

***“The Day of the Lord — Christ As Messiah
Will Be the Clear Focus of the Kingdom”***

Review: "Peter & Paul, Different Messengers for Different Times, Part 2"

- **What Did Peter Really Believe Regarding Paul's Ministry and Message?**
 - Our apostle Paul was sent by the risen and ascended Lord to the Gentiles with the gospel of the grace of God and with a distinctive, even unique, ministry. Peter and John, members of the Twelve, were sent to the Jews with a different message and ministry.
 - As Peter and John write in their letters to their own, the Jews, during the Time of Jacob's Trouble, everything on earth will be focused on God's people, the Jews. For surely, as scripture makes so clear, the Lord God is not finished with them yet. If he were, our future would be so uncertain as to be of little certain and eternal value. For all depends on the faithfulness of Almighty God, doesn't it?

2 Peter 3:8-10, 13-16

8 But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day [is] with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

11 [Seeing] then [that] all these things shall be dissolved, what manner [of persons] ought ye to be in [all] holy conversation and godliness,

12 Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

14 Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

15 And account [that] the longsuffering of our Lord [is] salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you;

16 As also in all [his] epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as [they do] also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction [*one letter of Paul to the Jews, the rest to the Gentiles*].

- Yes, Peter writes, their expectation of the Lord's soon return has not been met. It seems that that plan of the Lord has been postponed. Indeed it had, as a new dispensation had begun. But the Lord will, Peter exclaims, still return according to his promise. The Lord had not abandoned them even though he suspended that dispensational plan and had begun another. It becomes a very interesting study of God's Word when we compare scripture with scripture, doesn't it?

Now, he says, "the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation", quite a different situation indeed compared to fervently expecting the signs of the Lord's return soon, perhaps. The contrast with the teaching on signs and wonders and on works is clear.

But did Peter truly understand grace? In some ways I am sure that he did. He did know that God had transferred the focus of his working to Paul as apostle of the Gentiles. He must also have known that a new and very different dispensation had been initiated. But beyond that, I do not know. I will comment further on Peter's view of Paul and his message at the end of this study.

So, Peter knew a change had occurred, and even a change in the gospel and its ministry had been introduced by the risen Christ. Paul had been raised up and given a unique and different commission than what the Twelve apostles were given. Peter seemed to know that, as we saw in the book of Acts and in Paul's Galatians letter.

- In our last fellowship here we looked into the Apostle John's writing, especially in the Revelation. Chapter 20 begins with this overview in verses 1-4, and then in chapter 21, we see what seems like the "final chapter" as far as prophecy could see:

Revelation 20:1-4

1 And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,

3 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus,

and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

Revelation 21:1-3, 7

1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God [is] with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, [and be] their God.

...

7 He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

- The “overcomers” are the ones who endure until the end and are therefore those who are saved. This is a major theme in the Revelation, but also in 1 John and in the Revelation, with many references as noted earlier. For example:

Revelation 3:5 He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

- It is to these overcomers that Peter, John, and the rest of the Twelve were ministering in their writings. They existed then and will be many in number during the Tribulation period. Only those in the Tribulation that endure until the end will be saved, and the Jews saved will compose the elect nation. Amen.

What a great difference there is between this message and Paul's. So with those many differences, even with the essence of the gospel of the kingdom and the gospel of the grace of God, it is no wonder that Peter had some difficulties with Paul's message. And it is the same for so many today who try to mix these messages, for it affects our understanding of how God is working today and affects our hope and our lives. The next thing on the prophetic agenda for us is our upward calling, not the signs of the return of the Lord.

- But Peter did not have understanding sufficient to know that the work of the Lord under grace was about a lot more than salvation; for it was also about how to abound in grace according to the full working of the Lord and his Spirit in each of us believers. But at the end of Peter's last letter, his “final” words are, from my perspective, rather strange:

2 Peter 3:15-16

15 And account [that] the longsuffering of our Lord [is] salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you;

16 As also in all [his] epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as [they do] also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. *[one letter of Paul to the Jews, the rest to the Gentiles]*

- Peter recognized Paul's apostleship. But he did not understand the grace message very well, it seems. That was demonstrated by his unwillingness to stand for the truths of grace when it counted, as in Antioch. He knew that without God's grace, no one could be saved. Yes. But grace in the living of one's life was an area of confusion for him due to his Jewish convictions, it seems.

I hesitate to put Peter himself in this group, which he identifies here as "unlearned and unstable", but his comments here may seem to demand that. But if Peter was thinking of what he had been teaching his entire life about the absolute necessity of enduring to the end to be saved, then perhaps this makes perfect sense, but that is not what Paul was referring to at all, of course, when he writes of the dispensational changes that had occurred. But did Peter understand that? I think he may not have.

Our Outline Today: Christ As Messiah Will Be the Clear Focus of the Kingdom

- **The Preparation for the Second Coming Requires the Creation of an Elect Nation**
- **The Life of the Kingdom Is Revealed by the Prophets for the Saved Jews and Willing Gentiles**

I. The Preparation for the Second Coming Requires the Creation of an Elect Nation:

- And one can rightfully ask, how shall this all be accomplished, the creation of an elect nation, seeing that nothing like this has ever been seen before on this sin-cursed earth?

The prophet Zechariah reveals the answer to this question:

Zechariah 9:9, 12

9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he *is* just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass. *[The Triumphal Entry]*

10 And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off: and he shall speak peace unto the heathen: and

his dominion *shall be* from sea *even* to sea, and from the river *even* to the ends of the earth.

11 As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein *is* no water.

12 Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope: even to day do I declare *that* I will render double unto thee; [*Have hope!*]

13 When I have bent Judah for me, filled the bow with Ephraim, and raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece, and made thee as the sword of a mighty man.

14 And the LORD shall be seen over them, and his arrow shall go forth as the lightning: and the Lord GOD shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south.

15 The LORD of hosts shall defend them; and they shall devour, and subdue with sling stones; and they shall drink, *and* make a noise as through wine; and they shall be filled like bowls, *and* as the corners of the altar.

16 And the LORD their God shall save them in that day as the flock of his people: for they *shall be* as the stones of a crown, lifted up as an ensign upon his land.

17 For how great *is* his goodness, and how great *is* his beauty! corn shall make the young men cheerful, and new wine the maids.

[READ] Zechariah 12:9-10

9 And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

10 And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for *his* only *son*, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for *his* firstborn.

[READ] Zechariah 13:1, 6-9

1 In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.

...

6 And *one* shall say unto him [*the promised Prophet above all prophets*], What *are* these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, *Those* with which I was wounded *in* the house of my friends.

7 Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man *that is* my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.

8 And it shall come to pass, *that* in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off *and* die; but the third shall be left therein.

9 And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, *It is* my people: and they shall say, The LORD *is* my God.

Zechariah 14:1, 4-9

1 Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee.

2 For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.

3 Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle.

4 And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which *is* before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, *and there shall be* a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.

...

8 And it shall be in that day, *that* living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be.

9 And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.

- So the theme of the coming Kingdom, the work of the Lord during those 1000 years, will be on the King, of course, and his presence and work. All will be focused upon him:

II. The Life of the Kingdom Is Revealed by the Prophets for the Saved Jews and Willing Gentiles:

- Let me start by presenting a fundamental principle regarding both the establishing of a kingdom and the life of the kingdom's citizens: An earthly King demands an earthly Kingdom, and that requires the giving of a Law. The nature of Law demands obedience, and failure to keep that Law, inevitable due to the nature of man, then requires a Priesthood. We shall see this principle reflected in our scriptures today. And, as we have already seen in many Old Testament prophecies, the Law of the promised Kingdom also requires a sacrificial system to allow ceremonial cleansing for those who have failed to keep that Law with perfect obedience.

Let us see what scripture says about the necessity of a coming prophet, priest, and king and the relevance of that to the life of the coming kingdom.

- One of the most important promises in the entire Old Testament is found in Deuteronomy 18 [and it sets the stage for all the rest]:

[READ] Deut. 18:18-19

18 I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.

19 And it shall come to pass, [that] whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require [it] of him.

- Here the Lord promised the Twelve Tribes through Moses a prophet who has the actual words of God in his mouth. This one promised would not be one who was given over to wine, strong drink, or idolatry as so many were. This promised one would be the one that they could obey with total confidence that they were obeying the very Word of God as Moses himself had required of them.
- But there would still be the issue of their obedience. But it was also prophesied that there would be a New Covenant made with the elect nation that would be entirely different in many ways to the one Moses was administering. Jeremiah 31 makes this clear:

Jer. 31:33 But this [shall be] the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

- But a perfect obedience is never possible for sinful man, even with these special enablements. The prophet Zechariah in 6:12-13 also writes of this coming one that God would send, who would combine these three offices in one: Prophet / King, and Priest — all in one person! The Priest above all priests and his priesthood will therefore be so important in the Kingdom:

[READ] Zechariah 6:12-13, 15

12 And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name [is] The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD:

13 Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.

...

15 And they that are far off shall come and build in the temple of the LORD, and ye shall know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you. And this shall come to pass, if ye will diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God.

- See also in Hebrews 7, where both the perfect King and the perfect Priest are found revealed to be in one person in our Lord Jesus. It is the work of

that coming prophet, priest, and king that provides the theme of the coming kingdom on this earth, and that is so distinctively different from what God is doing today under grace.

Other key scriptures among many would be Zechariah 9:9-10 [Even here there is judgment!], Isaiah 9:6-7 [Here as well judgment is clearly implied], Isaiah 22:21-22, Psalm 2:6-8 and 110:1-4.

- Indeed, the Throne of David shall be reestablished. David, resurrected, will reign along with the Lord Jesus from a throne in Jerusalem, with the resurrected Twelve Apostles as well. After judgment, peace will reign for many generations, and the character of the 1000 years will be peaceful indeed, since open sin will be judged and immediately removed (see the flying scroll of Zechariah). The final rebellion, when satan and his minions are released from the bottomless pit and wreak havoc on this earth, will be finally put down, and God's enemies will have been destroyed forever.
- So, as we have now seen, the fundamentals of life in the coming Kingdom is revealed to be different in nearly every way from what prevails today during the Dispensation of the Grace of God. Those features have never been seen in any government on this earth, and they are certainly not seen today as we live under the fullness of God's grace through Jesus Christ.
- But one thing is crystal clear: the coming Kingdom will bring the fulfillment of many of the prophecies of the Bible that were still unfulfilled, whether Old Testament or New. And the several covenants of the Bible, whether the Abrahamic, Palestinian, Davidic, or the New Covenant will finally be brought to pass for God's elect nation Israel. After a coming time of "Jacob's Trouble", the Lord's creation of an elect nation will be completed at the Second Coming of Christ to this earth. Importantly, for us who attempt always to "rightly divide the Word of Truth", the several covenants promised to Abraham and to his Seed (and seed, plural as well) must be fulfilled literally, or the entire redemptive plan of God also falls into dust and will be rendered meaningless and without foundation.
- Those key covenants are stated and restated and amplified beginning in Genesis 12. But this takes us to where we will be in our next fellowship here, God willing: For our theme then will be Israel's Land Promises.

Without a fulfillment of Israel's Land Promises, the entire structure of divine prophecy falls to the ground. Without God's fulfilling of those promises regarding the Jewish possession of land in the Middle East, there is no foundation for the literal fulfillment of any of the promises of scripture. For both the Old Testament and the New are full of the promises of God regarding that Land, its Capital City, Jerusalem, and how

all the world will be dependent upon it and its inhabitants, God's elect nation of Israel.

- But what a contrast indeed with what the Lord God is doing today, under grace. In the 1000-year Kingdom all life will be focused on the King, our Lord Jesus, in his manifold ministries as the long awaited Prophet, Priest and King.

■ Kingdom

- Prophet
 - To reveal the word of the law.
- Priest
 - To build and administer the operation of the temple with its continuing sacrificial system combining animal sacrifice with remembrance of Christ's death.
- King:
 - To establish the rule of law and to administer it
 - To bring judgment as needed (along with the Holy Spirit)
 - To administer the new covenant
 - To be the center of worship for all believers

Zechariah 6:12-13

12 And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD:

13 Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.

Zechariah 14:1-21

1 Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee.

2 For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.

3 Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle.

4 And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.

5 And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.

...

16 And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.

...

20 In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the LORD'S house shall be like the bowls before the altar.

21 Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the LORD of hosts: and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and see the therein: and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts.

- And so again a sacrificial system will be established in the coming Kingdom. There will be no lack of priests either, due to their uncleanness and rebellion:

[READ] Jeremiah 33:14-22

14 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah.

15 In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land.

16 In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this *is the name* wherewith she shall be called, The LORD our righteousness.

17 For thus saith the LORD; David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel;

18 Neither shall the priests the Levites want a man before me to offer burnt offerings, and to kindle meat offerings, and to do sacrifice continually.

- And that covenant can never be broken! Amen.

19 And the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah, saying,

20 Thus saith the LORD; If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season;

21 *Then* may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites the priests, my ministers.

22 As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured: so will I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites that minister unto me.

- See also Ezekiel 40-48 for the details. For example:

Ezekiel 43:18-27

18 And he said unto me, Son of man, thus saith the Lord GOD; These *are* the ordinances of the altar in the day when they shall make it, to offer burnt offerings thereon, and to sprinkle blood thereon.

19 And thou shalt give to the priests the Levites that be of the seed of Zadok, which approach unto me, to minister unto me, saith the Lord GOD, a young bullock for a sin offering.

20 And thou shalt take of the blood thereof, and put *it* on the four horns of it, and on the four corners of the settle, and upon the border round about: thus shalt thou cleanse and purge it.

21 Thou shalt take the bullock also of the sin offering, and he shall burn it in the appointed place of the house, without the sanctuary.

22 And on the second day thou shalt offer a kid of the goats without blemish for a sin offering; and they shall cleanse the altar, as they did cleanse *it* with the bullock.

23 When thou hast made an end of cleansing *it*, thou shalt offer a young bullock without blemish, and a ram out of the flock without blemish.

24 And thou shalt offer them before the LORD, and the priests shall cast salt upon them, and they shall offer them up *for* a burnt offering unto the LORD.

25 Seven days shalt thou prepare every day a goat *for* a sin offering: they shall also prepare a young bullock, and a ram out of the flock, without blemish.

26 Seven days shall they purge the altar and purify it; and they shall consecrate themselves.

27 And when these days are expired, it shall be, *that* upon the eighth day, and so forward, the priests shall make your burnt offerings upon the altar, and your peace offerings; and I will accept you, saith the Lord GOD.

- Deuteronomy 18, Verse 19 is a fitting ending for us today. For the proper worship of the King will require obedience to his law, the Law of the Kingdom. The annual feasts will be required by Law of all, the sacrificial system administrated by the new priesthood, open sin will be judged whenever needed, and worship of our Lord as King will be required of all.

Deuteronomy 18:15-19

15 The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;

16 According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not.

17 And the LORD said unto me, They have well *spoken that* which they have spoken.

18 I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.

19 And it shall come to pass, *that* whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require *it* of him.

- So it is clear. The Lord's administration today of his abundant grace is so very different, and those differences are of critical importance. Just as obedience to the Law of Moses was required, and obedience to the Kingdom Law will be required for the living of one's life to the fullest during the Kingdom, today, under grace, we are exhorted to receive the abundance of grace by faith in his completed word. We have no sacrifices to offer beyond our thanksgiving and praise. Amen.

That there will be a continuing sacrificial system in the Kingdom

and a priesthood to administer it may seem like a conundrum to us today. But clearly they will be looking back to Christ and his shed blood for their sakes, and not forward as in times past. This will be much like our Lord's Supper in that respect. But with a great difference, since there will be animal sacrifice again in the Kingdom, as we have seen in the words of the great prophet Ezekiel.

- What a blessing is his abundant grace to us today which operates so powerfully in each of us:

Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service.

Ephesians 5:2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

Philippians 4:18 But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things *which were sent* from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God.

1 Corinthians 5:7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:

- Amen.