

CAN WE KNOW THE FUTURE?

C. Objectives (Value, a.k.a. Blessings) of this Study

C3. Blessing: Knowledge

We may have confidence that as the Holy Spirit within guides us in all truth, that we, being diligent to abide in God's word, are recipients of a growing knowledge, an increasing unity, and a blessed assurance. Paul comforts the Laodicean church with these words in Colossians 2:2-3,

“that [our] hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and attaining to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ, ³in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”

As we study Revelation, we should realize the source of knowledge, wisdom, and understanding is the Lord. Even Solomon recorded this in Proverbs 2:6,

“For the Lord gives wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding”

Our attention should be acutely conscious of Our Lord's word, including his revealing of the things that are assured to come. For, his return is imminent and his role will be executed with the same precision as it was during his first advent. The knowledge and understanding of this certainty is another blessing we can claim through our study of Revelation.

Just as we see Jesus fulfilling Scripture in the Gospels, so too, will he do so when he returns. When Jesus began his ministry he explained to his followers that his works would fulfill prophecy. Jesus quotes from Isaiah in Luke 4:18-21,

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty

those who are oppressed; ¹⁹To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."
²⁰Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down.
And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. ²¹And He
began to say to them, "*Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.*"

In his second coming, Jesus will complete the prophecy. For, he will pick up at the very point where he left off: a comma! found in Isaiah 61:2-3,

“To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, *And the day of vengeance of our God*; To comfort all who mourn, ³To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified.”

Just as he proclaimed the “*acceptable year of the Lord*” before, so Jesus will proclaim the “*day of vengeance of our God*”!

Jesus’ role in his second coming will be very different from the one he carried out in his first coming. We should get to know what his role will be, and in what ways his return will fulfill Scripture. For example, we read of the Lord conquering all the nations gathered for battle in Zechariah 14:1-4,

“Behold, the day of the Lord is coming, And your spoil will be divided in your midst. ²For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; The city shall be taken, The houses rifled, And the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, But the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city. ³Then *the Lord will go forth And fight against those nations*, As He fights in the day of battle. ⁴And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, Which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, From east to west, Making a very large valley; Half of the mountain shall move toward the north And half of it toward the south.”

This is the conquering Messiah that the sons of Israel were expecting to see when Jesus first arrived. Even his disciples were anticipating these Scriptures to be fulfilled after Jesus’ resurrection. The disciples’ hearts are revealed by their question to Jesus in Acts 1:6-7,

“when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, *will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?*" ⁷And He said to them, "It is not for

you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority.”

Notice what Jesus did not say: He did not refute them! He merely told them, in essence, ‘not yet’.

The disciples did not realize then, as we know today, that the interval between the time when Jesus left until his returnⁱ would last as long as it already has: nearly two thousand years! So, why has the Father made this season last this long? James, the brother of Jesus, answers this question for us by quoting Scripture in Acts 15:14-17,

“Simon has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. ¹⁵And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written: ¹⁶*After this I will return* And will rebuild the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down; I will rebuild its ruins, And I will set it up; ¹⁷So that the rest of mankind may seek the Lord, Even all the Gentiles who are called by My name, Says the Lord who does all these things.”

After receiving the Holy Spiritⁱⁱ, it is obvious how the disciples were given knowledge of things to come through their ability to discern the truth of God’s word. This same ability, this same knowledge is available to us through the same Spirit within us. We need only to ask God to reveal His wisdomⁱⁱⁱ to us. The knowledge of the truth we gain through reading, hearing, and abiding in His word. For, God has magnified His word even above His name^{iv}, which emboldens us with strength to speak His truth.

ⁱ ACTS 1:9-11, when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. ¹⁰And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, ¹¹who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, *will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.*"

ⁱⁱ ACTS 2:1-4, When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. ²And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. ⁴*And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit* and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

ⁱⁱⁱ JAM 1:5-6, If any of you lacks wisdom, *let him ask of God*, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. ⁶But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.

^{iv} PSM 138:2-4, I will worship toward Your holy temple, And praise Your name For Your lovingkindness and Your truth; For *You have magnified Your word above all Your name.* ³In the day when I cried out, You answered me, And made me bold with strength in my soul. ⁴All the kings of the earth shall praise You, O Lord, When they hear the words of Your mouth.

We, who surrender to the will of God, all have the same Spirit. All of us are then given work to accomplish for the benefit of the church. Yet, not all of us are given the same task, as Paul explains in 1 Corinthians 12:7-11,

“the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: ⁸for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, ⁹to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, ¹⁰to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.”

So, we each have a role to assume; and, the Holy Spirit facilitates and sustains us in the tasks that He has chosen for us. All that we do, therefore, should bring glory to Jesus as the Holy Spirit glorifies him^v through us. To accomplish this, we cannot think of ourselves too highly^{vi}, but submit ourselves to the Father’s will, and seek His glory^{vii}.

During this season that God has placed us in^{viii}, awaiting the return of Jesus, He gave us work to accomplish^{ix} for His glory and gave us insight, knowledge of the future that we may have assurance of things that are and of things that are yet to come. For, the Father has declared His role regarding this season in Psalms 110:1,

“The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.”

In addition, we may know that there are things that are yet future, as we are told in Hebrews 2:8,

^v JOHN 16:13-14, However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. ¹⁴*“He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.*

^{vi} ROM 12:3, I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, *not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.*

^{vii} JOHN 7:17-18, If anyone wants to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority. ¹⁸*“He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who seeks the glory of the One who sent Him is true, and no unrighteousness is in Him.*

^{viii} ACTS 17:26, He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has *determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings.*

^{ix} EPH 2:10, For we are His workmanship, *created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*

“You have put all things in subjection under his feet.” For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. *But now we do not yet see all things put under him.*”

Paul explains this progression in 1 Corinthians 15:24-26,

“Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. ²⁵For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. ²⁶*The last enemy that will be destroyed is death.*”

So, as death still reigns^x in the world, this Scripture is yet fulfilled. Even so, we gain peace that surpasses understanding^{xi} in the knowledge God’s word gives us: the assurance that God is in control during this season and every season. We anticipate obtaining this peace, God’s blessing, through our prayerful study of Revelation, as God reveals to us His planned sequence of the end.

^x ROM 5:17, For if *by the one man's offense death reigned* through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.

^{xi} PHIL 4:6-7, Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; ⁷and *the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding*, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.