

PERCEPTIONS OF JESUS CHRIST



According to one online article, "Perceptions vary from person to person. Different people perceive different things about the same situation. But more than that, we assign different meanings to what we perceive."

This is a famous picture. What does it look like to you?

"Some people see a young lady looking away. Others see an old lady looking down. Depending on how you look at it, part of the picture might be the young woman's nose and eyelash, or it might be a wart on the old woman's nose. What is the young woman's ear might be the old woman's eye. What is the young woman's necklace might be the old woman's mouth. The picture hasn't really changed. You just emphasize different parts of it and assign them different meaning."¹

Oxford Dictionary defines the words 'perceive' and 'perception' as follows:

Perceive (per|ceive)

verb

[with object]

1 become aware or conscious of (something); come to realize or understand:

his mouth fell open as he perceived the truth

[with clause]:

he was quick to perceive that there was little future in such arguments

- become aware of (something) by the use of one of the senses, especially that of sight:

he perceived the faintest of flushes creeping up her neck

2 interpret or regard (someone or something) in a particular way:

*if Guy does not **perceive** himself **as** disabled, nobody else should*

Perception (per|cep|tion)

1 the ability to see, hear, or become aware of something through the senses:

the normal limits to human perception

- awareness of something through the senses:

the perception of pain

- Psychology & Zoology the neurophysiological processes, including memory, by which an organism becomes aware of and interprets external stimuli.

2 the way in which something is regarded, understood, or interpreted:

According to another online writer, "The word 'perception' comes from the Latin words *perceptio*, *percipio*, and means "receiving, collecting, and action of taking possession, apprehension with the mind or senses. What one perceives is a result of interplays between past experiences, including one's culture, and the interpretation of the perceived. In the case of visual perception, some people can actually see the percept shift in their mind's eye. Others, who are not picture thinkers, may not necessarily perceive the 'shape-shifting' as

their world changes. The question, "Is the glass half empty or half full?" serves to demonstrate the way an object can be perceived in different ways. Just as one object can give rise to multiple percepts, another object may fail to give rise to any percept at all: if the percept has no grounding in a person's experience, the person may literally not perceive it.

Preconceptions can influence how the world is perceived. The processes of perception routinely alter what humans see. When people view something with a preconceived concept about it, they tend to take those concepts and see them whether or not they are there. This problem stems from the fact that humans are unable to understand new information, without the inherent bias of their previous knowledge. A person's knowledge creates his or her reality as much as the truth, because the human mind can only contemplate that to which it has been exposed. When objects are viewed without understanding, the mind will try to reach for something that it already recognizes, in order to process what it is viewing. That which most closely relates to the unfamiliar from our past experiences, makes up what we see when we look at things that we don't comprehend.

We obtain information from the external world, from our senses: taste, hearing, smell, touch, sight. Then we somehow integrate and analyze perceived information and make our decision. Decision is an "outcome of mental processes (cognitive process) leading to the selection of a course of action among several alternatives. Every decision making process produces a final choice. How do we make a decision, or even better to ask what leads us to make a decision?"²

The picture to the right is suppose to show how the kitten perceives itself. However, using this same picture, I would like to propose a few questions to you. How do you perceive Christ Jesus? Do you perceive Him as a meek, gentle, soft and cuddly kitten or as the Lion of the tribe of Judah (Revelation 5:4)? Can you distinguish between the meek savior who came and the strong and all powerful King of kings and Lord of lords who is coming again to rule the nations with a rod of iron (Revelation 19:11-16)? How do you *really* perceive Jesus Christ?



For most of Christendom the visual image of Jesus Christ, the son of God, is perpetually portrayed as a helpless infant at Christmas; or by Easter, a dying or dead savior on a cross. I ask you, do these images project a Savior and King with all power and authority?

People may declare that little baby Jesus came to save us from our sins; or pass out palm branches, smear ashes on their foreheads and declare, "He is risen"; but the lasting image before their minds eye is still that of a baby or a dead man. The images are firmly locked into our minds and reinforced year, after year, after year. But are these images the truth? Yes, they *were* to one decree or another some two thousand years ago; but that snap shot of time is long over.

I am not implying that we should forget that Christ Jesus died on a cross. By no means! I just wonder if most Christians can perceive of Christ Jesus beyond the cross; especially if they do not take time to study the Word of God for themselves. Are we limiting our vision of Jesus by holding on to images of the past? Have the traditions of men blinded our hearts from seeing the true Jesus? You decide.

¹ The Meaning of Perception- <http://worldtrans.org/TP/TP1/TP1-9.HTML>

² Sanjeev Himachali - <http://sanjeevhimachali.blogspot.com/2011/01/perception-and-truth.html>

Following is what Jesus said about the traditions of men:

Mark 7:6-9

“ This people honors Me with their lips,
But their heart is far from Me.

⁷ And in *vain* they *worship* Me,

Teaching as *doctrines* the *commandments* (1778) of men.

⁸ For *laying aside* the *commandment* (1785) of God, you *hold* the *tradition* of men—the washing of pitchers and cups, and many other such things you do.” ⁹ He said to them, “All too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may *keep* your tradition.

Vain (3155) μάτην, — *mat'-ane*; (through the idea of tentative *manipulation*, i.e. unsuccessful *search*, or else of *punishment*); *folly*, i.e. (adverb) *to no purpose*: — (Translated in King James version as) in vain.

Worship (4576) σέβω, — *seb'-om-ahee*; middle of an apparently primary verb; to *revere*, i.e. *adore*: — (Translated in King James version as) devout, religious, worship.

Doctrines (1319) διδασκαλία, — *did-as-kal-ee'-ah*; from (1320) (διδάσκαλος); *instruction* (the function or the information): — (Translated in King James version as) doctrine, learning, teaching.

Commandments (1778) ἐντολμα, — *en'-tal-mah*; from (1781) (ἐντέλλω); an *injunction*, i.e. religious *precept*: — (Translated in King James version as) commandment.

Laying aside (863) ἀφίημι, — *af-ee'-ay-mee* from απο - apo (575) and hiemi (to send; an intensive form of eimi, to go); to send forth, in various applications (as follow) – (Translated in King James version as) cry, forgive, forsake, lay aside, leave, let (alone, be, go, have), omit, put (send) away, remit, suffer, yield up.

Commandments (1785) ἐντολή, — *en-tol-ay'*; from (1781) (ἐντέλλω); *injunction*, i.e. an authoritative *prescription*: — (Translated in King James version as) commandment, precept.

Hold (2902) κρατέω, — *krat-eh'-o*; from (2904) (κράτος); to *use strength*, i.e. *seize* or *retain* (literal or figurative): — (Translated in King James version as) hold (by, fast), keep, lay hand (hold) on, obtain, retain, take (by).

Tradition (3862) παράδοσις, — *par-ad'-os-is*; from (3860) (παράδίδωμι); *transmission*, i.e. (concrete) a *precept*; specially the Jewish *traditionary law*: — (Translated in King James version as) ordinance, tradition.

Keep (5083) τηρέω, — *tay-reh'-o*; from teros (a watch; perhaps akin to 2334); to guard (from loss or injury, properly, by keeping the eye upon; and thus differing from φυλασσω - phulasso (5442), which is properly to prevent escaping; and from κουστωδια - koustodia (2892), which implies a *fortress* or full military lines of apparatus), i.e. to *note* (a prophecy; figurative to *fulfill* a command); by implication to *detain* (in custody; figurative to *maintain*); by extension to *withhold* (for personal ends; figurative to *keep unmarried*): — (Translated in King James version as) hold fast, keep (-er), (pre-, re-)

Perhaps it is time for many of us to allow the Word of God to show us a new image of Christ.

Let us begin with John's description of Jesus Christ in the Book of Revelation.

“And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.”

(John 17-5)

Revelation 1:1-18

“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified *it* by His angel to His servant John, ² who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw. ³ Blessed *is* he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time *is* near.

⁴ John, to the seven churches which are in Asia:

Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, ⁵ and from **Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth.**

To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, ⁶ and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him *be* glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

⁷ Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him.

And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.

⁸ “I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the* Beginning and *the* End,” says the Lord, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

⁹ I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. ¹⁰ I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, ¹¹ saying, “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last,” and, “What you see, write in a book and send *it* to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea.”

¹² Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³ and in the midst of the seven lampstands **One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band.** ¹⁴ **His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire;** ¹⁵ **His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters;** ¹⁶ **He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.** ¹⁷ **And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead.** But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, “Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. ¹⁸ I *am* He who lives, and was dead, and behold, **I am alive forevermore.** Amen. And **I have the keys of Hades and of Death.**

Verse 5 - speaks to our image of Jesus as our savior who shed His blood to cleanse us from our sins; however this same verse also pictures Him as both (1) “the firstborn from the dead; (2) and the ruler over the kings of the earth.”

(1) The firstborn from the dead means Jesus is alive, now. See verse 18.

(2) The ruler over the kings of the earth shows Jesus’ position as ruler over every perceived authority. Strong’s Concordance defines the words ‘ruler’ and ‘king’ as follows:

Ruler (758) *αρχων*, — *ar’-khone*; present participle of *αρχω* - *archo* (757); **a first** (in rank or power): — (Translated in King James version as) chief (ruler), magistrate, prince, ruler.

King (935) *βασιλευς*, — *bas-il-yooce*; (through the notion of a *foundation* of power); a **sovereign** (absact, relative or figurative): — (Translated in King James version as) king.

Note – This same word is used in verse 6 regarding those Jesus has made kings and priests.

Verse 16 - reminds me of a passage in the Book of Hebrews.

Hebrews 4:12

"For the **word of God** *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Jesus Christ is the Word of God.

Revelation 19:11-13

"Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And **He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.** ¹² **His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns.** He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. ¹³ He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called **The Word of God.**

John 1:1-4

"In the beginning was **the Word**, and **the Word** was with God, and **the Word** was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. ⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

Verse 17 – the vision of Jesus before John was so powerful it caused John to fall at His feet as dead.

Dead (3498) νεκρός, — *nek-ros*'; from an apparently primary nekus (a *corpse*); *dead* (literal or figurative; also as noun): — (Translated in King James version as) dead.

I am aware of two passages in the Old Testament that show a similar image of Christ. In both instances, the results were the same.

Daniel 10:4-12

"Now on the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, that *is*, the Tigris, ⁵ I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, **a certain man clothed in linen, whose waist was girded with gold of Uphaz!** ⁶ **His body was like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like torches of fire, his arms and feet like burnished bronze in color, and the sound of his words like the voice of a multitude.**

⁷ And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men who were with me did not see the vision; but a great terror fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves. ⁸ Therefore I was left alone when I saw this great vision, and no strength remained in me; for my vigor was turned to frailty in me, and I retained no strength. ⁹ Yet I heard the sound of his words; and while I heard the sound of his words I was in a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground.

¹⁰ Suddenly, a hand touched me, which made me tremble on my knees and *on* the palms of my hands. ¹¹ And he said to me, "O Daniel, man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you." While he was speaking this word to me, I stood trembling.

¹² Then he said to me, "Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words.

Ezekiel 1:22-28

"The likeness of the firmament above the heads of the living creatures *was* like the color of an awesome crystal, stretched out over their heads. ²³ And under the firmament their wings *spread out* straight, one toward another. Each one had two which covered one side, and each

one had two which covered the other side of the body. ²⁴ When they went, I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of many waters, like the voice of the Almighty, a tumult like the noise of an army; and when they stood still, they let down their wings. ²⁵ A voice came from above the firmament that *was* over their heads; whenever they stood, they let down their wings.

²⁶ **And above the firmament over their heads was the likeness of a throne, in appearance like a sapphire stone; on the likeness of the throne was a likeness with the appearance of a man high above it. ²⁷ Also from the appearance of His waist and upward I saw, as it were, the color of amber with the appearance of fire all around within it; and from the appearance of His waist and downward I saw, as it were, the appearance of fire with brightness all around. ²⁸ Like the appearance of a rainbow in a cloud on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the brightness all around it. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD.**

So when I **saw** *it*, I fell on my face, and I heard a voice of One speaking.

Ezekiel 2

"And He said to me, "Son of man, stand on your feet, and I will speak to you." ² Then the Spirit entered me when He spoke to me, and set me on my feet; and I heard Him who spoke to me. ³ And He said to me: "Son of man, I am sending you to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that has rebelled against Me; they and their fathers have transgressed against Me to this very day. ⁴ For *they are* impudent and stubborn children. I am sending you to them, and you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD.' ⁵ As for them, whether they hear or whether they refuse—for they *are* a rebellious house—yet they will know that a prophet has been among them.

Entered {935} בוא — **bow'**, **bo**; a primitive root; to go or come (in a wide variety of applications): — (Translated in King James version as) abide, apply, attain, X be, befall, + besiege, bring (forth, in, into, to pass), call, carry, X certainly, (cause, let, thing for) to come (against, in, out, upon, to pass), depart, X doubtless again, + eat, + employ, (cause to) enter (in, into, -tering, -trance, -try), be fallen, fetch, + follow, get, give, go (down, in, to war), grant, + have, X indeed, (in-) vade, lead, lift (up), mention, pull in, put, resort, run (down), send, set, X (well) stricken (in age), X surely, take (in), way.

Is there anything in the Word that could possibly link these verses to Christ? Yes there is. (1) Ezekiel 2:5 declares Ezekiel to be a prophet. (2) Ezekiel 2:2 states the Spirit of the image Ezekiel saw entered him. (3) According to 1 Peter 1:11, the Spirit in the prophets was Christ.

1 Peter 1:10-12

"Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace *that would come* to you, ¹¹ searching what, or what manner of time, **the Spirit of Christ who was in them** was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. ¹² To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things which angels desire to look into.

2 Peter 1:20-21

"knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, ²¹ for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke *as they were* moved by the Holy Spirit.

Next we will take a look at a few passages that describe Christ Jesus' prophesied coming as our conquering King of kings and Lord of lords.

“And He has on *His* robe and on His thigh a name written:
KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.”

(Revelation 19:16)

Revelation 12:1-5

“Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars. ² Then being with child, she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth.

³ And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. ⁴ His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born. ⁵ **She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron.** And her Child was caught up to God and His throne.

Who is this “male child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron?” According to Revelation 19 this child is the Word of God and our soon coming King of kings and Lord of lords.

Revelation 19:11-16

“Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. ¹² **His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns.** He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. ¹³ He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and **His name is called The Word of God.** ¹⁴ And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. ¹⁵ **Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron.** He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. ¹⁶ **And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written:**

KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

In Revelation 2 Jesus proclaims,

Revelation 2:25-27

“But hold fast what you have till I come. ²⁶ And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations—

²⁷ **‘He shall rule them with a rod of iron;**

They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter’s vessels’—

as I also have received from My Father;

Verse 27 - is a quote from Psalm 2. King David, a prophet of the Most High, prophesied this concerning the Son of God.

Psalm 2

“Why do the nations rage,

And the people plot a vain thing?

² The kings of the earth set themselves,

And the rulers take counsel together,

Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying,

³ “Let us break **Their bonds** in pieces

And cast away **Their cords** from us.”

⁴ He who sits in the heavens shall laugh;

The Lord shall hold them in derision.

⁵ Then He shall speak to them in His wrath,

And distress them in His deep displeasure:

⁶ **"Yet I have set My King
On My holy hill of Zion."**
⁷ **"I will declare the decree:
The LORD has said to Me,
'You are My Son,
Today I have begotten You.**
⁸ **Ask of Me, and I will give You
The nations *for* Your inheritance,
And the ends of the earth *for* Your possession.**
⁹ **You shall break them with a rod of iron;
You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel."**
¹⁰ Now therefore, be wise, O kings;
Be instructed, you judges of the earth.
¹¹ Serve the LORD with fear,
And rejoice with trembling.
¹² Kiss the Son, lest He be angry,
And you perish *in* the way,
When His wrath is kindled but a little.
Blessed *are* all those who put their trust in Him.

Zechariah 14 gives us a glimpse into what will occur when Jesus and the armies in heaven come to earth, prepared to battle.

Zechariah 14:1-9

"Behold, the day of the LORD is coming,
 And your spoil will be divided in your midst.
² For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem;
 The city shall be taken,
 The houses rifled,
 And the women ravished.
 Half of the city shall go into captivity,
 But the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city.
³ **Then the LORD will go forth
And fight against those nations,
As He fights in the day of battle.**
⁴ **And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives,**
 Which faces Jerusalem on the east.
 And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two,
 From east to west,
Making a very large valley;
 Half of the mountain shall move toward the north
 And half of it toward the south.
⁵ Then you shall flee *through* My mountain valley,
 For the mountain valley shall reach to Azal.
 Yes, you shall flee
 As you fled from the earthquake
 In the days of Uzziah king of Judah.
Thus the LORD my God will come,
 And all the saints with You.
⁶ It shall come to pass in that day
That there will be no light;
 The lights will diminish.
⁷ It shall be one day
 Which is known to the LORD—

Neither day nor night.
But at evening time it shall happen
That it will be light.
⁸ And in that day it shall be
That living waters shall flow from Jerusalem,
Half of them toward the eastern sea
And half of them toward the western sea;
In both summer and winter it shall occur.
⁹ **And the LORD shall be King over all the earth.**
In that day it shall be—
“ The LORD *is* one,”
And His name one.

There is some controversy as to the meaning of “the Lord’s Day” or “the day of Lord.” Some say it is supposedly Sunday, the day forced upon early Christians by Constantine and the Catholic Church as the official day of rest and worship; instead of the Holy, set apart by God, Sabbath. But is this true? Is this the same day John and Zechariah proclaimed? Not according to numerous Bible passages.

Here are just a few:

Isaiah 2:12

“For **the day of the LORD** of hosts *shall come* upon everything proud and lofty, upon everything lifted up— and it shall be brought low—

Isaiah 13:6-9

“Wail, for **the day of the LORD** *is* at hand!
It will come as destruction from the Almighty.
⁷ Therefore all hands will be limp,
Every man’s heart will melt,
⁸ And they will be afraid.
Pangs and sorrows will take hold of *them*;
They will be in pain as a woman in childbirth;
They will be amazed at one another;
Their faces *will be like* flames.
⁹ Behold, **the day of the LORD** comes,
Cruel, with both wrath and fierce anger,
To lay the land desolate;
And He will destroy its sinners from it.

Jeremiah 46:10

“For this *is* the **day of the Lord GOD of hosts**,
A day of vengeance,
That He may avenge Himself on His adversaries.
The sword shall devour;
It shall be satiated and made drunk with their blood;
For the Lord GOD of hosts has a sacrifice
In the north country by the River Euphrates.

Joel 1:15

“Alas for the day! For **the day of the LORD** *is* at hand; it shall come as destruction from the Almighty.

Obadiah 1:15

"For **the day of the LORD** upon all the nations *is* near; as you have done, it shall be done to you; your reprisal shall return upon your own head.

Joel 2:1-14

"Blow 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** is coming,
For it is at hand:
² A day of darkness and gloominess,
A day of clouds and thick darkness,
Like the morning *clouds* spread over the mountains.
A people *come*, great and strong,
The like of whom has never been;
Nor will there ever be any *such* after them,
Even for many successive generations.
³ A fire devours before them,
And behind them a flame burns;
The land *is* like the Garden of Eden before them,
And behind them a desolate wilderness;
Surely nothing shall escape them.
⁴ Their appearance is like the appearance of horses;
And like swift steeds, so they run.
⁵ With a noise like chariots
Over mountaintops they leap,
Like the noise of a flaming fire that devours the stubble,
Like a strong people set in battle array.
⁶ Before them the people writhe in pain;
All faces are drained of color.
⁷ They run like mighty men,
They climb the wall like men of war;
Every one marches in formation,
And they do not break ranks.
⁸ They do not push one another;
Every one marches in his own column.
Though they lunge between the weapons,
They are not cut down.
⁹ They run to and fro in the city,
They run on the wall;
They climb into the houses,
They enter at the windows like a thief.
¹⁰ The earth quakes before them,
The heavens tremble;
The sun and moon grow dark,
And the stars diminish their brightness.
¹¹ The LORD gives voice before His army,
For His camp is very great;
For strong *is the One* who executes His word.
For **the day of the LORD** *is* great and very terrible;
Who can endure it?
¹² " Now, therefore," says the LORD,
" Turn to Me with all your heart,
With fasting, with weeping, and with mourning."
¹³ So rend your heart, and not your garments;

Return to the LORD your God,
For He *is* gracious and merciful,
Slow to anger, and of great kindness;
And He relents from doing harm.
¹⁴ Who knows *if* He will turn and relent,
And leave a blessing behind Him—

Joel 3:9-11

“Proclaim this among the nations:

“Prepare for war!
Wake up the mighty men,
Let all the men of war draw near,
Let them come up.
¹⁰ Beat your plowshares into swords
And your pruning hooks into spears;
Let the weak say, ‘I *am* strong.’”
¹¹ Assemble and come, all you nations,
And gather together all around.
Cause Your mighty ones to go down there, O LORD.
¹² “Let the nations be wakened, and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat;
For there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations.
¹³ Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe.
Come, go down;
For the winepress is full,
The vats overflow—
For their wickedness *is* great.”
¹⁴ Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision!
For **the day of the LORD** *is* near in the valley of decision.
¹⁵ The sun and moon will grow dark,
And the stars will diminish their brightness.
¹⁶ The LORD also will roar from Zion,
And utter His voice from Jerusalem;
The heavens and earth will shake;
But the LORD will be a shelter for His people,
And the strength of the children of Israel.
¹⁷ “So you shall know that I *am* the LORD your God,
Dwelling in Zion My holy mountain.
Then Jerusalem shall be holy,
And no aliens shall ever pass through her again.”

Amos 5:16-20

“Therefore the LORD God of hosts, the Lord, says this:

“ *There shall be* wailing in all streets,
And they shall say in all the highways,
‘ Alas! Alas!’
They shall call the farmer to mourning,
And skillful lamenters to wailing.
¹⁷ In all vineyards *there shall be* wailing,
For I will pass through you,”
Says the LORD.
¹⁸ Woe to you who desire **the day of the LORD!**
For what good *is* **the day of the LORD** to you?
It *will be* darkness, and not light.
¹⁹ It *will be* as though a man fled from a lion,
And a bear met him!

Or *as though* he went into the house,
Leaned his hand on the wall,
And a serpent bit him!
²⁰ *Is not **the day of the LORD** darkness, and not light?
Is it not very dark, with no brightness in it?*

Now let us tie the Old Testament passages with what Jesus told His disciples, and others.

Luke 4:16-21

“So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. ¹⁷ And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written:

¹⁸ “The Spirit of the LORD *is* upon Me,
Because He has anointed Me
To preach the gospel to *the* poor;
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to *the* captives
And recovery of sight to *the* blind,
To set at liberty those who are oppressed;
¹⁹ To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”

²⁰ Then He closed the book, and gave *it* back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. ²¹ And He began to say to them, “Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”

Jesus read from a passage found in Isaiah 61:1-2; but He stopped short of reading all of it. Then Jesus sat down and said, “Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”

Isaiah 61:1-2

“The Spirit of the Lord GOD *is* upon Me,
Because the LORD has anointed Me
To preach good tidings to the poor;
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives,
And the opening of the prison to *those who are* bound;
² To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD,
And the day of vengeance of our God;

Jesus did not quote the next line of the above prophecy because it would not be fulfilled until the day of the Lord.

Note – The scroll Jesus read from was a continuous document. There were no chapters, paragraphs or numbered verses like we have today in our Bibles.

Matthew 24:21-31

“For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. ²² And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened.

²³ “Then if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here *is* the Christ!’ or ‘There!’ do not believe *it*. ²⁴ For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. ²⁵ See, I have told you beforehand.

²⁶ “Therefore if they say to you, ‘Look, He is in the desert!’ do not go out; *or* ‘Look, He *is* in the inner rooms!’ do not believe *it*. ²⁷ For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the

west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. ²⁸ For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together.

²⁹ **“Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ³⁰ Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. ³¹ And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.”**

This is also recorded in Mark 13 and Luke 21. Scripture is not broken. What it says in the Old Testament Jesus confirms in the New. One thing that is blatantly missing from all these passages is the very mention of a pre-tribulation Rapture.

Verse 31 - speaks about the angels gathering together the elect, after the tribulation (verse 29), but makes no mention of sinners. Following are passages that reveal the other side of the coin.

Matthew 25:31, 41

“When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory.

⁴¹Then He will also say to those on the left hand, **‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels:**

Matthew 13:36-43

“Then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field.”

³⁷ He answered and said to them: “He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. ³⁸ The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked *one*. ³⁹ The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. ⁴⁰ Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. ⁴¹ **The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, ⁴² and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.**

⁴³ Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

Matthew 13:46-49

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of every kind, ⁴⁸ which, when it was full, they drew to shore; and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but threw the bad away. ⁴⁹ So it will be at the end of the age. **The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just,**

For those who say they believe but do not yet belong to Christ, I will simply say, "Turn from your sins to God, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near (Matthew 3:2)!"

His dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away,
And His kingdom *the one* which shall not be destroyed.

(Daniel 7:14)

I believe many professing Christians view Christ Jesus only as Savior; but fail to see Christ as our all powerful, soon coming, King and Lord of an actual down to earth kingdom.

Isaiah 9:6-7

"For unto us a Child is born,
Unto us a Son is given;
And the government will be upon His shoulder.
And His name will be called
Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷ Of the increase of *His* government and peace
There will be no end,

**Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom,
To order it and establish it with judgment and justice
From that time forward, even forever.**

The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Revelation 5:9-11

"And they sang a new song, saying:

"You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,

¹⁰ And have made us kings and priests to our God; and **we shall reign on the earth.**"

Revelation 20:1-6

" Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. ² He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is *the* Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; ³ and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.

⁴ And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then *I saw* the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received *his* mark on their foreheads or on their hands. **And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.**

⁵ But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This *is* the first resurrection. ⁶ Blessed and holy *is* he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but **they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.**

Isaiah 2:2-4

"Now it shall come to pass in the latter days
That the mountain of the LORD's house
Shall be established on the top of the mountains,
And shall be exalted above the hills;
And all nations shall flow to it.

³ Many people shall come and say,
"Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,
To the house of the God of Jacob;
He will teach us His ways,
And we shall walk in His paths."

For out of Zion shall go forth the law,
And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

**⁴ He shall judge between the nations,
And rebuke many people;**

They shall beat their swords into plowshares,
And their spears into pruning hooks;
Nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
Neither shall they learn war anymore.

Isaiah 11:1-12

¹“There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse,
And a Branch shall grow out of his roots.

² The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him,
The Spirit of wisdom and understanding,
The Spirit of counsel and might,
The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.

³ His delight *is* in the fear of the LORD,
And He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes,
Nor decide by the hearing of His ears;

⁴ But with righteousness He shall judge the poor,
And decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth,
And with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked.

⁵ Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins,
And faithfulness the belt of His waist.

⁶“The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb,
The leopard shall lie down with the young goat,
The calf and the young lion and the fatling together;
And a little child shall lead them.

⁷ The cow and the bear shall graze;
Their young ones shall lie down together;
And the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

⁸ The nursing child shall play by the cobra’s hole,
And the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper’s den.

⁹ They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain,
For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD
As the waters cover the sea.

¹⁰“And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse,
Who shall stand as a banner to the people;
For the Gentiles shall seek Him,
And His resting place shall be glorious.”

¹¹ It shall come to pass in that day
That the Lord shall set His hand again the second time
To recover the remnant of His people who are left,
From Assyria and Egypt,
From Pathros and Cush,
From Elam and Shinar,
From Hamath and the islands of the sea.

¹² He will set up a banner for the nations,
And will assemble the outcasts of Israel,
And gather together the dispersed of Judah
From the four corners of the earth.

For those of us who truly belong to Christ at this time we are citizens of His kingdom now. We are simply awaiting His return.

Acts 1:9-11

Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. ¹⁰ And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, ¹¹ who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? **This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.**"

1 Peter 2:11-12

Beloved, I beg *you* as **sojourners** and **pilgrims**, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, ¹² having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by *your* good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.

Sojourners (3941) παροικος, — *par'-oy-kos*; having a *home near*, i.e. (as noun) a *by-dweller (alien resident)*: — (Translated in King James version as) foreigner, sojourn, stranger.

Pilgrims (3927) παρεπιδημος, — *par-ep-id'-ay-mos*; an *alien alongside*, i.e. a *resident foreigner*: — (Translated in King James version as) pilgrim, stranger.

Our sovereign King rules over us now; but we must also remember that Christ will return again to both wage war and conquer actual nations of this earth. Jesus Christ is the stone spoken of in Daniel.

Daniel 2

" Now in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; and his spirit was so troubled that his sleep left him. ² Then the king gave the command to call the magicians, the astrologers, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans to tell the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king. ³ And the king said to them, "I have had a dream, and my spirit is anxious to know the dream."

⁴ Then the Chaldeans spoke to the king in Aramaic, "O king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will give the interpretation."

⁵ The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, "My decision is firm: if you do not make known the dream to me, and its interpretation, you shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made an ash heap. ⁶ However, if you tell the dream and its interpretation, you shall receive from me gifts, rewards, and great honor. Therefore tell me the dream and its interpretation."

⁷ They answered again and said, "Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will give its interpretation."

⁸ The king answered and said, "I know for certain that you would gain time, because you see that my decision is firm: ⁹ if you do not make known the dream to me, *there is only* one decree for you! For you have agreed to speak lying and corrupt words before me till the time has changed. Therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that you can give me its interpretation."

¹⁰ The Chaldeans answered the king, and said, "There is not a man on earth who can tell the king's matter; therefore no king, lord, or ruler has ever asked such things of any magician, astrologer, or Chaldean. ¹¹ *It is* a difficult thing that the king requests, and there is no other who can tell it to the king except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh."

¹² For this reason the king was angry and very furious, and gave the command to destroy all the wise *men* of Babylon. ¹³ So the decree went out, and they began killing the wise *men*; and they sought Daniel and his companions, to kill *them*.

¹⁴ Then with counsel and wisdom Daniel answered Arioch, the captain of the king's guard, who had gone out to kill the wise *men* of Babylon; ¹⁵ he answered and said to Arioch the king's captain, "Why is the decree from the king so urgent?" Then Arioch made the decision known to Daniel.

¹⁶ So Daniel went in and asked the king to give him time, that he might tell the king the interpretation. ¹⁷ Then Daniel went to his house, and made the decision known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, ¹⁸ that they might seek mercies from the God of heaven concerning this secret, so that Daniel and his companions might not perish with the rest of the wise *men* of Babylon. ¹⁹ Then the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. So Daniel blessed the God of heaven.

²⁰ Daniel answered and said:
"Blessed be the name of God forever and ever,
For wisdom and might are His.

²¹ And He changes the times and the seasons;
He removes kings and raises up kings;
He gives wisdom to the wise
And knowledge to those who have understanding.

²² He reveals deep and secret things;
He knows what *is* in the darkness,
And light dwells with Him.

²³ "I thank You and praise You,
O God of my fathers;
You have given me wisdom and might,
And have now made known to me what we asked of You,
For You have made known to us the king's demand."

²⁴ Therefore Daniel went to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise *men* of Babylon. He went and said thus to him: "Do not destroy the wise *men* of Babylon; take me before the king, and I will tell the king the interpretation."

²⁵ Then Arioch quickly brought Daniel before the king, and said thus to him, "I have found a man of the captives of Judah, who will make known to the king the interpretation."

²⁶ The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name *was* Belteshazzar, "Are you able to make known to me the dream which I have seen, and its interpretation?"

²⁷ Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, "The secret which the king has demanded, the wise *men*, the astrologers, the magicians, and the soothsayers cannot declare to the king. ²⁸ But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and **He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days.** Your dream, and the visions of your head upon your bed, were these: ²⁹ As for you, O king, thoughts came *to your mind while* on your bed, *about* what would come to pass after this; and He who reveals secrets has made known to you what will be. ³⁰ But as for me, this secret has not been revealed to me because I have more wisdom than anyone living, but for *our* sakes who make known the interpretation to the king, and that you may know the thoughts of your heart.

³¹ "You, O king, were watching; and behold, a great image! This great image, whose splendor *was* excellent, stood before you; and its form *was* awesome. ³² This image's head *was* of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, ³³ its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. ³⁴ **You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces.** ³⁵ **Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no**

trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

³⁶ “This *is* the dream. Now we will tell the interpretation of it before the king. ³⁷ You, O king, *are* a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory; ³⁸ and wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, He has given *them* into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all—you *are* this head of gold. ³⁹ But after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth. ⁴⁰ And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, *that kingdom* will break in pieces and crush all the others. ⁴¹ Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter’s clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay. ⁴² And as the toes of the feet *were* partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile. ⁴³ As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay. ⁴⁴ **And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.** ⁴⁵ Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold—the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure.”

Daniel 7:9-14

**“I watched till thrones were put in place,
And the Ancient of Days was seated;
His garment was white as snow,
And the hair of His head was like pure wool.
His throne was a fiery flame,
Its wheels a burning fire;**

¹⁰ **A fiery stream issued
And came forth from before Him.
A thousand thousands ministered to Him;
Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him.
The court was seated,
And the books were opened.**

¹¹ “I watched then because of the sound of the pompous words which the horn was speaking; I watched till the beast was slain, and its body destroyed and given to the burning flame. ¹² As for the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.

¹³ **“I was watching in the night visions,
And behold, *One* like the Son of Man,
Coming with the clouds of heaven!
He came to the Ancient of Days,
And they brought Him near before Him.**

¹⁴ **Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom,
That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him.
His dominion *is* an everlasting dominion,
Which shall not pass away,
And His kingdom *the one*
Which shall not be destroyed.**

Conclusion

Little baby Jesus is all grown up and He has already defeated our enemies and those that hate us.

Luke 1:68-71

"Blessed *is* the Lord God of Israel, for **He has visited and redeemed His people,**⁶⁹ and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David,⁷⁰ as He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets, who *have been* since the world began,⁷¹ **that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us,**"

He is risen!

Matthew 28:5-6

"But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. ⁶ **He is not here; for He is risen,** as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

He has the keys of Hades and death.

Revelation 1:17-18

"And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. ¹⁸ *I am* He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And **I have the keys of Hades and of Death.**

Now we await His return to take possession of all that belongs to Him.

What is your perception of Jesus now?

10/13/2022 – change in background highlights only