
Becoming Christlike – Learning How from Old Testament Kings and Prophets

Session 24 – Current Chaos – End Times?

There is a great deal of chaos in the world currently with Israel and Hamas, the ongoing war in Ukraine etc. We need to look at our current situation as it relates to the Word. Some questions and comments have come in and it is good to see that some are approaching this series with the mindset of “How does this apply to me?” and really diving in and studying the material.

We will deal briefly with some questions that were sent in:

1. Jonathan gave gifts to David but David did not reciprocate. Why not? Jonathan recognized that David was the Lord’s anointed even though Jonathan in a hereditary sense was the rightful heir to the throne. Jonathan had the right heart for God and acknowledged who David was.
2. Why was Merab given to another in marriage. There is a lot we don’t know. Conversations and actions went on that are not written down. David may have been reluctant to be the son-in-law of the king because of his lowly position (remember out tending the sheep). Saul plots and connives and sets David up with Michal.
3. If we compare Saul with leaders of today, his authority plays out as evil toward David. Saul is “everyman” in authority. Look at the evil being done by those in authority today and the chaos that has resulted. Mens’ hearts are unchanged unless they seek God and learn to think logically according to the Word there is going to be chaos
4. There is all this chaos in Israel with Hamas, yet in the US there is all this petty bickering going on and selfish ambition.

All of this has led to a number of you asking if these are signs that we are in the “End Times”. That is a good question. Many recognized preachers are asking and answering or attempting to answer this question. It is very human to want to know what the future holds. People have been asking similar questions for a very long time.

Acts 1

1 In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, **2** until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen.

Luke is the author. The previous writing “first book” relates to the book of Luke.

3 He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. **4** And while staying^a with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, “you heard from me; **5** for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with^b the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

Jesus is instructing them on what is to come in the near future. Read John 13-17 where Jesus prepared his disciples in much detail on what to expect and the coming of the gift of holy spirit.

6 So when they had come together, they asked him, **“Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?”**

It is very human to ask the question, “Where are we in spiritual history?” “We want to know what is going on!” We want safety, We want security. We want to know. They knew the Old Testament. They knew Isaiah had prophesied of the coming kingdom, of the lion lying down with the lamb etc. So they wanted to know, “Is this kingdom coming now”?

7 He said to them, **“It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority.**

He is essentially saying, I love you. I am telling you what to do. But it is not for you to know the times or seasons that God has fixed by his own authority.

8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit (holy spirit) has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” **9** And when he had said these things, **as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight.**

Can you imagine standing there hearing this and THEN HE WAS LIFTED UP AND A CLOUD TOOK HIM OUT OF THEIR SIGHT!

10 And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, **11** and said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven?

Hello? Wouldn't you be gazing into heaven? The messiah with whom we have been for his entire ministry just went up in a cloud!

This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”

This section is bookended with the section in Thessalonians that speaks of his return. We are in the time period BETWEEN when he left and when he is going to come back!

We know that this is the next thing to happen to and for the church. We don't know when this will be. We will not know until we hear the trumpet

I Thessalonians 4: 13-18

13 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. **14** For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. **15** For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord,^d that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. **16** For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. **17** Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. **18** Therefore encourage one another with these words.

This is what we are waiting for. The dead in Christ shall rise first. Then any alive believers at that time will be gathered to meet him in the air and SO SHALL WE EVER BE WITH THE LORD! From that time on “where he is, we is”.

We know that is the next event to happen.

We don't have to be wondering and trying to match up this event with that event. We should just focus on what we are to do in the here and now. It is clear from scripture that the next thing that will transpire is the rapture – the return of Christ in the air, when the dead in Christ rise first then the living believers are changed and gathered together to meet him in the air.

Then the events of the book of Revelation begin to occur. Those events are what Ezekiel and Daniel spoke about. The tribulation, the Millennial Kingdom and the final battle etc.

Because this time period in which we now live was not known in the Old Testament, it was a secret and not revealed until after the day of Pentecost when Paul and others got the revelation.

While it is very difficult for us to do so in the midst of the current chaos we need to focus on what we have been called to do. It is difficult for us because we are used to some semblance of surety and safety and confidence in our leaders and we no longer have that.

All of our confidence needs to be in God. This is the way it should be anyway.

Revelation 21 speaks of a time when there will be no more chaos, but that will not happen until the new heaven and new earth come down from heaven.

Revelation 21:1-4

1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. **2** And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. **3** And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place^a of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people,^b and God himself will be with them as their God.^c **4** He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”

Hebrews 3:18-19

18 And to whom did he swear that they would not enter **his rest**, but to those who were disobedient? **19** So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief.

In Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28 we saw that the Children of Israel were not able to enter the promised land because of unbelief. Only Joshua and Caleb were permitted because they had come back from the spying expedition with total belief that God would bring them in.

In Hebrews 4 God is reaching out to the Hebrews who knew the Old Testament and explaining that the way to enter into rest is to accept the Messiah.

Hebrews 4:1-11

1 Therefore, while the promise of entering **his rest** still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it. **2** For good news came to us just as to them, but the

message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened.^a

The first key is to hear and know the Word with belief, with faith.

3 For we who have believed enter **that rest**, as he has said, “As I swore in my wrath, ‘They shall not **enter my rest**,’” although his works were finished from the foundation of the world.

The only rest is in Christ. Those who believed in the 1st Century entered into the rest amidst all the chaos and unbelief of that time.

4 For he has somewhere spoken of the seventh day in this way: “And **God rested** on the seventh day from all his works.” **5** And again in this passage he said, “They shall not enter **my rest**.”

He is talking about rest and how we get it. There is chaos now and things are probably not going to get any better. Things will get worse and worse until the Lord returns. Fortunately the Word assures us that we are saved from the wrath to come. That wrath to come is described and will play out in the Book of Revelation.

People around us who are wondering if we are in the End Times need to get born again...we need to speak to them and explain to them Romans 10:9,10 so they can be saved from the wrath to come. Certainly if they know anything about the events of the Book of Revelation they don't want to go through it. Recall the Phillipian jailer, what he wanted to know was “What must I do to be saved?”

During the last 50-60 years the devil has targeted the US and our institutions. Every tradition, principle, every Godly institution has been worn away. We have become a secularized nation. Look at marriage, gender, sexuality, the church, our government institutions, there is lying and lawlessness everywhere. We are no longer the country we once were. Lying has been normalized. There is lying everywhere.

6 Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly received the good news failed to enter because of disobedience, **7** again he appoints a certain day, “Today,” saying through David so long afterward, in the words already quoted, “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts.”

8 For if Joshua had given them rest, God^b would not have spoken of another day later on. **9** So then, there remains a Sabbath **rest** for the people of God, **10** for whoever has entered **God's rest** has also **rested** from his works as God did from his.

The devil is the God of this world.

I John 5:19

19 We know that we are from God, and **the whole world lies in the power of the evil one**.

Ephesians 2: 1,2

1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins **2** in which you once walked, **following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is**

now at work in the sons of disobedience—

2 Corinthians 4:4

In their **case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.**

We see this playing out all around us. So here we are in the midst of this chaos.

We are in it till the return of Christ. But we need to be in Christ, and we will have rest regardless of circumstances, situations and the turmoil in the world. If you have ever thought that we are going to get any relief from political sources well...ain't gonna happen!

11 Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience.

“Strive” to enter rest? This sounds contradictory. Yes we must work at keeping our minds in the Word and in Christ and live that way.

Colossians 3:2,3

2 Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. **3** For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. **4** When Christ who is your^a life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Now think of these next verses in the context of rest! If you want to have peace and get rid of anxiety.

12 For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. **13** And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

It is HUGE that this occurs in the context of “Rest”. The only way you are going to have rest is IN THE WORD of GOD! Not the word of men. Not philosophers. Not professors. Not politicians. Not community leaders. Not philanthropists. Not your yoga teacher.

John 6:63

63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.

We must fill our minds and lives with the living and active Word of God if we want to have rest in the midst of the current and coming chaos and until the trumpet sounds. It is the very life of God in these words.

Nothing can divide joints and marrow, but it is a figure of speech intended to show us the power in the Word, the life-penetrating power in the Word.

12 For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

And haven't we seen this with Jonathan, David and Saul that we are able to see their hearts. Every act, thought, word is exposed to God and one day we must give account.

13 And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

Every, thought, word, action is exposed to God. It should inspire us to be obedient because we know the end is coming! Everything is being recorded in the Book of Life.

Does that make you uncomfortable? Does it make me uncomfortable? Yes and Yes.

14 Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. **15** For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. **16** Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need

In the mist we have Christ as our High priest. Look at his life. He was continually pursued. He was alone but in constant contact with His Father.

We have Christ in us. Because of that we have the ability to be at rest in the midst of it all.

We have seen the example of David being continually pursued. Christ of course read that.

Hebrews 4: Rest – The Word – Christ

What is coming? We don't know. We don't know how soon or far off is the return of Christ, but we do know that he is going to return.

We must be prepared and tell everyone we know what they must do to be prepared.

I want to mention something about Hebrews 4 and the Word of God being living and active. I no longer go to Ezekiel, Daniel or Revelation 1-18. I go to the END END TIMES recorded in **Revelation 21 and 22.**

Genesis 1-3 sets the foundation for all of life. There are significant truths in those chapters. Creation, the fall, the results of the fall.

Revelation 21 and 22 are of equal importance as Genesis 1-3.

One issue from Genesis to Revelation and all the time in between, man has rarely taken God as seriously as he should.

Genesis 2:15-17

15 The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. **16** And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, **17** but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil **you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat^d of it you shall surely die.**"

Adam and Eve had everything they needed in every category. Man was designed to work. He was to work and keep the garden.

They did eat of it. They disobeyed God's Word that He had given to them and all of time since is the story of the consequences. They didn't really know all that would happen. They did not take

the Word as seriously as everyone should. Often we don't think of the consequences until it is too late.

How seriously do we take the end of the Bible? Do we see it as God sees it? Living, powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword. Do we see it as a standard to which we will be held to account?

How seriously do we take Revelation 22? If we take it seriously it will alter the way we think, our priorities and everything we do!

Let's look for a moment at the middle of the Bible.

Jeremiah was written about 600-620 BC before the exile when Jeremiah was still trying to keep Judah out of captivity and exile.

Jeremiah 3:6-10

6 The Lord said to me in the days of King Josiah: "Have you seen what she did, that faithless one, Israel, (722 Israel had been defeated) how she went up on every high hill and under every green tree, and there played the whore?"

God is speaking of spiritual adultery. Instead of worshipping Him, the true God they went after the gods of the nations around them.

7 And I thought, 'After she has done all this she will return to me,' but she did not return, and her treacherous sister Judah saw it. **8** She saw that for all the adulteries of that faithless one, Israel, I had sent her away with a decree of divorce. Yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear, but she too went and played the whore. **9** Because **she took her whoredom lightly**, she polluted the land, committing adultery with stone and tree.

Neither Israel nor Judah learned. They took their whoredom LIGHTLY. This reverberates through all of history. People take their sin lightly. They don't realize the consequences. They don't take the Word seriously.

10 Yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah did not return to me with her whole heart, **but in pretense**, declares the Lord."

People take their sin lightly. And they act not with their whole heart but in pretense! The reason people take their sin lightly is because just like Adam they don't realize what the consequences will be.

Think of all the times and ways God has told us the importance of his Word. Everything God ever promised has happened. All that is prophesied for the future WILL HAPPEN.

They would go to the temple, do the sacrifices etc but not with their whole heart. That is pretense. Do we know people today who go to church on Sunday, but it does not impact anything they do the rest of the week. That's pretense.

Judah did not learn from the mistakes of Israel even after they were defeated by Assyria and dispersed never to return. Judah did not learn from that and also took their sins of idolatry lightly.

9 Because **she took her whoredom lightly**, she polluted the land, committing adultery with stone and tree. **10** Yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah did not return to me with her whole heart, but in pretense, declares the Lord.”

We need to take the Word of God so seriously that we obey the commands of Christ.

We need to take the commands of Christ seriously:

- Deny yourself and follow me
- Forsake all and follow me
- Take up your own cross and follow me
- Give me your whole heart, soul, mind and strength

Why? Because we should be living for eternity!

The end is coming. The Word speaks of our lives as a vapor. We need to take an eternal perspective on life because of what is coming in the end. We need to be concerned about what we do right now and what God wants us to be focused on. We see lives being cut short in all the major cities, in these senseless wars, in the persecution of Christians all over the world. We don't want to squander the one life we have been given to live and glorify God.

Revelation 21 and 22 speak of the true End Times. The end of the end.

Revelation 21

1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.

There will have to be a totally NEW heaven and earth because of the events of the tribulation and the rest of the Book of Revelation. Everything will have been totally poisoned and ruined (much more than it already is).

2 And I saw the **holy city**, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Pay attention to the theme of “holy” throughout. “Be ye holy, for I am holy.” Is frequently repeated in scripture. He's given us holy spirit. Christ paid the price so that we can be holy.

3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “**Behold, the dwelling place^a of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people,^b and God himself will be with them as their God.^c**”

This is what God had wanted from the very beginning. He wanted to be in fellowship with man. And in the new heaven and earth He will be at last!

4 He will wipe away **every tear** from their eyes, **and death shall be no more**, neither shall there be **mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore**, for the former things have passed away.”

Think of how significant it is for all these things to have passed away! All of human history since the fall has been full of all these things and they will be GONE! We have this to look forward to in the New Heaven and New Earth.

5 And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “**Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.**”

We humans like new things. We get them and they may make us feel better for a short time, but we are actually yearning for the new Jerusalem to come.

TRUSTWORTHY AND TRUE! Think of this in light of what we just read in Hebrews 4. Take the Word seriously. Christ responded to every temptation with "IT IS WRITTEN". We must fill our hearts and minds with the Word so we can respond in that same powerful way. We must remind ourselves that these words are trustworthy and true.

6 And he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. **7** The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son.

Remember that during the tribulation people who missed the rapture will have a second chance to believe and stay faithful. That is why it is speaking of "the one who conquers". It will be quite a feat to make it through the tribulation as a believing one and "endure to the end".

8 But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, **which is the second death.**"

Here he is setting up the context of who will get to participate in eternity and who will not. When people die who are living on earth now it is "the first death". The second death spoken of here after the final judgement is FINAL. Those subject to it are **burned up for all eternity.**

Cowardly = don't have faith to trust God, to take Him at His Word and take it seriously

Faithless = No belief in God, his trustworthiness, and His Word.

Sexually immoral – we see this everywhere today, look at our sex-crazed culture, pornography, prostitution, trafficking, people dress to entice, our culture is almost totally given over to sexual immorality and it has been almost completely normalized

All liars – people lie because it enables them to get what they want

We can look at the prevalence of lying through all of time. Why is it such an egregious sin? The nature of God is truth, transparency, honesty. Lying is completely contrary to the nature of God. The devil who was a liar from the beginning has caused people (coupled with one's desire to get what one wants) to become habitual liars.

Here are just a few of the many many verses of scripture that address lying:

Psalm 5:5

5 The boastful shall not stand before your eyes; you hate all evildoers. **6** **You destroy those who speak lies; the Lord abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man.**

Psalm 5:9

9 **For there is no truth in their mouth; their inmost self is destruction;** their throat is an open grave; **they flatter with their tongue.**

It is because of what is in their heart that comes out. "From the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks." That is why we can't trust anything we hear in the news, commentators etc. We don't know if it is true or not. People lie with impunity to get what they want.

Psalm 50:19

19 “You give your mouth free rein for evil, and your tongue frames deceit.

God gave us our bodily members for good. The devil inspires one to use his members for evil and deceit.

Psalm 52:2-4

2 Your tongue plots destruction, like a sharp razor, you worker of deceit. **3** You love evil more than good, and lying more than speaking what is right. **4** You love all words that devour, O deceitful tongue.

How graphic, how pointed is God’s Word regarding lying which is so prevalent in our culture. We are surrounded by it. That is why we have to be able to discern good and evil by knowing God’s Word.

Psalm 101:7

7 No one who practices deceit shall dwell in my house; no one who utters lies shall continue before my eyes.

When we read in Revelation “all liars” we see the significance God puts on lying. Then when we go back through all scriptures, these are just a few examples from Psalms, anyone should know why in Revelation there is gnashing of teeth at all liars.

We are to be TRUTH TELLERS

We are to speak the truth in love – Ephesians

We are to “truth it”, literally.

We are to speak words that align with God and His Word and the character of Christ.