

Sermon to the Saints which are at Topeka, Kansas, Sunday, February 14, 2016

"For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. ... And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon." (Revelation 16:14, 16)

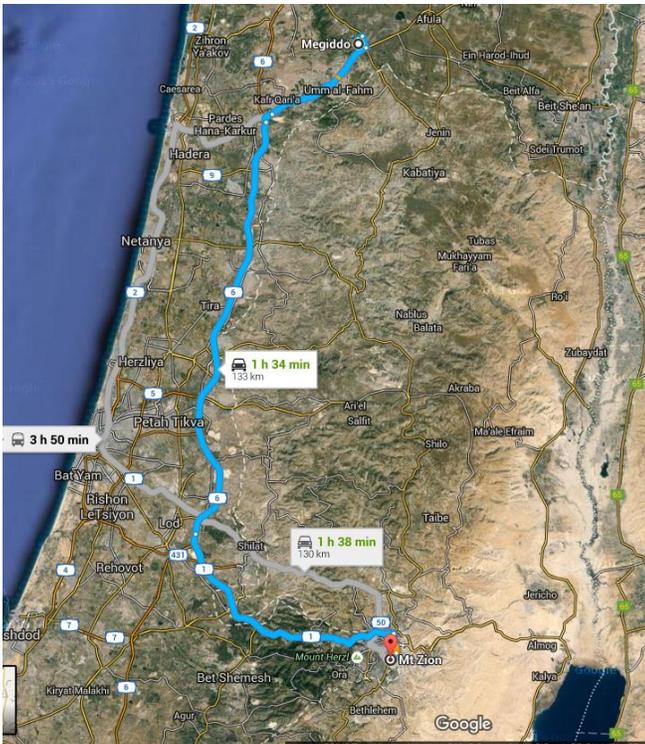
Armageddon. A word that triggers vast, yet vague, concepts in the minds of the human creation. So much so, it has become a favorite subject matter for fiction works. Wicked men, moved to do the work of their father the Devil, spend millions and make many millions more in promulgating sophisticated works of art to draw any soul, who would be instructed on -- and indeed warned about -- its true scope and import, away to mocking and vain notions. It is Satan's work to do this, as we were instructed in the parable of the seed, to wit:

"And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow; And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up: ... [which is expounded by Christ to mean] When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side." (Matthew 13:3-4, 19)

If this generation had a proper understanding of what was coming -- including this horrific conflict -- they may be moved to flee that wrath; but his majesty will not have it! Thankfully, we in this house have cause to believe we are that ***"good ground"*** upon which this blessed seed has fallen and from which Christ has ***"brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold."*** (Matthew 13:8). That being the case, we must declare very certainly what is to be known in Scripture about this amazing work of God that is prophesied to come at the close of the violent dispensation that is called -- among various terms -- the Day of the Lord.

The thesis under consideration for today and in future sermons is this: The battle to take place at Armageddon is properly to be understood as a distinct conflict that brings to a conclusion the most violent dispensation in the history of the Adamic Race. It's place, purpose, combatants, and issue is to be distinguished in Scripture from two other major conflicts that are written about in eschatological prophecies: The siege against Jerusalem and the slaughter of the armies of Gog and Magog.

The word "Armageddon" is strictly only found in the Bible one time; Revelation 16:16. As intimated in that verse, it is a Hebrew word making reference to a location that sits at the foot of Mt. Carmel, in the North-central part of modern-day Israel. Indeed, if you travel about 21 miles southeast from the port city of Haifa, Israel, you'll find the very place referenced: "The hill or city of Megiddo". This city sits in a valley beneath Carmel's Southeast foothills. Megiddo is approximately 80 miles, by highway, from



Jerusalem. This route would take you West, then North, then sloping Northeast; but as the crow flies, Megiddo is essentially due north of Mt. Zion (see map). This information is particularly instructive and comforting as we read these prophetic words written thousands of years ago about this great conflict:

"Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O LORD. Let the heathen be wakened, and come up [i.e., north] to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about." (Joel 3:11-12)

This passage mentions another very instructive thing to know about Megiddo; that it has obtained the moniker ***"valley of Jehoshaphat"***. This reference ***does not*** come, as some have posited, from King Jehoshaphat's

military campaigns -- including that most ignoble event where he joined forces with wicked Ahab at Ramothgilead. Megiddo and Ramothgilead are not the same place; the latter being positioned due East of the former, at about 70 miles distance. And it was not Jehoshaphat's demise or particular victory that was signal at Ramothgilead anyway. Rather, it was in that instructive event that we learn how God Almighty makes use of lying spirits to send His enemies to their destruction:

"Now therefore, behold, the LORD hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the LORD hath spoken evil concerning thee." (1 Kings 22:23)

We know it was there where that evil King of Israel Ahab was slain when a Syrian archer ***"drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness"*** (1 Kings 22:34), confirming the words of the prophet Micaiah. But as we learn in the Chronicles version, Jehoshaphat was spared only by God's intervention:

"And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, It is the king of Israel. Therefore they compassed about him to fight: but Jehoshaphat cried out, and the LORD helped him; and God moved them to depart from him." (2 Chronicles 18:31)

So, then, the question remains why this place where God has determined to locate His coronating conflict -- where ***"the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army."*** (Revelation 19:19) -- would be named after Jehoshaphat? The answer is found, I submit, in the name of Judah's ancient king. "Jehoshaphat" is literally translated "Jehovah has Judged", and is therefore the perfect word-picture of that place, that

is also twice called in the prophecy of Joel, "***the valley of decision***" (Joel 3:14). While it would give me much joy here to turn aside to a full view of Joel's prophecy about this coming terrible and awe-inspiring work of God, let us for now put a pin in it because there is much more groundwork to be laid.

Some weeks ago, I prepared a rather simplistic conceptual timeline for the events that occur during the seven-year dispensation that I believe makes up this event called "***The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him***" (Revelation 1:1). I say seven years both because of the repeated use of language in prophecy about two distinct three and one half year periods of time for events in the Apocalypse to occur, as well as this express language in the prophecy of Daniel about the last of the 70 weeks:

"And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week [i.e., at the midpoint, or 3 ½ years] he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate." (Daniel 9:27)

The timeline is attached at the end of the materials you have in front of you, so you can make reference to it while we examine this subject matter. In an attempt to further fix your heart and mind on a proper view of this issue, it may serve to briefly touch on this time -- or perhaps more importantly "event" -- sequencing. For purposes of this subject matter, here is a simple expression of ***how*** I believe Scripture shows us things unfold in the Day of the Lord:

Sanctification (1st 3 ½ year period): In a manner only partially experienced among the post-diluvian sons of men previously, the human race is shaken with violent conflict, uncontrollable famine, irremediable pestilence, terrifying disruptions in the natural world, and visitations by frightful creatures preserved for that hour in the netherworld. The purpose of it all is to force the inhabitants of the world to know two things for absolute certainty: (1) God is fighting against them. (2) His servants in the earth are clearly identified and active in declaring the prophetic end of the Adamic experiment. This reaches a crescendo, after three and one half years when in the city of Jerusalem some apparent degree of success is perceived by the earth dwellers to have been achieved in the slaying of the two tormenting witnesses.

Like Belshazzar on the eve of the decreed end of Babylon's captivity of Judah -- the seventh iteration of Antichrist basks in the praise of earth's kings and subjects for having slain them. Like for Belshazzar, the promised end comes when the two witnesses amazingly have life return to their bodies and are taken into the sky -- in the sight of all the earth. Precipitously, the seventh trumpet sounds and Christ breaks through the earth's atmosphere and slays that champion king of the earth dwellers "***with the spirit of his mouth, and ... with the brightness of his coming:***" (2 Thessalonians 2:8)

Fulfillment of Promise to Abraham (2nd 3 ½ year period): With the Christian Gentile saints taken up to **"ever be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:17)**, the conflict shifts to the question: will that ancient promise given to Abraham be fulfilled? The 144,000 -- sealed during the first three and a half year period and trained up by the Gentile saints in proper service to God and Christ Jesus -- are ensconced on the Mount Zion. A nation of apostate, vicious, unrepentant Jews -- who have fretted God and been judicially made **"contrary to all men" (1 Thessalonians 2:15)** in their arrogant behaviors -- fill up the cities of modern day Israel.

The unrepentant, unrighteous Jews will now receive the promised retribution; the remnant, redeemed by Christ in a day, will now receive the fulfillment of the promised return to their land. It is a violent slaughter like nothing seen before, engaging the merciless rage of Gentile armies from around the globe upon every unregenerate Jew. All that will remain of Jacob's seed will be those 12,000 from each of the twelve tribes.

It is a significant point to be added here that during this second period of three and one half years, there is no public service or ministry engaged in by the redeemed Jews ... and the Christian elect have been removed from the earth. Consider these words of Daniel's prophecy: **"[H]e shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease" (Daniel 9:27)**. The number of the redeemed Jews having been sealed (Revelation 7:4-8), and the **"mystery of God [was] finished"** when **"the voice of the seventh angel ... [began] to sound" (Revelation 10:7)** establishing the **"fulness of the Gentiles" (Romans 11:25)**, there is no further purpose in a public ministry in Christ's stead commanding **"all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30)**. The fulfillment of those provisions of the covenant establishing who are Christ's is completed.

Having been loosed to accomplish God's purpose against the rebellious Jewish population, Antichrist's army will now be fully and finally dealt with. Because the promise to Abraham was both Mahershallalhashbaz **and** Shearjashub. The armies of Antichrist necessarily **have** to fulfill the promised slaughter of the Jewish population. Christ **has** to fulfill the final deliverance of the remnant to their land. This latter promise is fulfilled in the valley of Megiddo, as the second three and one half year period comes to a violent close, and the prophecy of the seventh trumpet is completed: **"The kingdoms of this world are [finally and fully, if you will] become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever."** (Revelation 11:15)

These two events -- the siege of Jerusalem and the battle at Armageddon -- are both contained within the three and one half years during which the resurrected Antichrist beast has reign over the earth's population. They are both intertwined with the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham. They are both **after** Christ has returned and has drawn up the Gentile elect, the **"dead in Christ"** have been resurrected, and both groups are ensconced in their glorified state. All who remain in the earth are the damned Gentiles (alive and dead), the unregenerate Jews (alive and dead), and the 144,000 which,

"[W]ere not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God." (Revelation 14:4-5)

But these two events are very distinct – and while many of the prophecies of them merge, sometimes within the very same verse, a proper view of the words lets you see them discretely considered.

There is one other important understanding that I would like to help this group of tender souls to attain unto – as it relates to these prophecies of such horrific afflictions to come – before we plunge into a consideration of the three conflicts. It has to do with the use, by generations of righteous souls, of the prophecies related to eschatological events for preaching on more time-specific, temporal matters. Because I think it is a critically important point to make, I will begin with an example of what I mean. Take this blessed passage:

"So the angel that communed with me said unto me, Cry thou, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy. And I am very sore displeased with the heathen that are at ease: for I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction. Therefore thus saith the LORD; I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies: my house shall be built in it, saith the LORD of hosts, and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem. Cry yet, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; My cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad; and the LORD shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem." (Zechariah 1:14-17)

In just his last little sermonette for the Lord's Supper, Brother Charles plucked forth verse 14 to speak of the jealousy of God with regard to His table ... beautiful. In times of great affliction, we have found ourselves applying in our prayers the promises of relief from those afflictions, by lifting up to our King his promise that he would ***"yet choose Jerusalem"*** ... spectacular! Some weeks past, Brother Benjamin articulated how that many of the prophecies of old had at least dual application, and this is one that received partial fulfillment when Jerusalem was rebuilt in the days of Nehemiah. Yet, the primary import of this prophecy is in the full and final punishment of unregenerate Jews, the overthrow of those heathen who had evil in their hearts in performance of that punishment, and the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham ... that the Israelites would be put into physical, prosperous possession of the Promised Land.

So what of it? What is my point in this aside? Well, when I embark on this disciplined journey with you – about these cataclysmic events to come in the history of the human race – I must ask that you work to be undistracted by thoughts of ***how else*** this or that prophecy has been or could be applied. Can there be a historical event-relevant application? Yes! Can there be a metaphorical or allegorical application to the amazing sustaining of a Christian-dispensation ***"Jew, which is one inwardly"*** (Romans

2:29)? Absolutely! If you have in past times seen the prophecy relevant in one of these ways, hallelujah! But for these adumbrating applications, there must be an event that brings the prophecy to full – and in this treatment of great and final things, we will find that application, if you will do the work with me. Now to the work.

To sharpen our focus on the battle of Armageddon, I wish to first address the event that precedes it for some increasingly-intense months (probably even years) – known generally as the siege of Jerusalem, and put more descriptively by Isaiah:

“Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, And the LORD have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land.” (Isaiah 6:11-12)

To gain an understanding of this first of the great pair of slaughters, the launching point is to see and understand the promise made to Abram. Here is where it begins:

“Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.” (Genesis 12:1-3)

And in case there is any question that part of that promise was to put them in direct possession of a distinct parcel of geography in the earth, consider this reiteration of that promise to Abraham's son, Isaac:

“And the LORD appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of: 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 swore unto Abraham thy father; 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;” (Genesis 26:2-4)

Lest anyone imagine that this promise was either discontinued, or already fulfilled when the natural Jews took possession of Canaan through the period of the judges and the kings -- or even when a few of them returned from captivity in part and rebuilt the temple at Jerusalem -- consider these words from Peter to the Jews who approached him and John at Beautiful Gate:

“Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things,

which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began. For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people. Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days. 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. Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.” (Acts 3:19-26)

So, pulling from these specific references to the promise, let us examine what the terms of the promise are -- so that we might better understand the events under consideration; Siege of Jerusalem and Armageddon.

“I will give all these countries ... and will give unto thy seed all these countries” is language that intimates the certainty that there will be a place for a possession. A fixed geographic location in which the inhabitants will live. All those who dwell in the earth will know for a certainty what those boundaries are, and they will be unmoved. The type of this inheritance was what drove the conflict between Ahab and Naboth, to wit:

“And Ahab spake unto Naboth, saying, Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs, because it is near unto my house: and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it; or, if it seem good to thee, I will give thee the worth of it in money. And Naboth said to Ahab, The LORD forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee.” (1 Kings 21:2-3)

The strength of this portion of the promise is also seen in the symbolism of the doctrines of grace that are so perfectly woven through this blessed Word, it becomes the dwelling place of all God's people, as solemnly expressed in this one-verse oracle:

“Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set.” (Proverbs 22:28)

Beginning, as I read the flow of the prophecy, in Ezekiel 47 the prophecy outlines in copious detail what land will be given to each tribe of that 144,000 redeemed of Israel who will be put into final possession of the promise to Abraham. It is interesting reading, and if carefully mapped will let you see these blessed and happy persons covering exactly those territories promised. Just as Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome disrupted the capacity of righteous Jews to possess the land promised to Abraham -- so will that seventh iteration of Antichrist before Christ returns ... and the eighth after him! (Revelation 17:11) It is for this reason the fight must take place there!

“I will make of thee a great nation, ... and make thy name great” is to be understood as to size and magnificence. The terminology articulating the volume of the population of Abraham's seed is clearly

hyperbolic, such as when Jacob reiterates that God promised to ***"make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude."*** (Genesis 32:12) The sands just on the beaches of the earth is estimated to contain 5,000 billion, billion, or five sextillion grains of sand – clearly the number of grains covering the seas of the earth would be beyond human calculation. Even if you calculated every Jew born from Isaac forward you would not approach unto such numbers. As we sit here today, there are fewer than 15 million Jews populating the earth – barely a scratch to nations such as China ... India ... Russia.

But ... what if there were 144,000 who lived and reigned 1,000 years with Christ, never dying and having offspring who multiply -- without the faithless birth control and violent abortion that vain humans use to thwart this blessing -- while the bounties of God are heaped upon them? How great would that population be upon the earth? Here's the promise:

"And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed." (Isaiah 65:19-20)

Whatever their actual numbers are to be -- a matter certainly written in the book of God's providence -- it is clear from Scripture that the people who will stand in Abraham's stead, as the example chosen by the Potter to perfectly express the doctrine of election, will be magnified over all nations ever to exist theretofore.

"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." (Daniel 2:44)

The kingdom in Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's vision of the great image is, of course, the ***"kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ"*** (Revelation 11:15), but the center of that great theocracy will be Mt. Zion, in the city of Jerusalem, in the finally and fully redeemed nation of Israel, about which this truth is written:

"And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts." (Haggai 2:7)

There are many more passages that reiterate the flowing of the beauties and glories of all the earth's nations into this newly-established Israel. It is evident from them all that this new Israel will exceed in glory and honor all kingdoms ever to exist in the earth in history -- and as a consequence we see the next fulfillment of the promise to Abraham.

"[I]n thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" is a part of this blessed promise that the likes of John Hagee and Christians United For Israel market for their own glory and fame. Plucking forth

a few of the multitude of verses referencing this coming blessing upon the redeemed Jews, these clowns pretend that the promises flow to that vile batch of **"very naughty figs" (Jeremiah 24:2)** who occupy a portion of the promised land and who promote every abomination that brought about that solemn condemnation from Christ:

***"Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."* (Luke 13:35)**

When we come to those apostate posers with the Bread of Life, they set upon us like the Sodomites around Lot's house. It's blasphemy to pretend that these precious promises run to those monstrous sinners before God. But it will not be so for the 144,000 ensconced upon the hill of Zion -- and it will not be so in that day when the promise to Abraham will be fulfilled and the scene will be blessing within and without the promised land, as prophesied by Zechariah:

***"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. 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 seethe therein: and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts."* (Zechariah 14:20-21)**

So, this is a glimpse of the promise made to our spiritual forefather Abraham. The fulfillment of the promise will be realized -- as was adumbrated in the treatment of those few returning Jews after the Babylonian captivity ran its course -- when two eschatological events are completed: (1) The siege and slaughter of the unregenerate Jews, and (2) the full and final retribution poured out upon the armies of the nations appointed to that violent work ... at Armageddon.

Moses, whom the Jews pretend to honor in their idolatrous worship of the Torah, was himself a prophet of eschatology. One of the most comprehensive treatments of the Jews' apostasy, Diaspora, siege and slaughter in the days of Antichrist was prophesied by Moses in Deuteronomy chapter 29. The Diaspora -- that judicial act of removing the Jews from the promised land and scattering them to be assimilated into all the nations of the earth -- is as much (or more so) in effect today as it was when the Assyrian and Babylonian kingdoms executed that work in 750-ish and 585-ish BC, respectively. When the temple was rebuilt under the rule of the Medes and Persians, it was a relatively pitiful symbol of what was -- and still is -- to come. The Jews who did that work were righteous, and for centuries (represented by the first 69 of Daniel's prophecy of 70 weeks) there remained a few righteous Jews among them. However, by the time Christ came on the scene in His first advent, that smattering of the original Jewish nation had come to full rot as well and rejected their Messiah. Never in those 69 weeks of years -- 483 years to be precise -- did the whole of the people of Israel return to the promised land and re-establish the nation in righteousness. Of a certainty, it could never have been said:

"The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the LORD shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory." (Isaiah 60:19)

So, with that fuller view of Jewish history, let me finish this first installment of this sermon series with these profound words of Moses the Prophet:

"Ye stand this day all of you before the LORD your God; ... That thou shouldest enter into covenant with the LORD thy God, and into his oath, which the LORD thy God maketh with thee this day: That he may establish thee to day for a people unto himself, and that he may be unto thee a God, as he hath said unto thee, and as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. Neither with you only do I make this covenant and this oath; But with him that standeth here with us this day before the LORD our God, and also with him that is not here with us this day: (For ye know how we have dwelt in the land of Egypt; and how we came through the nations which ye passed by; And ye have seen their abominations, and their idols, wood and stone, silver and gold, which were among them:) Lest there should be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turneth away this day from the LORD our God, to go and serve the gods of these nations; lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood; And it come to pass, when he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add drunkenness to thirst: The LORD will not spare him, but then the anger of the LORD and his jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the LORD shall blot out his name from under heaven. And the LORD shall separate him unto evil out of all the tribes of Israel, according to all the curses of the covenant that are written in this book of the law: So that the generation to come of your children that shall rise up after you, and the stranger that shall come from a far land, shall say, when they see the plagues of that land, and the sicknesses which the LORD hath laid upon it; And that the whole land thereof is brimstone, and salt, and burning, that it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein, like the overthrow of Sodom, and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, which the LORD overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath: Even all nations shall say, Wherefore hath the LORD done thus unto this land? what meaneth the heat of this great anger? Then men shall say, Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them forth out of the land of Egypt: For they went and served other gods, and worshipped them, gods whom they knew not, and whom he had not given unto them: And the anger of the LORD was kindled against this land, to bring upon it all the curses that are written in this book: And the LORD rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as it is this day."

(Deuteronomy 29:10-28)

Now lest you consider these words as fulfilled when Assyria and/or Babylon sacked the Jewish nations of Israel or Judah -- or even when Titus sacked the temple in c. 70 AD -- please consider the severity of this language underscored here. Adumbrations, perhaps ... but I cannot see those previous events

satisfying it. When we take this matter up next week, we will look at some other prophecies -- including some that post-dated the Assyrian and Babylonian onslaughts -- about this mother of all sieges against the rebellious Jewish population.

Let me close today with a brief explanation of why I feel a great need to examine things that are to come, spoken of by these great prophets and apostles who contributed to this **"more sure word of prophecy; whereunto [we] do well that [we] take heed" (2 Peter 1:19)**. We, of course, have no certain knowledge of when that great and terrible Day of the Lord will come; though we have many evidences to point to ground us in the conclusion that it must be very soon now. I believe that while there are probably many in this house today who do not feel a personal urgency to ponder these things at present ... it will no doubt become a matter of increasing urgency for different ones of you as that course set for you by your Father dictates. When that time comes -- whether it be now or later -- I want you to have a place to go and feed and learn ... and be comforted.

So, next week I will pick up on our consideration of the pre-Armageddon siege of Jerusalem by the fevered and furious armies of the nations, being led by the last Antichrist. We will consider more closely how you can comfortably understand when a prophecy of old has that event in view -- terrible as it will be. In the meanwhile, please spend some additional time considering these foundational thoughts and framing. And, please return with the timeline attachment next week so that you can reference it as needed for our analysis.

I love you all, and take great honor and humility at getting to walk this journey with you. Amen.

Dispensational Period 7 years (Daniel's 70th Week)

