
APOCALYPTIC LANGUAGE

- ⇒ In 539 BC, King Darius, son of Ahasuerus the Mede and Cyrus the Great King of Persia, attacked Babylon. King Belshazzar was killed and Babylon was divided between the Medes and the Persians. There is prophetic scripture of this event in the Bible.

- ⇒ *"The Burden of Baby lon... For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine... Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger...Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them..." - (Isa.13:1,10,13,17).*

- ⇒ Although history records the conquering of Babylon as prophesied above, there are no historical or scientific records that record any of the cataclysmic events that appear in these scriptures!

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- ⇒ Bozrah was the capital city of ancient Edom. The Maccabees subdued the Idumeans in Bozrah late in the sixth century BC. This event was prophesied in the Bible.

- ⇒ *"...the mountains shall be melted with their blood. And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll...For my sword...shall come down upon Idumea...to Judgment..and their land shall be soaked with blood...the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch...the smoke thereof shall go up for ever: from generation to generation" (Isa.34:3-10).*

- ⇒ Although history records the destruction of Bozrah as prophesied above, there are no historical or scientific records that record any of the cataclysmic events that appear in these scriptures!

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The following prophecy appears in the Scripture with regards to Egypt.

"...take up a lamentation for Pharaoh king of Egypt...I will lay thy flesh upon the mountains, and fill the valleys with thy height. I will also water with thy blood the land wherein thou swimmest, even to the mountains; and the rivers shall be full of thee...I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark: I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light. All the bright lights of heaven will I make dark..." (Ezek.32:2,5-8).

Nebuchadnezzar (see verse eleven) was the agent that God used to carry out the above action!

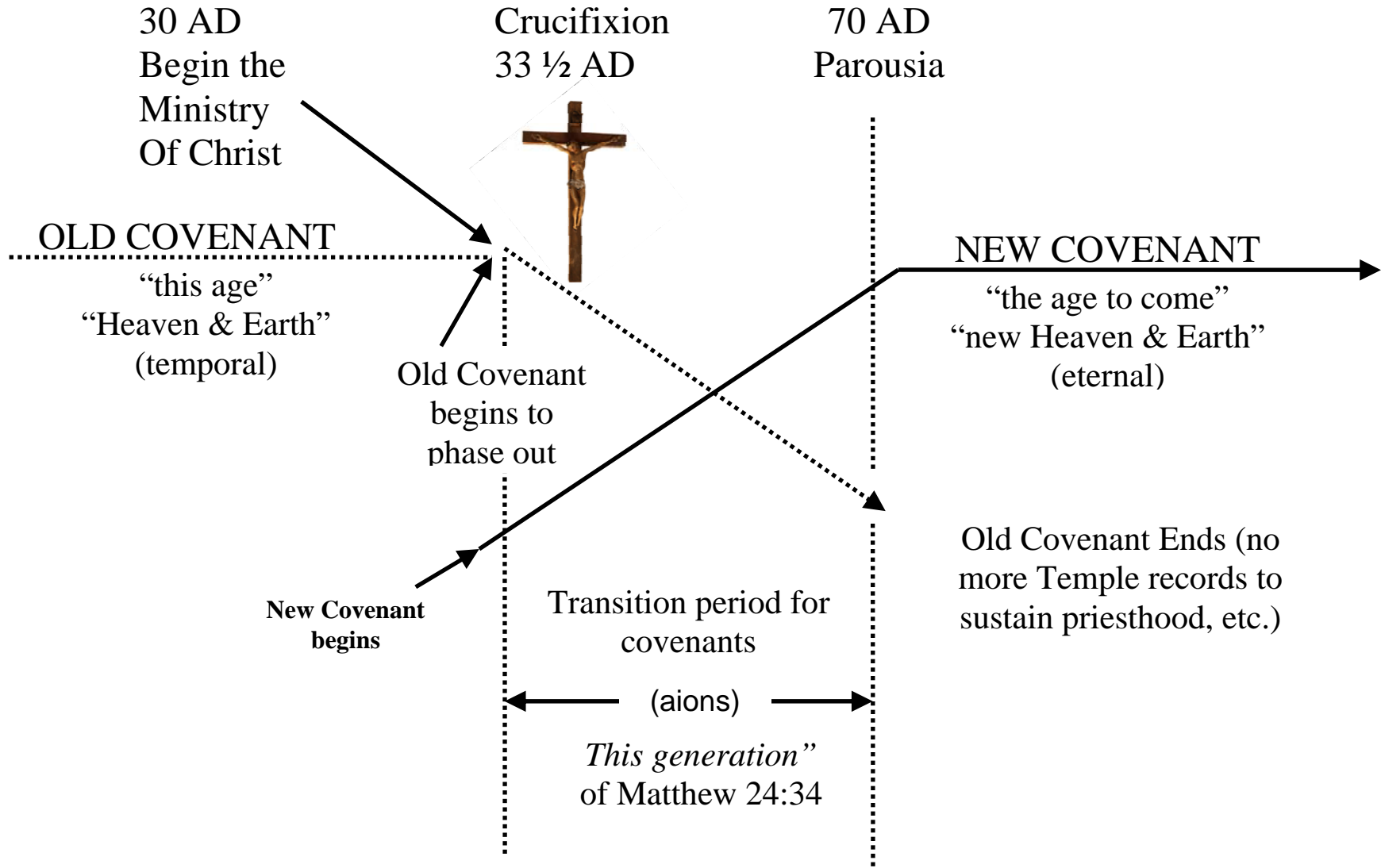
Note the apocalyptic language used!

APOCALYPTIC LANGUAGE CONCLUSION

- ⇒ The examples in the preceding charts are sufficient to illustrate what is self-evident, that in prophetic language in the Bible the most terrible phenomena are used to represent God's judgment and His awesome power!

- ⇒ The imagery, if literally fulfilled, would require the destruction of a part of the world or universe when in fact what it is actually describing is the downfall of a dynasty, the capture of a city, the overthrow of a nation or God's judgment on a particular group of people!

- ⇒ Since the language we have examined thus far has the meaning we have discussed, then similar language throughout the Bible can be understood in the same manner. Apocalyptic forms of speech are not to convey one thing in one area of the Bible and then mean something entirely different in another area of Scripture. This is an accepted interpretation principle used by Bible scholars.



The Transition of the Two Covenants of the Bible

Figure 13

APPLICATION OF APOCALYPTIC LANGUAGE

- 📖 *"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Matt.24:29-30).*
- 📖 *"And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come" (Joel 2:30-31).*

Along with Peter's testimony at Pentecost:

- 📖 *"...this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel...And I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke: The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come" (Acts 2:16,19,20).*

"SEEING" CHRIST AT HIS PAROUSIA

- ⇒ THE PROBLEM VERSE: *"And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory"* (Matt.24:30)

- ⇒ CONCLUSION: Some Christians believe that since there does not appear to be any historical record of any one SEEING Jesus *"coming in the clouds of heaven,"* then His Parousia has not yet taken place. Their problem is with the word "see."

- ⇒ The same language appears in: *"...Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven"* (Matt.26:64)

- ⇒ ? Who would SEE the Son of man coming in the clouds?
"ye"= Caiaphus, the high priest! (See Matt.26:57,63,64).

- ⇒ The Scriptures state that the Parousia was to take place during the lifetime of Caiaphas!

- ⇒ Why do we not have historical records of the early church and Caiaphas "seeing" Christ's presence in AD 70?

"SEEING" GOD

📖 *"And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower [of Babel]...let us go down, and there confound their language..." (Gn.11:5,7).*

There is no indication that anyone "saw" God in the above presence of God!

📖 *"And I am come down to deliver..." (Ex.3:8).*

When God came down in the above instance what Moses saw was a burning bush!

📖 The Psalmist states that: *"He [God] bowed the heavens also, and came down"* (Ps.18:9), but there is no indication that anyone physically saw God!

📖 Isaiah states: *"...thou [God] earnest down, the mountains flowed down at thy presence"* (Isa.64:3), but Isaiah does not state that God was seen physically!

CONCLUSION: From the scripture above we understand that at Babel God scattered the people and in that action He had "come down," but He was not seen physically. In Egypt He delivered His people. He "came down" to do that and can be "seen" in the deliverance, but was not seen bodily or in a physical manner.

To "see" means to recognize, to be aware of or to perceive.

"Seeing" Jesus is not restricted to a physical manifestation of Christ Himself!

"SEEING" GOD

- ⇒ Jesus had told Caiaphus and others they would "...see *the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven*" and they DID! Not with their physical third dimensional eyesight, but with the eyes of their understanding and their perception when judgment fell upon Jerusalem in AD 70.
- ⇒ When Jesus spoke to His disciples about leaving this earth He said, "*Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more: but ye see me...*" (Jn.14:19). Jesus was speaking of being in them at a later time which is the same as their "seeing Jesus." Jesus did come later, and His presence was literally IN THEM, but it was not a physical seeing but rather a spiritual seeing.
- ⇒ In the same manner, when the Son of man came in His kingdom the tribes of the land did "*...see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory*" (Matt.24:30), however, it was not a physical person that they saw nor did they see Him with their physical eyes, but they did know that He had come (Parousia, presence)!
- ⇒ In the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 by the actions of the Roman armies, God "came down" [back] and His coming [Parousia, presence] was in judgment on Israel and at the same time a blessing to His church as they were released from the persecution being brought against them by the Jewish system of religion which was severely antagonistic toward their belief in the Messiah.

CHRIST COMING IN THE CLOUDS OLD TESTAMENT

- 📖 *"And it came to pass, as Aaron spake unto the whole congregation of the children of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and, behold, the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud" (Ex. 16:10).*

- 📖 *"And the Lord said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud..." (Ex.19:9).*

- 📖 *"And the Lord said unto Moses...I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat" (Lev.16:2).*

- 📖 *"And the Lord came down in a cloud..." (Numb.11:25).*

- 📖 *"...who [God] maketh the clouds his chariot..." (Ps.104:3).*

- 📖 *"...the Lord rideth upon a swift cloud..." (Isa.19:1).*

The passages above illustrate to us that to *"come in the clouds"* is a phrase that is NOT used literally in the Bible, but rather is to be taken as figurative language associated with an event involving the presence of God.

Actually, no one has seen God: Jn.1:18; 1 Jn.4:12, because God is a spirit and a spirit cannot be seen with third dimensional eyesight. In places where the Bible states someone has "seen God" what they have actually seen is a "theophany" or God appearing in another form.

CHRIST COMING IN THE CLOUDS NEW TESTAMENT

- 📖 *"...and they [all the tribes of the earth] shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and glory" (Mt.24:30).*
- 📖 *"...Hereafter shall ye [Caiaphus] see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Mt.26:64).*
- 📖 *"And then shall they [those who undergo the afflictions] see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory" (Mk.13:26).*
- 📖 *"...and ye [Caiaphus] shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Mk.14:62).*
- 📖 *"And then shall they [those caught in the destruction (see vs.23,24) see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory" (Lk.21:27).*
- 📖 *"Behold, he [Christ] cometh with clouds..." (Rev.1:7).*

Do notes on Rev.1:7