

Studies in Prophecy

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God's Plan for the Earth - Part I

“You shall call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his Father David. And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.”

Reason for Blessing

A good reason for blessing is that Satan will be shut up in the bottomless pit for 1,000 years (see Revelation 20:1-3). Man will be tried under ideal conditions, but will miserably fail. This is God’s final test of man. The curse will be removed. The original curse put upon the earth, in Gen. 3:17-19, will be removed:

1. The productive potential of the earth will be unleashed. Amos 9:13 says, “Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper.” See also Isaiah 30:26. One of the reasons for this increase is “The light of the moon shall be like the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold.”

2. The animal kingdom will lose its venom and ferocity (see Isaiah 11:6-9, Isaiah 35:9, and Isaiah 65:25).

Thing will be like Eden before the Fall:

Sickness will be removed – no one will die from natural causes (see Isaiah 65:20). A man 100 years old will be considered a child. There will be no deformed persons, no imbeciles, no immaturity, and no retarded – No broken homes.

There will be peace throughout the world. No armies, navies, air forces, or police forces.

There will be a perfect economic system and economic prosperity.

There will be a unified language (see Zephaniah 3:9).
“For then will I give to the peoples a pure language.”
The curse of Babel will be removed.

There will be unified worship. The entire world will worship Jesus Christ.

Events yet to come:

1. The rising led by the Prince or Leader of Russia (see Revelation 20:7-9).
2. Satan cast into the Lake of Fire (see Revelation 20:10).
3. The Great White Throne (see Revelation 20:11-15).
4. The eternal state (see Revelation 20).

Some time back, we asked, “Who would live during the Millennium?”

Now I want to ask, “Who will inherit heaven?”

What must I do to be saved?

Believe. See Acts 16:31.

Believe what? Believe that you are a sinner - Believe that Christ died for sinners - Believe with all your heart that He can save you. Confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus (see Romans 10:9).

God's Plan for the Earth (Zechariah 14:4-11)

Zechariah 14:4 - "His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives." Describe the two phases of the Lord's coming:

1. The rapture - in the air. Shout (Lord) - voice (Arch-angel) - trumpet. The promise of his coming ("I will come again").
2. His coming to the earth (Acts 1, and 2 Thessalonians 1:7-8).

At his coming to the earth certain physical changes take place.

Zechariah 14:5-9 - The Mount of Olives will cleave in two, leaving a great valley. Into this valley the remnant will flee for safety. (Zec. 14:5) This valley will extend from the eastern sea (Persian Gulf) to the hinder sea (The Mediterranean). Ultimately these seas will be joined and Jerusalem will become a seaport (the world's greatest). See Zec. 14:8. Jerusalem will become the metropolis of the world (see Zec. 14:6-8). The Lord Jesus will reign supreme over all the earth (Zec. 14:9).

Who Will Inhabit the Earth During the Millennium?

The Inhabitants are:

1. The believing remnant of Jews (see Rev. 7).
2. An innumerable company of Gentiles (see Rev. 7) saved during the tribulation. (Not one saved soul left after the Rapture (Miracle) seven years later).

The Judgment of the Nations (Matthew 25:31-46) - [Stress the individual aspect] There will be sheep on one side and goats on the other. Matthew 25:36 says, "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, 'Come

you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” Only believers will enter the kingdom. Matthew 25: 41 says, “Then shall he say also to them on the left hand, “Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.” The martyrs of the Tribulation will be resurrected.

Note the two phases of the first resurrection (see Revelation 20:4-6):

1. The Church
2. Tribulation saints (O.T. saints resurrected here also).

Why is this period, known as the Millennium, such a time of unprecedented blessing?

There are several reasons:

1. The Millennium is actually the fulfillment of all the promises given to Abraham and David.
2. To Abraham’s seed, God promised perpetual blessings, in the land (Palestine).
3. To David, God promised a royal house, a king, and an eternal throne (see Luke 1:32-33).

God's Plan for the Earth - Part II

Zechariah 14:4-11 and Isaiah 11:1-10

Zechariah describes the Lord's visible return in glory for us. In Zechariah 14:4, he says that the Lord's feet shall stand upon the Mount of Olives in that day. He will come in the air to rapture His blood-bought people, and his own will rise to meet him. But his coming will be secret, silent, and swift.

Seven years later will be His coming to the earth (see Acts 1-2 and Thessalonians 1:7-8). At this time, He will come with His people in power and in great glory. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (see Revelation 19:11-16).

In a previous study we noticed how this took place. Upon His coming to the earth, certain physical changes will take place. The Mount of Olives will cleave in two, making a very great valley. Israel will be at the point of annihilation when this happens, and she will flee into it for safety. The believing remnant will see Him, whom their forefathers had crucified. As they see their Messiah they will say, "What are these wounds in your hands?" Then He shall answer, "I received these in the house of my friends" (see Zechariah 13:6).

This revelation will cause them great sorrow, and as they repent and receive Christ as their Messiah, "a nation will be born in a day." This valley will extend from the eastern sea (the Persian Gulf) to the western sea (the Mediterranean Sea). Jerusalem will become the

world's greatest seaport and will also become the metropolis of the world. The Lord Jesus will reign over all the earth. And, as Luke 1:32-33 says, "He shall be great, the Son of the Highest shall sit upon the Throne and He shall reign and of His kingdom there shall be no end."

Who, then, will inherit the earth during the Millennium? The earth will be inherited by both the believing remnant of the Jews, and also an innumerable company of Gentiles saved during the Tribulation (see Revelation 7). Their spiritual status will be determined at the time Christ judges the nations. Those whom the Lord recognizes as sheep will go into the Kingdom and be placed at his right hand. Then, the king will say to them, "Come you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom, prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (see Matthew 26: 31-46).

Only believers will enter the kingdom. Furthermore, at this time, those who were martyred during the Tribulation will be resurrected. In addition, Old Testament saints will also be resurrected. All of these saints will together live and reign with Christ one thousand years (see Revelation 20:4).

Why will the Millennium be such a time of unprecedented blessing?

1. The Millennium is the fulfillment of the promises given to Abraham and David: To Abraham's seed, God promised perpetual blessings in the land. To David, God promised a royal house, a king and an eternal throne, "He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David and He shall reign over the

house of Jacob forever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:32-33).

2. In the Millennium, Satan will be shut up in the bottomless pit for 1,000 years (see Revelation 20:1-3). The Beast and the False Prophet will be cast into the Lake of Fire. Man will be tried under ideal conditions, but will miserably fail. Children born during this time will be unregenerate. This will be God's final testing of man.

3. In the Millennium, the curse put upon the earth by Adam's sin will be removed (see Genesis 3:17-19). Romans 8:22 says, "Creation groans and travails in pain until now... and waits for the manifestation of the sons of God." The productive potential of the earth will be unleashed, and there will be continuous productivity. As Amos 9:13 says, "'Behold the days shall come,' saith the Lord, 'that the ploughman shall overtake the reaper.'"

4. In the Millennium, the animal kingdom will lose its venom and ferocity.

The wolf will live with lamb.

The leopard shall lie down with the kid.

The calf and the young lion will be friendly.

And a little child shall lead these.

The cow and the bear shall feed together.

Their young shall lie down together.

The lion shall eat straw like an ox.

Snakes will lose their venom...little children will play with them (Isaiah 11:6-8).

5. In the Millennium, sickness will be removed, and no one will die of natural causes. A person who is 100 years old will be counted a child. There will be no cancer or arthritis. The eyes of the blind will be opened, and the ears of the deaf will be unstopped. The lame man will leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb will sing. And there will be no impaired minds.

6. In the Millennium, there will be peace throughout the whole world- no armies, navies, air forces, or police force.

7. In the Millennium, there will be economic prosperity.

8. In the Millennium, there will be a unified language. The curse of Babel will be removed. As Zephaniah 3:9 says, "I will give to the peoples a pure language."

9. In the Millennium, there will be unified worship. The entire world will worship the Lord Jesus Christ (see Zephaniah 1:4-16).

At the close of this illustrious reign, Satan will be loosed from the bottomless pit. See Revelation 20:7-9. He shall deceive many in the nations of the world. (Special mention is made of the leader and people of Russia. They welcome him gladly.) Satan will gather the rebels together, whose number will be as great as the sands of the sea. From the four corners of the earth, this satanic force will encompass Jerusalem, but fire will come down from God and devour them. In Revelation 20:10, Satan's doom described for us, "The devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire where the beast and the false prophet are and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."

In Revelation 20:11-15, we see a description of the second resurrection and the Great White Throne Judgment. This judgment is described as great because of the almighty power demonstrated, as well as greatness of the eternal consequences.

In Revelation 1, we see a description of John's vision. He sees both a great white and the one who is seated upon it, namely, the Lord Jesus Christ. Then he sees a vision of all those who stand before God- they the dead, the small and the great. They are of all ranks and degrees- both high and low, both respected and outcast, both young and old.

He then sees the books being opened. But why? The dead, the small and great are being judged according to their works, which are written in the books. Every man is being judged according to his works. He sees the sea, the graves, and hell give up their dead and Death and Hell, Hades being cast into the lake of fire (Gehenna). This is the second death, and those who experience this death will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

In our past stories we have listened to the voices of the world, the Father and the Son, and now we hear the voice of the Holy Spirit. "Be wise therefore oh Kings, he instructed ye judges of the earth." It is a call to all mankind to be reconciled to the Son. To kiss His feet with trembling, to accept His wounded hand in token that you surrender to Him. Blessed are they who put their trust in Him.

Daniel's Seventy Weeks

Read Daniel 9:20-27

Introduction

The chronology of Israel's future is outlined in this prophecy. It is also another instance of the truth and accuracy of the Scriptures. "Heaven and earth shall pass away," "Thy Word is truth." As the great image of Nebuchadnezzar and the vision of Daniel's beasts foretold the history of the Gentile world, so Daniel's prophecy of the seventy weeks foretells the history of the Jewish people. The entire prophecy has to do with Daniel's people and their holy city—Jerusalem.

Prior to this remarkable vision, Daniel had been studying prophecy (see Dan. 9:2). The Jews were captive in Babylon. Daniel saw that the prophetic word indicated that this captivity would last for seventy years (see Jeremiah 25:11). Daniel was taken captive when he was very young. Now, he was an old man and he knew that those seventy years were almost finished.

In preparation for the return of the Jews to their own land, Daniel commences to pray, supplicate, and repent for the sins of his people (see Dan. 9:20). While he was praying in this fashion, the great angel Gabriel gave him this vision now under consideration. This vision is a look down the vista of the ages of Daniel's people and Daniel's City, Jerusalem. Daniel 9:24-27 contains the contents of this remarkable prophecy.

[Explain the Hebrew term "weeks" (Cp. Gen 29:26-28)]
The same word is used in the Hebrew for a week of

seven days or a week of seven years. It is obvious then from the context that what is meant by a “week” is really seven years. The entire time period involved is exactly seventy weeks or 490 years (see Dan. 9:24).

Notice that this period is divided into three lesser periods (see Dan. 9:25-27):

(1) A period of seven weeks = 49 years (2) A period of sixty-two weeks = 434 years (3) A period of one week = 7 years

The Three Periods

What happened in each one of these periods? If we can determine when this period began we can trace prophecy in history. Our text clearly defines the start.

The First Period - (See Dan. 9:25): “From the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem.” Artaxerxes issued the commandment to build Jerusalem on the 14th of March, 445 B.C. (This is history now, see Nehemiah 2). For the next seven weeks or forty-nine years, the returned remnant built the city-walls and sanctuary in troublous times (see Dan. 9:25 along with the books of Ezra and Nehemiah).

The Second Period - The second period is of sixty-two weeks or 434 years. At the end of this period, Daniel says that certain things will happen. What are they?

(1) Messiah, Prince, shall appear (see Dan. 9:25, and Luke 4:18-19). [Describe the Lord’s entrance into Jerusalem riding on the colt of a donkey] See Mark 11:1-11, Luke 19:28-39, Matthew 21:1-9, and John 12:12-18. Quote also Zechariah 9:9:

“Rejoice greatly o daughter of Zion; shout o daughter of Jerusalem; behold thy king commeth unto thee; he is just, and having Salvation; lowly, and riding upon a colt, the foal of a donkey.”

The Lord presented Himself to His people in the way that the prophetic scriptures said that Messiah would, but instead of crowning Him they crucified Him. Historians give the date of His entrance into Jerusalem as exactly 483 years or sixty-nine weeks of years from the commandment of Artaxerxes (see Dan. 9:26).

(2) Messiah would be cut off and have nothing (i.e. No regal glory or crown). The Gospels tell us that, “He came unto his own and his own received him not.” He presented Himself as King and Messiah. The People said, “Away with Him, we will not have this man to reign over us.” Pilate asked, “Shall I crucify your King?” They replied, “We have no king but Caesar.” So we know that Messiah was cut off and was deprived of His Kingdom.

(3) Daniel 9:26b: “And the people of the prince shall come and shall destroy the city and the temple, and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end wars and desolations are determined.” Did this happen? [Describe what happened in the year A.D. 70 - Titus]

The Third Period (The Final Week) - The expression, “the time of the end” is found often in Daniel and elsewhere in the Holy Scriptures. It means and refers to the last seven years, the Tribulation, in which God shall deal with the Jews. This is still future, the seventieth week. The period of time in which we live, known as the Dispensation of Grace, or the Church Age, is also described by some as, “The Great Parenthesis.”

When this period of waiting closes, the prince spoken of in Dan. 9:26 shall appear. He is the great Roman leader of the last days, called in Revelation 13, "The Beast," because he is the embodiment of every evil principle in all the empires of the world.

When he appears, he will pretend to be the friend of the Jews, making a covenant with them for seven years (see Revelation 6:1). Dan. 9:27 says:

"He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week = (seven years) and in the midst of the week (3½ yrs.), he shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured out upon the desolator."

In the midst of the week (3½ years), he will break the covenant and demand that all worship of Jehovah cease: "The abomination of desolation."

The next three and one half years is what is known as the "time of Jacob's trouble." During this time the Jews will be brutally persecuted and the Gentiles will feel the judgment of God (22 judgments, 42 months). The Book of Revelation from chapter 6 to chapter 19 deals with and describes the events that take place in heaven and on earth during the seventieth week of Daniel. We will describe some of these events in future talks.

Conclusion

We could not close this meeting without challenging your heart. In the past few Sundays we have tried to show you the accuracy and the trustworthiness of the Bible, which is God's Word. God's word has never failed - all prophecy in the past has been fulfilled. On this

basis, we are confident that all future prophecy will also be fulfilled.

In light of this, how have you been treating Him and how are you now treating Him?

Urge: Full repentance from sin.

Urge: Full surrender and consecration for believers.

The Interpretation of Daniel 9:24

At the end of 490 years, Israel's transgression will be finished. Their sins brought to an end, because their Messiah will have made reconciliation or atonement for iniquity. The long period of Israel's offerings under the heel of Gentiles will be completed. Then everlasting righteousness will be brought in—the Millennium. Then, finally, the vision and prophecy will be sealed up (i.e. all will be fulfilled), so that vision and prophecy will no longer be needed.

Last of all – the most Holy will be anointed. This refers to the Shikinah glory returning to Jerusalem when the people are gathered back in their own land and Jehovah's Temple is rebuilt. The glory has been missing ever since the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. It did not return to the temple built by Zerubbabel, nor was it in the temple of Herod. It will return when Israel's mourning shall be ended and, as a repentant people, they will be brought back to God.

Israel's Place in History

The Vision of the Valley of Dry Bones (Ezekiel 37:1-10)

[Describe this] This prophecy was given over 2,500 years ago, and it is being fulfilled in our generation. This prophecy declares that in “the end times” the whole nation (the twelve tribes) will be gathered from the nations of the world.

The Scattering of the Nation

Leviticus 26:33 - “And I will scatter you among the nations, and will draw out a sword after you; and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste.”

Leviticus 26:38 - “And ye shall perish among the nations, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up.”

[Babylonian Captivity - Final Dispersion: A.D. 70] Note again the accuracy of biblical prophecy. This prophecy was made before Israel even entered the land. History shows how they have been scattered, persecuted, and hated. They have been tortured in turn by Nebuchadnezzar, herds of Persians, Alexander, the Romans, Caesars in Russia, and finally, Hitler and Mussolini (over 8,000,000 in Germany). Nationally speaking, they are indestructible (for example: Jonah and the great fish). They are like the bush that burned and was not consumed. God has blessed His nations who have shown kindness to His people (i.e. Britain and America).

The Bible says that the scattered nation will be re-gathered. See Deuteronomy 30:3-4:

“Then the Lord thy God shall return thy captivity and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations where the Lord thy God hath scattered thee. If any be driven out unto the utmost part of heaven, from these will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from there will he fetch thee.”

History and recent events stand as a proof of the literal fulfillment of this prophecy.

Signs of Great Events

In a general sense, we are seeing signs of impending great events. We are not looking for signs, but looking at them:

- An increase in wickedness, wisdom, and travel
- Wars and rumors of wars
- Moral decay
- Earthquakes
- Racial hatred
- The revival of the Roman Empire (common market)
- The rise of the Northern Confederacy and satellites
- The flourishing of the times

These signs pale in comparison to the momentous events in the Middle East and the revival of the state of Israel. The dry bones are beginning to come together – the sinews and flesh have formed upon the skeleton – the skin, which contains the nation, is holding them together. One thing remains to be done – they need the breath of God. They need a spiritual renewal rather than a political one.

The House of Israel (Ezekiel 37:11-14)

From the passage we learn that these dry bones are the whole house of Israel. They lay in an open valley...the nations of the world...and there are many of them. As Ezekiel prophesied and looked:

- There was a noise among the bones.
- There was a shaking among the bones.
- The bones came together.
- Flesh and sinews covered the bones.
- Skin covered the body.

One thing more remains to be done. They need the breath of God...a spiritual revival. [Express some thoughts on the re-gathering here]

The Two Sticks (Ezekiel 37:15-22)

In Ezekiel 37:16, we see that one stick was to represent Judah, the other Israel. These sticks are joined together in Ezekiel 37:17 (i.e. they became one).

The History Behind the Two Sticks: Let us review history here and see how there came to be two sticks - When King Solomon died, Rehoboam, his son, became king over Israel (the twelve tribes). Solomon had imposed heavy taxes. The people asked for some relief, but instead of decreasing them, he increased them. This caused an insurrection; the result being that the ten northern tribes seceded from the two southern tribes, Judah and Benjamin. This separation exists today.

One hundred and fifty years later, the Assyrians defeated the Northern Kingdom (the ten tribes) and took them away into captivity. These tribes never returned to

their own land, but instead were scattered among the nations of the earth. "Speculation as to who they are." Eighty years after this, Nebuchadnezzar captured Judah (two tribes) and held them as prisoners for seventy years. Then a remnant – some 40,000 of them - returned to Jerusalem and under Zerubbabel, Nehemiah, and Ezra, and built the city. The Jews today are the descendants of these two tribes.

Where are the lost ten tribes? They have been lost in the nations, but at the right time, they will emerge from the nations and return to Palestine under the direction of God.

How near is all this to completion? One can almost see the end. Before the consummation of all, this one great event must take place.

(For the Rapture of the Church, see I Thessalonians 4).

Knowing the Time

Romans 13:8-14

The imminence of the Lord's coming is under consideration here. The apostles use this great even to urge believers to live more holy lives. This portion is no exception. In Romans 13:8 Paul says, "In view of the soon return of the Lord, owe no man anything except love. Love is a debt which cannot be paid in full."

Romans 13:9-10 is very practical in their application. [Mention the five commandments; the others are summed up in the one. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."]

Love thinketh, seeth, and speaketh no evil.

Love doeth no wrong.

Love is the fulfilling of the law.

Love covers a multitude of sins.

Love is as strong as death.

Many waters cannot quench love.

Romans 13:11 - "Besides this knowing the time that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now is our salvation nearer than when we first believed."

The Soon Return of the Lord

Discerning the Times - See Matthew 24 (The signs are ominous):

- Wars and rumors of wars
- Nation rising against nation
- Famines

- Pestilences
- Earthquakes

These are the beginnings of sorrows. (For knowing the time also see Luke 21:29-30, Luke 17, and Luke 21:24) The Bible indicates that in the closing days of God's grace to man there will be an increase in lawlessness and disobedience. There is lawlessness and disobedience in every country. Student rebellion and campus riots are common. Policemen and law officials are challenged, fought and killed. Wars and rumors of wars abound. There is no peace. Civil war is common. Famines occur. Countless multitudes are suffering from malnutrition and starvation. Twelve thousand people starve to death each day. If in the next thirty years our population doubles how many will die of starvation then?

If there is rebellion and rejection of authority now, what fearsome conditions will exist by the year 2000? To further enlighten you to discern the days in which we now live, read 2 Timothy 3:1-5. It is high time to awake out of sleep! Spiritual sleep or indifference is one of the deadliest enemies of the soul. It was while men slept that the enemy sowed the tares. The whole world lieth in the wicked one. Let us now see what can happen when men sleep or become indifferent.

Greek mythology—The Siege of Troy by the Greeks - For ten years they besieged it unsuccessfully. Finally, they built a huge wooden horse, filled it with soldiers, and then pretended to sail away. The Trojans, in exultation, dragged the horse within the walls. That night, in the darkness and while the Trojans slept, the Greek soldiers crept from their hiding place and opened the city gates.

The waiting Greeks poured into the city, massacred the people and burned their city.

Belshazzar - The king of the Babylonians failed to recognize the signs of the times. See Daniel 5. [Describe Babylon, the feast, and the writing on the wall: numbered, weighed, and divided] Because of his blindness, unwillingness, and indifference to the conditions around him, Belshazzar lost his empire and his life. Has Satan, the God of this world, so blinded your eyes that you are asleep, insensitive to the lateness of the hour and the signs of the times? (For the God of this world, see Matthew 16)

It is time to wake up! Our text says, "It is high time to wake out of sleep." The night is far spent, the day is at hand and our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. We are living in the last days. The coming of the Lord draweth near. The clarion call of the Gospel is "Awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead and Christ shall give thee light." See Ephesians 5:14.

Now, is our salvation nearer than when we first believed?

Paul calls this "that blessed hope and glorious appearing." In Romans 8:22, Paul depicts the spiritual Christian as waiting for the redemption of the body. When this takes place, we will be sons in the fullest sense. The curse will be removed from the earth. [Describe some of the conditions in the liberated world] The night is far spent and the day is at hand.

Are you ready for the Lord's coming? "You can discern the face of the sky." Mark 13:33-37 says, "Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. For the Son of Man is as a man taking a far journey, who left

his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.”

Thoughts on the Lord’s Coming

The Certainty of His Coming - The Old and New Testaments are filled with promises of the Lord’s coming. There are 1,845 references to it in the Old Testament and 318 in the New Testament. For every prophecy of the first coming, there are eight on the Second Coming. He is coming:

- Personally (John 14)
- Quickly (Revelation 22, 1 Corinthians 15)
- Unexpectedly (1 Thessalonians 5:1-3)

A former Israeli Prime Minister said, “We are living in the Messianic Age.”

General MacArthur said, “I will return.”

The Lord Jesus said, “If I go, I will come again.”

Most believers know of the “certainty of the Lord’s return.” What we don’t know is the “time of His coming” (see Matthew 24:36). The Scriptures teach us that we are to observe the signs that would tell of the nearness of His coming. Then “knowing the time” or “recognizing the events” around us, we can take the necessary action for our future well-being.

Prophetic truth is flashing its warning signals from every direction to our generation. Some examples of this are:

The return of Israel to Palestine and her being able to stay there
The forming of the Common Market = The revived Roman Empire (The Wall)

The awakening of China = The kings of the East

The rise of Russia = The king of the North

The ascension of the Arab nations = The king of the South = the focus of world attention on the Middle East
The apostasy of Protestantism
Famines (worldwide)...
pestilences (AIDS)...earthquakes (Mexico, Columbia)

The unrest and restlessness among the nations

The lawlessness and rebellion against authority in every country
The summit talks - "Peace, peace then suddenly destruction cometh upon them."

Lastly, but not the least, there is the knowledge of explosions in science and technology.

Daniel says that "knowledge shall be increased" prior to the Lord's coming. Knowledge has increased more in the last 50 years than during all previously recorded human history. Think of the tremendous development in communication...the Arts - the Sciences.

Consider the field of medicine: biology, surgery, chemistry, physics, agriculture, electronics, etc. Man has topped what many believe to be the "secret of the universe," the splitting of the atom, and the discovery of atomic energy by nuclear fission. What is the purpose of me reminding you of these prevailing conditions? It is to

acquaint you with the nearness of the Lord's return to earth.

Again, Romans 13:11 says "And that knowing the time that it is already the hour for you to awaken out of sleep." Spiritual sleep and indifference are two of the deadliest enemies of the soul. 1 John 5:19 says, "The world is lulled to sleep in the lap of the wicked one." See what can happen when men sleep? It is time to wake up, "the night is almost gone, the day is at hand." "Where is the promise of His coming?" We are living in the last days. See 2 Timothy 3. "The coming of the Lord draweth near."

At least seven years before the Lord returns to the earth, the rapture will take place. For this is the next event on God's prophetic calendar. We are not looking for signs. We are listening for footsteps. "I can almost hear the footfall." [Describe the Rapture: 1 Thessalonians 4 and 1 Corinthians 15. Two persons in one bed: one taken, the other left. Two women are working together: one taken, the other left. Two men shall be in the field: one taken, the other left.]

In the days of Noah they ate and drank while Noah preached, they married and were given by marriage... until the day that Noah entered into the ark. Then the flood came and destroyed them all. As sure as the flood came...the Lord will come. In the days of Lot, they ate, they drank, they bought and sold, they planted, and they divided. But the same day that Lot left Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone and destroyed them all. "The coming of the Lord draweth near, therefore be ye also ready."

The Beast and the False Prophet

Revelation 13

The Beast

The Beast is the description given to the one who will head up the Revived Roman Empire (or the ten-kingdom federation). It is possible that he is in the world today, but his activities are restrained by the Restrainer (see 2 Thessalonians 2:6-7). He is a Gentile; he rises out of the sea, the Gentile nations (see Revelation 13; 17:15). The nature of the kingdom is terrible (see Revelation 13:1). He is like a leopard, a bear, and a lion. [Consider the common market - the ten toes of iron and clay] The Antichrist is the political leader of the empire and for a time he rules over all nations (see Revelation 6:2; 13:7). His rise to fame comes through his peace program. See Daniel 7:3, "Four winds of heaven strove upon the great sea."

"And I saw and beheld a white horse; and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him, and he went forth conquering and to conquer."

As head of the federated empire, he makes a seven year covenant with the Jews (see Daniel 9:27):

He breaks it after 3 ½ years.

He sets himself up as God (see Daniel 11:36-37).

He is the head of Satan's lawless system (2 Thessalonians 2:3).

He becomes the bitter enemy of Israel (see Dan 7:21).

He heads the nations of the world at the last great battle.

His rule is terminated by direct judgment from God (see Rev 19:19-20).

He is cast into the lake of fire (see Revelation 19:20).

The False Prophet

The False Prophet is also called the second beast. This individual is a Jew – he arises out of the earth or the land (see Revelation 13:11).

He is the “religious leader” of the whole world.

He has two horns like a lamb – a voice like a dragon (see Revelation 13:11).

He promotes the worship of the beast (see Revelation 13:12).

His ministry is authenticated by signs and miracles.

He compels worship of the beast.

He also controls the economic scene (see Revelation 13:16-17).

His doom is revealed in Revelation 19:20.

“The beast and the false prophet were taken and cast into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.”

A Description of the Army from the Far East (Revelation 9:13-21)

Four angels are loosed from the Euphrates for a very specific purpose. Note how God has a plan and a program – a year – a month – a day – an hour (see Revelation 9:15). At this point in time, God will smite or kill one third of the men through the released angels

(see Revelation 9:15). When the fourth seal was opened, the rider on the pale horse was given the power to kill $\frac{1}{4}$ (750 million) of the population (see Revelation 6:8). These two judgments together would account for just over $\frac{1}{2}$ of the world's population (one billion seven hundred and fifty million people).

In Revelation 9:16, the numbers of the invading army from the East is given at two hundred million. In Revelation 9:17, we are given a description of the invaders (breastplates of fire = red, jacinth = blue, and brimstone = yellow). The description of the "horses" would equate with the armaments of modern warfare, such as tanks, guns, flamethrowers, etc. Out of their mouths issued fire, smoke, and brimstone. These three things were responsible for the death of $\frac{1}{3}$ of the world's population.

The world's population is $3\frac{1}{2}$ billion. One billion people will be slain. Do you question this? See Revelation 9:20-21. Scientists are talking about total annihilation by means of a hydrogen bomb. What effect had this upon the survivors? They repented not. They continued to worship demons (demonism). There was much spiritualism along with idolatry, murder, sex, and theft.

Sorceries - In proof of our belief that the Bible throws light on this present time, let us take the word "sorceries." Each time it is mentioned in Revelation (a total of four times), it has the same root word "pharmacy." A sorcerer is one who enchants. In this instance, he does it with drugs. Consider for a moment the present drug problem. How did John know what would happen 1900 years from then? It was divine

inspiration. What we see now going on will be nothing compared with what will prevail during the Tribulation.