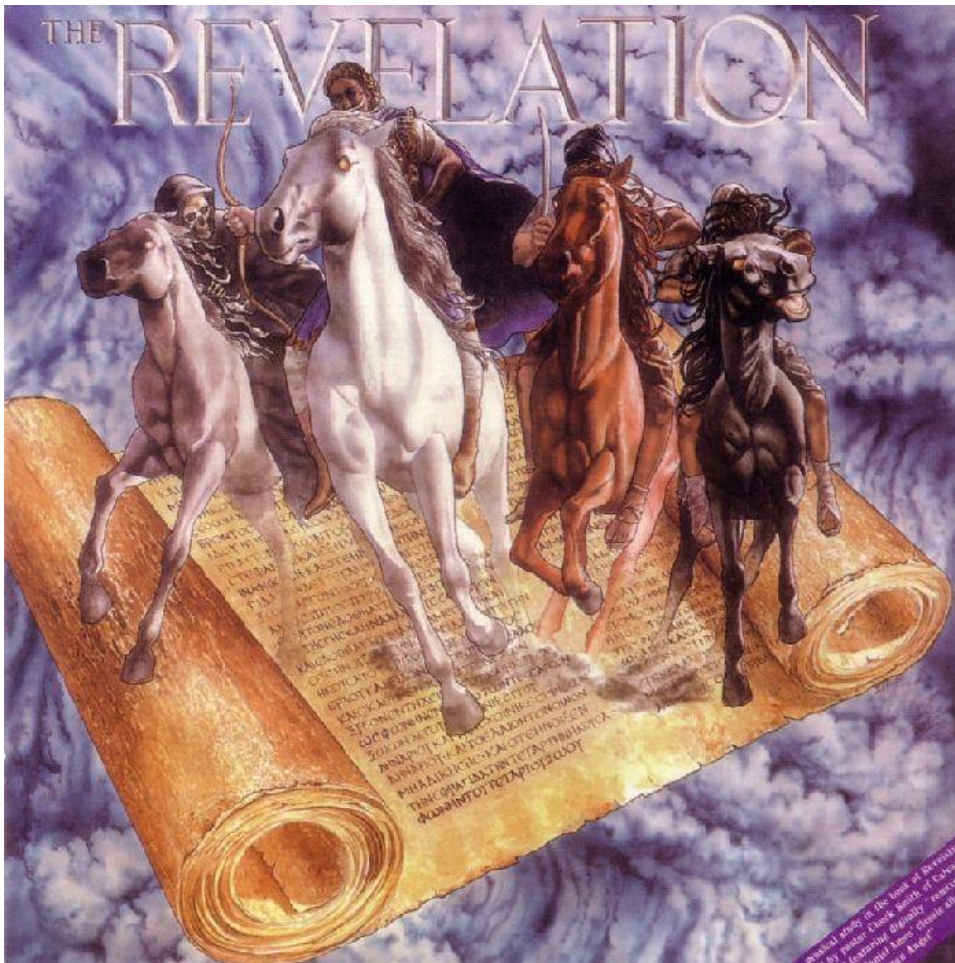


# **GOD'S REDEEMPTIVE PLAN** **FOR THE AGES**



**Precursory Studies to the Book of Revelation**

**by**

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## **PREFACE**

Sitting on the table in Ben Siaki's house in the Philippines was a little red book. Walking by it, I said to myself, I would like to read that someday. It was a Bible Society Greek text, open to the book of Revelation. I was a short-term missionary in the Philippines at the time, unsaved, but having a deep urge to read this text. I do not remember the missionaries name, but that is not the most important thing. His influence, by leaving that book on the table, has had a dramatic effect over my life. Several years later the Lord would call me to Himself. When He did, I had only one urge, to know the Scriptures. To that effect, I immediately quit my job and headed off to seminary, not to become a pastor or teacher, but simply to fulfill the inner urge to know the Word of God.

What then do you do when you go to Seminary? Of course, you major in Greek. At least I did and have now my little red book on my desk. I can read Revelation in the original language of Greek as I had wanted too. That does not mean that I understand all that is in this book. That is because much of the symbolism is grounded in OT passages.

For many who study Revelation, we come to it with insufficient knowledge of its background. For this reason and for myself, I've wanted to do a precursory study in preparation to help understand this somewhat mysterious book. I'm not interested in spewing out the normal prophetic lines that sometimes come from the pulpit or are heard on the radio. I have only one interest, "What do the Scriptures say about the background for this book, especially the OT."

We will seek to answer questions like, what is the redemptive outline for the redemption of the heavens and earth; Is the modern day gathering of Israel the one noted in the OT; Did the bible say that Jesus' return would be to the Mount of Olives; Who is the fourth beast of Daniel; What is the terminology used for the second coming and the rapture; What did Jesus say in the Olivet Discourse; How does the second Exodus relate to the first; Where does Revelation's terminology come from and what is it; and more.

My hope is to create a dialogue of thinking as you read and study, not to say that I have it all figured out. There have been too many who have figured it out, only to be proven wrong. I need not go down the list. But hopefully it might bring a challenge to your thinking or even open up new pathways of thinking.

With that, let's dig in!

Paul A. Wright

## LESSON 1

### Scriptural Axioms that Govern Prophecy

Where does one begin? Premises undergird everything. Even methodology affects understanding, especially in dealing with the Old Testament. Many will not even consider the Old Testament since we have the New. However, the apostles and writers of the New Testament continually referred to the Old Testament as proof for fulfillment.

But the trend of interpretation in contemporary evangelical scholarship has shifted. It has begun to deny “any messianic message” in key passages in the Old Testament such as Genesis 3:15; Psalm 22; Isaiah. 7:14.<sup>1</sup> Other evangelical scholars, in an attempt to remain faithful to the words of the New Testament authors and Jesus have adopted alternative interpretations: *sensus plenior* (dual fulfillment), typical fulfillment and Midrashic fulfillment.<sup>2</sup> These methods are used to maintain an historical interpretation, with a fulfillment in a person or event at the time of writing and a future fulfillment by Jesus.<sup>3</sup>

The undergirding premise of this study is that the OT should be read as a Messianic text. John Sailhamer has made the case for this argument along with its textual and compositional basis.<sup>4</sup> Rydelnik has also advanced the same position. This position argues that the Law, the Prophets and the Writings are all Messianic and are to be read this way. By this is meant that the Hebrew Bible tells us there will be a Messiah, i.e., it not only predicts the coming of Messiah but also identifies and describes Him, while the NT tells us Jesus is the Messiah, i.e., by identifying Jesus as the one about whom the Hebrew Bible speaks and so makes the claim Jesus is the true Messiah.

The argument that this course takes for the position that the Pentateuch should be read as a Messianic text, stems from Gen. 3:15; 12:1-3; 49:8-12; Exod. 15; Lev. 26; Num. 22-24; Deut. 4:25-31; 30:1-10; 31:16-18, 24-29; Psa. 90; and Lk. 24:25-27, 44-45. Key is Luke, because this is how Jesus explained the Scriptures, i.e., the OT, to His disciples. Let's look at it.

Consequently, if we draw out the connections and genealogies that appear from these verses in the Old and New Testaments, we begin to get a picture that looks like an hour-glass. From the beginning, the hope of Israel narrows down to the coming Messiah and then broadens out to the nations, until it intersects with the coming kingdom of God. We call it the plan of the ages. From this all the other axioms are derived. See the following pages.

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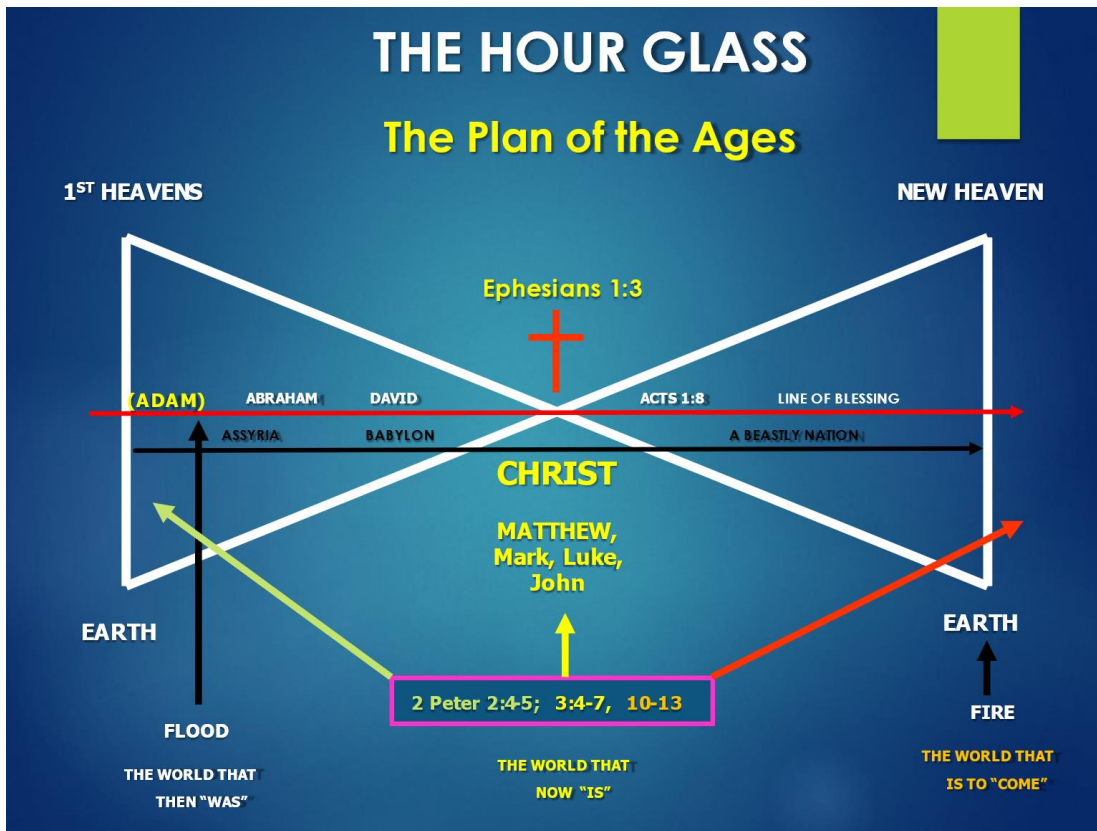
<sup>1</sup> Michael Rydelnik, “The Messianic Hope: Is the Hebrew Bible Really Messianic,” B&H Academic, 2010, p. 112.

<sup>2</sup> Idem. p. 112. He will later state G.F. Moor's definition of Midrashic as: “an atomistic exegesis, which interprets sentences, clauses, phrases, and even single words, independently of the context or the historical occasion, as divine oracles; combines them with other similarly detached utterances; and makes large use of analogy of expressions, often by purely verbal association,” Moore, Judaism, 1:248

<sup>3</sup> Idem. p. 112

<sup>4</sup> “The Pentateuch as Narrative;” and “The Meaning of the Pentateuch.”

**I. THE PLAN OF THE AGES—The Hour Glass**

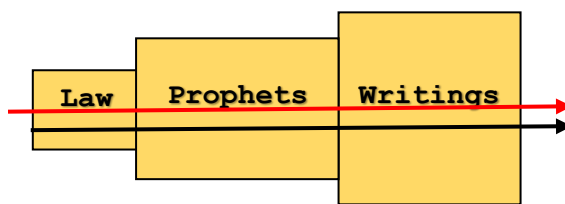


**II. SCRIPTURE BUILDS UPON SCRIPTURE—it is progressive**

A. Seen in the Hebrew arrangement of the OT—the **TaNaK**, an acronym:

1. **T**a for Torah—Law (Pentateuch)
2. **N**a for Neviim—Prophets—The Former; The Latter
3. **K** for Ketuvim—Writings (poetical; wisdom; Megilloth)

B. The sailors telescope—



1. **The Red-line** starts before creation, Eph. 1:4; Gen. 3:15 and will continue through eternity

2. **The Black-line** starts at the fall and ends in Rev. 20:10 along with death (Rev. 20:14-15)

3. The red-line, Gen. 3:15, proceeds from Adam through Abel/Seth-Noah-Shem-Abraham-The Twelve-Judah and David in the OT

4. The black-line follows from Cain through Lamech-Ham-Nimrod-Assyria-Egypt/Pharaoh-Babylon-Medes/Persians-Greece-to a beastly empire, in the NT



**IV. ALL AUTHORITY IS FROM GOD**—God is sovereign (Rom. 13:1)

- A. Rom. 13:1—ou gar estin exsousia ei me hupo theou: *For not is authority except under/by God*, i.e., For there is no authority except under/by God
- B. This explains why God can send a disciplining nation against Israel and then turn around and judge that nation
- C. The disciplining rod/nation exceeds the limits of its authority given by God
- D. For example, Isa. 10:5-19—Assyria; Jer. 25:9-14—Babylon
- E. Both, the nations, Israel and the angels will be judged by His statutes and laws (Isa. 42:1-4; 24:21-23)

**V. ISRAEL IS AT THE CENTER OF ALL THE NATIONS**—Ezek. 5:5

- B. Because of the hope of Messiah, all prophecy for the nations, centers around Israel/Jerusalem, even in the Torah (Num. 23:9; Ezek. 5:5; Gen. 3:15 with 12:1-3)
  - 1. Moses connects the creation and fall, using Gen. 3:15 and a genealogy leading to Abraham (Gen. 5; 11:27ff.)
  - 2. From the Abrahamic promises (Gen. 12:1-3) all prophecies are centered around Israel and a coming ruler/deliverer (see Gen. 49:8-12; the Balaam prophecies, Num. 22-24; and the song of Moses, Deut. 31:14-32:29)
- C. Israel was created to be the head of the nations, not the tail (Deut. 28:1, 9-10, 13, 44)
- D. YHVH is to be enthroned in Israel and in the midst of the nations (Ezek. 5:5)
- E. Jerusalem and its Davidic king are to be over all the nations (Exod. 15:16-18; 2 Sam. 7:10-16; Psa. 2; 45:5-7; 72:8-20; 102:13-17; 110; Isa. 2:2-4; 9:7; Joel 3:12)
- F. This is a continuation of the mandate given Adam (Gen. 1:26-27; see Gen. 12:1-3)

**VI. HISTORY IS A TYPOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK**—God's dealing in the past prefigures His work in the present and future—it is called foreshadowing/recycling

- A. The typological framework of the garden of Eden/the tabernacle/temple
  - 1. The garden of Eden/tabernacle/temple are all patterned from the same heavenly pattern having three sacred spaces (Exod. 25:9; Ezek. 1)
  - 2. They consist of an outer court, holy place and holy of holies, surrounded by the nations, with Israel functioning as a priestly nation to the nations (Exod. 19:5-6; Num. 23:9; Ezek. 5:5)
  - 3. Following the mandate given to Adam and Eve, all three were to expand, filling the whole earth (Gen. 1:26-28; 9:1; 12:1-3)
  - 4. Moses saw the return of the glory, Exodus 40, but due to the sins of Israel, it would not be final until the coming of the new Jerusalem in Rev. 21-22
  - 5. The New Jerusalem is modelled on the pattern of the holy of holies, in that its 3-dimensional cube models the mountain in the garden of Eden (Ezek. 28:13-14, 16) and the holy of holies in the tabernacle and temple, filling the whole earth
  - 6. The water flowing from the throne and the trees for the healing of the nations, follows the pattern of the river and the tree of life in the garden (Rev. 22:1-2)

- B. Another typological framework is the Exodus, prefigured in the deliverance of Noah in the flood (Gen. 6-8; Deut. 30:1-6; Isa. 11:11; 1 Cor. 5:7; Lk. 22:15-16)
1. This framework is especially visible in Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel (Isa. 11:11-12; Jer. 16:14-15; 23:7-8; Ezek. 20:33-38)
  2. Through judgments, like those in Egypt, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness (Isa. 26:9; Rev. 16:7; 19:2; see Job 30:24)
  3. Israel will be redeemed with great judgments and given a new heart (Isa. 1:27 KJ; see Neh. 1:10; Jer. 31:31-33; see Isa. 26:9b; Jer. 12:14-17; 29:10-11; Ezek. 16:59-60; 20:33-38)
  4. As Moses would defeat Pharaoh (Exod. 7:8-12), so the greater Moses (Deut. 18:13; 34:10; Jn. 7:40) will defeat the adversary (Gen. 3:15; 1 Jn. 3:8)
- C. Also, the tabernacle and its offerings will prefigure the coming Messiah's work in the matters of redemption for sin (Leviticus; Jn. 1:29; 1 Cor. 5:7)

## VII. FORMING AN ESCHATOLOGICAL OUTLINE FOR THE REDEMPTION OF HEAVEN AND EARTH

- A. God created and is possessor of the heavens and earth (Gen. 1:1-2:3; 14:19)
- B. Man was to rule in obedience to God over the earth, enlarging the Son's domain, until it encompassed the whole heavens and earth (Gen. 1:26-27)
- C. Man's disobedience led to the need of a Redeemer, to return blessing and free both man and earth from the curse, rendering a judgment against the serpent and his seed (Gen. 3:1-24; Rom. 8:19-22; 1 Cor. 15:20-28)
- D. This redeemer would come as the offspring of the woman (Gen. 3:15, see the 3<sup>rd</sup> pers. pronouns; sing. vb. forms; and sing. suffixes in relation to zera—seed)
- E. His family line would narrow from Adam, through Abraham; through the twelve; through Judah to David (Gen. 5:1ff.; 49:8-12; Num. 22-24); to the Christ—Yeshua
- F. Israel's failure to keep the Sinai covenant would lead to them being dispersed among the nations, in need of the Redeemer (Lev. 26:33-39; Deut. 4:25-31; 28-29; 30:1-6)
- G. God would then come and bring them out a second time, making a new covenant with them, redeeming them from their sins and giving them a new heart (Lev. 26; Deut. 4:25-31; 30:1-10; Jer. 31:27-34; Ezek. 36:22-32; cf. Matt. 23:37-39)
- H. Through Abraham and his seed, Yeshua, blessings would go out to the nations, offering them redemption through the Son, grafting them into the covenants and promises of Israel through faith (Gen. 12:1-3; Matt. 28:18-20; Jn. 15; Rom. 11:11, 19-22; Eph. 2:11—22)
- I. In the latter days, Yeshua will seat Himself on a glorious throne in Jerusalem and render judgment upon all the unbelieving nations (Matt. 25:31-46; see Exod. 15:16-18; 1 Sam. 2:10)
- J. Finally, He will defeat the Devil, his anti-Christ, the false prophet and death (Matt. 28:18; Heb. 2:8; 1 Jn. 3:5, 3-8; Rev. 19-20)
- K. In so doing He will usher in the kingdom of God and a new world for all eternity— (Rev. 21-22)



## **VIII. CONCLUSION**

- A. The goal of this course is to follow the simple outline, enlarging upon it as it is developed in the scriptures
- B. This will then be used as a platform for the study of the book of Revelation