

e-concepts

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This Present Church Age

In the Old Testament age, the purpose of God for Israel is stated in covenants. The covenants were God's idea, and God bound Himself to keeping them. Therefore, they must be fulfilled. But the Old Testament closes with those purposes **unrealized**. After the death of Christ, God set up the church age, a new divine program, **not** to fulfill or to replace the program for Israel, but to **interrupt** that program. This interruption was a **mystery** (Matthew 13:11). [A mystery is a new revelation from God, not given in the Old Testament (Ephesians 3:5).]

This mystery, revealed in the New Testament, includes:

1. Israel being blinded so the Gentiles could be brought into relation with God (Romans 11:25)
2. The church, the body of Christ, being made up of both Jews and Gentiles (Ephesians 3:3-9)
3. The revelation of Christ to men for redemption (Colossians 2:2; 4:3)
4. A separate distinct first coming of Christ (1 Timothy 3:16)
5. The restraint of evil by God (2 Thessalonians 2:7)
6. The development of a great apostate religious system (Revelation 17:5, 7)
7. A new method by which God received men into His presence apart from death (1 Corinthians 15:51)

Contrast Past Ages to this Present Church Age

Past Ages- Old Testament

- Christ is anticipated
- The Holy Spirit came upon certain men to empower them to a given task
- The Good News is anticipated
- Revelation is incomplete
- Believers are promised blessings in this life
- The nation of Israel is the object of God's dealing

Present Age- New Testament to Today

- Christ has come, has died, has been raised, and is seated at the right hand of the Father
- The Holy Spirit indwells every believer
- The Good News announces accomplished salvation through Christ
- Revelation is complete
- Believers are promised persecution in this life
- The nation of Israel is set aside as an object of God's dealing and should not expect fulfillment of her promises during this age

The End of the Church Age

*The condition of the **false church** will be:* denial of Christ (2 Pet. 2:1), denial of Christ's return (2 Pet. 3:3-4), denial of faith (1 Tim. 4:1-2), denial of sound doctrine (2 Tim. 4:3-4), no denial of self (2 Tim. 3:1-7), denial of morals (2 Tim. 3:1-8, 13; Jude 18), and denial of authority (2 Tim. 3:4).

*The condition of the **true church** will be* resurrected and translated into the presence of the Lord (John 14:1-3; 1 Cor. 1:8; 15:51-52; 2 Cor. 5:1-9; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 2 Thess. 2:1).

*For more information on the **Church Age** see **Prophecy** on Relational Concepts we page:
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