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“Deliverance before Judgment” Part 16

It is important to understand that a prophecy may sometimes be describing two separate events at once, mixed together in the same section of text making it appear at first glance as if everything in that section relates to one single event. Another important point to keep in mind is that one prophecy can have multiple fulfillments and may also be separated by a gap in time. This is less obvious to Christians with a Gentile background. However, because of their understanding of the Hebrew language as well as cultural and religious background, Messianic Jews are better equipped to identify the nuances of these Biblical texts. For example, in the descriptive passage of Matthew 24:29-31 (part of the Olivet discourse), we find a prophetic picture describing two separate events chronicled within the same narrative and describing both the Rapture and the Second Coming.

“Immediately after the Tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from haven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken; And then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” -(Matthew 24:29-31).

Critics of the Pre-Tribulation Rapture point to this passage to say that it refutes the Pre-Tribulation Rapture. But does it really? There are many reasons which can be closely examined leading to the conclusion that this view has faulty reasoning and can therefore be rejected. The nuances of the Greek text show a disjointed order of events.

- Jesus was talking to the Jews, His disciples (The Olivet Discourse of Matthew 24 & 25 does not present a discussion of a chronological order of events, but are a dialogue conversation naming things to come but not in a specific chronological pattern.).
- The church did not come into existence for another decade or two (Jesus first mentioned the concept of the church in Matthew 16:18 and 18:17. The use of the term “church” only occurs twice in the four Gospels. The church does not begin until Acts 2, and the term is the focus of the book of Acts and the rest of the New Testament.).
- The Olivet Discourse covers nearly two chapters (Matthew 24 & 25) noting upwards of two dozen specific things, situations or circumstances that will happen over a lengthy but undefined period of time. They are a generalized list and no way inferred or implied to follow a specific pattern.).

Here is an example of an Old Testament life experience, but it was also used as a Bible prophecy. **“Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.”** -(1st Corinthians 10:11). Some of the Corinthian believers thought that because they had professed faith, went to church, and joined in the Lord’s Supper, they could then live as they pleased. But this was a false belief, as Paul would show through the lessons learned in Israel’s history.

Believing the false notion that one can be saved and then live a faithless, Godless life can be seen in what happened to the Jews’ ancestors in the wilderness long ago. The record of their miraculous escape from slavery in Egypt by the intervention of God is recorded in the first twelve chapters of Exodus. God set them free through the use of many miracles, afforded them with Moses a strong leader, who himself was miraculously preserved and readied for the task of leading, and then guided all of them as they moved out of Egypt and headed toward the Promised Land, which God vowed to give to Abraham. God’s presence was with them in the form of a cloud by day and fire by night -(Exodus 13:21-22). When they came to the Red Sea, God brought them all safely through the waters of the sea on dry ground (Exodus 14). Note, God can bring his people through the greatest difficulties, and force a solution where man does not find it. The God of nature is not tied Himself to its laws, but, when He pleases, dispenses them for His purpose.^(b)

Despite the fact that God had performed great miracles for his people, **most of them rebelled against God**. Of the thousands who stood at the very edge of the Promised Land, only two men, Joshua and Caleb had enough faith in God to enter -(Numbers 14:5-12; Numbers 14:30). **Because of their lack of faith, God caused the people to turn back from the land and wander for forty years in the wilderness.** God destroyed them in the wilderness by causing them to wander until they died. This was God’s punishment on them for their disobedience and rebellion.

When the Israelites disobeyed, they received punishment. Likewise, when people who claim to be Christians sin with no repentance, no desire to change, and no concern for God’s laws, **they too will receive punishment.**^(a)

Jesus addressed the request for a sign as proof of His authority in Matthew 12:39-41. Let’s see how Jesus used Jonah as the only sign that would be given. **“But He [Jesus] answered them, “An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign; but no sign shall be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh will arise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.”**

Jonah was an example, or Type of Jesus. Jonah's experience was a prophesy Jesus was using to relate or explain something about Jesus' death. However, the Lord Jesus was not Jonah. Not hardly.

- Did the Lord Jesus Christ run away from His commitment before being killed? No.
- Was the Lord's death a punishment for the Lord, just as Jonah's being in the belly of a whale was a punishment for Jonah? No.
- Did the Lord **begin** His ministry after He came out of the grave, as Jonah had begun his ministry after he came out of the belly of the whale? No.
- Did Jonah's prophecy of doom for Nineveh come to pass? No. But **all of Jesus' prophecies will come to pass**. -(Luke 21:33).
- Did Jonah actually die when he was in the belly of the whale? No. But Jesus would die and be buried in the belly of the earth for three days and three nights. -(Matthew 27:63-66; 28:1-4; 28:11-15 and many more) ⁽¹⁾

The prophecy was true, and we will examine why this is the case. It is a legitimate prophecy because of the parallel similitudes, comparisons or examples resembling similarities within each occurrence. Not ALL of it has to match perfectly. It just has to be a "Type", or an example - 'this is like the other' because some of their parts resemble each other. We must let Scripture shows us the definition of Types, but they do not all have to be exactly, specifically, 100% precise and correct for each and every aspect imaginable. That's what makes a comparison a comparison. Things are "like" each other but not "exact" in every respect. ALL analogies break down and are not perfect when closely scrutinized.

- Believers are compared to sheep. Does that mean that Christians are stupid? No.
- Believers are compared to being the bride. Does that mean Christians are supposed to be effeminate or all women? No.
- Believers are supposed to watch and be ready, yet told **"no man knows"**. Does that mean we don't have to watch since it's impossible to "know"? No. This expression is a Hebrew idiom which points to a specific Jewish Feast Day. This analogy or Type could not be known in Biblical times by an observation of when it would take place because it pointed to a future fulfillment.
- Believers are told our Lord will come as a thief in the night. Does that mean that the Biblical commandment not to steal no longer applies? No.

The point of each analogy or picture or comparison, or metaphor listed above **is true**. It continues to be true and is not invalidated simply because individual peculiarities exist within each example which we might detect because we are viewing them through the lens of skeptical reasoning.

The spirit of the law becomes invalid when something is examined with an absolute expectation that it must be precise in every respect in order for it to be considered true. An internal apprehension in the skeptical mind brings about a belief that everything must go by the letter of the law and so has its roots in mistrust or unbelief. Who are we to say that the Typology must be absolutely clear, consistent and perfect in order to be valid? Where is it stated that this concept is a Biblical principle? In fact, the underpinnings of types (especially parables) depicted within a Biblical principle, teaching or event will often be difficult to recognize, if not impossible, for most people who are unfamiliar with Scripture.

One of the best ways to investigate the Word of God is to study it thematically. This is the conclusion I've reached in my fifty+ years of personal study experience. When a theme is repeated multiple times, it should be investigated for the deeper meaning and significance that it will most definitely carry. For example, let's look at the number 40:

- In the Old Testament, when God destroyed the earth with water, He caused it to rain 40 days and 40 nights -(Genesis 7:12).
- After Moses killed the Egyptian, he fled to Midian, where he spent 40 years in the desert tending flocks -(Acts 7:30).
- Moses was on Mount Sinai for 40 days and 40 nights -(Exodus 24:18).
- Moses interceded on Israel's behalf for 40 days and 40 nights - (Deuteronomy 9:18, 25).
- At God's command, Moses sent leaders from each tribe of Israel to scout out the Promised Land for 40 days. After a mostly negative report rooted in disbelief, all but two (Joshua and Caleb) wanted to return to Egypt. Because they didn't place their trust and faith in God, the Israelites were punished. A day for a year they would wander in the wilderness for 40 years before finally entering the Promised Land. But those twenty years and older would perish in the wilderness for their lack of faith. Only their children along with Joshua and Caleb would eventually enter the land promised to them - (Numbers 13 - 14).
- The Law specified a maximum number of lashes a man could receive for a crime, setting the limit at 40 -(Deuteronomy 25:3).
- In the New Testament, Jesus was tempted for 40 days and 40 nights - (Matthew 4:2).
- There were 40 days between Jesus' resurrection and ascension -(Acts 1:3). Thus, 40 is a number that generally symbolizes a period of testing, trial, probation or judgment, and or isolation or separation from God.

Some, but not all, contemporary era Christian leaders attack the concept of the Pre-Tribulation Rapture, concluding that it is a relatively new doctrine or teaching. Some would have people believe the idea began in the 1830's by a young Scottish girl who had visions. But the doctrine was held by the early church up to the middle of the fourth century. So this argument is a superficial attack because there is evidence of the Rapture teaching in Scripture, therefore it is not a new teaching. Once Roman Catholicism gained prominence, it stifled theological discourse and claimed the benefits of the Bible for the Church. It was Catholicism that introduced a thoroughly heretical teaching we know today as "Replacement Theology". Dozens of the early church fathers (as they were once referred to) held to the teaching of "Deliverance before Judgment". God's plan does not and never has excluded the Jewish people from His Master Plan. On the contrary, the Jewish people are the primary focus of the last week of Daniel's 70th week prophecy. That week is the final "Seven" year period referred to as the "Great Tribulation".

Numerous Old Testament prophets taught about the twofold return of the Jews, once in unbelief and once in belief. We are presently in the time of the Jews return in unbelief, which began in the late 1800's and continues to this day. World events forming today are leading to the next phase. As anti-Semitism continues to grow in Europe and elsewhere in the world, Jewish people are returning to Israel -(Zephaniah 3:20; Zechariah 10:1-12; Ezekiel 36:21-28, and others). In 2015, the high priest of the Jewish Sanhedrin issued a world statement for Jews to return to Israel. I have written a 7-part series of Bible/Biblical Forensics© that covers this two-stage return of the Jews to their homeland.

The Christian community has been completely blinded by this apostate "Replacement Theology" teaching. The doctrine has its roots in Roman Catholicism but it was perpetuated by Protestants in the Reformation movement period which began in 1517. Most mainline Protestant denominations today are nearly all anti-Israel. The cause for this lies in the teaching of "Replacement Theology". Those adhering to "Replacement Theology" have a veil of blindness over their eyes. Because of this blindness, it will most likely lead them into the Great Tribulation thereby missing out on deliverance before judgment. It is my view, as many Bible prophecy scholars and teachers, that most of the churches engaged in the Ecumenical movement will return to the folds of Rome in the One World Church lead by the Vatican. (2;3;4) This fact will place them under judgment, and they will miss the Pre-Tribulation Rapture as a result of the Satanic spirit that rules the Vatican. There can be no question that the Vatican is controlled by Satan. Those are not my words but are from former ex-Jesuits, such as Malachi Martin and Alberto Rivera, who have become born-again Christians, but both died under mysterious circumstances, one by poison and one by being pushed down a step staircase at his New York apartment. Next time we will discuss the Jewish Feast Day of Passover.

Pastor Bob

Notes:

1. <https://bible.org/seriespage/lesson-100-evidence-jesus-resurrection-john-201-10>
2. <http://americamagazine.org/content/dispatches/us-lutherans-ratify-catholic-interfaith-document>
3. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=07dPzM5q43c>
4. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sSYafB6NNTY>

Commentaries:

- a. Believer's Bible Commentary
- b. Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible