

What Saith the Scripture?

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**1998: Year of the Apocalypse (Part 3)**  
**Or, A Firmly Held Opinion of One Who Is Incurably Watching**

"Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man"

(Luke 21:36).

by Tom Stewart

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**Preface**

Marilyn J. Agee has popularized in her book, *"The End of the Age"*, the May 31, 1998 date for the Rapture of the Church. She has done her LORD credit, and the Church much good. I, too, have wondered when the Rapture will occur. I believe in a Pre-Tribulational Rapture because our LORD promised His people escape from "all these things that shall come to pass" (Luke 21:36). If the LORD God will do nothing unless He reveals "His secret unto His servants the prophets" (Amos 3:7), then when is the Pre-Tribulational Rapture? Since I am no longer troubled by the "No Man Knows the Day or the Hour" position, I, like the Brethren who crowded around the Saviour, am quite willing to ask about the exact timing of the Pre-Tribulational Rapture of the Church. "Master, but when shall these things be? and what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass?" (Luke 21:7). [For more of a discussion of the "No Man Knows the Day or the Hour" objection, see our article, "Why Should Christians Be Date Setters?"]

I believe that both the 70 Weeks of Daniel prophecy (Daniel 9:24-27) and the 430 Days of Ezekiel prophecy (Ezekiel 4:1-8) outline chronologically the events in Israel's past and future with mathematical precision. From Nebuchadnezzar's initial subjugation of King Jehoiakim on July 18, 606 BC to Israel's recapture of the Temple Mount on June 7, 1967 AD, Ezekiel and Daniel both gave the outline for these events in their prophecies. [See our article "1998: Year of the Apocalypse (Part 2), or Ezekiel Predicted the 1967 Recapture of Jerusalem" for more on the 430 Days of Ezekiel prophecy (Ezekiel 4:1-8).]

Recently, after reading two books by John Zachary, *"Threshold of Eternity"* and *"Mysterious Numbers of the Sealed Revelation"*, his concept of the 14,000 Day Generation and the Prophetic Mirror-- to be explained in this article-- caused me to stumble upon what I believe is the mirror image event of the May 31, 1998 Pre-Tribulational Rapture of the Church. Please read on to see if you would agree with me that Cornelius the Centurion of the Book of Acts mirrors-- and consequently confirms-- the May 31, 1998 date. [For a presentation of why there will be both a Pre-Tribulational and Pre-Wrath Rapture, see our article, "The Seventh Trumpet and the Second Rapture". For an explanation of why the Pre-Tribulational Rapture will occur on a Pentecost, i.e., May 31, 1998, see the "4- Pentecost: The Giving of the Holy Spirit to the Church and the First 'Come Up Hither'" and "5- Feast of Trumpets: Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Church" sections of our article, "The Appointed Times".]

## **Cornelius the Centurion and the May 31,1998 Pre-Tribulational Rapture**

### **The Terminal Generation**

The LORD Jesus Christ, in His Olivet Discourse, said: "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled" (Matthew 24:34). To which generation was our LORD referring? What did He mean by "till all these things be fulfilled"? I believe that the LORD Jesus was referring to the Terminal Generation, and that "all these things" referred to the events prior to the Pre-Wrath Rapture.

Let me explain. Virtually identical transcriptions are made by Mark and Luke of Jesus' Matthew 24:34 statement. "Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done" (Mark 13:30). "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled" (Luke 21:32).

The Second Coming of the LORD Jesus Christ does not occur during the Tribulation Week. Jesus' exact words were: "Immediately after the tribulation of those days" (Matthew 24:29). Mark confirms the timing: "after that tribulation" (Mark 13:24). All three synoptic gospels-- Matthew 24:30, Mark 13:26, and Luke 21:27-- exactly agree in wording about the event that would take place after the Tribulation Week: "the Son of Man coming". The LORD Jesus will come the Second time after the Tribulation Week.

Illustrating one subject by another was a teaching device made famous by our LORD's earthly ministry. The parable of the fig tree was a notable example. Mentioned in Matthew 24:32, Mark 13:28, and Luke 21:29, the fig tree was intended to draw attention to the nation of Israel. "But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it" (Micah 4:4). Micah's Millennial Age prophecy points to Israel resting securely in Jehovah.

Though modern prophetic teachers have labeled the May 14,1948 rebirth of the modern nation of Israel as the beginning of the Fig Tree Generation, the June 7,1967 date of the Six Day War seems more appropriate. Israel was 19 years old. That was mature enough to go to war-- and to have children. Israel sprouted forth into the Golan Heights, the Sinai, the Gaza Strip, and the West Bank. "Now learn a parable of the fig tree; when his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh" (Matthew 24:32). I believe that June 7, 1967 was the beginning of the Fig Tree Generation, which is the Terminal Generation.

The Master called the Terminal Generation "this generation" (Matthew 24:34; Mark 13:30; Luke 21:32). He promised that the Terminal Generation would "not pass away" or be finished "till all be fulfilled" (Luke 21:32). "All these things" (Matthew 24:34) must take place before the Terminal Generation is finished. Curiously, the LORD Jesus made a statement immediately before His promise about the completion of the Terminal Generation, that seems to unlock the meaning of the phrase "all these things".

"So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors" (Matthew

24:33). The phrase "all these things" occurs in both Matthew 24:33 and 24:34. Matthew's account of our LORD's words gives the following chronology:

- 1-"Immediately after" the Tribulation Week (24:29),
- 2- the Second Coming of the LORD Jesus Christ (24:30),
- 3- the parable of the fig tree to explain the Terminal Generation (24:32),
- 4- the "all these things" before "it is near, even at the doors" (24:33), and
- 5- the end of the Terminal Generation (24:34).

The Doors of Matthew 24:33 seem to refer to the Two Raptures. The Pre-Tribulational Rapture would be Door 1 and the Pre-Wrath Rapture would be Door 2. The Philadelphian Church represents the concept of the Rapture. An "open door" (Revelation 3:8) and a promise to be kept "from the hour of temptation" (3:10) connect to point to the Rapture concept. "I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it... Because thou hast kept the Word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth" (Revelation 3:8-10).

The Laodicean Church contains a cloaked reference to the Pre-Wrath Rapture. "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me" (Revelation 3:20). Since the Tribulation Week will be full of backsliders and never-were-saved-only-deceived professed Christians, opening the door represents repentance and faith on man's side. A Gracious Saviour and LORD opens the door at exactly the same time from the other side. "For by grace are ye saved through faith" (Ephesians 2:8).

Unmistakably, the Pre-Tribulational Rapture is described in Revelation 4:1: "After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in Heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter" (Revelation 4:1). The Saints at the First "Come Up Hither" or Pre-Tribulational Rapture hear a trumpet just like the Saints of the Second "Come Up Hither" (Revelation 11:12,15) or Pre-Wrath Rapture. Both Raptures have a door opened to Heaven. Revelation 4:1 overtly states it for the 1st Rapture. For the 2nd Rapture, Revelation 11:19 implies the opening of the door of the temple of God in Heaven. "And the temple of God was opened in Heaven, and there was seen in His temple the ark of His testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail" (Revelation 11:19).

Thus, the doors of Jesus' statement in the Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24:33) refer to the Two Raptures. The "all these things" (Matthew 24:33,34) refers to the events preceding the Two Raptures, but more specifically to the 2nd and final Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Tribulation Saints. Therefore, the words of the LORD Jesus, "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled" (Matthew 24:34), tell us that the Terminal Generation ends at the Pre-Wrath Rapture (or, the Second "Come Up Hither"). Now, if we could only determine exactly how long a generation is...

## How Long is a Generation?

A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from Heaven" (John 3:27). I wish to again thank John Zachary for his Holy Spirit- inspired work in teaching the Church the exact length of a generation. He says, "A Generation is Exactly 14,000 Days" (*Threshold of Eternity*, p. 42). That was easy to say, but much more difficult to discover.

A word to all Bible expositors. All Christians are given the privilege of feeding upon the Word of God. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every Word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). No one is necessary for you to be taught of God. "But the anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same Anointing teacheth you of all things, and is Truth, and is no lie, and even as It hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him" (1 John 2:27). All God requires of you is a heart willing to do the will of God. "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself" (John 7:17). However, God designed His Body to help His Body. That's an appropriate means of receiving the expositional help that God intends for all of us. "And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:11-13).

Palm Sunday is the day that the Church commemorates the Triumphal Entry of the LORD Jesus. Jesus actually entered Jerusalem on Sunday, April 6, 32 AD (Julian)-- as demonstrated by Sir Robert Anderson in his work, [The Coming Prince](http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Voice/The.Coming.Prince.html) -- <http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Voice/The.Coming.Prince.html> --. The very next day-- Monday, April 7, 32 AD (Julian)-- our LORD made a precise statement to the Jews that can pinpoint the exact length of a generation. He said: "Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation" (Matthew 23:34-36). The Good Master prophesied the death and destruction of the very people to whom He was speaking. They could be labelled the Doomed Generation. Rome would be used by God to destroy Jerusalem and the Temple in punishment for their rejection of the Messiah. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!" (Luke 13:34).

When did Rome burn the Temple? The Romanized Jewish historian, Josephus, witnessed the actual event. He recorded that it was burned on "exactly the same day it was burned by the Babylonians". Jeremiah the prophet gives the exact date of Nebuchadnezzar's burning of the Jerusalem Temple. "Now in the fifth month, in the tenth day of the month, which was the nineteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, came Nebuzaradan, captain of the guard, which served the king of Babylon, into Jerusalem, And burned the house of the LORD, and the king's house; and all the houses of Jerusalem, and all the houses of the great men, burned he with fire" (Jeremiah 52:12-13). It was destroyed by the Babylonians on the 10th day of the 5th month or Av 10. John Zachary, in his book, *Scientific Evidence for the Second Coming of Christ*, on p. 8, establishes Sunday, August 5, 70 AD

(Julian)-- also Av 10-- as the correct date for the destruction of the 2nd Temple.

Inclusive counting of dates means to include the first and last days in the calculation along with all the days in between. How long was it between April 7, 32 AD (Julian), when Jesus predicted the death of his stubbornly rejecting listeners of Matthew 23:34-36, and the August 5, 70 AD (Julian) Roman burning of the Temple? Let John Zachary say it again. "A Generation is Exactly 14,000 Days." Inclusively, there are 14,000 days between the two dates. Moses even confirms this with his statement about the Generation That Perished in the Wilderness. "And the space in which we came from Kadeshbarnea, until we were come over the brook Zered, was thirty and eight years; until all the generation of the men of war were wasted out from among the host, as the LORD swore unto them" (Deuteronomy 2:14). 14,000 days is about 38 years and 4 months.

Armed with this knowledge that a generation is 14,000 days, we again read Jesus' statement about the Fig Tree or Terminal Generation. "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled" (Matthew 24:34). If June 7, 1967-- when Israel recaptured Jerusalem's Temple Mount-- is the beginning of the Fig Tree Generation, then 14,000 days later (inclusive) would be the conclusion of the Terminal Generation. What date is the end point of the Terminal Generation? October 4, 2005, or Tishri 1-- the Feast of Trumpets (Rosh HaShanah).

I firmly believe that Tuesday, October 4, 2005 is the date of the Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Tribulation Saints. The Mystery of the Church would be finished. "But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the Mystery of God should be finished, as He hath declared to His servants the prophets" (Revelation 10:7). It would also be the day of the Resurrection of the Righteous Dead. "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (1 Corinthians 15:52). Traditionally, the Jews identify the Last Trump with Rosh HaShanah. "For the LORD Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the LORD in the air: and so shall we ever be with the LORD" (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17).

## **Prophetic Mirrors**

But, what about Cornelius the Centurion and the May 31, 1998 Pre-Tribulational Rapture of the Church? More foundation must be laid before that connection will make any sense. We have attempted to show the significance of October 4, 2005 as the date of the Second "Come Up Hither" (Revelation 11:12,15)-- or, the Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Tribulation Saints. However, the concept of being delivered from "the hour of temptation" (Revelation 3:10), doubles as a general promise of escape from the entire Tribulation Week for the watching and waiting ones at the Pre-Tribulational Rapture, as well as a specific promise of escape for the Tribulational Saints at the Pre-Wrath Rapture. "Because thou hast kept the Word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth" (Revelation 3:10).

Specifically, the "hour of temptation" (Revelation 3:10) is equivalent to 15 days, if Daniel's Seventieth

Week (1 week) equals 2,520 days. One hour would be 1/168 of a week or .0059523 of a week, which is 15 days. This would be the time equivalent to Tishri 1 (Feast of Trumpets or Rosh HaShanah) to Tishri 15 (Feast of Tabernacles or Sukkot). If the Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Church occurs at perhaps the midnight hour on Tishri 1, then approximately 8 to 9 days (depending on how you count it) would be left in the Tribulation Week, which would then extend through Tishri 9. This would allow for the pouring out of about one vial a day during the Seven Vial Judgments-- "the vials of the wrath of God" (Revelation 16:1), which are escaped by the Tribulation Church by virtue of the Pre-Wrath Rapture. Armageddon lasts 5 days from Tishri 10 (the Second Coming of the LORD Jesus Christ) to Tishri 14-- the day before Tishri 15 (the Inauguration of the Millennial Reign of the LORD Jesus Christ on Earth). 9 days (for the Vial Judgments) plus 5 days (for Armageddon) equals 14 days, which lacks only one day to complete the "hour of temptation" (Revelation 3:10). That one day lacking is Tishri 15. [See our article, "The Appointed Times", for a more developed discussion of the concept of aligning the Seven Feasts of Israel of Leviticus 23 with the Pre-Tribulational Rapture at Pentecost, the Pre-Wrath Rapture at the Feast of Trumpets, the Second Coming of Christ at the Day of Atonement, and the Inauguration of the Millennial Reign of the LORD Jesus Christ on Earth at the Feast of Tabernacles.]

If we use the timing of the Feast of Trumpets (Tishri 1), the Day of Atonement (Tishri 10), and the Feast of Tabernacles (Tishri 15-21) with the Pre-Wrath Rapture, the Second Coming of Christ, and the Inauguration of the Millennial Reign of Christ, respectively, we arrive at the following. The Pre-Wrath Rapture-- demonstrated earlier in the article-- would be October 4, 2005. The Second Coming of the LORD Jesus Christ would be October 13, 2005. And, the Millennial Reign of Jesus would begin, October 18, 2005. Truly, the LORD meant the Seven Feasts of Israel to teach the Church, His appointed times-- not just the Old Testament annual feast schedule, but the New Testament important day schedule. God has wisely designed His Feasts for this double purpose. "The secrets of wisdom, that they are double to that which is!" (Job 11:6).

Since the Second Coming occurs "immediately after the tribulation" (Matthew 24:29), the last day of the Tribulation Week would be October 12, 2005. 2,520 days earlier would be the first day of the Tribulation Week. Inclusively reckoned, Thursday, November 19, 1998 would be the beginning of the Seventieth Week of Daniel (Daniel 9:24-27). Additionally, we must ponder the fact that the "Pre" in Pre-Tribulational Rapture of the Church means before the Tribulation Week. The only question is: How much before the Tribulation Week does the LORD remove His Church? To answer this, we must ask another question.

What is a Prophetic Mirror? Let John Zachary tell us what the LORD revealed to him. "When you look into a mirror, you see the reverse image of your face. Your nose is closest to the mirror and the reflection displays the proximity of your nose to the mirror. Your ears appear further away from the mirror than your nose" (*Mysterious Numbers of the Sealed Revelation*, p. 34). Perhaps you have dropped paint onto a piece of paper. If you fold the paper through the middle of the wet paint, when you open the paper, you will have a mirror image of one side of the wet paint on the other side of the paper. Though more complicated than the tool of Double Fulfillment of Prophecy, a Prophetic Mirror is invaluable in developing insightful information in the interpretation of Biblical prophecy. "For now we see through a glass, darkly [literally, into a mirror dimly]; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known" (1 Corinthians 13:12).

Remember, fold the Timeline and look for opposite and symmetrical events. For instance, the Antichrist is the opposite of our LORD Jesus Christ. "I [the LORD Jesus] am come in My Father's name, and ye receive Me not: if another [the Antichrist] shall come in his own name, him ye will receive" (John 5:43). Christianity, and even the world, knows that Jesus is said to have arisen from the dead. "Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ" (Acts 17:3). Antichrist must also rise from the dead. Scientifically and medically dead, but not truly dead, because only the LORD Jesus has the authority over the "quick and the dead" (2Timothy 4:1). Antichrist will deceive people by his apparent resurrection. "And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast" (Revelation 13:3).

There are two pairs of events that indicate a possible Prophetic Mirror. You may compare this form of prophetic study of the Scriptures to a type of prophetic research. The Doomed Generation was the people Jesus addressed on Monday, April 7, 32 AD (Julian), who would die by the hand of the Romans by the time of the burning of the Temple on Sunday, August 5, 70 AD (Julian). The Doomed Generation was 14,000 days long. The Terminal Generation (or, the Fig Tree Generation) began on June 7, 1967, when Israel recaptured the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. It will end on the Feast of Trumpets on October 4, 2005-- 14,000 days later (inclusive).

Compare April 7, 32 AD (Julian) to October 4, 2005. The Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Tribulation Saints occurs on October 4, 2005. The 144,000 sealed "servants of our God" (Revelation 7:3), who are numbered after the Tribulation Week has already begun, are called the "firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb" (Revelation 14:4). We are searching for opposite and symmetrical events. If these 144,000 are Jewish firstfruit at the Pre-Wrath Rapture, then something on April 7, 32 AD (Julian) must correspond to these 144,000. On the very morning of that April 7th, the LORD Jesus left Bethany hungry. He came upon a fig tree. "And when He saw a fig tree in the way, He came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away" (Matthew 21:19). Jesus cursed not only that particular fig tree on that day, but He also cursed the Doomed Generation. To recapitulate, April 7th was the cursing of the Fruitless of Israel, while October 4th will be the blessing of the Firstfruits of Israel.

Picture our timeline. Starting from the left, we have the Cursing of Fruitless Israel on April 7, 32 AD (Julian). To the far right, we have the Blessing of the Firstfruits of Israel on October 4, 2005. 14,000 days inclusively after April 7, 32 AD (Julian) is August 5, 70 AD (Julian). 14,000 days inclusively before October 4, 2005 is June 7, 1967. What is the significance of August 5, 70 AD (Julian)? Jerusalem and the Temple Mount are Lost. "And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down" (Matthew 24:2). And, what is the significance of June 7, 1967? Jerusalem and the Temple Mount are Recaptured. "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke 21:24).

We are about to get to the part concerning Cornelius the Centurion and the May 31, 1998 Pre-Tribulational Rapture of the Church. If the Pre-Tribulational Rapture must occur before the Beginning of the Tribulation Week, then it will occur sometime before Thursday, November 19, 1998.

I believe that Pentecost-- also called "the feast of harvest, the firstfruits of thy labours" (Exodus 23:16)-- will be the Firstfruits Harvest of the Church. In 1998, Pentecost falls on May 31-- a Sunday.

The Apostle Peter's Pentecostal sermon quoted from Joel 2:28-32-- "this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel" (Acts 2:16). This was only partially fulfilled, i.e., "I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh" (Acts 2:17). The rest of the fulfillment will occur during the Tribulation Week. "And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour 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 2:19-20). Likewise, the Pre-Tribulational Rapture is the rest of the prophetic fulfillment of Pentecost.

To confirm the May 31,1998 date with a Prophetic Mirror, we must calculate the number of days from May 31,1998 to October 4, 2005 (inclusive). The span is 2,684 days. [I use a Macintosh program called Calendar Conversion 2.0 to do all these manually unimaginable calculations.] 2,684 days inclusively after April 7, 32 AD (Julian) is August 12, 39 AD (Julian). What happened on that date that could be the Prophetic Mirror image of May 31,1998? "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings is to search out a matter" (Proverbs 25:2). "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people" (1Peter 2:9).

Although my Macintosh version of the Online Bible - Version 2.5.3 has a "*Treasury of Scripture Knowledge*", (excellent), my hard bound copy has dates at the top of each page and sometimes in the chapter (probably the Anglican Bishop Usher's dates). The closest date to August 12, 39 AD (Julian) that I could find in the "*Treasury of Scripture Knowledge*", was Acts 10-- dated around 41 AD. Since I had access to a conservative commentary on the Book of Acts called "*The Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles*", by R. C. H. Lenski, I proceeded to investigate Acts 10. I approached the pages with great excitement and joy. "Again, the kingdom of Heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field" (Matthew 13:44).

A little background is necessary to appreciate Acts 10. The Church had already experienced Pentecost in 32 AD, but officially the Church was reaching out to the Jewish people. Though Philip the Evangelist had already reached an Ethiopian eunuch for the LORD Jesus (Acts 8), this "man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians" (Acts 8:27) was already a proselyte to the Jewish religion before his introduction to Christ. After Saul of Tarsus unleashed the first persecution of the Church, causing the martyrdom of Stephen (Acts 6-7), the Church began to spread the Gospel. "Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the Word to none but unto the Jews only" (Acts 11:19).

During this time of obedience to Acts 1:8-- "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth"-- Cornelius comes into sharp focus in Acts 10. Cornelius was not just a Roman soldier, he was a centurion. As an officer, he commanded 100 men. "He belonged to the Italian cohort which was stationed in Caesarea at this time; thirty-two such cohorts were stationed in the different provinces of the empire. They were made up of Italian



volunteers and were considered the most loyal Roman troops. A legion consisted of ten cohorts plus auxiliary troops. Each cohort had six centuries and the same number of centurions." (R. C. H. Lenski, pp. 393-394). Lenski dates this passage about the "summer of 38" AD (p. 394). Remember, my August 12, 39 AD (Julian) date for Acts 10 is based solely on the Prophetic Mirror as a tool of interpreting Bible prophecy.

The Holy Spirit told Luke to describe Cornelius as a "devout man, and one that feared God with all his house" (Acts 10:2). Lenski points out that Cornelius and his family were "proselytes of the gate", i.e., "were still Gentiles and were regarded as such by all Jews, were considered as standing only at the gate of the pale of the Jewish Church and were debarred from passing beyond the court of the Gentiles in the Temple" (pp. 394-395). In other words, Cornelius was the next best thing to being a Jewish proselyte without being one. He was still considered a Gentile.

Cornelius had a daytime vision where an angel commended and instructed him to send for Peter in Joppa (Acts 10:3-6). He dispatches two servants and a soldier to get Peter (10:7-8). Meanwhile, the LORD was working on Peter's Jewishness by giving him a vision three times, in which Peter was commanded to eat things a good Jew new to be "unclean". With the command came the instruction: "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common" (10:15). Peter meets Cornelius' representatives with God's instructions to "go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them" (10:20). Peter comes to Cornelius' house with the knowledge that he "should not call any man common or unclean" (10:28). Peter profoundly declares what he has discovered about God and Cornelius. "Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him" (Acts 10:34-35).

Peter outlines clearly the mission of the LORD Jesus that "through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts 10:43). I believe that Cornelius was already a Saint of God-- as far as God was concerned. The problem was convincing Peter and the rest of the, then Jewish, Church. Peter remembered the 3,000 souls that were saved after his sermon on Pentecost. These were all Jews. A new bold approach was being hatched in the understanding of Peter that the Gentiles would be saved as they were. The proof was forthcoming.

"While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the Word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" (Acts 10:44-47). If the Holy Spirit would fall upon the 120 gathered in that upper room, what was the difference with those gathered in Cornelius' house? When the Holy Spirit filled the 120 in Acts 2, they were already converted. Now they were useful and powerful. When the Holy Spirit fell upon the Gentiles gathered in Cornelius' house it was obvious that they were already "accepted with Him [Jehovah Jesus]" (10:35). The Gentiles were now on an equal footing with the Jews in the Church that the LORD Jesus Christ was building.

What is the significance of April 12, 39 AD (Julian)? It was the Second Pentecost Where the Gentiles Began Their Ascendancy. "I say then, Have they [Israel] stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their [Israel's] fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to

jealousy" (Romans 11:11). The Church was now to move into the domain of the Gentiles. Just look at Church History.

Conversely, what is the significance of the May 31,1998 Pre-Tribulational Rapture of the Church? It will be the time when the LORD will begin to remove the blindness from Israel. "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this Mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in" (Romans 11:25). Removing Israel's blindness is a process beginning at the Pre-Tribulational Rapture of the Church on May 31,1998 and culminating with a Nation Born in a Day (Isaiah 66:8) at the Second Coming of the LORD Jesus Christ on October 13, 2005. That process of removing Israel's blindness begins when "the fulness of the Gentiles [are] come in" (Romans 11:25) to Heaven at the Pre-Tribulational Rapture on May 31,1998. By definition and design, that process of removing Israel's blindness must occur AFTER June 7,1967 to be consistent with Jesus' words concerning the fulfillment of the "times of the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24b).

This removal of the blindness from Israel will enable her to begin her return to the LORD. "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth" (2 Timothy 2:25). Soon Israel will begin to return to the calling to which Jehovah called Israel. "And ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation" (Exodus 19:6). May 31,1998 is the Second Fulfillment of Pentecost Where Israel Will Begin their Ascendancy.

## **Conclusion**

Many excellent and good men and women of God have, more expertly than I, demonstrated dates for the Pre-Tribulational Rapture of the Church. This is at it should be. Did not the Scriptures say that we should be looking? "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13). Even if there was error as to the exact timing of the event, God has justified their efforts. "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand" (Romans 14:4). I am not afraid of incorrectly calculating the date for the Pre-Tribulational Rapture of the Church. I am afraid of not trying. "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Hebrews 9:28).