

The Blessed Hope!

“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;” –(Titus 2:13)

Diamond & Nugget #8

In Diamond & Nugget #7, I used the term **Pattern = Prophecy** as a grammatical tool in our understanding how the Creator communicated His lessons to humanity. 28% of the Bible is considered to be Prophecy. I prefer to use the term “History told in advance”, and suggest that others will come around to my point of view once they grasp the larger scope of the Bible. Many Christians are called Christian Zionists because of their blanket endorsement of Israel, that Israel can do no wrong! This is a false teaching based upon the misunderstood idea that the Jews are God’s “Chosen” ones. This view poses great danger for many Christians that actually will be guilty of helping bring in the Antichrist. Man can do nothing to change the ultimate outcome of Scripture.

Consider this example. Christians agree that Isaiah 66:8 was a prophecy of Israel’s return as a nation. **“Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.”** How that came to be is an entirely different story, and I might add, Christian prophecy ministries neglect to teach their television audiences.

Christians see this vastly different than from how all that was really brought to bear in Israel becoming a State in May 14/15th, 1948. Christians see this as a God event, when it might be considered a Satanic event. It was the Satanists of the House of Rothschild, who financed the Zionist movement of the First Zionist Conference of August, 1897. Such is the case of the Balfour Declaration of 1917, which took five years before being granted in 1922. The Balfour Declaration was a product of years of careful negotiation. After centuries of living in the diaspora, the 1894 Dreyfus Affair in France shocked Jews into realizing they would not be safe from arbitrary antisemitism unless they had their own country.

In response, Jews created the new concept of political Zionism in which it was believed that through active political maneuvering, a Jewish homeland could be created. Zionism was becoming a popular concept by the time World War I began. My point here is that the Bible states a historical fact told in advance. Scripture says little or nothing about the details of the how and why, the parties involved; the reasons for the Statehood declaration of 1948 became an independent State.

During World War I, Great Britain needed help. Since Germany (Britain's enemy during WWI) had cornered the production of acetone Great Britain may have lost the war if Chaim Weizmann had not invented a fermentation process that allowed the British to manufacture their own liquid acetone, an element of "smokeless" gun powder.

It was this fermentation process that brought Weizmann to the attention of David Lloyd George (Minister of Ammunitions) and Arthur James Balfour (previously the Prime Minister but at this time the First Lord of the Admiralty). Chaim Weizmann was not just a scientist; he was also the leader of the Zionist Movement.

Weizmann's contact with Lloyd George and Balfour continued, even after Lloyd George became prime minister and Balfour was transferred to the Foreign Office in 1916. Additional Zionist leaders such as Nahum Sokolow also pressured Great Britain to support a Jewish homeland in Palestine.

Although Balfour himself was in favor of a Jewish state, Great Britain particularly favored the declaration as an act of policy. Britain wanted the United States to join World War I and the British hoped that by supporting a Jewish homeland in Palestine, the world Jewish community would be able to sway the U.S. to join the war against Germany.

Though the Balfour Declaration went through several drafts, the final version was issued on November 2, 1917, in a letter from Balfour to Lord Rothschild, president of the British Zionist Federation. The main body of the letter quoted the decision of the October 31, 1917, British Cabinet meeting. This declaration was accepted by the League of Nations on July 24, 1922, and embodied in the mandate that gave Great Britain temporary administrative control of the land known as Palestine.

This is the background for the reader of what lies behind the historical events and meaning to the Isaiah 66:8 passage. Scripture is in many ways like a hologram. A hologram is a picture of a "whole" object, showing it in three dimensions. We've all seen cheap hologram images on credit cards and ID cards (where they help prevent counterfeiting and copying).

My point is this: **The Holy Scriptures are the standard guide for the recognition of all knowledge that God has planned for mankind dealing with the past, applying to the present generation and what He has designed for all future eras. All prophetic parameters that are destined to occur are within the power and sovereignty of God's all-encompassing plan and they are actively placed into force through the divine attributes of God's authority. God is the one who has determined the outcome of all historical events to occur on earth long before this planet came into being. The apostle James informs us: "*Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world*" -(Acts 15:18). There is nothing that happens on this earth (or in the universe for that matter) that is a surprise to God. This includes all the actions of the holy angels (as well as the evil angels,**

including Satan), and it embraces all of the activities of human beings no matter in what era they have lived or will live. In bringing things to pass, God has the prerogative of using both good and bad things. We are told in no uncertain terms that God is the author of good and also evil. *"I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things"* (Isaiah 45:7). This is a hard concept for many to accept, but nonetheless it essential in understanding Gods dominion.

The Bible is more fully expressed: **Pattern = Prologue = Prophecy**. In using the term "**Pattern = Prophecy**" was to put it into the simplest of terms and yet it is incomplete.

In her book, *Not Good If Detached*, holocaust survivor Corrie Ten Boom told of a friend who was reading her Bible one morning, studying the Rapture of the Church in 1st Thessalonians 4:13-18. As the passage came alive to her, she became engrossed in its truths and didn't hear the doorbell ringing. After several rings, the sound registered and she went to the door to find an impatient delivery man. *"You must be getting deaf, madam,"* he said. *"I had to ring three times."*

"I'm sorry," she said. Then the excited lady started preaching a mile-a-minute to the unprepared man. *"It is not that I am deaf, but I have just read something in my Bible so glorious I forgot everything else. Do you know that it is possible that some day you may come to my door and I will no longer be here? Young man, one day you may find every Christian home empty. Jesus is coming to take His church away and we shall meet Him in the air."* The delivery man looked at her like a calf staring at a new gate, *"That's great, miss. But before you fly away can I just get you to sign for this package?"*

Many people like that delivery man find the Rapture difficult to accept. The instant disappearing of millions of people seems so bizarre that it sounds like something out of a science-fiction plot. For that reason, the rapture is dismissed by skeptics, liberal Christians and Amillennialist's who have a knack for spiritualizing prophetic sections of the Bible. Corrie Ten Boom did not believe in the Rapture, and was quite critical of it.

However, it may surprise you to know that there are several historical prototypes of the rapture in the Scripture. In fact, the Bible records six examples of the Rapture, which serve as illustrations (word-pictures) of the climatic one to come. They illustrate the concept of **Pattern = Prologue = Prophecy**.

· ***Enoch***: In the days before the Flood, ***"Enoch walked with God and he was not for God took him"*** -(Genesis 5:24; Hebrews 11:5). Enoch is the first one in the Bible to be taken directly into heaven. Going deeper, we find an interesting model in Enoch, Noah and the pre-flood people of the three groups of people associated with the end-times. Enoch is an Old Testament type of the church, whereas Noah and his family is a picture of Israel, while those who drowned in the deluge are a picture of the unbelieving masses that reject the Gospel. Enoch was spared from the judgment of the Flood just as the Church will be spared from the wrath of the Tribulation -(1st Thessalonians 1:10; Revelation 3:10), while Noah and family were preserved in the Ark. In like manner, the

church will be removed from the Earth before the tribulation while Israel will have to endure it -(Jeremiah 30:3). Enoch was taken on his birth date, which was Sivan 6, Pentecost. Pentecost this year is Sunday, May 31st, 2020! World events today are pregnant with huge significant possibilities. God may have set into motion His final exit plan for the church. It was March 24th, 2020, when churches around the world were ordered to close their doors to corporate worship.

- **Elijah:** The famous prophet, who stood against the wicked priests of Baal and the rebellious King Ahab, was whisked away in a chariot of fire -(2nd Kings. 2:1, 11).
- **Jesus:** At the ascension Jesus was taken up into heaven 40 days after His resurrection -(Acts 1:9; Revelation 12:5).
- **Philip:** In the book of Acts we are told that Philip vanished into thin air after baptizing the Ethiopian eunuch. His body was translated, not to heaven, but from one geographical location to another twenty miles away to Azotus -(Acts 8:39-40).
- **Paul:** At some point in his life, Paul was raptured into paradise and then returned to Earth to complete his ministry. Twice in 2nd Corinthians 12:2-4 Paul uses the words “caught up” which are translated from the same Greek word used to describe the rapture, **harpazo**. However, this trip came with a price tag, Paul also remarked in that same passage that God gave him a “thorn in the flesh” to keep him humble and from becoming conceited.
- **John:** While exiled on the desolate isle of Patmos, the apostle John had a similar experience that Paul did. John was given an exclusive tour of the future when he was called up to the heavenlies by the Spirit of God and then later returned to write down all that he had seen and heard in the book of Revelation -(Revelation 1:9-11; 4:1). John’s consciousness and perhaps his body were taken beyond the limits of space and time. He was not only moved upward in space, but forward in time to see the end of history.

There are important observations we can make about these historical examples:

First, they were *prophetic*. Each one was a type or model of the final Rapture foretold in the last days. Prophecy is usually tied to pattern. Moreover, if God has fulfilled these six instances of rapture then we can know the seventh will also be fulfilled.

Second, they were *physical*. In each of these historical raptures, people were physically taken up by the power of God and transferred to another location. In other words, these weren’t symbolic. This will hold true of the rapture of the Church as well.

Third, they were *not predictable*. Each case happened with no clear warning or preceding sign, so it will be with the rapture of the church. Christ will come “as a thief in the night” -(1st Thessalonians 5:2).

Let's take a closer look at 1st Thessalonians 5 and the "thief in the night"..

1st Thessalonians chapter 5

1. Previous chapter

Chapter 4: Sexual morality, earning a living, and the dead

2. Analysis of chapter

The apostle tells the Christians to be ready for the coming of Christ which will come suddenly. (vv. 1-11)

He gives instructions about several particular duties. (vv. 12-22)

And concludes with prayer, greetings, and a blessing. (vv. 23-28)

3. Key verse

Verse 17: **"Pray continually."**

4. Key word / key phrase

Verse 2, **"will come like a thief in the night."**

5. Key event / key person / key theme

The Day of the Lord, and holy living

6. Key thought

Note how Paul contrasts light and darkness in this chapter.

7. Key thing to look out for

Paul insists that evil must be avoided.

8. Key Bible cross-reference

Verse 8. See Isaiah 59:17.

9. Key "by way of explanation"

Verse 21, **"Test everything."** If the Christians Paul wrote to had not been so gullible he would not have had to issue so many warnings to them. All teaching had to be in line with the gospel of Jesus. That was the supreme test.

10. Key "Quotable Quote"

"I do not think that in the last forty years I have lived one conscious hour that was not influenced by the thought of our Lord's return."

Lord Shaftesbury

No person knows how much time we have left on earth, either personally or prophetically. Personally, **"life is a vapor that appears for a moment and then vanishes quickly away"** -(James 4:14). We stand on a razor's edge between life and death. Prophetically, Christ could appear at any moment to whisk His bride - the church - away to heaven -(Matthew 25:13). Those left behind will have to endure a long dark night of judgment.

Are you rapture ready? If so, then we ought to be filled with evangelistic urgency to share the Gospel -(John 9:4). If not, then the time to repent and trust in Christ is now! As the Scripture says, **“They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead”** -(1st Peter 4:5).

The Wedding Motif is the major thematic pattern that alludes to the Pre-Tribulation Rapture. Brent Miller of Ingenuity Films recently released his DVD **“Before the Wrath”** almost to the very week when churches were ordered to close their doors. As I was viewing it, my thoughts turned to this theme as perhaps more prophetic than recognized in its timely release date. Some of the names of those appearing in the DVD are familiar to you, J.D. Farag, Amir Tsarfati, Jack Hibbs, and Jan Markell.

All through the Gospels, Jesus relied on the ancient Jewish wedding pattern for many of His parables, climaxing in His promise in the Upper Room in John 14. Many of us miss the full import of these allusions if we aren't familiar with the model of ancient Jewish wedding customs and practices.

The **first** step, the **Ketubah**, or Betrothal; **(2)** was the establishment of the marriage covenant, usually when the prospective bridegroom took the initiative **(3)**; and **(4)** negotiated the price (**mohair**) he must pay to purchase her.

Once the bridegroom paid the purchase price, the marriage covenant was established, and the young man and woman were regarded as husband and wife. **(5)**. From that moment on, the bride was declared to be consecrated or sanctified - set apart - exclusively for her bridegroom, **(6)**. As a symbol of the covenant relationship that had been established, the groom and bride drank from a cup of wine over which the betrothal had been pronounced, **(7)**.

After the marriage covenant was established, the groom left his bride at her home and returned to his father's house, where he remained separated from his bride for approximately 12 months, **(8)**. This afforded the bride time to gather her trousseau and prepare for married life, **(9)**.

During this period of separation, the groom prepared a dwelling place in his father's house to which he would later bring his bride. At the end of the period of separation, the bridegroom came - usually at night - to take his bride to live with him. The groom, the best man, and other male escorts left the father's house and conducted a torch-light procession to the home of the bride, **(10)**. Although the bride was expecting her groom to come for her, she did not know the time of his coming, **(11)**. As a result, the groom's arrival was preceded by a shout, **(12)**. which announced her imminent departure to be gathered with him.

After the groom received his bride, together with her female attendants, the enlarged wedding party returned from the bride's home to the groom's father's house, **(13)** where the wedding guests had assembled.

Shortly after their arrival, the bride and groom were escorted by the other members of the wedding party to the bridal chamber (*huppah*). Prior to entering the chamber, the bride remained veiled so that no one could see her face, **(14)**. While the groomsmen and bridesmaids waited outside, the bride and groom entered the bridal chamber alone. There, in the privacy of that place, they entered into physical union for the first time, thereby consummating the marriage that had been covenanted approximately one year earlier, **(15)**.

After the marriage was consummated, the groom came out of the bridal chamber and announced the consummation of the marriage to the members of the wedding party waiting outside, **(16)**. Then, as the groom went back to his bride in the chamber, the members of the wedding party returned to the wedding guests and announced the consummation of the marriage, **(17)**.

Upon receiving the good news, the wedding guests remained in the groom's father's house for the next seven days, celebrating with a great wedding feast, **(18)**.

During the seven days of the wedding feast, the bride and groom remained hidden in the bridal chamber, **(19)**. -(Cf. Genesis 29:21-23, 27-28) for the seven days of the *huppah*, **(20)**. Afterwards, the groom came out of hiding, bringing his bride with him, but with her veil removed so that everyone could see her.

The New Testament portrays the Church as the Bride of Christ in Ephesians 5:22-33 (Paul even quotes Genesis 2:24 as the union at the *Parousia* of the Bridegroom in vs .31!); cf. Romans 7:4; 2nd Corinthians 11:2; James 4:4. In the opening verses of John 14, the marriage covenant is confirmed, **(21)**. Paul continually reminds us of the purchase price **(22)** and the covenant **(23)** by which we, the Bride, are set apart, or sanctified, **(24)**.

It is John the Baptist that closes out the Old Testament, not Malachi, **(25)**. A profound distinction appears to be drawn between the saints of the Old Testament and those of the New.

One of the challenges in fully appreciating Paul's epistles is the need to understand the staggering and distinctive advantages afforded the Church, in contrast to those of the Old Testament saints, **(26)**. And it is this role as the Bride of the Bridegroom that is emphasized in the parables and in the Book of Revelation, **(27)**.

The Bridegroom has departed, and His return to gather His Bride is imminent, **(28)**. He has gone to prepare a place for you and me. (He has been at it for all of 2,000 years! It must be a spectacular abode!)

This very doctrine of "imminence" is taught throughout the New Testament and is a cornerstone of the "Pre-Tribulational" view: there is no event which is a prerequisite condition for His gathering of His Bride. Technically, the word "imminence" can be troubling; however, when looked at it through my point on page 2, its appreciation

blooms like a tomato plant having been sprayed with a watery mist from an irrigation hose..



Blessings, in the Name of All Names,

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