

Thursday Evening Bible Study

Series: the End Times – Bible prophecy about future events and periods

Teaching Summary for Week 38

The Kingdom and the Covenants

Part 6. The future Messianic Kingdom in Old Testament prophecy

Five major subjects in the future prophesied Kingdom

5. The **Temple**: Worship in the Millennial Kingdom

i. The **River (Eze 47:1-12)**

This passage can be read as is without much comment.

Ezek 47:1-12

47 Then he brought me back to the door of the house; and behold, water was flowing from under the threshold of the house toward the east, for the house faced east. And the water was flowing down from under, from the right side of the house, from south of the altar. 2 He brought me out by way of the north gate and led me around on the outside to the outer gate by way of the gate that faces east. And behold, water was trickling from the south side.

3 When the man went out toward the east with a line in his hand, he measured a thousand cubits, and he led me through the water, water reaching the ankles. 4 Again he measured a thousand and led me through the water, water reaching the knees. Again he measured a thousand and led me through the water, water reaching the loins. 5 Again he measured a thousand; and it was a river that I could not ford, for the water had risen, enough water to swim in, a river that could not be forded.

6 He said to me, "Son of man, have you seen this?" Then he brought me back to the bank of the river. 7 Now when I had returned, behold, on the bank of the river there were very many trees on the one side and on the other. 8 Then he said to me, "These waters go out toward the eastern region and go down into the Arabah; then they go toward the sea, being made to flow into the sea, and the waters of the sea become fresh. 9 "It will come about that every living creature which swarms in every place where the river goes, will live. And there will be very many fish, for these waters go there and the others become fresh; so everything will live where the river goes. 10 "And it will come about that fishermen will stand beside it; from Engedi to Eneglaim there will be a place for the spreading of nets. Their fish will be according to their kinds, like the fish of the Great Sea, very many. 11 "But its swamps and marshes will not become fresh; they will be left for salt. 12 "By the river on its bank, on one side and on the other, will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither and their fruit will not fail. They will bear every month because their water flows from the sanctuary, and their fruit will be for food and their leaves for healing."

There is also a river in Revelation 22.

Rev 22:1-2

22 Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, 2 in the middle of its street. On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. 3

There is some similarity between the two rivers. However, the differences are striking.

There are tree leaves on either side of both rivers. The leaves of the trees are for healing.

However, Ezekiel sees all kinds of trees, while John in Revelation 22 describes one tree – the tree of life.

The trees bear fruit every month. However, Ezekiel says that the fruit is for food, but John leaves that out.

The Millennial River flows out from the Temple.

The River in the New Jerusalem flows from the Throne.

And there is no temple building in the New Jerusalem:

Rev 21:22

22 I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.

The Millennial River will flow in two directions toward two seas: the Mediterranean and the Dead Sea.

However, there will be no sea in the new heavens and the new earth.

Rev 21:1-2

21 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. 2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband.

The River in Rev 22 is in the New Jerusalem, which will exist for all of eternity.

The New Jerusalem is a very different city from the Millennial Jerusalem.

Take its size.

The New Jerusalem will be a three-dimensional cube of incredible size: The length, width and height will each be 1,500 miles long!!!

The International Space Station is 250 miles above earth.

That means that to get to the top of the New Jerusalem, you would have to ascend to a height six times higher than the International Space Station.

Ankara, Turkey to Mecca, Saudi Arabia

Cairo, Egypt to Tehran, Iran

[See map]

Part 7. The Tribulation period

Opening the eyes of our hearts

This will be very different way of beginning a study.

Because studying the Tribulation can get overwhelming at times.
So we need a place of simplicity and rest to return to when it becomes so.

It's the place where our hearts become open once again to what really matters.

And what really matters is how **God sees** the Tribulation Period.

So, to begin – three poems.

I saw You

I saw You when Your fingers made a star
I saw You

I saw You when chaste wisdom kissed your cheek
I saw You

I saw You when You crafted Adam's rib
And wiped that woman's tears
And called your good friend Lazarus to live
I saw You

I saw You when You nodded Yes to Me
Convulsed in pools of tears and blood and sweat
The next day hoisted half-dead on the wood
I saw You

And I saw You when I raised you from the tomb

And brought You back to live with Me in bliss

I vowed that I would one day make things right
When Tribulation fire consumes Your foes
To clear a path for mighty rolling streams
Of righteousness and justice and redemption.

A terrifying beauty

Man's terror
God's beauty

Eyes on the Lamb
As we dive
Into the pool of Revelation

We will find God raw there

Raw wounds
Raw wrath
Raw love

Soon to be poured out
In Tribulation

The beauty of God
Is not His rage
But rather His long-suffering

How much He is willing
To hold back,
And for how long.

Until He can no longer wait
Releasing the tidal wave
Of His gigantic love

For all that is His Son
Which comes as fits of anger
For all that which is not.

My Son! My Son! I love you so.
My rage is now aroused!
It strikes each enemy of Yours
Look! I have crushed them down!

And now all that remains of them
Will slide beneath Your feet.
So rest those once-pierced feet My Son
Son of My raging love,
The love that did annihilate
Those raging sons of wrath.

Psalm 2

1 Why are the nations in an uproar
And the peoples devising a vain thing?
2 The kings of the earth take their stand
And the rulers take counsel together
Against the Lord and against His Anointed, saying,
3 "Let us tear their fetters apart
And cast away their cords from us!"
4 He who sits in the heavens laughs,
The Lord scoffs at them. 5
Then He will speak to them in His anger
And terrify them in His fury, saying,
6 "But as for Me, I have installed My King
Upon Zion, My holy mountain."
7 "I will surely tell of the decree of the Lord:
He said to Me, 'You are My Son,
Today I have begotten You.
8 'Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance,
And the very ends of the earth as Your possession.

9 'You shall break them with a rod of iron,
You shall shatter them like earthenware.'"
10 Now therefore, O kings, show discernment;
Take warning, O judges of the earth.
11 Worship the Lord with reverence
And rejoice with trembling.
12 Do homage to the Son, that He not become angry, and you perish in the way,
For His wrath may soon be kindled.
How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!

Introduction to the Tribulation

When people first learn the Bible, they often get the impression that the Tribulation is only described in the book of Revelation.

But this is far from the case. Information about the Tribulation period can be found throughout the Bible.

The books of the Old Testament prophets are teeming with descriptions of the Tribulation. It's found in Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Joel, Zephaniah and Zechariah, as well as others.

In the New Testament, Jesus taught about it, and so did Peter in the book of Acts, as well as Paul in his second letter to the Thessalonians.

As a matter of fact, a lot more is written about the Tribulation outside of Revelation than inside that book.

The Old Testament prophets describe a period that precedes the Messianic Kingdom.

It is a period of calamity (Oba 12-14), vengeance (Isa 34:8), trouble, wrath, distress, destruction, desolation, darkness, gloominess, clouds, alarm (all in Zeph 1:15).

The prophets call this period **the Day of the LORD**. We will study the Day of the Lord.

It is given several other names in the Bible as well, including the Time of Jacob's Trouble (Jer 30:7), the Day of the LORD's wrath (Zeph 1:18), The Tribulation (Deut 4:30, Mat 24:29), and the Great Tribulation (Mat 24:21, Rev 2:22, 7:14).

Here's how the book of Joel describes the Day of the Lord:

Joel 2:1-11

1 Blow a trumpet in Zion,
And sound an alarm on My holy mountain!
Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble,
For the **day of the Lord** is coming;
Surely it is near,
2 A day of darkness and gloom,
A day of clouds and thick darkness.
As the dawn is spread over the mountains,
So there is a great and mighty people;
There has never been anything like it,
Nor will there be again after it
To the years of many generations.
3 A fire consumes before them
And behind them a flame burns.
The land is like the garden of Eden before them
But a desolate wilderness behind them,
And nothing at all escapes them.
4 Their appearance is like the appearance of horses;
And like war horses, so they run.
5 With a noise as of chariots
They leap on the tops of the mountains,
Like the crackling of a flame of fire consuming the stubble,
Like a mighty people arranged for battle.
6 Before them the people are in anguish;
All faces turn pale.
7 They run like mighty men,

They climb the wall like soldiers;
And they each march in line,
Nor do they deviate from their paths.
8 They do not crowd each other,
They march everyone in his path;
When they burst through the defenses,
They do not break ranks.

9 They rush on the city,
They run on the wall;
They climb into the houses,
They enter through the windows like a thief.

10 Before them the earth quakes,
The heavens tremble,
The sun and the moon grow dark
And the stars lose their brightness.

11 The Lord utters His voice before His army;
Surely His camp is very great,
For strong is he who carries out His word.
The **day of the Lord** is indeed great and very awesome,
And who can endure it?

If you have studied Revelation, you may have noticed some parallels between Joel here and the book of Revelation.

Which ones did you pick up on?

Then in chapter 3 of the book of Joel, we learn that the Tribulation is followed immediately by the Second Coming of Christ:

Joel 3:9-21

9 Proclaim this among the nations:
Prepare a war; rouse the mighty men!
Let all the soldiers draw near, let them come up!

10 Beat your plowshares into swords
And your pruning hooks into spears;
Let the weak say, "I am a mighty man."
11 Hasten and come, all you surrounding nations,
And gather yourselves there.
Bring down, O Lord, Your mighty ones.
12 Let the nations be aroused
And come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat,
For there I will sit to judge
All the surrounding nations.
13 Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe.
Come, tread, for the wine press is full;
The vats overflow, for their wickedness is great.
14 Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision!
For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision.
15 The sun and moon grow dark
And the stars lose their brightness.
16 The Lord roars from Zion
And utters His voice from Jerusalem,
And the heavens and the earth tremble.
But the Lord is a refuge for His people
And a stronghold to the sons of Israel.
17 Then you will know that I am the Lord your God,
Dwelling in Zion, My holy mountain.
So Jerusalem will be holy,
And strangers will pass through it no more.

18 And in that day
The mountains will drip with sweet wine,
And the hills will flow with milk,
And all the brooks of Judah will flow with water;
And a spring will go out from the house of the Lord
To water the valley of Shittim.
19 Egypt will become a waste,
And Edom will become a desolate wilderness,
Because of the violence done to the sons of Judah,
In whose land they have shed innocent blood.