

31 Just at that time some Pharisees came up, saying to Him, "Go away and depart from here, for Herod wants to kill You." 32 And He said to them, "Go and tell that fox, 'Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I reach My goal.' 33 "Nevertheless I must journey on today and tomorrow and the next day; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem. 34 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, just as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not have it! 35 "Behold, your house is left to you desolate; and I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, 'BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!'"

This is now our third week considering this passage of scripture. And we've looked at the aspect of completed prophecy being an infallible proof that Jesus is who He says He is. Completed prophecy that stands together with and is just as significant as the miracles that He did.

In His day, in His time on earth, Jesus appealed to the miracles. In John 14 He exhorts the disciples; 11*"Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me; otherwise believe on account of the works themselves.*

The miracles themselves are an anchor for faith. We read in this ancient book about the miracles. Many accounts related to us by eyewitnesses. Perfectly reliable witnesses. The written accounts would stand up in any courtroom. But we didn't get to see them with our eyes.

Thomas, the doubter, believed when He saw the risen Jesus. But; 29 *Jesus said to him, "Because you have seen Me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."* John 20:29

We didn't get to see the miracles with our eyes. We didn't get to see Jesus, alive, after the cross, risen from the dead. But we get one benefit those folks didn't enjoy. We get the benefit of 20 centuries of completed prophecies on this side of the cross.

We've been looking at words that Jesus said about Israel. Prophetic words. He makes 2 claims here that are directly about the family, the ethnic group of people, who are descended from Israel. The children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob who God named Israel. A people that God chose from all the families of the earth to be His own.

Jesus says; *“Behold, your house is left to you desolate; and I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, ‘BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!’”*

Two prophetic claims. Jerusalem, and the larger family of people who identify with Jerusalem, the nation of Israel, will be abandoned. Abandoned by God. Left to you desolate. Left by who? God. God is walking away from Israel, and when God leaves, the only word to describe the void, is desolation.

Israel is an enigma. There's no reason for it in the first place. God says; *7 The LORD did not set His affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than the other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples.*

Deut. 7:7

God didn't choose them because they were the most attractive, the biggest, the mightiest, the noblest, the most righteous, or any other reason. In fact He says they were the least. He chose them because . . he chose them.

Just the fact that there are Jewish people, distinctly Jewish as an ethnic group who still exist 40 centuries after Abraham and Isaac and Jacob is a signpost that God completes what He says He will do. The Jews themselves are an anchor for our faith.

Mark Twain, in 1897, after the words of Jesus about them, and before Hitler tried to finish them, said this about the enigma of the Jewish people;

"If the statistics are right, the Jews constitute but one quarter of one percent of the human race. It suggests a nebulous puff of star dust lost in the blaze of the Milky Way. Properly, the Jew ought hardly to be heard of, but he is heard

of, has always been heard of. He is as prominent on the planet as any other people, and his importance is extravagantly out of proportion to the smallness of his bulk.

His contributions to the world's list of great names in literature, science, art, music, finance, medicine and abstruse learning are also very out of proportion to the weakness of his numbers. He has made a marvelous fight in this world in all ages; and has done it with his hands tied behind him. He could be vain of himself and be excused for it. The Egyptians, the Babylonians and the Persians rose, filled the planet with sound and splendor, then faded to dream-stuff and passed away; the Greeks and Romans followed and made a vast noise, and they were gone; other people have sprung up and held their torch high for a time but it burned out, and they sit in twilight now, and have vanished.

The Jew saw them all, survived them all, and is now what he always was, exhibiting no decadence, no infirmities of age, no weakening of his parts, no slowing of his energies, no dulling of his alert but aggressive mind. All things are mortal but the Jews; all other forces pass, but he remains. What is the secret of his immortality? "

Mark Twain - September 1897

We believe we understand the secret of the immortality of the distinct Jewish peoples group. The secret is bound up in these words of prophecy, uttered by Jesus, who they murdered, recorded for posterity by Luke the physician.

Can one man say a few words that causes a people to fight way out of their weight class, for centuries? The answer is yes, if that man is God in human flesh.

So we need to consider again, these words spoken by Jesus of Nazareth, 2000 years ago, that somehow set in motion the phenomenon so well described by Mark Twain, who incidentally, was not a believer.

35 *“Behold, your house is left to you desolate; and I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, ‘BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!’”*

Two distinct statements. God is going to abandon you. And; God is going to return to you. The words are for Israel as a people group. And we spent last week looking at the confounding evidence over 2000 years span of the first claim. The heart breaking abandonment and dispersion of Israel.

Israel was abandoned by God, and very nearly decimated by the Romans in 70 AD. In 259 and again in 315 - 337 further wars with Rome cause the remaining jews to be dispersed, scattered all over the earth.

All through the long centuries, little groups of distinct jews hang on in different places, but anytime they begin to thrive at all, another crushing comes. Why?

Actually, we can see the wisdom and plan of God at work before our very eyes in the very dispersion of the jews, scattered literally all over the earth. Because Satan has been trying to eradicate them for 20 centuries.

Hitler in the 1930's is just a single incident of many. If God had kept them all in one place, someone like Hitler might have been able to snuff them out. But you can look down through the centuries and some despot will do his best to kill them off in his local area, but there's more of them somewhere else.

Imagine Satan's glee, when in 1948, the British Mandate is retracted recognizing Israel as an independent state. Finally we can gather them all in one spot, so that their enemies can surround them and eliminate them.

Which brings us to the second part of Jesus prophetic statement regarding Israel. *and I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, ‘BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!’”*

We said last week that the antecedent of the word YOU, used three times in

that prophetic statement can only be the children of Israel. Jesus in effect says; I'm abandoning you for an undisclosed period of time, total desolation, a people roaming the earth abandoned by God, persecuted and oppressed.

And you will be in that state, you won't see me again, your Messiah, until you say; *and I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, 'BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!'*”

You say, do we have any clues as to when that day is? The answer is: between a quarter and a third of this book is prophecy about that day. So, yes. And no. Jesus says "*But of that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone...*Mark 13:32

But then Paul says; 1 Thess. 5:3 *While people are saying, "Peace and security," destruction will come upon them suddenly, like labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. 4 But you, brothers, are not in the darkness so that this day should overtake you like a thief. 5 For you are all sons of the light and sons of the day; we do not belong to the night or to the darkness.*

We don't know the day or the hour, but on the other hand, Paul says we're not in the darkness either. Ever since Israel was back in their own land as a national identity, christians have been on "high alert".

Let's look at some of the most significant mile markers we have to try to determine exactly where we are. The first has to be Daniel's prophecy in the 9th chapter of Daniel;

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.”

Seventy weeks. Seventy periods of time. In this case, weeks of years. And you can do the math, and a noble englishman in the 1800's has done that for us and you can calculate the end of the 69th week of years to the very day when Jesus enters Jerusalem and says; in Luke 19

41 And when He approached, He saw the city and wept over it, 42saying, “If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes. 43 “For the days shall come upon you when your enemies will throw up a bank before you, and surround you, and hem you in on every side, 44 and will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation.” Luke 19:41 - 44

The rulers who are seething to murder Him had Daniel's prophecy at their disposal. They should have known the times. They should have been able to calculate the days and known that they were in the year that Daniel prophesied.

Daniel gives us some specifics after he says Messiah will be cut off. Cut off means killed. Murdered.

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.

The people of the prince who is to come. We know who those people were.

We know who came and destroyed Jerusalem. Rome. So we can predict where the antichrist will come from. So we know that the "prince who is to come", the anti-christ, will be from that same people group. Rome. More specifics.

In Daniel's prophecy messiah is cut off after the 69th week. That leaves a week of years to finalize all of this prophecy.

And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.

This sounds exactly like what Jesus just said. Your house is left to you desolate. After Messiah is murdered, the desolations came. We have the history books, all the way to that time.

What we didn't see, what Paul calls a mystery, is that after Messiah is cut off, the seventieth week of years of jewish history doesn't follow immediately. We have a 2000 year parenthesis called the church age. The age of grace. God has been gathering His elect, mostly gentiles from every nation, but a few jews also, into His kingdom for 2000 years.

So then, there is a 7 year period of distinctly Jewish history to complete Daniels 70 week prophecy. A week of years that has been put on hold, so to speak. We woke up this morning still in the church age, still in the age of grace.

What slams that door shut and restarts the jewish clock? Many of us believe two things will happen coincidentally. Same time. Maybe hours apart. We don't know. The church will meet Jesus in the air. The rapture of the church. God takes the christians out. And coincidentally, at the same time back to Daniel's prophecy;

27 "And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week,

OK, who is the "he" that Daniel's speaking of. Who is the antecedent of he?

The people of the prince who is to come. That was Rome, this is the *prince who is to come*. The 'he' here is the antichrist. Antichrist makes a covenant with Israel for this final week of years to fulfil the seventy weeks. Church is gone. Church is out of the way. The final week commences with this covenant with antichrist.

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.”

Antichrist will stop the sacrifices and we learn in other places he will set himself up in the temple as god. And at the end of that desolation, we have *even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.”*

That destruction of anti-christ, is the return of Jesus. That moment is the moment Jesus speaks of in our passage this morning; *and I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, 'BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!'"*

Let me show you a window view of that exact time frame's events. This is also prophecy from Jesus mouth. His prophecy of God's abandonment of Israel has proven true for 2000 years. Thus we have no reason not to take this prophecy literally, even though it is still future.

20 “But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is at hand. 21 “Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let those who are in the midst of the city depart, and let not those who are in the country enter the city; 22 because these are days of vengeance, in order that all things which are written may be fulfilled.

At the end of the seventieth week, as things are coming apart at the seams, literally, all hell is breaking out on earth, the jews are about to be annihilated by antichrist, Jerusalem is surrounded by armies, final destruction is a blink

away, and the Lord Jesus appears and destroys antichrist and saves His people, Israel.

A little advertisement: Some ladies at the back of the church last week during the greeting were speaking about studying the book of Revelation. I've been adding the messages to our web site earlier this week. I think I've got all the way through chapter 15 done and the first part of chapter 16. I hope to have all of it completed soon. So if you're interested in prophecy, go look through what we have already posted on line.

This moment of Jesus appearing when Israel is completely hopeless, Jerusalem is surrounded by all the armies of the earth, total annihilation is imminent, is spoken of in other prophecies. Paul, in Romans 11 picques our curiosity. Paul says;

25 For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery, lest you be wise in your own estimation, that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles has come in; 26 and thus all Israel will be saved; just as it is written,

*“THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION,
HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB.”*

*27 “AND THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM,
WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS.”*

There is going to be a moment in time, promised by Jesus in our passage this morning that we're studying together, a moment when Israel will look up and see Jesus, and Paul says, the whole nation of them, those who remain, because many will already be slaughtered, 2/3's will perish, but the whole nation who remain are all going to be saved. All Israel will be saved.

Zechariah's famous prophecy about this moment in chapter 12 : 8 *“In that day the LORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the one who is feeble among them in that day will be like David, and the house of David will be like God, like the angel of the LORD before them. 9 “And it will come about in*

that day that I will set about to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

10 “And I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him, like the bitter weeping over a first-born.

In Zechariah 13 we read;

*8 “And it will come about in all the land,”
Declares the LORD,
“That two parts in it will be cut off and perish;
But the third will be left in it.*

*9 “And I will bring the third part through the fire,
Refine them as silver is refined,
And test them as gold is tested.
They will call on My name,
And I will answer them;
I will say, ‘They are My people,’
And they will say, ‘The LORD is my God.’”*

2/3rds of Israel annihilated and lost, 1/3 will receive their Messiah, Jesus, and be gloriously saved from their sins. The whole surviving nation of them, on the same day, when they see Him.

*and I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say,
‘BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!’”*

Where will the christians be in all of this. We'll be following Jesus, we'll be with Him, we are His bride, the marriage supper is complete, and we return with Him to gather in the chosen people Israel and to enjoy all of the promises God gave those people for a 1000 year reign, in Jerusalem, by Messiah the prince.

Another interesting point. The return of Jesus is spoken of 2 different ways. He comes like a thief in the night, complete surprise, no one could predict the day or the hour. Many many prophecies that describe that event. A surprise coming.

But there is also this prophecy of Him arriving in the air, every eye will see, there are years numbered, and days numbered, lots of other details about all of the events going on, no surprises at all.

How can both be true? They can both be true if Daniels 70 weeks prophecy is interrupted after the 69th week and there is a parenthesis in between the end of the 69th week and the beginning of the 70th week.

No one saw that coming, but now we have 20-20 hindsight. We're 2000 years into that parenthesis. The surprise part of His coming is to retrieve His bride, the church. No one knows the day or the hour. Complete surprise, like a thief in the night. Jesus will come and call His bride away, and the church leaves, and that event begins Daniels 70th week.

After the rapture you can count days and weeks and months to the final time when Messiah returns. Some of us believe the final thermonuclear bombs are literally in flight that would terminate the world completely, when Jesus returns to Israel.

In Matt. 24 Jesus intimates something like what I just described;

21 For at that time there will be great tribulation, unmatched from the beginning of the world until now, and never to be seen again. 22 If those days had not been cut short, nobody would be saved. But for the sake of the elect, those days will be shortened. Mt. 24:21,22

Who is the "elect" in that verse? Israel. Messiah returns to save God's people, God's elect people Israel.

I hope that you will be able to look at Jesus words that He spoke in Luke 13:35 with a new astonishment and amazement this morning;

35 “Behold, your house is left to you desolate; and I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, ‘BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!’”

He abandon's them, and He returns to save them. Why? We're sort of astonished like Mark Twain. Why these folks? Why Israel?

Ezekiel 36:22

Therefore, tell the house of Israel that this is what the Lord GOD says: 'It is not for your sake that I will act, O house of Israel, but for My holy name, which you profaned among the nations to which you went. Ezekiel 36:22

God saves them . . . because He said He would. Nothing about them worth saving. Worth anything. Like us also. He does it for the sake of His own great name. His Holy name. He keeps every promise. That's who He IS.