

Sunday December 27th 2020
The Fullness of the Time
Part Four

1). Isa 9:6 *For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given.....*

Ga 4:4 But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under law, 5 to redeem those who were under law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

In our previous studies we have seen how the Lord's first advent cannot be separated from His second advent, and our future adoption as firstborn sons. And how both are linked to 'when the fullness of the time had come.'

a). Now we can add to the statement in Galatians this verse from -
Am 3:7 Surely the Lord GOD does nothing, Unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.

From this we realize that the Lord's first advent had been made abundantly clear through the Scriptures, to the nation of Israel, so that they would be prepared for His coming – and we had seen this to be true everywhere from Genesis, to Daniel, to Isaiah, to Malachi.

b). We will remember that Israel had been given the specific timeframe for the Lord's advent through Daniel - *Da 9:25 "Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times. 26 "And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined.*

And not only did the Lord, through Daniel, give the timing of the Lord's advent but also foretold His crucifixion and events that would ultimately follow.

b). All this could have been known by the Jews, knowing that the coming of Messiah would bring the restoration of Israel one step closer.

c). And then following the Lord's birth, it was possible for the Jews to know that their Messiah had come - Nu 24:17 *"I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near; A Star shall come out of Jacob; A Scepter shall rise out of Israel, And batter the brow of Moab, And destroy all the sons of tumult.*

This is the 'star', literal and metaphorical, seen by the wise men, and could have been clearly visible to all, but it seems that no one, apart from the wise men had bothered to look.

d). The presence of the wise men in Jerusalem spoke directly to the prophecy in Numbers - Mt 2:1 ¶ *Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, 2 saying, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him." 3 When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. 4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. 5 So they said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet:*

The reason for the wise men's arrival in Jerusalem was known not only to Herod but to the entire city, for all of Jerusalem was troubled with him. Let's note that Herod does not question the birth of Christ, but only to verify its location.

e). Bethlehem, as we saw last time, has to do with lineage through David and promised rulership. Hence the reason for Herod's actions- Mt 2:16 ¶ *Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise*

men. 17 Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying: 18 "A voice was heard in Ramah, Lamentation, weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, Refusing to be comforted, Because they are no more."

There is one last thing we will note concerning the Lord's first advent found in - Ge 49:1 ¶ *And Jacob called his sons and said, "Gather together, that I may tell you what shall befall you in the last days:.....10 The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes; And to Him shall be the obedience of the people.*

The scepter is the visible symbol of the power of government, so when the scepter would depart from Judah, according to the scripture, then Messiah would have come.

f). Now, the basis for defining the exercise of governmental power is set out in Genesis Chapter 9. It is in the right to impose capital punishment - Ge 9:6 *"Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man.*

So, with this definition in mind let's look at this recorded in – Joh 18:31 *Then Pilate said to them, "You take Him and judge Him according to your law." Therefore the Jews said to him, "It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death,"*

Pilate gave responsibility for the crucifixion back to the Jews, but it was not lawful for them to put anyone to death – the scepter had departed from Judah – therefore Shiloh had come.

g). But none of these things were of any consequence to the nation as a whole.

h). And even that which would follow the crucifixion of their King had been previously laid out for the Jews through Moses – they had been adequately warned – Le 26:27 *'And after all this, if you do not obey Me, but walk contrary to Me, 28 then I also will walk contrary to you in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins.....33 I will*

scatter you among the nations and draw out a sword after you; your land shall be desolate and your cities waste.

This very thing happened with the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD and the diaspora which followed, foreshadowing that which is still to come in the tribulation.

2). We can also witness what we read in Amos in the days of Noah, where there are 3 significant events revealed to Noah that readily pointed to that which God was about to do for any who had eyes to see.

a). The first of these we can find in - Ge 6:12 *So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. 13 ¶ And God said to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth. 14 "Make yourself an ark of gopherwood.....*

The building of the ark was not something that took place in Noah's garage. This would have been a huge structure that could not be constructed overnight or in secret. So, with every plank of wood that had to be cut from a felled tree and prepared came the declaration of God's intent to bring cataclysmic judgment upon the earth, just as He revealed to Noah.

b). We can find commentary on the building of the ark in – Heb 11:7 *By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.*

In this verse from Hebrews, we see that Noah's faith and his godly fear in response to the divine warning on the one hand, condemned the world, and on the other made him the 'heir of the righteousness which is according to faith'.

c). And it is of course through Noah, via the lineage of Shem, that we come to Abraham and Abraham's Seed – the Christ.

d). Now the condemnation of the world did not come solely through the building of the ark – *2Pe 2:5 and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly;*

Noah was ‘a preacher of righteousness’ – he proclaimed the righteousness of God and the necessity to live righteously before Him through his visible faith, the life that he led for all to see and the words he spoke. Remember, Noah is just the 10th generation from Adam and the physical world was not divided into continents as it is today and therefore his interaction with the people would not have been restricted as we might suppose. And those within his sphere of influence would not have been devoid of some knowledge of God.

e). So then, righteousness was preached through Noah for a significant period of time with a view to the impending judgment of God. God had provided ample warning of His intentions – no one would be able to say that they did not have the opportunity to know.

g). There is one final event that we would think someone might have taken notice of - *Ge 6:19 "And of every living thing of all flesh you shall bring two of every sort into the ark, to keep them alive with you; they shall be male and female. 20 "Of the birds after their kind, of animals after their kind, and of every creeping thing of the earth after its kind, two of every kind will come to you to keep them alive.*

It would appear that the animals and the birds went willingly into the ark which of itself must have been an incredible spectacle – but still the people would not believe – once again though, they had been warned.

3). *Ge 19:1 ¶ Now the two angels came to Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw them, he rose to meet them, and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground.*

Before the destruction of the cities of the plain the Lord sent His angels into Sodom to warn of the impending judgment, but the presence of the

angels and the reason for their coming had no significance whatsoever for the inhabitants of the city beyond their lust for strange flesh.

a). And even those of Lot's own household refused to take note of the warning which the angels brought - Ge 19:14 *So Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who had married his daughters, and said, "Get up, get out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city!" But to his sons-in-law he seemed to be joking.*

Ge 19:16 And while he lingered, the men took hold of his hand, his wife's hand, and the hands of his two daughters, the LORD being merciful to him, and they brought him out and set him outside the city. 17 So it came to pass, when they had brought them outside, that he said, "Escape for your life! Do not look behind you nor stay anywhere in the plain. Escape to the mountain, lest you be destroyed."26 ¶ But his wife looked back behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.

Again, there was not one person who perished that day who did not have the opportunity to hear the warning of that which was to come.

4). Similarly, Pharaoh was warned by God in a dream, interpreted by Joseph, about 7 years of famine so that adequate preparations could be made during the 7 years of plenty.

a). The Pharaoh of Moses day had been warned concerning the ultimate destruction of his nation at the Red Sea, given through the 10 plagues visited upon his nation.

b). And the same would be true for Belshazzar. There had been warning for him through the experience of his father Nebuchadnezzar whom he had seen grazing in the fields with the oxen for 7 years, before being restored to his kingdom – Da 4:30 *The king spoke, saying, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?" 31 While the word was still in the king's mouth, a voice fell from heaven: "King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: the kingdom has departed from you!*

Despite witnessing his father's demise and knowing the reason for it, and despite having Daniel the prophet of God in his court, Belshazzar chose instead to ignore the God of heaven - Da 5:1 ¶ *Belshazzar the king made a great feast for a thousand of his lords, and drank wine in the presence of the thousand. 2 While he tasted the wine, Belshazzar gave the command to bring the gold and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple which had been in Jerusalem, that the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines might drink from them. 3 Then they brought the gold vessels that had been taken from the temple of the house of God which had been in Jerusalem; and the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines drank from them. 4 They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze and iron, wood and stone. 5 In the same hour the fingers of a man's hand appeared and wrote opposite the lampstand on the plaster of the wall of the king's palace; and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote.....22 "But you his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, although you knew all this. 23 "And you have lifted yourself up against the Lord of heaven.*

And it was the very same night that Belshazzar was slain, and his kingdom taken by Darius the Mede, but he had been warned.

4). Now the point of all this is not just to prove the veracity of Amos 3:7 of itself, but to realize that God in His mercy leaves no one in ignorance of His plans and purposes. And in doing so, He provides every opportunity for anyone who will have ears to hear to submit themselves under His mighty hand, having the full assurance that what God has said, that He will do.

a). With this and the fullness of the times in view, let's now consider- Heb 1:1 ¶ *God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, 2 has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;*

Re 3:20 *"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with*

Me. 21 "To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. 22 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.""

Isa 46:9 Remember the former things of old, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, 10 Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,'

From these verses alone, no Christian who ever opens their Bible could claim that they did not have the opportunity to know God's plans and purposes with the rewards and loss of rewards that go with them.

b). From the very beginning God has declared the end with respect to rulership over the earth - Ge 1:26 ¶ *Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion....."*

And from the beginning He has revealed the timing for when that rulership will be realized – Ge 2:1 ¶ *Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. 2 And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. 3 Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.*

There are 6 days of work to be followed by a 7th Day, the Day of Rest, the age to come, and if we would but do the math then we must come to the conclusion that we are on the very cusp of the 7th Day and that the ordinary and the everyday and the mundane are about to pass away forever as the fullness of the time with respect to this is certain to come.

c). And if we have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior then we must also believe in all that Scripture says about Him, particularly with respect to our present and the future.

d). And not to do everything that we possibly can to be prepared for that Day, when our lives will change irrevocably, knowing what we know, would be foolish in the extreme.

e). But what do the scriptures say? - Lu 17:26 *"And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: 27 "They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. 28 "Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; 29 "but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. 30 "Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed.*

As in the days of Noah righteousness is preached and largely ignored; as in the days of Lot the warning is given through the ministry of angels to flee to the mountain, but the warning is largely ignored.

f). And is there anything else we can know about these days in which we live? Most certainly there is - Mt 13:31 *Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field, 32 "which indeed is the least of all the seeds; but when it is grown it is greater than the herbs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches." 33 Another parable He spoke to them: "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened."*

We find ourselves amidst the Laodicean church which has grown exponentially in a way it was never supposed to. And what of the Word of the Kingdom as a result? Completely leavened. Rather than the teaching of the truth we find the very thing that the Lord rebuked the Pharisees for - Mt 15:7 *"Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying: 8 "These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. 9 And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men."*

The combination of all of this points us in one direction only, that the 2000 years of this dispensation and the 6000 years of Man's Day are nearly at an end - 2Ti 3:1 ¶ *But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: 2 For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3*

unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, 4 traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, 5 having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!

And this situation is present everywhere - 2Pe 3:1 ¶ Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), 2 that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior, 3 ¶ knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, 4 and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation."

We are taught the Scriptures and we are surrounded by the evidence of the imminent return of the Lord; not the least of which is the chronological certainty of the expiration of the 2000 years of this dispensation – all of which should cause us to take serious note of the hour in which we find ourselves, so that we may conduct our lives in godliness and fear – particularly knowing what is coming next –
1Th 4:16 *For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.*

The next major event in the Lord's prophetic timetable is the resurrection/rapture of the 'Church' to His Judgment Seat, and this is an event that none of us will miss – and we are both warned and encouraged, knowing that we shall receive a just recompense of reward -
1Th 5:1 ¶ *But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. 2 For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. 3 For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. 4 But you, brethren, are not*

in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. 5 You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. 6 ¶ Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober.

The Lord's second advent, that begins with the resurrection/rapture of the 'Church', will be either the most glorious of times or the most devastating of times for us, just as God has warned in His Word – Mt 13:49 *"So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, 50 "and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth."*

2Co 5:11 *Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men;*

Heb 10:31 *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*

And just as God has promised us in His Word - 1Pe 1:6 ¶ *In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, 7 that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, 8 whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, 9 receiving the end of your faith--the salvation of your souls.*

The end we have seen from the beginning – Re 19:7 *"Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His bride has made herself ready." 8 And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.*

All considered, will we choose to be like Simeon and Anna with respect to the Lord's second advent or like Lot's married daughters? Have the eyes of our faith seen the coming of the glory of the Lord or is it business as usual?

b). The time is soon upon us when we will find out.

Ga 4:4 But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under law, 5 to redeem those who were under law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

More next time – If the Lord is willing.