A Prophetic Overview

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The Empire Age

Because of the chronic corruption in Israel, Ezekiel saw the Spirit of God departing from the temple, and then from Jerusalem. With God's protection removed, Nebuchadnezzar and his army were free to level Jerusalem and the temple, extracting anything of value. Even the ark of the covenant would never be seen again. With the destruction of the temple and another wave of exiles being hauled off to Babylon, spiritual guidance would no longer be provided through Israel.

But the Spirit of God does not go away; it continually sifts through humanity to anoint those who yearn for God's righteousness and purpose in their lives.

Among the spoils of Jerusalem were intelligent young men who could be trained to serve the king as administrators and advisors. But some of these had already pledged in their hearts to serve the God of Abraham. Could there have been less likely heroes than neutered teenage slave boys from a culture that had been obliterated by conquest?

This was a pivotal point in history, in which God would ordain a series of five global empires to reduce international conflicts. For instance: Even while under the heel of Rome, historians call the era "Pax Romana," because of the global peace afforded by a central government.

Daniel chapter two describes this sequence through a prophetic dream of a statue of gold, silver, brass, iron and a mixture of iron and clay. This was given to king Nebuchadnezzar and interpreted by Daniel. By today, four of these empires have come and gone (Babylon, Medes and Persians, Greece, and Rome), so now we are awaiting the rise of the fifth and final world government.

During the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, the kingdom of God would begin to separate from the main priorities of global government. It is described there as a stone cut without hands, and it would become a mountain that would eventually replace human control over the earth.

The first recorded conflict came when a teenage slave and his friends objected to defiling themselves with the king's delicacies. But they were soon granted this departure from the Babylonian culture. The law was now written into the hearts of these men, and no longer depended upon the temple rituals. Since then, the kingdom of God has continued to grow as a separate entity within a hostile world

As we navigate these current and future times we can be reassured that God has ordained them and that he remains in control. So the promises of provision, protection, and purpose remain active as we choose to love God and follow his leading during these terrifying times that we will face.

But there will come a time when God withdraws his hand from the protective governments that he has provided. We see this prophesied in Daniel chapter seven, and also in Revelation chapter six. It will start with a rebellion against this fifth and final God-ordained kingdom.

In Daniel chapter two, this final empire is described as divided, and in chapter seven it is described as very brutal and oppressive in conquest. But chapter seven also describes an insurrection within it, wherein three of the ten regions involved will rebel against this final kingdom.

The fifth kingdom itself is mentioned in Revelation six as a conquering rider on a white horse. This rider is followed by a rider on a red horse, who ignites rebellion throughout the world. The bloodshed from the resulting civil war, along with the famine and disease that follow, will decimate the global population by twenty five percent. This will be the result of no more than God unleashing what people will do to each other.

During that period, Christians will become increasingly targeted. Then Revelation speaks of a second phase of disasters that will respond to the cries of the saints to deliver them, and rescue them from those persecuting them. The form of these judgments will be convulsions of the earth itself, plus massive strikes entering through the atmosphere.

A third wave of catastrophe will originate from the spiritual realm and specifically target only the oppressors. The selectivity of these two judgment periods will mirror the plagues that delivered the Israelites from Egypt.

The death toll for phases two and three will be one third of the remaining population. Together, the total decline in human population due to human behavior and God's judgments, will be half of those who were alive before the red horse of Revelation six.

There will then be a pause in chapter ten of Revelation, as creation takes a breather and prepares for a final three and one half years. By this point John has fulfilled his commission to write letters to the seven churches and provide various prophesies. He is now being given a second prophetic commission.

Prophetic accounts of a final period of three and one half years are described in chapters eleven, twelve, and thirteen in Revelation, these focus upon different categories of detail.

Remember that the church has repeatedly been called the temple of God in the New Testament, as we consider John measuring it in chapter eleven. But he is told to leave out the courtyard, since it will be trampled under foot by the gentiles for three and one half years. We would expect to see two parts of the temple remaining, but remember that the veil separating the two indoor rooms was torn from top to bottom by God himself upon the crucifixion of Jesus.

In Revelation twelve we see the church clothed (as opposed to exposed) by the light of the sun. We also see the woman standing on the moon, which is revealed by light from the sun. In Matthew sixteen we see that the church is built upon the bedrock of revelation from the father.

When Satan is cast out of the spiritual realm in this Rev.12, he goes after the woman on earth. But she is evacuated out of reach for three and one half years. So then he goes after the rest of her children – the courtyard Christians, as mentioned in chapter eleven.

Christ returns three and a half years later, as indicated in Revelation chapters eleven and thirteen,

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