

**Opening Reading:**

**Jeremiah 10**

*Idols and the Living God*

<sup>1</sup> Hear the word that the Lord speaks to you, O house of Israel. <sup>2</sup> Thus says the Lord:

“Learn not the way of the nations,  
nor be dismayed at the signs of the heavens  
because the nations are dismayed at them,  
<sup>3</sup> for the customs of the peoples are vanity.

**Mark 7:6-9**

<sup>6</sup> And he said to them, “Well did **Isaiah** prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written,

“**This people honors me with their lips,  
but their heart is far from me;**

<sup>7</sup> *in vain do they worship me,*

teaching as doctrines the **commandments of men.**’

<sup>8</sup> You leave the commandment of God and hold to the **tradition of men.**”

<sup>9</sup> And he said to them, “You have a fine way of **rejecting the commandment of God in order to establish your tradition!**”

**Isaiah 29:13**

<sup>13</sup> And the Lord said:

“Because <sup>1</sup> this people <sup>2</sup> draw near with their mouth  
and honor me with their lips,  
while their hearts are far from me,  
and their fear of me is a commandment taught by men,

**Ezekiel 33:31**

<sup>31</sup> <sup>1</sup> And they come to you as people come, and they sit before you as my people, and they hear what you say but they will not do it  
; for <sup>2</sup> with lustful talk in their mouths they act; their heart is set on their gain.

**Matthew 15:7-9**

<sup>7</sup> <sup>1</sup> You hypocrites! Well did **Isaiah** prophesy of you, when he said:

<sup>8</sup> <sup>1</sup> “This people honors me with their lips,

but their heart is far from me;

<sup>9</sup> in vain do they worship me,

teaching as <sup>2</sup> doctrines the commandments of men.”

**Jeremiah 10**

<sup>3</sup> for the customs of the peoples are vanity. A tree from the forest is cut down  
and worked with an axe by the hands of a craftsman.

<sup>4</sup> They decorate it with silver and gold;  
they fasten it with hammer and nails  
so that it cannot move.

<sup>5</sup> Their idols are like scarecrows in a cucumber field,

and they cannot speak;  
they have to be carried,  
for they cannot walk.

Do not be afraid of them,  
for they cannot do evil,

neither is it in them to do good.”

**Long before Christianity appeared**, people in the Northern Hemisphere used evergreen plants to decorate their homes, particularly the doors, to celebrate the Winter Solstice. On December 21 or December 22, the day is the shortest and the night the longest. Traditionally, this time of the year is seen as the return in strength of the sun god who had been weakened during winter — and the evergreen plants served as a reminder that the god would glow again and summer was to be expected.

The solstice was celebrated by the Egyptians who filled their homes with green palm rushes in honor of the god Ra, who had the head of a hawk and wore the sun as a crown. In Northern Europe, the Celts decorated their druid temples with evergreen boughs which signified everlasting life. Further up north, the Vikings thought evergreens were the plants of Balder, the god of light and peace. The ancient Romans marked the Winter Solstice with a feast called Saturnalia thrown in honor of Saturn, the god of agriculture, and, like the Celts, decorated their homes and temples with evergreen boughs.

It’s worth mentioning at this point that Saturnalia was the most important celebration in Roman life. It was a week-long lawless celebration held between 17 and 25 December in which no one could be prosecuted for injuring or killing people, raping, theft — anything usually against the law really. But although a lot of people blew off steam by taking advantage of the lawlessness, Saturnalia could also be a time for kindness. During Saturnalia, many Romans practiced merrymaking and exchange of presents.

Sounds familiar? In the early days of Christianity, the birth of Jesus was set at the last day of Saturnalia by the first Christian Romans in power to approach pagans, even though scholars assert **Jesus was born nine months later**. It was a clever political ploy, some say, which in time transformed Saturnalia from a frat party marathon into a meek celebration of the birth of Christ.

<https://www.zmescience.com/science/history-science/origin-christmas-tree-pagan/>

### **The Christmas Tradition**

We celebrate the birth of Messiah (Christ) on Christmas (from Old English, meaning “coming of Christ”), the 25th day of December. This date was first observed in 336 AD, some 24 years after the Roman emperor Constantine established Christianity as the state religion. Apparently, Pope Julius I chose to replace the pagan winter solstice feast in honor of Mithra, the “Unconquered Sun,” that had been officially recognized by the emperor Aurelian in 274 AD. From Rome, the new feast celebrating the birthday of the “*Sun of Righteousness*” (Malachi 4:2) spread to all other churches (except the Armenian church) over the following century.

As many Christians are aware, the modern Christmas celebration combines many strands of tradition including the ancient Roman pagan festival of Saturnalia (merrymaking, exchange of presents), the old Germanic midwinter customs (Yule log, decorating evergreen trees), the tradition of Francis of Assisi (displaying the crib, or crèche of Jesus), the medieval feast of St. Nicholas (Sinterklaas in Dutch, hence “Santa Claus”), and the British sending of greeting cards (1840s). The Puritan pilgrims did not celebrate Christmas because of its many unbiblical associations. The holiday was officially recognized in the United States in 1870.

The Dutch Sinterklaas (Saint Nicholas) is the origin of the North American Santa Claus. According to legend, Sinterklaas makes his rounds on December 5, Saint Nicholas’s Eve. Dressed in a catholic bishop’s robes, Sinterklaas rides through the streets distributing sweets to the children. According to some versions of the popular legend, another figure accompanies him named Black Peter, who carries a whip with which to chastise naughty children.

<https://christinprophecy.org/articles/when-was-jesus-born/>

### **Jeremiah 10:6-25**

<sup>6</sup>There is none like you, O Lord;  
you are great, and your name is great in might.  
<sup>7</sup>Who would not fear you, O King of the nations?  
For this is your due;  
for among all the wise ones of the nations  
and in all their kingdoms  
there is none like you.  
<sup>8</sup>They are both stupid and foolish;  
the instruction of idols is but wood!  
<sup>9</sup>Beaten silver is brought from Tarshish,  
and gold from Uphaz.  
They are the work of the craftsman and of the hands of the goldsmith;  
their clothing is violet and purple;  
they are all the work of skilled men.  
<sup>10</sup>But the Lord is the true God;  
he is the living God and the everlasting King.  
At his wrath the earth quakes,  
and the nations cannot endure his indignation.  
<sup>11</sup>Thus shall you say to them: “The gods who did not make the heavens and the earth shall perish from the earth and from under the heavens.”<sup>[e]</sup>  
<sup>12</sup>It is he who made the earth by his power,  
who established the world by his wisdom,  
and by his understanding stretched out the heavens.  
<sup>13</sup>When he utters his voice, there is a tumult of waters in the heavens,  
and he makes the mist rise from the ends of the earth.  
He makes lightning for the rain,  
and he brings forth the wind from his storehouses.  
<sup>14</sup>Every man is stupid and without knowledge;  
every goldsmith is put to shame by his idols,  
for his images are false,  
and there is no breath in them.  
<sup>15</sup>They are worthless, a work of delusion;  
at the time of their punishment they shall perish.  
<sup>16</sup>Not like these is he who is the portion of Jacob,  
for he is the one who formed all things,  
and Israel is the tribe of his inheritance;  
the Lord of hosts is his name.  
<sup>17</sup>Gather up your bundle from the ground,  
O you who dwell under siege!  
<sup>18</sup>For thus says the Lord:  
“Behold, I am slinging out the inhabitants of the land  
at this time,

and I will bring distress on them,  
that they may feel it.”  
<sup>19</sup>Woe is me because of my hurt!  
My wound is grievous.  
But I said, “Truly this is an affliction,  
and I must bear it.”  
<sup>20</sup>My tent is destroyed,  
and all my cords are broken;  
my children have gone from me,  
and they are not;  
there is no one to spread my tent again  
and to set up my curtains.  
<sup>21</sup>For the shepherds are stupid  
and do not inquire of the Lord;  
therefore they have not prospered,  
and all their flock is scattered.  
<sup>22</sup>A voice, a rumor! Behold, it comes!—  
a great commotion out of the north country  
to make the cities of Judah a desolation,  
a lair of jackals.  
<sup>23</sup>I know, O Lord, that the way of man is not in himself,  
that it is not in man who walks to direct his steps.  
<sup>24</sup>Correct me, O Lord, but in justice;  
not in your anger, lest you bring me to nothing.  
<sup>25</sup>Pour out your wrath on the nations that know you not,  
and on the peoples that call not on your name,  
for they have devoured Jacob;  
they have devoured him and consumed him,  
and have laid waste his habitation.

## **Jeremiah 11**

### *The Broken Covenant*

<sup>1</sup>The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: <sup>2</sup>“Hear the words of this covenant, and speak to the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup>You shall say to them, Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: Cursed be the man who does not hear the words of this covenant <sup>4</sup>that I commanded your fathers when I brought them out of the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace, saying, Listen to my voice, and do all that I command you. So shall you be my people, and I will be your God, <sup>5</sup>that I may confirm the oath that I swore to your fathers, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey, as at this day.” Then I answered, “So be it, Lord.”

<sup>6</sup>And the Lord said to me, “Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem: Hear the words of this covenant and do them. <sup>7</sup>For I solemnly warned your fathers when I brought them up out of the land of Egypt, warning them persistently, even to this day, saying, Obey my voice. <sup>8</sup>Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but everyone walked in the stubbornness of his evil heart. Therefore I brought upon them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded them to do, but they did not.”

<sup>9</sup>Again the Lord said to me, “A conspiracy exists among the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. <sup>10</sup>They have turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, who refused to hear my words. They have gone after other gods to serve them. The house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken my covenant that I made with their fathers. <sup>11</sup>Therefore, thus says the Lord, Behold, I am bringing disaster upon them that they cannot escape. Though they cry to me, I will not listen to them. <sup>12</sup>Then the cities of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem will go and cry to the gods to whom they make offerings, but they cannot save them in the time of their trouble. <sup>13</sup>For your gods have become as many as your cities, O Judah, and as many as the streets of Jerusalem are the altars you have set up to shame, altars to make offerings to Baal.

<sup>14</sup>“Therefore do not pray for this people, or lift up a cry or prayer on their behalf, for I will not listen when they call to me in the time of their trouble. <sup>15</sup>What right has my beloved in my house, when she has done many vile deeds? Can even sacrificial flesh avert your doom? Can you then exult? <sup>16</sup>The Lord once called you ‘a green olive tree, beautiful with good fruit.’ But with the roar of a great tempest he will set fire to it, and its branches will be consumed. <sup>17</sup>The Lord of hosts, who planted you, has decreed disaster against you, because of the evil that the house of Israel and the house of Judah have done, provoking me to anger by making offerings to Baal.”

<sup>18</sup>The Lord made it known to me and I knew;  
then you showed me their deeds.

<sup>19</sup>But I was like a gentle lamb  
led to the slaughter.

I did not know it was against me  
they devised schemes, saying,

“Let us destroy the tree with its fruit,

let us cut him off from the land of the living,  
that his name be remembered no more.”

<sup>20</sup>But, O Lord of hosts, who judges righteously,  
who tests the heart and the mind,  
let me see your vengeance upon them,  
for to you have I committed my cause.

**Jeremiah 12**

*Jeremiah's Complaint*

<sup>1</sup>Righteous are you, O Lord,  
when I complain to you;  
yet I would plead my case before you.  
Why does the way of the wicked prosper?  
Why do all who are treacherous thrive?

<sup>2</sup>You plant them, and they take root;  
they grow and produce fruit;  
you are near in their mouth  
and far from their heart.

<sup>3</sup>But you, O Lord, know me;  
you see me, and test my heart toward you.  
Pull them out like sheep for the slaughter,  
and set them apart for the day of slaughter.

<sup>4</sup>How long will the land mourn  
and the grass of every field wither?  
For the evil of those who dwell in it  
the beasts and the birds are swept away,  
because they said, “He will not see our latter end.”

*The Lord Answers Jeremiah*

<sup>5</sup>“If you have raced with men on foot, and they have wearied you,  
how will you compete with horses?  
And if in a safe land you are so trusting,  
what will you do in the thicket of the Jordan?”

<sup>6</sup>For even your brothers and the house of your father,  
even they have dealt treacherously with you;  
they are in full cry after you;  
do not believe them,

though they speak friendly words to you.”

<sup>7</sup>“I have forsaken my house;  
I have abandoned my heritage;  
I have given the beloved of my soul  
into the hands of her enemies.

<sup>8</sup>My heritage has become to me  
like a lion in the forest;  
she has lifted up her voice against me;  
therefore I hate her.

<sup>9</sup>Is my heritage to me like a hyena's lair?  
Are the birds of prey against her all around?  
Go, assemble all the wild beasts;  
bring them to devour.

<sup>10</sup>Many shepherds have destroyed my vineyard;  
they have trampled down my portion;  
they have made my pleasant portion  
a desolate wilderness.

<sup>11</sup>They have made it a desolation;  
desolate, it mourns to me.  
The whole land is made desolate,  
but no man lays it to heart.

<sup>12</sup>Upon all the bare heights in the desert  
destroyers have come,  
**for the sword of the Lord devours  
from one end of the land to the other;  
no flesh has peace.**

<sup>13</sup>They have sown wheat and have reaped thorns;  
they have tired themselves out but profit nothing.  
They shall be ashamed of their harvests  
because of the fierce anger of the Lord.”

**Matthew 10:34-39**

*Christ Brings Division*

<sup>34</sup>“Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. <sup>35</sup>For I have come to ‘set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law’; <sup>36</sup>and ‘a man’s enemies *will be* those of his *own* household.’ <sup>37</sup>He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. <sup>38</sup>And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. <sup>39</sup>He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.

<sup>14</sup> Thus says the Lord concerning all my evil neighbors who touch the heritage that I have given my people Israel to inherit: “Behold, I will pluck them up from their land, and I will pluck up the house of Judah from among them. <sup>15</sup> And after I have plucked them up, I will again have compassion on them, and I will bring them again each to his heritage and each to his land. <sup>16</sup> And it shall come to pass, if they will diligently learn the ways of my people, to swear by my name, ‘As the Lord lives,’ even as they taught my people to swear by Baal, then they shall be built up in the midst of my people. <sup>17</sup> But if any nation will not listen, then I will utterly pluck it up and destroy it, declares the Lord.”

#### **Romans 11:11-31**

##### *Gentiles Grafted In*

<sup>11</sup> So I ask, did they stumble in order that they might fall? By no means! Rather, through their trespass salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel jealous. <sup>12</sup> Now if their trespass means riches for the world, and if their failure means riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their full inclusion<sup>[a]</sup> mean!

<sup>13</sup> Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry <sup>14</sup> in order somehow to make my fellow Jews jealous, and thus save some of them. <sup>15</sup> For if their rejection means the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead? <sup>16</sup> If the dough offered as firstfruits is holy, so is the whole lump, and if the root is holy, so are the branches.

<sup>17</sup> But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, although a wild olive shoot, were grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing root<sup>[b]</sup> of the olive tree, <sup>18</sup> do not be arrogant toward the branches. If you are, remember it is not you who support the root, but the root that supports you. <sup>19</sup> Then you will say, “Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.” <sup>20</sup> That is true. They were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand fast through faith. So do not become proud, but fear. <sup>21</sup> For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you. <sup>22</sup> Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God’s kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness. Otherwise you too will be cut off. <sup>23</sup> And even they, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God has the power to graft them in again. <sup>24</sup> For if you were cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, the natural branches, be grafted back into their own olive tree.

#### **Deuteronomy 18:9-14**

##### **Abominable Practices**

<sup>9</sup> “When you come into the land that the Lord your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominable practices of those nations. <sup>10</sup> There shall not be found among you anyone who burns his son or his daughter as an offering,<sup>[a]</sup> anyone who practices divination or tells fortunes or interprets omens, or a sorcerer <sup>11</sup> or a charmer or a medium or a necromancer or one who inquires of the dead, <sup>12</sup> for whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord. And because of these abominations the Lord your God is driving them out before you. <sup>13</sup> You shall be blameless before the Lord your God, <sup>14</sup> for these nations, which you are about to dispossess, listen to fortune-tellers and to diviners. But as for you, the Lord your God has not allowed you to do this.

#### **Deuteronomy 13:1-11**

<sup>1</sup> “If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and gives you a sign or a wonder, <sup>2</sup> and the sign or wonder that he tells you comes to pass, and if he says, ‘Let us go after other gods,’ which you have not known, ‘and let us serve them,’ <sup>3</sup> you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams. For the Lord your God is testing you, to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. <sup>4</sup> You shall walk after the Lord your God and fear him and keep his commandments and obey his voice, and you shall serve him and hold fast to him. <sup>5</sup> But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has taught rebellion against the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you out of the house of slavery, to make you leave the way in which the Lord your God commanded you to walk. So you shall purge the evil<sup>[a]</sup> from your midst.

<sup>6</sup> “If your brother, the son of your mother, or your son or your daughter or the wife you embrace<sup>[b]</sup> or your friend who is as your own soul entices you secretly, saying, ‘Let us go and serve other gods,’ which neither you nor your fathers have known, <sup>7</sup> some of the gods of the peoples who are around you, whether near you or far off from you, from the one end of the earth to the other, <sup>8</sup> you shall not yield to him or listen to him, nor shall your eye pity him, nor shall you spare him, nor shall you conceal him. <sup>9</sup> But you shall kill him. Your hand shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people. <sup>10</sup> You shall stone him to death with stones, because he sought to draw you away from the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. <sup>11</sup> And all Israel shall hear and fear and never again do any such wickedness as this among you.

#### **Hanukkah in Remembrance:**

*We celebrate Hanukkah in remembrance* of the historic victory of the Maccabees over the Seleucid Greek Emperor Antiochus IV and those who desecrated the Temple, making it into a pagan shrine.

Part of the wonder of **Hanukkah** is that this small, untrained force was able to defeat the most powerful army on earth at that time.

Another is that when the Maccabees rededicated the Temple, the one-day supply of consecrated oil used to relight the Menorah miraculously continued to burn the entire eight days necessary to produce additional consecrated oil. We see the parallel to this story in Jesus’ Parable of the Ten Virgins, and the sustaining power and salvation of the “Oil”, which we will see played out towards the end of this message in relationship to prototype parallel of the **Hannukah** story, and the Endtimes Prophecy of the *“Abomination of Desolation”*:

#### **Matthew 25:1-13**

##### *The Parable of the Ten Virgins*

<sup>1</sup> “Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their **lamps** and went to meet the bridegroom. <sup>2</sup> Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. <sup>3</sup> For when the foolish took their **lamps**, they took no oil with them, <sup>4</sup> but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. <sup>5</sup> As the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and slept. <sup>6</sup> But at midnight there was a cry, ‘Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.’ <sup>7</sup> Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their **lamps**. <sup>8</sup> And the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your **oil**, for our **lamps** are going out.’ <sup>9</sup> But the wise answered, saying, ‘Since there will not be enough for us and for you, go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves.’ <sup>10</sup> And while they were going to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was

shut. <sup>11</sup> Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open to us.’ <sup>12</sup> But he answered, ‘Truly, I say to you, I do not know you.’ <sup>13</sup> Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

**Matthew 24:13**  
*“But the one who endures to the end will be saved.”*

God honored the efforts of the Maccabees to restore the Temple, taking what little oil they had, and making it last an impossibly long time.

*Elijah's successor, Elisha*, also helped a widow who only had a small jar of oil. The woman's husband, a prophet, had died and the creditors were demanding her sons in payment.

**Elisha told her to ask all her neighbors for empty jars and then go home and pour oil into all the jars until they were full. Then he directed her to sell the oil, pay her debts, and live on what was left.**

Likewise, we, as Believers in Yeshua (Jesus), have many times experienced God’s grace in our lives in ways that resemble a small supply of oil lasting beyond all expectation.

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**Week 10 - Miketz (At the End)**  
**Genesis 41:1-44:17; Zechariah 2:10(14)–4:7; John 1:1–18**

**“Transformed from Darkness to Light”**

*“And it came to pass at the end of [miketz] two full years, that Pharaoh dreamed a dream: and, behold, he stood by the river.” Genesis 41:1*

In last week’s study, Joseph’s brothers became jealous of him. They plotted against him because his father favored him above his other sons and because his prophetic dreams revealed his own grand destiny. So they threw Joseph into a pit and then sold him into slavery. While serving honorably as a slave, Joseph was falsely accused and sent to prison for a crime he didn’t commit.

In this week’s reading, Joseph is finally about to come to the end of his many trials and enter into his grand destiny. In fact, the name of the reading, **Miketz**, found in the opening verse of this week’s Torah reading, hints at this since this Hebrew *word means* **“at the end of”**.

**Joseph is brought out of the darkness of an Egyptian dungeon to illumine the strange dreams of the Pharaoh. In just one day, Joseph is promoted from prison to palace; his life was transformed suddenly from darkness to light.**

Since “to everything is its season, and a time for every purpose” (Ecclesiastes 3:1), certainly the arrangement of the festivals of the year, which are the “appointed times of G-d” (Leviticus 23:4), as well as the festivals and fasts instituted by the Sages, all have a special connection to the Torah readings in whose weeks they fall, since everything is masterminded by G-d. Thus the story of Joseph is destined to be repeated (prophetically through this season of “Light/Dedication”) ...

***Hanukkah Story Prophetically Realized:***

**There has only been one Proclaimed Messiah who Fulfilled the Prophecies of Daniel 9:24-27, and that was Jesus himself, all the others came hundreds and thousands of years later, as even Jesus warned:**

**Matthew 24:4-5, 15-31**

<sup>4</sup> And Jesus answered them, “See that no one leads you astray. <sup>5</sup> **For many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and they will lead many astray.**

*The Abomination of Desolation*

<sup>15</sup> “So when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), <sup>16</sup> then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. <sup>17</sup> Let the one who is on the housetop not go down to take what is in his house, <sup>18</sup> and let the one who is in the field not turn back to take his cloak. <sup>19</sup> And alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days! <sup>20</sup> Pray that your flight may **not be in winter or on a Sabbath**. <sup>21</sup> **For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be.** <sup>22</sup> And if those days had not been cut short, no human being would be saved. But for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short. <sup>23</sup> Then if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Christ!’ or ‘There he is!’ do not believe it. <sup>24</sup> **For false christs<sup>2</sup> and false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect.** <sup>25</sup> **See, I have told you beforehand.** <sup>26</sup> So, if they say to you, ‘Look, he is in the wilderness,’ do not go out. If they say, ‘Look, he is in the inner rooms,’ do not believe it. <sup>27</sup> **For as the lightning comes from the east and shines as far as the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.** <sup>28</sup> Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather.

*The Coming of the Son of Man*

<sup>29</sup> **“Immediately after the tribulation of those days** the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. <sup>30</sup> **Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man,** and then **all the tribes of the earth will mourn**,<sup>3</sup> and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. <sup>31</sup> And **he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call**,<sup>4</sup> and they **will gather his elect from the four winds**,<sup>5</sup> from one end of heaven to the other.

<sup>1</sup> <sup>20</sup> Pray that your flight may **not be in winter or on a Sabbath** (which speaks of the importance of our Observance of the Biblical Sabbath, and not just some man-made version of Sabbath, to fully understand Biblical Prophecy) . . .”: **Feast of Purim** – the Appointed Time

of the attempt of the enemy to annihilate all of God’s people – Esther 3:6-7 **“Hamon sought to destroy all the Jews,”** and Esther 9:20-22, 31 **“that the days of Purim should be observed at their appointed seasons** (14<sup>th</sup>– 15<sup>th</sup> day of Adar – *near the end of winter and beginning of springs*).

<sup>2</sup> <sup>24</sup> **For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray**: including, and especially, the Anti-Christ mentioned here in this End Time Prophecy, “The Abomination of Desolation”, also spoken of in **2 Thessalonians 2:3-4**, in Paul’s address to the False Teaching of “Eminency”, *“Let no one deceive you in any way, For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God.”*

<sup>3</sup> <sup>29</sup> **Immediately after the tribulation of those days . . .** <sup>30</sup> **Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn . . .**: **Zechariah 12:10**, “And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, **on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn** for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn.”

We see the parallel to this story in Jesus’ Parable of the Ten Virgins, and the sustaining power and salvation of the “Oil”, which we will see played out towards the end of this message in relationship to prototype parallel of the **Hannukah** story, and the Endtimes Prophecy of the *“Abomination of Desolation”*.

<sup>4</sup> <sup>30</sup> . . . and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. <sup>31</sup> **And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call**: the fulfillment of **“The Feast of Trumpets”**, and the **“Last Trump”** blown for **10 days** (known also as **“The Days of Awe”**, as well as, the call towards **“Repentance”**, first sounded as the Last Trump on the **“Feast of Trumpets”**, culminating at the **“Closing Gate”** ceremony at the conclusion of **“The Feast of Atonement”** (the **“Ark of the Covenant”** is only SEEN once a year, at the same time every year, at the **“Feast of Atonement”**, which then gives a time table in which this event will occur, as read in Revelation 11:19 (**The Seventh Trumpet**), **“Then God’s temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant was SEEN within his temple.”**)

**“7 Trumpets”, “7 Bowls”, “7 Seals” all culminating together at the Battle of Armageddon and Jesus’ Return (2<sup>nd</sup> Coming):**

**(The Seventh Trumpet)** – Revelation 11:19, **“Then God’s temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant was SEEN within his temple. There were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, and earthquake, and heavy hail.”**

**(Seventh Bowl)** – Revelation 16:15, **“It is done! And there were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, and a great earthquake** such as there had never been since man was on the earth,” and the . . .

**(Seventh Seal)** – Revelation 8:5, **“Then the angel took the censer and filled it with fire from the altar and threw it on the earth, and there were peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake.”**

<sup>5</sup> <sup>31</sup> . . . and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other . . .: **Zechariah 14:4-5**, **“On that day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives** that lies before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall be split into two from east to west by a very wide valley . . . And you shall flee to the valley of my mountains . . . Then **the Lord my God will come and all the holy ones (His Saints/His Anointed Ones) with him.**”

#### **Daniel 9:24-27**

##### *The Seventy Weeks*

<sup>24</sup> **“Seventy weeks are decreed about your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place.** <sup>25</sup> Know therefore and understand that from the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to **the coming of an anointed one, a prince**, there shall be seven weeks. Then for sixty-two weeks it shall be built again with squares and moat, but in a troubled time. <sup>26</sup> **And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing. And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.** Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war. Desolations are decreed. <sup>27</sup> **And he (the Anti-Christ) shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, and for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering.** And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator.”

#### **What to expect at the start at the 70<sup>th</sup> week?**

Daniel gives a number of clues as to what will happen during that **final** seven years:

1. A War (WW III) will take place (**Daniel 9:26 – Revelation 9:13-21**, **“Then the sixth angel blew his trumpet and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar before God . . . ‘Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates . . . prepared for the hour, the day, the month, and the year, were released to kill a third (2 Billion (WW III), WW I = 8 Million & WW II = 50 Million) of mankind . . . by these plagues . . . The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands nor give up worshipping demons and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood, which cannot see or hear or walk, nor did they repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.”**).
2. The antichrist will come and make a covenant with the Jewish people. He has a description **here**.
3. The antichrist, known as the **“abomination of desolation”** in Daniel, will put an end to sacrifices and offerings in the temple.\*
4. **Jesus returns immediately following the events of the 70<sup>th</sup> week.**

\*Some theologians have attributed the title of the abomination of desolation to Antiochus Epiphanes IV, who entered the temple, stopped sacrifices, and put an altar to Zeus in the temple, an abomination in Jewish culture.

Revelation details more of the antichrist’s modus operandi. For instance, **he will try to change laws and times, to prevent prophecies from being fulfilled.**

#### **Daniel 7:25**

<sup>25</sup> **He (Satan) shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and shall think to change the times and the law; and they shall be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time.**

*He will try to take the place of God, and he will persecute the saints of God severely.*

### **Revelation 12:1-17**

#### **Revelation 12:1-6**

*The Woman and the Dragon*

<sup>1</sup> And a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. <sup>2</sup> She was pregnant and was crying out in birth pains and the agony of giving birth. <sup>3</sup> And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems. <sup>4</sup> His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she bore her child he might devour it. <sup>5</sup> She gave birth to a male child, one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, but her child was caught up to God and to his throne, <sup>6</sup> and the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, in which she is to be nourished for 1,260 days.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> “<sup>5</sup> She gave birth to a male child, one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, but her child was caught up to God and to his throne, <sup>6</sup> and the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, in which she is to be nourished for 1,260 days.”: There is a 2,000 year gap between Verse 5 and Verse 6 of this passage; from “her child was caught up to God and to his throne,” to “and the woman fled into the wilderness . . . to be nourished for 1,260 days,” we SEE here described the Birth and Ascension of the Messiah, Jesus, and the 2,000 years later we SEE, in Verse 6, the description of the time period of the “Great Tribulation” and just before the “Battle of Armageddon”, were we SEE one of the three time stamps calculated from the “Abomination of Desolation”:

**Revelation 12:6:** “and the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, in which she is to be nourished for 1,260 days (the precise time of the Beginning of the “Battle of Armageddon”).”

**Daniel 12:11-13:** “<sup>11</sup> And from the time that the regular burnt offering is taken away and the abomination that makes desolate is set up, there shall be 1,290 days (the precious time of the Return of the Messiah, and the end of the “Battle of Armageddon”).<sup>12</sup> Blessed is he who waits and arrives at the 1,335 days (the precious end of the “Wrath of God” on the Earth and the Beginning of the Messiah’s “Millennial Reign” on the Earth). <sup>13</sup> But go your way till the end. And you shall rest and shall stand in your allotted place at the end of the days.”

#### **Revelation 12:7-17**

*Satan Thrown Down to Earth*

<sup>7</sup> Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, <sup>8</sup> but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. <sup>9</sup> And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called **the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.** <sup>10</sup> And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, “Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. <sup>11</sup> And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death. <sup>12</sup> **Therefore, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath<sup>1</sup>, because he knows that his time is short!”**

<sup>13</sup> And when **the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to the earth,** he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child.<sup>14</sup> But the woman was given the **two wings of the great eagle** so that she might fly from the serpent into the wilderness, to the place where she is to be nourished for **a time, and times, and half a time<sup>2</sup>.** . . .

. . . <sup>17</sup> Then **the dragon became furious with the woman and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus<sup>3</sup>.** And he stood on the sand of the sea.

<sup>1</sup> **Revelation 12:7-12,** “<sup>7</sup> Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, <sup>8</sup> but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. <sup>9</sup> And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called **the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him . . .** <sup>12</sup> **Therefore, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!”**: notice this is the “wrath” of Satan and not the “wrath” of God, which will follow the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming of the Messiah, just following the “Day of Atonement”.

#### **2 Peter 3**

*The Day of the Lord Will Come*

<sup>1</sup> This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved. In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, <sup>2</sup> that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles, <sup>3</sup> knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires. <sup>4</sup> They will say, “Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation.”<sup>5</sup> For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, <sup>6</sup> and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. <sup>7</sup> **But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.**

<sup>8</sup> But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. <sup>9</sup> The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. <sup>10</sup> But **the day of the Lord will come like a thief,** and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

<sup>11</sup> **Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness,**<sup>12</sup> waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens



**will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn!** <sup>13</sup> **But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.**

*Final Words*

<sup>14</sup> Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace. <sup>15</sup> And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, <sup>16</sup> as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures. <sup>17</sup> **You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability.** <sup>18</sup> But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

<sup>2</sup> **Revelation 12:13-14.** “<sup>13</sup> And when the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child. <sup>14</sup> But **the woman** was given the **two wings of the great eagle** so that she might fly from the serpent into the wilderness, to the place where she is to be **nourished for a time, and times, and half a time.**”: here in Verse 13 we read about two Nations that will be Key players in the Fulfillment of Endtimes Prophecy, that of “*the woman*”, **Israel**, and “*two wings of the great eagle*”, the **United States of America**, both Known Symbols Today, as it would relate to who these two Nations are; as well as, again, here in Verse 14 we SEE the prophecy of 1,260 days referred, or as it is written, “*a time, and times, and half a time*”, again, **the precise time of the Beginning of the “Battle of Armageddon”**.

**Revelation 12:6.** “and the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, in which she is to be nourished for **1,260 days** (the precise time of the Beginning of the “*Battle of Armageddon*”).”

<sup>3</sup> **Revelation 12:17.** “<sup>17</sup> Then **the dragon** became **furious with the woman and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus.**”: here we SEE “*the dragon*”, the devil and Satan, bringing great tribulation and persecution to two peoples, referenced in symbolism of “*the woman*” and “*those who keep the commandments of God*”, **the Jews**, and “*her offspring*” or “*hold to the testimony of Jesus*”, **followers of Jesus**, also known as **Christians**.

**Matthew 24:21.** “**For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be.**”

When *mid-week of the 70<sup>th</sup>* week approaches, be prepared for a great deal of persecution and martyrdom than Christian history has ever seen before.

But also be prepared for God’s restoration of all things, at the conclusion of the 70<sup>th</sup> week, where He will bring about righteousness and renewal for all eternity.

#### **Daniel 11:33-35**

<sup>33</sup> And **the wise among the people shall make many understand**, though for some days they shall stumble by sword and flame, by captivity and plunder. <sup>34</sup> When they stumble, they shall receive a little help. And many shall join themselves to them with flattery, <sup>35</sup> and some of the wise shall stumble, so that they may be refined, purified, and made white, until the time of the end, for it still awaits the appointed time.

**A Part of our Great Commission – “Make Disciples . . . teaching them to Observe everything I have commanded”**