

Paul's Unknown Prophecy

by
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The Spirit from time to time over the years has shone a revelatory spotlight on certain passages of scripture, causing me to have an unusual and lasting interest in those passages as he opens them up, layer by layer, over a relatively long period of time.

Each revelatory layer causes me to receive God's absolute, immutable truth as though that specific layer is the ultimate focus and truth of the passage, but each layer ultimately leads me into a deeper, and more comprehensive understanding.

Paul's letters contains numerous passages that are obviously prophetic, but Ephesians 4:1-16 has not been generally recognized to be prophetic. Yet, as the Spirit of Truth has opened my understanding to this passage He has revealed that this passage is an astonishing prophecy related to the wise virgins of the end times church.

Now, as the Spirit unseals end time prophecy for the "generation" (entire group of believers) who will experience it, this prophecy, in perfect agreement with the Lord's own prophetic words in Matthew 24 and 25, John 17, and Revelation, is opened up (unsealed) to us.

In the past Ephesians 4:11-16 has been primarily viewed as an explanation of the purpose and function of the Lord's appointed ministry gifts of apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher (the "fathers" of the faith) for equipping the body of Christ for works of faith. In this Paul notes that the ultimate result of these gifts to the body of Christ will be complete unity and maturity in Christ.

The identification of this passage as a prophecy is confirmed when Paul tells us that it is the Lord's intention (His will) to provide the body with the appointed ministry gifts of apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher, until...we ALL (the entire corporate body)...***attain oneness in the faith and in the comprehension of the full and accurate***...(experiential, relationship)...***knowledge of the Son of God; that[we might arrive] at really mature manhood – the completeness of personality which is nothing less than the standard height of Christ's own perfection – the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, and the completeness found in Him***...(while in the world).. Ephesians 4:13 Amplified (inserts are the author's)

That the body of Christ has not, yet, attained to this intention of the Lord from Paul's day forward is recognized and known by all. This event, and the completion of

the purpose of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, is, therefore, a future prophetic event.

Paul wrote the letter to the church at Ephesus long after the first few years of true unity and fullness in the church at Jerusalem, which is our example of what this unity and fullness will look like for the entire remnant end time church at some point.

The Pharisees of the institutional church, embarrassed and condemned by our current state of somnolent deception, division and immaturity, claim that this passage will only be fulfilled in heaven. But we clearly will not need the offices of apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher in heaven. Therefore, it is His intention (purpose, will) to bring us to complete maturity and unity in the faith before the resurrection of all the saints on the last day.

This is in agreement with the Lord's own prayer in which He states that the purpose of the church manifesting the glory of Christ in perfect unity is to bear witness to the world.

“I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ... (as opposed to our current witness of division with very little manifestation of His glory)... ***The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one,... (why?)... ***so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me***. John 17:20-23 ESV (inserts and emphasis are the author's)***

Because it is His intention (will, purpose) that we become “perfectly one” as a witness to the world then it WILL be done, though we cannot now imagine that possibility.

The Greek word transliterated as *teleioo* means to be made perfectly one. The Strong's outline of Bible usage shows it as meaning:

- 1) To make perfect, complete
 - a) To carry through completely, to accomplish, finish, bring to an end
- 1) To complete (perfect)
 - a) Add what is yet wanting in order to render a thing full
 - b) To be found perfect
- 2) To bring to the end (goal) proposed
- 3) To accomplish
 - a) Bring to a close or fulfillment by an event (of the prophecies of scripture)

This meaning, difficult for a somnolent, sin-conscious church to receive, is consistent with His intention (will). Therefore, our acknowledgment in the spirit that

this passage in Ephesians is obviously prophetic raises numerous questions. And, because the church as we know it falls shockingly short of the Lord's stated intention for His spiritual body, Bible teachers over the years have invented "errors to mislead," in order to assuage the knowledge of our shortcoming.

Keep in mind that Paul wrote this letter at a time after the first exemplary years of the church in Jerusalem, and he wrote it as a future expectation for the entire body of Christ. It also seems that he expected to personally see and experience this unified fullness of the truth, power, and glory of the Lord in and through the church. But what he experienced instead was a constant assault on the absolute, immutable truth of God through the introduction of false doctrines that divided and emasculated the church.

Paul's corresponding assessment of the corporate body of Christ as he knew it, even though they were still under the direct influence of the Lord's first apostles, was that they (the corporate body of believers) were still "children" (immature in the faith) and divided by "winds" of (false) doctrine introduced by evil men who were themselves influenced by demons.

So then... (at the time of the fulfillment of this prophecy)..., we may no longer be children... (as Paul saw the church then, and as we are now)..., tossed [like ships] to and from between chance gusts of teaching, and wavering with every changing wind of doctrine, [the prey of] the cunning and cleverness of unscrupulous men, (gamblers engaged) in every shifting form of trickery in inventing errors to mislead. Ephesians 4:14 Amplified (inserts and emphasis are the author's)

In his second letter to the church at Corinth Paul identified these evil men introducing errors for the purpose of misleading the church as the "servants" of Satan.

For such men are false apostles – spurious counterfeits – deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles (special messengers) of Christ, the Messiah.

And it is no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light, so it is not surprising if his servants ... (men, not demons)... masquerade as ministers of righteousness. [But] their end will correspond with their deeds. 2 Corinthians 11:13-15 Amplified (emphasis is the author's)

"Their end" reminds us of the Lord's prophetic parable of the "wicked servants," those appointed by the Lord to feed the sheep unleavened bread, who, instead, "beat" the sheep by feeding them leavened (deceptive and manipulative) bread.

A study of church history beginning with the constant corrections Paul and the other apostles had to make in the rapidly growing young church, followed by the corruption of the Roman Catholic Church from the Nicene Council all the way through the dark ages, then by the development of numerous differing protestant denominations with various schools of doctrine and scriptural interpretation, including schools of

eschatological doctrine, as well as the development of numerous Christian cults, reveals that the trend toward division has expanded dramatically for the past two millennia for the very reasons Paul identified in Ephesians and 2 Corinthians as the “wicked servants” of the church “beat” the sheep.

And most of the “beaten” body of Christ today accepts this division and immaturity as being “normal” for the church with no real expectation of change.

In his wonderful book, “The Normal Christian Life,” Watchman Nee, one of the founding fathers of the underground house church in China, identified the life of Peter, Paul, and John as being “normal,” and anything less as being sub-normal. But the church at large has normalized our division, our lack of revelatory truth, and our failure to manifest the fullness and unity of Christ in the world as though our experience, our understanding, and our practices are in perfect agreement with the intention (will) of the Lord.

Yet, we have the more sure word of prophecy given by Paul that the Lord’s intention, His perfect will, is that we experience oneness in the faith and the full manifestation of His truth, power, and glory in the world.

How can this be? It is almost impossible for anyone with awareness concerning the current status of the church to imagine the possibility that the entire body of Christ could be united in the faith, manifesting the fullness of Christ in the earth (i.e. “...greater things will you do...”) without some dramatic, supernatural change taking place.

If Paul and the other apostolic fathers of the faith couldn’t do it, how can the divided and deceived fathers of the faith today do it?

Ecumenicalism, letting the main thing be the main thing and ignoring the rest, is not the answer. Ecumenicalism is like the church building a NT tower of Babel in order to achieve what can only be achieved by the Spirit through our faith and obedience. Ecumenicalism, therefore, is not a move of the Holy Spirit to bring the church into a state of complete maturity and unity. It is, instead, an agreement to remain divided, and a denial (i.e. unbelief) of the possibility that God can bring unity and full maturity to the body of Christ.

In the parable of the ten virgins the Lord Himself specifically prophesied that the virgins (the unmarried kinsmen of the bridegroom – the church) ALL waited expectantly for His return with lamps burning brightly in the beginning. This was the “normal” church identified by Watchman Nee, the church under its initial apostolic leadership.

Thus the oil of the Holy Spirit burned brightly in their souls, giving them revelatory light and empowerment. And these were unified and vigorous in their faith

responses to the revealed will of the Lord, manifesting His love, His power, and His glory in a dark world that hated and persecuted them.

But when the Lord tarried the virgins became “drowsy,” and fell asleep, which is where we are now in spite of the amazing “Great Awakening” of the 19th century, the Charismatic renewal of the early 20th century, and other localized, temporary revivals that demonstrated for a time, the unity, power, and glory of Christ in and through His church.

The Lord specifically addressed this drowsy, falling asleep church in the revelation given to John on the isle of Patmos in what is known as the letter to the seven churches, which includes the church at Ephesus to whom Paul’s letter was written.

What we have missed is that the entire revelation of Jesus Christ from Revelation 1:1 to Revelation 22:21 was circulated as a letter to these churches. What we have also missed, because of numerous deceptions, is that this same revelation of Jesus Christ has its greatest application to the end time church.

Dispensational theologians, “inventing errors to mislead,” such as the dangerously misleading dispensational pre-tribulation “rapture” theory, insist that Revelation is only for the church from Chapter 1 through Chapter 3, but in doing so they deny the fact that the Revelation was given to John, an apostle of the church, to be distributed to the churches in its entirety and included in the Christian Bible, not the Torah, with a specific blessing for those Christians who read and heed (obey) the warnings and instructions it contains.

Then, in the final passages the Lord makes certain we understand that the entirety of His revelation is for the church.

“I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches.” Revelation 22:16 ESV (emphasis is the author’s)

The seven churches in Asia Minor (Turkey), which includes the church at Ephesus who first received Paul’s prophecy, were addressed by the Lord with specific commendations and grievances that were to be read and heeded (obeyed) in their day. But these same commendations and grievances were intended to read and heeded by these same types of the church and same types of believers from that day forward all the way to the last day.

We also have a warning in Revelation 22:18,19 that will apply to the “foolish virgins,” the Pharisees of the end times church, who take away from or add to the revelation, which would include taking away from the absolute, immutable, revelatory truth or adding to the absolute, immutable, revelatory truth of the Lord’s prophecy.

The warning given in Revelation 22:18,19 indicates two things. First, that this warning is most applicable to the end times church, and, second, that the failure to heed this warning by the “foolish virgins” will result in the loss of their salvation.

“I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues... (the seven trumpet judgments of the 7th seal)... described in this book, and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city... (his participation in the everlasting covenant in Christ)..., which are described in this book. Revelation 22:18,19 ESV (inserts are the author’s)

Therefore, the dispensational claim that the letter circulated to the churches by John only applies to the church through chapter 3, and, from that point forward only applies to national, ethnic Israel and the tribulation saints, is “taking away” (the absolute, immutable truth of God) from this prophecy.

It would be difficult to imagine a more serious warning. But the Pharisees of our faith, through presumptive false doctrines and even doctrines originating from demonic inspiration, distorting the truth of this intensely important end times revelation, if they do not ultimately repent, are in danger of experiencing the curse thereof.

We also have a specific clue that the greatest application of the Revelation of Jesus Christ is for the end times church in His promise to the Philadelphian type of church.

“Because you have kept my word about patient endurance... (during the 4th, 5th, and 6th seal events of Revelation)..., I will keep you from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world, to try those who dwell on the earth.” Revelation 3:10 ESV (insert is the author’s)

The “hour of trial” is, of course, the “great tribulation” during the seven trumpet judgments of the 7th seal of Revelation, which lasts a period of three and a half years after the Antichrist has declared himself to be “God” and “Messiah.”

The first thing we should notice is that every believer who dies before the opening of the 7th seal escapes this “hour of trial,” whether or not they qualify as being Philadelphian types of believers. Therefore, this promise is only for a specific group of end times believers who qualify as participating in the Philadelphian type of church at the time.

These are identified in the Lord’s parable of the ten virgins as the “wise virgins” who are awakened from the present state of somnolence in the church by the groomsman’s warning: ***Behold! The bridegroom is coming.***

I have speculated that this announcement event will take place immediately after the Gog-Magog war (Ezekiel 38 and 39) when God intervenes miraculously to destroy the Third Jihad of Islam, and, in the aftermath of nuclear war, the nations surrender sovereignty to the United Nations as an interim world government for the purpose of restoring peace and prosperity in the world.

The announcement event, though, will include an outpouring of the Holy Spirit on both the “foolish” and the “wise” virgins to know, supernaturally, that the final stages of tribulation (pre-“great tribulation”) have begun.

The foolish virgins are awakened at the same time as the wise, and ALL of the virgins, the entire born-again, regenerated body of Christ, begin to trim the wicks of their lamps (cutting away sin, false doctrine, and unbelief) so that the revelatory light of the Spirit of Truth begins to shine brightly again.

The virgins, shocked awake by events in the world and by the Holy Spirit’s revelatory announcement, begin to trim the wicks of their lamps during the events described by the 4th, 5th, and 6th seals of Revelation, which is “tribulation,” including the rise of the Antichrist, worldwide famines, disease, and wars that kill 25% of the world’s population.

What a shock this will be for those who have been deceived by the dispensational promise of escaping tribulation by being “raptured” away before end time tribulation begins, and a great many fathers of the faith, those who were given to the body of Christ to equip us with faith and bring us to full maturity in Christ, will be faced with the rich young ruler’s decision.

What will they do when the Lord says, “Repent of the false doctrines you have been teaching and promoting. Apologize to those you have deceived, and teach the truth boldly and without compromise...”?

This is also the time in which believers will hear the Holy Spirit’s voice in their inner man saying, “Come out of her,” (out of the harlot church in whatever pre-forms the harlot church has taken at that time).

This is also a time in which the “foolish” virgins will begin to fall away because they have not responded appropriately to the Lord’s demands for repentance and the instructions of the Holy Spirit.

In the Lord’s own words:

“Then they will hand you...(my church)... over to suffer affliction and tribulation, and put you to death; and you will be hated by all nations for My names’ sake.

“And then many...(of my church)... will be offended and repelled and begin to distrust and desert [Him Whom they ought to trust and obey] and will stumble and fall away, betray one another and pursue one another with hatred.

“And many false prophets will rise up...(in the harlot church)...and deceive and lead many into error. And the love of the great body of...(My)...people will grow cold, because of the multiplied lawlessness and iniquity.

“But he who endures to the end will be saved.” Matthew 24:9-13 Amplified
(inserts are the author’s)

The passage above in which the Lord is succinctly describing the 4th, 5th, and 6th seal events of Revelation is followed by a passage in which He explains that there will be an end time evangelistic move throughout the whole world before the end (the last day resurrection) comes.

“And this good news of the kingdom (the Gospel) will be preached throughout the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then will come the end.”

Matthew 24:14 Amplified

In context with Matthew 24:9-13 this final preaching of the gospel throughout the world (to every nation, tribe, and tongue) is a fresh, new preaching of the gospel as a testimony, a testimony that includes the unity, power, and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Yet, it is hard to imagine the church under extreme persecution by the Antichrist, the massive falling away of “foolish” virgins and the betrayal and deception of the harlot church being able to carry out this end time evangelization of the entire world to bring in the end time harvest of tribulation saints.

The “wise” virgins WILL receive some help during this time, because of their response to the repentance required by the Lord in Revelation 2 and 3. The outpouring of the combined “former and latter rains” that fell on the church at the first Pentecost will be restored so that the experience of the wise virgins approaches or exceeds that of the original disciples. But it is not during the 4th, 5th, and 6th seals that the great and notable harvest of tribulation saints takes place.

The most important thing that takes place in the church during the 4th, 5th, and 6th seals is the testing and endurance of the saints, the “wise virgins,” under extreme worldwide persecution and deception, greater than we have yet imagined, because we have always imagined it happening to some other group of people.

The event that initiates the opening of the 7th seal by the Lord is the Antichrist declaring himself to be “God” and “Messiah.”

But, at the same time, an utterly amazing and intensely glorious event will take place with the wise virgins on some future Pentecost as recorded in Revelation 7:2-8, Revelation 9:4, and Revelation 14:1-5. The surviving wise virgins, a.k.a the end times Philadelphian church, will receive the promise of God to “keep” them from the hour of trial coming upon the whole world (the 7th seal judgments) of “great tribulation.”

These wise virgins are also identified as the metaphorical 144,000, the tried and tested New Testament “Israel of God,” who will be sealed in the forehead with the name of God and the name of the Lord. This sealing is not only for protection, but also for the completion of their redemption as “firstfruits unto God and the Lamb” (Revelation 14:4) also seen as the fulfillment of the wave offering of two wheat loaves (Jew and Gentile)

on Pentecost presented prophetically in the appointed times and feasts of the Lord (Leviticus 23).

Therefore, the coming of the Holy Spirit on that first Pentecost was the initiatory event during which the Law of God was written on our hearts, fulfilling the natural event of the Jews receiving the Law on Mount Sinai, and the redemption of the metaphorical 144,000 spiritual Jews (whose real number may be in the millions) as firstfruits of the wheat harvest unto God and the Lamb is the fulfillment of the wave offering of the two wheat loaves.

These are also described as the woman clothed with the sun carried into the wilderness (a place of protection and provision) by the “great eagle,” the Holy Spirit, but NOT removed from the earth.

But the function of the metaphorical 144,000, a.k.a. the woman clothed with the sun, these who are “*perfectly one*,” and who have attained to “...*the completeness of personality which is nothing less than the standard height of Christ’s own perfection – the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, and the completeness found in Him...*” is to carry the gospel to every nation, tribe, and tongue with great power and authority in the face of the worst that the Antichrist can do.

It is these “wise” virgins who will be the fulfillment of Paul’s prophecy, the fulfillment of the Lord’s prayer in John 17, and the fulfillment of the Lord’s promise to the end time Philadelphian church, manifesting the unity and the glory of Christ in a world infested with the full manifestation of Satan through the Antichrist.

Tertullian, AD 160-220, a “father” of the church still living under the apostolic tradition, penned this purpose of God succinctly. It has applied through all the ages of the church, but Tertullian, himself, was unaware of the astonishing way it would ultimately be carried out through the end times church:

“By allowing a permission for the operation of [Satan’s] designs, God acted consistently with the purpose of His own goodness. He deferred the devil’s destruction for the very same reason that He postponed the restitution of man. For He afforded room for a conflict, wherein man might crush his enemy with the same freedom of his will as had made him succumb to Satan... [And it enables man] to worthily recover his salvation by a victory. In this way, also, the devil receives a more bitter punishment, by being vanquished by him whom he had previously injured. By these means, God is discovered to be so much the more good.”

Those who have accepted the dispensational theory of a pre-tribulation “rapture” of church only saints have somehow fantasized that this will be a glorious event. But dispensational doctrine literally teaches that the church has failed, and that it will be a failed church that God pulls out of the world before tribulation.

But the truth of God is that when the enemy has come in like a flood and Satan's final victory seems secure, the Lord will cause the remnant company of the wise virgins, the Philadelphian church, to be sealed for protection and redeemed as "firstfruits unto God and the Lamb," in perfect accordance with prophetic scripture and with the appointed times and feasts of the Lord, to bring in the final wheat harvest of an uncountable number from every nation, tribe, and tongue in the midst of the worst that Satan can do.

So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy... (Satan through the Antichrist)... shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him. (the 144,000) Isaiah 59:19 KJV (inserts are the author's)

Of these it is prophesied:

***Arise, shine; for your light has come,
And the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.
For behold, darkness will cover the earth
And deep darkness the peoples;
But the LORD will rise upon you
And His glory will appear upon you.*** Isaiah 60:1,2 NASB

What the Lord intends (as Paul has spoken) is to manifest Himself and His victory over sin and death completely through His church before He comes Himself to destroy His enemies at Har-Maggedon. This is the exact opposite of the dispensational teaching concerning the Lord removing the failed church for the final seven years so He can restore His covenant with Abraham to the Jews.

Satan has been setting up and empowering this dispensational deception and many other deceptions, from the earliest days of the church until now, to prevent the body of Christ from "seeing" this truth, because he does NOT want us to experience the Lord's glorious intention (will) for His church .

But, because it is the Lord's intention, it WILL happen. And, because He has allowed the Spirit of Truth to unseal this amazing truth so that we can "see" it by revelation, we can be certain that many in this current generation of the body of Christ will also experience it.

Be, therefore, wise, and pay attention to the Lord's primary end time command, "***Do not*** ... (continue to)... ***be deceived.***" (insert is the author's)