

Prophetic Fall Feasts of The LORD

Nov. 20, 2019 Lesson #44 John 7:37-52 A Challenge Uncovers A Prophecy

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| A. Jesus In Jerusalem Before The Feast | Disbelief | John 7:1-10 |
| B. In the Midst of the Feast | Debate | John 7:11-36 |
| C. Jesus In Jerusalem The Last Day Of The Feast | Division | John 7:37-52 |

3 groups of people: Religious Jews; citizens of Jerusalem; pilgrims attending the festival

John 7:37-39 In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.³⁸ He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.³⁹ (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

John 7:40 Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet.

John 7:41a Others recognized his authority and said, "This is the Christ."

John 7:41b But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee?

John 7:42 Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?

John 7:43 So there was a division among the people because of him.

John 7:44 And some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him.

Some wanted to seize him and have him stoned for blasphemy, that is, claiming to be God.

Recall: The chief priests and Pharisees had sent officers to bring Jesus. [John 7:32]

John 7:45-49 Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him? The officers answered, Never man spake like this man.

Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived? ⁴⁸ Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him? ⁴⁹ But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed.

- Why didn't they arrest Him? "This Jesus is more than a man! No mere man speaks as He does!" They were "arrested" by the Word of God, spoken by the Son of God. They were faced with His obvious authority.
- The leaders refused to face facts honestly but passed judgment on the basis of their prejudices and their superficial examination of the facts. "So some of the people have believed on Jesus! So what? These common people know nothing about the law anyway!"
- Have any important people—like ourselves—believed on Him? Of course not!"
- God has hidden His truth from "the wise and prudent" and revealed it to "spiritual babes," the humble people who will yield to Him [Matt. 11:25-27].
- Paul was a very intelligent rabbi when God saved him, yet he had to be "knocked down" before he would acknowledge that Jesus Christ was the resurrected Son of God.

- If only they had honestly examined the evidence, they would have discovered that, indeed, He was the Christ, the Son of God. They identified Jesus with Galilee [John 1:45-46; 7:52] when in reality He was born in Bethlehem.

John 7:50-52 Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,)

⁵¹ Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?

⁵² They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look:

for out of Galilee arises no prophet.

- Nicodemus = 3x in John's gospel = always "came to Jesus by night"
- Not afraid to take his stand for truth
- The rulers had already passed judgment and were trying to arrest Him before He had even been given a fair and lawful trial!
- What did Nicodemus want them to consider about Jesus? His word and His works.
- It was Jesus the Teacher and the miracle worker who had attracted Nicodemus's interest in the first place in John 3:2.

The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

- Jesus had pointed to His works as proof of His deity (John 5:36).
- He repeatedly urged the people to pay attention to His words.
- You can hear the sarcasm and disdain in the reply of the rulers: "Are you a lowly and despised Galilean too?" Refused to admit Nicodemus was right in asking for a fair trial.
- They challenged Nicodemus to search the prophecies to see if he could find any statement that a prophet would come out of Galilee.
- Jonah was a prophet from Galilee whom Jesus was a picture of Himself in death, burial, and resurrection [Matt. 12:38-41].
 - Greek Scholar, A.T. Robertson: "As a matter of fact, Jonah, Hosea, Nahum & possibly Elijah, Elisha, & Amos were from Galilee."

Perhaps Nicodemus recalled Isaiah 9:1-2 and began to trace the great messianic prophecies in the Old Testament. If he did, then he became convinced that Jesus of Nazareth was the very Son of God. [Couple Isaiah 9 with Matt. 4:12-16]

Matt. 4:12-16 Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee; ¹³ And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali: ¹⁴ That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, ¹⁵ The land of Zebulun, and the land of Naphtali, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; ¹⁶ The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up. [quotes Isa. 9:1-2]

Isa. 9:1-2 Nevertheless there will be no more gloom for her who was in anguish; in earlier times He treated the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali with contempt, but later on He shall make it glorious, by the way of the sea, on the other side of Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles.

² The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

- Matthew points out: Jesus DWELT in Capernaum.
- Matthew points out: Capernaum is, in the "territory of Zebulun and Naphtali."
- They were the very first tribes of the northern kingdom of Israel deported by the Assyrians 700 years before Matthew wrote.
- It has been an extremely long time since that region was called the area of Zebulun and Naphtali. Imagine a modern-day writer referring to Paris as being in the "territory of the Franks". It seems Matthew is trying to get us to think historically.
- It seems That Jesus — the son of David — is beginning his restoration of the Davidic kingdom at ground zero where God's covenant judgment had fallen seven centuries before.
- Recall His message: Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.

Significance of Galilee

John 1:46 And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.

- ❖ Jesus' parents were from Nazareth in Galilee.
- ❖ 11 of the 12 disciples were from Galilee.
- ❖ Jesus told 19 of his 32 recorded parables in Galilee.
- ❖ 25 of 33 recorded miracles were performed in Galilee. Includes feeding of 5000
- ❖ Site of transfiguration was in Galilee
- ❖ Capernaum in Galilee: "His own city"
- ❖ Great Commission was given on a mountain in Galilee.

1. Jacob's Prophecy Over ZEBULUN - Son #10

Gen. 49:13 Zebulun shall dwell by the haven of the sea; He shall become a haven for ships, And his border shall adjoin Sidon.

Note: When Zebulun was born, Leah said, "God has presented me with a precious gift. This time my husband will treat me with honor, because I have borne him six sons." [Genesis 30:20]. Zebulun means "dwelling" or "honor."

Key Pt #1 Upon entering the Promised Land, Zebulun failed to drive out the Canaanites although they did subject them to forced labor [Judges 1:30]. This was INCOMPLETE OBEDIENCE to God's CLEAR COMMAND to drive out all the inhabitants of the land (Num. 33:52).

From the beginning these unfaithful Jews suffered the problem of mixed marriages and the inevitable pagan influence resulting from the unequal yoke.

Consider: Not responding fully to God's Word is a trait to which we all can relate. How often do we choose to follow our own paths and not fully obey God?

Key Pt. #2 Later, Zebulun returned to God and followed His commands.

a. Deborah & Barak praised the men of Zebulun for rallying to the cause and valiantly fighting Sisera. [Judges 4:6; 5:18]

Judges 5:18 Zebulun and Naphtali were a people that jeopardized their lives unto the death in the high places of the field.

b. Zebulun joined David at Hebron to transfer Saul's kingdom to David. [I Chron. 12:23, 33, 40]
I Chron. 12:33 Of Zebulun, there were 50,000 who went out in the army, who could draw up in battle formation with all kinds of weapons of war and helped David with an undivided heart.

Brave people whose warriors had excellent reputations; stable; trustworthy

Consider: While at times we turn away from God, His love for us draws us back into communion with Him and compliance with His will.

Spiritual Application: Numerous verses in the Bible extol God for His unfailing patience, love, and faithfulness. Indirectly, Zebulun's history reminds us that God is always present when we return to Him. No matter how battered or bruised we may be or how ashamed we may feel about past transgressions, God can still use us.

Key Pt. #3 Zebulun will extend to the sea in the Millennium when his borders will extend as far as Sidon on the Mediterranean. [Ezek. 48:1-8; 23-27] Jacob's prophecy fulfilled! [Gen. 49:13]

2. Jacob's Prophecy Over NAPHTALI "My Wrestling" Son #6

Gen. 49:21 Naphtali is a doe let loose; He gives beautiful words.

a. The image is of one who springs forth with great speed and provides good news.

b. Deut. 33:23 Moses' Blessing: Naphtali is abounding with the favor of the Lord and is full of his blessing; he will inherit southward to the lake.

c. Possessed the most fertile and productive land in all of Canaan.

d. They also failed to utterly drive out the Canaanites. They did force them to do labor.

e. Naphtali responded to Gideon's call to repel the Midianites and Amalekites from their encampment in the Jezreel Valley. [Judges 6:35] Naphtali followed Gideon into battle.

f. When David was to assume the throne, the tribe of Naphtali provided 1,000 officers, together with 37,000 men carrying shields and spears, along with a caravan of food, to help him. [I Chron. 12:34, 40]

g. The tribe of Naphtali had its ups and downs. Its history includes incomplete obedience and shades of cowardice, but it includes bravery under Gideon and a godly support of King David.

Lesson: Probably the greatest lesson is that God exalts the humble.

Naphtali (as part of Galilee) was despised.

Key Point: The portion of land given to Zebulun [lower] and Naphtali [upper] became known as "Galilee of the Gentiles."

Isaiah spoke of this area in Isaiah 9:1-2.

But in the midst of judgment there is the promise and the certainty of the Lord's deliverance and there shall be no gloom for Her Who Was In Anguish.

In the former time [the Lord] brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the Latter Time He Will Make It Glorious, by the way of the Sea [of Galilee, the land] beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations. The people who walked in darkness have seen a great Light; those who dwelt in the land of intense darkness and the shadow of death, upon them has the Light shined.

1. Her Who Was In Anguish: This refers to the lands occupied by the Northern Kingdom of Israel after the split in 931 BC.
2. Being most remote from Judah it was nearest to the foreign countries and so subject to heathen influences. Not only the location contributed to its disgrace, but it had been the first to tremble in awe before the might of Assyria.
3. These lands experienced gloom and anguish at the hands of the Assyrian invaders.
Place of devastation!
4. Jews were removed from their homelands by the Assyrians [Gentiles] and were replaced with Assyrians and other non-Jews [Gentiles].
5. This set the stage for this area becoming a "melting pot" of Jews and Gentiles: hence, the name "Galilee of the Gentiles."

Isaiah's Prophecy:

1. Announcement: An age of peace is coming. It will begin with the coming of the Messiah [1st coming] who will be your Savior and future King.
2. God's prophetic promise: This land which was now experiencing gloom and anguish would not always be in darkness.
3. The people in the north who have suffered so much have the prospect of a wonderful new beginning. "Light" [signifies prosperity, peace and joy] will shine on people who were walking in "darkness" [adversity, despair, gloom and evil].
4. "A great light has dawned on those in the land of the shadow of death."

Note: This language is used of the Messianic Age.

5. Isaiah prophesied: In the past God humbled the land of Zebulun and Naphtali...but in the future, He will honor this area - Galilee.
6. This prediction is Messianic: Galilee would be honored as the first to hear Christ's preaching. This would more than compensate for their humiliation at the hands of the Assyrians centuries before.

Key Point: Initial Fulfillment Of Isaiah's Prophecy

Note: Matthew quotes Isaiah in conjunction with the beginning of Jesus' ministry in Galilee.

Matt. 4:12-17 Now when Jesus heard that John had been imprisoned, He departed into Galilee. And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt [made his home there] in Capernaum, which is upon the seacoast, in the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali, so that what was spoken by Isaiah the prophet would be fulfilled: "Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles - the people who sit in darkness have seen a great light, and on those sitting in the region and the shadow of death a light has dawned. From that time Jesus Began To Preach This Message: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."

- a. Jesus' withdrawal to Galilee was no mistake. It was a fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy. More proof Jesus is the Messiah.
- b. This despised district, despised even in New Testament times, was glorified when God honored it, and the fulfillment of the prophecy occurred when Jesus Christ the Son of God dwelt in Capernaum.
- c. This area was looked down on by the Judeans. It had become diluted ethnically and spiritually when the Assyrians brought foreigners to live there.
- d. Galilee was the most pagan of the Jewish provinces; considered less spiritual and less pure than Judea.
- e. Noted for being the nest of revolution
- f. Jesus' first miracle was in Cana of Galilee.
- g. This area had truly been in darkness. Miracles included the healing of the centurion's servant, exorcising the man with an unclean spirit and healing of the paralytic who was lowered through the roof.
- h. The honor was restored to this area with the coming of Jesus Christ. All His disciples [but Judas] were from Galilee.

Ray Ortlund: God came to His people first where they had suffered the most and from that place He launched salvation for the world.

Recall: Zebulun = dwelling; honor Naphtali = doe let loose; good news

Pulpit Commentary: For thirty years he had dwelt at Nazareth, in Zebulun. There he had first come forward to teach in a synagogue (Luke 4:16-21); in Galilee he had done his first miracles (John 2:11; 4:54); at Capernaum. "upon the seacoast, in the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali." He commenced his preaching of repentance (Mt. 4:13-17).

The "light" first streamed forth in this quarter, *Glorifying The Region On Which Contempt Had Long Been Poured.*

MacArthur Just as Isaiah had predicted eight centuries earlier, the despised, sin-darkened, and rebellious Galileans were the first to glimpse the Messiah, the first to see the dawning of God's New Covenant! Not mighty and beautiful Jerusalem, the queen city of the Jews, but Galilee of the Gentiles would first hear Messiah's message. Not the learned, proud, and pure Jews of Jerusalem, but the mongrel, downcast, nontraditional mixed multitude of Samaria and Galilee had that great honor. To those who were neediest, and who were most likely to recognize their need, Jesus went first. The fact that Jesus began His ministry in Samaria and Galilee, rather than in Jerusalem and Judea, emphasizes the fact that His gospel of salvation was for the whole world.

As the new day of the gospel dawned, the *First Rays Of Light Shined In Galilee.*

[Recall: 1. Jacob's blessing on Naphtali: Beautiful words and good news.

2. Leah = wife not favored. Now my husband will Treat Me With Honor.

Zebulun means dwell and honor.]

While they deserved God's allowing them to be treated with contempt because of their unfaithfulness and their sins, they did not deserve the gracious promise of a Savior Who would minister powerfully where sin had previously abounded greatly.

Rom. 5:20 Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.

Paul uses "abounded" to describe this abundance of sin. The Greek tense describes an abundance that is growing larger and more expansive with the passing of time.

The implication is that sin is never stagnant but continually grows, increases, and expands.

Paul doesn't stop there! He goes on to say, "...Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."

- ❖ "much more abound" = Greek word *hyperperisseo*, which describes something that is growing out of measure, beyond proportion, and out of its banks to a far-stretched extreme.

It is like a giant river that is being flooded with waters from upstream. Those waters are coming downstream so fast that the river can no longer hold the raging current in its banks. Its water rises, rises, and rises until it finally begins pouring out of its banks and begins to flood everything in sight.

Romans 5:20 could be interpreted: "For wherever sin exists in abundance and is multiplying and constantly expanding, that is precisely the time and place where grace is poured out in a far greater, surpassing quantity."

Such is the amazing grace of God! He is the true light of the world that lights every person. He brings to a darkened world grace and truth, and the sure promise of peace.

Near the end of Matthew 9 we reach a critical turning point.

1. Jesus preaches and performs miracles in the land of Zebulun and Naphtali, Galilee of the Gentiles:

Matt. 9:33 And when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake: and the multitudes marveled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel.

The attitude of the Pharisees crystallizes into entrenched hostility:

Matt. 9:34 He casts out devils through the prince of the devils.

Why is this a critical turning point? Matt. 9:36 But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, like sheep having no shepherd.

- ❖ Ezekiel 34 is directed to the northern kingdom: The false shepherds of Israel are castigated by God for shearing, killing, and eating, rather than feeding, the sheep.

Ezek. 34:11-14 For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. ¹² As a shepherd seeks out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. ¹³ And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel.

- ❖ Ezekiel promises restoration for the "ten tribes of Israel" who were deported by Assyrians seven centuries before Christ.

Ezek. 34:15 I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord GOD. God promises that "I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep" and deliver them from their bad shepherds as well as from their enemies.

- ❖ Matthew 10, Jesus begins the act of restoration promised in Ezekiel 34.
- ❖ He calls 12 disciples and empowers them to be apostles.

Matt. 10:5-7 These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:

⁶ But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

⁷ And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

His proclamation of the kingdom through salvation is what ends the despair, for believers in Him are not lost in gloom and despair, for we Know that What He Promised Will Come To Pass At His Second Coming.