

THINGS TO COME ON GOD'S AGENDA

I. The Importance of Prophecy¹

- A. Prophecy as witness to the source of revelation (only God knows the future).
 - 1. He promises to "perform His word." Jer 1:12; 29:10; Eze 12:25
 - 2. God alone knows the future. 2Sa 7:19; Job 24:1; 31:4; Ps 69:5; 139:2-4; 147:5; Isa 40:28; Isa. 41:21-26; Isa. 42:9; Isa. 44:7; Isa. 45:21; Isa. 46:10; Da 2:10,27; Mt 6:8; Lu 7:39; Lu 12:6; Ac 15:28; Ro 11:33; Re 2:23
- B. Prophecy statistics.²
 - 1. Unique prophecies fulfilled: 695 (230 prior to Christ's advent, 117 at first coming of Christ, 57 during church age, 291 after church age).
 - 2. Prophecies of Christ's second coming: 328 (129 in the OT, 199 in the NT).
 - 3. Why would God give it if it were unimportant for us to understand?
 - 4. The Testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. Luke 10:22; **Luke 24:27**; John 5:39; Acts 10:43; 1Cor. 1:6; Heb. 10:7; 1Pe. 1:11; Rev. 1:2; **Rev. 19:10**

II. The Interpretation of Prophecy

- A. Early church practiced a literal interpretation of all scripture and understood a literal millennial kingdom yet future (e.g. Rev 20).
- B. School at Alexandria began allegorical interpretation.
 - 1. Motivation: reconcile scripture with Greek philosophy, rationalism.
 - 2. Applied to prophetic content too.
 - 3. Philo, Origen, Augustine, Roman Catholicism
 - 4. Reformers restored literal interpretation *except* for prophecy.
 - 5. Allegorical interpretation practiced by *most* mainline denominations. Leads to Postmillennialism, Amillennialism.
- C. Golden rule of interpretation
"When the plain sense of Scripture makes common sense, seek no other sense, therefore, take every word at its primary, ordinary, usual, literal meaning unless the facts of the immediate context, studied in the light of related passages and axiomatic and fundamental truths, indicate clearly otherwise." D.L. Cooper, *The Golden Rule of Interpretation*

III. The distinction between Israel and the Church.

- A. Church a mystery not known in ages past. Eph. 3:5,9; Col. 1:26
- B. Spirit not yet given - the promise of the Father. John 7:38-39; John 14:16-18,26; 15:26; John 16:7-14; Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-5
- C. The formation of the Body of Christ. Something new. Eph. 2:14-16; 3:6; Col. 1:24
- D. The indwelling of the Spirit. Col. 1:27
- E. Sealed with the Spirit. John 14:16; 2Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13-14; 4:30

¹ Class notes are available from <http://www.SpiritAndTruth.org/download/download.htm#e-sword> for use within the free bible study software available from <http://www.e-sword.net>

² *Tim LaHaye Prophecy Study Bible*, pp. 1554-1599

- F. "Israel" always denotes the physical descendants of Jacob. Whether in NT or OT. Believers are the spiritual seed of Abraham, but never called Israel.

IV. Daniel 9 - The key to understanding prophecy. Dan. 9:24-27

- A. "Weeks" is a term meaning "sevens." Dan. 9:24
B. All 70 "sevens" apply to the Jewish people and Jerusalem. Dan. 9:24
C. 69 weeks from decree to rebuild until presentation of King. Dan. 9:25; Luke 19:44³
D. The grammar clearly denotes a gap between the 69th and 70th seven.⁴
E. The "prince who is to come" is of Roman origin because Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 A.D. by Rome. Dan. 9:26
F. A covenant for one "seven" with "many" (Jews), but broken in mid-seven. Compare with time intervals given elsewhere. Dan. 7:25; Dan. 9:27; Dan. 12:7; Dan. 12:11-12; Jas. 5:17 (?); Rev. 11:2-3; Rev. 12:6; Rev. 12:14; Rev. 13:5

V. Rapture of the Church - Whence the view?

- A. The two comings of Christ (once as suffering servant and again as victorious king) are not clearly spelled out in the OT, but must be *inferred from clear differences in emphasis concerning similar passages*. This same logic applies to second coming passages in the NT which exhibit some striking differences:
1. Christ comes for His own (John 14:3; 1Th. 14:17; 2Th. 2:1) vs. Christ comes with His own (1Th. 3:13; Jude 14; Rev. 19:14).
 2. He comes in the air (1Th. 4:17) vs. He comes to the earth (Zec. 14:4; Acts 1:11)
 3. Tribulation begins (2Th. 1:6-9) vs. Millennial kingdom begins (Rev. 20:1-7)
 4. Saved are delivered from the wrath of God (1Th. 1:10; 1Th. 5:9; Rev. 3:10) vs. Unsaved experience the wrath of God (Rev. 6:16-17; 11:18; Rev. 14:10,19; 15:1,7; 16:1,19; 19:15)

³ Begins Nisan 1 of Artaxerxes' 20th year (March 5, 444 BC, Ne. 2:5-9). Sixty-nine 'sevens' = 173,880 (29 x 7 x 360) days ending on the Triumphal Entry on Nisan 10, AD 33 (March 30, AD 33, Luke 19:28-40). Messiah cut off after 69 weeks on Nisan 14 (April 3) AD 33. Calculation: 476 years x 365.24219879 days per solar year = 173,855 days. Days between March 5 and March 30 = 25. Total: 173,855 + 25 = 173,880 days. Ref-44, 115-140. "Several factors commend this decree as the one prophesied by Daniel (Dan. 9:25) for the commencement of the seventy weeks. First, there is a direct reference to the restoration of the city (Ne. 2:3,5) and of the city gates and walls (Ne. 2:3,8). Second, Artaxerxes wrote a letter to Asaph to give materials to be used specifically for the walls (Dan. 2:8). Third, the Book of Nehemiah and Ezra 4:7-23 indicate that certainly the restoration of the walls was done in the most distressing circumstances, as predicted by Daniel (Dan. 9:25). Fourth, no later decrees were given by the Persian kings pertaining to the rebuilding of Jerusalem." Hoehner, Harold W. *Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1977) 126

⁴ The following is Dr. Randall Price's explanation and defense of a gap preceding the final week of Daniel's famous prophecy ... "The sixty-ninth week has already been set off as a distinct unit comprised of the seven and sixty-two weeks. This would imply in itself that the events of the seventieth week are to be treated separately. Further, the events in verse 26-'the cutting off of Messiah,' and of the 'people of the prince'--are stated to occur *after* the sixty-nine weeks. If this was intended to occur *in* the seventieth week, the text would have read here 'during' or 'in the midst of' (cf. Daniel's use of *hetzi*, 'in the middle of,' v. 27). This language implies that these events *precede* the seventieth week but do not *immediately* follow the sixty-ninth. Therefore, a temporal interval separates the two. It is also important to note that the opening word of verse 27 (*higbbir*, 'confirm') is prefixed by the *waw* consecutive, a grammatical connective that indicates a close consequential relationship to a preceding verb. This use indicates that the events of verse 27 are *subsequent* to those of verse 26. Furthermore, the very language of these two verses, first speaking of 'the prince [*nagid*, 'leader'] who is to come' (v. 26), and then of that prince that later comes (the 'he' of v. 27), implies that a separation of time exists between these events." Ice, Thomas, and Kenneth L. Gentry Jr., *The Great Tribulation: Past or Future? Two Evangelicals Debate the Question*, (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1999) 86.

5. Appears to His own (Heb. 9:28; 1Th. 4:13-18) vs. Every eye shall see Him (Mtt. 24:30; Rev. 1:7)
 6. No signs precede His coming for His own (1Th. 5:1-3) vs. Signs precede His coming in judgment (Luke 21:11,15)
 7. The world is deceived when the day of the Lord begins (2Th. 2:3-12) vs. Satan is bound when the millennial kingdom begins (Rev. 20:1-2)
- B.** Promises have been made that the church will not undergo God's wrath (1Th. 1:10; 1Th. 5:9; Rev. 3:10). The tribulation judgements represent God's wrath (Rev. 6:16-17; 11:18; Rev. 14:10,19; 15:1,7; 16:1,19; 19:15)
- C.** The identity of the Restrainer: His possible identification as Satan, an angel, or government does not seem adequate to the global task. Thus the view that He is non other than the Holy Spirit permanently indwelling the body of Christ. His removal as Restrainer would necessitate the physical removal of the body of Christ since he permanently indwells believers.⁵
- D.** Daniel's 70 week prophecy--with a week yet remaining--is specifically focused on the Jews and Jerusalem.
1. An unprecedented time of trouble for the Jews (Dan. 12:1; Jer. 30:7; Mtt. 24:21)
 2. The woman persecuted by the dragon during the Tribulation represents I srael (Rev. 12:1-5,13-17; Gen. 37:9)
 3. Specially preserved witnesses are Jewish (Rev. 7, 14)
 4. Two specific witnesses are Jewish and minister in Jerusalem (Rev. 11)
- E.** The Church and I srael appear to be separate programs of emphasis.

VI. Major Events Yet Future

- A.** Rapture of the church. John 14:1-3; 1Cor. 15:51-58; 1Th. 4:13-18
- B.** Attack of God and Magog upon I srael. Eze. 38-39
- C.** Antichrist⁶ sets up one world government. Rev. 6:2; Rev. 13:1-8
- D.** Antichrist makes a seven-year covenant with I srael. I sa. 28:15; Dan. 9:24-27. Covenant is eventually broken. Dan. 9:27
- E.** A global apostate church is established. Rev. 17:1-15
- F.** Two witnesses with supernatural powers like Moses and Elijah preach and prophesy in Jerusalem. Rev. 11:1-6 Eventually killed and resurrected. Rev. 11:7-13
- G.** Seal, trumpet, judgments upon the earth. Rev. 6:1-17; Rev. 8; Rev. 9
- H.** Antichrist desecrates the temple, requires worship upon penalty of death. Dan. 9:27; Dan. 11:31; Dan. 12:11; Mtt. 24:15; Mark 13:14; 2Th. 2:4; Rev. 13:15
- I.** False prophet aids Antichrist, mark of the beast instituted. Rev. 13:16-18; Rev. 14:9-11; Rev. 15:2; Rev. 16:2; Rev. 19:20; Rev. 20:4. Both a global religious and global economic system are now in place — as was the case in Gen. 11—both denoted as *Babel*⁷

⁵ After the rapture, the Holy Spirit would minister on earth *in the same way He did prior to His coming* on the day of Pentecost.

⁶ For our purposes here, we denote the varied titles of the Antichrist (e.g. "little horn," "beast") by the single term "Antichrist."

⁷ Or the derivative term, *Babylon*.

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- J.** Image of Antichrist worshiped. Rev. 13:14-15; Rev. 14:9; Rev. 14:11; Rev. 15:2; Rev. 16:2; Rev. 19:20; Rev. 20:4
- K.** Antichrist receives worship. Dan. 11:36-37; 2Th. 2:4; Rev. 13:4; Rev. 13:8; Rev. 13:12; Rev. 14:9; Rev. 16:2; Rev. 19:20; Rev. 20:4
- L.** Antichrist prevails over the saints. Dan. 7:21; Dan. 7:25; Dan. 8:24; Rev. 13:7. Jews persecuted. Dan. 12:1; Jer. 30:7; Zec. 13:8-9; Rev. 12:13-17
- M.** Seven bowl (vial) judgments produce a "great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world." Matt. 24:21, Rev. 16:1-21
- N.** Battle of Armageddon takes place. Joel 3:2; Joel 3:12; Joel 3:14; Zec. 12:11; Rev. 16:16
- O.** Babylon (political, commercial, religious) system destroyed. Isa. 13-14; Jer. 51-52; Rev. 17-18
- P.** Second Coming of Christ. Isa. 63:1; Zec. 14:2-5; Mtt. 24:30; Acts 1:11; 2Th. 1:7; Heb. 9:28; Heb. 10:37; Jude 1:14; Rev. 1:7; Rev. 19:14
- Q.** Antichrist destroyed. Dan. 7:11; Dan. 7:26; Dan. 8:25; Dan. 9:27; Dan. 11:45; 2Th. 2:3; 2Th. 2:8; Rev. 17:8; Rev. 17:11; Rev. 19:19-20; Rev. 20:10; Rev. 20:15
- R.** Satan bound, Millennial Kingdom on earth. Dan. 7:14, 27; Mic. 4:1-8; Luke 1:33; Matt. 25:31; Rev. 20:1-7
- S.** Satan released, rebellion against Millennial rule judged, Great White Throne judgment. Rev. 20:11-15
- T.** New heavens and earth, the eternal state. Rev. 21-22