

2. Future and present from the past

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As we grew up, we saw some sci-fi movies or read novels that depicted time travel by a time machine that no human can make. If you've noticed, somehow they all involved the idea that you can change the past and future outcomes. Wishful thinking.

A newsflash!!! Long before any man or Hollywood from LaLa Land came up with the idea of time travel, the Lord had done it and even recorded many incidents in the best selling Book in human history – the Bible. The entire Book of Revelation was written by the guy who did time travel.

One third of the Bible is about the prophecies. Here are a few examples we will find in chapters 2 through 5. Since many of us would like to learn about prophecies, let's pay attention to what the Lord tells us about the future and present from the past.

A. THE FUTURE HOUSE OF GOD

Isaiah 2:1-4 The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. 2 Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the Lord's house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow to it. 3 Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. 4 He shall judge between the nations, And rebuke many people; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore.

V1 gives us an obvious clue for us to know that what Isaiah is about to tell us is a prophecy. And this chapter 2 starts almost identical as Micah chapter 4. It isn't surprising that the same Spirit of God could give both of them the same word to establish and emphasize His Word.

Since we are hearing the prophecy here, we need to understand which era the prophet is talking about. In context, the term 'the latter days' is referring to the Millennial reign of Jesus Christ on this earth, the thousand years of peace after the seven years of the Great Tribulation.

During this Millennium period, the central point of the earth will be Israel. It will be the leading nation of all the earth; and in the center of Israel, the mountain of the Lord's house will be located. It is not because Israel itself is special, but because it will be God's choice.

During this Millennium period, every human on the earth will acknowledge and submit to the Lordship of Jesus. It will be the time of the perfect government, not by democracy, but theocracy which means that we will be ruled by God Himself, not by dumb majority votes.

During this Millennium period, there will be no more war. Since the people who live in the Millennium still have their own free will, they will have conflicts between nations and individuals, but they will be justly and decisively resolved by the Lord Jesus. That

means that Raytheon will no longer produce Tomahawk missiles, rather something else.

In 2013, the United States alone spent 3.9 trillion dollars on the defense budget. Can you imagine the total amount of the defense budget for all the nations around the world? During this Millennium period, all that money will be spent for something constructive rather than destructive.

One very important thing here we must not do is that we should not spiritualize this portion of the Scripture and replace Judah and Jerusalem that represent Israel with the church. That is known as the 'Replacement Theology' and it is a heresy. Unfortunately, many churches subscribe this theology and do not support Israel. A very, very dangerous idea from Satan spiritually and physically, because the Lord will not forsake His choice, Israel.

Genesis 12:3 I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

Speaking of Israel, in spite of what is happening in Gaza and the Middle East against Israel is a prime example of God's faithfulness to that country. Logistically Israel should have been at the bottom of the Mediterranean Sea when the Six-Day War happened in 1967 – 13 Arab nations were against one tiny sliver nation. Since that war, those Arab nations were completely humiliated and they've been doing everything they could to wipe Israel off the map.

Mark my word, the day the U.S. pulls the supporting plug from Israel is the day America will go down real fast. This will happen right after the rapture when all the born-again Christians who are the last supporters of Israel will be taken out of the world.

B. THE DAY OF THE LORD AGAINST UNGODLY

Isaiah 2:12-19 For the day of the Lord of hosts Shall come upon everything proud and lofty, Upon everything lifted up-- And it shall be brought low -- 13 Upon all the cedars of Lebanon that are high and lifted up, And upon all the oaks of Bashan; 14 Upon all the high mountains, And upon all the hills that are lifted up; 15 Upon every high tower, And upon every fortified wall; 16 Upon all the ships of Tarshish, And upon all the beautiful sloops. 17 The loftiness of man shall be bowed down, And the haughtiness of men shall be brought low; The Lord alone will be exalted in that day, 18 But the idols He shall utterly abolish. 19 They shall go into the holes of the rocks, And into the caves of the earth, From the terror of the Lord And the glory of His majesty, When He arises to shake the earth mightily.

To the OT prophets, "the Day of the Lord" was foreshadowed by events in their own day. In the Book of Isaiah, Assyria's conquest of the Northern Kingdom and invasion of Judah, and the Babylonian Captivity of Judah both picture the coming "Day of the Lord" which will happen during the Great Tribulation era.

The term day of the Lord, which was used more than 25 times in the Bible, does not necessarily refer to one specific day. It speaks of "God's time." The idea is that now is the day of man, but the day of man will not last forever. One day, the Messiah will end the day of man and bring forth the day of the Lord.

Why will God judge the humans He created? Because of their idolatry, covetousness, pride, and exploiting of the poor that is mentioned in v6 through 22. Instead of

holding to the truth of God's Word, they were adopting superstitions from the East just like many religious seekers today.

Whether you believe it or not, there are many churches and denominations that started to embrace eastern religion practices and unbiblical spiritual practices to reach God, such as:

- Contemplative prayer
- Prayer Labyrinths
- Candles
- Yoga
- Liturgies
- Icons
- Crosses
- Eastern type meditative practices (New Age)
- Prayer Beads
- Chants/Mantras
- Incense

By the way, do you know what contemplative prayer is? It is a meditative practice where a person focuses on a word and repeats that word over and over for the duration of the exercise. He or she is encouraged to empty one's mind during this practice. Jesus talked about the danger of emptying one's mind without filling it with the Word of God in Matthew 12:

Matthew 12:43-45 "When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest, and finds none. 44 Then he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when he comes, he finds it empty, swept, and put in order. 45 Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. So shall it also be with this wicked generation."

C. AGAINST THE LORD IN WORDS AND ACTIONS

Isaiah 3:8-9 For Jerusalem stumbled, And Judah is fallen, Because their tongue and their doings Are against the Lord, To provoke the eyes of His glory. 9 The look on their countenance witnesses against them, And they declare their sin as Sodom; They do not hide it. Woe to their soul! For they have brought evil upon themselves.

We are commanded to glorify the Lord in what we do as well as what we say. It is so much easier to think about what we do is sin against Him than to think what we say can go against Him.

Matthew 12:37 For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.

The cultural dynamic in Isaiah's day was much like our time. Actually, homosexuality is up and loud whenever godliness is oppressed and silent.

A baker in Colorado has been ordered to undergo sensitivity training after declining to provide a wedding cake for a gay couple. The Colorado Civil Rights Commission ruled May 30, this year, that Jack Phillips, owner of Masterpiece Cakeshop in Lakewood, CO., must also ensure that his staff is "rehabilitated," and he must submit quarterly reports to the government confirming that he has not refused customers because of their sexual orientation. All this despite the fact that same-sex weddings are not even legal in Colorado. The bullying of Christians has reached new heights in America.

This is not because there is no other wedding cake bakers in Lakewood, CO, rather because the homosexual groups are extremely intolerant against Christianity and Christians ONLY while they insist 'tolerance' and 'acceptance' of everyone.

The United Church of Christ (UCC), one of the mainline Protestant denominations announced it will serve as a major sponsor of the Gay Olympic Games. Presbyterian Church (USA) denomination, Methodist denomination, and Affirming Pentecostal Church International denomination are accepting gay clergy and supporting the homosexual lifestyle. These people are bowing down to the different god – god of modern social culture.

Unity and love are being misused to justify anti-biblical positions among these pastors, churches, and many Christians. It has become epidemic.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a German WWII pastor whom I've quoted frequently out of sheer respect for his devotion to the Lord Jesus and willingness to die for uncompromising walk with the Lord said this in his book "The Cost of Discipleship":

"Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate. Costly grace is the treasure hidden in the field; for the sake of it a man will gladly go and sell all that he has... Such grace is costly because it calls us to follow, and it is grace because it calls us to follow Jesus Christ. It is costly because it gives a man the only true life."

Please note this carefully. The Bible does not single out homosexuals as any more or less sinful than other sinners. Homosexual acts are clearly a sin and are a perversion of what God made to be a good thing, which is sexual relations between a husband and wife. I believe, however, that it is a mistake for Christians to somehow mark homosexuality as more sinful or as a special category to be singled out.

The homosexual community may try to present it as something they are born with and inevitable. I do not deny that some people are born with a stronger tendency toward this particular sin. Others are born with more tendency to alcoholism, sexual promiscuity, violence, and any of a host of other sins. The fact that one person is genetically more disposed toward one sin than another does not remove our responsibility to repent and to stop sinning. All are responsible for their own sin.

Will homosexuals go to hell if they do not repent? Yes, just like any other sinner who does not repent from one's sins. There is no difference.

D. EVIL IS CALLED GOOD, GOOD EVIL

Isaiah 5:20-21 Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! 21 Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, And prudent in their own sight!

Using clever and deceptive words, they blur moral issues and excuse their sin. They look at their own evil and call it good, and they look at the good of others and call it evil. Isaiah is describing a deep state of moral confusion.

Unless ungodly people put the labels against Christianity, the general public would not accept their argument, so they cunningly label those Christians who stand up for what the Bible says as "Intolerants," "Bible-mongers," or "Narrow-minded bigots." They may use God's vocabulary, but they do not use His dictionary.

E. APPLICATIONS

1) To receive Jesus Christ is to avoid His judgment; to avoid Jesus Christ is to receive His judgment.

2) Our marching orders from the Lord Jesus can be summed up in three commands:

- Clean up your life.
- Look up to the Lord Jesus through His Word, the Bible, for His call for us.
- Speak up the Good News of Jesus to others.