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**Biblical Training**

**2 Chronicles 16:9;  
Matthew 6:33; 1 John 2:6**

## **ORIENTATION TO BIBLE PROPHECY**

by

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### **ORIENTATION TO BIBLE PROPHECY**

When studying Bible Endtimes Prophecy (eschatology - the doctrines of last things) there are many things and issues to consider if we are to gain understanding of why as well as knowing the sequence of end times events. (Refer to the Glossary for the definition of terms.)

When we speak of Bible Prophecy, we generally refer to the Rapture timing, the endtimes Tribulation, Christ's Second Coming, the 1000 years of Revelation 20, the potential return or no return of the Covenant Nation of Israel in Revelation's 1000 years, the seventieth week of Daniel, and the spiritual warfare between Christ and Satan. In order to understand prophecy, we need to know what must be fulfilled and/or completed in order for God to bring the Tribulation and the Church's Rapture. We need to know the purpose of the Tribulation. We need to know the impact on our Christian lives if our prophecy view is wrong and/or if we are inadequately training and maturing our people and inadequately doing area-wide evangelism.

Bible interpreters have established over six views of Bible prophecy sequencing the above items in all the possible ways and combinations. These views have stood over many years without having resolution to only one view which all of the Church accepts. With a future Tribulation, they have believed Pre-, Mid-, and Post-Tribulation Rapture times with the 1000 years coming before and after Christ's Coming. Some believe the endtimes Tribulation is history occurring at the time of the first century Jews. Daniel's seventieth week has been set as history near the time of Christ or in the future equal to the endtimes Tribulation making the Tribulation last seven years. Most of these views do not know what the signs that signal when the Tribulation will soon come. So people can be caught without warning.

We have found that we can know and understand prophecy better when we work first to learn God's Plan for history, the spiritual warfare, and then see how prophecy fits into the end phase of His Plan. We need to understand why God is doing things throughout history. This is better than working with prophecy directly. In our study of prophecy we need also to find the Bible's harmonization of over 40 doctrines (all that we can find) that refer to God's Plan and endtimes prophecy if we are to see the truth and to avoid inadvertent mistakes.

A summary of all the views and their tenets are found in my book: *Watchman Warning*.

When we do these we find the following key aspects need to be understood and believed if we are to understand endtimes prophecy - these are seldom if at all found in the published literature (there are many-many other doctrines):

- If we are to understand prophecy and God's Plan for man, we must clearly understand that the main reason God placed us on the earth was for us to become mature in high-skill spiritual ability in Christ-likeness in relationship living. All Bible events lead to this result. This is so that, throughout eternity, we can know and relate to God toward His fullest in love and by faith in His

holiness and righteousness, and of course to each other. This approach provides an overview for our understanding of Bible prophecy. ***Apart from this relationship and life, there is nothing. We must pay attention and pursue this maturity as commanded with excellence.***

- The task that our Lord entrusted to the Church is that she evangelize the entirety of local and foreign areas and disciple converts, her people, to this needed maturity in Christ. This is in contrast to working for only some spiritual growth and doing only some evangelism. Tongues were used in the first century Church to signal that according to the Joel prophecy, the Gospel is going to all peoples, no longer only to the Jews. The exclusive Jewish period was now over. The Gospel now was to go to the entire world. Biblical tongues now are no longer used.
- At the fall of man in the Garden of Eden, Satan usurped both the Kingdom of God (that now becomes the Kingdom of the World) and the Title Deed of the Earth away from Christ.
- At the fall in the Garden of Eden, man received a depraved nature and was transferred into the Dominion of Satan under his temporal and eternal control. Man remains in Satan's Dominion until God satisfies His Justice for sin by Christ's Cross and man accepts this satisfied Justice as God works in man drawing him to Himself.
- The Church is defined as consisting of those people, having believed in Christ's Cross in some manner, have been transferred from the Dominion of Satan under his eternal control into the Kingdom of God under Christ's eternal control. One cannot be a believer without being in the Church.
- Our Lord at His Ascension, after the Cross, received all power in heaven and in earth. This authority allowed Him to take the Gospel to the world (no longer just to the Jews and their proselytes) and to transfer believers into the Kingdom of God from the Dominion of Satan. This gives Him full eternal authority over believers. When a person is translated into the Kingdom of God, they become the Church, a called out person.
- At the seventh trumpet, after the endtimes Tribulation, the heavenly court determines that our Lord has won the spiritual warfare over Satan. Having made this determination, the court awards our Lord the Kingdom of the World that becomes the Kingdom of God. It awards Him the Title Deed of the Earth. These awards give our Lord authority to rapture the Church. It gives full temporal and eternal authority over all unbelievers, taking this authority away from Satan. Thus, these awards allow our Lord to bring the resurrections and final judgments.
- The events of Revelation's seven-sealed scroll is how our Lord takes back the Title Deed of the Earth from Satan.
- In these endtimes, God establishes a special sequence at the proper time in His Plan, one that is patterned after what happened to the Old Testament Jews. He uses this sequence to end history. Because it repeats, we call it a Pattern Sequence. The events of Revelation's seven-sealed scroll are part of this sequence. The Tribulation period is a period in the sequence of divine discipline for sin. The sequence shows the Tribulation's purpose is to bring this discipline. Because it brings divine discipline for sin including that of the Church (not penal judgment), the Church will go through the Tribulation.

One needs to understand this sequence in order to know what will happen to us in the Tribulation and what the signs are that show the Tribulation is soon coming.

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- God establishes a favored nation in the sequence that begins in obedience and God's provided great prosperity. (The favored nation was Israel and is now the United States) The favored nation then turns to sin that causes God to bring divine discipline (the Tribulation) implemented by calamity and world government. After the discipline runs its course, then God delivers His people to Himself (the Rapture in the endtimes; to the land of Israel in Israel's time) and kills all the remaining people (in the endtimes; destroyed the world governments in Israel's time).
- Another purpose of the endtimes Tribulation is to polarize the beliefs of all the remaining people alive concerning the acceptance or denial of the Gospel. The Rapture cannot occur until all the people who are to live, have lived, and have made formal decisions in life or by death to accept or deny the Gospel. No one is born or saved after the Rapture. (The wheat cannot be separated in rapture from the tares until after all the tares are bundled for the fire.) Unbelievers formally deny the Gospel when they take the Mark of the Beast in the Tribulation giving formal worship to Satan. God uses Satan and the Mark-of-the-Beast period to polarize the beliefs of all people living to formally accept or deny the Gospel. This allows Him afterward to rapture the Church.
- At His Ascension, our Lord sits at the right hand of God the Father, not coming in the clouds for the Rapture, until all His enemies become His footstool or under His control and authority. People formally become His enemies when they formally deny the Gospel. They formally become under His authority when the heavenly court awards Him the Kingdom of the World at the seventh trumpet after the Tribulation.
- After the Tribulation, the Church is rewarded and reigns with Christ for 1000 years (the time of the bowls or vials) which is probably only a day or short period of time. During this time, Satan is bound in prison, and the Church determines whether or not any one remaining on earth will repent, receive the Gospel, and be saved. None do. Then Satan is released from prison and brings the armies of the world against Christ and His armies in the battles of Armageddon. Satan's armies are defeated and killed, and Satan and his angels are cast into the Lake of Fire. Then the unbelievers are resurrected, judged according to their works, and cast into the Lake of Fire.
- God established a period of 490 years that would run from the decree of Cyrus the Great that would bring the Jews back into the land after the 70 Babylonian captivity to the time when our Lord would bring the New Covenant for salvation. The 490 years were to tell the Jews when their Messiah the Prince would come and bring His Cross of salvation (e.g. bring the Atonement for Iniquity). Many have wrongly assigned the last and seventieth week of seven years to be the endtimes Tribulation period. This has wrongly established the endtimes Tribulation to be only seven years in length and provided the bases for a Pre-Tribulation Rapture that will not happen.
- The period, after the Tribulation, when Christ comes in the clouds, includes the Rapture (resurrection of the Church), the 1000 years, the resurrection of the unbelievers, and the Great White Throne Judgment. The 1000 years do not occur before, or after Christ's Second coming, but instead during His Second coming.
- By studying the signs in Israel just before the world empire invaded bringing God's discipline for sin, we can know the signs that point to the endtimes Tribulation coming. They are now all around us.
- All believers are the Church. Christ is to have first place in all things; and He works to mature His Church in His likeness in relationship living that is needed for now, the endtimes, but especially for eternity.

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- Israel as a Covenant Nation had a very important Old Testament role, but she now is out of focus. The Jewish and Gentile believer are now one new man in Christ without distinction or ethnic division as a holy nation to God. Thus, God is through with Israel as a Covenant Nation and is only working with individual Jewish people to bring them to Christ and to this holy nation and new man without distinction. Attempting to bring back Israel as a nation in the future just confuses the understanding of prophecy. It will not happen. There is no Jewish 1000 years period coming. God also will not bring back animal sacrifices and physical temples. (Satan may bring them back. He no doubt brought the current apostate Israel in the land.) Bringing them back would deny the Cross's efficaciousness and the Christian faith. The Church is now the sanctuary of God and is to be a living sacrifice.
- The Covenant Nation of Israel was divided into a northern and southern kingdom. Israel as a nation was married to God. God divorced the covenant nation of the Northern Kingdom (Israel) in her history (Jeremiah 3:8) and the Southern Kingdom (Judah) at the Cross when the Jewish leaders said let Christ's blood be on us and on our children. They were denying Christ as their Messiah forever. We know that God divorced Israel because Christ is now marrying the Church and a spiritual leader cannot have two wives at the same time.
- In the Pattern Sequence, the Tribulation comes because the Church is falling away followed by the sin of the rest of the people mainly in the endtimes favored nation - the United States. The primary cause of the Tribulation coming is the falling away of Church leadership, followed by the falling away of the Church people. We need to have revival in our churches or the Tribulation will come without recourse. Even with revival, the Tribulation will come some time. It appears to be coming now or in the next few to many years. Only God knows the timing.
- Some churches and Christian leaders are working for reform and placing Christians into positions of government leadership. Reform may delay the Tribulation, but it will not change the course of the nation. Only revival will do this. With revival, God will heal the nation and He might place Christian people into place of leadership. But without revival, the Tribulation will come without recourse as is prophesied.
- God established a spiritual warfare throughout biblical history between Christ and Satan to be used to mature people in Christ. Christ is to bring God's elect to believe and accomplish God's work. This will happen. He also is to bring responding people to maturity in Christ. Satan, on the other hand, works to prevent some of God's chosen elect from believing and from accomplishing some of God's chosen work. If he could accomplish these, he can avoid going to the Lake of Fire. This will not happen. He was sentenced to go there before people came on the earth. He works also, as God allows, to establish his man in the endtimes to rule the world and have himself worshiped as god. In the Garden of Eden, he worked to deceive man so he could become god of this world and have full control over unbelievers. In these endtimes, as throughout history, he works to establish false religious systems based on human works without satisfied Justice for sin. He works to influence the Church to ignore the Gospel, do only first-level teaching, and not to evangelize local areas. He works to have Church people in immorality, have wrong divorce, speak in false tongues, and use his loud rock-type dominate repetitive beat music. When the churches become involved in these, they become casualties in the warfare. They implement key satanic strategy. The situation now is that our churches on the average are training mostly with first-level learning, leaving their people mostly immature. We are losing our biblical intellect. Very few now know and can teach the Bible comprehensively. Few know the doctrines of Bible Prophecy and how bad the endtimes will unfold. We are not maturing our people for the sake of eternity. Because the more mature people do God's work, our churches

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are implementing key satanic strategy and are bringing less glory to God.

We are heading into divine discipline implemented by the endtimes Tribulation when Satan will be allowed to make war with the Church, especially including her children and youth, and rule the world. The times will become most terrible.

Thus, in summary, with a God's Plan approach to the study and understanding of Bible prophecy, the Bible teaches: (1) God's main plan for history and placing us on the earth is that we become mature in Christ for the sake of eternity so we can know and relate to God toward His fullest; (2) understanding that Revelation unfolds in a Pattern Sequence; (3) the Tribulation with its seven-sealed scroll is future being the way that Christ wins back the Title Deed of the Earth; (4) the Rapture comes after the Tribulation; (5) the 1000 years come during Christ's Second Coming, not before or after; (6) all believers are in Christ as the Church and a holy nation to God; (7) Daniel's seventieth week is history at the time of Christ; and (8) current signs and conditions signal the Tribulation bringing calamity and world government can come at any time.

***And there is the possibility that the maturity we have at death we can have forever, Thus, we must pay attention and pursue gaining maturity in Christ with excellence (as God commands this pursuit in all our time periods) under God's leading and working in us. WE MUST UNDERSTAND, THE MAIN REASON WE ARE HERE IS TO GAIN THIS MATURITY FOR USE IN ETERNITY SO WE CAN KNOW AND RELATE TO HIM IN HIS DEPTH. THIS IS DIVINE PRIVILEGE.***

Our action now, if we are not already doing it, is to: (1) train our people, including our children and youth, to become mature in Christ with high-skill spiritual ability; (2) help to do area-wide evangelism; (3) place our people into small home support groups and put in some provisions; (4) avoid immorality; (5) avoid wrong divorce; (6) avoid speaking in false tongues; (7) avoid using the world's Christian rock loud repetitive beat music, and (8) work for revival. Will we do it?

### SUMMARY

From our perspective, the best way to understand prophecy is to understand the following:

1. Revelation unfolds in a pattern sequence that defines how the endtimes unfold and what we will experience as the endtimes come.
2. Our Lord does not have the legal authority to rapture the Church until it is awarded by the heavenly court at the time of the seventh trumpet after the Tribulation.
3. All believers in Christ and His Cross are part of the Church without exception, being called out of the Dominion of Satan into the Kingdom of God.
4. All believers are one in Christ without ethnic division. There is no Jew or Gentile in Christ. There will be no future Jewish periods.
5. Daniel's seventieth week is history when Christ brought the New Covenant and does not refer to the endtimes Tribulation.
6. God's goal for all people is that they become a believer in Christ's Cross and afterward become mature in Christ. God is not concerned where people live on the earth.