

UNDERSTANDING THE PROPHETIC TIMETABLE



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INTRODUCTION

The Prophetic Timetable describes the unfolding of major world events as described in the Bible. Despite man's sinfulness and seeming self dependence, God is still in control of human history. And His major priority has always been to carry out specific activities within given timeframes to accomplish His work of salvation. It is as we examine these prophecies and their subsequent fulfilments that we have divine understanding to current world events, and confidence to declare the future. Such prophetic declarations could be to call attention to some specific divine blessings allotted for a specific time, or to warn against some specific dangers to come.

This teaching only comes as a summary and would require that you study it in detail along with your Bible. What is most important for you is to secure for yourself an eternity in the kingdom of God. Time is running out; and the last grace of God is being poured out for the salvation of man. Be a part by giving your heart and life to Christ to be eternally saved. My book, *Zion Vision of Today* contains a great deal on the church, the Middle East and the world at large. I encourage you to read it to know more about our vision.

Part One

THE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS

Origin and History

The Middle East crisis is one centred largely between the Arabs and the Jews. The founding of the Jewish homeland in Palestine in the midst of Arab settlers who had occupied the territory for close to two millennia has been the cause of the crisis that is drawing international attention ever since the end of the second world war. "Palestinians" is the modern term for Canaanites used in the Bible. Palestine is ancient Canaan or the Promised Land. The conflicts between the Arab-Palestinians and the Jews who returned from the nations constitute the Middle East crisis. The uncompromising Arabs who claim they have been living in the land for centuries and consider it their homeland would not want to cede any inch of the territory to the Jews whom they look more or less as enemies. The Jews also see a homeland in Palestine since it was from there they were driven by the Romans in to the nations and say the land is theirs given them by God; and so the two parties have been in conflict.

Christ did prophesy about the present Middle East crisis. In the book of Lk19:41-44, it says thus:

Now as he drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, saying, "if you had known, even you, especially in this your day the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, and level you and your children within you to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another because you did not know the time of your visitation."

The prophecy above was fulfilled in the year 70 AD when the Romans burned Jerusalem and drove away all the Jews who went into exile into all the nations known as the Diaspora. God had promised in the Old Testament that they would come back from this dispersion from all the nations in the world. This is in the book of Jem.16:14-16

Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said, the Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but the Lord liveth that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the North and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers. Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks.

This prophecy was fulfilled in 1948 when the Jews returned back to Palestine after the Second World War from all the nations. God used instruments like the Zionist movement and also Hitler's persecution to force the Jews to return. Their meeting with the Palestinians in the land resulted in confrontations which continue to today.

The Crux of the Crisis

The heart of the Middle East crisis is in a number of things:

1- It is a religious and cultural crisis. Imagine the enmity that existed between the Samaritans and the Jews in Jesus' days. These two people have different cultures and

- religions. The Palestinians are Moslems and have the support of the Arab world, while the Jews believe in Judaism. They look at each other as unbelievers and unclean.
- 2- It is a land crisis. With the coming of the Jews to occupy the very geographical space hitherto occupied by the Palestinians meant there was going to be a strain on available natural resources. Such would include building space, fertile land for agriculture, water, other natural and economic resources etc.
 - 3- The crisis has caused international tension from the 1960's upward. This even contributed to the cold war between America and Russia. Russia had economic interests in the Middle East and so supported the Arab nations militarily against Israel. America came in to support Israel unconditionally against the Arabs in case of any war.
 - 4- The status of Jerusalem and the temple has been the unsolvable problem of the crisis. The Palestinians hold unto Jerusalem and consider it the third holy city after Mecca and Medina. The Islamic temple called the Dome of the rock now stands exactly where God's famous temple once stood.
 - *As for the temple, God had specifically chosen that it should be built on that spot. According to Gen 22:1-2, God commanded Abraham to sacrifice Isaac on that spot. God commanded David to build for Him an altar on that spot in 1Chron 21:18-28. Solomon later built God's temple on the very spot on mount Moriah in 2 Chron 3: 1.
 - *As for Jerusalem it is the spiritual foundation of human civilisation. The Bible says that Melchizedec was a priest of God in Salem long before Abraham came. The Bible says that he has neither father nor mother; beginning nor end of days. It means that God's altar was already in Jerusalem even before the Canaanites ever established their civilisation. (Gen14:18-20).

1948 in World History

This is the year of beginnings. Certain Prophecies began being fulfilled in this year:

- 1- In 1948, Israel became a nation with capital as Tel Aviv on the 7th of May. This was the fulfilment of the prophecy in Ezekiel 36 and 37 where God says He shall gather them again and they shall no longer be two nations. Prophecies relating to the Jewish Diaspora were not to leave the nation hopeless, but God made adequate provisions for their restoration. The return of the Jews into their homeland therefore marked the beginning of a new phase of restorations that shall take place to culminate in the coming of the Messiah.
- 2- In 1948 the idea of forming the European common market was born by three nations of Western Europe i.e. Belgium, Netherlands and Luxemburg. This later grew to the ten nations of Western Europe and it is now involving political unity as well. This is fulfilling the prophecy of Dan 7: 7-8. We should remember that it was under the Roman (European powers) that Christ came, was crucified and the Diaspora was enforced. The rise of the modern Roman power today that shall soon be over much of the affairs of the world and the Middle East is a sign of the second coming of Christ. They shall seemingly broker a peace deal which shall greatly be against the will of God.
- 3- In 1948 again, the first meeting of the world council of churches (W.C.C) was held in Amsterdam the capital of the Netherlands. This marked the beginning of the Apostate church referred to in Rev 17: 5 as BABYLON, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS. Religion plays an important role in the unfolding of global events. The remarkable thing is the rise of a religious personality who stands parallel to Christ, the Head of the Church. The Bible warns His people from having any close association with the apostate church and equally calls on His people within her to come out and separate themselves. Biblical prophecies declare that this religious authority shall approve the decisions of the anti Christ and shall call on the world to adhere to him. True people of God should beware these coming apostasies.

America and the Middle East Crisis

America is doing its best within human logic to solve the mid-East Crisis as the world's only super power. But despite the peace efforts by Bill Clinton and George Bush, the crisis shall not be solved by the Americans. We should also remember that the current crisis began in September 2000 and since then a lot of events have taken place in the world as a result of it. E.g the destruction of the world trade centre in September 2001, the attack on Afghanistan and Iraq etc are all aimed at fighting terrorism and weapons of mass destruction.

The Arab terrorists think by attacking America or American interests, they are fighting against the enemies of Allah in Jihad or holy war. America considers that by fighting terrorism and their strongholds, they are opening the region to greater democracy, peace and human rights. The top American foreign policy is thus to create a peaceful and democratic Middle East that shall be able to sustain the two states to be founded in Palestine.

In the month of June 2003 when I was teaching on this subject in my church I told them that the ambitious plan put forth by George Bush known as the Road Map was not going to work. That was a plan by which the Palestinians were going to stop terrorism, have a prime minister and become a completely independent state by 2005.

America's commitment to protect Israel has been the cause of the much anti-Americanism in the Arab world.

*Even though the U.S is trying hard to establish a lasting peace deal, it shall be the European Union under its great leader in an advent of world crisis who shall establish a somewhat lasting peace deal.

The Human Image

Long ago during Israel's first captivity in Babylon, God revealed the great Kingdoms that were to rule the world especially the Promised Land and Jerusalem before the end of the world. From the time the Jewish state was founded, God Himself was supposed to govern His people. Israel was supposed to be absolutely independent and politically free from pagan domination. But the rise of these kingdoms was to mean the lose of Jewish independence. Israel was going to be under their dominion. They specifically refer to those kingdoms that would have great political influence in the world including the Middle East. God gave this vision to Nebuchadnezzar and was interpreted by Daniel the prophet.

***Read Dan 2: 31-45**

According to the human image having a head of gold, a chest and arms of silver, a belly and thighs of brass, legs of iron and feet mixed with iron and clay; God gave the interpretation as world empires that were to rule as follows:

1- The Babylonian Empire founded by Nebuchadnezzar was the head of gold.

His was a kingdom of royal majesty and as God Himself testifies in Daniel chapter 4, the whole world was under his wrings.

The Assyrians had taken the ten northern tribes away captive by 597 Bc. Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem and carried its last king captive in 587 Bc.

2- The Medes conquered Babylon under Cyrus in 539 Bc and the combined Medo-Persian empire controlled the world and Jerusalem until defeated by Alexander the Great of Greece. The Medo-Persians were the breast and arms of silver. Jeremiah's prophecy to restore the Jews back to their homeland was fulfilled during the reign of the Persians.

3- The Greeks under Alexander the Great conquered the Persians in 334 Bc putting Jerusalem and Israel under Greek control. Under the Greeks, The Jerusalem temple was desecrated by Antiochus IV in 167 Bc when he forbade the Mosaic law, stopped sacrifices, offered a pig on God's altar and introduced the cult Zeus olympius in God's temple. The Greeks were the belly and thighs of brass.

4- The Roman Empire began expanding in 264 Bc, defeated the Greeks in 146 Bc and became a world power with the conquest of Egypt in 30 Bc.

The Roman Empire lasted until it was overthrown by the Visigoths in 410 AD and the overthrow of its last Empire in 476 AD.

*The first phase of the Roman Empire lasted for seven centuries (i.e 264 BC-476 AD) but the second phase of feet with ten toes is to have dominion over God's land only for seven years.

*We should remember that Jesus was persecuted during the reign of the Roman Empire and that the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple was by them in 70 AD. The E.U under their political spokesman shall be the one to implement the peace deal granting two states between the Israelites and the Palestinians.

And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate (Dan 9:27).

God's Time Clock

God calculates the time and seasons for the accomplishment of His divine purposes. The timing for the first coming of Christ was based on the decrees of the restoration of Jerusalem and the temple. When Daniel was praying to God to fulfil the promise of restoring the Jews back after the 70 year exile into Babylon according to the book of Jeremiah 29:10-11, God sent the angel Gabriel to come and assure him of it and also give him a greater revelation of God's future plans that were to bring the Messiah into the world.

Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and three-score and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times (Dan 9:24-25).

According to the 70 weeks of Daniel, at the end of the seventy weeks of 70x7 weeks of years, the following things would happen.

- 1- Finish transgression
- 2- Make an end of sins
- 3- Make reconciliation for iniquity
- 4- Bring in everlasting righteousness
- 5- Seal up the vision and prophecy
- 6- Anoint the most Holy.

In Vs 25, it says from the time when the commandment (decree) shall be given to restore and build Jerusalem shall be 69 weeks of years at the end of which all the above points shall be fulfilled. In other words after 69 weeks i.e. 69x7= 483 years, God shall put an end to sin, introduce everlasting righteousness and anoint the most holy (Christ). Jesus was anointed when the Holy Spirit came on Him in the form of a dove as he came out of the Jordan River being baptized by John the Baptist.

Three decrees were given to restore and rebuild Jerusalem. These were all Medo-Persian Kings.

1- Cyrus in 538 Bc (2 Chron 36:22-23, Ezra 1:1-6)

2- Darius in 519 Bc (Ezra 6:1-12)

3- Artaxerxes in 457 Bc (Ezra 7:11-28)

Since the last decree was made in 457 Bc and God says it will take 483 years after that and Christ shall be anointed for ministry, if we subtract 483-457, we get 26 AD. But if the decree was made in spring marking the beginning of the Jewish year, then it shall bring us to 27 AD, which is the historical year in which Christ was baptised by John and anointed by the Holy Spirit in the river Jordan to bring in everlasting righteousness through faith in Christ.

The factor that determines the coming of Christ is based on the status of Jerusalem. As the decrees for restoring Jerusalem determined the first coming of Christ, so will the restoration of Jerusalem after Christ's prophecy determine His second coming. Christ also says that after the Diaspora, Jerusalem shall be trampled (roughly ruled in an unholy manner) by the gentiles until their period be accomplished.

And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the gentiles, until the times of the gentiles be fulfilled. Luke 21:24

In LK 21: 29-32, He says that we should observe the fig tree. When it begins to blossom we should know that God's Kingdom is at hand. And also that this generation of the blooming of the fig tree shall not pass away until all prophecies be fulfilled.

Israel became a nation in 1948 and adopted the fig tree as its national symbol. Since then it began to blossom as a nation. But we cannot talk of Israel without Jerusalem. Israel took Jerusalem from the Arab gentiles in 1967 in a six day war and this fulfilled LK 21: 24. If we are to consider Christ's prophecy that all things shall be fulfilled including His second coming in the generation in context when Israel begins to blossom, then it should be from 1967 when Jerusalem came back to the Jews and not 1948. Biblically a generation is a period of 40 during which God accomplishes his divine goals. For example:

- The rest of Gideon was for 40 years: - Judges 8: 28
- The judgement of Eli was for 40 years – I Sam 4: 18
- The reign of Saul was for 40 years- Acts 18: 21
- The reign of David was for 40 years-2 Sam 5: 4
- The reign of Solomon was for 40 years-2 Chron 9: 30

As God does many things within 40 days, 40 years etc it is important for us to consider the words of Christ seriously as in LK 21: 24. But if all intermediate activities within the Church and Israel do not finish by the end of the generation period of 40 years after 1967, then we should be sure it shall not exceed the Jubilee of 50 years.

***Read Lev 25: 1-17**

*And thou shalt number seven Sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven Sabbaths of years shall be unto thee shall be forty and nine years. Then shall thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the Day of Atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land (*vs. 8, 9)*

The Jubilee and the Middle East Crisis

1-Jubilee means ram's horn; and it shall be a time when God shall be blowing the trumpet of liberty to the earth.

2-It is a time for the rest of the land (Lev 25:2, 7, 11, 12). The burden of sin and its consequences of wars and sufferings shall be rolled off the world.

3- It is a time when landed property is restored to their owners (vs. 13-17, 28-34). The entire Israel's territory including the west bank shall come back to the Jews.

4- It is a time for the setting free of Israelite slaves (vs. 40, 41; 50-54). God shall set free His chosen people from the laws of the nations and from the influence of the anti-Christ.

5- In the Jubilee, the land belongs solely to God (vs. 23; 18: 24-30)

Christ shall come to possess Jerusalem and thus the seat of power over the world.

Significance of the Seventy Weeks

The seventy weeks of Daniel is an absolute timing in God's prophetic timetable. According to the prophetic revelation, the seventy weeks is divided into two. The end of the first 69 weeks of 483 years marked the first coming of Christ, while the end of the last one-week of seven years shall mark His second and glorious coming. Between the 69 and one remaining week is the period of the gentiles when the gospel of grace is carried to the pagan world outside Israel. From the period between the death resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus into heaven and the destruction of Jerusalem in the year 70 till now, we are within this period of grace. In other words, we are between the two phases of the prophetic weeks. The main characteristics of this period between the prophetic weeks include:

1- The gospel is carried to the gentiles; thus marking the church age.

2- The nation of Israel ceases to exist.

3- Great scientific and technological advances are made in the world (Dan 12:4, Nahum 2:3-4)

4- Towards its end, the nation of Israel begins to reappear and blossom.

* As for the seventy weeks itself, the very significant characteristic within it is that Israel ceases to exist as an absolutely independent kingdom having a king or ruler, but rather functions as a semi-independent state under the protection and authority of a world power. They shall thus be under full or partial pagan domination. From the time when the Persian decrees were made for the Jews to return to their homeland until the coming of Christ 483 years later, Israel remained under the custody of the various superpowers that ruled the world. Jesus' first coming was during the period of the Romans. And curiously, His second coming shall be at the end of the last prophetic week of seven years when Israel shall be under the custody of the modern Roman Empire.

The Sin that Invokes Judgement

The actual sin that shall cause God to be punishing the nations during the tribulation shall be the sharing of God's land between the Jews and the Palestinians. Out of all the vast territories of the world God has mapped out that portion and calls it His own. Touching what belongs to God is tantamount to divine judgment.

For behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land Joel 3:1-2.

According to the passage above, God is to plead with (Judge) the whole world for ill treating the Jews in causing the Diaspora and also punishing them for dividing His land. The creation of two independent states on God's territory is actually a coup attempt against God on the earth. In what I wrote in my book, I said, "If the nations of the earth shall conspire to dispossess God of His inheritance, He in turn shall dispossess them of their own inheritance. This shall result in God stripping from man the supreme responsibility of governing the earth which he has so exercised in an atmosphere of godlessness and secularism". And that "the whole world shall pay dearly if they accept to split, share or

partition the chosen piece of territory, which God calls 'My Land'" Israel occupies a tiny 0.01% out of the world surface. If men want to take this 0.01% from God's rule, He shall not take it lightly.

As the Middle East crisis keep increasing in momentum, the Jews will be obliged to accept a peace deal brokered by whoever can be a messiah. Christ said to the Jews in Jn 5: 43 that He came in His Father's name but they rejected Him; but some one else (the anti-Christ) shall come in his own name and they shall receive him.

America is seeking to implement the partition presently but the Bible says it shall be the spokes man of the European Union who shall implement it according to Daniel 9: 27.

Part Two

GOD'S PROPHETIC PLAN FOR THE END-TIME CHURCH

The prophetic plan of God for the end-time church is in restoration, revival and the rapture. It is true that Israel is the time clock of God; but God has to complete His redemptive work with the church as well before He shall return to completely save Israel. By this, we are examining the final activities, which God has to undertake with the church in this grace dispensation.

Restoration

The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. (Isaiah 40: 3-5).

Before God accomplishes a great task He first sends special servants to go and prepare the way before Him. Obstacles that pose as mountains, valleys, rough and crooked places must all be made plain and straight so that God can have a clear way to implement His glorious plans. Since we live in a generation awaiting God's visitation, the prophet cries out in Isaiah that the way for the Lord must be prepared. And so, the church of God also needs restoration to be able to get the dispensational blessing and meet with her Lord when He appears.

According to the book of Act 3:19-21 which says "repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive (keep) until the times of the restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."

The Bible is calling on God's people here to repent of their sins in preparation for the refreshing or the outpouring of the Spirit of God in our time and also telling us that heaven must withhold Jesus until all things are restored in the church. This means that restoration precedes revival and the second coming of Christ. Things to be restored in the church include:

1. The restoration of righteousness.

The Bible makes it clear that the church prior to the coming of Christ must be pure spotless and glorious in all aspects

That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. Eph 5:27

By the above passage, it is clear that certain spiritual sins and other compromises shall be taken off the church to make her ready for Christ. The book of Joel 2:16,17 also calls for the gathering of God's people and the sanctification of the congregation. The restoration of righteousness at all levels within and among the churches is imperative to the reception of the latter glory and the second coming of Christ.

2. The restoration of the rightful observance of Biblical doctrines and ordinances.

It is clear that with the disparity existing among God's people as to the implementation of His ordinance word, certain clarifications shall be needed to be able to distinguish between absolute and relative truths.

3. The restoration of unity

When God always begins with His people they are united and in one accord. But as the years roll by there arise various factors that cause their disintegration. But in the time of restoration God gathers them again for His visitation.

According to 1kngs 18: 30-32 when God wanted to bless Israel, He was interested first with the condition of the altar. Elijah practically put the twelve stones signifying the twelve tribes of Israel. That was unity. When he called on God from that altar, He answered by fire. Until the altar of unity is repaired in the church, the revival fire of God shall not be experienced.

In other places of the Bible like in Isaiah 2:2, the church is referred to as “the mountain of the Lord’s house”. God considers His entire church as a temple and thus implying that there must be oneness in such a house before it can be said to be complete. In the book of Ps 102: 13-16 the Bible says the time to favour Zion has come and Vs 16 says “when the Lord shall build up Zion He shall appear in His glory”. The building up of Zion is the putting of the church together in unity. When our Lord prayed for unity in Jn 17: 22,23 He said “... that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me”

In an end time period when more opposition is expected against the people of God, their unity is absolutely indispensable in the propagation of the gospel. The fact that Jesus prayed for unity towards the close of His ministry and just before His trials makes me understand that towards the close of the work of grace, and just before the tribulation, the Lord wants His entire church united. The book of Haggai also calls for the building of God’s house that lies waste; and we shall see how this is the sole condition for the church to experience the latter glory.

Revival

And thou shalt observe the feast of weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the feast of ingathering at the years end. Ex 34: 22.

When God took His people out of Egypt, He established a covenant with them on Mount Sinai. Among other things God established certain feast days, which the children of Israel were to observe forever in their generations. Among the five feasts were the three most important ones found in Ex 23: 14-16 (read it) they include the feast of Passover or unleavened bread, firstfruits or Pentecost, and the feast of ingathering at the year’s end.

Christ says in Mt 5:17,18 that we should not think He came to destroy the law or the prophets; but that He came to fulfil. And that heaven and earth would pass away but every single aspect in the law shall be fulfilled (even in the church).

Christ came to open a new dispensation by which we His church were going to keep the Law of Moses and the feast ordinances not as the Jews did, but in a glorious manner. He came to fulfil the covenant of Passover, first fruits and ingathering in the church.

1. Passover

God established the Passover when He was delivering His people out of Egypt (Ex 12:1-30) He said that was going to be their beginning of year, i.e. God gave them a new calendar. He commanded them to kill a lamb in each household and eat it with bitter herbs; and also to eat it with bread without yeast. For one week, bread was to be eaten without yeast. This was a continual activity year by year.

Jesus came to fulfil the Passover or feast of unleavened bread for us. He came to be the Lamb of God who died to take away the sin of the world. When we study the Bible we see that Christ died at the exact Passover period. In Jn 13:1, it says when Passover came, Jesus knew His time to depart had come. He even ate His own Passover meal with His disciples on the night before He was crucified. On the next day Friday, when the Jews were going to break the bones of those on the cross because of the Passover that had to begin by

5pm but before they came to Jesus, they discovered He had died two hours earlier and his legs were not broken.

Paul says in 1 Cor 5:7-8 that we should keep the feast not with leaven bread but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. Christians keep the Passover by acknowledging the death of Christ on the cross to save them of their sins and by living a life of consecration. This is a continual covenant, which God establishes with us forever through Christ.

2. Pentecost.

Pentecost is the Greek word for fifty and it is also the feast of first fruit harvest. God commanded His people to observe this feast fifty days after Passover to dedicate the first fruits unto Him and to open the harvest season.

Jesus came to open a new dispensation by which the feast of first fruits or Pentecost was no longer going to be just an annual event but a continual one by His spirit. Forty days after His death and resurrection in Passover or Easter, He told His disciples to tarry in Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit will come on them (Acts 1:4-8).

As the disciples were in fear, unity and prayers in the upper room, something happened ten days later on the fiftieth day after Passover that marked the birth of Christianity and Christian witnessing. The Bible says in Acts 2:1-4 “And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven ...” the sound filled the house and the Holy Spirit lighted upon them like tongues of fire and they began speaking in other tongues. In other words on the exact day of first fruit harvest while the Jews were celebrating Pentecost, the Holy Ghost came upon the first disciples. This anointing was to enable Christians keep the feast in a spiritual manner, dedicate the first fruit of Christianity unto God and to open the dispensation for soul harvesting unto the kingdom of God. Since then, the Pentecost anointing is still in the world as the covenant is a continual and everlasting one; fulfilling the Law of God through Moses. By being filled with the Spirit of God; and by witnessing to the death and resurrection of Christ, we are keeping the feast of first fruit harvest or Pentecost through out our generation.

3 Ingathering:

According to Exodus 34:22, the feast of ingathering (also known as Tabernacles or shelters) was directly linked to the feast of first fruit harvest. They both had to do with fruit harvest as one was at the beginning of the year while the other was at the end of year. It was inaugurated to celebrate the autumn ingathering of all fruits including the last of the grapes, olives and grain from the threshing floor.

As the Christian feast of Passover and Pentecost were remarkable events in birthing Christianity, so too shall the Christian feast of Ingathering be very significant in completing the work of grace. The end of year during which the church is to celebrate ingathering is the end of the period of grace before the tribulation.

The fact that God commands an ingathering of fruits implies that there shall be an ingathering or unity of God’s people at the end of times. The sacrifice is to be among people who have been gathered to be in one accord as was in the upper room. The end result is that God shall pour out His Spirit; much more than He did on Pentecost.

When we get the prophecy in the book of Haggai 2:7-9 where God says “... The glory of this latter house shall be more than that of the former...” it is important to note that the glory is for a house. When Solomon built the temple, the glory of God filled it. When Christ built a temple, the glory of God came down on Pentecost. Now, when He shall build His latter house of united believers in Christ, He shall pour a greater amount of glory. We are interested in the glory but He is more interested with the house before He can grant the glory; thus, the glory of the latter house.

God has a revival to release when the church is restored in unity. This ingathering is to help the church to minister the gospel of God in a last and most powerful manner. It is the generation of the sons of God (Rom 8:19) when God’s prepared army shall perform

signs and wonders in the most extraordinary revival in world history. Christ has spoken over and over in many ways to His various servants about this event. The church has and is still celebrating Passover and Pentecost but we are to be made perfect in ingathering which is at this end of year period in the work of grace. Pray for the church.

Rapture

For every single Old Testament prophecy about Christ's first coming, there are eight relating to His second coming. The second coming of our Lord shall be in two phases a) rapture and b) the Revelation of Jesus Christ. In the first phase, He shall descend and stand upon the clouds in the air and we shall be caught up to meet Him there. In the second phase, we shall come down physically with Him upon the earth in the sight of everyone.

The word rapture is a Latin word "rapere" and means to "catch up" or "snatch up". This describes the sudden disappearance of born again believers from the earth. I Thes 4:16, 17

Jesus described the very event in the book of (Mt 24:40-41 when He said two shall be working in the field and one shall be taken and the other left. It shall be a worldwide event occurring in both the day and night periods in a twinkling of an eye. Jesus made His disciples taste what the rapture shall look like when He said some of them shall not die before they see the kingdom of God come with power. Eight days later, He took Peter James and John to a high mountain and the transfiguration took place (Mk 9:1-8) there Jesus' face became shiny like the sun and His clothes as white as snow. Moses and Elijah appeared and talking with Him and the voice of God spoke from a bright cloud. Peter later described what happened on the mountain as the power and coming of our Lord in 2 Pet 1:14-18.

On the mount, Moses and Elijah came talking with Jesus. They represent the two sets of people to be raptured. Moses who had died so many years ago (Deut 34: 1-6) represents those who have died in Christ and Elijah who was taken to heaven alive (II kings 2:11-12) represents those who are alive and in Christ. Those who are dead in Christ shall rise first, then we who are alive and in Christ shall be transformed and transported to meet them in the air (I Cor 15: 51-53).

Jesus is equal to the resurrection and the life and He is the central force pulling these two sets of people together. In Jn 11:25-26 Jesus said "*I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live and whoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die*".

In the rapture, Jesus shall be the resurrection to those who died believing in Him and the life (transformation) to those who are alive and believing in Him. They shall never die.

The purpose of the rapture is threefold:

1- To separate God's people from the judgment of God to come upon the world. God always separates His people from mass judgment. Before He destroyed the ancient world with water, He translated Enock who walked with Him (Gen 5:24) Noah and His sons were preserved in the ark. Before Sodom was destroyed with fire, the angels of God led Lot and his daughters out of the city and to the church of the end time preaching the gospel, Christ says in Rev 3:10 "I also will keep (preserve) thee from the hour of temptation (tribulation) which shall come upon all the world."

2- To enable the church celebrate the marriage feast of the Lamb. During the seven-year tribulation period when the anti-Christ establishes his covenant of peace with Israel and disasters also take place worldwide, the church shall be celebrating a big wedding with Christ in the air (Rev 19:5-9).

3- The third purpose is to prepare us for the millennial reign with Christ on earth. The book of DAN 7: 10,27 says God shall reward His servants and shall also give them dominium. The preparedness to reign with Christ in the millennium shall be made while the believers shall still be in the air

Part Three

PERSONS, INSTITUTIONS AND EVENTS

The anti-Christ

The word anti-Christ has two meanings: a) Against Christ and b) Instead of Christ. There is a political anti-Christ and a religious anti-Christ. While the political anti-Christ is totally against God and Christ, the religious anti-Christ usurps Christ's name and office.

***Read Rev13:1-15**

When we read the passage above, we get the description of two beasts. The first like a leopard is fierce, and terrifying, while the second is like a lamb. The leopard beast having ten horns and great iron teeth which tramples the inhabitants of the world is both a description of the modern Roman Empire and also of its political spokesman in times of world crisis. The political anti-Christ shall be thus fierce and openly opposing God and His people, while the religious anti-Christ looking like a lamb (Christ-like) but speaks boastfully like a dragon.

1 Origin

The origin of both the political and the political and religious anti-Christ is by a diabolic activity of Satan. That means Satan creates a spiritual partnership a physical agent to produce a greatly empowered leader upon the earth. The Bible says in Thes 2: 7-9 that the mystery of iniquity is already working in the world but the Holy Ghost is withholding it until He shall be taken out of the way. Then the wicked one (anti-Christ) shall be revealed whom Christ shall destroy. Vs 9 says, "even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders". Also read (Rev 13:4; Rev 11: 6-7; Rev 16:13-14).

2 Activities

- The political anti-Christ shall bring about a temporal peace deal in the Middle East crisis (Dan9: 27, I Thes 5:1-3)
- He shall bring about economic prosperity to the world under a centralised system (Rev 13:16-17, Rev3: 17, Dan11: 39)
- He shall persecute and torment the saints of God (Rev 13:1-7, Dan 11:33-35)
- He shall demand worship and force his mark and number on all who do not have faith in Christ.
- He shall cause the abomination that causes desolation.

The book of Rev 13: 8 and 9 has it explicit. "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb from the foundation of the world. If any man have an ear, let him hear" Also read Rev13: 16-18.

God sends His angel in Rev 14:9-12 to warn the inhabitants of the world not to worship the anti-Christ or receive his mark in their forehead or right hand; else they shall be tormented eternally.

We know that the number of the political anti-Christ is 666. If we look into one of the names or titles of the religious anti-Christ, it also sums up to this number. The "Holy Father" (which is actually usurping God's name also) of the holy catholic (universal) Church, who resides in the Vatican also has this title in Latin Vicarious Filii Dei. This official title means –Instead of the Son of God. In other words, he is acting where Christ ought to act. He has stolen Christ's authority and power in the Church.

Have you never seen the "Holy Father" seated on a high throne wearing a crown and all the College of Cardinals, Bishops and everyone falling before him in worship? As

for us, we know that we have to worship God alone and that Christ is the only Head of the Church (Eph 1:22; 5:23, Col 1: 16);

- The religious anti-Christ shall be the head of the fake or apostate Church that unifies other world religions united in ecumenism. The Bible refers to it in Rev 17:5 as “MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT. THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH”.

The reasons why God is to judge this religious institution include:

- 1- It is a mixture of idolatrous religious beliefs that do not hold faith in Jesus alone.
- 2- Its past atrocities and sins.
- 3- It has a craving for luxury and materialism.
- 4- It harbours the kingdom of darkness in occultism, witchcraft and spiritism.
- 5- It usurps Christ’s name and authority.

* Due to the end –time pressures to come from both the political and religious sides, the true Church of born again believers shall not be expected to remain divided. But as Christ prayed, they will have to be one for the gospel to have any meaning in the midst of changing times.

According to Dan 9:27, the political anti-Christ shall secure a peace treaty with Israel and the Palestinians for seven Years. In the middle of the 7 years i.e. after 3.5 years he shall go to the Hebrew temple and proclaim himself God (Mt 24: 15; 1Thes 2: 4). This shall immediately spark world unrest and Christ says that let him who is in the field not even return home to take anything but he should flee into the mountains.

3) End

The end of both anti-Christ shall be brought directly by Christ Himself when He appears in His visible coming (II Thes 2:8). The book of Rev 19: 19-20 says the two anti-Christ shall be captured and cast alive into the lake of fire. There are only two people who have been taken up to heaven alive body and soul (Enoch and Elijah) and there shall be only two persons that shall be cast alive into the lake of fire due to their great evil and wickedness - the political and religious anti- Christ.

The Tribulation

The tribulation describes the state of a general suffering and disaster to come upon the world. The tribulation shall be in two phases. The first phase shall be called the northern aggression which is not to be considered the real tribulation as such.

The second phase shall be the real tribulation which shall be the Armageddon battle involving the whole world. In the first phase, believers shall still be here and it shall help to push the fulfilment of certain prophecies; but before the second (Armageddon) believers shall be evacuated.

1 The northern Aggression

Read Joel 1; 2:1-10; Ez 38,39; Dan 11: 40-45

* Since America is the world’s only superpower, it would need that she be weakened so that the European Union can implement the peace deal as Bible prophecy states.

* Since the Bible in Dan 7 describes the fourth beast of the modern Roman empire to be coming up in the midst of political turmoil and chaos represented as winds striving upon the sea, it will require such an atmosphere of crisis created by the king of the north to permit the man of sin (anti-Christ) to come to prominence as the only “messiah” to the world’s political and economic problems. (Mid-east crisis and the consequences of the northern aggression)

The Bible passages quoted above describe a specific invasion of God’s land by a strong force. In all passages it describes the invasion as coming from the king of the north (Dan 11:40; Joel 2:20; Ez 38:17; 39:1-2). Unlike Armageddon that is coming upon the entire world, the specific nations to be implicated in this battle are all named in the passages.

But who is this king of the north? The Bible describes him as Gog in Ezekiel 38 and 39. Gog is the symbolic name of the nation's leader and Magog is his land. He is the prince of the ancient people called Rosh, Meshech and Tubal (Gen 10:2). The word "Rosh" means head. Magog is called Scythians by the Greeks. Meshech is the founder of Moschi, a barbarous people dwelling on the Moschian Mountains. The Greek word "Moschi" is from the Hebrew word "Meshech" and is the source of the great capital city northernmost of Israel.

The Hebrew word "Rosh," translated "chief" in KJV (Ez 38:2) means "head" or "top" of something; source of the name of the great nation whose capital city is cited above. Tubal is the son of Japheth founder of the Tiberni dwelling on the west of the Moschian Mountains. (Genealogical references taken from the book *The Late Great Planet Earth*)

The reasons for their attack as the Bible says are economic. They are coming to get spoil (Ez 38: 10-12). With the political and economic grievances Gog is having with the USA they shall exploit the unstable Middle East situation to launch a great attack on Israel and the Middle East area. This shall also involve America-Israel's friend and protector. This is to gain possession of strategic sites like the land bridge and mineral resources in order to compensate for America's unfavourable policies against them in other part of the world.

Even though Gog shall come with a great invasion on God's land and upon the region, God shall fight against him. God shall judge their atheism and mistreatment of His people. God shall call for a sword against him (Gog) from his mountains – meaning other great nations like the U.S shall retaliate against her. She shall fall and Israel shall gather the spoil (Ez. 38: 18-22; 39:3-9).

2- Armageddon

Read Joel 3:1-17

Armageddon is a byword which describes the horrors of war. The word in the Hebrew root word means to "cut off", to "slay". Armageddon is actually a physical terrain in Israel in which countless bloody battles have been fought. Other names include:

- The valley Jezreel
- The plain of Megiddo
- The valley of Decision
- The valley of Jehoshaphat.

Here, God shall gather the nations of the world for judgment. He shall be bringing an end to human rule with its injustices and godlessness to establish his own government of truth righteousness and peace in the world.

The battle of Armageddon shall be fought in two planes

i) Spiritually: spiritually, there shall be a clash in the cosmic or heavenly realms. Christ and His heavenly armies shall be fighting the evil powers of darkness that rule the world. Rev 17: 12-14 says the ten horns shall submit their power to the beast and they shall fight against the Lamb (spiritually) but He shall overcome them for he is Lord of lords and King of kings. In Rev 19: 11-16 and 19-21 the spiritual Armageddon is described in which the Rider on the white horse fought against the beast and his demonic armies and conquered them. The beast was captured alongside the false prophet (religious and political anti-Christ). Their bodies are given to the flame (also read Is 24: 21).

ii) Physically: On the earth, there shall be total distress and desolations. While the nations of the world shall be represented symbolically in the physical Armageddon in Israel, those very nations shall still be fighting one another within an across continents.

In addition to the nuclear, biological and chemical weapons that shall be used, the forces of nature shall also be against man. There shall be great earthquakes; the sun shall be harming man. Demonic spirit from hell shall also be tormenting people with incurable plaques etc.

The Bible says the earth shall be burnt and few men left and men shall be rarer than gold (Mat 21:1, 5, 19-20; Zach 14:1-3; Is 24:1-22; Mal 4: 1-2 etc).

During the tribulation period, that shall last 3.5 years, God shall miraculously protect His people –Israel as 1/3 of them shall survive (Zach 13:8-9) Christ shall intervene physically in His second and glorious coming only to save the world from total destruction.

The Millennial Reign of Christ

***Read Rev 20: 1-15**

The millennial reign of Christ describes the period in which Jesus Christ as King of Kings shall rule and reign upon the earth for a thousand years in a physical manner together with His saints.

When He shall appear from heaven with the clouds of believers, He shall land or set His feet on the Mount of Olives (read Zachariah 14: 4-5). As He sets His feet on the mount, it shall split into two and there shall be a great valley created. Scientists say there is already a giant fault line there.

He shall also be coming as the Sun of righteousness to give light, hope and healing to the despair and destruction which the world shall be facing in the tribulation. His coming shall heal and repair the world from the devastations it experienced during the tribulation. This shall bring about a quick restoration to the earth, as it was when God created it (Mal 4: 1-2).

1 Purpose of the millennium:

i) The first purpose of the millennium is to fulfil the objective for which God created man. The Bible says in Gen 1:27-28 that God made man to dominate over the entire creation. But when the devil deceived Adam, man lost that power to dominate and was instead dominated upon by the devil and by nature.

But as Jesus will finally defeat the devil and bind him during the thousand years, He, the last Adam, shall actually rule and dominate in the world as God intended from the beginning. (Read 1 Cor. 15: 45-47; Dan 7: 8-14, 18).

ii) To give a fulfilled meaning to the “millennium Sabbath” theory. In the creation account, God created the heavens and the earth in six days and rested on the seventh. He also sanctified the seventh day and it became holy. (Gen 2: 1-3).

On the seventh day, God was resting from His creative works. In the millennium, Christ the author and finisher of our salvation shall be resting from His redemptive works. For the past six thousand years, God has been working to redeem the world through various covenants and dispensations. But in the last seventh thousand years, He shall come to rest over the fruits of His labour. (Read Rev 11: 14-15; Rom 8 : 21-23) .

iii) The third purpose of the millennium is to act as a transition into God’s eternal kingdom. At this time, the Lord’s Prayer that God’s will be done on earth as in heaven shall be fulfilled. (Mt 6: 10). The earth shall be full of peace and righteousness as Christ renders justice and truth to all (Jer. 23:5-6). Thus, the millennium shall be a part and foretaste of God’s kingdom.

Believers too at this period shall be acquainted with responsibility and heaven’s standards before they enter the realm of God’s new heaven and new earth.

Life in the millennium shall be characterised by peace and righteousness, the saints reigning and also filled with true worship to God (Dan 7:26-27; Rev 20:4; Zach 14:16-17).

After the one thousand years are expired the devil and his demons shall be loosed out of their prison and shall now come and inspire a mass hatred and rebellion against the reign and government of Christ. Fire from heaven shall destroy them and shall destroy the present world, bringing in the great last judgment, and the new heaven and new earth. (Rev 20:7-15)

Chronology of Events

Among all the prophetic books, only the book of Joel treats end-time events in a chronological and successive manner. The story line has a straight cohesion and words like “afterwards”, “then” show this chronology. Details are in the other prophetic books. End-time events will occur in this manner:

i) The northern aggression to be ignited by the Arabs.(Joel 1;2: 1-10; Ez 38,39 ; Dan 11:40-45).

ii) An urgent call for repentance and restoration in Israel. (Joel 2:12-27)

iii) The outpouring of the Spirit, revival and the rapture (Joel 2:28-32; Haggai 2:7-9; 1 Thes 4:16-17).

iv)The anti-Christ’s covenant of peace in the Middle East, the abomination that causes desolations and Armageddon. (Joel 3:1-17; Dan 9:27; Zach 14:1-3).

v) Christ’s intervention in the tribulation and the millennial reign (Joel 3:18...; Rev 20...).

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