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BIBLE PROPHECY

BY

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HOME STUDY NOTES JULY

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Outline of Bible Prophecy

(PART I)

Introduction. One of the most fascinating and profitable studies the Bible student can make is that of the prophecies of the Bible. This outline study of the prophetic Word is intended to whet the appetite of the student and to create a desire to dig more deeply into this treasure-house of knowledge.

A. *The Prominence of Prophecy in the Bible.* The Bible is really a prophetic Book. One of the most important sections of the Old Testament is that of the Prophets. A study of the Old Testament prophets reveals the fact that they fulfilled a two-fold function: they prophesied, or *forth-told*, the message of God for *the people of their day*, and they *fore-told* the divine message for *the people of a future day*. Sometimes their foretelling depicted events to take place in the immediate future; more often they foretold events to take place in the more distant future. Many of the Old Testament prophecies have yet to take place. These will be listed in our outline as we progress.

B. *The Value of Prophetic Study.* The very fact that a large portion of the Bible deals with events that are yet future indicates that it is imperative that the Bible student concern himself with the study of Bible prophecy. Some of the values of such a study are as follows:

1. *Such a study helps to confirm the Christian's faith in the divine origin of the Bible.* Who but God could predict with minute accuracy the events in the far-off future?
2. *The Study of prophecy helps the Christian to adjust*

and focus his sights. Prophecy gives the Bible student the proper perspective. If the modernist, for example, knew his Bible better he would not be wasting his time trying to bring in the Kingdom that the Bible expressly states will come only with the Return of our Lord. He would be able to read the signs of the times, and would know that this age is going to end in the failure of man to establish a righteous world. How different from his vain and fanciful wishful thinking of a Utopia ushered in through human efforts!

3. *Prophetic study helps to keep Christ real to the believer.* There is no more powerful incentive to living and faithful service than the fact that Christ is soon coming back!
4. *A study of prophecy gives the student the ability rightly to interpret contemporary world events.* The importance of such an ability is evident in this day in which events of truly world-wide significance are taking place.

C. *The Major Subjects of Bible Prophecy.* A study of the Word of God discloses that the major subjects of prophecy are the following:

1. *Jesus Christ* in His first and second Advents.
2. *The Jew* as he fits into the plan and program of God.
3. *The Church* regarding her character and destiny in the end times.
4. *World History*, especially in regard to the political set-up of the last days.
5. *The Signs of Christ's Return.*
6. *The Last Things*, or the winding up of God's great purposes for the world and the inauguration of the eternal era.

A. PROPHECY CONCERNING JESUS CHRIST. The bulk of Old Testament prophecies concerning Jesus Christ have to do with His second coming. The Hebrew prophet was not granted a full revelation of the coming of Christ to die and through His death to fashion a universal Church composed largely of Gentiles. The Old Testament prophet was given, rather, to depict the glorious character of the coming earthly kingdom of our Lord during the Millennium. There are a number of prophecies, however, in the Old Testament that have to do with Christ's first advent. The list given below of such prophecies is taken from Blackstone's admirable little book *Jesus Is Coming* (p. 23).

1B. Prophecies Regarding His First Advent.

- 1C. He was to be born of a Virgin (Isa. 7:14).
- 2C. He was to be born at Bethlehem (Micah 5:2).
- 3C. There was to be a slaughter of children connected with His birth (Jer. 31:15).
- 4C. He was to be called out of Egypt (Hos. 11:1).
- 5C. He was to be anointed with the Spirit (Isa. 11:2).
- 6C. He was to make an entry into Jerusalem (Zech. 9:9).
- 7C. He was to be betrayed by a friend (Psa. 41:9).
- 8C. He was to be forsaken by His Disciples (Zech. 13:7).
- 9C. He was to be sold for 30 pieces of silver (Zech. 11:12).
- 10C. A Potter's Field was to be bought in connection with His Death (Zech. 11:13).
- 11C. He was to be spit on and scourged (Isa. 50:6).

12C. Not a bone of His body was to be broken (Ex. 12:46; Psa. 34:20).

13C. He was to be offered gall and vinegar (Psalm 69:21).

14C. His hand and feet were to be pierced, His garments parted and lots cast (Psa. 22).

15C. He was to know poverty, suffering, patience, and death (Isa. 53).

2B. Prophecies to be fulfilled regarding Christ's Second Advent. A careful study of the Scriptures that deal with the second coming of Christ seem very clearly to indicate two phases of that coming. Christ will come first for His saints. This coming is described in I Thes. 4:13-18; II Thess. 2:1. Some time after this epochal event Christ will return to earth with His saints to set up His righteous Kingdom which will endure for 1000 years. (Acts 1:11; Zech. 14:4-5; Matt. 16:27; 24:29-30; Rev. 20:1-6).

1C. His return is to be *personal and visible* Acts 1:11; John 14:3; I Thes. 4:16).

2C. His return will result in the *resurrection and translation of believers* (I Thess. 4:13-18). This event is called the "Rapture" which means "caught up" and it will occur before the great Tribulation gets under way and before the Lord comes back to the earth to rule and reign.

3C. *He will return to this earth* with His saints. This is the second phase of His Coming. (Acts 1:11; Zech 14:4; II Thess. 1:8; Matt. 24:30; I Peter 1:7; 4:13; Job 19:25; I Thes. 3:13; Jude 14).

4C. When He comes *He will destroy Antichrist* (II Thess. 2:8).

5C. *He shall sit on the throne of David in Jerusalem* (Matt. 25:31; Rev. 5:13; Isa. 9:6-7; Luke 1:32; Ezek. 21:25-27).

6C. When He comes *He will judge the nations.* (Matt. 25:32).

7C. During the Millennium *all kings and nations shall serve Him* (Psa. 72:11; Isa. 49:6-7; Rev. 15:4; Zeh. 9:10; Rev. 11:15; Isa. 45:23; Zech. 14:16; Psa. 86:9).

2A. PROPHECY CONCERNING THE JEW. About 2000 years before Christ God called a man named Abraham out of the city of Ur in the region of Mesopotamia, and made him the father of the Hebrew people. This account is given in Genesis 12. The remainder of the Old Testament is the record of God's dealings with this chosen people. In the Old Testament God has been pleased to sketch the history of this amazing people from their origin to the end of time.

1B. *Why God Chose The Jew.* The question comes—Why did God choose the Jew? Several answers are forthcoming: First, *God chose the Jew in order that He might have a medium through which to reveal Himself to the world.* God dealt with the Hebrew nation as He has dealt with no other nation in human history. He dealt personally with them; He led them with a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night; He performed miracles in their behalf; He fought their enemies, protected them in danger, gave them a land of milk and honey for their home, promised to make them a great nation, and promised that He would make them a blessing to the entire world.

In the second place, *God chose the Jew in order that*

He might have a people to whom He might communicate His truth and through whom He might preserve and propagate that truth. This was the sacred responsibility of Israel, and in spite of her rebellion, stubbornness and often blindness, God accomplished His purpose. The Old Testament Scriptures are the blessed result.

God chose the Jew for a third reason, more important than any of the others, namely, *that He might, through the Jewish nation, present to the world the Saviour, His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.* Christ was a Jew according to the flesh, for His mother was a Jewess. We Christians ought never to forget this and we should love the Jew for Christ's sake.

2B. *Jewish History from the Sojourn in Egypt to the Kingdom Period.* (ca. 1800 to 1000 B.C.).

1C. *Period of Prosperity in Egypt* (ca. 1800-1500 B.C.). Genesis describes how Joseph was sold into Egypt by his jealous brothers. In Egypt the Lord prospered Joseph so that ultimately he became the prime-minister of the land. During a universal famine he invited his father and brothers to live in Egypt where there was a sufficient supply of food stored up. Jacob and his large family remained in Egypt, and their offspring, during the 400 years of their Egyptian sojourn, became a mighty people.

2C. *Period of Oppression* (ca. 1500 to 1440 B.C.). A new king arose in Egypt who did not love the Hebrew people but who hated and mistrusted them. Through his instrumentality the Hebrews were made the persecuted slaves of the Egyptian throne. God was taking this means of teaching

His chosen people dependence upon Him and of becoming their Redeemer. (Exodus 1)

3C. *The Exodus* (ca. 1440-1400 B.C.). The account of the deliverance of the people of God from the bondage of Egypt is described in *the book of Exodus*. Moses was the leader. Because of their constant rebellion and murmuring against God the people were punished and were made to wander forty years in the wilderness before being allowed to enter the promised land. (See *Numbers*).

4C. *The Period of Settlement and Establishment in Canaan (Palestine)* (ca. 1400-1000 B.C.). The account of the events during this period is given in *Joshua, Judges and I-II Samuel*.

3B. *Jewish History from the Kingdom Period to the time of Jesus Christ* (ca. 1000 B.C. to A.D. 1). This one-thousand year period witnessed the development of the Jewish kingdom, the rise of the Old Testament prophets and the completion of the Old Testament writings, and captivities of the Hebrew people, the restoration of the southern kingdom, and the dispersion of the Jews to all the nations of the then inhabited earth.

1C. *The United Kingdom* (ca. 1000 to 933 B.C.). Following the period of the Judges the Jew people formed a monarchy with Saul as the first king of the Hebrew kingdom. Then came King David, and following him his son, Solomon.

2C. *The Divided Kingdom* (ca. 933 to 721 B.C.). With Solomon's death the kingdom was disrupted for the reason given in the books of Kings

and *Chronicles*, and *two* kingdoms were formed. The kingdom in the north was called *Israel*; the kingdom in the south was called *Judah*. In the main most of the kings of Israel were wicked and did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord. The kings of Judah were for the most part good men.

3C. *The Captivities* (721 to 536 B.C.). The divine punishment so well deserved by the northern kingdom came in the year 721 B.C. when the Assyrians invaded the land and took the inhabitants away captive. As a result of this invasion the people of the north were ultimately scattered to all parts of the earth. Some 135 years later the same punishment was meted out to Judah when Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came against Jerusalem, carried the inhabitants off to Babylonia, and destroyed the city. With this event began "the times of the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24). From this event to the second coming of Christ the Jews are in the background and the Gentile nations of the world loom large. With the destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersion of the Jew came the fulfillment of the many Old Testament prophecies regarding these events. For the past 2400 years the Jew has been the most hated, hunted, hounded and hissed at race in the world. The climax of Jewish blindness and rebellion was their rejection and crucifixion of God's Son. Following this infamous act God's severe chastisement has followed the Jew wherever he has gone. But the most severe trials of the Jewish race are yet ahead, as we shall see. Study the following passage to see how accurate-

ly God described the sad plight of the Jew during their dispersion among the nations (Deut. 28-30).

4C. *The Restoration (536 to 432 B.C.)*. In the year 536 B.C., Darius, king of the Persians, now the ruling power over Palestine, made a decree permitting exiled Jews to return to their homeland. Only a small handful of Jews responded to the decree, about 50,000. In about one hundred years after the decree had gone out the city of Jerusalem, the walls round about the city, and the Temple had been rebuilt, although not to be compared with their former splendor. This partial restoration is not to be confused with the restoration foretold in the prophecies. The prophesied restoration is *now* in progress as may be seen by a comparison of the events now taking place with the prophecies themselves.

5C. *Jewish History from the Restoration to the time of Christ (432 B.C. to A.D. 1)*. This period of approximately 400 years witnessed the completion of the Old Testament books (Malachi, the last of the prophets, was written about 400 B.C.). During this period, also, Palestine passed under the political jurisdiction of three world-powers — the Persians, the Greeks, and the Romans. In this period of some 400 years several important developments took place in the Jewish religion. Synagogues sprang up all over the area bounding the Mediterranean Sea and became the center of Jewish worship. A number of religious groups developed, among them the Pharisees (orthodox groups), the Sadducees (liberal)

group) and the scribes (lawyers of the Jewish faith). We meet each of these groups when we begin reading the Gospels.

5B. *Jewish History from the time of Christ to the present*. The Jewish nation rejected Jesus Christ as their Messiah and were responsible for His death. As a result of their stubbornness and rebellion God sent them spiritual blindness so that they could not understand the teaching of their Old Testament regarding Christ. In A.D. 70 He sent the Roman armies utterly to destroy Jerusalem. From that time to this the Jew has been a wanderer on the face of the earth—without Temple, sacrifice or priest.

But in the providence of God the time has again come for Him to begin dealing with the Jew. We are witnessing today the thrilling drama of the Jews' restoration to their own land in minute fulfillment of the Word of God. They are now established in Palestine; they are reorganizing their ancient religion; they are reviving their ancient language and instituting their ancient customs. Without doubt the Jews will very soon begin to agitate for possession of the ancient Temple site (now occupied by the Mohammedan Mosque of Omar), and will commence building another Temple after the fashion of Solomon's Temple. Then will come the employment of priest and sacrifice and prophecy will be complete. The following prophetic passages bear on these events: Lev. 26:44-45; Deut. 4:30-31; Deut. 30:1-10; Jer. 32:36-33;26; Ezek. 33-39. The passage in Ezekiel is especially clear and detailed. See also Jer. 16:14-16; Ezek. 20:40-44; Zech. 10:6-8.

6B. *The Jews During the Great Tribulation*. The Jews are now going back to Palestine, but in unbelief.

They are still rejecting Jesus Christ and are still looking for the coming of the Messiah, not knowing that it was He Who came nearly 2000 years ago. When the Jews are back in Palestine and established in their ancient homeland, the last furious blast of God's chastisement will fall upon them. This period is called "the time of Jacob's trouble" (Jer. 30:4-7); Daniel says that it is "a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation . . ." (Dan. 12:1); our Lord called it a time of "great tribulation" unparalleled in human history (Matt. 24:21). John describes the nightmarish horrors of this period in the book of the Revelation.

7B. *The Jews during the Millennial Kingdom.* Never yet have the Jews experienced the fulfillment of the promises God made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as recorded in so many places in the Old Testament. Either God has forgotten about these promises, or they are to be spiritualized away, or they are to be taken literally. The first two explanations must be ruled out, because God cannot lie, and because He says what He means and means what He says. The literal interpretation, therefore, seems to many of us to be the only sane and sensible method. (Isa. 49:18, 22-23; Micah 4:1-2; Zech. 8:20-23; Zech. 14:16; Ezek. 37:23-27; Jer. 23:3-6; Ezek. 40-48).

"Throughout the West . . ."

THE BIBLE INSTITUTE HOUR

8:30 A.M. — KHJ — 930 kc.

Monday, Wednesday and Friday