

Prophetic Insights

6. Following Our Lord Jesus During The In-between Period

August 14, 2013

“I will bend Judah as I bend My bow and fill it with Ephraim. I will rouse your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O Greece, and make you like a warrior’s sword” (Zechariah 9:13).

While we were attending a prayer conference in Jerusalem in January, 1994, a prophetic message was given using this verse as its basis. The essence of the explanation was this:

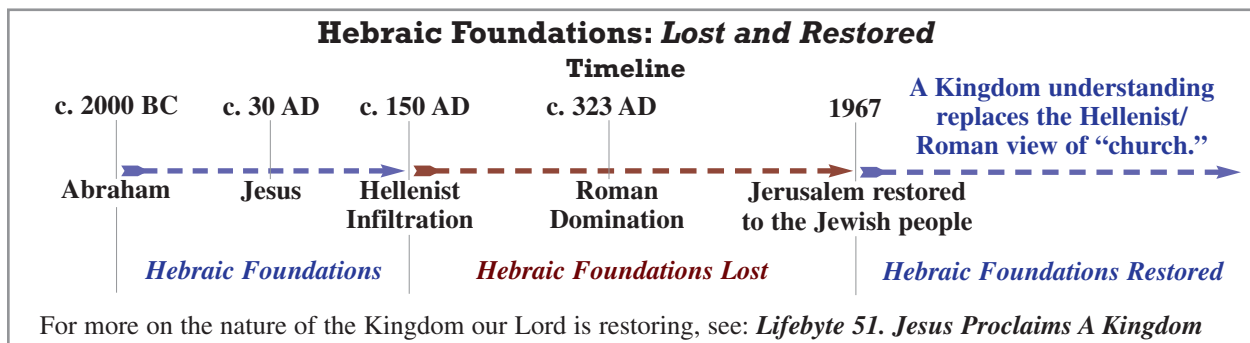
“Throughout the world our Father is sending forth a Hebraic understanding of the Scriptures to undo the heathen influence within the Church by second and third century Greek philosophers who had converted.”

In the months following the conference, through revelation and research our Father deepened our understanding of the meaning of this verse. It lays at the heart of the Hebraic Restoration. The first followers of Jesus related to their Lord through a Hebraic framework of understanding God’s Word with the intent of obeying it. By their obedient trust which was patterned after the patriarch Abraham, God would show His redemptive power through them.

The denominational creeds which now divide our Father’s children as well as the

powerlessness that leaves Christendom virtually impotent in this nation as well as in many areas worldwide have ancient roots. Both are a result of the infiltration of Hellenist man-centered philosophy and the Nicolaitan clergy-dominated system which were so opposite the biblically Hebraic foundations. During the second through fourth centuries Hellenist and Roman influence gained control of an ever-expanding political/religious “kingdom” of this world. For 1700 years our Father waited until the pieces were in position for Him to rouse the “sons of Zion”—the Hebraic foundations which connect both Testaments—against the “sons of Greece”—the man-centered philosophical worldview founded on human rationale. When Jerusalem was restored to Israel in 1967 as our Lord promised, the restoration of the Hebraic foundations began to be revealed to Gentiles.

How was the prophetic promise of Jesus fulfilled? During the 1967 war in Israel, the city of Jerusalem came under Jewish control for the first time in 2000 years. No longer were Gentiles (non-Jews) ruling it: *“Jerusalem will be trodden down by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are accomplished”* (Luke 21:24). As our Father is showing mercy to the



Jewish people in restoring to them the city to which Jesus will return to rule, He is revealing to us Gentiles the Hebraic understanding of His Word to undo the spirit of Hellenism (Zechariah 9:13).

We're Born Again Into A Kingdom, Not A Religion

For several centuries before the coming of Jesus, a number of what we call the "Hebraic Stream" of rabbis taught that a person must experience a spiritual rebirth—being *born from above*. These rabbis of the Hebraic Stream understood the trust-filled, obedience-based relationship Abraham had with God. This was an intimate relationship in which God could call Abraham His *friend* (James 2:23, apperceived from Isaiah 41:8). It was *not* a system based on religious form or ritual. For those who were part of the Hebraic Stream, conversion meant *rebirth*.

In Hebraic understanding, being "*born from above*" was a shift from following the letter of the law and relying on religious forms to abiding in obedient trust in their God and Father as did their father and ours, Abraham (Romans 4:16; Galatians 3:7).

It was with this relational Hebraic understanding that Jesus could speak to Nicodemus about spiritual rebirth: "*I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit*" (John 3:5). Water signifies a death to your old self, and a pledge of a clear conscience (Romans 6:3-13; 1Peter 3:21). Through the indwelling Spirit of Christ, your life as a new creation who has been born from above is demonstrated in how He rules your soul (1Corinthians 5:17). As a new person IN Christ you're no longer dependent on religious practice and rituals as a bridge to our Father.

Instead, He gives you the grace to *fully trust and rely on* the indwelling Spirit so that Jesus grows evermore the **Lord** of your life. Just how deep your commitment is in this relationship is captured in this truism:

**If the Lord is not Lord of all,
Then He's not Lord at all.**

The spiritual understanding of being born from above was readily understood among Jews even before John wrote about it. That's why Jesus was so surprised when Nicodemus professed ignorance of this new birth: "*Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand this?*" (John 3:10).

- If Jesus asked you what being born again meant, how would you reply?
- Would Jesus and the people around you recognize from your life that He truly is your Lord?

The phrase "born again" has been so overused that its unique significance of a new creation in Christ has been lost. That *totally changed nature* requires both death through identifying with Christ's death in baptism *and* rebirth through His Spirit as you rise up from the water to live a new life in Him (see Romans 6:3-5). And as Paul assured the Roman followers of Jesus, when your soul is ruled by the Spirit you're no longer who you once were, a slave to sin. You're now a living testimony who can reveal the power of His Spirit within you! Is this who *you* are?

Our Lord Jesus endorsed the break away from fruitless religious form and practice when He told the Jews (and those to come), "*No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. If he does, the new piece will pull away from the old, making the tear worse. And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. If he*

does, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the wineskins will be ruined. No, new wine [His Spirit] must be put into new [reborn] wineskins" (Mark 2:21,22). Wholehearted trust in Jesus as Lord of your life can't be patched onto religious form and ritual.

We're Living In An In-between Period

As the Hebraic Restoration goes forth around the world, we are living in an in-between period similar to the years following the ascension of our Lord in AD 30 and the destruction of the temple in AD 70. For those who embraced Jesus as Messiah it was a time in which they were trying to distinguish just who they were as His followers. The first Jews who placed their trust in Him still gathered in the temple courts to encourage each other in Jesus and reach others for Him even as they also gathered together in one another's homes rejoicing and praising God (Acts 2:46). In fact they were initially viewed as a sect within Judaism called "The Way" (Acts 19:23; 24:22).

For centuries the temple, the center of the Jewish religious system, had given them a common identification factor. But Jesus foresaw the need for the temple's destruction because His disciples were still attached to its physical magnificence and the presence of God it had represented since its initial construction by Solomon a thousand years earlier: *"Do you see all these things?" He asked. 'I tell you the truth, not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down'"* (Matthew 24:2). The temple edifice had to be destroyed so that the followers of our Lord would be forced to reconsider their understanding of their rebirth apart from the old religious system on which they had depended.

The in-between period of 40 years after Christ's ascension and before the temple's destruction by the Roman army was a time of tension between His followers and the religious system which used that edifice as their focal point. Not long after that first spurt of public approval His followers experienced persecution by the religious system (Acts 8:1; 12:1,2). Years before the temple was leveled the followers of Jesus realized that as the collective "temple" of the Holy Spirit they didn't *need* an edifice to unite them (1Corinthians 3:16,17). His Spirit within them empowered them to serve as individual "temples" to go forth to expand His Kingdom.

Our Lord's Spirit within His followers as living, mobile "temples" is akin to how He dwelt with His people in the mobile Tabernacle in the desert before Solomon built a fixed temple. His indwelling presence then and now is all the guidance we followers of Jesus need individually and collectively as we cooperate to do our part in extending His Kingdom. Our Lord warned the Israelites not to compromise with the pagan religious systems they would encounter among the heathen peoples in the Promised Land. So too we must not compromise with the Hellenist/Roman paganism that is widespread in what today is erroneously called "church."

Our Father has given the Spirit to His Son's followers so that we might serve Him in His Kingdom as we serve others in His Name. He never intended that those who call themselves "Christians" be complacent pewsitters who gather weekly to feel good about their religious practices. That may be religion's concept of "church"—but it's certainly not our Lord's! We who belong to our **Lord and King** are the collective called-out ones, the biblical church, empowered by His

Crucify Them!!!

Spirit and armed with His love to reveal Him to a lost world.

From 1967 until the Dark Days of Chastisement come upon the United States we are in a similar “in-between period” that followed the ascension of Jesus into heaven. For several decades there has been tension between the “**Kingdom-minded**” and those who are deceived within the religious establishment's forms and rituals. Too many today point to their “**temple edifices**” (or the prestige of their “high priest” pastor) just as the deceived did whom Jesus confronted. With over 350,000 congregations in the USA, if the Hellenist/Roman system really served Him in love-grounded obedient trust, this nation would truly be “*One nation under God.*”

Since 1967 there has been an increasing number of people who are becoming “**new wineskins**” seeking “**new wine.**” For these earnest seekers it's important that they don't get caught up in anger over the media's mockery of Christians. The established religious systems have presented much fodder for criticism in their tolerance for sin in their own household. The reputation of Jesus is being brought down more by those who call themselves “Christian” and live like hellions than by people of other religions who respect Jesus but have yet to know Him as Lord and Savior.

Have you considered that *our Father* is exposing the sinful compromise of “Christian” religious systems and allowing them to implode? As distressing as our society may be today, the full emergence of the Dark Days of Chastisement on this land won't come until a woman becomes President.

The religious system leaders of Jesus' time were the ones who demanded His crucifixion. Today's Hellenist/Roman religious system will be the source of persecution for Spirit-indwelled followers of our Lord Jesus. Among the faithful will be modern-day “Stephens” who “*Overcome Satan by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and do not love their lives so much as to shrink from death*” (Revelation 12:11).

“**Judaizers**” then and now will persecute those who are true to our Lord Jesus in their love and obedient trust and are actively involved as instruments of extending His Kingdom wherever they are.

Today's “**Judaizers**” are those who are blindly devoted to denominational creed and religious form. Yet they completely miss the love relationship Jesus offers them to be their Lord and King through being born anew. Without His Spirit within them, they are still controlled by the world's ways as well as by its ruler, Satan (Ephesians 2:2). Therefore they are threatened by those in whom He lives. So-called “believers” rather than unbelievers will be the ones who will hound and persecute the authentic followers of Jesus.

None of us likes the idea of being persecuted. But now is the time to scrutinize your own devotion to our Lord Jesus and your absolute trust in the sovereignty of our God in whatever comes. Have your roots of trust grown deep because you've known in your heart His faithfulness and grace to hold you in the midst of personal trials? Then this verse gives you strength and comfort and joy: “*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?*” (Romans 8:35).

On the other hand, has your “faith” been more of an intellectual acceptance of Bible facts and religious teachings which ebbs and flows depending on your life circumstances? Jesus describes you this way: *“But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away”* (Matthew 13:21).

We realize that in this in-between period you may be at a loss as to what to do. You’ve perhaps realized that what you were taught about “church” or being “born again” isn’t what Jesus intended in His relationship with His own. Maybe you’ve been trained to rely more on human teachers and their own interpretations than on the indwelling Spirit by Whom you were born again. As a result, you’ve done little or nothing to serve our Lord’s Kingdom purposes because you’ve felt useless or inadequate or unmotivated. Please, don’t let this deceived state go on any longer!

Maybe you’ve been part of a faith community in which nothing of the power of

Jesus is revealed by anyone—and yet you’re fearful to leave. As we shared earlier: In this in-between period which mirrors after our Lord Jesus ascended, you need to make your decision to follow Christ wholeheartedly without reservation, motivated by a grateful heart of love for Him. Don’t wait too long like the five foolish virgins did (Matthew 25:1-13).

In recent years over 20 million people have left the religious system establishment in this nation seeking what the first followers of Jesus experienced of relational intimacy and spiritual power. If you’re already part of the 20 million, anchor this encouragement for yourself:

You’re *not* a subgroup of Christian religion, but rather a temple in whom the Spirit of Jesus is free to work in and through and around you to reach the hearts of unbelievers for your King. You don’t need some religious edifice to bring them to; a relationship with you and other followers of Jesus makes your home a perfect place to gather as part of His collective Body being built up in Him.