

Prophetic Fall Feasts of The LORD

March 13, 2019 Lesson #10 Building Blocks Of Prophecy

With all the killer storms, earthquakes, wars and disease dominating our news, it's not surprising that people are becoming more interested in End Times Prophecy. Even non-believers are wondering if the end is near. What is surprising is how little most Christians know about prophecy, especially since it comprises nearly 40% of the Bible's content, more than any other topic.

The Bible devotes more space to End Times Prophecy than it does to all the teachings of Jesus. For the believer, prophecy is neither scary nor confusing but the key to understanding God's plan for man.

The purpose of the next 2 lessons is to provide a solid foundation. When the foundation of a building is stable and solid, the entire building is stronger, able to withstand powerful forces that would otherwise weaken or even topple it. When the foundation of our study is solid, powerful arguments from scoffers and unbelievers cannot shake us or weaken our faith.

Seven Essential Building Blocks For A Solid Foundation

1. The Sequence of Major End Time Events
2. The Destiny of the Three Components of Humanity
3. The Purpose and Length of the Great Tribulation
4. The Purpose of the Rapture
5. The Conditions Surrounding the 2nd Coming
6. The Purpose and Length of the Millennium
7. Eternity

These seven essentials will help you avoid the mistakes that have thrown others off the track. This combination of facts will give you the ability to put all the prophetic verses in the Bible into their proper context.

A. The Sequence Of Major End Times Events

1. Prophecy can be confusing if you don't know what happens and when. Logical order
2. Best way to figure it out is to perform a "back scheduling" exercise.
 - Start at the end and identify the final outcome.
 - List all the things that have to happen to produce the final outcome.
 - Then put them in reverse order and back into the present.
3. Total of 9 major events yet to come:
 - Rapture of the Church
 - Christ's Second Coming
 - Eternity
 - Great Tribulation Period
 - Millennial Kingdom
 - Daniel's 70th Week

- Battle of Ezekiel 38-39
- Psalm 83 War
- Battle of Isaiah 17

The Final Outcome = Eternity

1. The last major event described in any detail in the Bible is the Kingdom Age or Millennium. It's the Lord's 1000 year reign on Earth, which is distinguished from and precedes Eternity.
 - Eternity can't happen until the Millennium is over.
2. The Millennium can't begin until after the 2nd Coming Of Jesus Christ when He returns to establish His Millennial Kingdom.
3. According to Matt. 24:29-30, the 2nd Coming doesn't happen until the end of the Great Tribulation, Time of Jacob's Trouble.

²⁹Immediately 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: ³⁰ 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.

4. The end of the Tribulation cannot happen until the anti-Christ stands in the Temple in Jerusalem and declares himself to be God.
 - Jesus warned Israel to look for "The Abomination of Desolation" as the marker of The Great Tribulation. [Matt. 24:15-21]
 - Daniel 9:27 indicates "The Abomination of Desolation" will happen at the mid-point of the 7 year period known as "Daniel's 70th week."
5. The Abomination of Desolation cannot happen until there is a Temple.
 - There has not been a Jewish Temple in Jerusalem since 70 AD.
 - There will not be one in Jerusalem until the Jews officially want one.
 - They will not need a Temple until God reinstates their Old Covenant relationship.
 - The Temple's only purpose is to worship Him according to Old Covenant requirements. His glory filled the Temple.
6. The Trigger to start Daniel's 70th week, beginning of the Tribulation Period, will be the signing of the covenant with the Anti-christ to build their Temple and restore Jewish worship as in the OT.
 - Remember: The Church Age will be over. This period is the last 7 yrs. under Law.
 - The Anti-christ and 7 year Tribulation Period cannot begin until there is a falling away and the restrainer is removed.

II Thess. 2:3-4, 7 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.⁷ For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.

7. The 70th Week cannot begin until the Battle of Ezekiel 38-39 is won.

- God will use that battle to awaken Israel and reinstate His covenant with them.

Note: Romans 11:25 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. This is a reference to the rapture of the Church.

Times of Gentiles Versus Fullness Of The Gentiles

Luke 21:24 Times Of The Gentiles

Rom. 11:25 Fullness Of The Gentiles

Rev. 7:9 Gentiles Will Be Saved During The Tribulation

Times Of The Gentiles = Begins with the reign of Nebuchadnezzar ~608 BC and will end at the 2nd Coming of Jesus Christ. 4 major Gentile Kingdoms [Daniel's statue; THE STONE crushes]

Fullness Of The Gentiles = A specific number of people who are saved during the Church Age.

When that number is reached, the RAPTURE takes place.

Gentiles Saved After The Rapture = Tribulation Saints; do not belong to the Church

8. The Rapture has to happen before the Battle of Ezekiel 38.

Put the Sequence of Major Events in its proper order, it looks like this:

The Rapture of the Church

The Battle of Ezekiel 38

Daniel's 70th week begins

The Great Tribulation

The 2nd Coming

The Millennium

Eternity

Note: The Rapture of the Church and the Battle of Ezek. 38 are the subject of debate as to the timing. Let's "back schedule" these 2 events.

Ezekiel 38 Battle: The Battle That Compels A National Return To God In Israel.

Ezek. 39:21-22, 28-29 "And I will set my glory among the nations, and all the nations shall see my judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid on them. The house of Israel shall know that I am the LORD their God, from that day forward.

Then they shall know that I am the LORD their God, because I sent them into exile among the nations and then assembled them into their own land. I will leave none of them remaining among the nations anymore. And I will not hide my face anymore from them, when I pour out my Spirit upon the house of Israel, declares the Lord GOD."

- The Lord has declared in no uncertain terms that He's going to use Ezekiel's battle to spiritually awaken His people and call them to Israel from all over the world.
- God will give Israel a decisive victory in the face of such overwhelming odds that everyone on Earth will realize that only God could have done it.

- When all the Jews in the world are suddenly drawn to Israel because God has called them there, they'll demand a Temple so they can resume their Old Covenant relationship with Him.
- This will result in the reinstatement of their Old Covenant relationship, revive Daniel's long-dormant "70 Week" prophecy for its final seven years.
- If He was calling them through the Messiah into a New Covenant relationship they wouldn't need a Temple, so it has to be a resumption of the Old Covenant, which as we know was interrupted seven years short of its promised duration.
- It requires a Temple be constructed so they can keep His covenant and sacrifices.

Consider: This was proven once before in history during the Babylonian captivity.

- ❖ When Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the 1st Temple, Israel ceased to exist.
- ❖ As soon as Cyrus the Persian defeated Babylon and freed the Jews, they returned to Israel and began building a Temple before they did anything else.
- ❖ Without a Temple there's no sacrifice for sin, and without that sacrifice, Jews cannot approach God.
- ❖ The Old and New Testaments refer to a Temple in Jerusalem at the End of the Age.
 - The only reason for a Temple is to perform Old Covenant ordinances.
 - Only a unified demand from the people of Israel accompanied by quiet acceptance from their Moslem neighbors would make the construction of a Temple even thinkable. Sound impossible?
 - Ezekiel's battle results in both a Jewish nation re-awakened to the presence of God in their national life and an utterly defeated Moslem attack force in no position to resist. When were the Moslem forces defeated? Israel at peace?

Two events we haven't put into the sequence yet: Battles of Psalm 83 & Isaiah 17

Yesterday's prophecies are today's headlines! When Israel wins these two battles all their next door enemies will be defeated and they'll enter into a brief period of peace.

These battles set the stage for Ezekiel's Battle in Ezek. 38:11: And thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwallled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates,

- These 2 battles can come either before or after the Rapture but very likely will happen before the Battle of Ezekiel 38 takes place.
- For these reasons, Ezekiel's battle has to take place on the threshold of Daniel's 70th week.
- The perfect conditions will finally exist to start building.

Now why does the Rapture of the Church have to precede Ezekiel's battle?

Rom. 11:25 Lest you be wise in your own conceits, I want you to understand this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

- ❖ According to Ezek. 37:7-10, Israel would be reborn first in unbelief.
- ❖ Paul said they'll remain partially estranged from God until the Gentile Church reaches its full complement (predetermined number) and arrives at its destination.

- ❖ The Greek word translated "fullness" in Romans 11:25 was a nautical term often used to describe the full complement of crew and cargo necessary to accomplish a ship's mission. The ship couldn't sail till those requirements were met.
- ❖ The one translated "come in" means to arrive at a designated place.

Then the veil will be pulled back as God reveals Himself to them again. As we saw above, He will use Ezekiel's battle to begin this by renewing the Old Covenant with them, later transitioning Israel from the Old Covenant to the New toward the end of the Great Tribulation.

[Zech 12:10]. Remember, if they didn't go back to the Old covenant first, they wouldn't need a Temple. He's picking them up where they left off in the New Testament.

Acts 15:13-18 After they finished speaking, James replied, "Brothers, listen to me. Simeon has related how God first visited the Gentiles, to take from them a people for his name. And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written, 'After this I will return, and I will rebuild the tent of David that has fallen; I will rebuild its ruins, and I will restore it, that the remnant of mankind may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles who are called by my name, says the Lord, who makes these things known from of old.'

- ❖ It was about 20 years after the cross. The controversy of the day was whether Gentiles had to become Jews before they could become Christians. And if not, what would become of Israel?
- ❖ In effect, the Lord's brother James explained to the Apostles and others present at the Council of Jerusalem that Israel was being temporarily set aside while God focused on the Church. After He had taken this "people for His name" [Church] from among the Gentiles, He would return and rebuild His Temple.
- ❖ The Greek words translated taken means to carry something away or remove it from its place, so the passage implies that He would take the Church somewhere and then come back to rebuild the Temple, restore Israel, and give what's left of mankind one final chance to seek Him.

These three Bible prophecies make it clear that as the End of the Age approaches, God will begin preparing Israel to be His once more. However, He won't be exclusively focused on them until He has finished building the Church and has taken us to our appointed place.

John 14:2-3 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

- He didn't promise to come back to be with us here where we are, but to take us there, where He is.
- After that, He would see to Israel's reawakening and the construction of their Temple.

Throughout Scripture, the Lord seems to be involved with either Israel or the Church, but never both at the same time. James bears this out in his pronouncement regarding the Church in Acts 15. [see p. 4]

All the leaders of the early church now knew that once God had accomplished His goals with the church, He would turn again to Israel, and that would signal the end of the Church Age.

Two Critical Points To Remember:

1. The Church didn't end the Age of Law, but only interrupted it 7 years short of its scheduled completion. Those seven years, called the 70th Week of Daniel, have to be fulfilled to complete the Old Covenant.
2. The Old and New Covenants, as practiced in Israel and the Church, are theologically incompatible, and therefore the two can only be on Earth at the same time while Israel is out of covenant. For Israel to return to the Lord, the Church has to be gone.

For this reason, the rebirth of Israel in 1948 and the reunification of Jerusalem in 1967 are seen as the most important signs of all that the End of the Age is upon us.

B. The Destiny Of The Three Components Of Humanity:

The Nations (aka Gentiles), Israel, & The Church

It is critical to know and understand a prophecy's intended recipient. 3 possibilities

I Cor. 10:32 Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks (Gentiles) or the church of God.

Gal. 3:26-28 You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

In the 4,000 or so years from the Creation to the Cross, the human race came to be divided into three distinct components from God's perspective.

1. From the Creation there was one race of Humans, the family of man, later called Gentiles.
2. In Genesis 12, God called Abraham to build a great nation. He and his descendants were first called Hebrews [Genesis 14:13], and later Jews [Ezra 4:12].
3. From that time on, the world's population was either Jew or Gentile.
4. At the cross God created the Church, taken from among both Jews and Gentiles but sharing a destiny with neither.
5. Now there were three, and everyone on Earth belongs to of one of them.
6. In his epistles, Paul always took pains to distinguish the Church from both Jews and Gentiles, in effect calling the Church a new race of Human in the passages cited above.

The Gentiles:

1. According to Isaiah 56:6-8, Gentiles who converted to Judaism before the cross became part of Israel and share its destiny (see below) as long as they died in faith of a coming Redeemer.
2. Gentiles who are born again during the Church Age become part of the church and eventually will populate the New Jerusalem [Rev. 21:27].

3. Gentiles who meet the Lord after the rapture are called tribulation believers. If they are martyred for their faith, their spirits will go to serve God in His Temple [Rev 7:13-17] and will be joined with resurrection bodies at the time of the 2nd Coming [Rev. 20:4].
4. If they survive the Great Tribulation, they will help re-populate the nations of Earth in the Kingdom age (Millennium).

The Jews:

1. The spirits of Jews who died in faith of a coming redeemer before Jesus went to the cross were taken into Heaven with Him after His resurrection [Matt. 27:52-53].
2. They'll also receive resurrection bodies at the Second Coming [Daniel 12:1-3].
3. Jews who are born again during the Church age become part of the Church and after the Rapture/Resurrection will populate the New Jerusalem [Rev. 21:27].
4. Jews who receive Jesus as their Messiah after the rapture will be hidden in the Jordanian desert [possibly Petra] during the Great Tribulation, last 3 ½ years [Rev. 12:14].
5. Along with their Old Testament counterparts, they'll dwell in Israel during the Millennium and help re-populate the earth. [Ezekiel 43:6-7].

Whether Jew or Gentile, those who reject Jesus as Lord and Savior during their lifetime will be tormented in Hell until they're brought back to life to stand trial at the Great White Throne judgment of Revelation 20:11-15 which takes place at the end of the Millennium.

At that time, they'll be sentenced to eternal suffering in the Lake of Fire. [Rev. 20:14]

In the Old Testament, God promised Israel that He would return one day to dwell among them in their land on Earth forever [Ezekiel 43:6-7].

In the New Testament, Jesus promised the Church that He would come back and take us to be with Him in His Father's House [John 14:1-3].

Both promises come true. Israel is not the Church nor is the Church Israel, and both groups are distinct from the Gentile nations. Much of the confusion surrounding End Times prophecy results either from the failure to understand, or the refusal to accept, this truth.

Many Christians today believe that the Church has replaced Israel in God's plan and has inherited all of Israel's blessings. Israel no longer serves any purpose in the world, they think, so when God talks about Israel in the New Testament, He really means the Church. Therefore they misunderstand the Doctrine of Election, the Olivet Discourse, the Great Tribulation, and other New Testament teachings having to do with Israel.

C. The Purpose And Length Of The Great Tribulation

Jer. 30:7, 11 Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it. For I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet I will not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure and will not leave thee altogether unpunished.

Matt. 24:22 He said that if it were left to run its course, not a single human being would survive. But for the sake of His people, He would stop it at its appointed time.

Two-Fold Purpose of the Great Tribulation

1. Completely destroy the nations among whom His people have been scattered
2. Discipline Israel, purifying them to dwell with Him in the Promised Land.

Consider: The Church, having been purified at the cross, requires neither destruction nor discipline and has no business in the Great Tribulation.

If you believe in the Lord's all-sufficient work on the cross, then you know that the Church has to be protected from the End Times judgments, not purified by them.

Length of the Great Tribulation: Time of Jacob's Trouble

- ❖ Dan. 12:7 = 3 1/2 years
- ❖ Rev. 11:2 = 42 months
- ❖ Rev. 12:6 = 1260 Days

Daniel 9:27 The Abomination That Causes Desolation will occur in the middle of the last seven years, or 3 1/2 years from the end.

Matt. 24:21 Jesus identified this event as the official beginning of the Great Tribulation.

II Thess. 2:4 Paul confirms this and adds detail by describing the anti-Christ standing in the Temple proclaiming himself to be God.

This particular defilement of the Temple happened once in history as a "type or shadow" of the real event to come that begins the yet future "Time of Jacob's Trouble."

In 168 BC. Syrian King Antiochus Epiphanes captured the Temple and converted it into a pagan worship center. He erected a statue of Zeus with his own face on it in the Holy Place, thereby proclaiming himself to be God and demanded the Jews worship it on pain of death.

He also killed a pig on the altar of the Temple.

Result: The Temple unfit for use. It triggered the 3 1/2 year Maccabean Revolt. The Jewish recapture and cleansing of the Temple in 165 BC is celebrated in the eight-day Feast of Hanukkah.

200 years after this event, Jesus told His Disciples that the people of Israel should watch for a future Abomination That Causes Desolation and referred to Daniel's prophecy in doing so [Matt. 24:15-21]. He said it would kick off the Great Tribulation; Time of Jacob's Trouble

Therefore, the Abomination That Causes Desolation that took place in 168 BC was only a partial fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy. Jesus referred to it so people in the end times would be able to recognize the complete fulfillment when they saw it. They'll know to look for a man standing in the Temple calling himself God and demanding that his image be worshiped.

Jesus told those living in Judea (Israel) that when they see it to flee into hiding immediately, for the Great Tribulation will have begun.