

Ezekiel 9
Prophetic Parallels Pointing to the End
J.D. Farag

PASTOR JD: Amen and amen! Good evening to you. You can be seated. How you doing tonight? Blessed? All right, all right, all right. Three chapters tonight. That's why I was asking you how you were doing tonight.

You like how I did that before? Just checking with you, was kind of taking your temperature just before I let you know that we're doing three chapters tonight. So I hope you brought your pajamas and toothbrush. No, we're doing this. We're doing this.

So I chose to take and tackle these three chapters together because they're actually a continuation of this vision that God gave Ezekiel that commenced in *Chapter 8*. And these visions that God gave to Ezekiel came by way of this supernatural transporting of Ezekiel who at the time was captive in Babylon, and God in the realm of the supernatural, takes him and transports him back to Jerusalem and the temple in Jerusalem.

Kind of takes him back to his old stomping grounds in a very interesting way and showed him many things. And what we're about to see tonight is a smattering of prophetic parallels with other prophecies that poignantly point to God's judgment at the time of the end. Yay! Well, maybe I should hasten to say that what we're going to see in these chapters and even as we go through these chapters, well, let me say it like this: I hope, I pray, I think all of us, myself included, myself especially maybe, that we would view these chapters through the lens of this the last hour and end of human history as we know it.

So we're going to see a lot of these parallels that I mean, very powerfully and even profoundly point to our day today, the world we're living in at this time, at the time of the end. So why don't we pray and we'll ask God to bless our time together in His word, if you would join with me.

Father in heaven, thank You so much. Lord, as Kapono prayed, this is our time. We need so much to have this time. We're very protective of it because it's the time that we can come together as a body of believers and worship and fellowship, and now the teaching of Your word, Lord, and the hearing of Your word and taking heed to Your word. And there's so much here in Your word that You want us to see with eyes to see, hear with ears to hear. And so Lord, we're just looking to You to minister to us.

And as You do, we readily admit that our minds will wander and get distracted. And please don't let the enemy do that. Keep us focused by the Holy Spirit so that we don't miss anything that You have for us tonight. Lord, we're really, with great anticipation, looking to You to speak in that still, small voice of the Holy Spirit. Get our attention. Keep our attention as only You can, Lord because Your servants are listening. So speak, Lord. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

All right, let's jump in *Chapter 9, verse 1*. **“Then He called out in my hearing with a loud voice, saying, ‘Let those who have charge over the city draw near, each with a deadly weapon in his hand. And [Verse 2] suddenly six men came from the direction of the upper gate, which faces north, each with his battle-ax in his hand. One man among them was**

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clothed with linen and had a writer's inkhorn at his side. They went in and stood beside the bronze altar."

By the way, Ezekiel would have been very familiar with the layout of the temple, which is still standing at the time. It hasn't yet been destroyed. It will be. And he was now, if you remember, being trained for priestly service in the temple. And he's now being taken back to the very temple that he would have at age 30 served his priestly duties in that which he was being trained for. He started the training at age 20.

He's taken captive to Babylon, it's believed in his mid-twenties, and now some maybe six months has passed by. And here he is now being taken back to Jerusalem. And God is, in a way, showing him what could have been, what would have been. And it is my belief that Ezekiel is thanking God for removing him, relocating him, uprooting him. And even if it meant being taken captive to Babylon because had he stayed, he would have witnessed firsthand, probably not been alive to talk about it. He would have witnessed firsthand the imminent destruction coming upon Jerusalem, as God's prophesied.

And I want to just to kind of insert that because we're all I think, again, myself included, we're too quickly disconnecting ourselves from the passage. I mean, we're reading God's word, and there's, again, I call it this disconnect because we don't — we don't really see what's behind all of it.

We're even dismissive of disconnecting with the emotions of this young man, Ezekiel, and what this must have been like for him, how hard this must have been on him to see now what's going to happen, this vision of what's going to happen to his beloved Jerusalem and the holy temple of God still standing there in Jerusalem. So please don't miss that or dismiss that.

Verse 3, "Now the glory of God [Of the God of Israel] had gone up from the cherub where it had been, to the threshold of the temple. And He called to the man clothed with linen who had the writer's inkhorn at his side. And the Lord said to him, 'Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and [Interesting] put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and cry over all the abominations that are done within it.'"

Wow! Here's our first prophetic parallel. It points to the seventh chapter of Revelation during the 7-year tribulation, where the 144,000 are sealed on their foreheads. This is this prophetic parallel fulfilled then literally, but yet to be fulfilled future literally as well.

So what is this mark? Well, this is very interesting. This is where it gets really interesting. So this mark on the forehead was the Hebrew letter T or "tau," which was in the shape of a cross on the forehead to seal specifically those who sighed and cried, grieved, hearts, broken, devastated because of what?

The abominations that were taking place in the temple. And they were so grieved. And God has this guy with this marker to seal, protect specifically these individuals with the mark on their forehead. Sounds like the mark of the beast, right?

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Well, get this. Satan is the counterfeiter. I think we get so caught up in the mark of the beast, we forget that the mark of the beast is actually a counterfeit, a false counterfeit of the true mark of God. Think about that. Let that sink in because these 144,000 are going to be marked. They're going to receive a mark in their forehead. It's not the mark of the beast, it's the mark of the Christ.

What's going to happen with those that are marked?

Nothing.

What's going to happen to those who are not marked with this mark but marked with the mark of the beast?

Everything. One more thing here, and I know we talked about the counterfeit authenticating the genuine last week, but I think I'd be grossly remiss if I didn't at least point out that the *Revelation 13* mark comes after the *Revelation 7* mark. I know that's deeply profound, that 7 comes before 13.

But God first marks these 144,000. And nothing happens to them because they are sealed with that mark. And it is reminiscent of — watch this — the cross that marked the Israelites' doors in the shape of a cross with the blood of the lamb, so the angel of death would pass over them and they would be saved and spared.

That's the mark, this mark, and so too, is this true for them, then, as Ezekiel is shown this vision of these individuals who sighed and cried. I like that — I don't know, Kaponi, that could be a song, just I'll leave that there, just saying. Sighed and cried over the abominations that took place in the temple.

Well, *verse 5*, **“To the others He said in my hearing, 'Go after him through the city and [Here it is] kill. Do not let your eyes spare, nor have any pity. Utterly [Verse 6] slay old and young men, maidens and little children and women, but do not come near anyone on whom is the mark; and begin at My sanctuary.' So they began with the elders who were before the temple.”**

You've got to bear with me on this one because we have here a second prophetic parallel. I have several. You might find more, which would be great, but here's one that I found, and it's not so easily seen at first read, but it is a well, dare I say, an uncomfortable, prophetic parallel, even an unpopular prophetic parallel by virtue of how it speaks to the time of the end when judgment begins in the house/family of God.

Now, hang on to that for a moment because this is *1 Peter 4:17*. And we just finished *1 and 2 Peter* in a verse-by-verse study. But listen to *verse 16, Chapter 4, 1 Peter*. **“For it is time for judgment to begin with [The family or] house of God. And if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the Gospel of God?”**

Okay, a couple of things here. First, I want to clarify something here that's missed in our understanding culturally, and it has to do with the word “house.” In the Middle East in that

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time, and it's really still the same in modern times, when you say “the house of” you're not talking about a structure or a building, you're talking about a family.

So when I was growing up as a kid and all of my relatives would come over to our house for dinner, they would say something like this in Arabic, Nahn dhahibun alaa bayt abi Wahid. Meaning that we're going to go to the family or house of the father of Wahid. We're going to that family.

Here's another illustration. And I'm hoping this will make some sense. Please help me, Holy Spirit, make some sense out of this. The Saudi family is the House of Saud, not a house. It's the family of Saud, the Saudi family. The House of Saud: Bayt Saud. Saud: The house or the family.

So when you read *1 Peter (verse) 17*, don't see it as the House of God, the church of God. It's the family of God. Because this is not the house of the Lord. This is not His house; we're His house. We're the temple of the Holy Spirit. We house the Holy Spirit, if you prefer. We're the family of God. So the judgment is going to begin in My family, My people, the brothers and sisters in the family of God, the children of God.

So that kind of changes the complexion a little bit, right? Because it's kind of generic when you say the “house of God.” Well, judgment begins in the “house of God.” And we put the growl into it and everything. But when you understand that God is saying that I'm going to begin this judgment within My people first, My sanctuary.

Oh, did you catch the end? Let me just read it real quick again of *verse 6*. **“So they began with the elders.”** Ooh, that's what I mean by “uncomfortable” because the elders, the teachers, the pastors, they're held to a higher standard and judged more strictly, as James would say. So that's where I'm going to start.

Now, here's where I'm going with this. And I said all of that to say this. I think that's happening right now. Would you agree? There's already now, I think the heavy hand of God's judgment on His people, and it's beginning with the elders and the pastors and the leaders. And the heavy hand of God is coming down on the people of God, the family of God.

And I would even venture to say that over the last maybe three-plus years, we've seen this. Again, it's very — this hits home, no pun intended, But I've watched it. There's kind of a sifting and not a separating. I'm not talking about wheats from tares. I mean, these are brothers and sisters. These are children of God. These are — these are believers. They're part of the family of God. But it seems that God is going to set His own house, His own family in order before He goes to the outside of His family.

And as Peter writes, it's going to start with us. And can you imagine if it's going to start with us, what it's going to be like for those who are not of us? But that — that makes sense, right? And is that not consistent with who God is and how God is?

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When you get into the pastoral epistles as they're affectionately referred to, Titus and Timothy, where they have the qualifications for the elders, they have to have their house in order, their families have to be in order because you cannot lead in the church of God if you are unable to lead in your own family.

You're basically disqualified because how do you expect to have a leadership position in the church if you're not taking that leadership position in your home? If your house is not in order, your family is not in order, if there's disorder, then you're disqualified because everything that God does is decently and in order.

And there has to be — I'm going a little bit further, but maybe I need to. And this is why I just kindly ask that you bear with me just a little bit on this real quick. This God ordained authority structure: I tell you; this is why it is I believe, that God is now bringing about the judgment on His own people, chief of whom are the leaders who have — you'll forgive me, abdicated their God-given authority as pastors and elders and leaders of the church of God.

And God has to deal with that. He has to set that in order because right now there's disorder that will always ensue because the authority structure is the glue. That's what keeps everything in place. And when you are outside of the spout where God's blessing comes out, you'll have nothing but chaos and disorder.

I wonder why, perhaps could it be that we need look no further than to this for the condition of the church of Jesus Christ today? Sunday I'm going to preach — I'm not gonna — we don't have — we have three chapters to go through. Stop doing that. Maybe this is another topic for another time.

Let me just kind of close this file real quick so we can move on and suffice it to say that this is one of those principles that you don't break. It breaks you. You go up against it; it's not going to end well for you. God has set in order His structure.

And when you don't fall in line with that or you abdicate your responsibility for that, well then God has to — has to come in and get His own house in order, His own family in order. And that's why the judgment will begin in My sanctuary, says the Lord, and among My elders, says the Lord. It will begin with My family.

Verse 6, "Then He said to them, [This gets a little bit graphic] 'Defile the temple, and fill the courts with the slain. Go out!' And they went out and killed in the city. So it was, that while they were killing them, I [Ezekiel] was left alone, and I fell on my face and cried out and said, 'Ah, Lord God! Will You destroy all the remnant of Israel in pouring out Your fury on Jerusalem?'"

[You got to know this is just heart wrenching for Ezekiel to be shown all of this] Then He said to me, [Verse 9] 'The iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah is exceedingly great, and the land is full of bloodshed, and the city full of perversity; for they say, 'The Lord has forsaken the land, and the Lord does not see!'

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And [Verse 10] as for Me also, My eye will neither spare, nor will I have pity but I will recompense their deeds on their own head.’ Just then, [Verse 11] the man clothed with linen, who had the inkhorn at his side, reported back and said, “I have done as You commanded me.”

So the chapter ends with what I'll refer to as the final report, or if you prefer, the final account. Why do I emphasize that? Because God said it. That settled it. Let it be said. Let it be done. I did what you commanded me to do. It's done. There's a reporting back. There's an accounting that's taking place here.

Chapter 10, verse 1, “And I looked, and there in the firmament that was above the head of the cherubim, there appeared something like a sapphire stone, having the appearance of the likeness of a throne. Then He spoke [Verse 2] to the man clothed with linen, and said, ‘Go in among the wheels, under the cherub, fill your hands with coals of fire from among the cherubim, and scatter them over the city.’

And he went in as I watched. Now [Verse 3] the cherubim were standing on the south side of the temple when the man went in, and the cloud filled the inner court. Then the glory of the Lord went up from the cherub, and paused over the threshold of the temple, and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the Lord's glory. And the sound of the wings of the cherubim was heard even in the outer court, like the voice of Almighty God when He speaks.

Then it happened, [Verse 6] when He commanded the man clothed in linen... [Man, I would love to have seen this guy] [Had to be awesome, right?] [So] when He commanded the man clothed in linen, saying, 'Take fire' [Hang on to that fire for a minute] 'Take fire from among the wheels, from among the cherubim,' that he went in and stood beside the wheels. And the cherub stretched out his hand from among the cherubim to the fire that was among the cherubim, and took some of it and put it into the hands of the man clothed with linen, who took it and went out. The cherubim appeared to have the form of a man's hand under their wings.

And when I looked [Verse 9] there were four wheels...”

This is going to sound an awful lot like *Chapter 1*. That's because it's an awful lot like *Chapter 1*. It's the same vision.

“...four wheels by the cherubim, one wheel by one cherub, and another wheel by each other cherub. The wheels appeared to have the color of a beryl stone. As for their appearance, [Verse 10] all four looked alike—as it were, a wheel in the middle of a wheel. When they went, they went toward any of their four directions. They did not turn aside when they went, but followed in the direction the head was facing. [Them are some wheels!] They did not turn aside when they went.

And their whole body, [Verse 12] with their back, their hands, their wings, and the wheels that the four had, were full of eyes all around. As for the wheels, they were called in my

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hearing, **“Wheel.”** *[That's a firm grasp of the obvious] [Verse 14]* **Each one had four faces: the first face was the face of a cherub, the second face the face of a man, the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle. And the cherubim [Verse 15] were lifted up. This was the living creature I saw by the River Chebar. [And he's going to repeat that again in verse 16]**

When the cherubim went, the wheels went beside them, and when the cherubim lifted their wings to mount up from the earth, the same wheels also did not turn from beside them. When the cherubim stood still, the wheels stood still, and when one was lifted up, the other lifted itself up, for the spirit of the living creature was in them.

Then [Verse 18] the glory of the Lord departed from the threshold of the temple and stood over the cherubim. And the cherubim [Verse 19] lifted their wings and mounted up from the earth in my sight. [He's watching all of this] When they went out, the wheels were beside them, and they stood at the door of the east gate of the Lord's house, and the glory of the God of Israel was above them. This is the living creature I saw under the God of Israel by the River Chebar, and I knew they were cherubim.

Each one had four faces and each one four wings, and the likeness of the hands of a man was under their wings. And the likeness of their faces was the same as the faces which I had seen by the River Chebar, their appearance and their persons. They each went straight forward.”

So that ends *Chapter 10* with yet another prophetic parallel that points to how it ends with Ezekiel's vision of the four creatures of John's Revelation vision. Let me expound just briefly on that.

And we did go in depth into this in *Chapter 1*, but we have these same four living creatures that are in the vision in the Revelation given to John. And these four living creatures with their four faces, their appearances are a powerful, profound, prophetic picture of the four gospels and also in the shape of a cross. The cross of Christ is all throughout, and it's such a powerful prophetic picture. And God is giving Ezekiel this vision, this revelation.

Why?

Because he knows Ezekiel is going to need this, as we've talked about. He's going to need this to get through that which God has called him to. He's preparing Ezekiel for that which is being prepared for Ezekiel. It just — from here on out — and we'll see — oh, yeah — next week — spoiler alert — *Chapter 12*.

It's going to be very interesting because he's basically now on the front lines and visual prophecies, but he's eyeball to eyeball and belly to belly, more so belly to belly for guys like me with all of these mockers, scoffers, all of these false prophets that were telling the people, they're in Babylon, “Hey, you guys, don't buy houses, don't have children, don't get too settled. We're not going to be here that long.”

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“Wait, wait, wait, wait, wait, Jeremiah 40-plus years, said no, we're going to be here for a while. In fact, at my age, I'll never see Jerusalem again. I hear Ezekiel got to see it. God took him on a round trip, you know, to Jerusalem, but he got to see it. And from what I hear, you don't want to see it.”

But all of these false prophets were telling the people that were taken captive there in Babylon, “Hey, don't listen to Jeremiah. Don't listen to Ezekiel. Don't listen to Daniel either.”

Because Ezekiel is now tasked with this calling to preach the truth and prophesy truth that Jerusalem is going to be destroyed. You ain't going back. And even if you were to go back, you would have nothing to go back to because it's just a matter of time, and it's going to be burned, burned with fire.

That's another prophetic parallel. And this comports with Peter again. The first destruction in God's judgment was with the flood. Not again. This time it will be by fire, and it will be a fire so intense with such heat that it will melt the elements. It's going to be destroyed by fire, a picture, a type of a prophetic parallel.

And Ezekiel is being shown this, why?

Because the time is coming not too far away, where Ezekiel is going to be in the, no pun intended, heat of the battle in the midst of all of this. And he's prophesying this, and then it happens. It happens. And those captives in Babylon know and hear about that which happens in Jerusalem to Jerusalem — their temple.

Oh, God would never do that. We're His people. This is His temple. This is His city. That's not going to happen. Don't listen to them.

Oh, really? No, it will happen. And then it does happen. And Ezekiel is going to need a strength that only comes from God to be able to remain steadfast and stand strong in the face of all that is going to come at him, all that he will be faced with, all that is going to come against him. And God is giving him this to strengthen him before he needs this.

And God does that in our lives, does He not? Because God knows the end from the beginning. God knows what's coming in your life. And He loves us so much. He does not want us to be ill-prepared. So He's going to go before us because He is for us, and He's going to prepare us for that which is prepared for us.

And like with Ezekiel, He's going to allow us to see things to strengthen us. So there's a sense, really a discernment of sorts whereby you just have this sense that God is readying me and steadying me for something, and then it happens, and you're like, okay, now I get it. Thank you, Lord! Because I would have been completely blindsided by this had You not gone before me and prepared me for this.

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And it's always proportionate. And by that I mean, God will proportionate to that which He's preparing you for He will equip you for. He's going to give you everything you need so that you have what you need at the time that you need it.

I mean, as a parent, wouldn't you do that for your kids? Hey, you're going to need this. So you give what they — you know they're going to need to them so they have it when they need it. Because I would rather you have it and not need it, than need it and not have it.

And I would be derelict. That's a whole — I hate that word, by the way. That's one of those words that just sounds horrible, doesn't it? It's one of those words that just — you're derelict. What's derelict? It's one of those — never mind. Just I don't know — pray for me.

Chapter 11, verse 1, “Then the Spirit lifted me up and brought me to the East Gate of the Lord’s house, which faces eastward...”

There's a lot of specificity here. You get the impression that Ezekiel kind of knew the layout, the lay of the land.

[So he] “brought me to the East Gate of the Lord’s house...” [A lot of memories there]

I'm sorry; I'm kind of parenthetically speaking for Ezekiel. So he's brought to the East Gate. Oh, can you imagine Ezekiel reminiscing? Oh, I remember. This is my old stomping grounds, man.

“The East Gate of the Lord’s house, which faces eastward.” *[Which is why it's the East Gate]*

And I read the verse. I'm not — that's — I didn't...

“And there at the door of the gate were 25 men, [Remember these guys] among whom I saw Jaazaniah the son of Azzur, and Pelatiah the son of Benaiah, princes of the people. [Now watch this] And He said to me: ‘Son of man, these are the men who devise iniquity and give wicked counsel in this city, who say, ‘The time is not near to build houses; this city is the caldron, and we are the meat.’”

In other words, we're protected as meat in the midst of the caldron; we're untouchable. We're invincible. Nah, it's not near, it's not going to happen.

Is that not a prophetic parallel? How pronounced is this prophetic parallel? This goes back to what I just shared with you about the judgment of God being first in the family of God. And you've got pastors today who are basically saying, Nah, we got another 50, 100 years.

Really? No, it's not near.

Nah, it's not going to happen.

Oh, yeah? Yeah, we got to, you know, think about the next generation. Excuse me, this is the last generation, the chosen generation; we are it. How about that? Yeah, nope, it's not.

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50 years. How do you get even 20 years? I'm even going to say 10 years. How do you get to 10 years from now?

Pastor, you're getting a little bit — um, you're kinda sounding a little bit like date-setting.

No, I'm not. No, I'm not. Sorry if that sounded mean, but I'm not!

[Laughter]

And here's why. Because look at just the last ten years. Hello? (Stumbling over words)

And by the way, it's not an equivalent. You cannot take the next ten years and superimpose them on the last ten years. It doesn't work like that because there's this speeding up.

What's happened in the last ten years has been exponentially faster and swifter, and it will make the ten years untenable, for lack of a better word.

What do you mean?

Well, I — first of all, you exceed what the Bible says the time of the end will be like because the Bible describes what the end will look like and be like and that's now. Am I right? That's like right now. This is why I refer to Bible prophecy as having a shelf life, an expiration date. It's a strike while the iron is hot. Everything is in motion now. The momentum is there. Everything is in place.

You can't just push the pause button because the fast-forward button has already been pushed. It's on fast-forward. And if you fast-forward another ten years, you're past the point where the Bible says this is the time of end, this is the point of the end. Just in ten years.

Can I just take it one step further? Why not? We'll get there, don't worry. Don't look at your watches.

Ten years ago was 2013. Ho! That was a long time ago. 2000 — 10 years ago was 2013. Can I just ask you lovingly, humbly, rhetorically how much has happened since 2013? Well, let's just try to put it into perspective. The technology: Just the technology alone, 2013? (Chuckling)

Let me ask you this. Well, do you own an electronic device that you acquired in 2013? Do you still have that?

[Laughter]

Thank you. That answers my question. Case closed. Enough said. (Frustrated sigh) I don't know why I do that to you and to myself, but I do.

“Therefore [Verse 4, moving right along] prophesy against them, prophesy, O son of man!”
Then the Spirit of the Lord fell upon me, and said to me, “Speak! ‘Thus says the Lord:
“Thus you have said, O house of Israel; for I know the things that come into your mind.
You have multiplied your slain in this city, and you have filled its streets with the slain.”

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Therefore [Verse 6] thus says the Lord God: “Your slain whom you have laid in its midst, they are the meat, and this city is the cauldron, but I shall bring you out of the midst of it. You have feared the sword; and I will bring a sword upon you,” says the Lord God.

“And [Verse 9] I will bring you out of its midst, and deliver you into the hands of strangers, and execute judgments on you. You shall fall by the sword. I will judge you at the border of Israel. Then you shall know that I am the Lord. This city [Verse 11] shall not be your cauldron, nor shall you be the meat in its midst.”

You see what God just did there? Here, they're using this, this analogy, this saying at the time, you're as safe as meat in the cauldron. And God says, no, you're not. That's what you think? Or really? Well, you're not the meat in the midst of the cauldron, safe. No, you are the cauldron. And I'm going to take the meat out of its midst.

“And I will judge you at the border of Israel. And you shall know [Verse 12] that I am the Lord; for you have not walked in My statutes nor executed My judgments, but have done according to the customs of the Gentiles which are all around you.”

This is sadly yet another prophetic parallel that's tucked into these verses, and it's that of the last days church becoming like the world all around it. And that's all — I won't — I could — you know I could. I'm very capable. It's a gift. I won't. But I will say this.

You don't have to look too far. The church has become like the world to win the world, but we'll never win the world because why would the world want to go to the church when it's like the world?

Let me try that again. I can maybe say the same thing a better way. So the church has become like the Gentiles all around them. So we need to kind of get with the program here. We need to up our game, and we need to get some fast-moving music, and we need to keep it moving and keep it fast.

We need to be relevant. Relevant. That's what we need to be, relevant, you know, seeker-sensitive. We need to be seeker-sensitive to the culture. So we just kind of tone it down, kind of soften it up so it's more amicable, more palatable.

So people will want to come because, I mean, come on! You think people are going to want to come on a Thursday night, no less? You know what's on TV on Thursday night? This is before Netflix.

I know I'm old fashioned. Wait.

For what?

Well, there's going to be this really neat, heart-for-worship worship leader that loves the Lord with all of his heart that's going to just simply worship and lead people into worship.

Wait, you don't have a band and a smoke machine and a strobe light?

No, not here.

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Wow!

And then you're going to get a guy — yeah, get a load of this guy. He's going to get up there, and he's going to go on and on and on in the Old Testament. You know, the Old Testament? The thing about the Old Testament is it's old. You know, come on!

Three chapters? Yeah, no, uh-huh. That's not for me. I'm not feeling it.

Oh, really?

So here's the pastor now, and I do feel genuinely sorry for them because I know of the pressure that is on them. So they lose confidence in the power of the Word of God, and they resort to all of these other gimmicks and become like the world under the banner of wanting to be attractive to the world, sensitive to the world.

And so the world's going, well, why bother? I mean, there's no difference. There's no contrast. There's no — I mean, you're too much like the world God's calling me out of. You're bringing me right back into it. And by the way, it's... (Frustrated sigh)

When the church tries to compete with the world, it ain't going to happen. And this is my — this is personally my problem, the problem I have, and this is between me and the Lord. I'm just being very open with you. I have a real problem with motion pictures that try to compete with Satanic Hollywood. Because they end up doing more damage than good.

The acting is horrible. I'm sorry. It's horrible. And it's — you're trying — wait, you're trying to — no. Why don't you just preach the word? Stop trying to be like them, be like the Gentiles all around you, do according to what they do.

Well, this is what the world does.

Well, don't do that. Why do you want to do that? You're watering it down. You're marring it. You're profaning it.

You know what “profaning” means? It means to make common. You're bringing it down to a lower level. That's profane. You're making it common. It's sacred. It's holy. It's holy.

And one last thing. Famous last words, “one last thing,” you know.

And again, I do know the pressure, and I'm not above it. It is crushing, the pressure as a pastor, especially in this world that we're living in, to acquiesce to this and lose confidence in. You know what? I'm just going to keep my hands to the plow. I'm going to preach the word. I'm going to stay true to the word of God because the word of God will never return void.

And I don't care; I might be an Ezekiel, or how about the book we just finished before Ezekiel? Lamentations.

Is that even book?

Yeah. How about the Book of Numbers?

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What's that about?

Well, numbers. One of the most fascinating books in all of the Bible. How about you just trust the Word of God and the God of the Word and let Him do what He's going to do? Because God's word is alive. You don't have to help God out.

Just let the word out. You let the lion out! And let — I hate clocks. There's no clocks in heaven, by the way. Do you know that? Right? Makes sense, right? Because it's eternity. There's no time. Nobody's going to have a watch in heaven. That alone.

Verse 11, **“This city shall not be your cauldron.”** Did I already do that one? I did.

“And you shall...” I already did that one. Okay, well, why am I going backwards then?

Verse 13, **“Now it happened, while I was prophesying, that Pelatiah the son of Benaiah died. Then I fell on my face and cried with a loud voice, and said, ‘Ah, Lord God! Will You make a complete end of the remnant of Israel?’”**

One of the reasons why I wanted to bring in the emotions of this man, this young man, Ezekiel, is because he knew these guys. This wasn't just his old stomping grounds. These are — these are his friends, and he knows them. Can you imagine how hard that would have been? I would venture to say he knew this Pelatiah, the son of Benaiah. And he dies?

No wonder Ezekiel cries, **“Lord! Will You make a complete end of the remnant of Israel?”** **Again the word of the Lord came to me, saying, [Verse 14] ‘Son of man, [Verse 15] your brethren, your relatives, your countrymen, and all the house of Israel in its entirety, are those about whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said, ‘Get far away from the Lord; this land has been given to us as a possession.’”**

Therefore say, [Verse 16] ‘Thus says the Lord God: ‘Although I have cast them far off among the Gentiles, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet I shall be a little sanctuary for them in the countries where they have gone.’”

Don't miss this in *verse 15*. They're the ones that said, **“Get away from me, Lord.”**

I'm not going to force Myself on them, Ezekiel. I'm not going to make a complete end of them. **“I am going to be a little sanctuary for them in the countries where they've gone.”** I'm not going to forsake My people. They've forsaken Me; they've turned their backs on Me.

Therefore, *[Verse 17]* say, **Thus says the Lord God: “I will gather you from the peoples, assemble you from the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.”** **And they will go there, and they will take away all its detestable things and all its abominations from there.”**

Ooh! Can't wait! Did that happen? You better believe it happened.

“Then [Keyword, verse 19] Then I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within them, and take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them a heart of flesh that they

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may walk in My statutes and keep My judgments and do them; And they shall be My people, and I will be their God."

This is what I wanted all along, Ezekiel. I want to restore them. And this is a magnificent, prophetic parallel that points to the end when at the end of the tribulation, God restores Israel, He's going to restore them. The whole house of Israel, family of Israel will be saved at the end of the tribulation when He restores them. **"They shall be my people and I will be their God."**

Here's the thing Ezekiel: I have an everlasting covenant with them. You know what an everlasting covenant is? Again, I know deeply profound, but it's a covenant that lasts forever. Forever. And it's a covenant. And God can't break His covenant with His people. God is not through with the Jew, as some would have you to believe, by the way. It's a very demonic teaching, false teaching called Replacement Theology, where the church replaces the Jew as God's people.

Don't do that. No wonder you've got to go through the tribulation because if you replace the Jewish nation, and the purpose of the tribulation is for the salvation of the Jewish nation, then I guess you're going into the tribulation.

That's why the Replacement Theology false teachers will never talk about or teach a pre-tribulation rapture. They can't because it doesn't fit their twisted theology. They've twisted eschatology into a false prophetic pretzel.

Wow, that's got a ring to it! Take that note too, Kapon. I don't know if you can work that in: Pretzel and cried and sighed. That's too much.

Verse 21, "But as for those whose hearts follow the desire for their detestable things and their abominations, I will recompense their deeds on their own heads," says the Lord God."

It's their choice. **"Choose you this day whom you're going to serve. As for me and my house, [My family] we're going to serve the Lord."** It's your choice. I've given you free will. I'm not going to force My will on you. So it's your choice.

So *verse 22*, Ezekiel continues. This is the return flight. **"So the cherubim lifted up their wings, with the wheels beside them, and the glory of the God of Israel was high above them. And the glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the city and stood on the mountain, which is on the east side of the city. Then [Verse 24] the Spirit took me up and brought me in a vision by the Spirit of God into Chaldea, to those in captivity."**

And this time at least He didn't take him by the hair. No, on the trip there to Jerusalem from Babylon, He picks him up by his hair. Come on, let's go. Well, this time He just takes him up. I don't know; maybe it ripped the hair out. Nevermind.

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“Brings me in a vision by the Spirit of God.” *[He's taken back to now Babylon, to those in captivity]* **And the vision that I had seen went up from me. So** *[Verse 25, last verse]* **I spoke to those in captivity of all the things the Lord had shown me.”**

Who's he talking about? Well, now that he's back, he's sitting with the elders. Remember, he was in the house with these guys, his friends, and he's just been taken and shown all of these things. And now he's taken back, and he's going to now speak to them about **“all the things the Lord had shown me.”**

That's the last prophetic parallel we end with, and it points to the end, which speaks to the paramount importance of speaking about and teaching on Bible prophecy. Now, you know, I could go on another hour just on that. I won't. There's hope.

But here's another one for you. I hope it doesn't sound like I'm beating up on the church. I'm really not. But this is an indictment on the church You would not even believe, and I'll close with this, you would not even believe the voluminous emails and comments we receive on a daily basis. I'm not exaggerating when I say this. It's over a thousand emails that we receive or comments on a daily basis.

Do you know what percentage of those say something to this effect? Nobody's talking about Bible prophecy

[Laughter]

Yeah because I guess they think we've got another 50 years. So just chill out. Calm down, carry on. Nothing to see here. Nothing to see here?

Excuse me? You're not going to talk about Bible prophecy at a time when Bible prophecy is being fulfilled at breakneck speed? What is up with that? Boy, I tell you, the Lord has to — and has — He's always so gracious and gentle when He does, but He's just had to settle my heart.

And I think I've shared this before. That's not on me. That's not on me. What's that to you? When Peter was all upset about Jesus telling John something — there was a — I know they loved each other, Peter and John, but I think at the beginning, they had issues, those guys, I don't think — I think it was a testy relationship between Peter and John.

Because you read John's gospel, and he's not very — doesn't shed Peter in a very favorable light, you know? And it's very subtle, you know: **“And the disciples and Peter.”** No, for real, and not just once, several times, **“The disciples and Peter”** — you know?

And then when on Resurrection morning, on that Sunday morning, John in his gospel makes it very clear that he got to the tomb before Peter did. I don't know; I'm just saying there's something there.

So what's your point, Pastor? And will you please close like you said?

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Yes, I will. You're in a time for which the Bible has more to say than any other period of time in human history, and you're not talking about it? Here's how God settled me and has to — it's a process continually, keyword, continually.

When John was told by Jesus, just between the two of them, Peter heard it, and then Peter went to Jesus and said, What's up with this? And what was Jesus' response to Peter? What's that to you?

Well, guess who's Peter in this story? Lord, they're not teaching Bible prophecy!

What's that to you? You just do what I've called you to. You don't worry about them. That's between Me and them.

That settles me. It's kind of like, good! It's between you and God, bro, He just said it's between you guys. But anyway.... I better end. I'm going to get myself in a lot of trouble. I'm already in trouble.

Kapono, come on up. Stand up. Thank you for your grace, your patience. You're very gracious to me, very patient with me and my idiosyncrasies, of which there are many.

Father in heaven, thank You. Wow! Wow, wow, wow! A lot here tonight, Lord. And certainly it parallels everything that is happening in our world today, and rightfully so. Lord, I pray that we'll take this to heart and take heed to this.

And Lord, if anything, I pray that it just brings into clearer focus Bible prophecy and the time of the end that we're living in now. Just the parallels that resembled the time of the end for them then and how it looks and is at this time now. So Lord, thank You.

Thank You so much for showing us that which You showed to Ezekiel so that we can see what's coming. And if anything, I'm sure it had the effect on Ezekiel that it should also have on us. And that effect was to have Ezekiel just finally let go of his beloved Jerusalem and the temple that he would have served in.

Lord, I pray that that's the effect that this has on us, that we let go of this world, the things of this world, knowing that we're not here for much longer, if at all, that we would not hold on too tightly because this is not our home. We're just passing through. Thank You for that much-needed reminder, Lord, tonight, in Jesus' name, Amen.