

Lesson Five — His Return

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In the past four weeks of study we have looked at the various aspects of the Messiah. We have look at

- The forerunner of the Christ,
- The birth of the Christ,
- The life of the Christ, and
- The death of the Christ.

This week we are going to look at a few (of the many) passages in Scripture dealing with the return of Christ and His coming Kingdom. The one thing to remember this week is something Peter said concerning prophecy. In making reference to the prophecies concerning the coming Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ in chapter one of his second letter, Peter said:

II Peter 1

20 But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, 21 for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

And this is just what we will do — we will understand that it doesn't matter what any one man says about prophecy — or what any one Church or denomination might say about prophecy, for that matter — it only matters what the Word of God says about it! Therefore, we'll take a brief look at prophecy concerning the coming Kingdom, by briefly comparing Scripture with Scripture, thereby building a framework of Truth concerning the return of the Messiah.

Please remember to pray as you proceed forward with study. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you into all truth.

Day One — The Coming Kingdom — Is it Figurative or Literal?

The second epistle written by Peter presents the matter of the coming Kingdom in a most concise, overall manner. In II Peter chapter one, Peter tells his readers *how to have a more abundant entrance* into this Kingdom (the topic of study on Day Five this week); and in speaking of these things, Peter says that, as long as he is alive, he will always be ready to remind his readers of things pertaining to the coming Kingdom (1:12-14); and the reason he would continue to remind them of these things is so that after his death, these things would be so ingrained in their hearts that they would *never* be able to forget them (II Pet. 1:10-15). Then he goes on to say:

II Peter 1

16 For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty. 17 For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory, “This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased” — 18 and we ourselves heard this utterance made from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.

19 And so we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts. 20 But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation, 21 for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

In making known to them “the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ,” what did Peter say he “did not follow”?

According to the passage, how was it that he could say that he “did not follow cleverly devised tales”? How was it that he could *make more sure* (v.9) the issue concerning the power and the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ? What had happened (vv. 16-18)?

Let’s look at the specific event to which Peter was referring in the passage above. Printed below is the extended passage, which will give us some insight into this specific event to which Peter refers in his second letter. Read through the passage carefully, noting points of interest in the margin. Then we will deal with some questions concerning the passage.

NOTES:

Matthew 16

24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. 25 For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake shall find it. 26 For what will a man be profited, if he gains the whole world, and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? 27 For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and WILL THEN RECOMPENSE EVERY

MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS¹. 28 Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who shall not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom.”

Matthew 17

1 And six days later Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John his brother, and brought them up to a high mountain by themselves. 2 And He was transfigured before them; and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light. 3 And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him.

4 And Peter answered and said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, I will make three tabernacles here, one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” 5 While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and behold, a voice out of the cloud, saying, “This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!” 6 And when the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces and were much afraid. 7 And Jesus came to them and touched them and said, “Arise, and do not be afraid.” 8 And lifting up their eyes, they saw no one, except Jesus Himself alone. 9 And as they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, “Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man has risen from the dead.” 10 And His disciples asked Him, saying, “Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?” 11 And He answered and said, “Elijah is coming and will restore all things; 12 but I say to you, that Elijah already came, and they did not recognize him, but did to him whatever they wished. So also the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands.” 13 Then the disciples understood that He had spoken to them about John the Baptist.

According to Jesus’ Own words in Matthew 16:24, what does it take for a person to “come after (or follow)” Christ? In other words, what does it take to *become a disciple of Christ*?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

It is evident in vv. 24-26, that Jesus is dealing with the way a person lives his life in this present age, with a view towards the coming age. As you can see, in this passage, Jesus was speaking to His disciples, *not* explaining to them *how to be saved* (that would be redundant), but rather how to *become His disciples*. Jesus is speaking to saved men, telling them what it takes *to follow Him*.

According to Jesus’ Own words in v. 27, *why* are Christians to do these things?

After this discourse, what happened six days later, or on the seventh day?

¹ In the NASB, capital letters indicate that the phrase is being quoted from the Old Testamen. Some cross references to this quote in the OT are: Job 34:11; Ps 62:12; Pr 24:12; Jer 17:10; 32:19; Da 7:10; Mt 25:31; 26:64; Mr 8:38; Lu 9:26; Ro 2:6; 1Co 3:8; 2Co 5:10; 1Pe 1:17; Jude 1:14; Re 2:23; 22:12.

Think about this for a moment. Jesus lays out a particular order of events in these verses. Note the order:

- In vv. 24-26, He speaks of the present time and how we are to live if we want to follow after Him.
- Then in v. 27, He refers to a future time, i.e., coming judgment of believers.
- Then in v. 28, He refers to a time that will follow the judgment, i.e., His coming Kingdom.

Then there is an event which takes place in 17:1-3 that depicts the culmination of these things — the transfiguration of the Lord Jesus Christ in His Kingdom glory.

Now let's look at the prophetic implications of this passage. With this chronology in mind, go back and reread Matthew 17:1-13. Then answer the following questions.

According to Matthew 17:1, who were the disciples who did not see death before they saw “the Son of Man coming in His kingdom”?

Where had Jesus taken them in order for them to witness this?

Describe Jesus' appearance.

What two men appeared with Jesus at this moment?

What happened in v. 5?

From what we have studied, what would God's Words imply about Jesus? For the answer, we need to remember what God had told King David in II Samuel 7:13-14a. (We studied this on pp. 29-31.) In your own words, relate what God the Father said on the holy mount to what He had previously told David.

Pause for a moment and think about that which these three young men were able to experience. What an effect it had on them! According to v. 6, how did this affect the disciples?

This event had effected these disciples to the point that James, the brother of John, suffered martyrdom for his faith, and the other two, John and Peter, wrote about this event in their writings (John 1:14; II Pet. 1:16-18).

After the moment of transfiguration was over, what was the discussion between Jesus and the disciples all about?

Very shortly after this event, Jesus was crucified. Three days later, He rose from the dead. Forty days later He physically ascended into heaven. Let's read about His ascension.

Acts 1

9 And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. 10 And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was departing, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them; 11 and they also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven."

Now relate all of this back to what Peter said in his second letter in 1:16-21. What correlation do you see?

With just these few passages in mind, do you think God is intending the Church to view this coming Kingdom as figurative or literal?

That's it for the day. I wish we could just keep going, but time constrains us. For the remainder of the week, we will be looking at passages which have to do with the coming Kingdom. Please continue to pray for a greater understanding.

See you tomorrow.

Day Two — Prophecies Concerning the Coming Kingdom, Part 1

Yesterday we perused just a couple of New Testament passages which reveal the obvious literalness of the coming Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. But these few passages in the New Testament are not all we have to go on. No, the Bible — in both Testaments — is replete with information concerning the literal coming Kingdom of God's Beloved Son, and the necessity of our believing it! Scripture says that we would *do well* to keep our eyes open to these things in Scripture. In fact, even in the midst of the text which we studied yesterday in II Peter, Peter says as much to his readers:

And so we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts (II Peter 1:19).

May we do just that — pay attention to the prophetic word!

Today and tomorrow we are going to delve into some Old Testament passages concerning the prophecies of the coming Kingdom in the Book of Daniel. These passages are specifically dealing with prophecy *as it relates to the nation of Israel*.

The difficult thing is to limit this study to only some few passages, and to only these days of homework. But, hopefully, you will see that this brief study of the coming Kingdom will propel you forward to study many passages beyond the ones dealt with in these five days.

The Prophet Daniel records some very important prophecies concerning five kingdoms. The Book of Daniel gives insight into a portion of the history of mankind known as “The Times of the Gentiles.” It spans history from the exile of the Jews into Babylon at the hands of King Nebuchadnezzar to the time Jesus comes back and sets up His Kingdom, though the present dispensation (positioned in an interim time between the death of Jesus and the seven year Tribulation) is not seen in the prophecy.

Daniel was one of the young men taken into exile from his homeland in Jerusalem to Babylon. During Nebuchadnezzar’s reign in Babylon, through various means, God began the process of revealing to Daniel details concerning five world-wide kingdoms, with the most emphasis placed on the fourth and fifth kingdoms throughout the entire book. The first, second and third kingdoms, specifically named in the book, have already taken place in history — the Babylonian kingdom (2:32a, 37-38; 5:18-27; *cf.* 7:4), the Medo-Persian kingdom (2:32b, 39b; 28, 31; 5:28-30; *cf.* 7:5; 8:3-4, 20; 11:2a), and the Grecian kingdom (2:33, 39b; 7:6; 8:5-8, 21-25; 9:20; 10:20; 11:2b-4). Daniel’s writings began during the Babylonian kingdom, and continued into the Medo-Persian kingdom, but his prophetic writings did not stop there; he wrote about times to which he was not witness i.e., the third — the Grecian kingdom, as well as the fourth and fifth kingdoms, which, even today are yet future. Some references concerning the fourth kingdom — a world-wide kingdom² — found throughout the Book of Daniel are 2:33, 35a, 40-43; 7:7-8, 11, 19-26; 8:9-14; 23-26; 9:26b-27; 11:5-12:1; and to the fifth and final kingdom are 2:34, 35b, 44; 7:13, 14, 22, 27.

In Daniel chapter two, King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream that was very disturbing to him, and he sought to find someone who could tell him the dream and interpret it for him. Finally, Daniel was brought before the king, and could relate to the king, both the dream to the king and its interpretation. We’ll drop into the story at this point.

Daniel 2

27 Daniel answered before the king and said, “As for the mystery about which the king has inquired, neither wise men, conjurers, magicians, nor diviners are able to declare it to the king. 28 However, there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will take place in the latter days. This was your dream and the visions in your mind while on your bed. 29 As for you, O king, while on your bed your thoughts turned to what would take place in the future; and He who reveals mysteries has made known to you what will take place. 30 But as for me, this mystery has not been revealed to me for any wisdom residing in me more than in any other living man, but for the purpose of making the interpretation known to the king, and that you may understand the thoughts of your mind.

31 “You, O king, were looking and behold, there was a single great statue; that statue, which was large and of extraordinary splendor, was standing in front of you, and its appearance was awesome. 32 The head of that statue was made of fine gold, its breast and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of bronze, 33 its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. 34 You continued looking until a stone was cut out without hands, and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay, and crushed them. 35 Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were crushed all at the same time, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them was found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the

² Scripture deals with the fourth kingdom in the sense of separate kingdoms which form a one world kingdom (*cf.* Dan. 2:35; 7:27; Rev. 11:15).

whole earth. 36 This was the dream; now we shall tell its interpretation before the king.

Go back and underline what God had made known to Nebuchadnezzar in the first sentence in v. 28?

Now underline the related thoughts in v. 29. Is there any question that God is revealing things that are to take place in the future?

Is there any indication that any part of this should be interpreted figuratively rather than literally?

And it should be no surprise that the interpretation of these things is given within the text of the Book of Daniel:

Daniel 2

37 “You, O king, are the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, the strength, and the glory; 38 and wherever the sons of men dwell, or the beasts of the field, or the birds of the sky, He has given them into your hand and has caused you to rule over them all. You are the head of gold. 39 And after you there will arise another kingdom inferior to you, then another third kingdom of bronze, which will rule over all the earth. 40 Then there will be a fourth kingdom as strong as iron; inasmuch as iron crushes and shatters all things, so, like iron that breaks in pieces, it will crush and break all these in pieces. 41 And in that you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter’s clay and partly of iron, it will be a divided kingdom; but it will have in it the toughness of iron, inasmuch as you saw the iron mixed with common clay. 42 And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of pottery, so some of the kingdom will be strong and part of it will be brittle. 43 And in that you saw the iron mixed with common clay, they will combine with one another in the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, even as iron does not combine with pottery. 44 And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever. 45 Inasmuch as you saw that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold, the great God has made known to the king what will take place in the future; so the dream is true, and its interpretation is trustworthy.”

Go back to vv. 40-44. What is the given time frame when God will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, nor left to another people?

And in v. 45, what specifically had God made known to the king?

Is this to be taken literally or figuratively? What makes you think so?

One of the major ways in which God teaches His people through His Word, is by initially laying out something, then repeating it over and over again, adding details to what had initially been given. We can see examples of this throughout the Book of Daniel. Over and over again, God gives information concerning five world-wide kingdoms. Much information can be ascertained about these things by simply

studying the Book of Daniel, comparing verses within the book. Then more information concerning these things can be ascertained by studying other Scriptures and bringing it all to bear. Further study and a look back in history would reveal that, at the present time in which we live, three of the five kingdoms have taken place. The fourth and fifth kingdoms are yet future.

While God began His revelation concerning the specifics of these kingdoms through King Nebuchadnezzar's dream, He continued to give Daniel more and more information throughout the span of Daniel's life. Some years later, during the first year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar's son — Belshazzar — Daniel had dreams and visions, which added more detail to the prophecy that God had previously revealed to and through Daniel.

For example, in chapter seven, God revealed to Daniel more information concerning the five great kingdoms, four through the use of metaphors (i.e., the four beasts), and the fifth and final kingdom being set up by One Who looked "like a Son of Man³." The four beasts are described as:

- A lion which had the wings of an eagle (representing the Babylonian kingdom);
- A bear (representing the Medo-Persian kingdom);
- A leopard with four wings and four heads (representing the Grecian kingdom); and finally
- A dreadful, terrifying and extremely strong beast which was different than the previous ones (representing the kingdom immediately prior to the fifth and final kingdom being set up.)

This last beast had ten horns, and an eleventh horn came up from among the ten, having eyes, like the eyes of a man, and was uttering great threats. After some time passed, Daniel saw a vision of thrones being set up and the "Ancient of Days" taking His seat, with myriads (of angels) attending Him, and books being opened. Judgment was about to be passed upon this fourth kingdom, exactly prior to the time when the fifth and final kingdom would be set up — the Kingdom of the Son of God, the Son of Man. Again here in the book of Daniel, the emphasis is placed on the fourth and fifth kingdoms. Let's pick up at this point and read Daniel's words:

Daniel 7

7 "After this I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrifying and extremely strong; and it had large iron teeth. It devoured and crushed, and trampled down the remainder with its feet; and it was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns. 8 While I was contemplating the horns, behold, another horn, a little one, came up among them, and three of the first horns were pulled out by the roots before it; and behold, this horn possessed eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth uttering great boasts. 9 I kept looking until thrones were set up, And the Ancient of Days took His seat; His vesture was like white snow, And the hair of His head like pure wool. His throne was ablaze with flames, Its wheels were a burning fire. 10 A river of fire was flowing And coming out from before Him; Thousands upon thousands were attending Him, And myriads upon myriads were standing before Him; The court sat, And the books were opened. 11 Then I kept looking because of the sound of the boastful words which the horn was speaking; I kept looking until the beast was slain, and its body was destroyed and given to the burning fire. 12 As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but an extension of life was granted to them for an appointed period of time. 13 I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him. 14 And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations, and men of every language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass

³ This vision was prior to God's Son coming in the likeness of sinful flesh, being born to a virgin. Hence the description — "One *like* a Son of Man."

away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed.

Check out the mid-section of v. 13, and compare it to Acts 1:9 on p. 89. What do see by way of comparison?

According to this passage, what happened at the end of the fourth kingdom?

In v. 14 of the passage, Who was given something and what was He given?

Does this description seem to describe a literal kingdom or a figurative one? What makes you think so?

And as we have previously seen through Peter's second letter, the prophecy is *not to be interpreted by any one man*. Daniel, *as he was carried along by the Holy Spirit*, gave ample interpretation. Continuing in Daniel chapter seven,

15 As for me, Daniel, my spirit was distressed within me, and the visions in my mind kept alarming me. 16 I approached one of those who were standing by and began asking him the exact meaning of all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of these things: 17 'These great beasts, which are four in number, are four kings who will arise from the earth. 18 But the saints of the Highest One will receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, for all ages to come.' 19 Then I desired to know the exact meaning of the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, with its teeth of iron and its claws of bronze, and which devoured, crushed and trampled down the remainder with its feet, 20 and the meaning of the ten horns that were on its head and the other horn which came up, and before which three of them fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth uttering great boasts and which was larger in appearance than its associates. 21 I kept looking, and that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them 22 until the Ancient of Days came and judgment was passed in favor of the saints of the Highest One, and the time arrived when the saints took possession of the kingdom.

And even more detail to the meaning is given! We are not left to our own imagination on these things in prophecy!

23 Thus he said: 'The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth, which will be different from all the other kingdoms and will devour the whole earth and tread it down and crush it. 24 As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings. 25 He will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One,

and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time. 26 But the court will sit for judgment, and his dominion will be taken away, annihilated and destroyed forever. 27 Then the sovereignty, the dominion and the greatness of all the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him.'

Write out all you have learned about the fourth king and kingdom from v. 19 forward.

Again, what happens at the end of the fourth kingdom?

Look at the mention of time in v. 22. Have the saints possessed the kingdom yet?

Give evidence from the text that the fourth kingdom has not yet taken place.

What activity is taking place in Daniel 7:10, 22, and 26?

Who will receive the sovereignty, power and greatness of the kingdoms in verse 27?

According to vv. 17, 23, 27, where are these kingdoms?

Within the Book of Daniel, the details of these kingdoms and the events leading up to and including the final two kingdoms in particular are revealed through:

- A dream given to Nebuchadnezzar in the second year of his reign (2:29-35).
- The interpretation to this dream (2:36-45)
- A vision given to Daniel in the first year of Belshazzar's reign (7:11).
- A second vision given to Daniel in the third year of Belshazzar's reign (8:23-25).
- In answer to Daniel's fervent prayer during the first year of the reign of Darius the Mede (i.e., the Angel Gabriel's appearance and message to Daniel [9:21, 26-27]).
- In a message given to Daniel during the third year of the reign of Cyrus, the Persian, again given to Daniel through the Angel Gabriel (chp.10).

Whew! That is enough for the day. Think on these things. See you tomorrow.

Day Three — Prophecies Concerning the Coming Kingdom, Part 2

In yesterday's homework, there was a lot of information to chew on. I am afraid that today may be the same. Would you pray again for understanding?

We have seen that prophecy is *not left up to any one man's interpretation* (II Pet. 1:20); rather prophecy is given throughout Scripture from start to finish through the pens of *men who were inspired by God*; and only in viewing prophecy together as a whole, can one begin to come into the correct interpretation of prophecy. Daniel is an integral part of an overall understanding of prophecy. And the various portions of the Book of Daniel must be viewed together, as God lays out the detail to and through this prophet.

Today we will look at sections in Daniel chapters nine and ten. Leading up to our passages today, Daniel had come to realize that God had given the prophet Jeremiah the number of years in which the desolation of Jerusalem would be accomplished (9:2). Daniel had come to realize that God had specified that there would be *exactly seventy years* that Israel would be in exile. In realizing this, Daniel began to pray and confess his own sins and the sins of his people (9:1-19). It was at this time that God sent the Angel Gabriel to give Daniel *a time-specific prophecy*. In fact, the time specified in this prophecy also had to do with the number *seventy*. Let's read it:

Daniel 9

20 Now while I was speaking and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God in behalf of the holy mountain of my God, 21 while I was still speaking in prayer, then the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision previously, came to me in my extreme weariness about the time of the evening offering, 22 And he gave me instruction and talked with me, and said,

“O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you insight with understanding. 23 At the beginning of your supplications the command was issued, and I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed; so give heed to the message and gain understanding of the vision. 24 Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy place. 25 So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress. 26 Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined. 27 And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.”

What is the overall specified time-frame given in this prophecy?

The Hebrew word for *weeks* in vv. 24, 25, and 27 is the word that literally means *sevens*. So the angel was speaking of a total of seventy ($7+62+1=70$) sevens, and in this text it literally means 70 periods of seven years, or 70 seven-year periods.

Then these 70 seven-year periods are divided into three portions:

- A 7 seven-year period (or 49 years)
- A 62 seven-year period (434 years)
- A 1 seven-year period (7 years)

Adding these years together brings a total of 70 seven-year periods or 490 years.

It is important to notice that these time periods are dealing with a particular group of people. According to v. 24, about whom has this prophecy been decreed?

And certain things have been decreed to happen within the total 70 seven-year time periods. According to God's inspired Word in vv. 24, what six specific items will be accomplished in this time period?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)
- 6)

According to v. 25, what event will begin the 70th seven-year period?

A decree by King Artaxerxes, the king of the Medo-Persian kingdom, went forth in about 444 B.C. to restore and rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. From this point in time to 33 A.D., using the Jewish calendar year of 360 days, taking away the beginning portion of the 444 B.C. and the ending portion of 33 A.D., you would come up with a total of 483 years. This makes up the 7 seven-year periods plus the 62 seven-year periods, totaling 69 seven-year periods equaling 483 years. Between the 69 sevens and the 70th seven, the text says that the Messiah will *be cut off*. The phrase *cut off* means *to destroy*, or *to kill*. Obviously, this would be referring to the Messiah being crucified in 33 AD. The last seven-year period of Daniel's revelation concerning his people remains to unfold in time. This will be the final seven-year period exactly prior to the coming Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ.

According to the passage, after the Messiah is cut off, in the middle of v. 26, who will make a firm covenant with the many for the last week?

There is something of extreme importance to notice here. Verse 25 deals with the end of the sixty-nine sevens; and v. 26 deals with things that come after the 69 seven-year periods. According to the middle of v. 26 through the end of the passage, what are the events which will take place?

The last seven-year period refers to the time of the coming Tribulation decreed for Daniel's people. And when comparing Scripture with Scripture, the Tribulation immediately precedes the Millennium, the thousand-year reign of the Christ on the earth. Because of Israel's rejection and crucifixion of the Messiah, the time clock, so to speak, for these 70 seven-year periods was halted at the end of the 69th seven-year period, at which time God ushered in the present dispensation — the dispensation of the Church in which God is dealing with the Church, not Israel. But once the Church is raptured, God will then turn and begin dealing with Israel once again; and the last seven-year period for Israel (Daniel's people) will begin — the seven-year Tribulation. While this long separation between the 69th week and the 70th week cannot be seen in the Book of Daniel, it can be seen in other places in Scripture⁴. Information of this specific angelic visitation ends there, though, God continued to reveal more to Daniel concerning the details and chronology of future events.

The dream of the magnificent statue, which Daniel interpreted for King Nebuchadnezzar in chapter two deals with the same five kingdoms that Daniel's vision in chapter seven deals with, which is the same that his second vision in chapter eight deals with, which is the same as the messages that the angel gave to Daniel in chapters nine and ten, which is the same that the remaining chapters in the Book of Daniel deals with. All of these chapters put together, along with several other places throughout Scripture — in particular the Books of Esther, Ruth, and Revelation — deal with the prophetic chronology of events. All in all, we have a detailed explanation of the events leading up to and including the coming Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I hate to end here, but time and space curtails more immediate study in this workbook. May I encourage you to study on your own? The benefit of personal Bible reading and study cannot be measured!

See you tomorrow.

Day Four — Prophecies Concerning the Coming Kingdom, Part 3

As we have seen in our previous weeks of study, John the Baptist came in the power and spirit of Elijah, with the message of repentance, with a view to the Kingdom of the Heavens. But the nation of Israel refused the message and crucified the Messiah. We have also seen that the Prophet Elijah himself *will return* to the earth in order to announce the coming of the Messiah, just prior to His setting up His Kingdom.

Throughout this five-week study, we have seen that the best place to begin a study of prophecy (or a study of any Scriptural topic for that matter) is at the beginning. We have seen that one must go back to Genesis and begin there to build the picture.

⁴ A good study to do in order to see *how the chronology of prophetic events is given in Scripture* would be UNDERSTANDING THE PICTURE OF MARRIAGE available through Seeking the Kingdom Ministries. Email address is kseeker1@aol.com. This Bible study deals with the coming marriage of Christ and His Bride and the chronology of events leading up to that marriage.

After God performed particular acts with respect to the earth over a six day period of time, He rested on the seventh day. Let's look at what is said about this seventh day.

Genesis 2

1 Thus the heavens and the earth were completed, and all their hosts. 2 And by the seventh day God completed His work which He had done; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. 3 Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

Write out everything God said about the seventh day.

In essence, God has laid His foundation for all revealed Truth in the first thirty-four verses of His Word. And the time-frame for the basis of this foundation is seen in the seven days spoken of in these first thirty-four verses of the Bible, wherein there are six days of work and a seventh day rest.

Later in Scripture, *after God delivers His people out of slavery*, God gives the seventh day Sabbath rest to His people as a sign, pointing to something future.

Exodus 31

12 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 13 "But as for you, speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'You shall surely observe My sabbaths; for this is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the LORD who sanctifies you. 14 Therefore you are to observe the sabbath, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does any work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people. 15 For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day there is a sabbath of complete rest, holy to the LORD; whoever does any work on the sabbath day shall surely be put to death. 16 So the sons of Israel shall observe the sabbath, to celebrate the sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant.'

17 "It is a sign between Me and the sons of Israel forever; for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, but on the seventh day He ceased from labor, and was refreshed." 18 And when He had finished speaking with him upon Mount Sinai, He gave Moses the two tablets of the testimony, tablets of stone, written by the finger of God.

Go back and underline the word *sign* in vv. 13 and 17. What is the sign between God and Israel?

When God gives His people a sign, the sign itself points to something future. The sign of the Sabbath was to point God's people to something yet future. And according to these verses, what would happen to a person who did not observe the Sabbath rest (a sign)?

Do you think God is serious about His people being mindful about a coming Sabbath? What makes you think so?

For the remainder of our study today, we are going to look briefly at a few passages having to do with the coming Sabbath rest *as it relates to Israel*. Then we will briefly look at a few passages that have to do with the coming Sabbath rest *as it relates to the Church*. (The difficult thing is to limit the number of passages concerning these things, because the Bible is replete with passages dealing with this topic, both for Israel and the Church. It is difficult to choose which passages to look at when there are so many from which to choose!)

There are some specifics that must be understood concerning the Day of Rest, the Millennium, the thousand-year reign of Christ on earth, with respect to *His people — Israel*. This is a time of peace and righteousness on the earth, which has not yet happened. Please read these passages *with a mind to understand*. (I ask you to read it in this way because, for some reason, it seems easy to read passages from Scripture in such a rote way, so as to read words without understanding. Don't allow yourself to do that, even if you have to read aloud to prevent it! These are exciting passages about a very exciting time!)

NOTES:

Zechariah 14

1 Behold, a day is coming for the LORD when the spoil taken from you will be divided among you. 2 For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished, and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city. 3 Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle. 4 And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south. 5 And you will flee by the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to Azel; yes, you will flee just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD, my God, will come, and all the holy ones with Him! 6 And it will come about in that day that there will be no light; the luminaries will dwindle. 7 For it will be a unique day which is known to the LORD, neither day nor night, but it will come about that at evening time there will be light.

8 And it will come about in that day that living waters will flow out of Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea and the other half toward the western sea; it will be in summer as well as in winter. 9 And the LORD will be king over all the earth; in that day the LORD will be the only one, and His name the only one. 10 All the land will be changed into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem; but Jerusalem will rise and remain on its site from Benjamin's Gate as far as the place of the First Gate to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the king's wine presses. 11 And people will live in it, and there will be no more curse, for Jerusalem will dwell in security. 12 Now this will be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the peoples who have gone to war against Jerusalem; their flesh will rot while they stand on their feet, and their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongue will rot in their mouth. 13 And it will come about in that day that a great panic from the LORD will fall on them; and they will seize one another's hand, and the hand of one will be lifted against the hand of another. 14 And Judah also will fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the surrounding nations will be gathered,

gold and silver and garments in great abundance. 15 So also like this plague, will be the plague on the horse, the mule, the camel, the donkey, and all the cattle that will be in those camps.

16 Then it will come about that any who are left of all the nations that went against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to celebrate the Feast of Booths. 17 And it will be that whichever of the families of the earth does not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, there will be no rain on them. 18 And if the family of Egypt does not go up or enter, then no rain will fall on them; it will be the plague with which the LORD smites the nations who do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths. 19 This will be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all the nations who do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths. 20 In that day there will be inscribed on the bells of the horses, "HOLY TO THE LORD." And the cooking pots in the LORD'S house will be like the bowls before the altar. 21 And every cooking pot in Jerusalem and in Judah will be holy to the LORD of hosts; and all who sacrifice will come and take of them and boil in them. And there will no longer be a Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts in that day.

Isaiah 62

1 For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, And for Jerusalem's sake I will not keep quiet, Until her righteousness goes forth like brightness, And her salvation like a torch that is burning. 2 And the nations will see your righteousness, And all kings your glory; And you will be called by a new name, Which the mouth of the LORD will designate. 3 You will also be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, And a royal diadem in the hand of your God. 4 It will no longer be said to you, "Forsaken," Nor to your land will it any longer be said, "Desolate"; But you will be called, "My delight is in her," And your land, "Married"; For the LORD delights in you, And to Him your land will be married. 5 For as a young man marries a virgin, So your sons will marry you; And as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, So your God will rejoice over you.

6 On your walls, O Jerusalem, I have appointed watchmen; All day and all night they will never keep silent. You who remind the LORD, take no rest for yourselves; 7 And give Him no rest until He establishes And makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth. 8 The LORD has sworn by His right hand and by His strong arm, "I will never again give your grain as food for your enemies; Nor will foreigners drink your new wine, for which you have labored." 9 But those who garner it will eat it, and praise the LORD; And those who gather it will drink it in the courts of My sanctuary.

10 Go through, go through the gates; Clear the way for the people; Build up, build up the highway; Remove the stones, lift up a standard over the peoples. 11 Behold, the LORD has proclaimed to the end of the earth, Say to the daughter of Zion, "Lo, your salvation comes; Behold His reward is with Him, and His recompense before Him." 12 And they will call them, "The holy people, The redeemed of the LORD"; And you will be called, "Sought out, a city not forsaken."

Isaiah 65

18 "But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; For behold, I

create Jerusalem for rejoicing, And her people for gladness. 19 I will also rejoice in Jerusalem, and be glad in My people; And there will no longer be heard in her The voice of weeping and the sound of crying. 20 No longer will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, Or an old man who does not live out his days; For the youth will die at the age of one hundred And the one who does not reach the age of one hundred Shall be thought accursed. 21 And they shall build houses and inhabit them; They shall also plant vineyards and eat their fruit. 22 They shall not build, and another inhabit, They shall not plant, and another eat; For as the lifetime of a tree, so shall be the days of My people, And My chosen ones shall wear out the work of their hands. 23 They shall not labor in vain, Or bear children for calamity; For they are the offspring of those blessed by the LORD, And their descendants with them. 24 It will also come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear. 25 The wolf and the lamb shall graze together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox; and dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall do no evil or harm in all My holy mountain," says the LORD.

What have you learned about the coming Kingdom for the nation Israel?

Now let's look at a couple of passages which describe the coming Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, i.e., Day of Rest, the Millennium, or the thousand-year reign of Christ on earth with respect to *His people—the Church*.

Let's read what is in the Book of Hebrews about these things.

Hebrews 4

1 Therefore, let us fear lest, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you should seem to have come short of it. **2** For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard. **3** For we who have believed enter that rest, just as He has said, "AS I SWORE IN MY WRATH, THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST," although His works were finished from the foundation of the world. **4** For He has thus said somewhere concerning the seventh day, "AND GOD RESTED ON THE SEVENTH DAY FROM ALL HIS WORKS"; **5** and again in this passage, "THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST." **6** Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly had good news preached to them failed to enter because of disobedience, **7** He again fixes a certain day, "Today," saying through David after so long a time just as has been said before, "TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS." **8** For if Joshua had given them rest, He would not have spoken of another day after that. **9** There remains therefore a Sabbath rest for the people of God. **10** For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His.

11 Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall through following the same example of disobedience.

The author relates the future Day of Rest back to two different times in history. He relates it back to the days when God redeemed Israel out of bondage in Egypt, taking them out of one land and into another, wherein they were to have rest from their enemies, if they but obeyed (*cf.* Heb. 3). And also the author relates the Day of Rest back to the opening verses in the Book of Genesis when God rested from His work (4:4).

Is the day of rest mentioned in Hebrews chapter four dealing with a time that is past or yet future for the people of God? How can you tell?

What do you think that means for you personally? (Seriously, think about this, and write out your thoughts.)

Now let's jump forward in the Book of Hebrews to another portion which deals with the future coming Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 12

22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, 23 to the general assembly and church of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, 24 and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel. 25 See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. For if those did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less shall we escape who turn away from Him who warns from heaven. 26 And His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised, saying, "YET ONCE MORE I WILL SHAKE NOT ONLY THE EARTH, BUT ALSO THE HEAVEN." 27 And this expression, "Yet once more," denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, in order that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. 28 Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe; 29 for our God is a consuming fire.

Again, in relating the coming Kingdom back to what took place in Israel, what do we have to look forward to?

Peter tells us how the Day of the Lord *will begin* and how it *will end*, and how *long it will last*. In this next passage, Peter is warning his readers that in the last days mockers will come, questioning *the promise* and *the timing* of the return of God's Son (II Pet. 3:3). He warns his readers not to forget certain things that they had previously understood, but could forget!

II Peter 3

8 But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is

as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 9 The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance. 10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.

Keeping in mind that this passage is dealing with the promise of Christ's return (v.3), according to this passage, how long with the Day of the Lord last?

How will the day begin?

How will the day end?

I hate to end our study for today, but I have kept you long enough. You have enough meat to chew on for one day. As you go, think on these things.

Day Five — Having an Abundant Entrance

Perhaps the questions you should be asking yourself on this last day of the study are:

- 1) What is it that I need to be mindful of?
- 2) How purposeful should I be concerning these things?
- 3) What can I be doing now that might affect my entrance into the kingdom?

Good questions. In order to find answers for these type questions, the best place to go is to the Word of God. We are not left to our own imagination to answer these questions. Peter has given us a list of things that we are to diligently add to our faith, *if we desire an abundant entrance into the coming Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ*. I have reformatted the passage to possibly help in understanding.

Peter says:

II Peter 1

5 Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge; 6 and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness; 7 and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love.

8 For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 For he who lacks these qualities is blind or short-sighted, having forgotten his purification from his former sins. 10

Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble; 11 for in this way the entrance into the eternal <166> kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.

Before we deal with the qualities which should be diligently added to your faith (qualities listed in the passage above), let's look at the first phrase in v. 5 and relate it to vv. 8-11. According to this passage, what must happen in your life in order for you *to be fruitful*?

And if these qualities are lacking in your life, according to v. 9 what will happen to you?

But if these qualities are increasing (v. 8) and you are practicing these things (v. 10), what two things will happen to you?

1)

2)

Something needs to be understood about v. 11. It has to do with the Greek word which has been translated *eternal*. Let's look at it.

This particular word has been translated from the Greek word *aionios*, which is an adjective derived from the Greek noun *aion*. Here are some possible definitions for the noun *aion* <165>:

Aion:

- 1) for ever, an unbroken age, perpetuity of time, eternity
- 2) the worlds, universe
- 3) period of time, age

This can mean: an age; by extension, perpetuity (also past); by implication, the world; specially (Jewish) a Messianic period (present or future): — age, course, eternal, (for) ever (-more), (n-)ever, (beginning of the, while the) world (began, without end).

The English word “age” is from the Greek word “aion” which means:

- 1) A lifetime: the period of an individual's existence on earth
- 2) A segment of time: such as this present age or the age to come
- 3) A very long time: such as the age of mankind
- 4) Perpetuity of time: eternity (especially if used in plural form)
- 5) Occasionally — aion is translated “world” or “universe”.

Aionios <166> is the adjective form of the noun *aion* <165>. Therefore the adjective form of the noun *cannot have a different meaning than the noun from which it was made*. While *aionios* can mean 1) without beginning and end, that which always has been and always will be, 2) without beginning, or 3) without end, never to cease, everlasting; it can

also describe a long period of time, but not eternity. It can be referring to an age, rather than the ages of ages.

VINES translates this word as describing duration, either undefined but not endless, or undefined because it is endless.

For further study, refer to an article in the Appendix entitled ETERNITY—IS IT ETERNAL OR IS IT AGE-LASTING?

Now back to the last question. Peter *is not saying* that you will never sin! In fact, in order to see exactly what he is talking about, we can go to the end of his letter.

II Peter 3

17 You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard lest, being carried away by the error of unprincipled men, you fall from your own steadfastness, 18 but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

What does Peter not want you to fall from?

Since this is at the end of Peter's second letter, and he ends with a warning about falling from "your own steadfastness," he surely would have implied within the text of his letter what he means by this warning. If you would peruse the entire letter, you would see, without doubt, that Peter is referring to a steadfastness with respect to the coming Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. Also the Apostle Paul refers to Christians being in a race, from which he says that he, himself, could be disqualified. Comparing Scripture with Scripture, it is easy to see that God wants us finish the race well. In order to do that, we, individually, must stand steadfast. And Peter tells us in this short epistle how to do that. Let's go back to the beginning portion of the letter, and think through the qualities that we must be *diligently* adding to our faith. Reread I Peter 1:5-11 printed at the beginning of today's lesson.

First of all, from where does faith come? With v. 5 in mind, let's see what Paul says us in the Book of Romans about faith:

Romans 10

...17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

According to Paul, from where does faith come? (When answering that question, remember what the name *Christ* means.)

Now back to what we need to be adding to our faith.

What would it look like to *diligently supply* moral excellence to your faith?

What would it look like to *diligently supply* knowledge to your moral excellence?

Where would you go to get the knowledge that Peter is talking about?

Why do you think Peter would list moral excellence before knowledge?

What would it look like to *diligently supply* self-control to your knowledge?

What would it look like to *diligently supply* perseverance to your self-control?

What would it look like to *diligently supply* godliness to your perseverance?

What would it look like to *diligently supply* brotherly kindness to your perseverance?

What would it look like to *diligently supply* love to your brotherly kindness?

And in the end, again what does Peter say will be the result in your life if these things are diligently added to your faith?

As we come to the close of this study, I would like to leave you with the last thing Jesus speaks in the entire Word of God. He says:

Revelation 22

12 “Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done. 13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.”

...16 “I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things for the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright morning star.”

And so there you have it!

Now you know.

NOTES:

