

## END TIMES AS PICTURED IN THE FALL FEASTS

### Week 1 – Will There Be “End Times”? WHY?

Will there be “end times”? Why? Are we “there” yet? Are we in “end times” now? Who’s “we”? Where is “there”? Do you want to be “there”? Where do we want to be? Where are we now? These are crucial questions!

Do we have a one-world view – focusing on the world/this world now? Or, do we have a two-world view? The two-world view is Biblical. The two-world view encompasses living now while having an eye on the world to come. When we have a two-world view, it definitely impacts how we should live now. While on earth, as we look forward to our home in heaven, the Holy Spirit will give us the desire to live holy, godly lives here on this earth – telling others that Jesus is the only way to eternal life with God - so that we will not be ashamed at His coming (I John 2:28).

From whose perspective are we viewing the world, our lives, our days, our moments? Why would we even attempt to put our spin on what God so clearly proclaims in Scripture? God’s message might not always appear to be in neon! We need to dig into Scripture further. Cross reference. The Bible is the best answer for itself. If you come up with a different view for what is said in a passage in Matthew than what is stated elsewhere in the Bible – something is amiss. The Bible doesn’t contradict itself. Many times we look at passages from our perspective because we don’t know the whole picture of Scripture.

Within the Evangelical Church there are those who don’t believe there will be a Rapture – there are those who don’t believe in a Millennial Kingdom. Whatever your view, you need to support it with chapter and verse from Scripture. That should go without saying. The Bible is our authority. Yes, there’s speculation about end times. However, there is a roadmap in Scripture. So much so that Jesus could say, as He wept over Jerusalem. . . Luke 19:42-44 - *If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.* <sup>43</sup> *For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side,* <sup>44</sup> *and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation.*

Many Jewish people placed their trust in Jesus as Messiah. The Jewish religious leaders did not. And, so we say that, as a nation, Israel missed the time of their visitation – the visitation of the Messiah Jesus at His first coming.

Re: viewing Scripture from God’s perspective, CONSIDER:

- God called Jesus to what seemed to be disaster – from the human perspective.
- Jesus called His disciples to see Him suffer and be put to death. He led them to the place where their hearts were broken.
- Ten of the disciples were martyred. John was exiled on the Isle of Patmos.
- From every standpoint but God’s, Jesus life was an absolute failure.

- BUT, what seemed to be failure from man's standpoint was a tremendous triumph from God's, because God's purpose is never man's purpose.

Therefore, from Whose perspective do you wish to understand Scripture?

The Second Coming of Jesus is a certainty and a doctrinal necessity!

“There is nothing more clearly stated in the Bible than the fact that Jesus Christ is coming again. The second coming of Christ to this earth – His visible, literal, physical, glorious return – is explicitly referred to 1,845 times in the Bible.” (Mark Hitchcock, *The Complete Book of Bible Prophecy*, p. 70).

Enoch was the first prophet to mention the Second Coming in Scripture as recorded in Jude, vv. 14-15. The NT teaches it in one out of every 30 verses and in every chapter of I and II Thessalonians. All nine NT authors mention it in 23 of their 27 books. God intended His Church to be motivated to holiness and evangelism by the study of the Second Coming of Christ. For every one prophecy of Jesus' first coming, there are eight prophecies concerning His Second Coming. If someone is of the persuasion that either Jesus' Second Coming is no big deal, or it might not happen. . . then perhaps we might reconsider His first coming! And, re: my having stated that the Second Coming is a doctrinal necessity, consider that Jesus Second Coming is far more than a simple ending of human history. It is rather a GRAND CLIMAX which brings the program, the plan of God to its highest point. The Second Coming of Christ along with the Kingdom which follows it is the major theme of OT prophecy.

Because Jesus promised that He would return, He would be guilty of fraud and deceit if He failed to return. God cannot lie!

At His first coming, Jesus came as the Suffering Servant. We saw Him in His humiliation. At His Second Coming, we will behold Him in all His GLORY!

SCRIPTURE: Revelation 1:1-8.

The REVELATION – the *apokalypsis* (Gk)– is the unveiling of what was once hidden now made visible – the revealing of Jesus, the Anointed, which God the Father gave to Him – to show – to UNVEIL – to His servants – future events which will take place quickly when they occur. The book of Revelation is meant to clarify what we've already read and studied in the Bible from the book of Genesis on. . . . The book of Revelation contains 550 references (not direct quotes) – from the OT – the Hebrew Scriptures (Mark Hitchcock; Arnold Fruchtenbaum, *Footsteps of the Messiah*, p. 9)! God desires that we KNOW what HE has revealed!

Verse one states that the things that are being revealed “must shortly come to pass.” This has been often misunderstood to mean that all the prophecies of the book were to be fulfilled soon after they were given to John. The word “shortly” – Gk word *TA-khos* means *quickly, with speed*. It is the word from which we get the English word

*tachometer*. A tachometer measures velocity. A tachometer in a car measures the revolutions per minute in a car engine. The word “shortly” simply means that once the day for the fulfillment of these things hits, there will be no delay in the execution of those things. The events that will occur in the future, when they transpire, will do so in a rapid sequence – once they begin. In [Revelation 22:12](#) Jesus says, "Behold, I am coming quickly." Now here you have *tachu* (ta-KOO) of the same word group. Look at Rev. 22:20 - "Yes," He says again, "I am coming quickly" – and the implication from the Greek is *without delay*. Without delay according to God’s timetable. Keep in mind II Peter 3:8-9. The reply during the first century – from [Rev. 22:20](#) - *Amen. Even so come, Lord Jesus*. From the teachings the first century believers received from the Apostles, they knew that Jesus’ coming for the Church was imminent/near/upon us. And, yet, we continue to wait and call out, “Even so come, Lord Jesus.” Jesus is NOT delayed – from His perspective. All is according to God’s timeframe. We are told to watch for Him.

[II Tim. 4:8](#) – *Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing*. Consider: to love His appearing means to live in the light of His coming – to behave as if He were coming today.

[II Pet. 3:11-14](#) - *Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,<sup>12</sup> looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat?<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless;*

Imminence means that Jesus’ coming for His Church – the meeting in the air – is the next event on God’s redemptive schedule FOR THE CHURCH – comprised of Jewish and Gentile believers in Jesus. Nothing needs to occur before the Rapture. There are no signs for the Rapture. The Church has always lived with an expectancy re: Jesus’ return. The Church is told to watch and wait for Jesus – not for the revealing of the antichrist – not for specific signs. We are to wait for Him and to love His appearing!

There’s a BLESSING connected to reading and hearing the words of the prophecy in the book of Revelation, and keeping the things that are written? Why would there be a blessing? These words are from God! The revelation is from God - of Jesus and of His plan!

And “keeping the things that are written”... “keeping” also means “while holding fast.” The saints are told to “be continually hanging on to” the things which John writes. This requires focus and energy and implies the need for watchfulness to avoid being caught off guard. It means that if we understand the book of Revelation, it will change the way we live!

The greeting that we read in Revelation is from Him Who is and Who was and Who is to come! This speaks to our ETERNAL God. God is Lord over eternity. As we launch out on this study concerning end times, we need to begin with GOD and Who He is!

. . . and from the seven Spirits Who are before His throne. Seven speaks to perfection/completion. In using “Spirits,” John is referencing the seven aspects of the Holy Spirit from Isaiah 11:2 which identify the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of the LORD, having the spirit of wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, and fear of the Lord - in fullness and completion. Seven is the number for perfection, completion, fullness in Scripture.

. . . and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth! God the Son is described by Who He is and by what He has done. DONE! Finished!

“Witness”, in the Gk is *MAR-tus*. Sounds like. . . martyr! Faithful witness – Jesus is utterly reliable to His plan and to His creation – even unto death.

Jesus is firstborn from the dead – Jesus was NOT created; He is the Creator (Col. 1:16

Jesus as “firstborn” is pre-eminent. He is first in priority. Note that Jesus is called the first-born, not the first-created. The word "first-born" (Gk *prototokos*) signifies priority. In the culture of the Ancient Near East, the first-born was not necessarily the oldest child. First-born referred not to birth order but to rank. The first-born possessed the inheritance and leadership. Esau was born first to Isaac & Rebekkah; Jacob received the blessing and rank of the firstborn. Manasseh was born first to Joseph and his Egyptian wife; Ephraim received the blessing and rank of the firstborn.

Jesus is the Ruler over the kings. Jesus will take dominion over every earthly king. (Psa. 2; Dan. 2:44-45; Phil. 2:9-11; Rev. 19:16 – He is “KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS”!!!)

To Him Who loved us. What a beautiful title for Jesus. “Loved” is in the past tense. It looks back to the cross. The cross is the height of God’s love for mankind. Rom. 5:8 – God demonstrated His own love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Washed us from our sins in His own blood. He died our death! We are cleansed – for all eternity!

And made us kings and priests. If we belong to God, we are an adopted child of God (adopted – not of His nature; brought into His family [Col. 1:13]). We are royalty. We are joint heirs with Christ (Rom. 8:16-17). As priests, we have direct access into His presence (Rom. 5:1-2).

Glory – this is speaking of Jesus’ splendor, brightness, magnificence, excellence, majesty, most exalted state (John 17:5).

Dominion – we must give Jesus dominion/rule over ourselves.

Revelation 1:7-8 - “Behold, He is coming. . . .” The text doesn’t say, “He will come” or “He shall come.” It says, “He’s coming.” His coming has been decreed from eternity past! It’s a done deal. AND - He’s already on the way! The process of His coming has already begun.

And, He is coming with clouds. . . .

Acts 1:9-11 - *Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. <sup>10</sup> And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, <sup>11</sup> who also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.”*

I Thess. 4:16-18 – *For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And, the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words.*

This is our God! Do we trust in His plan re: end times? This is where we need to begin in our study of end times.

Because our study is end times, let’s move from Who God is to the book of Genesis. Genesis means beginning, origin, formation. In Genesis we find the reason for God’s end times plan. God, Who is above time and space, created a world to be populated. God created man for relationship. God created man with a physical body and placed him into a physical world – into a physical garden – gave man dominion over the earth (Gen. 1:26) – to rule over the earth, to nurture it, to serve it. God told man to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.

It appears that man enjoyed fellowship with God on a daily basis. God gave man a “test,” so to speak, which would require man’s obedience. God told man not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Man failed. Sin entered into the world. Man was driven out of the garden (Gen. 3:22). This was God’s grace! God drove Adam and Eve out of the garden following the fall and barred the way to the tree of life in the garden by placing Cherubim at the east of the garden and a flaming sword which turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life. How was this God’s grace? If man – IN HIS SINFUL, FALLEN CONDITION – ate of the tree of life – he would live in that fallen condition forever.

At this point - man – in his fallen condition - served Satan (god of this world mentioned four times in John) (Col. 1:13). Man was separated from God immediately. God’s plan

is to restore/to reconcile. **This is HUGE: God chose to restore and reconcile HIS original plan. The foundation for Biblical prophecy, the reason for what we call “end times,” is based on the truth that God will restore and reconcile everything that was lost. For God’s credibility to be intact, everything must be restored. God’s CHARACTER is at stake!**

Did God know beforehand re: the need for restoration? OF COURSE. He is God; He is omniscient – all-knowing! God’s purpose: REDEMPTION for man and for the earth! AND, this is what we see unfolding in the Scripture – in ALL of Scripture! And through God’s plan of redemption we see all the attributes of God: holiness, justice, graciousness, mercy, love, immutability, faithfulness. . . .

REDEMPTION: to buy out of the marketplace. Who was in the marketplace in Biblical times? SLAVES. Buying a slave out of the marketplace meant buying them out of BONDAGE.

**Genesis provides us with the key to what God is planning.**

- **He tells us that He has committed Himself to RESTORING His original plan – this is the foundation of Biblical prophecy. (Gen. 3:15; Gen. 4:1; Gen. 22:8; Rev. 21:5). We NEED to know this to be able to understand eschatology – the study of last things/end times.**
- **Everything that was lost must be restored (and even enhanced)**

We must understand Scripture in its CONTEXT. The entire BIBLE is our context – so we must commit to knowing it from the beginning! And, from the beginning through to the book of Revelation we see that our God is a God of RESTORATION!

Are we comforted in that truth? Take the truth of RESTORATION into the remainder of the day, into the week, the month, the year. . . for however much time God gives each of us!

### QUESTIONS

With Whom does “end times” begin?

WHY must there be “end times”?

Did you have any V8 moments? What was new to you?

How will what you have learned impact your walk with the Lord? Why?

### SUGGESTED HOMEWORK

**VERY MUCH SUGGESTED:** Go over the Chart on the Feasts of the Lord!

Read the handout for Week 2 when you receive it.