

## END TIMES AS PICTURED IN THE FALL FEASTS

### Week 9 – Pressing On!

SCRIPTURE: Revelation 5

*Rev. 4:1-2 - After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this." <sup>2</sup> Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne.*

*I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne, a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals.*

"Him Who sat on the throne" – this is God the Father. The right hand is the side of favor and strength (Ps. [20:6](#); [80:17](#); [89:13](#); [98:1](#)). This is the side at which Jesus, the Son of God, is seated NOW, since His ascension into heaven - awaiting His kingdom (Ps. [110:1](#); Mark [16:19](#); Acts [5:31](#); [7:55](#); Eph. [1:20](#); Col. [3:1](#); Heb. [1:3](#); [10:12](#)). It is here, at God the Father's right hand, that Jesus is making intercession for His Church (Rom. [8:34](#)). Upon receiving the kingdom from God the Father (Dan. 7:14) and establishing it on earth (Zech. 13, 14) and giving the kingdom to the saints (Dan. 7:27) – Jesus will sit on the throne of David in that Millennial Kingdom (Psalm 2; Luke 1:31-33; Acts 15:15-17). Currently Jesus is seated at the right hand of God the Father as our great High Priest (Heb. 4:14-16; Heb. 8:1-2). He is interceding for believers in Jesus as Satan accuses us (Rev. 12:10).

Jesus is seated! He's SEATED because - "It is finished"!! There were no seats in the physical temple in Jerusalem. There were no seats for the priests to sit down because they were constantly constant serving. (NOTE: no seats in the construction of the Tabernacle: Ex. 26 & 27; Ex. 37 & 38)

*Rev. 5:9 – a new song was sung in the throne room of God - You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood.* This is JESUS! The right to open the scroll is based on REDEMPTION! Redemption means to buy out of the market place. Slaves were bought and sold. To redeem is to buy those who are in bondage! This scroll is related to the fulfillment of a purchase. A purchase was made at the cross and the deed of that purchase will be claimed in the future – by the rightful owner. Restoration!

The scroll in Revelation 5 is a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals. In the book of Jeremiah we see a similar scroll. Jeremiah was prophesying to his people about the Babylonian captivity. Babylon was going to besiege Jerusalem, destroy the Temple, and take many from the southern Kingdom of Judah into captivity in Babylon. God told Jeremiah to buy a field that belonged to a relative (Jer. 32:6-15). And the purchase deed was to be, in essence, hidden in an earthen vessel. Why was God telling Jeremiah to buy a field when the Jews were going to be carried away from Israel – for 70 years? (Jer. 25:11).

Let's consider several details. . . . The purchase deed for that property that Jeremiah bought was a scroll that was sealed and that was open – it was written on the inside and on the back (Jer. 32:10). This purchase deed is written inside and on the back and then rolled up and sealed with seven seals. It was typical to write the details of a contract on the inside and then write a summary of the contract on the outside. All the seals must be opened before the scroll could be read.

Why did God tell Jeremiah to purchase the land when the Jews were to be carried away? GOD IS FAITHFUL! Jer. 32:14-15 - <sup>14</sup> *'Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: 'Take these deeds, both this purchase deed which is sealed and this deed which is open, and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may last many days.'* <sup>15</sup> *For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: 'Houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land.'* Jeremiah's purchase demonstrated the reality of God's promise to RESTORE Israel back to the land (Jer. 32:14-15, 43-44).

Similarities between the account in Jeremiah and the account in Revelation 5.

- This purchase deed in the book of Jeremiah is similar to the purchase deed in Rev. 5. Both are written inside and out, inside and on the back.
- The scroll that Jesus took from God the Father (Rev. 5:7) is connected to redemption. It's connected to a purchase.
- God told Jeremiah to purchase the land in advance – before he and his people could take possession of the land. The children of Israel wouldn't return to the land until after 70 years of exile in Babylon. NOTE: ultimate possession of all the land that God had promised to Abraham won't take place until the Millennial Kingdom.
- Jesus, through His blood, purchased us before we would be with Him eternally, before we would see Him face-to-face.
- In both cases, a purchase was made in advance and a period of time intervened before the possession was fully awarded at a future date.

It's been suggested that the scroll in Revelation 5 represents the title deed for the land/the earth/the universe. God the Father has the ownership. *The earth is the Lord's* (Psa. 24:1) and He is passing it to His Heir, to His rightful Heir to take possession of what is His (Psa. 2). When the scroll that Jesus takes is totally opened, the Lamb will then possess His inheritance – that which has been promised to Him from eternity past (Psa. 2; Isa. 53:10). When will the scroll that we see in the throne room of God – in the book of Revelation – be fully opened? At the end of the seven years of Tribulation. After Jesus looses the seal judgments, there are then the trumpet judgments and then the bowl judgments.

What was promised to Jesus as His inheritance?

Psa. 2:6-7 - *Yet I have set My King on My holy hill of Zion. <sup>7</sup> I will declare the decree: the LORD has said to Me, 'You are My Son, today I have begotten You.* God the Father will set up/establish God the Son, the King, on His "holy hill" – speaking of Jesus' reign from Jerusalem during the Millennial Kingdom following the Tribulation! Psa. 2:8 - Ask

*of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession.*

Jesus' inheritance includes an enduring kingdom with redeemed mankind having dominion over the earth - and the title deed to the earth! The title deed was never lost. God the Father is holding the scroll – the title deed to the earth – in Rev. 5! BUT mankind rebelled, mankind sinned against God. God is just. The wages of sin is death. The penalty for sin must be paid! Jesus paid the penalty for our sin and purchased us/redeemed us from bondage to sin. In God's plan of redemption, judgment must fall on unrepentant mankind. And, judgment must fall on the world where Satan, who usurped man's dominion at the fall in the Garden of Eden, has been allowed to roam! The earth must be cleansed which is one of the reasons for the Tribulation. The earth must be RESTORED which is one of the reasons for the Millennial Kingdom.

In Revelation 5 we see what is going to transpire in the throne room of God prior to the seven-year Tribulation. As each seal is broken, judgments come upon the earth. The wrath of God is poured out at the beginning of the 7-year Tribulation period. Where is that scroll being opened? In the throne room of God. And, it's being opened by Whom? By the Son of God, Jesus. These are judgments from God pouring out upon the earth at the outset of the Tribulation. The loosing of the seventh seal leads to the seven trumpet judgments, and the seventh trumpet leads to the seven bowl judgments. The judgments get progressively worse and more devastating as the end times progress. The seven seals, trumpets, and bowls are CONNECTED to one another. The seventh seal introduces the seven trumpets (Rev. 8:1-5), and the seventh trumpet introduces the seven bowls (Rev. 11:15-19; 15:1-8). We see the wrath of God from the outset of the seal judgments as Jesus is the One Who breaks the seals!

At the end of the judgments, at the end of the Tribulation, the time of Jacob's trouble, the 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel, Satan, the usurper is evicted – he's bound in the abyss. As Jesus establishes His 1,000-year Kingdom on earth, the Purchaser, King Jesus, takes back what is rightfully His!

How is what we read in the Bible leading up to RESTORATION...of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord filling the earth (Habakkuk 2:14)? The overarching theme of the Bible is the glory of God. The Bible moves toward the ultimate purpose or goal of history – God's glory! Glory – Heb. - kavod – weightiness – all Who God is – His attributes, His character, His reputation.

The OT is divided into two distinct parts, each covering several thousand years of history.

#### OT

| <u>Gen. 1-11</u> | <u>Gen. 12 - Malachi</u>               |
|------------------|----------------------------------------|
| 2,000 yrs.       | 2,000 yrs.                             |
| Creation         | Abram through history through writings |
| The fall         | through the major and minor prophets   |
| The flood        |                                        |
| Tower of Babel   |                                        |

Genesis 1-11 is a record of God's dealings with mankind in general. During this time there was no special group such as the Church or the nation of Israel. There were no Jews and/or Gentiles. God dealt with individuals – with mankind.

For the first 2,000 years, four important events occurred: the creation, the fall of man, the universal flood, and the division of mankind at the Tower of Babel. We learn from this – how the material universe came into being, the beginning of sin and evil, and why the world of mankind is so fragmented. Within the four important events during the first 2,000 years, God promised THE Redeemer. Man sinned and IMMEDIATELY God promised THE way back to Himself in Gen. 3:15 which is the first Messianic prophecy. And from that time forward, Satan attempted to thwart God's plan and annihilate the line through whom the Messiah would come. Enter: conflict – which we see throughout the Bible. God's plan can never be thwarted.

Mankind spiraled downward and God flooded the earth after giving mankind 969 years to repent. HOW do I know that God gave mankind 969 years? Methuselah. "Methuselah" means "His (Methuselah's) death shall bring it;" or, "When he (Methuselah) dies, it will come." The "it" might very well refer to the flood. The flood occurred the very year Methuselah died. The flood was God's judgment! Methuselah lived longer than any other man. What does that say to us? God waited 969 years (Methuselah lived 969 years – Gen. 5:27) before executing judgment on mankind!

Eight were saved from the universal flood: Noah, Mrs. Noah, Ham, Shem, and Japheth and their wives. Gen. 9:19 - *These three were the sons of Noah, and from these the whole earth was populated.*

What is the overarching theme of the Bible? The glory of God. During the course of history, God's glory is displayed as God deals with the redeemed, and with those who are not redeemed. God's glory is displayed as He is sovereign over ALL, including. . .

- NATIONS - Job 12:23 – He makes nations great and destroys them; He enlarges nations and guides them; Isa. 14:24-27; Jer. 10:7; Psa. 2 – He will be the King of the nations; Dan. 2:36-45 – Nebuchadnezzar's dream re: the image – the empires of the world: Babylon, Medo-Persia; Greece, Rome, (all fulfilled; past history) the revived Roman empire; the kingdom of God. The Gentile kingdoms will continue until the Second Coming of Jesus. This is known as "the times of the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24) – control over Jerusalem.

- RULERS – Ex. 9:16 – God raised up Pharaoh to display His power so that God's name would be proclaimed in all the earth. Isa. 44:28-45:7 – Cyrus of Persia performed all God's pleasure; Cyrus issued a decree by which the Jews were allowed to return to Israel following the Babylonian captivity. Dan. 2:21 – God removes kings and establishes kings; Dan. 4:17 - the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, gives it to whomever He will, and sets over it the lowest of men.

- SATAN - Jn. 12:31 – the ruler of the world was cast out when Jesus died on the cross; Satan no longer has power over death; Rev. 12:7-10 – war broke out in heaven between Michael and his angels and the dragon and his angels; Rev. 20:1-3 – Satan will be bound for 1,000 years in the abyss during the Millennial Kingdom.

Nations? Rulers? Daniel 2 speaking of empires? Isn't this a bit political?

- Isa. 9:6 – “Unto us a Child is born; unto us a Son is given; and the GOV'T shall be upon His shoulders and His name will be called. . . .”
- Psa. 2 – Jesus' rule and reign is highlight – over the nations.

The Bible covers the entire scope of history from beginning to end, from eternity past to eternity future. All that unfolds gives glory to God. God's plan: that the knowledge of the glory of God would fill the earth. And, so, we read in. . . Romans 9:17 - *For the Scripture says to the Pharaoh, 'For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth.'*

In Noah's sons we see an outline of nations, of people groups. We need to understand God's plan for the nations descending through Noah's sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

God's promised line for blessing for the world is promised through Shem (Gen. 11:10-26). Abraham comes through Shem's line (Gen. 11:26). The Messiah comes from Abraham (Matt. 1:1 – *The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham*) (Gen. 12:3). Abraham was a Gentile – from Ur of the Chaldeans (present day Iraq). Abraham's father, Terah, was an idol worshipper – he served many gods (Josh. 24:2). God chose Abram, exalted father, and told him to leave his country, his family. Abraham is called a Hebrew (Gen. 14:13) which means one who has crossed over from the other side.

Isaac would come from Abraham. Through Isaac, the promise would come (Gen. 17:19; Gen. 21:12; Rom. 9:7). The promise would not come through Ishmael. God promised that He would make Ishmael fruitful, and would multiply him exceedingly. Twelve princes would come from Ishmael's line. God would make of Ishmael a great nation. BUT, God's covenant would be established with Isaac.

God created Israel through Jacob (Isa. 43:1) whose name was changed to Israel. Jacob/Israel was the father of the 12 tribes – of the nation of Israel.

We see all the nations of the world coming from Noah's three sons. We see God creating a new nation through Jacob (Isa. 43:1) – Israel.

And, God would use Israel as an instrument of blessing for the world (Gen. 18:18 – *since Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?*)

Repeatedly we come across the phrase in the OT, “that the world may know.”

I Sam. 17:45-46 - *Then David said to the Philistine, “You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.”*<sup>46</sup> *This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you and take your head from you. And this day I will give the carcasses of the camp of the Philistines to the birds of the air and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.*

The world was watching God's relationship with Israel. Israel was God's witness people (Isa. 43:10). When Israel obeyed God, God blessed them. When Israel disobeyed God, God chastised them. . . so that the world might watch and know this God! The world was witnessing God's faithfulness to Israel. Hab. 2:14 – one day the earth will be

filled with the knowledge of the glory of God. That is God's desire. That is God's purpose – His goal. Through Israel, God has demonstrated Who He is - and God will continue to do so through the Millennial Kingdom.

Here are a couple of prime illustrations, Biblical illustrations, of how God used the children of Israel to bless the nations.

- Prior to the Exodus from Egypt, Joseph, the favorite son of Jacob was thrown in a pit by his brothers and sold to the Midianites/Ishmaelites who were on their way to Egypt. GOD'S marvelous plan at work! In the midst of trials and difficulties in Egypt, God used Joseph to interpret Pharaoh's dream which told of 7 years of abundance and 7 years of famine – and to prepare Egypt for the famine and to provide for the world. In speaking to his brothers, Joseph told them, *But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive. (Gen. 50:20)* God used Joseph to provide for the hunger of the known world – mostly “the nations”. After all, when the children of Israel went down to Egypt, they were 70 in number (Gen. 46:6-27).

Following the Exodus from Egypt, we read. . .

- Ex. 12:37-38 - *Then the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides children.* <sup>38</sup> *A mixed multitude went up with them also, and flocks and herds—a great deal of livestock.* When God delivered the children of Israel from Egypt, people from Gentile nations – “a mixed multitude” - were delivered with the Jews. Egypt was a conquering nation. When they conquered other people groups, they took captives who became their slaves. I truly believe that within this “mixed multitude” many nations of the world were represented. The children of Israel did not leave Egypt without taking Gentiles. God blessed the Gentile mixed multitude with freedom through His deliverance of the children of Israel – through the blood of the Passover Lamb!!!! What a BEAUTIFUL picture of God's plan for the NATIONS of the world – deliverance from bondage through the blood of the Passover Lamb. And, God using tiny, weak Israel as His instrument of blessing!

Romans 11:11-15 - *I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not! But through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles.* <sup>12</sup> *Now if their fall is riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness!* <sup>13</sup> *For I speak to you Gentiles; inasmuch as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry,* <sup>14</sup> *if by any means I may provoke to jealousy those who are my flesh and save some of them.* <sup>15</sup> *For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?*

I hope that what we've briefly seen gives you more support for the truth that the Church and Israel are distinct, that God's plan of redemption is for both Jews and Gentiles, and that God has chosen Israel to serve as His instrument of blessing for the world!

## COMMENTS RE: THE 3 VIEWS CONCERNING THE TIMING OF THE RAPTURE:

I adhere to the Pre-Trib Rapture view mainly because. . .

- I see a distinction between Israel and the Church. Daniel's 70 week prophecy, which is the backbone of all end times prophecy, doesn't mention the Church when it mentions the Tribulation.
- The Rapture isn't noted in the OT. It's called a "mystery" in the NT (I Cor. 15:51-53) – something hidden in the OT – because the Rapture isn't for Israel. The Rapture is for the Church.
- The Pre-Trib view is the only view that allows for the imminent return – the any moment coming – of Jesus! The Bible ends with Rev. 22:20 – "Come, Lord Jesus." Maranatha – The Lord cometh (I Cor. 16:22).  
 "An imminent event is one that is always hanging overhead, is constantly ready to befall or overtake a person, is always close at hand in the sense that it could happen at any moment. Other things may happen before the imminent event, but nothing else must take place before it happens. If something else must take place before an event can happen, that event is not imminent. The necessity of something else taking place first destroys the concept of imminency."

### Re: the Post-Tribulational view:

- Doesn't allow for the imminent return of Jesus. Signs occur before Jesus comes in the Rapture. So, people are first looking for the antichrist to appear - not Jesus.
- Regarding the Church being promised suffering and persecution, YES, the Church has been promised suffering and persecution (John 16:33; Phil. 3:10 - *that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death*). Christians have been martyred for their faith since the Church was birthed. There's a difference between suffering in this fallen world and being a recipient of God's wrath. I Thess. 5:9 – Believers are not appointed to wrath. Rom. 8:1 – There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. And, God's wrath begins at the loosing of the seals during the first half of the Tribulation.
- Regarding the belief that the Church will be preserved and protected through the Tribulation while remaining on the earth, does that mean that no believer will lose their life during the Tribulation?
  - If so, how does one explain Rev. 6:9-11 which speaks of Tribulation saints already slain during the Tribulation AND those yet to be killed - *When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.* <sup>10</sup> *And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"* <sup>11</sup> *Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.*
  - And, how does one explain Rev. 7:9, 14 *After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands,. . . After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues,*

*standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands,*

○ In speaking to His disciples re: the Tribulation, Jesus said in Matt. 24:22 - *And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.* If God is shielding believers during the Tribulation, why would the days need to be shortened?

- Regarding viewing the Rapture and the physical Second Coming of Jesus as a single event at the end of the Tribulation, see the sheet explaining the differences between the Rapture and the Second Coming.
- The Post-Trib view understands all believers as the same. So, the Church is in the OT. And, often times this view understands the Church as “true Israel,” “the Israel of God,” or “spiritual Israel.” While there is only ONE way of salvation, Scripture speaks of OT saints (Dan. 12:1-2 – resurrected at the end of the Tribulation), Tribulation saints (Dan. 12:1-2 – resurrected at the end of the Tribulation), and those “in Christ” (I Thess. 4:16). And, OT/children of Israel saints will be joined by Gentile saints in the Millennial Kingdom (Matt. 8:11).

Regarding the statement made by Post-Trib folks that the Rapture is a recent view that surfaced circa 1830, the Pre-Tribulational view is based on Scripture NOT on the vision of a person in the 1800's. Early Church Fathers embraced the view that the Rapture would occur prior to the Tribulation. AND, when Martin Luther (1483-1546) rejected several teachings and practices of the Roman Catholic Church and taught that salvation is not earned by good deeds but that salvation is by grace through faith in God's revealed message in Jesus – was that considered to be “new/recent” since Luther lived in the 1500's? NO! Luther was basing this on the truth of the word of God!

Concerning the Mid-Trib view, note how arguments challenging the Post-Trib view apply.

Concerning signs, i.e. severe weather. How are we to understand this? God is sovereign over nature. God is sovereign, period. But it's not that He necessarily reaches down and causes every rain storm, tornado, lovely day, hurricane, earthquake. Much happens as a result of natural processes which God has created.

We DO KNOW that God has literally and directly manipulated the weather for His own purposes: God sent the universal flood in the days of Noah (Gen. 6 – 9); He sent thunder and hail down on the Egyptians (Ex. 9:22-43); divinely sent winds were instrumental in the events of the Exodus from Egypt (Ex. 10:19, 14:21); the Lord withheld rain to punish His people for disobedience (Lev. 26:18-20); abundant rain and crops, on the other hand, were a reward for obedience (Deut. 11:13-15); as a form of punishment on His rebellious people, God sent stifling dust storms instead of rain (Deut. 28:24); hailstones rained down on Israel's enemies, the Amorites (Josh. 10:11); loud claps of thunder confused the Philistines so they could be routed by Israel (I Sam. 7:10); the Lord sent thunder and rain at Samuel's request to get Israel's attention (I Sam. 12:17-18); David petitioned the Lord to suspend a disastrous, three-year famine in Israel (II Sam. 21:1); Solomon said that God sends rain in response to humility and repentance (I

Kings 8:35-36); The Lord sent an “east wind” to create drought conditions for the northern kingdom of Israel (Hosea 13:15); He sent a violent storm to change Jonah’s course (Jonah 1:4); Nahum declared that God metes out judgment on His enemies through tornadoes, storms, and droughts (Nahum 1:2-4); when a violent storm was about to sink their boat on the Sea of Galilee, Jesus’ frightened disciples were astounded when He calmed the wind and the waves (Matt. 8:23-27).

God can and does manipulate the weather sometimes. We need to remember that God has ordained and set into motion natural laws and processes that govern the universe and control the weather (Job. 38:33; Jer. 31:35-36) and He normally doesn’t interfere with those processes. Extreme weather by itself is not a sign of the Second Coming. The celestial manifestations referred to in Matthew 24 and in Revelation are the result of a direct intervention of God Himself.

### QUESTIONS

Has Rev. 5 impacted you? If so, how?

Did you have any V8 moments re: the brief overview of the Bible? If so, what are they?

If so, how will you now read/understand the Bible?

Have you been pondering your view re: the timing of the Rapture? Have you changed your thoughts since last week?

Has your view been strengthened? If so, how?

### SUGGESTED HOMEWORK

Go over handout and look up references.

Think of other accounts where God used the Jewish people to provide for, bless, comfort the Jewish people.

Read handout for week 10 when you receive it.