done for ourselves. He perfectly kept the Law of God, and having perfectly kept the Law on our behalf, He bore the curse and punishment for us who had broken it – not only through the sin of Adam, but through our own personal transgressions as well. No human being will be lost because of Adam's sin. If they are, it is because they did not accept the work of the Second Adam.

### **Won Back Man's Original Authority:**

We also saw in chapter one that when God created this physical world, He gave the first man Adam all authority and dominion to rule and subdue His perfect Creation. But after they sinned, Adam and Eve relinquished that authority to Satan.

Yet unlike human beings, who change their minds and break promises, God did not violate His Word. When He told Adam he had dominion and power to subdue and rule, it was done.

God did not take back man's right to govern the Earth after the Fall; instead He became a Man Himself and took back that authority by conquest. After His death and resurrection Jesus declared:

*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me, Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.*

*(Matthew 28:18b-20)*

Jesus now has *all* authority over Earth and Heaven too and He has given His authority and power to the Church to fulfil man's original mandate upon the Earth:

*Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.*

*(Matthew 28:19-20)*

*See, I have given you authority to tread on snakes and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy and nothing will hurt you.*

*(Luke 10:19-20)*

*I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.*

*(Matthew 16:19-20)*

It is the Church's responsibility to be active in building the Kingdom of God on Earth; to bring righteousness back to our world and to release humanity from the bonds of Satan and his cohorts through preaching the full Gospel of our Lord Jesus.

## **Satisfied Divine Justice:**

Our Creator is holy and righteous and His just judgement for all wrongdoing is death. At the same time, He is loving and merciful, but He could never deny His righteousness in order to be so. Through the Cross of His Son, God satisfied His justice, righteousness, love and forgiveness all at once. The Cross reveals the dire consequences of sin and how God in His love took that punishment upon Himself in Christ:

*For there is no distinction, since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; They are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement by his blood effective through faith.*

*He did this to show his righteousness because in his divine forbearance he had passed over the sins previously committed; it was to prove at the present time that he himself is righteous and that he justifies the one who has faith in Jesus.*

*(Romans 3:23-27)*

The amazing truth is that what Jesus did was for all mankind. It is given as a free gift to anyone who will come to the Father through Christ in true repentance and faith:

*For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.*

*(John 3:16)*

## **Defeated and Disarmed Satan:**

The work of our Lord's great redemption not only dealt decisively with our sin, but with Satan and all his demons as well. Jesus' atoning sacrifice totally disarmed the powers and authorities, because every righteous demand of God for human transgression was met at the Cross:

*God made you alive together with him, when he forgave us all our trespasses, erasing the record that stood against us with its legal demands. He set this aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and made a public example of them, triumphing over them in it.*

*(Colossians 2:13b-16)*

The devil has no legal hold on believers and cannot accuse God of injustice by saying that our sins have not been punished. He knows this and therefore tries to encourage people to reject Jesus. Using every deception possible he has blinded their minds to the Gospel, and the liberty they could have in Christ, so that unbelievers are unable to recognize sin for what it is, and the eternal consequences of their decisions and actions:

*And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ.*

*(2 Corinthians 4:3-5)*

## **Gave Believers a New Nature and Eternal Life:**

In the Gospel of John Jesus said, “*No one can see the kingdom of God without being born again*” (John 3:3). In other words, the New Birth is the key to true reconciliation with God and to receiving eternal life.

The ancient Greek word translated *again* can also mean *from above* and this is the sense in which John uses it. This is not simply a moral or religious reform, but the bringing of new life; the impartation of a *new nature*, the very nature of God Himself, the moment you repent and receive Jesus as your Lord and Saviour.

Notice I said impartation. You cannot bring about the New Birth by yourself; it is a work exclusively of the Holy Spirit upon your heart. It is also the in-dwelling Holy Spirit who helps you live that new life to the full in your on-going walk with God.

Therefore, when an individual is born again, a new creature immediately comes into existence, “*Everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new.*” Well might the Apostle Peter exclaim:

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who are being protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

(1Peter 1:3-6)



## **Promised Believers a Glorified Body:**

Not only has our great God and Father delivered all those who will come to Him through Jesus from the consequences of Adam's sin, He has also promised that He will one day give each believer a new glorified body to inhabit Eternity.

As wonderful as our redemption is here in this life, it is not yet complete. Our bodies are still prone to decay and are often a source of trouble, so we groan for the time when they will be changed; when our perishable body “*will put on imperishability*” and our mortal body will “*put on immortality*” (see *1 Corinthians 15:50-54; 2 Corinthians 5:1-6*).

The Apostle Paul says that since the Fall the whole of Creation has been groaning in bondage to corruption and waits with eager longing for this final redemption of the children of God:

*For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God, for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.*

*We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now, and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies.*

*(Romans 8:19-24)*

Many times we are astounded at the beauty and perfect harmony we see in nature. But as beautiful as it may seem, it is not God's best. Our Creator made the things in nature *involuntarily* subject to the same corruption that man *voluntarily* entered into, so He could reunite us back through the redemption of Christ Jesus to

the glorious state He originally intended. This will all happen at Jesus' Second Coming to Earth.

# 04

## *THE SECOND COMING*

The most important end-time doctrine the Bible teaches is that the Lord Jesus is coming again. His Second Coming will be just as important as the First, because by it He will bring to completion His great work of redemption.

The most common term used in the New Testament for the Second Advent is *Parousia* (please see table a for biblical references). *Parousia* means *coming, arrival* or *presence* and was used in the first century for the visit of an emperor or other distinguished persons.

Likewise, its use in New Testament conveys the idea that there will be nothing vague or uncertain about the Lord's return. He will do something which will be visible to all. He will come Himself, in Person, as surely as He came in the incarnation:

*For as lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.*

*(Matthew 24:27-28)*

*Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of him. So shall it be! Amen.*

*(Revelation 1:7-8)*

We see also in the Book of Acts, before the Lord was taken up into Heaven after His resurrection, the disciples asked if He would give the Kingdom to Israel at this time. Jesus told them there would be an interim programme before His earthly reign would be established. During this intervening time the Kingdom of God

would be established in the hearts of men through the Gospel and not by carnal weapons (2 *Corinthians* 10:3-5; *Luke* 17:20-22). While He was going and they were looking up toward Heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them and said:

*Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.*

*(Acts 1:10-12)*

Here these angels promise that the Lord Jesus would come back in the same way that He left. And how did He leave? Bodily, physically and visibly. This was far from symbolism what the disciples witnessed on that day. It was the real resurrected Christ ascending into Heaven and He is going to come back in the exact same way to the exact same place. The Prophet Zechariah describes it this way:

*On that day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives, which lies before Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west by a very wide valley; so that one half of the Mount shall withdraw northward, and the other half southward.*

*(Zechariah 14:4-5)*

Here Zechariah tells us the Mount of Olives will be split in two by an incredible earthquake the moment Christ's foot touches it. Interestingly, I read that a geological fault was discovered there; a fault-line that runs in exactly the direction this prophecy indicates.

## Ultimate Goals of the Second Advent

Both the Old and New Testament have a lot to say about the wonderful things that Jesus will accomplish when He returns to Earth. By far the most important will be to complete the work of redemption for believers of every age and to bring to fullness the conquest and victory won decisively at His first appearing.

To summarize what we have said in the previous chapters: the process of salvation began at the very beginning of the Fall of man and was carried into triumphant effect in the Lord's life, death and resurrection, and the continuing ministry of the Holy Spirit. We also said that at Jesus' First Coming He struck the wicked in the spiritual realm and won the victory over the powers of darkness on our behalf (see table b for references).

Yet although our Lord Jesus certainly won a decisive victory over all the powers of darkness at Calvary, and through the Church has been binding the devil so that the Gospel can be preached and the captives set free and delivered, His total will and authority is not yet completely carried out on Earth.

The ultimate victory over the powers of darkness will only be complete when He returns to “*destroy death*,” cast the devil into the Bottomless Pit (*Revelation 20:1-4*) and judge the inhabitants of the Earth. No one could improve on John's majestic description of this momentous historic event:

*Then I saw heaven opened, and there was a white horse! Its rider is called “Faithful and True,” and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems; and He has a name inscribed that no one can know but himself. He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood and His name is called “The Word of God.” And the armies of heaven, wearing fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses.*

*From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron, he will tread the wine press of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has a name inscribed, “King of kings and Lord of lords.”*

*(Revelation 19:11-17)*

Here Jesus is described as a fierce Warrior executing judgement upon those who have rejected Him and His offer of salvation. What a contrast between this role and the Saviour’s role at His First Coming, when as a meek and innocent Lamb He came to take upon Himself the sin of humanity by being nailed to a cross and dying the awful death that we deserved.

Our Redeemer wears the many crowns of His divine and royal titles, an indication that He is supreme in all things. He has a Name written on Him that is so glorious, so much a part of his infinite character, that no man can understand it. All the clothing of Jesus is stained in the blood of His enemies.

### **“Joint Heirs with Christ”**

The Word of God also says the Lord Jesus will share His rule with the saints. Enoch, the very first Prophet to appear in the Bible, predicted this very thing:

*See, the Lord is coming with ten thousands of his holy ones, to execute judgement on all, and to convict everyone of all the deeds of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him.*

*(Jude 14-16)*

The expression *ten thousands* means ten thousand times ten thousand, which equals one hundred million. Also the Prophet Moses described the Lord and His Heavenly Army coming from Sinai to take vengeance against Satan's forces. Daniel too says:

*But the saints of the Most High will receive the kingdom and will possess it forever – yes, for ever and ever.*

*(Daniel 7:18)*

And in the Book of Revelation John says:

*I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshipped the beast or his image and had not received the mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years.*

*(Revelation 20:4-5)*

Finally, the Apostle Paul enlarges upon this in his First Epistle to the Corinthians. He wrote:

*Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases? Do you not know that we will judge angels?*

*(1Corinthians 6:2-3b)*

In the New Testament the word *saint* is the title for a person who has been cleansed by the blood of Christ and sanctified by the Holy Spirit. Many of the things Christians are doing here on Earth are preparing us for that day. This is why it is very important to be good stewards of what God has entrusted to us.

## Crown Him Lord of All

Another important reason for the Lord's return will be to set up His glorious Messianic Kingdom, which is at the very heart of the Bible's overall prophetic message (see table c for biblical references). The Old Testament passages which refer to the Second Advent are in general those which speak of this future Messianic Kingdom. A Scripture passage of this kind is found in the Book of Isaiah:

*The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.*

*The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.*

*(Isaiah 11:6-10)*

A similar reference comes from Psalm 2, where the Messiah is referred to as the Kingly Son of God, who is destined to inherit the whole Earth and also to be the instrument for the judgement and overthrow of evil in the world:

*I will tell of the decree of the Lord; he said to me, "You are my Son; today I have begotten you. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."*

*(Psalm 2:7-10)*



The New Testament writers saw this prophecy as a direct reference to Jesus (see *Acts 13:33; Hebrews 1:5, 5:5; Matthew 3:17; 2 Peter 1:17*). Notice that this *Son* is destined to inherit the whole earth; “*I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession.*”

Again, while we certainly discern the fulfilment of this prophecy in principle in the historic ministry of Jesus at His First Coming, and His continuing ministry through the Church in every age, the full terms of this prophecy have not yet been realized. They point us forward to the return of the Lord and all that that will involve for Him and the world. Another similar passage is found in the Book of Zechariah:

*Shout and be glad, O daughter of Zion. For I am coming and I will live among you, declares the Lord. Many nations will be joined with the Lord in that day and will become my people. I will live among you and you will know that the Lord Almighty has sent me to you.*

*(Zechariah 2:10-12)*

The Prophet Isaiah again speaks plainly of this future eschatological Kingdom where Jesus will physically rule and reign over the Earth in power and great glory, bringing to completion the victory won at Calvary:

*For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.*

*(Isaiah 9:6-8)*

This prophecy predicts that the Messiah will one day reign upon the physical throne of David. This will be a time when God will establish His Universal Government over the whole Earth and all the Old and New Testament prophecies concerning the earthly reign of Christ will be fulfilled.

## **Life in the Golden Age**

Currently people in the radical environmental movement are making every attempt, through humanistic means, to usher in a counterfeit to God's rule on our planet. But nowhere can we see such wonderful descriptions of what life will be like during this time as those described in the Bible.

The Bible says that during this future age our planet will be restored to its original state before the Fall. Disease and sickness will virtually vanish, sin will be punished immediately, the animal kingdom will be at peace – no more carnivorous animals – and the life span will be greatly increased: Isaiah says:

*But be glad and rejoice forever in what I am creating, for I am about to create Jerusalem as a joy, and its people as a delight. I will rejoice in Jerusalem and delight in my people, no more shall the sound of weeping be heard in it, or the cry of distress.*

*No more shall there be in it an infant that lives but a few days, or an old person who does not live out a lifetime; for one who dies at a hundred years will be considered a youth, and one who falls short of a hundred will be considered accursed.*

*They shall build houses and inhabit them, they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build and another inhabit, they shall not plant and another eat, for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands.*

*They shall not labour in vain, or bear children for calamity, for they shall be offspring blessed by the Lord – and their descendants as well.*

*Before they call I will answer, while they are yet speaking I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the ox, but the serpent—its food shall be dust! They shall not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain says the Lord.*

*(Isaiah 65:18-25)*

Another characteristic of the Golden Age will be peace from war. The Prophet Micah gives a picture of all the nations beating their swords into plowshares and of God's righteous Laws going out to all the nations from Jerusalem:

*In the last days the mountain of the Lord's temple will be established as chief among the mountains; it will be raised above the hills, and people will stream to it. Many nations will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths."*

*The law will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He will judge between many peoples and will settle disputes for strong nations far and wide. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore.*

*(Micah 4:1-4)*

The Book of Revelation says something even more beautiful than all this; that God Himself will dwell with us:

*See the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them, He will wipe every tear from their eyes, death will be*

*no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away. And the one who was seated on the throne said, “See I am making all things new.”*

*(Revelation 21:3-5b)*

## **Some Theological Disputes**

The New Testament refers to this Golden Age we have been speaking about as the Millennium Reign. The word millennium comes from the Latin word for one thousand – *mile*. The Greek word is *chilia* and explains why the Millennium is sometimes known as *chiliasm*. It comes from chapter twenty of the Book of Revelation.

The main theological dispute on this subject is whether the Millennium will occur *after* or *before* the Second Advent. There are in total three main views – pre-millennialism, post-millennialism and a-millennialism.

By far pre-millennialism is the oldest view and the most consistent in interpreting biblical prophecy. This view holds that Jesus will literally and bodily return to Earth *before* the Millennium Kingdom begins.

He will set up His Kingdom and reign from the throne of David out of a rebuilt city of Jerusalem. And at the end of the Millennium Jesus will turn the Kingdom over to the Father at which point it will merge with God’s Eternal Kingdom.

## **A Final Word**

Dear reader, in referring to the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus, and His Messianic Rule, we are not speaking of a doctrine which can be found only in some obscure passage of the Bible.

On the contrary, it has been computed that there are over two-hundred and fifty clear references to the Second Advent in the New Testament alone, not to mention the numerous Old Testament references that we have not included above.

And just as every prophecy about the Lord's First Coming as a little Baby in a manger has been literally fulfilled, we can be sure that every prophecy related to His Second Coming, and the historic events that must proceed and follow it, will also come to pass exactly as God inspired His Prophets to forecast.

God Almighty is going to remove all wicked people from this world and establish, "*New heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.*" Jesus will come back as the Second or Last Adam to undo and overturn, once and for all, the sorry effects of the first Adam.

He will remove the curse of sin and inaugurate a New World Order in which God's original purpose for His Creation will find its full realization forever! My prayer is that you, dear friend, will be a part of it.

*Repent therefore, and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Messiah appointed for you, that is Jesus, who must remain in heaven until the time of universal restoration that God announced long ago through his holy prophets.*

(Acts 3:19-22)

**Maranatha, Speed the Day, Come Lord Jesus.**

## **Table A**

*Matthew 24:3, 27, 39*

*1 Corinthians 15:23*

*1 Thessalonians 2:19, 3:13*

*2 Thessalonians 2:1, 8*

*James 5:7*

*2 Peter 1:16, 3:4, 12*

*1 John 2:28*

## **Table B**

*Matthew 28:18*

*John 12:31*

*Acts 2:32-33*

*Romans 8:34*

*1 Corinthians 15:25*

*2 Corinthians 2:14*

*Ephesians 1:20-22*

*Colossians 2:15*

*Hebrews 1:3-5, 2:14*

*1 Peter 3:22*

*Revelation 5:5-14*

## **Table C**

*Isaiah 2:2-5, 11:1-10, 35:1-10, 65:17-25*

*Micah 4:1-4*

*Zechariah 14:9, 16-17*

*Psalms 24:7-10, Psalms 45, 72, 110*

*Matthew 19:28*

*Acts 1:6-7*

*Mark 10:35-40*

*Revelation 5:9-11*