

## are you prepared?

- We all make plans      church today      work tomorrow.
- birthday parties.
- retirement.

Preparation makes plans successful.

When planning a birthday party how successful would it be if you forgot the food.

retirement wait till age 55 to invest.

Being prepared is to work out the details in advance, to have what is needed for a particular event or function to be orderly and successful.

Mat 25:1 The Parable of the Ten Virgins serves as a cautionary tale about planning ahead and being prepared.

We know the bible is the inspired word of God, not because God says so, because He proves it.

Detailed prophecies written centuries before Observable fulfillment, provide concrete evidence authenticating scripture as Gods inspired word...Since God is batting 1000 prophetically:

- Logic dictates that unfulfilled prophecies are entirely accurate and will happen as stated.
- The book of Daniel is arguably the most attacked book of the Old Testament. Many arguments focus on the timing of when it was written. Because of the comprehensive accuracy and precise historical details, the naysayers contend it was written **after the events occurred** and is a fraud. During the Mount Olivet discourse, Jesus quoted Daniel, authenticating the book.
- Why is that important to us? The book of Daniel is a key to unlocking our understanding of eschatology, (end-times prophecy) throughout the bible.
- Usually, the NT brings clarity to the OT, teachings:
- Without the book of Daniel, the book of Revelation becomes figurative, symbolic and metaphorical.

We have an idea of how important prophecy is to God because He devoted a large amount of scripture to it.

There are 1,239 Old Testament prophecies, 578 New Testament prophecies Resulting in 8,352 prophetic verses 25% of the bible verses when they were written were prophetic
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- prophecy should be equally important to us.
- PSALMS 33 gives us insight:

<b>PSALMS 33:20-21</b> Our soul waits for the Lord; He is our help and our shield. 21 For our heart shall rejoice in Him, because we have trusted in His holy name.
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Our soul waits for the Lord; is summed up in the REVELATION 22:20 "Come, Lord Jesus".

We are waiting for the Rapture. But there is a big difference between knowing that Jesus could return today and knowing He will return today.

Knowing Gods plans is always presented as motivation to prepare for action, not an end to action.

- Noah prepared on a global scale,

<b>Genesis 6:9</b> This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God.
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- God gave His reasons to Noah for the flood,
- Gave specific instructions for building the ark, sufficient time and resources to finish the project.
- God used the Ark to preserve the lives of both humans and animals that would repopulate earth.
- When Noah was finished the first worldwide catastrophe happened as God said it would.

**HEBREWS 11:7** By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.

- God gave Noah what was needed to be fully and sufficiently prepared, and Noah by his obedience to God, represented thru his actions, proved his faith to God.

Joseph coat colors, sold into slavery by his brothers... what a lot of people miss when reading thru Genesis Ch. 37 is the decision to sell Joseph into slavery is based solely on love, I'll show you.

**GENESIS 37:26-27** So Judah said to his brothers, "What **profit** is there if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? **27** Come and let us **sell** him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him, for he is our brother and our flesh." (oozing with piety) And his brothers listened.

- Joseph not only had but maintained an incredible focus on God completely independent of his situation.
- Our faith should control our response to situations. Situations should not control our faith but reveal the Holy Spirit working in us.
- Instead attack all situations with a Colossians 3 attitude:

**Colossians 3:23-24** And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, **24** knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.

- Do it heartily, as to the Lord means we understand Romans 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.
- Situations may not always seem fair to us, or favorable to us, but all things work together for good to those who love God. Give analogy.

James tells us:

**James 1:2-4** My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, **3** knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. **4** But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

- According to James, when we endure painful trials, we can take joy in knowing that God is at work in us to produce endurance and Christ-like character.
- Joseph is a good example of practical application for what James is saying:

**GENESIS 39:5-6** So it was, from the time that he [Potiphar] had made him overseer of his house and all that he had, that the Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the Lord was on all that he had in the house and in the field. **6** Thus he left all that he had in Joseph's hand, and he did not know what he had except for the bread which he ate.

- How great would it be if the people that manage your affairs were so trustworthy your main concern daily ...is what's for lunch?
- Sadly because of Mrs. Potiphar's adulterous behavior, and Lying, Potifar threw Joseph into prison.
- Joseph changed jobs... not his focus.

**GENESIS 39:23 (ESV)** The keeper of the prison paid no attention to anything that was in Joseph's charge, because the LORD was with him. And whatever he did, the LORD made it succeed.

We get a sense of Joseph's incredible focus on God, from Pharaoh's statement.

**GENESIS 41:39-40 (ESV)** Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has shown you all this, there is none so discerning and wise as you are. **40** You shall be over my house, and all my people shall order themselves as you command. Only as regards the throne, will I be greater than you."

Joseph's wise planning not only saved the nation of Egypt, his family the people of Israel but the lineage of Christ.

In both historical narratives God tells His people what they are preparing for and how to prepare.

- Noah, flood, Build an Ark.
- Joseph 7 yrs. plenty, famine, Build storage silos.

Joseph had 7 years to prepare but Noah had around 100 both never lost focus. What is it that so easily ensnares us and pulls our attention away from preparing to be Raptured.

- 1 of the biggest distractions to our preparation, is the secular world preparing for all their end time events:
- The difference is their information is driven by man's wisdom, scientists, and experts, it is published and broadcast making it easy to get sucked into their predictions and their preparations:
- What are they preparing for: Since 1970 scientist and experts have predicted over 50 different world changing or world ending events.
- Impending ice age (1970-16), ozone depletion, arctic ice gone, global warming.
- We are also bombarded with famous secular predictions that are sometimes called prophecies, from:
  - Nostradamus, Y2K, and the end of the Mayan calendar.
  - None of them have been correct.

After Christ's ascension, there have been people with great conviction and data to back up their beliefs that set dates for Christ's return.

- This commonly happens when folks align the return of Christ, with events and tribulations experienced in their lifetime.
- But ultimately what you end up with looks a lot like
  - New Orleans during hurricane Katrina, many warnings, apathy, trapping many, believing it is just another false alarm.

Additionally, the Rapture has a lack of teaching or details in the OT to give us insight. However, the OT does provide examples:

**Enoch** = GEN 5:24 Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.

**HEB\_11:5** By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death, and he was not found, because God had taken him. Now before he was taken, he was commended as having pleased God.

**Elijah** = 2KI 2:11 And as they still went on and talked, behold, chariots of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them. And Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

The date setters and experts fill our head with noise, creating apathy with many false alarms and distracting us from preparing for the Rapture but God tells us to be alert and self-controlled.

All these factors compete for our attention: What prophecy has the ability to do is silence the noise of this world, so our Christian Walk doesn't fall prey to apathy making US indifferent to God's word.

We need to prepare ourselves for the right event. If you prepare for a day at the beach and end up at a ski slope, you're not prepared.

We need to be more like the Bereans to study the rapture and the second coming verses because:

- They can look like the same event,
- They don't always appear in chronological order in the text,
- They are often confused and interchanged with each other.

But, the Rapture and 2nd coming of Christ have unique characteristics, distinguishing them as 2 separate events.

<b>Rapture</b> <b>SAINTS MEET JESUS IN THE CLOUDS</b>	<b>2ND COMING</b> <b>JESUS RETURNS TO EARTH</b>
First the dead rise, those asleep in Christ, to meet the Lord in the air <b>1 Th 4:17</b>	No resurrection of the dead
Saints are Translated on way to be with Jesus.	Translated saints <b>return</b> to earth with Jesus. <b>Zec 14:5</b>
Only His own see Him <b>1 John 3:2</b>	<b>Rev 1:7 tells us</b> every eye shall see Him

<b>1Jn 3:2</b> Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.	
Imminent, any moment, sign less, nobody knows the time. <b>(WE ARE HERE)</b>	Predicted in the Old Testament following detailed prophetic signs,

- Rapture is imminent, there never has been and never will be any direct signs or events to reveal the timing of the Rapture, it can happen at any moment.

The obvious question is, with no direct prophetic events to reveal the timing of the Rapture, what could make anyone believe the Rapture is close or has any chance of happening in our generation?

Jesus talking about the trees said Luk 21:30 As soon as they come out in leaf, you see for yourselves and know that the summer is already near. 31 So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near.

Understand the prophetic signs being fulfilled are pointing to and preparation for Christ's Second Coming, an event that occurs post Rapture.

- The 3 basic views of the Rapture are: Pre/Mid and Post, they all have 1 commonality, the Rapture occurring before the second coming of Christ.

<b>Pre-trib.</b> Rapture is <b>imminent</b> before tribulation.
<b>Mid-trib.</b> happens <b>after</b> 3 ½ years into the tribulation.
<b>Post-trib.</b> happens <b>right before</b> the 2 <sup>nd</sup> coming of Christ. Make slide

Because the Rapture happens before the tribulation, we acknowledge the closer the second coming of Christ is the closer the Rapture is.

This is important: God's plan for history - moves forward in relation to what He is doing with Israel, it's not about the gentile world.

- Since Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, we are living in the time gap between the 69<sup>th</sup> and 70<sup>th</sup> week known as Daniels 70 weeks Dan 9. Gods prophetic clock has stopped, and the focus has shifted from Jews to Gentiles. This was the prophecy sealed up by Daniel, but the NT reveals this mystery to us!

Paul tells us **Eph 3:5** the mystery, which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, now is **revealed: Eph 3:6** the gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel,

Galatians 3 explains the statement about the mystery revealed.

**Gal 3:29** and if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise, fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God.

This time gap is called:

- The age of grace,
- The time of the gentiles, Luke 21:24
- The church age,

The time of the gentiles is the time given for Gentiles to become partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

The age of grace ends, when the last gentile accepts Jesus as their Lord and savior. Gods' prophetic clock starts again: And history – starts moving forward again.

Romans 11 completes statement about the mystery revealed.

**Romans 11:25** For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery—so that you will not be wise in your own estimation—that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in;

So, what should make us believe this time in history, right now, is different from any other?

Recent prophecy fulfilled when the nation of Israel was restored on May 14, 1948:

Is so prophetically significant it could be considered a “super-sign” of the end times. It is without a doubt the most significant prophetic event since the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

- Were Israel not a nation it would not be possible for many of the end time events to occur as prophesied in the word of God.
- Prophecy has the Jews living in their promised land at the end of time. From 79 A.D. to 1948 1878 years that's just not happening.
- God made a promise to Abraham, reiterated the promise to Isaac, and repeated the promise thru Jacob, the tiny strip of land called Israel is the promised Land for their descendants.
  - God originally brought the Jews into the land He promised to them.
  - God gathered them back into their promised land.
  - God will defend them and their promised land.

There has never been a convergence of prophetic signs related to the Jews and gentiles concerning the second coming of Christ as there is Right now:

The floodgates holding back prophecy are ready to burst open and flood this world with prophecy being fulfilled. The signs are incredible:

The Jewish Signs:

- Red Heffers without spot or blemish, from Texas, ashes for cleansing priests, temple, utensils,
- Temple institute Estimates 7 to 9 months to rebuild the temple,
- Jews back in Jerusalem: 2 Th 2:4 tells us when the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, sits as God in the temple of God This means the temple must be rebuilt in the city of Jerusalem. This will be a super sign.

The Gentile signs:

- Advances toward a 1-world gov, globalism, all humanities problems solved w/ global solution [tower of babble].
- One-world religion, Pope Francis has now put in place a functional political, religious, and financial framework on which the One World Religion of Chrislam will operate. September 2022 Chrislam was officially announced as the 1 world religion.
- And one-world currency, crypto electronic currency {used to record and track every purchase}
- Electronic id's (passports) with health, financial records and religious preference integrated all in 1.

These are observable, prophetic preparations for second coming of Christ.

Sadley we are seeing the beginnings of another prophetic sign found in 2 Thess 2: called the great falling away.

- European and American churches are closing faster than they are opening... since 2015.
- A 2024 March Gallup poll shows 47% of Americans say they belong to a church, synagogue, or mosque, down from more than 70% in 2000. That's in just 4 years.

As these trends becoming common place, we see man's love growing cold, as God tells us would happen. As man moves further from God, we see more of the wrath of satan using evil men to accomplish His purposes.

**Eph 6:12** For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

- When you hear the bible is outdated, irrelevant for today, usually a list of modern inventions follow that Moses and Jesus didn't know about, automobiles, airplanes.

- It's not about technology, it's a heart issue, find 1 of the 10 commandments that are not a relevant issue in society today. Only technology has changed, not the heart of man.
- We are told that man is better off today than any time in history, it only looks worse because we have more ways to track and record data, man has longer life span, better health, wealthier more content.
- But when man's heart is the comparison... the tracking and data show things differently.

In the ten years spanning the 1960's the FBI statistics for Mass shootings in the US were defined as 2 or more people being shot in a single incident. There were 13 Mass shootings recorded.

The revised FBI statistics for Mass shootings in the US redefined as 4 or more people shot in a single incident, last year 2023 623 mass shootings were recorded. It's a heart issue.

Due to time I ask you to be a Berean and visit Romans 1:24-32 for a comprehensive list of what evil looks like.

In contrast to the evil we are experiencing today it is nothing compared to Gods' wrath being poured out on unrepentant man during the tribulation, to accomplish His purposes. But God protects His own:

**1 THESS 1:10** and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

Understand that Jesus' imminent return means every day is a gift, use it to glorify God, stay busy doing God's work. Take the examples of Joseph and Noah, provide for your families as well as others:

We are told in **1 TIMOTHY 5:8** But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

What are some practical ways to provide for our own, especially for those of our household our Families?

According to **Ephesians 2:10**.

**Eph 2:10** For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

- Do you know what your spiritual gifts are, if not ask, find out, everyone should be using their spiritual gifts to edify and mature the church and to glorify God in serving others.
- The importance of Christian fellowship cannot be overstated. Most of the New Testament is written to churches, not individuals.

Impact the world with His gospel message however you can.

- My wife and I support OCC, there is compassion Int. voice of the Martyrs, do your research there are many ways to fulfill the great commission with your time or money.

Remember when the last Gentile receives Jesus as their Lord and savior, Christians are called home, we get our glorified bodies and go to the wedding feast of the Lamb.

**Hebrews 10:25** tells us to consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but *exhorting* one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

We want to stir up love and good works, get the blood flowing, the NT has over 50 "one another" verses that refer to loving one another, serving, encouraging, and praying for one another.

Fellowship involves more than church attendance. Eph 1:23 tells us believers are the church. Each member is a part of Christ's Body that is relationship.

Mature Christians are you discipling someone, invest in the lives of other people thru relationship.

Parents' disciple your kids they are your first ministry, (bonus) and they will teach you the skills and patience needed to disciple adults.

**James 4:14** says: "Yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes".

James is saying, our life here on earth, it's simply a vapor compared to timeless eternity.

To place a greater emphasis on our well-being today rather than our well-being for all of eternity is foolishness.