

This is the first of four messages in a short series on “Prophecy” – Its purpose, people, path, and promise.

“The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” Rev 19:10

The Bible – prophecy – is all about the Lord Jesus Christ.  
To understand prophecy is to understand Him and His works  
The spirit of prophecy is to reveal the Lord Jesus Christ to men

## I. Introduction

- A. When the Bible speaks, its words are always “prophecy”
  - 1. Prophecy is the “fore-telling” of future events
    - a. When the Bible was written all of its events were future ones
      - (1) Psalm 119:89 - For ever thy word is settled
      - (2) God never learned anything before it was written down – the word is eternal just as God’s knowledge is eternal.
  - 2. The Bible speaks of itself as prophecy (II Peter 1:21)
    - a. It came not because of man’s will, but because of God’s will
    - b. The Holy Ghost assured its accurate transmission to men
    - c. It “came” (not into existence, but unto men)
  - 3. The Bible is not an account which is accurate only when historical, it is accurate because God’s knowledge of “history” is not affected by time
- B. When the Bible was recorded, over 25% of it spoke of future events
  - 1. Of that 25%, much of it is still unfulfilled (maybe 3/4 )
  - 2. Of the rest, it has all come to pass literally, and exactly as God said it would
- C. There are 17 distinctly prophetic books in the Bible and many others that contain prophetic writing

## II. Why should we be interested in prophecy?

- A. Understanding — Prophecy of future events is interwoven in God’s word and without it we cannot understand the Bible
- B. Proof — Prophecy fulfilled is proof that God’s word has Divine authorship
- C. Revelation — Prophecy reveals those things to come that God wants us to know
- D. Focus — Prophecy allows us to know what things are important to God
- E. Comfort — Prophecy comforts us concerning the future
- F. Clarity — Prophecy provides a backdrop (setting) for all of the events in the Bible
- G. Motivation — Prophecy motivates us to holiness and service as we can know the Lord’s return is near
- H. Blessing – God promises blessings to those who read the words (Rev 1:3)

## III. Who should be interested in prophecy — The Prophetic Audience

- A. The Lost
  - 1. Prophecy tells them of a certain past event - the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ (I Cor 15)
  - 2. Prophecy tells them of a certain present opportunity to receive Christ by faith (Eph 2:8-9)
  - 3. Prophecy tells them of a potential future event during which the lost will be cast into a lake of fire after being judged by God (Rev 20:14-15)
- B. The Saved Gentile
  - 1. Prophecy assures him of a home in heaven
  - 2. Prophecy gives him peace about future events and eternity
- C. The Jew
  - 1. Prophecy tells of his return to God, as unlikely as it seems
  - 2. Prophecy assures him that he is God’s people and always will be

## WHAT DOES PROPHECY ACCOMPLISH – WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

### IV. It Reveals the Prophetic Author – (Prophecy shows the character of God)

- A. In His omniscience, He knows every event and fact beforehand
- B. In His omnipotence, He brings to pass exactly what was written without fail

### V. It Provides the Historical Picture

- A. The picture of the fate of Israel's tribes (Genesis 49)
- B. The picture of Christ's first and second advent and forgiveness of Israel (Gen 37 thru 50)
- C. The history of the kingdoms of the Gentile times (Daniel 2)
  1. We know we are in the last of these kingdoms because we believe God's word
- D. The picture of God's plan for Israel from captivity to eternity (Dan 9:24-27)
- E. The picture of Christ and his sacrifice (Isaiah 11, Isaiah 53)
- F. The picture of false prophets and teachers given in the New Testament (II Peter 2)

### VI. It Assures a Realistic Perspective

- A. It applies to all ages
  1. One of the greatest problems of our day was clearly described all the way back in Genesis 16
    - a. Gen 16:10 ¶ And the angel of the LORD said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude. 11 And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, thou art with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction. 12 And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.
    - b. "He shall be a wild man" – One who has no fixed place of dwelling
    - c. "His hand will be against every man" – He will be opposed to all
    - d. "Every man's hand against him" – All will oppose him
    - e. "He shall dwell in the presence of his brethren" – Among the Jews
- B. It verifies the authenticity of the word of God
  1. Its prophecies have all come true to perfection
    - a. Several hundred years prior to the event, it named "Cyrus" who would command the rebuilding of Jerusalem (Is 44:28; Is 45:1)
    - b. It gave a detailed account of the crucifixion of Christ over 600 years before the event. (Isaiah 53)
- C. It establishes the players on the Biblical stage
  1. Jews
  2. Gentiles
  3. Church
  4. Kingdoms
  5. Many others

### VII. Conclusion

- A. Prophecy is not given to fascinate man, but rather to glorify God
  1. We are not interested in prophecy because it amazes us, but rather because it reveals the Lord to us in a more perfect way
- B. Prophecy is not to be ignored or reduced in importance; it is to be understood
  1. God gave prophecy for a purpose; we should prayerfully study it
- C. Prophecy is not to become our only focus; it should be treated as part of the whole counsel of God
- D. Prophecy is a tool in God's word which will increase our faith and encourage us in the hope of things to come

This is the second of four messages in a short series on “Prophecy” – Its purpose, people, path, and promise.

Heb 8:10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:  
11 And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.

I Chron 16:14 He is the LORD our God; his judgments are in all the earth.

15 Be ye mindful always of his covenant; the word which he commanded to a thousand generations;  
16 Even of the covenant which he made with Abraham, and of his oath unto Isaac;  
17 And hath confirmed the same to Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant,  
18 Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance;  
19 When ye were but few, even a few, and strangers in it.

Before you open your Bible, you must open your heart – humble yourself to what God has to say as He says it.

- What the Bible says is true, just as it reads
- You cannot explain it away
- You cannot try to submit it to something that some other many says
- You cannot defy the Spirit of God as He is its author and what He intended is all that is valid

For example, if you come to the Bible as an evolutionist, you will go away as one unless you will humble yourself and admit you were wrong.

PROBLEM: It has been said by those who are misnamed “covenant theologians” that the church of the Old Testament is the People of Israel and that the People of Israel of the New Testament are the church.  
NOTHING COULD BE FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH

## I. Introduction

- A. When the Bible says something, that is the literal way it is
  1. Don’t appeal to the supposed great theologians of the past
  2. Don’t pretend that it is not clear in what it means
- B. Now we come to a question . . .
  1. It is an important question
    - a. Its answer will reveal the validity of many “protestant” denominations
    - b. Its answer will determine if we will understand the Bible or not
    - c. Upon it rests all understanding of prophecy
  2. It is a simple question
    - a. The answer to the question is one word
    - b. The answer is a group of people
  3. It is a scriptural question
    - a. Much scripture addresses this question directly
    - b. The answer is plainly found in the Bible if we will accept it
- C. The question is, WHO ARE THE PEOPLE OF PROPHECY?

## II. God’s covenants with men

- A. God’s Covenant with Abraham (Genesis 17)
  1. It was a personal covenant made solely by God’s request (verse 1-2) PERSONAL
    - a. Gen 17:1 ¶ And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. 2 And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.
  2. It was a prolific covenant (verse 3-4) PROMISE OF MANY NATIONS
    - a. 3 And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, 4 ¶ As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.
    - b. 5 Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father

- of many nations have I made thee.**
- c. 6 And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will **make nations of thee**, and kings shall come out of thee.
  - d. When God promises something 3 times it is special
3. It was a paternal covenant (verse 7 - 10) **IT WAS PROMISED TO HIS SEED**
    - a. 7 ¶ And I will establish my covenant between **me and thee and thy seed** after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.
    - b. 8 And I will give unto thee, and **to thy seed after thee**, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.
    - c. 9 And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and **thy seed after thee in their generations.**
    - d. 10 This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, **between me and you and thy seed** after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised.
    - e. Four times God says, **THY SEED**
  4. It was a pictured covenant (verse 11 - 14) **THE SIGN WAS CIRCUMCISION**
    - a. 10 This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be **circumcised**.
    - b. 11 And ye shall **circumcise** the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you.
    - c. 12 And he that is eight days old shall be **circumcised** among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed.
    - d. 13 He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be **circumcised**: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.
    - e. 14 And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not **circumcised**, that soul shall be cut off from **his people**; he hath broken my covenant.
  5. It was a passed on covenant (19, 21) It was passed on to his descendant
    - a. 19 And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and **I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant**, and with his seed after him.
    - b. 21 But **my covenant will I establish with Isaac**, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year.
  6. It was an eternal covenant (Gen 17:7)
    - a. 7 ¶ And I will establish my covenant between **me and thee and thy seed** after thee in their generations **for an everlasting covenant**
- B. God's Covenant with Isaac (Genesis 26:1-5)
1. The covenant involved the Land (Gen 26:1-3) and was sworn to Isaac
    - a. Gen 26:1 ¶ And there was a famine in the land, beside the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went unto Abimelech king of the Philistines unto Gerar. 2 And the LORD appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of: 3 **Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father;**
  2. The covenant involved the inhabitants of the land (verse 4)
    - a. 4 **And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven**, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;
  3. The covenant was the same that was made with Abraham (Gen 26:5)
    - a. 5 Because that **Abraham** obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.
- C. God's Covenant with Jacob (Gen 35:9-13)
1. God re-established Abraham's covenant with Jacob (9-10)
    - a. Gen 35:9 And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padanaram, and blessed him. 10 And God said unto him, Thy name is Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and he called his name Israel.
  2. It was a covenant of prosperity (11) **MANY PEOPLE**
    - a. 11 And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company

- of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins; (SAME WORDS as Gen 17:6)
3. A land was promised (12)
    - a. 12 And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land. 13 And God went up from him in the place where he talked with him.

### III. God's Covenant with Abraham involved literal things

- A. Literal recipients (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob)
- B. Literal people – their offspring
- C. Literal land – a specific geographic location
  1. A land with a literal name (Gen 17:7) - Canaan
  2. A land where Isaac was told to stay (Gen 26:2)
- D. Literal kings were involved in this covenant (Gen 17:6, Gen 35:11)

### IV. The Reiteration of This Covenant

- A. Ex 2:24 And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.
- B. Ex 6:3 And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them. 4 And I have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers.
- C. I Chron 16:14 He is the LORD our God; his judgments are in all the earth. 15 Be ye mindful always of his covenant; the word which he commanded to a thousand generations; 16 Even of the covenant which he made with Abraham, and of his oath unto Isaac; 17 And hath confirmed the same to Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant, 18 Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance; 19 When ye were but few, even a few, and strangers in it.
- D. Psalm 105:8 ¶ He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations. 9 Which covenant he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac; 10 And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant: 11 Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance: 12 When they were but a few men in number; yea, very few, and strangers in it.
- E. Acts 3:25 Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.
- F. Rom 9:6 ¶ Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: 7 Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. 8 That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. 9 For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sara shall have a son.
- G. Rom 11:1 ¶ I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. 2 God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel

### V. CONCLUSION

- A. The people of Prophecy are the literal descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob!
- B. When the Bible names Israel, these are the people to or about whom it is speaking.
- C. The promises in prophecy that deal with Israel deal with these literal people.
- D. To understand prophecy, you must understand that the people of prophecy are Israel
- E. You must deny and reject . . .
  1. That Israel has been replaced by “the church”
  2. That circumcision has been replaced by infant baptism
  3. That the kingdom God promised has been replaced by the church's reign
  4. That the covenants God established have been taken from Israel and given to someone else

This is the third of four messages in a short series on “Prophecy” – Its purpose, people, **path**, and promise.

The path of prophecy is a picture of salvation by Grace thru faith. (Eph 2:8-9)

#### **FOR ISRAEL**

- Israel knew God’s commands but could not keep them
- Israel was not rejected because of her disobedience, but rather God saved her in spite of her disobedience.
- A remnant was saved by grace

#### **FOR THE GENTILES**

- The Gentiles had no hope, no inheritance, no prophets, no sponsor (they were not chosen by God)
  - God had compassion on them and, at Israel’s expense, saved them
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### **I. THE PATH OF PROPHECY FOR ISRAEL (Romans 11)**

#### **A. It is a path with clear definition (Romans 11)**

1. God’s choice of Israel as a Nation (Romans 11:1 - “His people”) and Gen 22:18 etc.
2. God’s calling out (deliverance) of Israel from captivity (Exodus 13)
3. God’s commands to Israel in the law of Moses (Exodus 20: Deut 5:1)
4. God’s condemnation of Israel’s disobedience (Rom 11:3)
5. God’s chastening of Israel for her sin
  - a. Ho 12:2 The LORD hath also a controversy with Judah, and will punish Jacob according to his ways; according to his doings will he recompense him.
6. God’s compassion for the Gentiles in allowing Israel to be blind
  - a. Rom 11:11 I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.
7. God’s charity for Israel in her restored remnant
  - a. Rom 11:5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. 6 And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.

#### **B. It is a path with a decision**

1. Israel was given a choice to obey and disobey God (Deut 3:19-20)
  - a. Deut 30:19 I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:
  - b. 20 That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.

#### **C. It is a path of disobedience**

1. Ezek 9:9 Then said he unto me, The iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah is exceeding great, and the land is full of blood, and the city full of perverseness: for they say, The LORD hath forsaken the earth, and the LORD seeth not.

#### **D. It is a path with deliverance**

1. Is 44:21 ¶ Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou art my servant: I have formed thee; thou art my servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me. 22 I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee.

#### **E. It is a path with a destination**

1. Isaiah 66:22 For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the LORD, so shall your seed and your name remain.

## II. THE PATH OF PROPHECY FOR THE GENTILES

- A. The Gentiles were first named in the table of Nations in Genesis 10 (Gen 10:5)
1. They are the descendants of Japeth (The Jews are the descendants of Shem)
- B. Gentiles were people without hope
1. Ro 10:19 But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you.
    - a. They are “NO PEOPLE”
    - b. They are a “FOOLISH NATION”
- C. God promised that the Gentiles would seek the Lord, as unlikely as it seemed
1. Isa 11:10 And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; **to it shall the Gentiles seek**: and his rest shall be glorious.
- D. The Gentiles followed not after righteousness, and yet they attained righteousness
1. Ro 9:30 What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith.
- E. As God sent Peter to Israel, He sent Paul to the Gentiles
1. Eph 3:1 ¶ For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, 2 If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: 3 How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, 4 Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) 5 Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; **6 That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel**: 7 Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.
  2. 2Ti 1:11 Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.
- F. God visited them to call out a people unto His name
1. Acts 15:14 Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.
- G. The Gentiles are proof of salvation by faith
1. Gal 3:6 ¶ Even as **Abraham believed God**, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.
  2. 7 Know ye therefore that they which are **of faith**, the same are the children of Abraham.
  3. **8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.**
  4. 9 So then they which be **of faith** are blessed with faithful Abraham.
  5. 10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.
  6. 11 But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, **The just shall live by faith.**
  7. 12 And the law is not **of faith**: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them.
  8. 13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:
  9. 14 **That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.**

- **The path of prophecy is . . .**
- Dependant upon the place in time where you choose to stand
- If we stand in the present, it is the Biblical and Historical account of Israel's past
- It begins in Genesis when God made His covenant with Abraham
- It ends where our feet stand, in time, including the miraculous events of the past few decades including Israel's return to the land.
- Between those two events are the fulfilled prophecies given in the Bible relating to Israel (its captivity, return, Messiah, destruction, and regathering).
- **The path of prophecy is also the path of the local churches and God's dealing with the Gentiles**
- It begins with the promised building of the local church (Matt 16:18)
- It continues thru the empowering of the local church promised in Acts 1:8 and fulfilled in Acts 2
- It includes the promised persecution of the church (Acts 11:19)
- It allows time for the mission given to the church (Matt 28:19-20)
- It tolerates the presence of false teachers (II Pe 2:1)
- It concludes with the future rapture of the saints (I Thes 4:16)
- It never ends: the church will bring glory to God forever (Eph 3:21)

### **The path of prophecy is a literal path**

- The nation of Israel is a literal people
- The land of Israel is a literal land
- The bondage in Egypt was a literal bondage
- The deliverance from that bondage was a literal deliverance
- The conquest of the promised land was a literal conquest
- The kings of Israel were literal kings
- The sin of Israel was literal sin
- The captivity and dispersion of Israel was literal captivity and dispersion
- The return to the land was a literal return
- The temple and walls that were rebuilt were literal temple and walls
- The Messiah was a literal Messiah

IF ALL THESE THINGS ARE LITERAL, YOU CAN BE SURE THAT THE REMAINDER OF PROPHECY WILL BE LITERALLY FULFILLED

### **Fulfilled Prophecy: Evidence for the Reliability of the Bible by Hugh Ross, Ph.D.**

(1) Some time before 500 B.C. the prophet **Daniel proclaimed that Israel's long-awaited Messiah would begin his public ministry 483 years after the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem (Daniel 9:25-26)**. He further predicted that the Messiah would be "cut off," killed, and that this event would take place prior to a second destruction of Jerusalem. Abundant documentation shows that these prophecies were perfectly fulfilled in the life (and crucifixion) of Jesus Christ. The decree regarding the restoration of Jerusalem was issued by Persia's King Artaxerxes to the Hebrew priest Ezra in 458 B.C., 483 years later the ministry of Jesus Christ began in Galilee. (Remember that due to calendar changes, the date for the start of Christ's ministry is set by most historians at about 26 A.D. Also note that from 1 B.C. to 1 A.D. is just one year.) Jesus' crucifixion occurred only a few years later, and about four decades later, in 70 A.D. came the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus.

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 (2) In approximately 700 B.C. the prophet **Micah named the tiny village of Bethlehem as the birthplace of Israel's Messiah (Micah 5:2)**. The fulfillment of this prophecy in the birth of Christ is one of the most widely known and widely celebrated facts in history.

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(3) In the fifth century B.C. a prophet named **Zechariah declared that the Messiah would be betrayed for the price of a slave—thirty pieces of silver**, according to Jewish law—and also that this money would be used to buy a burial ground for Jerusalem's poor foreigners (**Zechariah 11:12-13**). Bible writers and secular historians both record thirty pieces of silver as the sum paid to Judas Iscariot for betraying Jesus, and they indicate that the money went to purchase a "potter's field," used—just as predicted—for the burial of poor aliens (**Matthew 27:3-10**).

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(4) Some 400 years before crucifixion, both **Israel's King David and the prophet Zechariah described the Messiah's death in words that perfectly depict that mode of execution**. Further, they said that the body would be pierced and that none of the bones would be broken, contrary to customary procedure in cases of crucifixion (**Psalms 22 and 34:20; Zechariah 12:10**). Again, historians and New Testament writers confirm the fulfillment: Jesus of Nazareth died on a Roman cross, and his extraordinarily quick death eliminated the need for the usual breaking of bones. A spear was thrust into his side to verify that he was, indeed, dead.

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(5) **The prophet Isaiah foretold that a conqueror named Cyrus would destroy seemingly impregnable Babylon and subdue Egypt along with most of the rest of the known world**. This same man, said Isaiah, would decide to let the Jewish exiles in his territory go free without any payment of ransom (**Isaiah 44:28; 45:1; and 45:13**). Isaiah made this prophecy 150 years before Cyrus was born, 180 years before Cyrus performed any of these feats (and he did, eventually, perform them all), and 80 years before the Jews were taken into exile.

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(6) **Mighty Babylon, 196 miles square, was enclosed not only by a moat, but also by a double wall 330 feet high, each part 90 feet thick. It was said by unanimous popular opinion to be indestructible, yet two Bible prophets declared its doom**. These prophets further claimed that the ruins would be avoided by travelers, that the city would never again be inhabited, and that its stones would not even be moved for use as building material (**Isaiah 13:17-22 and Jeremiah 51:26, 43**). Their description is, in fact, the well-documented history of the famous citadel.

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(7) **The prophet Moses foretold (with some additions by Jeremiah and Jesus) that the ancient Jewish nation would be conquered twice and that the people would be carried off as slaves each time, first by the Babylonians (for a period of 70 years), and then by a fourth world kingdom (which we know as Rome)**. The second conqueror, Moses said, would take the Jews captive to Egypt in ships, selling them or giving them away as slaves to all parts of the world. Both of these predictions were fulfilled to the letter, the first in 607 B.C. and the second in 70 A.D. God's spokesmen said, further, that the Jews would remain scattered throughout the entire world for many generations, but without becoming assimilated by the peoples or of other nations, and that the Jews would one day return to the land of Palestine to re-establish for a second time their nation (**Deuteronomy 29; Isaiah 11:11-13; Jeremiah 25:11; Hosea 3:4-5 and Luke 21:23-24**). This prophetic statement sweeps across 3500 years of history to its complete fulfillment—in our lifetime.

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(8) **Jeremiah predicted that despite its fertility and despite the accessibility of its water supply, the land of Edom (today a part of Jordan) would become a barren, uninhabited wasteland (Jeremiah 49:15-20; Ezekiel 25:12-14)**. His description accurately tells the history of that now bleak region.

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(9) **Joshua prophesied that Jericho would be rebuilt by one man. He also said that the man's eldest son would die when the reconstruction began and that his youngest son would die when the work reached completion (Joshua 6:26)**. About five centuries later this prophecy found its fulfillment in the life and family of a man named Hiel (**I Kings 16:33-34**).

Illustration of failing my CDL General Knowledge test because I tried to skim over the material and understand it quickly – you cannot do that when studying prophecy or the prophets. (*Funny: Mike Leemon was encouraged when I said I preached a bad message; the school staff seemed refreshed when I told them I failed my CDL. I have a new strategy: fail a lot and everyone will be encouraged*).

Lesson from failing the CDL.

- The details count for much.
- Many people refuse to ever study ANY books of the Bible in detail

**The Old Testament prophets and The Revelation give the most detailed view of things to come, but the entire word of God sheds light on prophecy:**

- Genesis lays the foundation with its covenants and description of Israel's beginning.
- Some New Testament epistles, like Thessalonians are dedicated to prophetic events
- The Gospels have much to say about the Lord's return and signs of the times.

**The promise of prophecy is . . .**

- The rapture of the saints to a joyful reunion in the skies (Thess.)
  - I Thess 4:16-17 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.
- The time of Jacob's trouble – seven years of tribulation
  - Jer 30:7 Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.
- The second coming of Christ (Thess.)
  - Zech 14:4 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.
- The re-gathering of Israel as a nation (Isaiah 11:11-12)
  - Is 11:11 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. 12 And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.
- The restoration of Israel's relationship with the Lord (Isaiah)
  - See passages below
- The opening of Israel's eyes concerning the Lord Jesus Christ (Genesis)
  - See passages below
- The reign of the Lord Jesus Christ as King
  - Rev 20
- The rule of Israel again as the one kingdom of the world (Isaiah)
- The destruction of Satan and all his forces (Isaiah 14:12)

John Shepherd, Catholic apologist, stated, "The church is the new Israel." The Catechism of the Catholic Church says, "

John Parsons points out, "Replacement theology claims that the church is the new Israel ... as the Jews rejected Jesus, God transferred His covenants to the church." "Advocates of this theology include the Roman Catholic Church, The United Methodist Church, the ELCA (Lutheran), the Presbyterian church, the Lutheran Church (Missouri Synod), The Episcopal and Anglican church, the Greek Orthodox Church, and the United Church of Christ.

Covenant Presbyterian Church of Ft. Worth – ". . . the church is the fulfillment of Israel"

## The certainty of Israel's literal re-gathering

### THE WITNESSES WHO TESTIFY TO THE TRUTH (as in court)

- Isaiah saw it
- Is 43:3-6 For I am the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. 4 Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life. 5 Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west: 6 I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth;
- Jeremiah saw it
- Jer 31:37-40 Thus saith the LORD; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD. 38 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that the city shall be built to the LORD from the tower of Hananeel unto the gate of the corner. 39 And the measuring line shall yet go forth over against it upon the hill Gareb, and shall compass about to Goath. 40 And the whole valley of the dead bodies, and of the ashes, and all the fields unto the brook of Kidron, unto the corner of the horse gate toward the east, shall be holy unto the LORD; it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down any more for ever.
- Ezekiel saw it –
- Ezek 37:21-28 And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: 22 And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all: 23 Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions: but I will save them out of all their dwellingplaces, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: so shall they be my people, and I will be their God. 24 And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them. 25 And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children for ever: and my servant David shall be their prince for ever. 26 Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. 27 My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 28 And the heathen shall know that I the LORD do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore.
- Daniel saw it –
- Dan 9:24 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.
- Hosea saw it –
- Hosea 14:4-7 I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him. 5 I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. 6 His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon. 7 They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon.
- Joel saw it –
- Joel 2:28-32 ¶ And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: 29 And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit. 30 And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. 31 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come. 32 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.
- Amos saw it –
  - Amos 9:14-15 And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. 15 And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the LORD thy God.
- Obadiah saw it –
  - Obadiah 1:17 But upon mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions.
- Micah saw it –
  - Micah 7:18-20 Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. 19 He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. 20 Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast

- sworn unto our fathers from the days of old.
- Habakkuk saw it
    - Hab 3:13 Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, even for salvation with thine anointed; thou woundedst the head out of the house of the wicked, by discovering the foundation unto the neck. Selah.
  - Zephaniah saw it
    - Zeph 3:16 In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not: and to Zion, Let not thine hands be slack. 17 The LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing. 18 I will gather them that are sorrowful for the solemn assembly, who are of thee, to whom the reproach of it was a burden. 19 Behold, at that time I will undo all that afflict thee: and I will save her that halteth, and gather her that was driven out; and I will get them praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame. 20 At that time will I bring you again, even in the time that I gather you: for I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the LORD.
  - Haggai saw it
    - Hag 2:20-23 And again the word of the LORD came unto Haggai in the four and twentieth day of the month, saying, 21 Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, saying, I will shake the heavens and the earth; 22 And I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen; and I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them; and the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother. 23 In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, will I take thee, O Zerubbabel, my servant, the son of Shealtiel, saith the LORD, and will make thee as a signet: for I have chosen thee, saith the LORD of hosts.
  - Zechariah saw it
    - Zech 14:9-11 And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one. 10 All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem: and it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananeel unto the king's winepresses. 11 And men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited.
  - Malachi saw it
    - Mal 3:16-18 Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name. 17 And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. 18 Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.
  - Paul saw it
    - Rom 11:1-2 I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. Ro 11:2 God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith . . .
    - Ro 11:26 And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:
  - John saw it
    - Rev 21:12 And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel:
  - Moses saw it
    - Deut 33:26-29 There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. 27 The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them. 28 Israel then shall dwell in safety alone: the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine; also his heavens shall drop down dew. 29 Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the LORD, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places.

## CONCLUSION

- If all of these prophets saw Israel restored for all eternity then . . .
  - Why can't the Covenant Theologian see it?
  - Why can't the Protestant Theologian see it?
  - Why can't the allegorical interpreter see it?
  - Why can't the Preterist see it?
- The foundation of the vast majority of theology is a bed of sand that omits the plain revelations of God thru prophecy. These are to be rejected!!!
- If you do not understand prophecy, you cannot understand the Bible