

“PRIMARY P’s”

Intro: Imagine you’re lost.... And it’s a matter of life or death...

Assume you KNOW you’re running out of time...

You have NO idea where you are (your position)

You have a compass but it doesn’t really work...

And people giving “help” can’t be trusted...

This IS where the vast majority of the world is TODAY – spiritually!

PLEASE LOOK THRU THIS LENS THIS MORNING...

AS WE WALK WITH GOD THRU HIS WORD...

1. We’re going to get a FIX on our POSITION (past, present, future)
2. We’re going to use the ONLY RELIABLE COMPASS... (Bible)
3. We’ll IDENTIFY some PEOPLE who CAN’T BE TRUSTED...
4. We’ll get a CLOSER LOOK at the LOOMING DANGER...
5. We’ll see the LIGHT, LOVE, & LIFE that awaits GOD’s CHILDREN...

I. POSITION

- A. Where we’ve been... (2 Chron. 36:15-20)

15 *The Lord, the God of their fathers, sent word to them again and again by His messengers, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place; **16** but they continually mocked the messengers of God, despised His words and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against His people... **19** Then they burned the house of God and broke down the wall of Jerusalem, and burned all its fortified buildings... and destroyed all its valuable articles. **20** Those who had escaped from the sword were carried away to Babylon; and they were servants to him and to his sons until the rule of the kingdom of Persia...*

- B. Where we’re going... (2 Chronicles 36:22-23)

22 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia—in order to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah—the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he sent a proclamation throughout his kingdom, and also put it in writing, saying, **23** "Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, 'The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and He has appointed me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever there is among you of all His people, may the Lord his God be with him, and let him go up!'"

NOTE: Dan told Cyrus of Elijah's message from God!

ALSO: Ezra 1:2-3 verbatim of 2 Chron. 36:22-23...

VIDEO: "Bible Clock"

II. Story-Line...

- A. After 70 years in exile... we're "Going Home" with the Jews...
 - 1. **Ezekiel** (Prophet, Prophecy, & Promise)
 - 2. **Daniel** (Prophet, Prophecy, & Promise)

- B. **Ezra, Haggai, Zechariah** (short & long), & **Esther...**
 - 1. First wave of "Remnant Returning"
 - 2. ALTER BUILT... (Zerubbabel & Jeshua)
 - 3. Problems & Priorities become an issue...
 - 4. Haggai brings inspiring words from God...
 - 5. Zechariah shares victorious vision from God...
 - 6. TEMPLE "eventually" built... (16 yr wait)
 - 7. Esther's story begins between Ezra 6-7...

VIDEO: "Ezra the Epic"

III. Primary P's (i.e. "parallels," "perseverance," etc.)

A. Prophetic Providence

Ezra 1:2-3 *"Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, 'The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and He has appointed me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. 3 Whoever there is among you of all His people, may his God be with him! Let him go up to Jerusalem which is in Judah and rebuild the house of the Lord, the God of Israel; He is the God who is in Jerusalem.*

B. Promise

Ezra 3:8 *Now in the second year of their coming to the house of God at Jerusalem... **Zerubbabel and Jeshua** and the rest of their brothers the priests and the Levites, and all who came from the captivity to Jerusalem, began the work... on the house of the Lord...*

Zechariah 1:16 - *thus says the Lord, "I will return to Jerusalem with compassion; My house will be built in it," declares the Lord of hosts, "and a measuring line will be stretched over Jerusalem."*

Zechariah 2:4-5 = *'Jerusalem will be inhabited without walls.... 5 For I,' declares the Lord, 'will be a wall of fire around Jerusalem, and I will be the glory in her midst.'*

Zechariah 2:8 & 10 = *...for he who touches you, touches the apple of His eye... 10 Sing for joy and be glad, O daughter of Zion; for behold I am coming and I will dwell in your midst," declares the Lord.*

Zechariah 4:9 = *"The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house, and his hands will finish it. Then you will know that the Lord of hosts has sent me to you.*

Zechariah 8:3 *Thus says the Lord, 'I will return to Zion & will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Then Jerusalem will be called the City of Truth*

Zechariah 8:7-8 *Thus says the Lord of hosts, 'Behold, I am going to save My people... 8 and I will bring them back and they will live in the midst of Jerusalem; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God in truth and righteousness.'*

Zechariah 9:8 *But I will camp around My house because of an army... And no oppressor will pass over them anymore...*

C. Problems

Ezra 3:3 *So they set up the altar on its foundation, for they were terrified because of the peoples of the lands;*

Ezra 4:1-5 = Adversaries Hinder the Work.... **1** *Now when the enemies... heard that the people of the exile were building a temple to the Lord God of Israel,* **2** *they approached Zerubbabel and the heads of fathers' households, and said to them, "Let us build with you, for we, like you, seek your God; and we have been sacrificing to Him..."* **3** **But Zerubbabel and Jeshua** *and the rest of the heads of households said to them, "You have nothing in common with us in building a house to our God; but we ourselves will together build to the Lord God of Israel, as King Cyrus, the king of Persia has commanded us."* **4** **Then the people of the land discouraged the people of Judah, and frightened them from building,** **5** *and hired counselors against them to frustrate their counsel all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia.*

Ezra 4:24 *Then work on the house of God in Jerusalem ceased, and it was stopped until the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.*

Zechariah 10:2-3... *For the household gods utter nonsense, & the diviners see lies; they tell false dreams & give empty consolation. Therefore the people wander like sheep; they are afflicted for lack of a shepherd.* **3** *"My anger is hot against the shepherds, and I will punish the leaders; for the Lord of hosts cares for his flock..."*

Esther.... Haman makes a "gallos" for Mordacai... (we'll look at more next week)

MOREOVER...

HAMAN to destroy - annihilate - wipe-out ALL the Jews!

***** Like Hitler with Concentration Camps... BUT... all in 1 day!**

D. Priorities

Ezra 3:11-12 They sang, praising and giving thanks to the Lord, saying, "For He is good, for His loving-kindness is upon Israel forever." And all the people shouted with a great shout when they praised the Lord because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid. 12 Yet many of the priests and Levites and heads of fathers' households, the old men who had seen the first temple, wept with a loud voice when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, while many shouted aloud for joy...

Haggai 1:1-6 (Fear stalls the Temple work for 16 years!)

...the word of the Lord came by the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel the governor of Judah, and to Jeshua... the high priest, saying, 2 "Thus says the Lord of hosts, 'This people says, "The time has not come... for the house of the Lord to be rebuilt.'" 3 Then the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet, saying, 4 **"Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses while this house lies desolate?"** 5 Now therefore, thus says the Lord of hosts, **"Consider your ways!** 6 You have sown much, but harvest little; you eat, but there is not enough to be satisfied...

***** Purify your PRIORITIES!**

Ezra 5:1-2 (Temple Work Resumed) = **When the prophets, Haggai and Zechariah... prophesied to the Jews...2 then Zerubbabel... and Jeshua... arose and began to rebuild the house of God which is in Jerusalem; and the prophets of God were with them supporting them.**

Zechariah 7:5-6 = **"Say to all the people of the land and to the priests, 'When you fasted and mourned in these seventy years, was it actually for Me that you fasted? 6 When you eat and drink, do you not eat for yourselves and do you not drink for yourselves?"**

E. Power

Ezra 6:14-16 = (Temple Completed...) *And the elders of the Jews were successful in building through the prophesying of Haggai... and Zechariah... And they finished building according to the command of the God of Israel... And the sons of Israel... celebrated the dedication of this house of God with joy...*

Zechariah 4:6 = *"This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel saying, 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the Lord of hosts.*

***** cf. Acts 1:8**

Zechariah 8:13 *It will come about that just as you were a curse among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so I will save you that you may become a blessing. Do not fear; let your hands be strong.*

Messianic Power!

Zechariah 9:9 *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, Humble, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.*

9:11 *...because of the blood of My covenant with you, I have set your prisoners free from the pit.*

9:12 **Return to the stronghold, O prisoners who have the hope...** *And I will make you like a warrior's sword.*

9:15 *The Lord of hosts will defend them... as the flock of His people; For they are as the stones of a crown, sparkling in His land.*

Zechariah 12:9-10 *...on that day I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. 10 "And I will pour out on the house of David... a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on Me, on Him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn.*

2 Signet Rings = 2 "Sources" of Power

1. **Zerubbabel** is God's man on God's mission...
 - A. Awesome authority of Almighty God!
 - B. Empowered by Eternal Royalty!
 - C. Symbolic/Parallel to "Church" TODAY
 - D. Guaranteed to "Git-R-Done!"

2. **Haman** is the evil enemy's #1 weapon of the day
 - A. Capable of doing REAL, but limited damage
 - B. Like Hitler.. on a mission from hell...
 - C. Empowered by temporary trouble/takeover
 - D. Guaranteed to FAIL in the END!

T/S: Esther shares so much in regards to God's POWER...

= **Key:** God's People live under Pressure
God Promises to keep His Promises
God's Promises test our Priorities
God's Power Perfects His Promises!

There was, is, and will always be... only 2 choices!

Truth	or	Lies
Life	or	Death
Sin	or	Savior
Heaven	or	Hell

Are you like Haman... wearing the signet ring of the
"ruler of this world?"

Or like Zerubbabel... wearing the signet ring of the One
TRUE God?

BEWARE... it's the 4th qtr, times running out...

The pressure's on & the devil is deceiving!

MAJOR ISSUE:

Could the Muslim "messiah" be the Christian anti-Christ?

VIDEO: Signet Ring Prophecies

Zechariah 14:2-5,9 *For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city shall be taken and the houses plundered and the women raped. Half of the city shall go out into exile, but the rest of the people shall not be cut off from the city. 3 Then the Lord will go out and fight against those nations as when he fights on a day of battle. 4 On that day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives that lies before Jerusalem on the east,*

*and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west by a very wide valley, so that one half of the Mount shall move northward, and the other half southward. **5... Then the Lord my God will come, and all the holy ones with him.***

Zechariah 14:9 And the Lord will be king over all the earth.

Zechariah 14:12-13 = *This is the plague with which the Lord will strike all the nations that fought against Jerusalem: Their flesh will rot while they are still standing on their feet, their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongues will rot in their mouths. **13** On that day men will be stricken by the Lord with great panic. Each man will seize the hand of another, and they will attack each other.*

PRAYER: **May the Lord help us all...**

Purify our Priorities...

AS WE

Praise God for His Providence, Promises, & Power

AND

Press into God with your Problems.