

Ask The Rabbi – July 13, 2021 (Part 5)

Question:

I feel I don't have a clear understanding of the timeline of end times. The what and when of events we can expect. Growing up I was taught about the rapture or the catching away. What is this and how should I understand the meaning of it?

How do I come back with an answer when others argue these verses that they see as “rapture” verses?

Response:

The term Rapture has become synonymous in Church teaching and is understood to be a “hidden” or “secret” return of Yeshua, prior to His very public return. Unfortunately, there are no distinct verses that speak specifically to this event occurring. What has occurred is a misappropriation of verses speaking specifically of one event, that being the return of Yeshua and identified as the Resurrection...

Joh 11:23 Yeshua said to her, "Your brother will rise again."

Joh 11:24 Marta said, "I know that he will rise again at the Resurrection on the Last Day."

Joh 11:25 Yeshua said to her, "I AM the Resurrection and the Life! Whoever puts his trust in me will live, even if he dies;

Joh 11:26 and everyone living and trusting in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

Joh 11:27 She said to him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world."

Over the last several weeks we have been reviewing portions of Scripture in the New Covenant writings that have been associated with the rapture and have addressed their intended meaning as written by Sha'ul and conveyed by Yeshua.

In letters to believers in Thessalonica and Corinth, Sha'ul's intent was not to introduce anything new but rather substantiate that which he had already conveyed to these communities.

To believers in Thessalonica there was a concern that the Resurrection, that is the expected return of Yeshua and the end of history was so imminently close that they had stopped working...

1Th 4:11 Also, make it your ambition to live quietly, to mind your own business and to earn your living by your own efforts—just as we told you.

Later on, Sha'ul would need address another aspect in Thessalonica that the Day of The Lord had already come.

2Th 2:1 But in connection with the coming of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah and our gathering together to meet him, we ask you, brothers,

2Th 2:2 not to be easily shaken in your thinking or anxious because of a spirit or a spoken message or a letter supposedly from us claiming that the Day of the Lord has already come.

2Th 2:3 Don't let anyone deceive you in any way. For the Day will not come until after the Apostasy has come and the man who separates himself from Torah has been revealed, the one destined for doom.

To believers in Corinth there was a perspective of disbelief towards the Resurrection and thus Sha'ul needed

to stem disbelief.

1Co 15:12 But if it has been proclaimed that the Messiah has been raised from the dead, how is it that some of you are saying there is no such thing as a resurrection of the dead?

And finally, Yeshua, was asked three questions by His talmidim...

1. When will all these things happen? Pertaining to Matthew 24:2

Mat 24:1 As Yeshua left the Temple and was going away, his talmidim came and called his attention to its buildings.

Mat 24:2 But he answered them, "You see all these? Yes! I tell you, they will be totally destroyed—not a single stone will be left standing!"

And that of Matthew 24:3

Mat 24:3 When he was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the talmidim came to him privately. "Tell us," they said, "when will these things happen? And what will be the sign that you are coming, and that the `olam hazeh is ending?"

2. What will be the sign of your coming? (That is His return)
3. What will be the sign of the end of the olam hazeh (the end of this age)?

Now that clarity has been provided to these three passages pointing to the Return of Yeshua and the Resurrection rather than used to support the theory of a Rapture, we can now build upon these passages in further providing understanding and guidance.

First and foremost, we must understand that the New Covenant writings don't provide any new revelation, but rather clarify revelation found in the Tanakh. When Yeshua taught His talmidim after His Resurrection, pay attention to what He taught from...

Luk 24:44 Yeshua said to them, "This is what I meant when I was still with you and told you that everything written about me in the Torah of Moshe, the Prophets and the Psalms had to be fulfilled."

Luk 24:45 Then he opened their minds, so that they could understand the Tanakh,

Luk 24:46 telling them, "Here is what it says: the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day;

Luk 24:47 and in his name repentance leading to forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed to people from all nations, starting with Yerushalayim.

The Revelation pertaining to Yeshua's death, burial and resurrection and its impact were not new, but their prophecy came from the Tanakh. Adonai has placed signs of Messiah throughout the Tanakh.

- His Suffering – Yesha'yahu 53
- His Death – Sh'mot (Exodus) 12 (The Passover account)
- His Burial – Yesha'yahu 53:9
- His Resurrection on the third day – Yonah 1:17; Hoshea 6:1 – 3; 2 Kings 20:8
- Forgiveness of sin – Yirmeyahu 31:33

Not to mention what Yeshua had conveyed to Yochanan the Immerser...

Mat 11:2 Meanwhile, Yochanan the Immerser, who had been put in prison, heard what the Messiah had been doing; so he sent a message to him through his talmidim,

Mat 11:3 asking, "Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for someone else?"

Mat 11:4 Yeshua answered, "Go and tell Yochanan what you are hearing and seeing—

Mat 11:5 the blind are seeing again, the lame are walking, people with tzara'at are being cleansed, the deaf are hearing, the dead are being raised, the Good News is being told to the poor—

Mat 11:6 and how blessed is anyone not offended by me!"

Yeshua's answer to Yochanan was in code. He refers to prophecies in the book of Yesha'yahu and the six signs which the Messiah will give when he comes:

- He will make the blind see ([Isa 29:18](#), [Isa 35:5](#))
- He will make the lame walk ([Isa 35:6](#), [Isa 61:1](#))
- He will cleanse lepers ([Isa 61:1](#))
- He will make the deaf hear ([Isa 29:18](#), [Isa 35:5](#))
- He will raise the dead (implied in [Isa 11:1-2](#) but not made specific)
- He will evangelize the poor ([Isa 61:1-2](#) in the light of [Mat 4:23](#) above).

There are many prophecies pertaining to Yeshua for which we have touched on just a few. An additional listing can be found through the following link to the Kehilah Portland web site.

http://www.shalommaine.com/article_index_pdf/prophecies_fulfilled_by_Yeshua.pdf

Adonai is all about providing signs that He has revealed to Israel and the Jewish people, custodian of His Word. Thus, there is a method by which Adonai operates. For Adonai has established His Word and His Covenants through the Jewish people...

Rom 9:1 I am speaking the truth—as one who belongs to the Messiah, I do not lie; and also bearing witness is my conscience, governed by the Ruach HaKodesh:

Rom 9:2 my grief is so great, the pain in my heart so constant,

Rom 9:3 that I could wish myself actually under God's curse and separated from the Messiah, if it would help my brothers, my own flesh and blood,

Rom 9:4 the people of Isra'el! They were made God's children, the Sh'khinah has been with them, the covenants are theirs, likewise the giving of the Torah, the Temple service and the promises;

Rom 9:5 the Patriarchs are theirs; and from them, as far as his physical descent is concerned, came the Messiah, who is over all. Praised be Adonai for ever! Amen.

The New Covenant writings are not intended to provide new revelation, but to connect the prophecies established through the Tanakh with Yeshua. Therefore, if the prophecies pertaining to Yeshua's appearance the first time are found in the Tanakh, then the prophecies pertaining to His return are also found in the Tanakh. For throughout the New Covenant writings, emphasis is placed upon the Tanakh, the Scriptures by Sha'ul...

Ti 3:14 But you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, recalling the people from whom you learned it;

2Ti 3:15 and recalling too how from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which can give you the wisdom that leads to deliverance through trusting in Yeshua the Messiah.

2Ti 3:16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is valuable for teaching the truth, convicting of sin, correcting faults and training in right living;

2Ti 3:17 thus anyone who belongs to God may be fully equipped for every good work.

Not to mention another reference, the Word of God...

1Th 2:13 Another reason we regularly thank God is that when you heard the Word of God from us, you received it not merely as a human word, but as it truly is, God's Word, which is at work in you believers.

1Th 2:14 For, brothers, you came to be imitators of God's congregations in Y'hudah that are united with the Messiah Yeshua—you suffered the same things from your countrymen as they did from the Judeans who

1Th 2:15 both killed the Lord Yeshua and the prophets, and chased us out too. They are displeasing God and opposing all mankind

1Th 2:16 by trying to keep us from speaking to the Gentiles, so that they may be delivered. Their object seems to be always to make their sins as bad as possible! But God's fury will catch up with them in the end.

For Yeshua is the Word of God who became flesh and dwelt among us...

Joh 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Joh 1:2 He was with God in the beginning.

Joh 1:3 All things came to be through him, and without him nothing made had being.

Joh 1:4 In him was life, and the life was the light of mankind.

Joh 1:14 The Word became a human being and lived with us, and we saw his Sh'khinah, the Sh'khinah of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth.

Now, onto the signs for the age we are living in and thus conveying the return of Yeshua is at hand.

Restoration of Israel:

The first and most prominent sign that everyone is familiar with, for which I will call the first domino of this age is the reestablishment of the Nation of Isra'el. In order for Messiah to come, there had to be a nation for Him to return to.

Isa 66:8 Who ever heard of such a thing? Who has ever seen such things? Is a country born in one day? Is a nation brought forth all at once? For as soon as Tziyon went into labor, she brought forth her children.

The realization of this verse happened on May 14, 1948 when the Jewish people made a declaration of independence and was recognized by the nations, more specifically a single nation, The United States through President Harry S. Truman on the very same day.

A promise by Adonai to regather Isra'el and enable them to return to the land is made in Torah...

Deu 30:1 "When the time arrives that all these things have come upon you, both the blessing and the curse which I have presented to you; and you are there among the nations to which Adonai your God has driven you; then, at last, you will start thinking about what has happened to you;

Deu 30:2 and you will return to Adonai your God and pay attention to what he has said, which will be exactly what I am ordering you to do today—you and your children, with all your heart and all your being.

Deu 30:3 At that point, Adonai your God will reverse your exile and show you mercy; he will return and gather you from all the peoples to which Adonai your God scattered you.

Deu 30:4 If one of yours was scattered to the far end of the sky, Adonai your God will gather you even from there; he will go there and get you.

Deu 30:5 Adonai your God will bring you back into the land your ancestors possessed, and you will possess it; he will make you prosper there, and you will become even more numerous than your ancestors.

Deu 30:6 Then Adonai your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your children, so that you will love Adonai your God with all your heart and all your being, and thus you will live.

We are in the process of and you are in the midst of witnessing the greatest revival of Adonai to occur since Yeshua's first appearance. For Yeshua conveys to the leaders of Y'hudah...

Mat 23:39 For I tell you, from now on, you will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of Adonai.' "

And Sha'ul conveys what the impact of the restoration of the Jewish people will truly be which includes acceptance of Yeshua as Messiah and King...

Rom 11:15 For if their casting Yeshua aside means reconciliation for the world, what will their accepting him mean? It will be life from the dead!

This is still an enormous work in progress, so do not judge by what has not yet happened, but pay attention to what has happened.

Upon the declaration of Israel and America's affirmation, this would be the first building block whereby the second domino would be the regathering of Jerusalem under Jewish control for the first time since Babylonian exile. For Yeshua Himself offered this too as a sign as recorded in Luke...

Luk 21:24 Some will fall by the edge of the sword, others will be carried into all the countries of the Goyim, and Yerushalayim will be trampled down by the Goyim until the age of the Goyim has run its course.

Note: I have included David Stern's commentary on this verse, providing you a history lesson of Gentile control over the city.

Martin Chernoff, a pioneering figure in the burgeoning Messianic Jewish Movement in 1960's and 1970's and thus a major influence of what exists today found it hard to believe there was not greater enthusiasm at the news of Jerusalem return to Jewish control during the time it occurred and within the circles they traveled. Many did not see the regathering of Jerusalem at the time as a significant moment in time, primarily for the reason that Prophecy from the perspective of Israel rather than from a church perspective was still extremely new. The nation of Israel was not even 20 years old since their declaration. The challenges pertaining to Israel centric understanding is still an enormous challenge to overcome among non-Jewish believers.

Yeshua offers a parable pertaining to Israel and its reestablishment and is that of the fig tree...

Mat 24:32 "Now let the fig tree teach you its lesson: when its branches begin to sprout and leaves appear, you know that summer is approaching.

Mat 24:33 In the same way, when you see all these things, you are to know that the time is near, right at the door.

Mat 24:34 Yes! I tell you that this people will certainly not pass away before all these things happen.

Mat 24:35 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

The people, that is the Jewish people will not parish and thus the reestablishment of the people to the land is

important for it will set the stage for all that is to follow. Therefore, pay attention to the fig tree.

The reunification of the Jewish people to their land and the reincorporation of Jerusalem under Jewish control are key prophecies that have been fulfilled and thus are preparing the stage for Yeshua's return. For when He returns He will return to the land, eretz-Israel, specifically to the Mount of Olives...

Zec 14:3 Then Adonai will go out and fight against those nations, fighting as on a day of battle.

Zec 14:4 On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which lies to the east of Yerushalayim; and the Mount of Olives will be split in half from east to west, to make a huge valley. Half of the mountain will move toward the north, and half of it toward the south.

This is established by the Angel speaking to the talmidim as Yeshua ascends...

Act 1:9 After saying this, he was taken up before their eyes; and a cloud hid him from their sight.

Act 1:10 As they were staring into the sky after him, suddenly they saw two men dressed in white standing next to them.

Act 1:11 The men said, "You Galileans! Why are you standing, staring into space? This Yeshua, who has been taken away from you into heaven, will come back to you in just the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

Act 1:12 Then they returned the Shabbat-walk distance from the Mount of Olives to Yerushalayim.

Thus the reestablishment of Israel is key to Yeshua's return. For the people must be in the land in order for the next sign to occur. At some point in time we will see the reconstruction of the Temple, for in order for Yeshua's words in Matthew 24:15 to occur, there must be a standing Temple.

Mat 24:15 "So when you see the abomination that causes desolation spoken about through the prophet Dani'el standing in the Holy Place" (let the reader understand the allusion),

Originally revealed to Daniel, Yeshua establishes this to be similar but is not related to Antiochus Epiphanies. History will recur with the Anti-Messiah performing the same desecration.

The Temple is key for another sign as revealed in Revelation is the two witnesses.

Rev 11:1 I was given a measuring rod like a stick and told, "Get up, and measure the Temple of God and the altar, and count how many people are worshipping there!"

Rev 11:2 But the court outside the Temple, leave that out; don't measure it; because it has been given to the Goyim, and they will trample over the holy city for forty-two months.

Rev 11:3 "Also I will give power to my two witnesses; and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, dressed in sackcloth."

Rev 11:4 These are the two olive trees and the two menorahs standing before the Lord of the earth.

For Adonai revealed the two who would witness through the Prophet Zechariah...

Zec 4:1 Then the angel that had been speaking with me returned and roused me, as if he were waking someone up from being asleep,

Zec 4:2 and asked me, "What do you see?" I answered, "I've been looking at a menorah; it's all of gold, with a bowl at its top, seven lamps on it, and seven tubes leading to the lamps at its top.

Zec 4:3 Next to it are two olive trees, one on the right side of the bowl and the other on its left."

Notice the Words of Yeshua to Yochanan making the connection of the two witnesses to the two olive trees of Zechariah's prophecy. Thus the two witnesses will appear at the time when the rebuilt Temple is standing. There is a time period associated with these two witnesses, that being 42 months for which I believe to be the first part of Daniel's 70th week and thus the first part of great tribulation. These two will witness for 42 months until they are put to death.

Rev 11:5 If anyone tries to do them harm, fire comes out of their mouth and consumes their enemies—yes, if anyone tries to harm them, that is how he must die.

Rev 11:6 They have the authority to shut up the sky, so that no rain falls during the period of their prophesying; also they have the authority to turn the waters into blood and to strike the earth with every kind of plague as often as they want.

Rev 11:7 When they finish their witnessing, the beast coming up out of the Abyss will fight against them, overcome them and kill them;

Rev 11:8 and their dead bodies will lie in the main street of the great city whose name, to reflect its spiritual condition, is "S'dom" and "Egypt"—the city where their Lord was executed on a stake.

Rev 11:9 Some from the nations, tribes, languages and peoples see their bodies for three-and-a-half days and do not permit the corpses to be placed in a tomb.

Rev 11:10 The people living in the Land rejoice over them, they celebrate and send each other gifts, because these two prophets tormented them so.

Rev 11:11 But after the three-and-a-half days a breath of life from God entered them, they stood up on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them.

Rev 11:12 Then the two heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here!" And they went up into heaven in a cloud, while their enemies watched them.

The condition of the people living in the land of Israel is not one of unified belief in Yeshua for the people of the land will rejoice in the death of the two witnesses. Yet, their time of witnessing is that of the Great Commission and the reality that Yeshua's return is close. The same message that was uttered some 2,000 years earlier...

Mat 3:1 It was during those days that Yochanan the Immerser arrived in the desert of Y'hudah and began proclaiming the message,

Mat 3:2 "Turn from your sins to God, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near!"

Mat 3:3 This is the man Yesha`yahu was talking about when he said, "The voice of someone crying out: 'In the desert prepare the way of Adonai! Make straight paths for him!' "

For Yeshua recognized Yochanan the Immerser through the following profession...

Mat 11:12 From the time of Yochanan the Immerser until now, the Kingdom of Heaven has been suffering violence; yes, violent ones are trying to snatch it away.

Mat 11:13 For all the prophets and the Torah prophesied until Yochanan.

Mat 11:14 Indeed, if you are willing to accept it, he is Eliyahu, whose coming was predicted.

Mat 11:15 If you have ears, then hear!

What did Yeshua mean by this...If you accept it, he (Yochanan) is Eliyahu? These two witnesses for whom we believe one to be Eliyahu, (Elijah) is prominent in another sign as conveyed by the Tanakh and affirmed by Yeshua.

Mal 3:22 "Remember the Torah of Moshe my servant, which I enjoined on him at Horev, laws and rulings for all Isra'el.

Mal 3:23 Look, I will send to you Eliyahu the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible Day of Adonai.

Mal 3:24 He will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to their fathers; otherwise I will come and strike the land with complete destruction." [*Look, I will send to you Eliyahu the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible Day of Adonai.*]

The prophecy of Malachi establishing that Eliyahu will come before Messiah and thus the Day of the Adonai. These verses have not been fulfilled in that Yeshua offers this truth...

Mat 17:9 As they came down the mountain, Yeshua ordered them, "Don't tell anyone what you have seen until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead."

Mat 17:10 The talmidim asked him, "Then why do the Torah-teachers say that Eliyahu must come first?"

Mat 17:11 He answered, "On the one hand, Eliyahu is coming and will restore all things;

Mat 17:12 on the other hand, I tell you that Eliyahu has come already, and people did not recognize him but did whatever they pleased to him. In the same way, the Son of Man too is about to suffer at their hands."

Mat 17:13 Then the talmidim understood that he was talking to them about Yochanan the Immerser.

On one hand Eliyahu came in the Spirit through Yochanan the Immerser, while on the other hand Eliyahu will appear in person as one of the two witnesses.

There will be many teachings about many things and how they pertain to the end times and the return of Yeshua. There will be a lot of noise for which I believe will be distractions. Know this, before the sign of Yeshua appearing in the sky...

Mat 24:29 "But immediately following the trouble of those times, the sun will grow dark, the moon will stop shining, the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers in heaven will be shaken.

Mat 24:30 "Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, all the tribes of the Land will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with tremendous power and glory.

Mat 24:31 He will send out his angels with a great shofar; and they will gather together his chosen people from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

You will see:

- The Temple standing in Jerusalem
- The appearance of Eliyahu, his death and resurrection at the end of 42 months, likely marking the midway point of great tribulation.

Many things will transpire in your presence, including:

- The Seventh Shofar
- The Seven Plagues
- The Seven Bowls of God's Wrath

For which Yeshua says...

Mat 24:4 Yeshua replied: "Watch out! Don't let anyone fool you!"

Mat 24:5 For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Messiah!' and they will lead many astray.

Mat 24:6 You will hear the noise of wars nearby and the news of wars far off; see to it that you don't become frightened. Such things must happen, but the end is yet to come.

Mat 24:7 For peoples will fight each other, nations will fight each other, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various parts of the world;

Mat 24:8 all this is but the beginning of the 'birth-pains.'

Mat 24:9 At that time you will be arrested and handed over to be punished and put to death, and all peoples will hate you because of me.

Mat 24:10 At that time many will be trapped into betraying and hating each other,

Mat 24:11 many false prophets will appear and fool many people;

Mat 24:12 and many people's love will grow cold because of increased distance from Torah.

Mat 24:13 But whoever holds out till the end will be delivered.

For just as the Jewish people remained safe in Goshen while Adonai imposed the 10 plagues the Egyptians, so to we as believers will remain safe as Adonai enacts His wrath upon the world for all that is to occur is not directed at those who have placed their trust in Yeshua...

Joh 3:36 Whoever trusts in the Son has eternal life. But whoever disobeys the Son will not see that life but remains subject to God's wrath."

1Th 5:8 But since we belong to the day, let us stay sober, putting on trust and love as a breastplate and the hope of being delivered as a helmet.

1Th 5:9 For God has not intended that we should experience his fury, but that we should gain deliverance through our Lord Yeshua the Messiah,

1Th 5:10 who died on our behalf so that whether we are alive or dead, we may live along with him.

1Th 5:11 Therefore, encourage each other, and build each other up—just as you are doing.

David Stern JNTC – Luke 21:24:

Luke 21:24

Many believe the prophetic message in the final part of this verse has been fulfilled in our own days, after nearly two thousand years. If so, it constitutes a powerful argument for believing in Yeshua.

The verse's opening passage, "**Some will fall by the edge of the sword**," was initially fulfilled in the rebellion of 66-70, when over a million Jews may have perished (see below). Moreover, its fulfillment was grievously repeated throughout history, often by those who called themselves Christians and claimed to be acting in the name of the Jewish Messiah. The phrase, "the edge of the sword." is found also in [Jer 21:7](#) and [Sir 28:18](#) (in the Apocrypha).

The second clause, "**Others will be carried into all the countries of the Goyim**," could stand as a heading for a history of the Jewish Diaspora. Josephus (*Wars of the Jews* 6:9:1, 3) states that 1,100,000 Jews were slain and 97,000 carried away captive as slaves by the Romans in the war of 66-70. The Diaspora is predicted as early as in the words of Moses ([Deu 28:63-68](#)) and dates at least to the Assyrian conquest of Israel (722 B.C.E.) and the Babylonian Captivity (586 B.C.E.; see [Ezr 9:7](#)). But the Roman slaughter and destruction brought the Jewish nation to an end: the Diaspora, in a national sense, had previously been partial; now and in the Second Rebellion (132-135 C.E.) it became all but total.

And Yerushalayim will be trampled down by the Goyim until the age (literally, "seasons") **of the Goyim has run its course.** Consider this prophecy in the light of [Psa 79:1](#) ("O God, *Goyim* have come into your inheritance; they have defiled your holy Temple; they have laid Yerushalayim in heaps"), [Isa 63:18](#) ("... our adversaries have trampled down your sanctuary") and [Dan 9:26](#) ("After sixty-two sevens Messiah will be cut off, with nothing left to him; and the people of a prince yet to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary...").

The Romans permitted Jews to continue living in Jerusalem after 70 C.E., but in the wake of the Second Rebellion under the false messiah Shim'on Bar-Kosiba all Jews were expelled, and the city, now entirely Gentile, was renamed Aelia Capitolina. (However, Jews continued to live in B'nei-B'rak, Yavneh, Tzipori, Tiberias and other locations throughout the Land of Israel. In fact, there has been a Jewish presence in *Eretz-Israel* continuously since the time of King David.)

Roman rule continued until 324, the Byzantine Empire controlled Jerusalem until 614 and the Persians governed briefly until 629. In 638 Muslim Arabs conquered the Holy City; and the Ummayyads, ruling from Damascus, built the Dome of the Rock mosque on what was believed to be the site of the Jewish Temple, completing it in 691. The Abbasid Arabs took over in 750; their capital was Baghdad. The Egyptians imposed their rule in 878. The Crusaders, thinking they were acting in the name of Yeshua, came to the Holy Land in 1096 "to reclaim it from the infidels." In 1099 they not only defeated the Muslims but massacred all the Jews they could find. The Crusaders in turn were driven out in 1187 by the Kurdish Ayyubid leader Salach-ed-Din (Saladin).

Battles between Crusaders and Muslim Arabs continued until 1244, with dominion being established by the Egyptian Mamluks in 1250; formerly military slaves of the Ayyubids, they had overthrown their masters. Suleiman (= Solomon) the Great displaced them in 1517, and his Ottoman Turks held sway in the Holy Land for 400 years until they were defeated by Britain's General Allenby in World War I. The British Mandate given by the League of Nations lasted until 1948, when, in the wake of the Nazi Holocaust, the world's conscience was momentarily pricked enough to permit the State of Israel to be established by a just-over-two-thirds vote of the United Nations General Assembly. By the U. N. plan of 1947 Jerusalem was to have been an internationalized city, but when five Arab countries attacked Israel within hours of her independence she

fought back and conquered the western, more modern part of Jerusalem. Nevertheless the Old City of Jerusalem, the portion the present verse speaks about, which includes the Temple site, was occupied by Jordan until the Six-Day War. On June 8, 1967, the Israeli army entered the Old City and converged on the Western ("Wailing") Wall, liberating Yerushalayim at last.

Many regard that as the moment when Yeshua's prophecy was fulfilled-1,897 years of Gentile rule over Yerushalayim came to an end, and she is no longer "trampled down by the *Goyim*," because "the age of the *Goyim* has run its course"; at last Yeshua's words have come true. Others date the fulfillment from Israel's 1980 proclamation that Jerusalem is a united city under Israeli sovereignty. Still others will not consider it fulfilled until Muslims no longer control the Temple Mount.

Those who adhere to Replacement theology-also called Covenant theology, Dominion theology, Kingdom Now theology, Christian Reconstructionism, and (in England) Restorationism-hold that the Church is the "new" or "spiritual" Israel, having replaced the "old" Israel, the Jews, as God's people. According to this view the Jewish people no longer have promises from God, only curses; therefore they deny any significance after 70 C.E. to the "times of the Gentiles." The falseness of this interpretation follows logically if Replacement theology itself is refuted-for which see references in [Mat 5:5](#).

In the Talmud a lengthy series of speculations on when the Messiah will come includes the following paragraph, which resembles Yeshua's prediction in the present verse:

"Rabbi Chama bar-Chanina said, 'The Son of David will not come until even the pettiest [*hazola*] kingdom stops having power over Israel, for it is written, "He will cut off the shoots [*hazalzalim*, a related word, understood here as a metaphor for "petty kingdoms"] with pruning hooks, and he will hew down and remove the branches.'" And this is followed by, "In that time shall *Adonai* of heaven's armies be presented with the gift of a people scattered and peeled" ([Isa 18:5](#), [Isa 18:7](#)).'" (Sanhedrin 98a)

What follows may seem a digression, but it is tied to the present verse by the concept of waiting two thousand years to see something happen. Messianic Jews hold that Messianic Judaism is the modern continuation of a Jewish stream which began in the first century with the Jewish followers of Yeshua. Opponents claim we ignore the intervening centuries of historical conflict between the Church and the Jewish people-as Israel High Court Justice Meir Shamgar wrote in the Esther Dorflinger verdict:

"For this purpose [to convince the Court she was a Jew entitled to make *aliyah* (immigrate) under Israel's Law of Return] she made exaggerations with long and tortuous arguments concerning the possibilities of her being a Jew who believes in Jesus' being the Messiah, as if we are still living in the beginning of the first century of the Christian Era, as if since then nothing had occurred in all that relates to the crystallization of the religious frameworks and the separation from Judaism of all those who chose another path." (Israel High Court of Justice Case #563/77)

I have two comments. First, the entire Zionist enterprise has had a virtually identical premise. For two thousand years the Jews had no home in *Eretz-Israel*. Those who opposed Zionism criticized its "long and tortuous arguments concerning the possibilities of" recreating a Jewish state, "as if we were still living in the first century of the Christian Era, as if since then nothing had occurred in all that relates to the crystallization of" political, social and "religious frameworks." Fortunately, the anti-Zionists were wrong-as is Justice Shamgar. (My thanks to Israeli Messianic Jews Menahem Benhayim and Ari Sorko-Ram, who both suggested this parallel.)

Second, if "religious frameworks" have "crystallized" in a way that separates "from Judaism all who chose another path," then it is a task of Messianic Judaism to persuade Christians and Jews alike to decrystallize the frameworks so as to bring them into line with reality. Jews who honor Yeshua remain Jewish. It is God who made us Jewish; and neither the rabbis, the Jewish people nor Israel's High Court of Justice can overrule God's reality and de-Jew us.

