

Sunday February 23rd 2014
The Fullness of the Time
A Final Thought

1). 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. 6 And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!"*

a). In our studies for the conference we had seen how the Lord's first advent is inextricably connected to our future adoption as firstborn sons and that His first advent had come at the fullness of the time.

b). Now if we combine the coming of the fullness of the time with this verse from - Am 3:7 *Surely the Lord GOD does nothing, Unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.*

We come to the realization that the coming of Christ's first advent had been made abundantly clear by the Lord to those who would need to know, in this case the nation of Israel, so that they would be prepared for His arrival – and we had seen this everywhere from Genesis, to Daniel, to Isaiah, to Malachi.

c). Doing nothing unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets is an attribute of the goodness of God seen throughout His recorded revelation to Man with respect to His intervention into the affairs of Man.

2). We can find an example of this from the days of Noah where we can see 3 significant events 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; make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and outside with pitch. 15 "And this is how you shall make it: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits. 16 "You shall make a window for the ark, and you shall finish it to a cubit from above; and set the door of the ark in its side. You shall make it with lower, second, and third decks.*

b). The building of the ark is not something that took place in Noah's garage – this was a huge structure that was not constructed overnight, and with every plank of wood that had to be cut from a tree and prepared was the declaration of God's intent to bring cataclysmic judgment upon the earth, in anticipation of which the ark was being built.

c). We 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.*

d). 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'.

e). And it is of course through Noah via the lineage of Shem that we would eventually come to Abraham and ultimately to the Christ.

f). Now the condemnation of the world does not come solely through the building of the ark, but in conjunction with this we have the second significant event that we find recorded in - 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;*

g). Noah was a preacher of righteousness – he proclaimed the righteousness of God and the necessity to live righteously before Him – remembering of course when we think of this that Noah is just the 10th generation from Adam and the physical world was not divided into continents as it is today and therefore his access to the people would not have been restricted as we might suppose and those preached to would not be devoid of the knowledge of God.

h). Ro 10:14 *How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? 15 And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!" 16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our report?" 17 So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. 18 But I say, have they not heard? Yes indeed: "Their sound has gone out to all the earth, And their words to the ends of the world."*

Now these verses are not specifically written concerning Noah, but they do give us insight into Noah's ministry as a preacher of righteousness.

i). In v14 we see the necessity of a preacher to declare the Word of God to those who would otherwise be ignorant of it and this is exactly how we would have to see Noah – righteousness was preached for a significant period of time with a view to the impending judgment of God, but as Isaiah said ‘Lord who has believed our report?’ – the Word of God preached through Noah to a degenerate population was not mixed with faith by those who heard it and was not therefore received, but the important thing to note here is that God provided ample warning of His intentions – no one would be able to say that they did not know.

j). So then we have the building of the ark signifying God’s intention and we have Noah’s preaching of righteousness to the same end.

k). Then the final event that you would think someone might have taken note 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.*

l). 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 – but 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.*

a). Before the destruction of the cities of the plain the Lord sent His angels into Sodom to give warning 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.

b). And even those of Lot’s own household refused to take note of the warning which the angels brought - Ge 19:12 ¶ *Then the men said to Lot, "Have you anyone else here? Son-in-law, your sons, your daughters, and whomever you have in the city-take them out of this place! 13 "For we will destroy this place, because the outcry against them has grown great before the face of the LORD, and the LORD has sent us to destroy it." 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.*

c). 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 mountains, lest you be destroyed.".....26 ¶ But his wife looked back behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.*

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

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

a). The Pharaoh of Moses day had warning concerning the ultimate destruction of his nation at the Red Sea given through the 10 plagues visited upon his nation – It was possible that the nation of Egypt could have submitted itself to the will of God, yet despite all they experienced of God's power, they chose not to.

b). The same would be true for Belshazzar who had been warned through the experience of his father Nebuchadnezzar who 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! 32 And they shall drive you from men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. They shall make you eat grass like oxen; and seven times shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses." 33 That very hour the word was fulfilled concerning Nebuchadnezzar; he was driven from men and ate grass like oxen; his body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hair had grown like eagles' feathers and his nails like birds' claws.*

Despite witnessing his father's demise and the reason for it, and despite having Daniel the prophet of God in his court and despite what had also happened with the fiery furnace incident 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.

5). Now the point of all this is not just to prove the veracity of Amos 3:7, but to realize that God in His mercy leaves no one in ignorance of His plans and purposes and in so doing provides every opportunity for everyone 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). We have seen this same truth with regards to the nation of Israel and the Lord's first advent – as we had seen in our previous studies the timing of the Lord's advent was clearly given 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.*

Not only did the Lord through Daniel give the timing of the Lord's advent but also told of His crucifixion and events that would ultimately follow.

b). It should have been possible then to do the math on this and to have worked out that Messiah's coming was very close so as to be prepared for it – knowing that the coming of Messiah would bring the restoration of Israel one step closer.

c). And then following His birth it should have been easy to identify that 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.

The star seen by the wise men would have been clearly visible to all, but it seems that no one, apart from those who travelled from the east, had taken any notice of it.

d). The presence of the wise men in Jerusalem spoke directly to this – 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 being in Jerusalem was known not only to Herod but to the entire city, for all of Jerusalem was troubled with the king – and interestingly Herod does not question the birth of Christ, but only seeks to verify the location of His birth.

e). Bethlehem is then, because of this, catapulted into the forefront of Jewish attention and becomes even more so through the heinous act perpetrated by Herod within its environs - 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."*

All of this should have been very clear. They had been warned.

f). And one last thing concerning the Lord's first advent takes us to Jacob on his deathbed - 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 had departed from Judah, according to the scripture, then Messiah would have come.

g). The basis for governmental authority and power, according to Genesis Chapter 9, resides in the ability to execute capital punishment on the murderer - Ge 9:6 *"Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man."*

h). So with this 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,"*

i). Pilate had no desire to crucify the Lord and puts the onus back on Israel, but it is not lawful for them to put anyone to death – the scepter had departed from Judah – therefore Shiloh had come.

j). But none of this was of any consequence to the nation as a whole – Yet that which would follow the crucifixion of their King had been laid out for them through Moses – even in this 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.* The very thing that happened with the fall of Jerusalem in 70AD and the diaspora which followed.

6). Now the laying of all this foundational material is not just for the sake of expanding our scriptural knowledge, but for us to realize that the Lord has spoken and continues to speak to us to encourage us and to warn us – 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.""*

a). There is not one of us who could say that we didn't know or that we didn't have an opportunity to know as God has from the beginning made all abundantly clear - 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,'*

b). From the very beginning God has declared the end - Ge 1:26 ¶ *Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."* With respect to rulership over the earth.

c). And from the beginning He has revealed the timing of the end – 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 would be 6 days for the earth 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 will come a second time.

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

e). And not to do everything that we possibly can to be prepared for that Day when our lives will never be the same again would be stupidity of the highest order.

f). 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 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 ignored.

7). 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 direction 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.'"*

And what would all of this combined tell us other than the 2000 years of this dispensation and the 6000 years of Man's Day are nearly at an end.

a). Does this sound in any way familiar? - 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!*

b). And this doctrine 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."*

c). We are then surrounded by the evidence for 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 after the appropriate fashion – particularly given what is coming next.

d). 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' and this is an event that none of us will miss – and we are warned and encouraged that we shall receive a just recompense of reward. The question remains though are we looking for it and are we really prepared for it? - 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.*

e). The coming of the Day of the Lord ushered in by the resurrection/rapture of the 'Church' will be either the most glorious of times or the most devastating of times, just as God has warned us 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.*

f). And the end we have seen from the beginning becomes reality – Re 19:7 *"Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife 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.*

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

h). The time is coming when we will very soon find out.