

The Big Picture 5 - The Culmination of All Things

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[0 : 00] Would you open the scriptures, please, to Zechariah chapter 12. Zechariah chapter 12. We're going to be talking about end-time events.

And if you have trouble finding Zechariah, just find the last book in the Old Testament. That's Malachi. Then go back one book, and you'll arrive at Zechariah.

Zechariah chapter 12. Should like to begin reading with verse 1, then we'll read down through verse 10.

Then we will come over a couple of pages to Zechariah chapter 14 and read a few verses from there. I want you to think in terms of what is going to transpire in the future as it is laid out here.

And bear in mind, of course, Zechariah was inspired of God to pen this prophecy hundreds of years before Christ was ever born in Bethlehem.

[1 : 09] And yet this is going to leap over that, and it is going to be connected to the second coming of Christ, not the first. So let's read these dynamic verses from Zechariah chapter 12.

The burden of the word of the Lord concerning Israel. Thus declares the Lord, who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him.

Behold, I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that causes reeling to all the peoples around. And when the siege is against Jerusalem, it will also be against Judah.

It will come about in that day that I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples. All who lift it will be severely injured, and all the nations of the earth will be gathered against it.

In that day, declares the Lord, I will strike every horse with bewilderment and his rider with madness. But I will watch over the house of Judah while I strike every horse of the peoples with blindness.

[2 : 29] Then the clans of Judah will say in their hearts, A strong support for us are the inhabitants of Jerusalem through the Lord of hosts, their God.

In that day I will make the clans of Judah like a firepot among pieces of wood, and a flaming torch among sheaves. So they will consume on the right hand and on the left all the surrounding peoples, while the inhabitants of Jerusalem again dwell on their own sites in Jerusalem.

The Lord also will save the tents of Judah, first in order that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem may not be magnified above Judah.

In that day the Lord will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the one who is feeble among them in that day will be like David, and the house of David will be like God, like the angel of the Lord before them.

And it will come about in that day that I will set about to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

[3 : 46] And I will pour out on the house of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on me whom they have pierced, and they will mourn for him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over him, like the bitter weeping over a firstborn.

And then over please to Zechariah chapter 14. And I want you to bear in mind again the prophetic nature of which we are speaking. There is no way historically that fulfillment can be attributed to any of these passages that we are reading.

None of this is history. All of it is future. And Jerusalem is right in the middle of it. It is no coincidence that international press corps that are gathered in Jerusalem represent a greater number than the press corps internationally gathered in any nation's capital throughout the world, with the exception of Washington, D.C.

Why would that be?

It is because Israel and Jerusalem are key, very, very significant, to what is going to transpire in the latter day.

[5 : 34] And it is almost as if the world press community knows in their heart of hearts that there is something unusually special about this little plot of land.

It is no coincidence that they are gathered there. Chapter 14 and verse 1 says, Behold, a day is coming for the Lord when the spoil taken from you will be divided among you.

And of course, this is all Israeli. For I, God speaking, I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished, and half of the city exiled.

But the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city. Then, the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations as when he fights on a day of battle.

And I must stop here and inject something for those who say, This is all history. This has all been fulfilled. This is talking about when the Romans, under the Roman general Titus, besieged the city and destroyed it.

[6 : 49] And this is not history. The Roman general Titus did besiege the city of Jerusalem and virtually leveled it. And do you think then that the Lord went forth and fought for his people then?

Do you think that God could somehow not have handled Titus and his army? We cannot assign this to history. This is yet future, very clearly. Because when the Lord goes forth and fights for Israel, guess who wins?

And in that day, verse 4, His feet, whose feet? Yeshua HaMashiach, the Messiah, His feet, will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south.

How is this going to happen? Well, we are told repeatedly in Scripture, including the Olivet Discourse in Matthew 24, about the abundance of earthquakes that are going to characterize this time, this period of time.

And not only will there be earthquakes, there will be a multitude of earthquakes over the face of the globe. The whole geographical tectonic plate underground are going to be in motion.

[8 : 33] And the earth is spoken of as reeling to and fro like a drunken man. There are going to be huge rifts, huge valleys, huge openings created as a result of these earthquakes.

The earth is going to be convulsing all over the globe. Verse 5, And you will flee by the valley of my mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to Azale.

Yes, you will flee just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah. Then, the Lord my God will come and all the holy ones with him.

And it will come about in that day that there will be no light. The luminaries will dwindle, for it will be a unique day which is known to the Lord, neither day nor night.

But it will come about that at evening time there will be light. And it will come about in that day that living waters will flow out of Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea, and the other half toward the western sea.

[9 : 52] It will be in summer as well as in winter. And the Lord will be king over all the earth.

In that day the Lord will be the only one and his name the only one. all the land will be changed into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem.

But Jerusalem will rise and remain on its site from Benjamin's gate as far as the place of the first gate to the corner gate and from the tower of Hananel to the king's winepress.

this is an incredible passage of scripture and you may be sure that its fulfillment is as precise and as exact as are the other fulfillments that have already come to pass.

It is just a remarkable time that this world is in for. Today's session concludes the brief but critical series on the big picture that we have condensed into just five scenes.

[11 : 09] We are dealing with why things are the way they are and how they will be ultimately. You will recall that in scene one we depicted from Genesis creation Adam and the early generations and the fall.

The moral fall and failure of our first parents introduced a sinful nature into all of humanity and it has been passed on generationally and genetically.

This explains better than anything else why the world is the way it is today. Why there is death, disease, wars, conflict, adversities of all kinds.

It is because of what man has been responsible in bringing down upon his own head. Many times God gets a bad rap when people say if God is God why doesn't he fix this?

Why doesn't he change this? Why doesn't he heal this? Why doesn't he fix that? It is because God created this earth in a way that he could pronounce very good and man with the volition God gave him really messed it up and we are dealing with the consequences.

[12 : 29] So we are born into a world of woe, a world of sorrows. Granted, there are beautiful aspects to it. There are pleasantries that we enjoy.

There are good times. There are wonderful times, exhilarating times, but there are also down times. And into every life some rain must fall and it does.

and we deal with our illnesses and some of them take us to our grave. And we bid our loved ones goodbye because death is very, very real among us.

This is not the world that God created. This is the world that God created that man remade through his sin and rebellion. And yet, of course, God often gets the blame for it.

But if you want to know who is really to blame for the mess we are in, go home and take a good look in the mirror, that's who's to blame. Then we looked at scene two which involved the corruption and the destruction of the earth with Noah and his sons.

[13 : 39] God looked upon all that he had created and made and behold, violence covered the earth and men's hearts were corrupt before God.

The reason that God hates human violence so much is because he loves people so much. And people do very, very bad things to one another.

And God brought down the curtain on that first generation in the form of the Noahic flood and scene three dealt with Abraham who came out of Shem, one of the sons of Noah with Shem, Ham, and Japheth and Abraham's line came out of Shem and thus the nation of Israel with the offspring of Abraham being Isaac and then Jacob.

And this offspring developed into a family or a clan if you will of seventy souls all of whom went down into Egypt as a result of Joseph sending word back for them to come down and those seventy Jews that went down to Egypt were going to dwell there for a period of four hundred years and for a large period of that time they would be in slavery subjugated to the pharaoh of Egypt because Joseph was the rescuer and the hero of Egypt but there arose a pharaoh years later who was not familiar with Joseph and he feared the growing population of Israel and he devised a scheme whereby they would rid themselves of all of the boy babies and you know the story of Moses and the bulrushes and how God eventually used him to lead these people out of Israel they went down seventy altogether four hundred years earlier do the math and you can easily conclude that the likely number for their multiplication over four hundred years is somewhere in the neighborhood of two million people got to keep in mind the pill had never been invented there was no birth control most of these women were having a baby about every eighteen months and the numbers tell us that the more people you get the more people you get that's the way it works so they numbered some two million and God used Moses to bring them out of the land of Egypt and to actually birth the nation and through a promise that God gave to

Abraham through you and your seed all nations of the earth will be blessed and I will make your name great and you will become the father of nations plural well God has made good on that promise Abraham is the father of nations Abraham is not only the father of Israel he is the father of all of the Arab nations because they came out of Abraham as well and even to this day they were enemies back then and they remain enemies so in the birthing of the nation of Israel God is continuing the line and he has established these twelve sons of Jacob to be the heads of the twelve tribes of Israel and the two most significant tribes particularly from a prophetic standpoint the fourth born son who is

[17:18] Judah Judah will be known as the royal tribe it will be Abraham Isaac Jacob Judah fast forward a thousand years genealogically and you arrive at David the king fast forward another thousand years and you arrive at Jesus the Messiah a direct descendant of Abraham Isaac Jacob Judah David the king and so on with numerous ancestors filled in between and then the other tribe of great significance is the third born son of Jacob and that would be Levi after whom the book of Leviticus is actually named and he will be the progenitor of the priesthood of Israel the priestly tribe Aaron will be a descendant of Levi

Moses his brother was a descendant of Levi and the priestly line can be traced all the way back in fact we open with the gospel of Luke and Zechariah is of the tribe of Levi and his wife Elizabeth as well as of the tribe of Levi and that is maintained so in another 2,000 years in scene number four we see the fulfillment of prophecy and the arrival of Yeshua HaMashiach Jesus the Messiah and the fulfillment of a promise when Christ came on the scene he was introduced by John the Baptist to the nation of Israel as their Messiah and as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world there he was baptized and he fulfilled his obligation as an obedient loyal Jew because Jesus Christ not only as the Messiah was introduced to Israel at the age of 30 but he was also inducted into the priesthood at age 30 this was a common age for the induction of those who were going to be priests into the priesthood at the age of 30 and Christ said it becomes us to fulfill all righteousness and he was baptized not for the same reason all the others were because he had no sin to repent of however he was baptized as a priest after the order of

Melchizedek and that goes all the way back to Genesis chapter 13 I believe it is Christ went about with his teaching and the authentication of his Messiahship via his miracles miracles and he pointed out the necessity of his death as a sacrifice for humanity the son of man has come to seek and to save that which was lost came to give his life a ransom for many and people today still do not understand the mystery of Christ how that it is through his death the death of the innocent that the guilty are able to go free much of the world most of the world still does not understand this concept God wanted to make sure that the Jewish people understood it because he instituted the whole system of sacrifice all of which is based upon the innocent dying in the place of the guilty and that is precisely what happened when Jesus

Christ died on that cross he was the innocent dying in the place of the guilty so for scene four let's go please to Luke's gospel and I think we can confine ourselves to the writings of Luke will be in Luke and then in some other things that Dr.

Luke wrote back in the book of Acts and I would ask you to turn first of all to Luke chapter 19 very important verse and a very important passage that is often overlooked and overlooking it I can promise you will lead to a lot of confusion Luke chapter 19 and let's begin if we may with Zacchaeus I'll just we'll just come in on the tail end of Zacchaeus and Zacchaeus is repentance and saying that he'll give back four times as much were in Luke 19:8 Jesus said salvation has come to this house because he too is the son of Abraham for the son of man has come to seek and to save that which was lost now bear because because and that's a very important word why this parable why at this time it is because he was near

[23 : 14] Jerusalem and they who the apostles who were accompanying him they supposed that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately this is it just as soon as we get into town everything is going to break loose and when they came riding into town Jesus on the back of that donkey people strew palm branches in the way and they shouted Hosanna Hosanna in the highest blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord Hosanna to the son of David that means they were recognizing Jesus as David's son David had been dead and buried for a thousand years this was his son and he is coming in to do what David did rule and reign he's going to drive out the Romans he's going to chase away the Sanhedrin and all their corruption he's going to install himself on the throne in Jerusalem reign forever and we are going to reign over the twelve tribes of Israel with him it's going to be wonderful can't wait till we get there that was all they had in their mind the kingdom the kingdom the kingdom because when the kingdom of Israel is restored then righteousness will spread out over the whole world and Jerusalem will be the center of the whole world and Yeshua will be the king of the whole earth and righteousness and peace will prevail and men will beat their swords into plowshares their spears into pruning hooks nations will learn war no more the knowledge of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea no one will be sick and die like they do now it will be just wonderful it will be a virtual paradise on earth and just as soon as we get to

Jerusalem Jesus is going to start it all off this is what we've been waiting for from Genesis 3 we've waited 4,000 years for this moment and we are right now on the cutting edge of it the air was filled with electricity it was amazing but Jesus is going to give them a parable now right on the edge of that what's the point what's the purpose of this parable well verse 12 a certain nobleman went to a distant country to receive a kingdom for himself and then return and he called ten of his slaves and gave them ten minas and said to them do business with this until

I come back but his citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him saying we do not want this man to reign over us and it came about that when he returned after receiving the kingdom he ordered that these slaves to whom he had given the money be called to him in order that he might know what business they had done and the first appeared saying master you have done so and so on so this is a time of accountability Jesus is saying fellas man must need to go to Jerusalem and there be entreated many terrible things by the chief priests and the scribes and be crucified and the third day rise again but we are aware that this saying was kept from their ears they didn't put it together they wouldn't until after the events had transpired

Jesus game plan had been this from the beginning and he even told them about it early on and I am satisfied that he did so that afterwards they would be able to recall that the mystery of the Messiah is not his coming to reign but his coming to die first and then the reign no crown without the cross the disciples were just like all the other Jews the Jews were just like you and me let's skip the cross who wants that just get on with the crown forget the bad stuff let's just go to the good stuff give us the crown give us the glory that's human nature it was no different with Israel it was no different with the apostles but it was different with Christ because he recognized that in order for

[28 : 29] God to be able to judicially lift the curse imposed upon a rebellious humanity because of their sin the scales had to be balanced God is loving God is gracious God is forgiving but God is also just and righteous and he can not overlook sin it has to be paid for the scales have to be balanced and when Jesus Christ died on that cross he provided the righteousness and the justice of God the moral authority and ability to lift the curse that had been imposed upon mankind and restore it to its original Edenic spot how was that to happen it is to happen through the nation of

Israel why them because God chose Abraham as the federal head of Israel and he made him a promise a covenant that through him and his seed all the nations of the earth would be blessed so Israel is key to this and Jesus Christ is key to the key he is the principal character Israel is the principal nation and the whole world will be the beneficiary once this is realized Jesus did not come just for Israel but he did come to Israel for the whole world Israel is not in the game they are set aside in judicial unbelief they remain there they will not be in the game again until the church is taken out raptured away and then

Israel will be back on center stage and God will resume unfinished business with the nation of Israel so for now this parable is given to offset their misunderstanding about the kingdom of heaven going to come immediately when is immediate just as soon as we get into Jerusalem and we're on our way now but we know that is not to be that way and over in chapter 19 and look if you will at verse 41 Jesus when he approached the city he saw the city and wept over it wept over Jerusalem here's why he was weeping saying if you had known in this day now today he's saying even you the things which make for peace what were the things that made for peace the embracing of the

Messiah he is called the prince of peace in Isaiah 6 Isaiah 9 and verse 6 he is the prince of peace and the things which make for peace was this man sitting on a donkey weeping over this city for their ignorance and their rebellion saying if you only knew what you are passing up if you only knew what you are just trashing this day it was a sorry sorry situation the things which make for your peace but now they have been hidden from your eyes why because of their recalcitrance because of their rebellion because of their rejection they were in that mode when Christ came and they continued in that mode and he goes on to say for the day shall come upon you when your enemies will throw up a bank before you and surround you and hem you in on every side and will level you to the ground and your children within you and they will not leave in you one stone upon another because you did not recognize the time of your visitation and when is the time of your visitation right now right now as

I am here on the outskirts of this town and people say but didn't they accept Jesus exuberantly didn't they line the pathways and say hail blessed is he who comes and sure they did who were these people these were people who were already on board these were disciples and they had gathered together in a considerable number because Jesus had been teaching and performing miracles for three years his name was a household word and everywhere he went crowds formed but the point is the religious establishment the administrative establishment and you see there was no separation of church and state the religion was the government the government was the religion they were inseparably connected and their position was anti Christ anti Jesus it was only the common people that received him and by the way shouldn't that say something to our politicians today do you know who these people do you know who these common people were

[34 : 03] I'll tell you who they were they were tea partiers yeah they were tea partiers just forget I said that okay don't want to wax political while we are in Luke's gospel I want you to come over to chapter 21 now Jesus has already foretold what's going to happen there their rejection will lead to their destruction and in Luke chapter 21 and verse 6 we have a similar kind of indictment leveled verse 6 he says the days are coming in which not one stone will be left upon another which will not be torn down well he already said that and I do think that that was in connection with the Romans in 70 AD and they literally leveled the city because Titus who was the Roman general later became the emperor of Rome had already given strict orders to his men that they were not to tear down the city and they had laid a siege against

Jerusalem that went on for weeks and weeks and weeks but he given them orders not to destroy the city because he wanted to preserve more or less as a trophy and he wanted the utilization of it and all the rest of it but what happened was in their trying to take the city of Jerusalem the Romans suffered the Roman soldiers suffered such a tremendous loss at the hands of the Romans were incensed and filled with resentment and hatred for those Jews and they disobeyed Titus' orders and they just got out of hand and they leveled everything but when Christ goes on in this same passage in 21 in verse 10 we have a tremendous shift taking place because this is not the Romans and the Roman army in verse 10 it is nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom well what's this all about this is a different time this is leaping ahead at least 2000 years and we see other gaps in scripture like this as well there will be another besieging of

Jerusalem and there will be in verse 11 great earthquakes and in various places plagues and famines and there will be terrors and great signs from heaven this is not 70 AD there's no record that those things took place in 70 AD but they will take place and they are tied to the same prophecy that is referred to as the Olivet Discourse in Matthew 24 before these things they will lay their hands on you and persecute you delivering you to the synagogues and prisons bringing you before kings and governors for my name's sake and so on and this is all tribulational content and verse 20 when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies plural not just the Romans everybody they are all going to mass an name of defense, that is, get out of town and flee to the mountains, in verse 21, because destruction is coming.

And he goes on to give details in verse 24, they will fall by the edge of the sword, will be led captive into all the nations, Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles. There will be signs and sun and moon and stars upon the earth, dismay among nations, perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves. All of this is tribulational content, not descriptive at all of 70 AD. And the icing on the cake, if you will, is in verse 25, signs in the sun and moon and stars, there's going to be cataclysms take place in the heavens.

Verse 26, men fainting from fear, expectation of the things which are coming, powers of the heavens will be shaken, and then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

[39 : 01] When these things begin to take place, straighten up, lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near. How so? The Redeemer is coming. He's on his way. You will see him. The whole earth is going to be darkened because of what's happening. But never mind. He's bringing his own light.

And every eye will see him. The repentance of Israel, which will be realized then, will bring back the crucified, resurrected Messiah. And he will come back and fight for his people. Israel remains the focus, and still remains the focus on God's program. And Israel remained the focus of the preaching of the twelve apostles until it became clear that Israel's rejection was final. In Acts chapter 7, we have the stoning of Stephen, which appeared to be a catalyst for confirming and consigning Israel in hardness of heart and unbelief. And for several years, after Christ's resurrection,

Israel was appealed to repeatedly by the disciples through their teaching and miracles, because Christ had delegated to them the power of miracles as well. And they utilized them. And for continuation in Dr.

Luke's writings, come past John's gospel, if you will, and come with me to the book of Acts chapter 9, because in chapter 9, we have a cataclysmic event that is going to take place that will forever change the chemistry of what is transpiring here. And that has to do with the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. And we are told, beginning in verse 11, that Ananias is to go to the house of, what's the fellow's name?

Came into the, go to the house, the street called Straight. In verse 17, Ananias entered, I'm sorry, I'm getting ahead of myself. I want, let's go to verse 14, 9, 14. Here, he has authority from the chief priest to bind all who call upon thy name. But the Lord said to him, that is to Ananias, arise, go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to bear my name, that is the name of Yeshua, before the Gentiles, and the kings, and the sons of Israel. Now there are three different categories to bear my name before the Gentiles, that's anyone who is not a Jew, and kings, those of royal persuasion, and the sons of Israel, offsprings of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, those who were Jews. Of course,

[42 : 36] Saul was one of them himself. So he is going to bear a powerful testimony to all of these categories. And in Acts chapter 13, if you will come over just a couple of more pages, please. Acts chapter 13, and beginning with verse 38, you realize I'm being terribly selective here, and there is so much that we just cannot say. And I know, when this message is over, some of you are going to be saying, well, he didn't even say anything about, I know that. Well, I wish you'd have spent more time on, so do I, but we're trying to put all of this into one sitting, and of necessity, there's a lot of very important stuff that we have to leave out. So I want you to look at Acts chapter 13, and verse 38, he has just made the case that when the scriptures speak of David, they are not talking about David the king, they are talking about David's son, who is the Lord Jesus, and he disqualifies

David the king as being the one of whom the psalmist is speaking, because we know where he's buried, and his soul did see corruption, because he was placed in the tomb, and his body decomposed like everyone else's. We're speaking of David's greater son, whom God raised from the dead, not allowing his body to see corruption. And therefore, verse 38, let it be known to you, brethren, that through him forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. How can that be? Because he paid for them. You can be set free from your sin, because Jesus Christ died in your place. Will you acknowledge that? Will you believe that? Will you put your trust in that fact? Or are you still trusting in, well, I'm not so bad, and there are a lot of people who are worse than me, and on and on and on. Through him, everyone who believes is freed from all things from which you could not be freed through the law of Moses, or through any other law. Grace, grace, grace, all the way, because the price has been paid. Take heed, therefore, so that the things spoken of in the prophets may not come upon you. Behold, you scoffers and marvel and perish, for I am accomplishing a work in your days, a work which you will never believe, though someone should describe it to you. And as Paul and Barnabas were going out, the people kept begging that these things might be spoken to them the next Sabbath. This is a preacher thinking he died and gone to heaven.

People are begging to be preached to. Can you imagine that? That's how open and available they were to the truth. We want to hear more of this. Please, please, can you come back next week and tell us about this. And today, they just beg that the preacher will stop, not that he will come and preach.

When is this guy going to quit? What time is it? What did you set the oven for for that roast? What? Well, continuing on in this electrifying passage, they came back. Verse 44, the next Sabbath, nearly the whole city assembled to hear the word of the Lord. They didn't have any telephones, no texting, no computers, just word of mouth. And it got all over town. And everyone heard about these guys and the message they were preaching. The whole city assembled to hear the word of God. And when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy, began contradicting the things spoken by Paul and were blaspheming.

And listen to what Paul and Barnabas said. Oh, this must have been something. Paul and Barnabas spoke out and boldly said, he's addressing the Jews now, troublemaking Jews who were raising all the fuss, prompted by their jealousy and anger.

[47 : 15] It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first. And it was. But since you repudiate it and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we're turning to the Gentiles.

We're going to take this message to somebody who wants it and will welcome it. For thus the Lord has commanded us, I have placed you as a light for the Gentiles, that you should bring salvation to the end of the earth.

This is why the Jew is so strategic. God raised up the Jewish nation to be a nation of priests to all the other nations and to provide light to the Gentiles. And the response of the Jews was nothing doing.

Gentile dogs, we owe them nothing. And Paul says, you're wrong. You're wrong. When you are selected by God and given a responsibility, you have a debt. Paul said, I am a debtor.

I am deeply in debt to the Jew and to the Gentile. You know what I owe them? I owe them the gospel.

[48 : 46] I owe them the good news. And I'm going to give it to them if it costs me my life. And it did.

The Gentiles heard this. They began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord. As many as had been appointed to eternal life believe.

Some of our Calvinist friends think that these people were elected. They had no choice because they were already selected, elected by God. And that's why they believe that's nonsense. What this means, this is the only time this word is used in the Greek in the New Testament.

And what it means is those who had a predisposition to eternal, those who had an interest in eternal, those who were open to the subject of eternal, those who had always wondered about it, those who questioned whether or not this information was available.

These people were ripe and they were ready. And they believed because they had good information to absorb. And they did.

[49 : 50] So Gentile converts began to multiply and Israel continued in their stubborn rebellion. It remains so even today.

And Romans 9, 10, and 11 provide the commentary on that. Jew and Gentile then, together, those who were believers among Jews and Gentiles, begin a new entity called the church, which is the body of Christ.

This is the meaning of mystery. The church, which is comprised of believing Jews and Gentiles, in one body on the same plane, is nowhere found in the Old Testament.

It just isn't there. It is as if it didn't even exist. Until all at once you get into the New Testament, and under the ministry of Saul of Tarsus to become Paul the Apostle, this whole new entity that nobody had ever thought of, is born.

It's called that which was hidden in the mind of God from before the ages began. But he never revealed it before. So it is not a subject of prophecy.

[51 : 18] You don't find any prophetic information about the church in the Old Testament. It's all about Israel. I don't think there is any prophecies regarding the church in the Gospels.

It's all about Israel. But all of a sudden, springing on the scene, out of nowhere, are these non-Jews. Gentiles. Well, what business do they have believing in a Jewish Messiah?

Because this Jewish Messiah is for the whole of humanity, including all the Gentiles. And when Jesus died on that cross, he died for every man, woman, and child who ever lived, of whatever background, ethnic origin, race, color, creed, or whatever, Christ died for everyone.

That makes everyone eligible for salvation. And when the Gospel is preached to them, the information is given. If they respond with belief and embrace Jesus as their Messiah, they are merely personalizing what Jesus Christ did for them.

That makes him a personal Savior. Have you done that? Have you responded to what God did in Christ for you by trusting him as your sin bearer, as your Savior?

[52 : 50] If you say you have no sin, you have another problem. It's called self-deception. We are all of the same ball of wax. We are all sinners.

And the proof of our sin is that one day we're going to die physically. You wouldn't die physically if you were not a sinner. We're all sinners.

So our spirit is redeemed, but our bodies are not. And according to Romans 8, they are awaiting the redemption of our body. So the kingdom of God on earth is the larger picture.

The church is a part of that final restoration, but it had always been hidden in God. And the kingdom is so front and center through all of the Old Testament and the Gospels because the kingdom is identical with the millennial reign of Christ, the thousand-year reign of Christ, when Christ is here on the earth ruling and reigning with a rod of iron.

That's the kingdom. That's the kingdom for which the disciples were praying when they prayed, Thy kingdom come, thy will be done. It's a prayer for the coming of the Messiah because you cannot have a kingdom without a king.

- [54 : 08] And they wanted the Messiah to come and anxiously awaited him. Now, via the Apostle Paul, the church emerges and constitutes an interim or a parenthesis in this big picture.
- The church, which is the body of Christ made up of believing Jews and Gentiles, will be removed from the earth a la 1 Corinthians 15, verses 51 through 58, and 1 Thessalonians 4, verses 13 through 18.
- They will be removed in an unannounced fashion in the rapture. The rapture will be as secretive as the mystery and as secretive as the church was in the Old Testament.
- It is not previously revealed, but it will be a reality. There is no church in the Old Testament, only Israel.
- And when the church is removed through the rapture, Israel returns to front and center stage and the coming of the Messiah, the second return of Christ, becomes the focus.
- [55 : 22] And I want to close with this passage of Scripture from the Revelation. Revelation chapter 19 In verse 11 John is describing what he is witnessing in heaven by way of a vision.
- He is given a preview, if you will, of what is coming. Call it, if you want, a preview of coming attractions. And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse.
- And he who sat upon it is called Faithful and True. And in righteousness he judges and wages war. And who is he going to wage war against?
- It is against everyone who is coming against Israel. His eyes are a flame of fire, and upon his head are many diadems. And he has a name written upon him which no one knows except himself.
- And he is clothed with a robe dipped in blood. And his name is called the Word of God. And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following him on white horses.
- [56 : 41] And from his mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it he may smite the nations. And he will rule them with a rod of iron.
- And he treads the winepress of the fierce wrath of God the Almighty. And on his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of Kings and Lord of Lords.
- And I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds which fly in midheaven, Come, assemble for the great supper of God, in order that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both three men and slaves and small and great.
- And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies assembled to make war against him who sat on the horse and against his army.
- And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast, and those who worshipped his image, these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire, which burns with brimstone.
- [58 : 06] And the rest were killed with the sword, which came from the mouth of him who sat upon the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh.
- An utterly gruesome, unthinkable sight. But that's where we must leave it. And from here, the scriptures have but one thing remaining, and that is to take us into the eternal state.
- So here is what I propose. Will you indulge me for part six? We cannot continue this next week because of our previous engagement, but the week following we will offer a wrap-up, and I would really appreciate it if you take any questions you may have.

You've got time to do this now. Take any questions you may have. Write them out. I don't care how tough they are or difficult they are. That will just get the gray matter going. And I will appreciate that.

And you can either sign them or not sign them. It doesn't make any difference. Just drop them in the offering box, and we will do our best to treat them. And I'm sure you must have a lot of questions. I've got a jillion of them myself, so I'm sure you must have some too.

[59 : 21] May we stand, please? We'll be dismissed. Loving Father, these are really sobering things that we have considered, and we are so grateful that you have made them available to us.

And we know, by virtue of our humanity, we know that not all that we have said is exactly the way it is, because our flawed thinking and our flawed conclusions beset us every time we open the Scriptures, and it's part of being a human being.

So, anything that may have been uttered that is not to your pleasing and is not supported by your word, we pray, Father, that you'll just dismiss it from these minds and allow us to give it no substance at all.

But what is from your Spirit, would you seal that to our hearts and minds so that we will be changed people because of it. And Lord Jesus, if there is anyone here today who, for whatever reason, has never put their trust in you, whatever they're trusting in, show them the futility of it, we pray, and show them that you yourself, the only fit and worthy object of their trust, and may they embrace Jesus as their personal Lord and Savior who did for them what they couldn't do for themselves.

We'll thank you for it in your wonderful name. Amen.