



“The Future History of the Church, Part 3”

by James Jacob Prasch

*“Your word is a lamp to my feet
And a light to my path.”
Psalm 119:105*



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Elijah Then and Now

There is much more that I could say about this, but let me put it to you this way: we must understand Elijah.

King Ahab covets the vineyard – the Antichrist enters the beautiful land in Nahum – but he can't get the vineyard too easily. So Queen Jezebel tries to get possession of the vineyard for him. This brings her into conflict with *Eliahu HaNawbe*, Elijah the Prophet. In the Last Days the Antichrist wants the vineyard and goes to the false religious system to get it. This somehow results in a conflict with Elijah. Elijah, Elisha, Samuel, and John the Baptist are all connected. Midrashically there are ways to connect things that the church doesn't think of because they're reading a Jewish book with a Greek mindset. Whenever you see things happening in the same geographical location in the Bible, there is a midrashic connection between those events. Where does the ministry of John the Baptist take place? On the plain of Jericho. This is the same location in which the ministry of Elijah ends and the ministry of Elisha begins. Samuel was the last of the judges, but the first of the prophets. John the Baptist was the last figure of the Old Testament but the first figure of the New Testament; when the Apostles looked for someone to replace Judas they didn't search out someone who was with Jesus from the beginning, but rather someone who was with them from John's ministry. (Acts 1:21-22) John was the pivotal figure; he was transitional. The New Testament era begins with John, not with Jesus.

John the Baptist and Samuel have similar circumstances surrounding their births. Wherever you see people born under similar supernatural circumstances there is a midrashic connection. Elijah, Elisha, and John had the same spirit. So the wicked woman turns the king against Elijah; the same happens with Herodias and King Herod: the wicked woman turns the king against John the Baptist. It is a pattern; the same things happen again and again. What happened in both these cases is somehow what happens when Elijah comes again in the end. There is a lot more that could be said about this, but it is very complicated.

Let's look at the book of Amos 8:11:

"Days are coming", declares the LORD, 'when I will send a famine on the land. Not a famine for bread or a thirst for water, but rather a famine for the hearing of the Word of God.'"

Remember that the physical reflects the spiritual: when the Temple veil was torn, the physical event reflected a spiritual one. Jesus said there would be famines in the Last Days, (Mt. 24:7) but the physical famines are only reflections of a spiritual one. There had been no prophet in Israel for over 400 years when John the Baptist came in the spirit of Elijah to feed God's people during the famine, preparing for the Messiah to come.

There is going to be a famine in the end; but somehow, God's people in the spirit of Elijah are going to be fed and prepared for the Messiah to come. The way Elijah stopped the rain is the same way that the Holy Spirit will be absent from the world when the outpouring stops. Yet Elijah fed the Gentile woman supernaturally; she is a type of the church as are many Gentile women in the Bible such as the Queen of Sheba. Remember that Jesus said the Queen of Sheba came to hear the wisdom of Solomon. (Mt. 12:42)

God's people are fed during the famine. On the Jewish calendar you have outpourings of rain and harvests. A Jew reading Revelation 10 and 11 would have called it a midrash on Joshua. You've got the same numerical pattern in both: in Revelation, the seven seals with the seventh seal having seven trumpets, a numerical subset. Those trumpets correspond to the Feast of Trumpets which corresponds with the last Trumpet and the trumpet blown on Yom Kippur – all of these things fit together, though I cannot go into it now. Anyway, you have seven with the seventh having a subset of seven. Then there is silence in heaven for half an hour. (For me that may be the most confusing verse in the Bible – how can a human measurement of time be applied to eternity? I don't understand that verse.) Next there come these two witnesses who are spoken of in Zechariah. The

last Trumpet is blown, and the text says "This kingdom has become the kingdom of our God and of His Messiah."

Now, let's look at what happened at the capture of Jericho. They marched around the city seven times, once a day for seven days, but on the seventh day they had to march around it seven times. There you have the same numerical pattern present in Revelation. The two spies in Joshua were sent to Jericho to rescue the Gentile woman, Rahab, before the judgment came. They prefigure the ministry of the two witnesses in Revelation. Revelation midrashically replays the text of Joshua, though you won't find that in any commentary that I know of, because people with Greek minds wrote them all.

Moses fed the children of Israel to prepare them for the Exodus from Egypt. Joseph fed the whole world during the famine, but Moses fed all Israel to prepare them to leave Egypt. This, again, is a type of the Resurrection/Rapture. There was darkness on the first Passover, and only the Jews had lights on in their houses in order to eat the Passover. When Jesus faced His last days, He fed His disciples and prepared them for what was coming. In Acts 20, before Paul leaves for his last days, he goes to an upper room, breaks bread, and feeds the disciples. It says in Acts 20 that there were many lamps in the room; the eye is the lamp of the body. If the eye is sound, as Scripture says, the body will also be sound. (Mt. 6:22) In Zephaniah 1 there is an allusion to the Jewish Passover *Bedichat Chametz*, during which each person's house is searched by its inhabitants for leaven. Here in Zephaniah it says,

"I will search Jerusalem with many lamps, purging leaven".

Leaven is a figure of sin in the Bible (1 Co. 5:6-8). Jews had to get all leaven out of the house before they could eat the Passover, just as we are supposed to get rid of the leaven in our lives before we come to the Lord's Table. Once again, the old-time Brethren have a much more Jewish understanding of the Lord's Supper than other Christians do.

"I will search Jerusalem with lamps," (Zeph. 1:12).

There will be a purging of the leaven from Zion through right teaching in the Last Days before Jesus comes.

"The eye is the lamp of the body," (Mt. 6:22).

Think of the armor in Ephesians 6, quoted from Isaiah. It says in Nahum and in Isaiah 52,

"How lovely on the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news".

Ephesians 6 admonishes us to

"Put on the shoes of the preparation of the Gospel of peace".

The church is a body; its feet are its evangelists. But the eye is the lamp of the body; this refers to teachers, who see and give the light. Somehow, the ministry of Elijah is going to put the oil into the lamps of the teachers in the Last Days. Jesus fed the Apostles, who then took the bread when He fed the 5,000 and fed the people in groups of 50. 50 is the number of the Holy Spirit, of Pentecost. Elijah, through Obadiah, also fed the sons of the prophets in groups of 50. The food comes from one source, but then is broken down and given to several groups. I don't fully understand this, but that is the pattern, and somehow it will happen like that.

Elijah is going to feed the other teachers in the Last Days – whoever Elijah is, or however you understand it. Whether “Elijah” is a man, a movement, two people, or something else is something I won't go into. I will only teach something once I have understood it definitively and the Holy Spirit hasn't shown me fully what this means or how it works. James says, "Let few of you be teachers"; (James 3:1) God will hold me more accountable than He will those of you who are not teachers. Therefore I will not teach anything doctrinally until I am sure that God has shown it to me.

The Maccabees, in Daniel 11, are similar to Elijah in this way:

"Those who have understanding among the people will give insight to the many."

In Proverbs we saw that the wicked woman had truth that was like a two-edged sword, and she was smoother than oil. This is the nature of seduction. If people lack God's wisdom, they're going to be vulnerable; since we have something that is sharper than a two-edged sword, so will they. We will have the oil of anointing and they will have something even smoother. Not better, but it will be a counterfeit. With diamonds, if you don't have a professional eye, you cannot tell a counterfeit from a genuine stone. Some false diamonds, made of polished glass and worthless, can look so real that only a jeweler can tell it is false. There are some false diamonds that are such good reproductions that even the experts have a hard time spotting them initially and have to do all kinds of cauterization tests. In the same way, if Christians today are sucked in by things that are obviously erroneous – if they are fooled by a guy like Rick Godwin, who claims that Matthew 24 is not about the Last Days – what will they do when **convincing** lies confront them? If you can't stand on the dry land, how will you persevere in the thicket of the Jordan? (Jer. 12:5) Again, if people are fooled by name-it-and-claim-it nonsense, what will they do when the **real** deception comes?

There will be a schism within the church in the Last Days, with a number of things that will divide it. One factor will be the churches that compromise and the ones that do not. Another thing dividing the church will be the role and calling of God upon Israel. A third thing will be the authority of Scripture and the way in which it is interpreted. Those are three of the issues that are going to divide; there may well be others. What happens with Elijah teaches about this tribulation.

As in the Days of Noah

Another indicator is where Scripture says that in the Last Days it will be "as it was in the days of Noah" (Mt. 24:37). In Peter's epistle, he describes the problem of Noah from one angle: Noah, a preacher of righteousness, was warning people who would not listen until

it was too late. That is the message of Noah for unsaved people. As it says in 2 Peter 3:9-10:

"The Lord is not slow in keeping His promise, as some count slowness, but is longsuffering toward us, wanting none to perish but that all should reach repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up."

I don't know what you make out of it, but before Mr. Einstein and Mr. Oppenheimer, nobody knew about sub-atomic particles in the sense of an atom gaining explosive energy when it is divided. Long before sub-atomic physics or particle physics, long before anyone thought of splitting an atom, a fisherman from Galilee not only said it was possible to split an atom, but that it is possible to get enough explosive energy to destroy the whole world that way. That is exactly what that passage is saying in Greek.

So again, Peter is giving a warning about the days of Noah for the unsaved. They didn't listen to Noah until it was too late, and unsaved people won't listen to us until it's too late either. Boats are types of the church. Noah's Ark, even in its dimensions, means something. Nonetheless, that is for the unsaved. They won't listen, because they'll be occupied with their sin and immorality, and only a remnant is preserved.

However, Jesus warns about the days of Noah in Matthew 24 from another aspect:

"But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the Ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be." (Mt. 24:37-39)

Eating and drinking, marrying and being given in marriage! The unsaved have to be warned about immorality; Christians must be warned about being caught up in temporal things.

There's nothing wrong with eating and drinking or with marrying and being given in marriage. However, the danger in these things to Christians in the Last Days is that they will become the primary focus of the Christian's life and believers will be absorbed in them. It is vital to remember this: The things that are for here are not the things that we are here for. There is nothing inherently wrong with getting married or going to a restaurant, but when those things become the focus of a person's life, that person has a problem: he or she will not be ready for Jesus to come back.

Not only that, there is also the danger of ministry becoming an idol, people building their own empires instead of the kingdom of God.

"Let him who is in the field"...

...the mission field...

... "not go back for his cloak". (Mt. 24:18)

"I will make you fishers of men", Jesus said. (Mt. 4:19)

Think about that; they fished all night and caught nothing until Jesus told them where to cast their nets. (Jn. 21:3-6) Fishing is a type of evangelism and that is the way it happens. When Jesus directed their fishing they had to call people in another boat to come and help them. When He directs our evangelism, the same miracle occurs. When revival breaks out in one church, it spreads to another.

When Peter is fishing in John chapter 21, and the call goes up that the Lord is waiting, he does something very peculiar. Normally, if you want to go swimming, you pull your shirt off and dive in the water; but Peter puts his **on**, because his shirt is a type of the

garments of salvation in Isaiah and Revelation. He dives off the boat as soon as it is said, "It is the Lord", in John 21:7. At this time, Peter was fishing; in figure, he was engaged in his ministry. But as soon as Jesus came, he forgot the ministry because Jesus came first. There is a real danger that in the Last Days even the ministry can be an idol. Jesus must always come first; I wish more Christians thought about that. I need to think about it a lot myself.

How Much Time is Left?

Consider American basketball: there are African-Americans who play basketball almost like they're superhuman – it's unbelievable how good they are. It doesn't matter to them if there are two hours on the clock left to play the game or only 30 seconds. They play with such energy, vigor, and concentration that even though there are only ten seconds left in the game, they know that can make a difference and as far as they're concerned, there might as well be an hour left in the game. Yet as soon as the final buzzer goes off, that's it; it's over. That is how we should be: totally intent on what we're doing. It doesn't matter if there are three days left until Jesus comes or 300 years, we should be playing the game in the same way, with the same concentration, vigor, and intensity. But as soon as that buzzer goes off, that's it. We're done.

It's always ten minutes to midnight. In John's epistle he says it is the last hour; the idea in Greek is that time freezes.(1 Jn. 2:18) Israel is God's timepiece for the nations. Why did the early Christians say it was the Last Days? Let me explain:

One day, Harold was watching rugby on television and Susan said, "When do you want your dinner?" It was then ten minutes to six so he said, "I want my dinner in ten minutes when the rugby game is over; the game ends at six o'clock." So Susan puts his dinner in the microwave, pushes the buttons. All of a sudden, at ten till six, there's an injury on the rugby field, and they stop the clock. The medics come out and say they can't move the guy without a doctor. The doctor comes out and says they need an ambulance because they have to move him a certain way. They can't do anything about it, the rest of the game is delayed. But how many minutes are left in the game? Ten. Ten minutes ago there were ten minutes left in the game, but the game time hasn't advanced from that

point. There are always ten minutes left in the game, but at any time the clock can be started again, once the injured man is removed. This time is the time of the Gentiles; it is Israel that is God's timepiece.

Nebuchadnezzar represents many things in the Bible; he is a very interesting and complex figure in Scripture. The seven churches of Revelation were seven churches that literally existed in Asia Minor in the 1st Century; they're also seven types of churches that can exist generally, especially in the Last Days before Revelation 4. But I am convinced that they also correspond to overlapping periods of church history. The Greek names of those churches also mean something: "Ephesus" is "not lasting", "Smyrna" is "myrrh", "Pergamum" is "divorced", "Thyatira" is "continuing sacrifice", and so on. (We have a series of tapes dealing with this in depth.) Nonetheless, those seven periods occur before we go on to Revelation 4 and the main part of the vision. Nebuchadnezzar is cut down and an iron collar is put around him. It says that for seven periods that iron collar is kept on him to prevent him from blossoming, but at the end of those seven periods the collar is removed and he blossoms again. It's the same idea. The age of the church occurs, to the best of my understanding, between the 69th and 70th weeks of Daniel. Somehow the age of the Gentiles comes to a close, as it says in Luke 21:24 and Romans 11, and then the clock is started again. There are always ten minutes left in the game; time is frozen.

Therefore, it is always the "Last Days". So concerning the days of Noah, we have to warn the unsaved about their immorality, but we must also warn ourselves about becoming attached to this life. When you want to understand the days of Noah, you must go back and read the story of Noah.

The Nephilim Then and Now

When I was a young Christian, I was a hippie who got saved out of the drug culture. We used to witness eight hours a day sometimes because we thought Jesus was coming next week, so what did anything else matter? I met so many people who said their beliefs were based on gods on other planets, UFOs and such.

When Jimmy Carter became President of the United States, he declassified something called *The Blue Report* that was put together by the American Air Force, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and the Central Intelligence Agency. It was not all declassified, but Carter declassified a major portion of it. They found no evidence from exobiology for extraterrestrial life, but they had innumerable cases of people using parapsychology to conjure up extraterrestrial phenomena; there were even cultists who could make these things appear. Similar studies were done in Great Britain. Reading the *Blue Report* can be quite frightening. There is no scientific basis for belief in extraterrestrials, but a firmly recorded basis in the occult. Uri Geller, the Israeli spoon-bender, said that there were people on other planets trying to persuade him to be the Messiah.

The Nephilim, the fallen ones, are strange characters in Genesis. It would appear that they survived the Flood; whether the Nephilim who were in the land of Canaan when the Jews came to it are a different Nephilim from the ones who were spoken of before the flood is an issue over which theologians are divided; no one is really certain. Some say they are the same ones, some say they're different. If they are the same, it would mean they had survived the deluge somehow. Nonetheless, these things are “the fallen ones”, and we're told in Scripture that they copulated with human women.

Now, most of the popular “deliverance ministry” going around today is a lot of Ghostbusters-type nonsense with no Scriptural basis; I would seriously question whether most of these people could handle real demon possession if it ever faced them – it's no joke. But I once cast a demon out of a black necromancer who was having sexual relations with demons.

There was a witch in England on television in America, who gave her testimony when she got saved and told of having intercourse with a devil; people witnessed this. This kind of activity was around in the days of Noah, and it will be around again in the Last Days. Somehow demonoids – they were virtual monsters – will exist on the earth again, as they did in Noah's day. We will see an increase in occult activity, but particularly in

this kind of high Satanism; even to the point of people having relations with demons. It already goes on, but it's going to increase.

Man is utterly fallen. I studied science in university, and I have no problem with science. However, it remains that man is fallen. So while I have no problem with science, I know what happens when you put science into the hands of fallen man. It is easy to visualize the kinds of atrocities that can be accomplished with biogenetic engineering; people can eventually take DNA, clone it, and re-create Josef Stalin or a whole race of Josef Stalins. There are things happening right now in genetics that when I studied biology in university would have seemed like science fiction; they no longer are.

I have no doubt – I am not teaching this doctrinally, this is my own opinion – that the world is being set up for a huge spiritual seduction in which UFOs and extraterrestrials along with other things of this type will play a role. It can be seen in David Bowie's albums and in Stephen Spielberg's movies, for example. The Bible talks about “the fallen ones”; the ones who fell from heaven, the Nephilim. The cosmos needs to be cleansed. I am quite convinced that extraterrestrial phenomena will be a large part of the spiritual seduction that is on its way. I am also quite afraid of the developments in biogenetic engineering – not the developments themselves, but seeing that kind of technology in the hands of fallen man. When combined with the occult, which scientology and other of these types of groups are already doing, the ramifications are terrible. Somehow, there was a physical manifestation of demons in the days of Noah; that will recur in some way in the Last Days before the Return of Jesus. I won't speculate on it further, but I do see the way things are heading. This is the kind of world that we have to prepare our children to live in; think about that and then tell me you don't believe in Christian school!

The Days of Lot Then and Now

Smyrna, the days of Elijah, and the days of Noah all teach about the Tribulation in some way, as does the sin of Sodom. Under the leadership of Simeon, who was a cousin of Jesus who replaced the Apostle James when James was martyred, the believers left Jerusalem for a place called Pella; not Petra, Pella. The believers thought that the Rapture of the church would happen in 70 A.D. When the Romans were through and

they were rescued – Josephus wrote about this – they thought Jesus was coming then. This is a major type of the Rapture; it teaches what will happen at the end. This idea of being surrounded, God's people being rescued and destruction coming is quite significant. That's what happened at the fall of Samaria in 720, what happened in the fall of Jerusalem, and what happened when Jerusalem fell again on the same day in 70 A.D. under the Romans. The idea is that God's people will be rescued and judgment will follow.

Somehow the two angels who rescued Lot's family correspond with the two spies sent into Jericho to rescue Rahab and the two witnesses in Revelation; they all teach the same idea in some way. Lot's daughters thought the destruction of Sodom was the end of the world; the way his wife turned around and faced Sodom is like what Jesus warned about – don't turn back when the flight comes. Don't hold onto this world. Lot represents a weak believer and Abraham, who was interceding for Lot, represents Jesus. Salt preserves; once the salt stops preserving and the light stops being light, God will only intervene for those who are truly His, and judgment falls.

In the Last Days, even the true believers have a lot of problems. Lot is a good example, for in many respects he was a weak believer. Up to a point, he was comfortable living in such an evil place

Isaiah 28 is one of the most important chapters of the Old Testament in teaching about the Last Days. It talks about the message at the end and says that it is “sheer terror to understand what it means”. (Is. 28:19) When the deep meaning of Scripture is revealed, there is going to be “sheer terror”. When Habakkuk saw the future what he saw was so frightening that he asked God to change it; God told him no. (Hab. 2:1) Something really terrible is going to happen but God will intervene for those who are truly His.

Remember Lot's sons-in-law: when they were being warned they failed to take Lot seriously. They were therefore not rescued. He leaves, his daughters leave, and his wife leaves. His wife was being rescued, but she looked back. Jesus is coming for **fervent**

believers – for those who want Him to come, who are not holding onto this world. Those are the ones who will once again be rescued from Sodom.

When It Goes Too Far

A baby is the ultimate emblem of God's love; even unsaved people can see that. If a couple has their firstborn, and – God forbid – that baby is in bad health, facing death, the baby's parents would willingly give their own lives if it meant that baby could live. God created that kind of love in order to teach how much He loves us. Jesus gave His life so that we could live. The baby might drive his parents nuts – may be colicky and all the rest of it – but still the parents would say, “This is my baby and I would die for him”. God creates that love to teach us how He loves us.

The point at which Israel went too far was when they sacrificed their babies to demons, to Moloch and other gods. In modern society, if you were to take all of the clinical reasons for abortion and put them together – such as ectopic pregnancy, vaginal cancer, radio-induced mutinogenesis of the fetus – they would account for a miniscule percentage of the abortions performed in any Western country. Most abortions are performed for non-therapeutic reasons; in other words, for social and economic considerations. Jesus called this “Mammon-worship”. Make no mistake about it: non-therapeutic abortion is theologically and spiritually related to demon-worship. God judged Israel for it and God is going to judge the United States and Great Britain for it. When someone takes these ultimate emblems of God's love and sacrifices them to demons, that's where God draws the line. We'll return to this in a moment.

The sins of Sodom are similar. You must understand the theology of human sexuality: the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is head of the church, Scripture says. (Eph. 5:23) Sex in a Christian marriage is a reflection of Jesus going inside of His bride and causing her to be fruitful. This does not mean that sexual love in marriage is not erotic or pleasurable – what it does mean is that it is holy. God comes together in an act of creative love in Genesis and brings forth the Creation. The plural God comes together – the Hebrew word is “*echad*” – “oneness”, and makes the creation. He created us in His likeness; so when male and female procreate in His love, we replay the Creation. He is

creative, so He makes us pro-creative since we're made in His image. Human sex as God intended it has a deep spiritual significance going back to the relationship between the Godhead as well as Christ's relationship with His church. A clear mark of Satan's is that he will always try to be the opposite of God. In God's design for sexual relations, it is giving and receiving pleasure and it is heterosexual. The two biggest forms of sexual perversion in the world today are undoubtedly homosexuality and sadomasochism. Both of those things bear the clear signature of Satan because of the principle of opposites. Instead of being heterosexual, sex is twisted to become homosexual. Instead of being the giving and receiving of pleasure, sex becomes the giving and receiving of pain. I am not saying it's wrong for married couples to enjoy aggressive sex; I am speaking of perversions.

The pop singer Madonna was interviewed once in Time or Newsweek Magazine; I read it. She put out a video about sex, and much of it was sadomasochistic. They asked her about this, why she found it sexually appealing, and her response was that she likes being humiliated and punished by a strict male authority figure because of her Roman Catholic upbringing. She has a point, in a way, if you know Roman Catholicism. Roman Catholicism puts guilt on people through its denial of the Cross. The Cross is what takes away our guilt, so because of their removal of the Cross with their doctrine of the Mass, Roman Catholics have a deep guilt problem. Oftentimes after a Roman Catholic gets saved, you'll see that it takes them a long while to grow out of this guilt complex.

There is in our society a blossoming of both homosexuality and sadomasochism. Recently in London, a lesbian headmistress in a school refused to let the children go on a class trip to see Romeo and Juliet because it was "blatantly heterosexual". This describes the last days of Sodom; it also describes the last days of England and America. Judgment begins in the house of God and that includes "Christian" countries. Take, for example, what is happening in Hollywood/ Malibu, with the rise in earthquakes, forest fires, and landslides. God judged Israel for these things and He is also going to judge the Western nations for them also. We have much more than Israel did and are therefore even more guilty than they were.

False Prophets Then and Now

Finally, the Bible says, "Fallen is Babylon". (Is. 21:9; Jer. 51:8; 51:44; 51:49; Rev. 14:8; 18:2) Scripture takes this theme from Jeremiah and Isaiah and uses it in Revelation, along with the theme of Daniel about the Temple being destroyed – see Matthew 24. Jeremiah, Daniel, and Isaiah were the prophets leading up to the Babylonian captivity. What happened in Israel during that time – leading up to and during the captivity – is a type of what happens at the end of the world. That is why Revelation and Matthew 24 take those themes and recycle them for the Last Days for both Israel and the church in different ways.

Let's look at Jeremiah 5:30-31:

"An astonishing and horrible thing has been committed in the land: The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests rule by their own power; and My people love to have it so. But what will you do in the end?"

The prophets prophesy falsely, the leaders lead on their own authority, and God's people love it. A modern example would be the fact that after John Wimber and Paul Cain made false predictions in the name of the Lord, the same people get on the same buses to go and see them again. Jeremiah was warning of God's judgment coming against their nation. Look at verse 27 in chapter 5:

"Therefore they have become great and grown rich."

They thought, like Laodicea, that because they were materially well-off, they were blessed by God and had His favor and didn't want to recognize that judgment was right around the corner. This is the Laodicean church. Jeremiah was telling the truth – "God's judgment is coming and we have to repent". They were saying, "No, no, no, we're rich and God wants us rich". He was warning of judgment, they were denying it. We have the same thing today with the Faith-Prosperity preachers and the Restorationists. "*The prophets prophesy falsely, and My people love it so.*" Notice that it **doesn't** say they are not His people.

Look at Jeremiah 28. Hananiah makes wild predictions that fail to happen just like the Kansas City false prophets. In verse 15 it says this:

"Then Jeremiah the prophet said to the prophet Hananiah"

-- it doesn't say he is not a prophet --

"Hear now, Hananiah, the LORD has not sent you, but you make this people trust in a lie. Therefore, thus says the LORD: "Behold, I will cast you from the face of the earth. This year you shall die, because you have taught rebellion against the LORD.""

You have made God's people trust in a lie, Mr. Wimber. You have made God's people trust in a lie, Bob Jones. You've made God's people trust in a lie, Paul Cain. They did it; it's a fact – you can see the videos and read the books and you'll see that they did the same thing. That is what happened then, that is what Jesus said will happen before He comes, and it is exactly what is going on now. These people are Gnostic and ecumenical: "It's OK to be a Roman Catholic and pray to the dead; God calls it an abomination, but that's all right." What happened leading up to and during the Babylonian captivity is a major type of what happens to the church in the Last Days. The same is true of Sodom and Gomorrah and the period of Elijah's life dealing with Ahab and Jezebel, the age of the church of Smyrna, the days of Noah, and the last days of Israel and Samaria. Again, it was the sacrifice of babies to demons that caused God's judgment to fall before the Babylonian captivity, and I have no doubt that non-therapeutic abortion is going to be the impetus of God's judgment on the West.

Similarly, when Israel's society was falling to bits just before the Babylonian captivity and the hallmarks of God's impending judgment were all over, people were running around saying, "We're rich, God wants us rich, we're triumphant, we're the King's kids, you're a false prophet, Jeremiah". It is the same today. The hallmarks of God's coming judgment are all over the place and the society is falling to bits. Yet we have people running

around claiming that God wants us rich and we're the King's kids, the church Triumphant, etc. Again, this is what Jesus warned about repeatedly in Matthew 24 – false prophets deceiving the church.

Rick Joyner wrote a book called *The Harvest* which actually predicted a blossoming of communism that would take over the entire developing world, part of the United States, and various other major areas of the West. The exact opposite, however, has happened. Yet people will follow this man and others like him as true prophets. "The prophets prophesy falsely and My people love it".

When the Terms are Redefined

Whenever you read the history of Kings and Chronicles, Jeremiah and Isaiah – the events leading up to the captivity – it teaches about the end. Remember Proverbs 5:10:

"Lest aliens be filled with your wealth, and your labors go to the house of a foreigner;"

King Hezekiah showed his treasure to the king of Babylon (2 Ki. 20:12-18). There will be a blossoming of Babylon, the false religious system, in the Last Days. They will want the treasures of the house of the Lord. When you find Evangelicals who are ecumenical – people like John Wimber and George Cary – they are showing our treasures to the king of Babylon and the king of Babylon will plunder those treasures. What happened before the Babylonian captivity and what caused it to happen – the sacrifice of babies, the show of our treasures to the king of Babylon, the following of false prophets instead of listening to true ones, thinking that God wants us rich and because we are rich we've got it made – these are the same things that preceded it.

All of this Gnosticism and other errors are based in eliticism, or simply put, spiritual pride. Be very careful about this. I got a letter a while back from Roger Foster who did not like the fact that I challenged him on his annihilationism. He claims there is no eternal hell so I showed him that the Greek word used in regards to hell for “forever and ever” is the same term used to describe God's glory, the high priesthood of Jesus, and

our salvation. Hence, if the torment of hell is not truly eternal, then neither is God's glory, Jesus' high priesthood, or our salvation. As soon as you begin telling unsaved people that if they don't repent and come to Jesus when they die they'll cease to exist, they will say, "So what? That's what we believe anyway". Unfortunately, that is the theology in back of the *March for Jesus*. That is what Graham Kendrick and Roger Foster believe; people don't realize this. I like the idea of Christians standing together proclaiming Jesus and preaching the Gospel, but in Dominion theology proclamation into the heavenlies replaces evangelism. Graham Kendrick is a very talented musician and hymn writer; probably the best since Charles Wesley, many people would say. However, all of his songs contain these Dominionist ideas – "We proclaim, we announce, we are triumphant," etc. The problem is this: When you deal with Gnosticism its adherents will always use the same terms we use, but they will mean different things by them. Let me explain:

A Roman Catholic theologian and a Protestant one will have an ecumenical dialogue at a theological forum. The Protestant will say, "We're saved by grace" and the Jesuit will agree, "Yes, we're saved by grace". Well, it seems they both agree and the Reformation was a mistake. However, the Hebrew word for "grace" is "*hesed*"; it is God's mercy in the covenant. The Greek word is "*charism*", meaning "gift". The English word is "undeserved favor" from the Latin "*grazia*". So when we speak of "grace" these are the things we think of. To a Roman Catholic, however, grace is an ethereal substance earned by the sacraments administered by a priest. Therefore they can both agree "we're saved by grace", but they mean two totally different things by the term "grace".

When you witness to someone in the New Age movement you may tell them, "I saw the light." You're thinking of the true Light that came into the world according to John 1. They will respond by saying, "I also saw the light"; only they mean an "illumination of cosmic consciousness". You can both say that you saw the light when you give your respective testimonies, but you have two different definitions of "light".

Similarly, when Restorationists use terms like "victory", "kingdom", "triumph", "dominion", "proclamation", they mean different things by those terms than you do. They use Biblical

terms in unbiblical ways just as a Roman Catholic or a New Ager will. Indeed, Roman Catholicism, Restorationism, and Gnosticism all come from the same place: Alexandria. They all have roots in that theology.

The Temple Then and Now

Now, we need to talk about the idea of the Temple. Jesus begins talking of the end of the world in Matthew 24 by discussing the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D. Jesus said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (Jn. 2:19). He was herein talking about His body.

Man is made in God's image and likeness; we are like a temple. In Corinthians Paul says "Know ye not that ye are temples of the Spirit?" The Temple was like a box within a box within a box: the Outer Courts, the Holy Place, and the *Qodesh HaQadashim* the sanctum sanctorum, the Holy of Holies. The Outer Court corresponds to our physical bodies. The Holy Place represents our mind, emotions and intellect; our souls. Paul says to keep this holy. The Holy of Holies corresponds to where God's Spirit dwells within us. This is one way to understand and eliminate a lot of the confusion surrounding demons being cast out of Christians. Yes, even Christians may come under demonic influence and be oppressed or even invaded in their bodies or possibly their souls. But when you say "possessed" by a demon you are talking about a demon entering the innermost man, where in a Christian God's Spirit dwells. That cannot happen. A Christian who is following Jesus cannot be demon-possessed. The Greek word "*ek ballo*" is a very strong word meaning "cast out"; we get our word "ballistic" from it. This term is never used in connection with a Christian anywhere in the Bible.

Jesus spoke of His body as a temple. Remember: what happened to Jesus in His last days happened to the Early Church and to the Apostles in their last days. Those things together teach us about what happens to the church in its Last Days. Again, in John 2:19 Jesus said,

"Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up."

The physical temple was an emblem of His body. In Hebrew we call Hosea “*Sohea*”; that “sh” sound indicates a link with Jesus because of the structure of Hebrew. The Hebrew language is based on roots; when you have the same root in two different words, those two words are usually connected in some theological manner with each other. In Midrash, words with the same root, or *shoresh*, usually have an established Midrashic connection in their interpretation. That “sh” root in Hosea means “salvation”. Jesus' name is *Yeshua*; Isaiah's name is *Ishiah*; Joshua's name is *Yehoshua*. Wherever you have that “sh” sound it has meaning pertaining to salvation, and all of those figures with an “sh” sound teach about Jesus in some way.

Look at Hosea 6:2:

"After two days He will revive us; on the third day He will raise us up, that we may live in His sight."

So we see it: what happens to Jesus happens also to us. In seven places the New Testament refers to the church as the “temple” or the “tabernacle”. The Holy Spirit is like the cement that holds the bricks together. Take a look at I Peter 2:5:

"You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood"

We are the stones of the temple. The church is the holy house, the Temple, and we are the stones that comprise it. The Hebrew word for “fellowship” is “*heet ha brut*”. Peter's epistle was written to Jews and his ministry was mainly to Jews as we're told in Galatians. He writes therefore from a very Jewish perspective, and the Jewish view of “fellowship” was *heet ha brut*, meaning “bricks cemented together”. It is one thing to come to church, but quite another to come to fellowship. Anyone may come into the building, but being a brick in the wall is something entirely different. If there is a brick missing from our wall, there is something wrong with the building; if a Christian is not cemented into it, there is something wrong with the church. He or she must get cemented in. We are the stones.

Midrashically, on Palm Sunday what happens? In Luke 19:37-40, we find this: Jesus comes onto the Temple Mount while the people are singing the *Hallel Rabbah* from Psalm 118 – "Hosanna to the Son of David". The Pharisees freak out, telling them to be quiet; but Jesus says, "If these remain silent, the stones will cry out", indicating the Herodian stones of the Temple. In other words, "If the Jews don't proclaim Me, the Christians will." The Pharisees and Jewish leaders believed themselves to be special because they were descended from Abraham. But they go out to hear John the Baptist in the wilderness and he tells them, "God could raise up Abraham's children out of the stones" (Luke 3:8). Somehow what happened to Jesus' body was replayed in the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D. Acts 15 shows the Tabernacle being restored as the church, quoting from Amos. That will also happen to us. The temple will be destroyed again, but then raised up in glory.

The early church had been meeting in Solomon's Portico right outside the Temple. At the same time God was making ready to destroy the old Temple, He was building a new one right next to it. When the new Temple was ready, the old one was destroyed. The same is true with us; God is building a new temple, a new tabernacle.

The old Temple in Jerusalem was demolished and the abomination of desolations was set up with the entrance of imperial Rome in 70 A.D. symbolizing political dominion over the house of God. Be careful of Erastianism, or state churches. The concept is totally dangerous. When Jesus said, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and render to God the things that are God's", he was addressing three issues: The first issue was that even in Old Testament Judaism there was to be a kind of separation of "church and state". The kings had to be descended from David while the high priests had to be descended from Aaron. That became convoluted during the reign of John Hurriganus during the period of the Hasmoneans which followed the time of the Maccabees. In context, Jesus was addressing this.

The Connection Between the Covenants

The second issue was the distinction between the two covenants. As it says in Jeremiah 31, the new covenant would not be like the old one.

"I will cut a new covenant with the house of Judah and with the house of Israel; it shall not be like the covenant I made with their fathers."

They had a state church: people in Jeremiah's day thought they were rightly related to God because they were part of the national covenant. Jeremiah came and said, "The new covenant won't be like that; God will write His law on your heart. It will be based on individual response." John the Baptist expressed the same thing. Jesus came and got rid of the state-church relationship; the Temple is destroyed.

Then Paul wrote in Romans 2, "That's it; it's over. There is a new covenant that is not like the old one." But the very thing that Jeremiah predicts Jesus would get rid of, the thing John the Baptist predicts He'll get rid of, the thing that Jesus dies to get rid of, and Paul confirms that Jesus did get rid of it, gets put back in place by Constantine. Then the Reformers, instead of going back to the Bible, came and also put it back in place. Instead of a Catholic state church there was now a Protestant state church. In order to really reform the church and bring it back to the Bible, the first thing that had to be done was to destroy the unscriptural marriage between church and state. The second thing was to be rid of Augustine's false doctrine of the "visible and invisible church" which claims that the church is made up of the unsaved as well as the saved. They failed to get rid of these things and so in essence put back the old covenant.

Remember, before Satan paganized the church he Judaized it. Roman Catholicism and Protestantism are both Judaizations. They both put back Erastianism, a state religion, and they both persecuted believers who would not go along with it for centuries. The Antichrist will ultimately marry church and state in that way; that is the third thing Jesus warns against. Having a state religion is totally unbiblical. In fact, when you understand the real eschatology implicit in it, it is abhorrent. England has had homosexual kings

such as King James and now has a New-Age king coming to the throne, all of whom have taken the title that belongs rightfully only to Christ – “head of the church”.

When you read Acts, you're not only reading past history, but future history also. When you read Jeremiah, Isaiah, and Kings about the Babylonian captivity and what led up to it, that too is future as well as past history. The same goes for Daniel and the story of the Maccabees that he predicted, the story of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the days of Noah. God “declares the end from the beginning”, it says in Isaiah. (Is. 46:10)

The Typology of the Boat

Now for the ultimate picture: Again, this is typology; I am not basing doctrine on it, I am using it to illustrate the truth. In Mark chapters 4 and 6 we read of boats being storm-tossed; this is a type of the church in tribulation. The earth has to do with Israel, the sea with the nations – “Why are the nations in an uproar”, etc. However, the ultimate boat is in Acts 27 with Paul being like the good and faithful servant in Matthew 24:45 who will give the proper food at the proper time just as Joseph fed the whole world and Moses fed the children of Israel in preparation for the exodus. Follow the typology. Acts 27:1...

"When it was decided that we should sail to Italy, they delivered Paul and some other prisoners to one named Julius, a centurion of the Augustan Regiment."

Remember, Paul had to stand before Caesar; the Caesars are types of the Antichrist. Verses 2-3...

"So, entering a ship of Adramyttium, we put to sea, meaning to sail along the coasts of Asia. Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, was with us. And the next day we landed at Sidon. And Julius treated Paul kindly and gave him liberty to go to his friends and receive care."

As it says in Daniel, they will receive a “little help” if you can understand the connection. (Dan. 11:34) Verse 4...

"When we had put to sea from there, we sailed under the shelter of Cyprus, because the winds were contrary."

The word for "wind" in Greek is "*pnuema*" or in Hebrew "*ruach*"; these are the same words for "spirit".

There are positive winds and negative winds, but the worst wind is the wind of the northeast. When a northeastern wind is blowing off the Mediterranean it goes through the Carmel mountain chain in Galilee and comes down onto the Sea of Galilee causing tumultuous waves. The ravines of the Carmel mountains cause a piston effect, which in turn creates these waves on the Sea of Galilee. This is the same wind that Paul's ship meets up with here. If you look at the Jewish calendar, which is agricultural, you will see on it the rainy seasons and which ways the wind blows. There are contrary and positive winds just as throughout history there are predominant spiritual forces. In the very end, however, the spiritual forces become tremendously contrary. Let's continue in verse 5...

"And when we had sailed over the sea which is off Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra, a city of Lycia. There the centurion found an Alexandrian ship sailing to Italy, and he put us on board. When we had sailed slowly many days, and arrived with difficulty off Cnidus, the wind not permitting us to proceed, we sailed under the shelter of Crete off Salmone. Passing it with difficulty, we came to a place called Fair Havens, near the city of Lasea. Now when much time had been spent, and sailing was now dangerous because the Fast was already over, Paul advised them, saying, "Men, I perceive that this voyage will end with disaster and much loss, not only of the cargo and ship, but also our lives." Nevertheless, the centurion was more persuaded by the helmsman and the owner of the ship than by the things spoken by Paul. And because the harbor was not suitable to winter in, the majority advised to set sail from there also, if by any means they could reach Phoenix, a harbor of Crete opening toward the southwest and northwest, and winter there. When the

south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained their desire, putting out to sea, they sailed close by Crete."

Paul knew that they were headed for trouble; he warned them how to avoid it, but the majority didn't want to listen to the guy who really knew what was going on. Then, when the wind changed and things seemed to be getting better, they reacted with an attitude of "See, I told you he was a jerk".

Restorationists said when the Iron Curtain came down, "See, we told you Hal Lindsay was a jerk and the Russians aren't going to invade Israel." Yet anti-Semitism in Russia has done nothing but increase since that time and there are four Moslem countries that are part of the former Soviet Empire, at least one of which has nuclear weapons capabilities and a growing fundamentalist Islam. This is the same idea: "When men say "Peace and safety", then the end will come". (1 Th. 5:3)

Bush spoke of a "New World Order". A few weeks later he and Mr. Major were rushing thousands and tens of thousands of troops to the Gulf in what was probably the biggest war since the Second World War. Next they decided that Saddam Hussein was a threat to the New World Order and must be gotten rid of; but he is still down there. Then there was Yugoslavia, and then the Middle East. There will be no lasting peace anywhere in the world, particularly not in that area of the world, until the Son of David, the Prince of Peace, is recognized by Jew and Arab. There is a false peace in the Middle East; I don't know if it's the false peace predicted by Zechariah, but if not, it is certainly a prelude to it. Things seem to get better; but remember, this is like birth pangs. The pain seems to let up for a while, but then the uterine contractions begin all over again, worse than the last time.

Getting Rid of the World's Goods

Let's look at what happens next in Acts 27:14...

"But not long after, a tempestuous head wind arose, called Euroclydon. So when the ship was caught, and could not head into the wind, we let her drive."

The church finds itself unable to control its direction and its destiny.

"And running under the shelter of an island called Clauda, we secured the skiff with difficulty. When they had taken it on board, they used cables to undergird the ship; and fearing lest they should run aground on the Syrtis Sands, they struck sail and so were driven."

They give up trying to control its direction, only remaining concerned with keeping it afloat

"And because we were exceedingly tempest-tossed, the next day they lightened the ship."

The early Christians had to get rid of this world's goods. In the Last Days, if we aren't careful, the things we own will wind up owning us. The attitude we need is that everything we have belongs to Jesus; if I have a lot of money, in actuality I'm flat broke because it doesn't belong to me. I am only a steward of what belongs to Jesus. On the other hand, if I have nothing and am unemployed for four years, I am actually rich because I'm a co-heir with Christ. Any other attitude is unbiblical and unhealthy and will lead to trouble for us. They begin to jettison the cargo to save the ship. I know a place in Brazil where the Christians are very poor; the people sold their houses and cars in order to build a church. Would Christians in the West be willing to jettison their cargo like that and divest themselves of this world's goods in order to save their church? Not many.

Let's look further, beginning in verse 19...

"On the third day we threw the ship's tackle overboard with our own hands. Now when neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no

small tempest beat on us, all hope that we would be saved was finally given up."

The sun and stars were not giving their light. Jesus told Abraham that his descendants would be like the stars of heaven. When the stars don't give their light – when Abraham's descendants hide their light – the glory of Jesus is obscured. Isaiah 13:10-11...

"For the stars of heaven and their constellations will not give their light; the sun will be darkened in its going forth, and the moon will not cause its light to shine. I will punish the world for its evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; I will halt the arrogance of the proud, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible."

This is what happens in Acts 27. The ship gets storm-tossed; the people who know what's going on are ignored by the majority that rules, and that doesn't want to know the truth.

If you'd like to know what will happen to the Charismatic movement, look at Isaiah 24:7-8:

"The new wine fails, the vine languishes, all the merry-hearted sigh. The mirth of the tambourine ceases, the noise of the jubilant ends, the joy of the harp ceases."

That is how the Charismatic movement ends. There is a place for joy and a place for worship as long as it is based on the truths of God's Word. Once you begin basing your doctrine on experience, standing on something other than the Bible, you have nothing left to rejoice about. There is only your own destruction to look forward to. However, Jesus wants to preserve us.

The Right Voice in a Crisis

Let's continue with verse 21 in Acts 27...

"But after long abstinence from food, then Paul stood in the midst of them and said, 'Men, you should have listened to me, and not have sailed from Crete and incurred this disaster and loss.'"

Most of the things that are going to happen to the church could, in theory, be avoided if people had the wisdom to listen to the teachers who are telling the truth, and to follow the pastors who are leading their flocks in the way of Scripture instead of following those who are tickling their ears. We see today many big Restorationists and the prosperity preachers in the United States with their big churches: do you know why their churches are big? Not because people are getting saved – those are not the churches where people get saved. People are getting saved at traditional Pentecostal churches such as David Wilkerson's and Nicky Cruz's. The reason the Restorationists and prosperity preachers have big churches is because they suck people out of other churches who want to have their ears tickled with prosperity preaching and Kingdom Now theology. Most of the destruction and judgment coming on the church could theoretically be avoided if people were willing to obey the Word of God and heed its warnings. Verse 22...

"And now I urge you to take heart, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. For there stood before me this night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve, saying 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must be brought before Caesar; and indeed God has granted you all those who sail with you.'"

I am convinced that not only will we see an increase in demonic activity before Jesus comes, but also an increase in angelic activity. Verse 25...

"Therefore take heart, men, for I believe God that it will be just as it was told me."

Notice Paul's confidence and his countenance. You can always tell the difference between hype and anointing if the Holy Spirit has tuned your ears. Verse 26...

"However, we must run aground on a certain island.' Now, when the fourteenth night had come, as we were driven up and down in the Adriatic Sea, about midnight the sailors sensed that they were drawing near some land. And they took soundings and found it to be twenty fathoms; and when they had gone a little farther, they took soundings again and found it to be fifteen fathoms. Then, fearing lest we should run aground on the rocks, they dropped four anchors from the stern, and prayed for day to come."

The number fourteen is interesting. Jewish genealogies considered fourteen to be an important number; double seven. They would re-sculpture the pedigree tables, only naming those ancestors who were of theological importance to the argument they were trying to make. For instance, in the genealogy of Jesus, they sculptured in fourteens and only named those ancestors who were of theological importance to the theological argument that Matthew was trying to make about Jesus being the Messiah. Fourteen has something to do with being halfway to the next event. Again, a good example is in Matthew 1:17:

"So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations, from David until the captivity in Babylon are fourteen generations, and from the captivity in Babylon until the Christ are fourteen generations."

This is an example of the way the number fourteen is used frequently in Scripture. (There is more to this subject of Biblical numerics than we have time for, and a lot more than I personally have time to study.)

Unity in Times of Testing

Nonetheless, let's continue. Verse 30 of Acts 27...

"And as the sailors were seeking to escape from the ship, when they had let down the skiff into the sea, under pretense of putting out anchors from the prow,"

Many will fall away in the Last Days; let's look at backsliders. In Jude's epistle he describes backsliders inside the church. There are as many backsliders in the church as there are outside it. Proverbs says that the backslider of heart shall be filled with his own ways. (Pr. 14:14) Backsliders often scheme when they try to leave. They stop coming to church, to fellowship, to prayer meeting, etc. on one pretense after another; they begin manipulating and scheming. What they're really trying to do is get away from the ship, because they have gotten away from the ship's Owner. Verse 31...

"Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, 'Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved.'"

Remember, fellowship is always important. Like 1 Peter, the epistle to the Hebrews is a very Jewish book which draws on the Jewish concept of fellowship.

"Forsake not the assembling one with another, especially as you see the Day approaching" (Heb. 10:25).

If too many bricks are removed from strategic places, the roof of the building will fall in. Christians are going to have to stand together, or they will never be able to stand-alone.

Let me qualify that: There is a unity of the Spirit and there is a unity of man. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth; you cannot build a unity of the Holy Spirit on a lie. The ecumenical and interfaith movements are trying to do this, to build unity on a lie. True unity of the Spirit, however, can only be built on the truth. Ecumenism builds unity on a deception, they do have "unity of the spirit", and the question is, which spirit? Much of what people are calling the "unity of the Holy Spirit" is really a man-made unity that compromises the truth of God's Word for the sake of organizational politics.

Getting Fed and Rescued

Acts 27:32...

"Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the skiff and let it fall off. And as day was about to dawn, Paul implored them all to take food, saying, 'Today is the fourteenth day you have waited and continued without food, and eaten nothing.'"

For three and a half years Elijah fed the Gentile woman. Now Paul comes in the way Moses, Joseph, Elijah, and John the Baptist came – like the good and faithful servant – to feed God's people during this time of darkness and famine. In the End, it will be the same; the good and faithful servant will feed God's people. Verse 33...

"Therefore I urge you to take nourishment, for this is for your survival, since not a hair will fall from the head of any of you."

You really have to be some man of God to stand up when things are like this, when everyone thinks they're finished, and have His power and anointing to tell people, "You're not finished; Jesus loves us and He's going to get us out of this." When persecution comes the first ones to betray each other and fall away will be the ones described in Jude's epistle. When hard times come, the prosperity preachers and those who follow them will be the first to lose their faith. They have not been prepared to live a crucified life, one of hardship, so when hardship comes, they won't be able to handle it. Verse 35...

"And when he had said these things, he took bread and gave thanks to God in the presence of them all; and when he had broken it he began to eat. Then they were all encouraged, and also took food themselves. And in all we were two hundred and seventy-six persons on the ship. So when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship and threw out the wheat into the sea."

“Cast much bread upon the water, and you will reap in a due season.” (Ecc. 11:1)
Somehow the Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached during the Tribulation to the raging sea. The Gospel of the Kingdom is different from the Gospel in some ways; it is still the same Gospel, still good news, but it is different in character. The Gospel of the Kingdom is like Matthew's Gospel: Jesus talked about hell three times as much as He did about heaven in Matthew. John the Baptist also preached this Gospel of the Kingdom, the warning that God is going to pour out His judgment. They feed themselves here in Acts 27, and then they cast the rest of the bread on the water. Verse 39...

"When it was day, they did not recognize the land; but they observed a bay with a beach, onto which they planned to run the ship if possible. And they let go the anchors and left them in the sea, meanwhile loosing the rudder ropes; and they hoisted the mainsail to the wind and made for shore. But striking a place where two seas met, they ran the ship aground; and the prow stuck fast and remained immovable, but the stern was being broken up by the violence of the waves. And the soldiers' plan was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim away and escape. But the centurion, wanting to save Paul, kept them from their purpose, and commanded that those who could swim should jump overboard first and get to land, and the rest, some on boards and some on parts of the ship. And so it was that they all escaped safely to land."

So the ship is destroyed, but the people in it are not. We should learn from this that if we cannot stand together, we couldn't stand-alone when the time comes. Acts 28:1...

"Now when they had escaped, they then found out that the island was called Malta. And the natives showed us unusual kindness; for they kindled a fire and made us all welcome, because of the rain that was falling and because of the cold. But when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and laid them on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat, and fastened on his hand. So when the natives saw the creature hanging from his hand, they said to one another, 'No doubt this man is a murderer,

*whom, though he has escaped the sea, yet justice does not allow to live.'
But he shook off the creature into the fire and suffered no harm."*

In Revelation, it says that they took that old serpent who was the devil and cast him into the fire. (Rev. 19:20) This represents the judgment of Satan.

Jewish midrash reads the Bible differently than the church at large because the church at large has made the mistake that Paul warned them not to make in Romans 11, forgetting the root. We don't see the root because it is underground; however, if it were not there, the tree wouldn't be either. If the root were dead, so would the tree be. God is going to bless the church through the Jews in the Last Days. We will see that as more Jews begin coming to faith in Jesus, God will begin pointing the church back to its roots and teaching it how to interpret the Bible correctly. A little light will take you a long way, but when things get very dark you need a strong light. These things are sealed up until the time of the End; one of the things that indicates that we are in the Last Days is that the Holy Spirit has begun to unseal them.

The ship is destroyed, but those on it are saved; the stones are thrown down, but resurrected. Satan will be judged. That is what will happen. Eventually, the people on the ship in Acts 27 realized that Paul was telling the truth all along though the majority had refused to listen to him. They found out the hard way that he was right. The people of Sodom scorned the words of Lot and the two angels, but they found out the hard way that they were right. Those in Noah's day thought Noah was crazy, but they too found out when it was too late that he was right.

Giving Insight to the Many

In Daniel 11 we read that those who have understanding among the people will give insight to the many. (Dan. 11:33) If it were up to me I would never teach the Bible. I would rather do nothing but evangelism – I want to see people saved and I would give this up in a minute to pursue that. The only reason I do teach is that enough people have told me that this is what God wants me to do, and I believe they are right. If God wants me to feed His people in preparation for the Last Days, then that is what I'll do.

There are wise and foolish virgins, the foolish ones do not have oil in their lamps and when they realize the wise virgins were right, they try to get it then. However, as we see in Matthew 25, they go to buy it and it is too late. When the night comes you need to have the oil in your lamp already. What I want is to see that all of you have oil in your lamps because you're going to need it. I want to see that all of you have grain stored up in your storehouses because you'll need it.

Yet at this time, when we should be storing up grain and buying oil for our lamps, when we should be facing the facts for what they are and prophecy is being fulfilled under our noses, we have the same thing they had in Noah's day, Jeremiah's day, Sodom's and Jerusalem's last days. What happened then is going to happen now; in fact, is already happening now.

A division is coming to the Body of Christ and there will be at least three issues that cause it: Once again, those who will compromise and those who will not. A lot of evangelicals are compromising: Baptists, Pentecostals, and Charismatics among them – division is already coming. Secondly, Israel and its role in prophecy. Division in the church over this issue is coming and in fact is already here. Thirdly, division will come over the authority of the Word of God and the way in which it must be interpreted. This is what is happening now.

Make no mistake about it – Jesus is coming. The time to get the grain and to purchase the oil is **now**. If you do, you will be a wise virgin. If not, you will be a foolish one. Jesus wants you to have it now; He is here, and He is offering it to you. Please take it. †††