

MIDDLE EAST PEACE – THE FULFILLMENT OF BIBLE PROPHECY (Part 8 of 9)

As promised in our last segment, we will make sense of what we have learned thus far in these last days of the Church Age and how all of it contributes to the fulfillment of Bible prophecy. From the standpoint of current events, many people in our world, whether Christians or not, are painfully aware of how the Middle East is in dire need of peace. Many are also aware of the numerous failed attempts at such peace in the past. But God's prophetic plan and purpose reveals that there will indeed be peace in the Middle East. But that peace will come at the hands of the most profoundly evil man in all of human history: the Antichrist. Daniel 9:27 tells us that he will orchestrate a firm covenant with the many for one week, Daniel's Seventieth Week, for the duration of seven years. This will give Israel the opportunity to build its much longed-for temple. Tragically, it will give the Antichrist the perfect occasion to declare himself to be God and demand that the whole world worship him.

But God's prophetic Word also tells us that Christ's Church will NOT be a participant in those terrible times, as a result of this blessed event known as the Rapture. There are those who have recently claimed that Christians will experience either the first half or even the entirety of Daniel's final prophetic week, the 70th week of his prophecy. BUT THOSE CLAIMS ARE ALSO WRONG! The nation of Israel and Christ's Church are two separate entities which have come into existence as a result of God's redemptive plan and purpose for our world. Israel is not the Church and the Church is not Israel. The seventy weeks of Daniel's prophecy have been ordained for Israel and NOT the Church. If that has proven to be true for the first sixty-nine weeks of the prophecy (and it has), why would it be any different for the seventieth week? It won't.

The 70th week of Daniel's prophecy will also be a time of great tribulation upon the earth, as confirmed by Jesus in Matthew 24:15-25. It is designed with a two-fold purpose. It will be a time of judgment upon our unbelieving world, with a final chance to trust in Jesus Christ and His redemptive work for personal salvation (Revelation 7:9-17; 11:15-18) But it is also designed for bringing the nation of Israel to a place of repentance for having rejected their Messiah during His first advent (Romans 11:25-27). Sadly, it will also serve as an open door for the Antichrist, under the influence and empowerment of the devil, to wreak havoc with people's lives; forcing many to worship him, only bringing the wrath of God down on earth in a deeper and more profound way.

The entire process will be initiated by this one individual who will have the ability, unlike the many others who came before him, to establish peace in the Middle East. And here is where it will get interesting and somewhat complicated. So, stay with me. The Antichrist's Middle East Peace treaty will initiate Daniel's Seventieth Week. But since the Church will not participate in this seventieth week, the Rapture will occur immediately upon the signing of the treaty. And on a much larger scale, both those events will bring forth the commencement of an EXTENSIVE AND PROLONGED period of time known as "the Day of the Lord." We know that to be the case due to the distinction established by Paul for those confused believers in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-2.

In other words, the Rapture will be an EVENT, occurring in a moment of time, in the twinkling of an eye. The signing of the Peace treaty will be an EVENT, confirmed on a particular day. But then two PERIODS OF TIME will begin. First, Daniel's Seventieth Week in the form of the seven-year tribulation on earth. As well as the Day of the Lord, a period of time which will last until the new-heavens and the new-earth are established by God for all of eternity (2 Peter 3:10-13). It is my belief that we are living in that moment of human history where all of the above will soon begin.