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# MAJORITY OPINION IN BIBLE UNDERSTANDING

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Does a majority of opinion make something a fact?

HISTORICAL EXAMPLES:

- ⇒ The world is flat!
  - ⇒ The sun revolves around the earth!
  - ⇒ The earth is the center of the universe!
  - ⇒ Have you seen any changes in the food pyramid lately?
  - ⇒ It was once believed that the woman determined the sex of a baby!
  - ⇒ Tuberculosis was once believed to be hereditary!
  - ⇒ Tomatoes were once thought to be poisonous because the tomato vine was!
  - ⇒ Etc.
- A majority opinion lends credibility to an argument, but it does not establish truth!
  - The majority might be correct, and is sometimes correct, but is not always correct!
  - Just because the church teaches something does not mean it is correct, but when Scripture speaks, the matter is settled!
  - "Fathers [early church fathers], creeds, councils and synods may err, but the Scriptures never do" (Westminster Confession, WCF 33.3).

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## CHALLENGES TO MAJORITY OPINION

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*"Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom" (Mt. 16:28).*

COMMENT #1:

*"Verily I say unto you. This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled" (Mt.24:34).*

COMMENT #2:

What were the *"all these things be fulfilled"* Jesus spoke about?

1. *"...There shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down" (Mt.24:2, Jesus speaking of the Temple in Jerusalem).*
2. *"For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many" (Mt.24:5).*
3. *"And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars..." (Mt.24:6).*

COMMENT #3:

4. *"Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you; and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name sake" (Mt.24:9).*
5. *"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Mt.24:14).*

Do Figure 30.

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## SCRIPTURES FULFILLED WITH THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM

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*"...There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down" (Mt. 24:2)*

- ♦ Titus burned the Temple down in August, AD 70  
(Josephus, *The War of the Jews*, Book 6, Chapters 4-5)
- ♦ Over the next three years the Temple stones were dismantled and leveled to the ground after which the area was plowed over.  
(Josephus, *The War of the Jews*, Book 7, Chapter 1)
- ♦ "Titus forced his way into the city [of Jerusalem], breaking through the three north walls in August, AD 70, and his army burned the Temple, eventually leveling it"  
(*The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, Page 486)

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## SCRIPTURES FULFILLED WITH THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM

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*"And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many" (Mt. 24:4-5).*

- ◆ In AD 36, under the procuratorship of Pontius Pilate, one such false Christ appeared in Samaria, by the name of Dositheus the Samaritan, who boldly claimed that he was the Messiah of whom Moses had prophesied. This scoundrel is reported to have deluded great multitudes.
- ◆ In AD 39, another Samaritan impostor declared he would show the people the sacred utensils said to have been given to Moses at Mount Gerizim. An armed group assembled under this impostor but Pilate defeated the group and killed their leader.
- ◆ Another appeared under the procuratorship of Cuspius Fadus in AD 45 whose name was Theudas. This impostor gathered a great multitude who took their possessions and followed him to the Jordan where he said the river would divide at his command. Fadus pursued the group dispersing them and killing Theudas.

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## SCRIPTURES FULFILLED WITH THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM

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(Continued)

- ◆ During the government of *Felix* (AD 53-60), Josephus tells us that the country was full of robbers, magicians, false prophets and impostors who deluded the people with promises of great events. (*The Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 20, Chapter 8, Paragraphs 5-6). Deceivers rose up frequently in Judea persuading people to follow them into the wilderness where they were promised to experience signs and wonders performed. *Felix* captured many of these deceivers and put them to death.
- ◆ In AD 55 an impostor named *Felix* collected about 30,000 followers and convinced them to join him to the Mount of Olives from where they would be able to witness the walls of Jerusalem fall down at his command. The Roman governor at that time viewed this group as the possible beginning of a revolt, attacked them killing 400, dispersing the rest. The impostor himself was able to escape.
- ◆ In AD 60, another impostor during the time of *Porcius Festus*, lured the people by promising them deliverance from the Romans if they would follow him into the wilderness. Festus sent some of his military after them and killed the deceiver and his followers.

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## THE "GREAT COMMISSION" & ITS FULFILLMENT

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*"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come"*  
(Mt. 24:14)

*"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost"* (Mt. 28:19)

*"And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen"* (Mark 16:20)

See Figure 30

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## SCRIPTURES FULFILLED WITH THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM

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*"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Mt. 24:14).*

- ⇒ In a hyperbolic way, and in the context of the Jewish world view, *"every nation under heaven"* was present on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:5).
- ⇒ The Apostle Paul stated that the gospel was producing fruit and growing *".. An all the world..."* (Col. 1 :6).
- ⇒ Paul further states that the gospel had been preached to *"...every creature which is under heaven..."* (Col. 1:23).
- ⇒ Paul also reported that the faith of the church at Rome was being spoken about *"...throughout the whole world"* (Rom.1:8).
- ⇒ *"But I say, Have they not heard? [the gospel - see verse fifteen] Yes, verily, their sound went into all the earth and their words unto the ends of the world"* (Rom. 10:18).
- ⇒ *"But now is made manifest, [the gospel - see verse twenty-five] and by the scriptures of the prophets according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith"* (Rom.16:26).
- ⇒ *"For we have found this man [Paul - see verse one] a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes"* (Acts 24:15).
- ⇒ A few years after the above words were recorded, the end came in AD 70!

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## CHALLENGES TO MAJORITY OPINION

(continued)

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6. *"When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place..." (Mt.24:15).*
7. Do Figure 31.
8. *"Then let them which be in Judea flee..." (Mt.24:16-20).*
9. *"For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming [parousia] of the Son of man be" (Mt.24:27).*
10. *"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" (Mt.24:29).*
11. *"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" (Mt.24:30).*
12. *"So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors" (Mt.24:33).*
13. *"Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled" (Mt.24:34).*

The List above are some of the *"all things"* Jesus spoke of!



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## SCRIPTURES FULFILLED WITH THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM

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*"When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation..,  
(Mt. 24:15-21).*

- ⇒ Early in the period of AD 60-69, an unqualified Jew whom Josephus identifies as "Phannias" was appointed to the position of high priest. (*Josephus Wars of the Jews*, Book 4, Chapter 3, Paragraph 8, Lines 155-157)
- ⇒ Josephus writes that "by casting lots, Phannias was chosen for the high priesthood who was not only unworthy of the high priesthood, but that did not well know what the high priesthood was." The high priest was normally selected by succession of family not by casting lots. (*Josephus Wars of the Jews*, Book 4, Chapter 3, Paragraph 7, Line 153)
- ⇒ This high priest and his staff of priests failed to properly perform the daily sacrifices and other required Temple duties making a mockery of the holy ordinances.
- ⇒ In AD 66, priests and Zealots fought each other in the Temple courts. Josephus reports the floors swam with the blood of more than 8,000 who stabbed each other.
- ⇒ Many atrocities [abominations] between the Zealots and other Jewish factions occurred in the holy place between AD 66-70.

# THE PARALLELS OF THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM AND SODOM & GOMORRAH

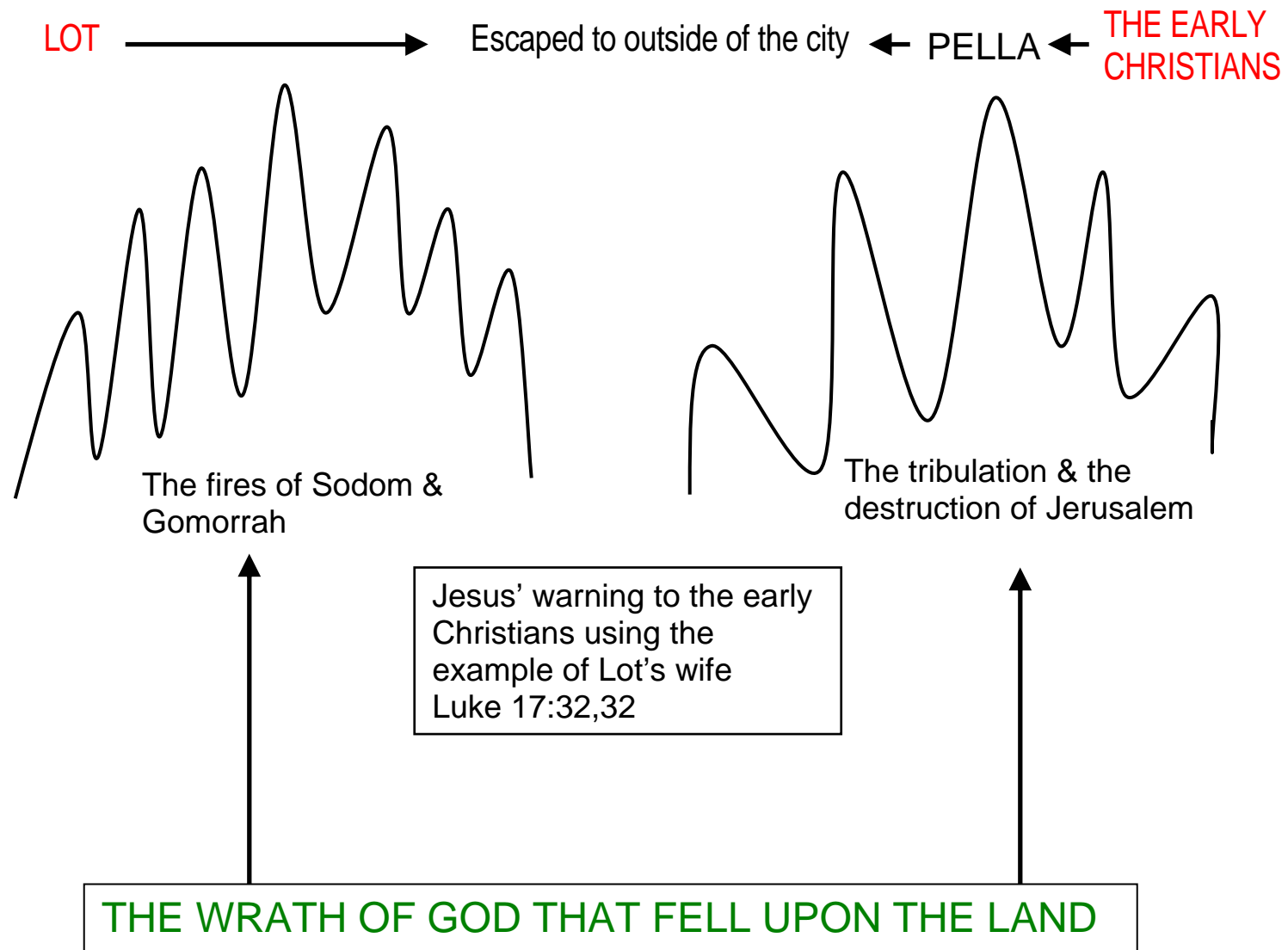


Figure 44

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## SECOND COMING MADNESS

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- ⇒ 500 AD Hippolytus, an early church father (170-236 AD) predicted that the world would end in 500 AD based upon his analysis of the dimensions of Noah's Ark.
- ⇒ 999 In Europe, Christian expectations of the end of the world flooded the continent. Terrified masses feared that the 1,000 years spoken of in the book of Revelation had expired and that Christ was coming back to end it all. Signs and warnings were eagerly sought in the final months leading up to 1,000 AD and it is said that activity in European monasteries nearly ground to a halt as 999 AD wound down.
- ⇒ 1033 When Christ did not appear in 1,000 AD, a new premise was made that counted the 1,000 years from the Ascension giving the new date of 1033. This was also false!
- ⇒ 1100 Joachim of Fiore, an Italian monk and leading Bible prophecy scholar in his day, set the dates of 1200-1260 for the end of all things to come.
- ⇒ 1501 Christopher Columbus allowed 155 years for all of mankind to be converted to Christianity after which the world would end. History of the End, Rubinsky & Wiseman, Page 91.
- ⇒ 1546 Martin Luther stated many times that "the day of judgment [end of the world] is not far off...will not be absent three hundred years longer." He believed that "all the signs which were to precede the last days had already appeared."
- ⇒ 1818 William Miller, founder of the Millerite movement in America, predicted that Christ would come and the world would end sometime between March 21, 1843, and March 21, 1844. Miller's end time movement swept through the United States and generated much excitement. The date was later changed to October 22, 1844!
- ⇒ 1835 Joseph Smith, founder of Mormonism (The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints), prophesied that the coming of the Lord was near and that "56 years should wind up the scene."

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## SECOND COMING MADNESS (continued)

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- ⇒ 1835 "Our lot has fallen under the solemn period emphatically designated in Daniel as the time of the end!" was declared by Archdeacon Browne of England, as quoted in "The Last Times," by Joseph A. Seiss, D.D.
- ⇒ 1874 Claiming to be the sole possessors of God's revealed truth, the Jehovah's Witnesses began a series of prophecies for the end of the world which continued naming the years of 1874, 1878, 1881, 1910, 1914, 1918, 1925 and 1975.
- ⇒ 1926 Oswald Smith, a leading missionary statesman of his day, wrote in his book, "Is the Antichrist at Hand? That "the great tribulation, the arrival of the Roman Empire, the reign of the antichrist and the battle of Armageddon must take place before the year 1933."
- ⇒ 1949 In U.S. News and World Report, Dr. Billy Graham is quoted as saying, "Two years and its all going to be over."
- ⇒ 1969 Hal Lindsay in his book, "The Late Great Planet Earth" states that within one generation we would experience the end of the present world and the return of Christ." The dust jacket of the book cautioned readers not to make plans beyond 1985.
- ⇒ 1978 Salem Kirban in his book, "The Rise of Antichrist" stated that "we are living in the age of Antichrist! The world is on the threshold of catastrophe."
- ⇒ 1978 West Coast Chuck Smith of Calvary Chapel writes in his book "Future Survival" that he is "convinced that the Lord is coming for his church before the end of 1981."
- ⇒ Edgar Whisenant predicts in his book "88 Reasons Why the Rapture Will Be in 1988" that the event would take place in that year.
- ⇒ Edgar Whisenant publishes a sequel to his 1988 book, this one is entitled "89 Reasons Why the Rapture Will Be in 1989."

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## SECOND COMING MADNESS (continued)

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- ⇒ 1990 Dallas Seminary president John Walvoord publishes a book entitled "Armageddon, Oil and the Middle East Crisis" stating that a war by America with Iraq would lead to the final battle of Armageddon.
- ⇒ Harold Camping in his book entitled "1994," predicted the return of Christ and the end of the world in September, 1994.
- ⇒ Jack Van Impe said that "everything is winding up within the next ten years" on his television program of June 22, 1994. On February 5, 1997, he changed his timetable to "between 2001 and 2002."
- ⇒ 1994 Paul Crouch during his Spring 94 Praise-A-Thon fund-raiser on February 22, 1994, stated, "we are in the last moments of grace before the wrath of God is revealed. This is the wind up. The curtain is about to come down. We don't have much time left...If Jesus hasn't come back by the year 2000 AD, then we (referring to his guest speakers on the show and himself) have missed the Scriptures.
- ⇒ 2000 The time leading up to New Years Eve, 2000, was filled with doomsday messages!
- ⇒ 2003 F.M. Riley, New Mexico, predicted that "the rapture would occur on or near the Passover in the Spring (April 16, 2003)."

Is it not time to end this madness!

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## A PROPER VIEW OF MATTHEW 24:34

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*"...This generation [the generation Jesus was speaking to] shall not pass [would not all die] till all these things [which Jesus had just finished talking about] be fulfilled."*

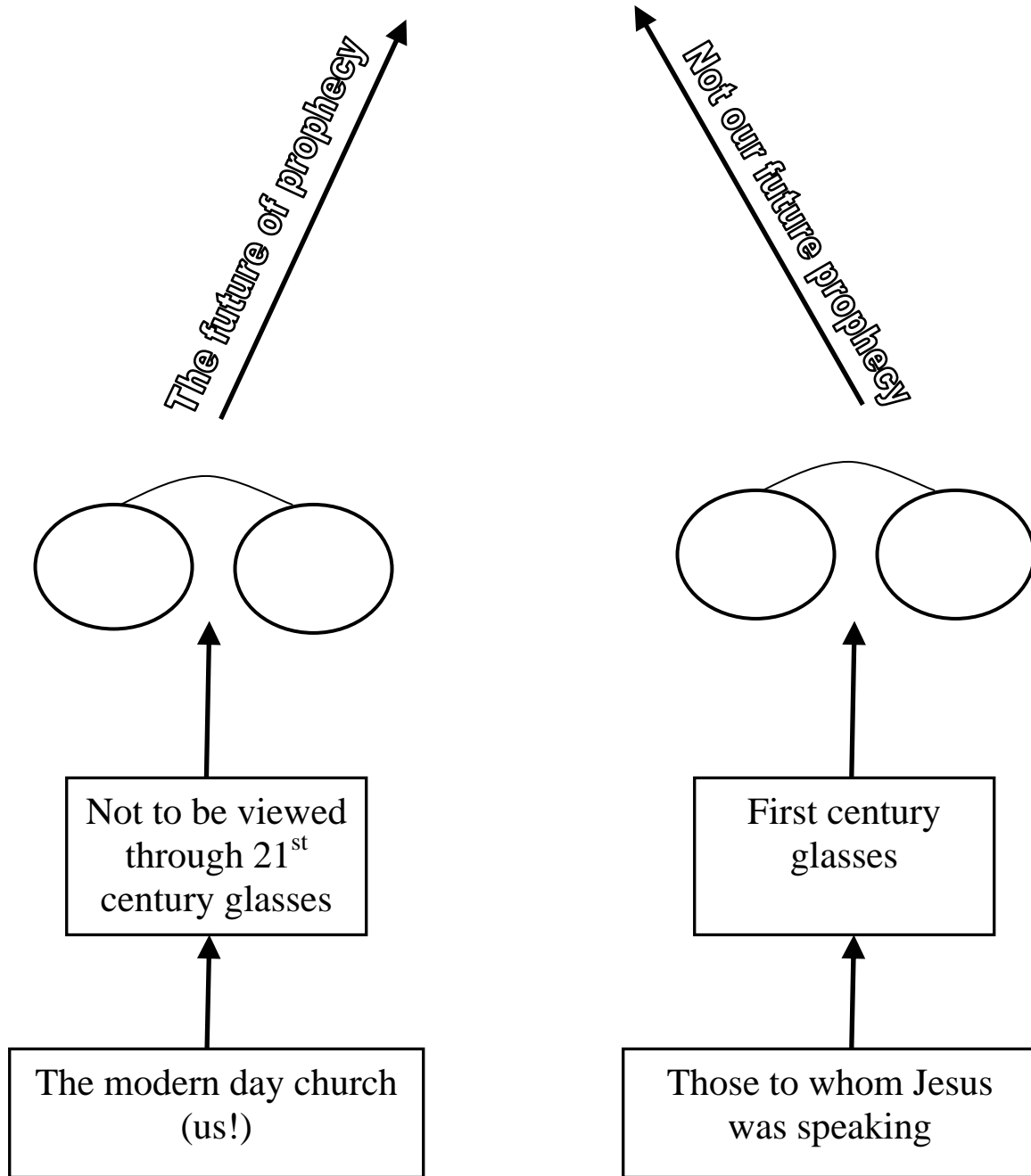


Figure 32

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## WHAT WERE FIRST CENTURY FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST EXPECTING?

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- 📖 "...the end of all things is at hand..." (1 Peter 4:7)
- 📖 "...the fullness of the time was come..." (Gal.4:4)
- 📖 "...The time is fulfilled..." (Mark 1:15)
- 📖 "...happened unto them... upon whom the ends of the world [ages] are come" (1 Cor.10:11)
- 📖 "For there be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled" (Luke 21:22)
- 📖 "...the time is short..." (1 Cor.7:29)
- 📖 "...for the fashion [the outward form] of this world passeth away [is passing away]" (1 Cor. 7:31)
- 📖 "...it is the last time [the last hour]..." (1 John 2:18)

These Scriptures indicate that the time of something extremely significant had grown very short!

## JESUS CHRIST, THE CORNERSTONE IN THE SCRIPTURES

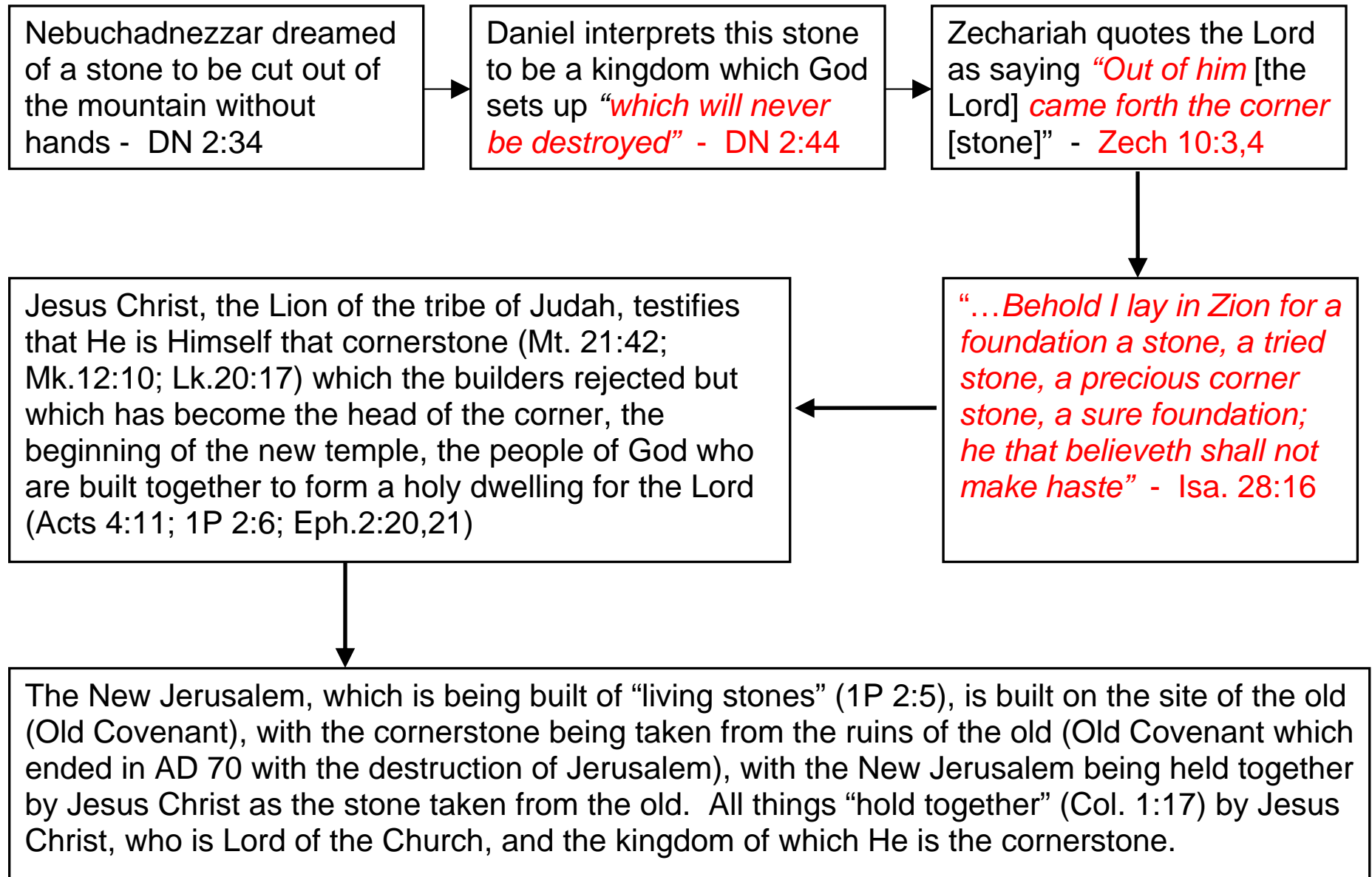


Figure 45