

God Works in Dispensations

by Pastor Mike Taylor

For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. (Romans 11:25)

As the times, and the clouds of end of Age grow and become dark and more ominous, people wonder if the Tribulation has already begun. Emails sent to me discuss the coming Tribulation and their views. With so many different variations of men's beliefs and interpretations, based on the curious minds of human beings that "want to know", as all variations can't be true, here is only one truth. To understand the truth of God's Word and know why it is what we believe, and why we believe it, I have encouraged people to not believe any tradition, denomination, or their favorite preacher or evangelist in church or on TV's Christian based programs, but to believe their bible. It is a tendency for men to take a passage of scripture and try to line it up with current events, much like a newspaper reporter, and make a doctrinal thesis on that investigation. Now, I don't believe God has a problem with men being curious and investigating what God's Word means, as if they rely on the Holy Spirit to lead them, they will come to the knowledge of the Truth. He uses that time to make the belief of the Truth more solid within their spirit and in their minds.

So it has been as some question the following: "are we approaching the 6th seal judgment and 5 seals have already been opened?" They postulate that is it possible that with the wars, famine, pestilence of old diseases coming back and new ones being formed, and the mess the world is in today, are those seal judgments being fulfilled right now as we speak? Are they? I look to the whole of God's Word, not just one passage to deny their premise. We are not in the middle of the tribulation and here is why.

Dispensationalism, God dealing with Israel and the Church Separately.

What I feel my brothers and sisters in Christ fail to recognize that God is dealing with men as a plan of redemption by working with men in dispensations, called Dispensationalism. What is Dispensationalism? The short definition and you can find a full explanation in places such as Wikipedia or Google it, but Dispensationalism is an approach to biblical interpretation which states that God uses different means of working with people (Israel and the Church) during different periods of history, usually seven chronologically successive periods. However, dispensational division of history varies among its adherents from three periods, to four, seven, and even eight dispensations. For brevity, I'm going to cut that down a bit, as God has worked with two sets of people for nigh 4000 years, the nation of Israel and His body, the Church.

From the Beginning...short version

From the time that God made Adam and Eve and their subsequent fall from grace, God has dealt with created mankind known as the Nations. Everyone knows the history from there to Noah, and beyond Noah and the flood until He called out a man called Abraham and made an everlasting covenant with him and his descendants. The nation of Israel was God's focus to be a Holy Nation, a kingdom of priest until the coming of their Messiah and a fulfillment of righteousness. But as men are imperfect, Israel transgressed God's law (given to Moses) and fell into idolatry, until God sent them into captivity to Babylon. There God made a promise to the prophet Daniel in chapter 9:

9:24 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

9:25 Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.

The ark angel, Gabriel, as a messenger of God came to Daniel and told him what the future would hold for the nation of Israel. From the time of their captivity, as Gabriel spoke, there would be 490 years that would bring Israel to behold their Messiah and the Kingdom Age offered, thus righteousness restored and the end of transgressions against God's law. This promise was given to Israel and no one else of humanity. History shows that exactly 483 years transpired when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a foal of a donkey and the people proclaimed Him their Messiah King crying "Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest."

Within just a few short days, Jesus would be falsely charged with religious crimes, tried in a kangaroo court, and sentenced to death on a cross. At that moment when Jesus died that clock of that dispensation stopped. After His resurrection, Jesus would be with them 40 days and tell them to tarry in Jerusalem and the Comforter would come, God's Holy Spirit. The Feast of Pentecost, 10 days later, is where the Church was born, and God's focus turned to building His church, to take a people who were not His people of the nations, the Gentiles and a few believing Jews, and build the Body of Christ. He has been doing that now, for near 2000 years. But in the Age of Grace that we are in is fast approaching completion, God still has made a promise to Israel for a complete 70 weeks, or 490 years to complete and make an end to transgressions. God does not change and He does not go back on His Word.

WHEN THE RAPTURE?

As we approach the coming end of the Age of Grace, and the Tribulation draws closer to beginning, the matter of God focusing on His church will abruptly stop and His Bride will be removed. That will leave the final seven years promised to Israel to be carried out. Understand one thing, my reader, God has never focused on Israel and the Church at the same time. When His work is complete and that last soul is safely aboard the ark of salvation, known as Jesus Christ, that ark will leave port of this earth, and we will forever be with the Lord Jesus....Then and only then, will God turn His focus back to Israel. To include the church in the first half, or any part of the first 3.5 years is to change the way God has been dealing with the redemption of mankind in dispensations and is not what God promised to Israel. Further understand, that the coming Tribulation is designed for 2 things, and 2 things only and that is, God will refine Israel as silver is refined in the furnace until purified, and to destroy completely, all rebellion against His Holy Name, and His Son, Jesus Christ.

God has previously worked with Israel solely, or with the church exclusively, but NEVER at the same time. When the first seal is broken in Chapter 6, God the Son begins to open the title deed to what He has bought with His own precious blood, redemption of the earth and His creation of mankind. Some try to state that the first 5 seals are the wrath of man and Satan, and the that God's Wrath does not start until the 6th seal. But notice that it is God that is causing these events to come to pass by each seal He opens. It is not man or Satan who is causing these events, but Jesus, the Son of God Himself. It is the beginning of His righteous wrath upon a rebellious human kind against His laws, and against His only payment for that rebellion, Jesus Christ. The doctrine is completely pre-tribulation in it's view and the ONLY one that makes sense, as we will see as we go along.

ISRAEL AND THE COMING TRIBULATION

Of all the books of the Bible, Revelation gives the Christian the most problems with it's symbols, word pictures, and prophetic message of the time we are fast approaching. One must divide the books into two distinct populations. I believe that God is speaking of the Church at the beginning of the book, and then makes a dramatic shift of focus to the rebellious Gentile nations and the nation of Israel. I see a common thread that flows through the whole of Revelation and that is, God putting down all rebellion during this period of 7 years and the refining of Israel and making her ready to accept her Messiah, at long last.

After chapter 4, the churches and the those redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ during the Age of Grace, are not mentioned again till chapter 19, not one time. Suddenly, the focus is turned to judgment of a world devoid of God and violating willfully His commandments. Then in chapter 7, God by His Holy Spirit reveals to John the main characters of this book. Let us take a look at a common thread that follows in the coming chapters that point to only one set of people....the nation of Israel.

144,000 EVANGELIST ORDAINED BY GOD

In chapter 7, God names the tribes of Israel that are symbolically 12,000 coming from each of the 12 tribes of Israel. In the bible, numbers are used as signs of perfection. Three is the sign of Divine perfection, seven is spiritual perfection, ten is the sign of ordinal perfection, and the number 12 is the sign of government perfection and is used throughout the bible as that sign of perfection. The number 144,000 from 12 tribes is 12×12 or 144 and thousand is given as a great number. Will it be just 144,000 when Israel and the scattered Jewish people amount to approximately 13 million people? I think that the symbolism points to Israel a nation as a whole. This symbolism is carried out numerous times within your bible, to emphasize that the focus of this book is on Israel. Apart from Israel, the rest of the nations are in divine judgment and we read horrific descriptions of the devastation brought on by this Divine wrath. Notice in the latter parts of chapter 7, we see a vast number of saints innumerable standing before the throne of God. Rev. 7, v. 9-17.

John is introduced to the nation of Israel and the evangelist that were being sealed with the seal of God, 12,000 from each of the twelve tribes. He then sees a great multitude that are standing in white robes and “palm fronds” in their hands. They speak different languages and come from all portions of the earth. These are the martyred saints of God from all the people of Israel or of Jewish birth, that have believed in their Messiah through these seven terrible years, called the Tribulation. As I have identified in past sermons, palms in the hands of these saints are a sign noted of Israel exclusively. Not the church, but saints of God, Tribulation saints, nonetheless.

But also notice that they will serve in the Temple of God, night and day, and He that sits on the throne shall dwell among them. They are not kings and priests unto God as noted in chapter 4 and the 24 elders pictured as the glorified Church saints are, but are to serve God in His temple unlike what John then writes in chapter 5 about the church saints ruling and reigning on the earth,

5:9 And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;

5:10 And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

Notice the difference?

But let's us jump to Revelation, chapter 14, where this same group of people are examined again and John describes them.

14:1 And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.

14:2 And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps:

14:3 And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.

Only these people can sing this song. They are the tribulation saints, the nation of Israel who have embraced their Messiah at long last and have died for that belief, much like the 12 apostles before them. They died preaching the Gospel to all who would listen. The church cannot sing this song, as we are not Israel. We are not of the 144,000 saints as a symbol of the martyred nation of Israel. Some will say, in error I might add, that we are Israel. That is Replacement Theology and Israel has never been cast away. God has not replaced Israel, just set them aside, as noted in the opening verses of this message, till this time in history to turn His attention to them solely, as the church has been completed. God has promised that He would save ALL of Israel, not losing one!

Hebrews:

10:15 Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before,

10:16 This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them;

10:17 And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.

Again in Romans a sole promise to Israel,

11:25 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.

11:26 And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:

11:27 For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.

11:28 As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sake: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the father's sake. (the promise God made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.)

Returning to Revelation:

14:4 These are they which were 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 first fruits unto God and to the Lamb.

14:5 And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.

Some say, ahah, see? It says being first fruits to God and to the Lamb. It can't mean that we arrived prior to them, as they came as first fruits. What they fail to understand, is that I believe and there is good evidence to support this, that God works in what I proposed at the beginning of this message, in dispensations. The church age has ended 7 years before. This is the time of Jacob's trouble and God turning His focus on Israel, as the time of the Gentiles has ended...We are the Gentiles that have been saved out of the earth. We are a people that were not His people, but because of Israel's unbelief and rejection of their Messiah, the Kingdom was given to another. We are the people of the Kingdom of God, or the children of the living God...Matthew,

21:42 Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?

21:43 Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

Paul makes a startling statement by the power of the Holy Spirit in Romans,

9:24 Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

9:25 As he saith also in Osee, (Hosea), I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved.

9:26 And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God.

We are the first fruits at the coming of the Lord for the Gentile Age, or the age of the Church, a dispensation also called the Age of Grace. When these who stand on Mt. Sion are considered first fruits of the Trials of Jacob, also known as Jacob's troubles and will be called Tribulation Saints. This is re-emphasized in chapter 15 in the following:

15:2 And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.

15:3 And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.

Now this is not to say that some besides only Jewish people will heed the call of the 144,000 evangelist, but the likelihood of that fact grows smaller and less likely, as the focus is on Israel, not on the Gentile nations.

THE CHURCH RETURNS WITH OUR LORD IN VICTORY

As we progress into the prophecy and the events that will destroy 2/3 of all mankind by divine wrath, we come near to the end of God's judgment and John's vision of the marriage supper of the Lamb and the revealing of the bride of Christ. Until this time, the church and its saints have not been mentioned, not one time since beginning chapter 6. Here John writes so of the bride by these words:

19:7 Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

19:8 And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

19:9 And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.

Then at the culmination of the great feast in Heaven, where the bride is presented in linen white and clean, one final judgment is still in need of fulfillment. We, His chosen bride, and saints of the most High, come back to earth with our Husband, our King, our God which comes in full war cry and as a roaring Lion to avenge the earth for treatment of His people and to squelch the rebellion on earth. (Revelation 19:11-15).

Almighty God, our Savior and King, will make short work of rebellion on this earth of the final battle called Armageddon. Why is His vesture dipped in blood? It is not His blood, but the blood of those He has slain in divine wrath for the last 7 years is what I believe. Here He will finish the slaying of unrepentant, lawless mankind till blood rises to the bridles of the horses they ride in a valley that is twenty miles long by 20 miles wide. This is His final coming to rule and reign with a rod of iron. He will rescue His people Israel that have endured to the end.

Thus ends the Wrath of God when Jesus takes total control of this earth, and sets up His Millennial Kingdom to last for the next 1000 years, and a Sabbath rest imposed for Satan and his evil and a rest for the earth.

Then all of Israel will be reconciled unto their King and Lord, Savior and Almighty God.

Thus says the Lord GOD: "Surely I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, wherever they have gone, and will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king over them all; they shall no longer be two nations, nor shall they ever be divided into two kingdoms again. They shall not defile themselves anymore with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions; but I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them. Then they shall be My people, and I will be their God. . . . Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them, and it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; I will establish them and multiply them, and I will set My sanctuary in their midst forevermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them; indeed I will be their God, and they shall be My people. The nations also will know that I, the LORD, sanctify Israel, when My sanctuary is in their midst forevermore." Ezekiel 37:21-23

TRIBULATION LOOMS ON THE HORIZON

Tribulation for Israel has ended. Jesus made a promise to Israel to loose not one, but save them all. If you are reading this, can you say the same? If you be Gentile, meaning not of Jewish heritage or birth, have you the same promise? No, you do not. The end of a dispensation of the church comes quickly. Tribulation is at our doorsteps. Jesus is right now still at the door knocking waiting for those who hear to open the door to His call. When that final call comes out, and He proclaims, "Come up here", then time for the church will have stopped as we have entered eternity. Won't you join us? When Tribulation comes in earnest that makes these hard times pale in comparison, then hope of an eternal reward in Heaven to be with our Lord and Savior becomes less and less likely. I want to repeat this fact. Tribulation is designed to do two things, and two things only. That is to purify Israel to prepare them for their coming Messiah, and to destroy all aspects of lawlessness and rebellion of a sinful Gentile nation. Tribulation is coming, and the times are dark, but the coming time, is a time beyond any of our imaginations when God said that with His full wrath unleashed, that if it were not stopped, NO MAN would survive, but for the elect, it will be stopped short of total annihilation. The Church is NOT part of this wrath.

5:9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

5:10 Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.

5:11 Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do. (1st Thessalonians 5:9-11)

Or when Jesus spoke:

21:36 Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man. (Luke chapter 21)

Will you be in that number, the ones destroyed for eternity and thrown into a Lake of Fire burning with brimstone and sulfur? Don't let that happen. Make that decision for Jesus Christ to come into your life right now. Pray the Holy Spirit to guide you into believing on the Name that is above every name, Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God. The Tribulation hour is coming, as the salvation clock is seconds before Midnight and the end of the age, the Age of Grace will end. Wrath is coming.

This is pastor Mike Taylor, praying God's salvation come into you life today. If there be any need for prayer, counseling or just a listening ear, email me today at realteam1999@sbcglobal.net.

God bless you all, till we meet at Jesus Feet.