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Megillot in Prophecy

by Ernest L. Martin, Ph.D., 1977

Transcribed and edited by David Sielaff, April 2010

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Prophecy is a way God proves himself. There is no question about that. Throughout the Old and New Testaments there are many, many prophecies. Prophecies are important and we know that they are interesting. The main reason they interest each of us is because we feel we may be living in the period that many of the prophecies will take place.

I know for a fact that the time of the end is getting closer. I have been saying for a long time, "Watch the Middle East." The revival of the Middle East is essential to the fulfillment of many prophecies in the Scripture. Too many people focus their prophetic understanding or interpretation on Europe, on Rome, on Germany, on Great Britain, and the United States. However, the center of prophecy is the Middle East. Most of us can see something happening there that shows the prophecies of the Bible begin to fit into place. God does prove Himself through prophecy.

Three Types of Prophecy

There are many types of prophecies in the Bible. Most of the prophecies are what scholars call "**Space prophecies.**" These types of prophecies are given in Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and some of the Minor Prophets. Even the New Testament has certain space prophecies, in which no time is given for their fulfillment. It says something like, "**In that day**" something will happen. It does not pinpoint the exact time. In fact, the majority of the Bible's prophecies are of this type of "space prophecy."

This is one reason why so much difficulty can occur in interpreting them, because no one knows exactly when they will occur. That is why we need other types of prophecies known as "**Time Prophecies.**" While Space Prophecies are the majority, we also need Time Prophecies. There are Time Prophecies in the New Testament, notably in the book of Revelation, but most Time Prophecies are found in the book of Daniel.

This is important to keep in mind that if you can straighten out the time of events of the End of the Age, then you can take the Space Prophecies and hook them onto the time sequence or schedule, to come to a better understanding of prophetic interpretation.

There is third type of prophecy. We will deal with this type of prophecy now. This type is known as “Prophecies by Design” or “**Design Prophecies.**” Let me explain. Design Prophecies show how prophetic themes or books of the Bible relate to one another through design or positioning of books one to another.

When you take a prophecy in Isaiah that might be 3 or 4 sentences long, you sometimes need to associate it with other sentences or a chapter in another place, put them on to a time sequence or schedule and then you have an understanding. Design Prophecies are not found just within a single book, but they are found within various books designed in a particular way to show prophetic teaching.

Who designed the structure of the Old and New Testaments? Most scholars say it was the men who canonized those books. The Old Testament canonizers were priests who lived in the 5th and 4th centuries before the birth of Christ. Tradition tells us, and I think it is reliable, that the one in charge of canonizing the Old Testament and putting it together into a particular design was Ezra the Priest. Ezra had helpers known as Sopherim, or Scribes. They are mentioned in the Old Testament. Tradition makes it clear that this Ezra, who lived in the 5th century BC, finally (with his helpers) put together the Old Testament.¹

The Old Testament was not structured as our King James Version is today. It came from Ezra in a different book order. There were 3 divisions of books: the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings. Christ Himself termed the Writings division as being “The Psalms” because the Book of Psalms introduced this division. There are 11 books of Writings in the third division. All have something to do with royalty or government. In ancient times, even before Christ, these were called the Royal Books or Ruler Books.

The Five Books

I will deal with five particular books in the middle of the third division, which on the surface one would think would have little prophetic information. But, when you analyze it from the point of view of Design Prophecies, you find that these five books go together. They were to be read in the Temple at particular times. All five were ordained by Ezra the priest under divine inspiration. When you put them together they tell a prophetic story which is very informative if a person could understand the prophetic design of these five prophetic books called The Megillot. Megillot is a Hebrew name which means “Festival Books,” because each was designed to be read at a particular festival.²

The first one was to be read at Passover, the second at Pentecost, the third read on the anniversary of the destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem in the 6th century BC in the summer on the 10th day of the 5th month of Ab of the Hebrew year.³ The fourth book was to be read at the Feast of Tabernacles. The fifth book was to be read at the Feast of Purim.

How many of us know very much about the Feast of Purim mentioned in the Book of Esther? The Book of Esther was read in the Temple at the anniversary of Purim festival. Purim is always held in the month prior to Nisan in the late winter, about one month prior to Passover. These five books were to be read in the Temple at these festival periods.

Let me list and then describe these time periods:

¹ For the proper canonical order of all the books of the Bible, see “[The Geographical Design of the Holy Scriptures.](#)” Dr. Martin’s book *Restoring the Original Bible* (Portland, OR: ASK Publications, 1994/2004). Chapter 6, “[The Design of the Old Testament](#)” from *Restoring* and Dr. Martin’s presentation “[The Intertestamental Period](#)” both have more information about the Sopherim and their role in the Old Testament canonization. DWS

² See Dr. Martin’s “[Chapter 10. The Writings Division](#)” from *Restoring* where the Megillot is briefly reviewed. DWS

³ The Jerusalem Temple was also destroyed on the 10th of Ab in 70 AD while Jews around the world were reading in the liturgical cycle from the Book of Lamentations describing the horrors and destruction prophesied by Jeremiah. DWS

| <u>Festival</u> | <u>OT Book</u> |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| Passover | Song of Solomon |
| Pentecost | Ruth |
| Ab 10 | Lamentations |
| Tabernacles | Ecclesiastes |
| Purim | Esther |

These five books were on one long scroll to be read in the Temple services at these festivals each year. The theme of Passover was illustrated in the Song of Solomon. Ruth was to be read at Pentecost. When you analyze Ruth you see that it really does have late springtime significance. Lamentations was sung on the 10th of Ab. Lamentations is a song, a dirge, about the destruction of Jerusalem. Ecclesiastes was associated with Tabernacles and people have wondered why. I will show why later. Esther is associated with Purim.⁴

There are two books that do not plainly mention “God,” or “Lord,” or anything referring to deity. Those two are the first book of the Megillot and the last book of the Megillot. The Song of Songs does not mention the word “God” once. You would not think the book should ever be included in the divine canon. God is not mentioned in Esther either. Some have felt it is cryptically in Esther about 5 different times through a form of acrostic design, but that is difficult to prove.⁵ You will find vague references to God because they fasted for three days, and obviously they fasted to God.

So you do not find God’s name mentioned either at the beginning of the Megillot or at the end. Some people may wonder why God’s name is not mentioned in these books; perhaps I can give a reason as we go on. In the middle books of Ruth, Lamentations, and Ecclesiastes, God’s name is mentioned.

There is a prophetic theme going through all five books from the Song of Songs through Esther. Since these were to be read in a 1-year period beginning with the first of Israel’s festivals going to the last, when you understand them as a unit, you get a prophetic theme placed there by the canonizers of the Old Testament, notably by Ezra the priest. If Ezra was under divine inspiration ordering these books to be read in association with the meaning of these festivals, there must be some significance to them. Indeed, there is tremendous significance to it. It is called Prophecy by Design. One book interprets and informs the next.

Passover and the Song of Solomon

Since Passover is the first festival of the ancient Israelite year, you would likely find the Song of Solomon to have a springtime theme associated with it. That theme is there.

Remember that the name of God is not found therein. Some have said that the only reason the Song found its way into the Bible is because God’s name is to be symbolically interpreted, but not actually understood. It can be comprehended in both ways. There are excellent, beautiful, physical love teachings found in the Song of Solomon. There is also a great deal of symbology or spiritual teaching, even though God’s name is not mentioned once, if we associate it with Passover.⁶ The introduction of the Song gives a springtime theme. In chapter 2 the time of year is given. You can understand why it is associated with Passover:

“For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, the voice of the turtle [turtledove] is heard in our land; the fig tree puts forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.”

• ***Song of Solomon 2:11–13***

⁴ See “[Appendix 1, Preliminary Suggestions for the Structure of the Psalms](#)” from Dr. Martin’s book *Restoring* for relationships of festival days to other biblical writings such as the Torah books, and the 5 sections of the Book of Psalms. DWS

⁵ Decide for yourself. See E.W. Bullinger’s “[Appendix 60, The Name of Jehovah in the Book of Esther](#).” DWS

⁶ See the 1981 presentation “[The Significance of the Song of Solomon](#)” where Dr. Martin’s understanding is given. DWS

From hereon the theme is one of springtime. In verse 15, it speaks of **“the tender grapes,”** and in verse 16, **“he feeds among the lily.”** The lily is a springtime flower associated with Passover. Going on throughout chapters 3, 4, and 5, this theme is continued. In chapter 6 the Song of Solomon speaks about:

“My beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies. I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine: he feeds among the lilies.”

• *Song of Solomon 6:2–3*

There again a springtime scene is shown. Song of Solomon 6:11 tells about the vine beginning to flourish and the pomegranates beginning to bud, as does Song of Solomon 7:12:

“Let us get up early to the vineyards [the flowers to come on] whether the tender grape appear [in the springtime], and the pomegranates bud forth, there will I give you my loves.”

• *Song of Solomon 7:12*

Verse 13 goes on to speak about mandrakes and new and old fruits that come up in the springtime.

This is a love story involving Solomon and this woman, along with the daughters of Jerusalem; it talks about a little sister of this woman at the end of the Song:

“We have a little sister, she has no breasts [she is a young girl], what shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoke for?”

• *Song of Solomon 8:8*

In verse 9 this woman who is doing the talking here says that she is herself mature. In verse 10 it says **“I am a wall.”** This is another description showing that she is mature. She is wondering about her little sister. In verse 11 it closes by saying:

“Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-hamon. He let out the vineyard unto keepers; everyone for the fruit thereof was to bring a thousand pieces of silver. My vineyard, which is mine, is before me: you O Solomon, must have a thousand, and those that keep the fruit thereof two hundred. [He apportions monies to keepers to tend his property.] You that dwell in the gardens, the companions hearken to your voice, cause me to hear it. Make haste my beloved and be you like to a roe or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices.”

• *Song of Solomon 8:11–14*

That ends the Song of Solomon. I skimmed the book and have not given any major treatment except to show that it takes place in the springtime.

Let us look at something very important. I said that the name of God is not found in the Song of Solomon. It is a love story between Solomon and a woman. In fact, there is a background story of the one man, Solomon, and more than one woman.⁷

It talks about virgins and them becoming married. It is a love story that leads to marriage. The entire story up to chapter 8 talks about one woman in particular coming in contact with Solomon who she loves very much. He is called the “bridegroom.” The “bridegroom” is “coming out” time and time again. It is a springtime setting associated with Passover.

Significance of Passover

Passover is the first feast of the ceremonial year. Passover was the feast that showed them how they came out of Egypt, had protection from God, and then became a nation in full covenant marriage relationship to Him, demonstrated at the original Passover in Egypt. In Ezekiel chapter 16 God says through

⁷ Again see [“The Significance of the Song of Solomon”](#) where Dr. Martin in 1981 came to understand that the Song of Solomon involved the woman and Solomon. Their relationship was complicated by Solomon’s other wives. DWS

the mouth of Ezekiel, I am paraphrasing here: I found you in Egypt, took you out of Egypt, and made covenant relationship with you at the time of the spring flowers, at the time of love. I made you my wife.

Passover was the time Israel received redemption from slavery, when they became God's wife. Here is a beautiful love story in the Song of Songs, associated with Passover at the time that Israel, the woman, became God's wife. Who is the bridegroom in this case? It is God Himself.

In chapter 8 the end of the Song of Solomon the beautiful relationship between the bridegroom and this woman is described. At the very end she says, I have a little sister. She is immature. What will happen to her? She also shall have someone in the future. It ends by saying that Solomon took his vineyard, hired it out to others to watch it. He pays them money to watch over it. When you put the whole thing together it says, sometime in the future he will come back, redeem his vineyard, and the little sister will have grown up to where she will be of marriageable age.

When you put it together symbolically, you find that the first woman, Israel, was the one who came out of Egypt. She became God's wife in the springtime when love would come into blossom. The Song of Solomon speaks of that relationship, but it also says that the bridegroom is seeing the little sister who will grow up. The bridegroom is going to let out his vineyard to watch out for, and at some future date when the little sister is grown up he will come and marry her also.

Jesus and the Brides

What kind of symbolism can we get out of this? This much I know, Jesus Christ came on the scene and died at Passover. He introduced a New Covenant at that time. He talked to His disciples, recorded in Matthew chapter 24 and Luke chapter 21, giving them prophecies and talking about the future. Then in Matthew chapter 25 He gave the story of the bridegroom and the 10 virgins, and how some of them were waiting for the bridegroom to come.⁸ At the end of it He gives this story about "letting out" of talents that seems to be a clear reference to what we find in the Song of Solomon. After telling about the bridegroom and the 10 virgins, which certainly fits with the Song of Songs very well, then He says:

"For the Kingdom of Heaven is as a man traveling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey."

• *Matthew 25:14–15*

He said go out and do this work for me. It is very similar to what we find at the end of the Song of Songs where the young girl is waiting to grow mature, but Solomon hires out his vineyard, waiting until a particular time. Later he will come back and redeem that vineyard. He will pay out thousands, he will pay two hundreds, just like Jesus' example in Matthew. By then this young girl will then be grown. Who is this young girl? The first woman was Israel. Is the young girl the 2nd Israel which we might call the *ekklesia*? Is the bridegroom not really Solomon, but Christ? Is that the theme being given here? It is possible. If so, then we find the Song of Songs, speaking about the first marriage, symbolically, between Israel and God. It also has at the end of it indications of a second type of marriage with the 2nd Israel and God at a future time.

Whatever the case we find the Song of Songs having to do with this marriage, with Jesus Christ having died on the cross He introduces the *ekklesia*, His bride, into the story.

⁸ Note that this story was not a parable, but it was a direct teaching, as Dr. Martin notes in his 1998 article "[What Is God's Viewpoint Regarding Sex?](#)" Jesus had left the Temple and stopped at the Mount of Olives where His disciples came to Him (Matthew 24:1–3). In Matthew 25:1–13, He spoke privately and frankly to them. He was not speaking to the general population. Jesus was giving them a prophecy, not a parable. DWS

Ruth and Pentecost

The next festival is Pentecost which is held 50 days after the Sabbath after Passover week during the days of Unleavened Bread. On that Pentecost Sunday the wave-sheaf offering is given, the first-fruits. For 50 days they harvest the barley and finally the wheat, and at the end of the 50 days they have the festival of Pentecost. Most people have not understood the true significance of Pentecost. Many of us have not, even though several of us have kept the festival for many years. I do not think we have understood it. The First-fruits festival of Pentecost is in honor of the conclusion of the first-fruits harvest, not the beginning of the first-fruits harvest. The first-fruits harvest begins within the days of Passover itself.

Who is the first-fruit resurrected from the dead? Jesus Christ is the first-fruit (1 Corinthians 15:20–23). After that come other first-fruits represented at the end of the 50 days, the Day of Pentecost. Then you have the Pentecost season, which is in honor of the gathering in of the barley and also of the wheat, called the first-fruits harvest.

Clearly, the first-fruits harvest has to do with the beginning of the *ekklesia*. I have no qualms about saying that. I feel that we find Christian teachings in the Old Covenant law, but they are there only in shadow form, they are not there in reality. Pentecost is a festival at the conclusion of the first-fruits harvest of barley and wheat with Christ Himself being the first sheaf.

Now let us look at the theme in the Book of Ruth. Ruth comes immediately after the Song of Solomon in the correct order of the Old Covenant books. Song of Solomon was springtime but so was Ruth. The difference is that Ruth relates to late springtime. The matter of Ruth and Naomi coming into Judah, into Bethlehem, all takes place in the first chapter of the Book of Ruth.⁹

Note the time of year that they arrive into Palestine from Moab.

“So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter in law, with her, which returned out of the country of Moab: and they came to Bethlehem in the beginning of barley harvest.”

• ***Ruth 1:22***

That would put it just after the Passover period has ended, but near the time when the first sheaf would have been given leading up to Pentecost.

Ruth then gleans in the field of Boaz, chapter 2. She keeps gleaning all during the time of the period of barley and wheat harvest:

“So she kept fast by [close by] the maidens of Boaz to glean unto the end of the barley harvest and of wheat harvest, and dwelt with her mother in law.”

• ***Ruth 2:23***

This takes us right up to Pentecost. Look at the theme here in Ruth. Who is Ruth? She will marry Boaz in Bethlehem. Boaz and Ruth have children. From that union eventually comes David, who is made King of Israel by God’s anointing. Yet here is Ruth going through the fields of Boaz and she is gleaning the barley and wheat harvest from this field.

In the overall teaching of the Bible the first-fruit was Christ Himself (1 Corinthians 15:20–23), the Christian people, the *ekklesia* afterward, the first-fruits, and the harvest comes in the early springtime, but in Leviticus it says,

⁹ Ruth was a Moabitess who married a man named Mahlon who belonged to the Israelite tribe of Judah from the territory of Bethlehem (5 miles south of present day Jerusalem). Mahlon, his brother, father, and mother Naomi, went to live in the land of Moab southeast of the Dead Sea. When the men died, Naomi traveled back to Judah. Ruth went with Naomi. The Book tells the story of Ruth’s faithfulness to Naomi, her marriage to another husband from Judah, and her conversion of the religion of Israel and its God. See Ruth *DWS*

“When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not make clean riddance of the corners of your field when you reap, neither shall you gather any gleanings of your harvest, you shall leave them to the poor and to the stranger.”

• **Leviticus 23:22**

This meant that the corners of any field were not to be harvested, or the interior of a field if there was a sprout left here or there, poor people could come into that field by law and take what they needed of the grain to eat. They could come into the corners and get all the grain there. Since there were poor people, and they needed food to eat for their families, you can be assured that every sprig of barley and wheat was gleaned and stripped from the sprouts.

Who was doing all of this? Ruth was, according to the story. She finally meets Boaz, who marries her near the end of the barley harvest probably at the time of Pentecost. What does this all have to do with the story so far? If the Song of Songs is in the springtime, and we see here a relationship to the marriage of God to ancient Israel, and a reference to a future marriage coming to the real bridegroom in the future. Perhaps we can see the same thing coming out here prophetically with Ruth.

Ruth is the queen mother who was great grandmother to King David. David is a type of Christ. Here you have this queen mother in Bethlehem going through the fields and taking every single bit of the barley and the wheat, and nothing is left for the birds or the animals to eat. She takes it all.

This queen mother was a Moabitess, a Gentile. She was not an Israelite herself. She became associated with Israel by marriage to Boaz. By this association here was a Gentile woman, a queen mother of David, going around getting all the gleanings from the harvest, as a Gentile doing it, does it not mean that Gentiles can have a part in this salvation at the end of the age, because we have a Gentile taking all the sprigs of the first-fruits harvest reaching up to Pentecost time?

The answer is yes. I think there is a prophetic theme in the Book of Ruth. To put it clearly, the bridegroom in this case is Christ. Ruth is a member of the Davidic family by marriage, formally. Christ came along from this Gentile woman, through Judah. Christ died on the cross and by His resurrection from the dead He was the first-fruit of the dead. We find the Christian *ekklesia* becoming the first-fruits, plural, at the resurrection of the saints at Christ’s Second Coming.

Ab 10 and Lamentations

The next festival is Ab 10 which related to the Book of Lamentations. Lamentations described the complete and utter destruction of the City of Jerusalem and the whole Judaic state. Jeremiah chapter 52 explains that the Temple in Jerusalem at the time of Nebuchadnezzar was burnt to the ground. That was when the nation of Judah came to its end and the Babylonian captivity started in the 5th month of Ab on the 10th day.

We are told in Chronicles that Lamentations was written by the prophet Jeremiah 22 years before the destruction of the Temple,¹⁰ but Ezra ordered that it be read on the anniversary of the destruction of that Temple, some 400 years before the birth of Christ. The prophetic description of that event is found in Jeremiah chapter 52.

The Jewish historian Josephus tells us that the Temple in existence at the time of Christ was destroyed in 70 AD exactly on the anniversary of the former destruction in the time of Nebuchadnezzar some 600 years before. In the time of that destruction all synagogues throughout the whole Roman Empire and Parthian Empire would be reading the book of Lamentations on the very day that the Temple was being destroyed. The words of the Book of Lamentations also described the 70 AD destruction.¹¹ It would have been as if they had a radio describing that current event.

¹⁰ See 2 Chronicles 35:25. See also Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 10.78–79. DWS

¹¹ Here is the sequence of events:

- Jeremiah wrote the Book of Lamentations, the prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem 22 years before Jerusalem’s destruction (reviewed in Jeremiah chapter 52).

Why do I say there is a prophetic theme here? If we can see Christ coming out in the Passover theme with the Song of Songs as first-fruit, and Ruth bringing in the *ekklesia*, when did the *ekklesia* actually start? It started in Acts chapter 2 — at Pentecost!

We are in the period of time from the time of Christ, through the *ekklesia* time, when it is the first-fruits, but there is something still looming on the horizon. It is the complete and utter destruction of the Judaic state. Though it happened in 70 AD on the exact day of the anniversary, is there not something in the future still waiting that could be associated with this day here, Ab 10?

It has been known in Jewish history that the 10th day of Ab has been a day of infamy throughout almost all Israelite history. In the time of Noah after the flood, he sent out a raven from the ark. A raven is a predator. If you read the account carefully, the raven was sent out on the 10th of Ab (Genesis 8:1–7).

Do you know how far the 10th of Ab is in time from the Day of Trumpets which symbolizes the 2nd coming of Christ and the resurrection of the dead? The 10th of Ab is exactly 50 days before the Day of Trumpets. It says that this raven went out. It does not say that it came back. The time that Noah's Ark came down and rested on Mount Ararat when the waters went down, was on the Day of Trumpets (Genesis 8:13). So that raven had a 50 day period, from the 10th of Ab down to the Day of Trumpets, which would signify war and destruction.¹²

It is most interesting that throughout history this was the day when terrible things happened to Israel or to the Jewish people on that very day of Ab 10. It seems to be indicated even back in the flood period in the time of Noah. The two Temples were destroyed on that day. Lamentations was to be read on that day, and the prophecies of the Bible say there will be tremendous war and destruction on Jerusalem before the 2nd coming of Christ.

I am convinced that the theme being developed is not one of the past, though that significance is there, but it is a theme for the future. This Lamentations and its association with Ab 10 is a prophetic indication of what we are to look for in the years ahead of us. This is an example of **Design Prophecy**.

That raven in the time of Noah went out until the Day of Trumpets and that symbolized the 2nd coming of Jesus Christ back to this earth and the resurrection of the dead. When He comes, through wars that He will conduct, that is when peace will finally emerge. That is when Tabernacles period comes on, which we have called the Millennium.

Tabernacles and Ecclesiastes

It is interesting that the Book of Ecclesiastes is associated with Tabernacles and it was ordained to be read by Ezra on the Feast of Tabernacles.¹³ Have you ever read carefully the 12 chapters of the Book of Ecclesiastes? You should really do so with this theme in mind. It relates to a time of peace.

Solomon's rule of 40 years was a time of peace:

“He had peace on all sides round about him. And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, from Dan even to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon.”

• 1 Kings 4:24–25

[continuing note from previous page]

- Then Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem.
- Some 125 years later Ezra placed Lamentations as the central book of the 5 books of the Megillot and ordered that all five chapters be read on the 10th of Ab, to memorialize the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple on that day.
- Some 600 years after Nebuchadnezzar's destruction, Roman legions conquered Jerusalem and burned the Temple — again on the 10th of Ab. DWS

¹² The raven sent out in Genesis 8:7 “**went forth to and fro**” and probably ate from dead carcasses floating in the waters or on the receding shores. Therefore, Noah sent out the dove that would only eat vegetable matter. Only when the dove returned with an olive leaf (verse 8:11) did Noah know there was dry land and fresh growth nearby. DWS

¹³ See Dr. Martin's presentation and commentary on “[The Book of Ecclesiastes](#).” DWS

Those 40 years of Solomon's reign was typical of the 1,000 year period that will emerge on the earth after the 2nd coming of Christ and after this major war indicated in Lamentations will be over.¹⁴ Then you will have Tabernacles, the 1,000 year period.

The 12 chapters of Ecclesiastes speak about all the glory, the dignity, the wealth, and the goodness there was in the time of Solomon's life. It will be repeated during this 1,000 year period here. What is the theme of Ecclesiastes? The theme is "**vanity of vanities**" of all physical things.¹⁵ There is wealth, plenty, education, grand buildings, and large-scale construction everywhere. Solomon mentions it in the 1st and 2nd chapters, in fact, just a beautiful existence. He then says all of it is vanity, unless you put God into it.

During the Millennium, a period of 1,000 years, it will be a time of peace, a time when Satan and his demons will be absent, when wealth will increase, when knowledge and understanding will be rampant, beauty, wonderful conditions, everything. The same thing occurred at the Feast of Tabernacles when all the latter fruits were on the table after the fall harvest back in the time of the Temple.

Still, Ezra the priest ordained they read Ecclesiastes at that time because it says that all these physical things are vanity of vanities. The only thing to pay attention to is to serve God and keep his commandments. That sums it up. Ecclesiastes has to do with the millennial period. During that 1,000 years one of the best books that you could possibly read for people living at that time, when there will not be much trouble around, will be the Book of Ecclesiastes. It shows that all of it is "vanity of vanities."

I know all types of people today who want to build big buildings, to do this and do that to show how good and beautiful everything is. I say read Ecclesiastes. It might be nice, it might be good, but it is simply a vanity of vanities if God is not in it.

Purim and Esther

The last is Purim. Esther was the book to be read at that time, the end of the ecclesiastical year. You all know the story of Esther, how the Jewish race was almost wiped out. It was going to be completely and utterly destroyed by Haman the Agagite and his intrigues. At the last moment Haman was hanged on the gallows he made for others. The Jewish people were able to fight against the attackers from Persia and elsewhere. They won the battles and the Jewish race was finally saved.

If there is a prophetic theme throughout this, we have Christ with the Song of Solomon at Passover and we have the *ekklesia* coming along with Ruth at the Day of Pentecost. That is the period we are in now. We are expecting Ab 10 to come along, the great Tribulation indicated by Lamentations. After Christ comes back we will have Tabernacles showing the 1,000 year reign when Ecclesiastes is to be read. After the 1,000 years, according to the Book of Revelation, Satan and his demons will be released from prison for a short time. They will go up the breadth of the world, up to Jerusalem, and what will they do according to the 20th chapter of Revelation? They are going out to destroy the saints once more, after the Millennium is over.

Do you know what will happen? Ezra put Esther here to be read after Ecclesiastes, to be read after Tabernacles, to be read by symbolically looking at it after the 1,000 years. It will be the same thing again. It will look like Satan, his demons, and the rest of the world will be able to subdue Israel and Jerusalem in Palestine. But the book of Revelation says that they will be put down exactly, if we parallel this, as the Jews won complete salvation in the days of Esther.

Conclusion

Note how all this seems to fit together very well. We have in these five books of the Megillot or the festival scroll (remember, all five were on a single scroll), great prophetic teaching if we have minds enough

¹⁴ Micah 4:1–4 and Zechariah 3:9–10. DWS

¹⁵ See Ecclesiastes 1:2, 14, 2:1, 11, 15–26, 3:19, 4:4, 7f, 16, 5:10, 6:2, 4, 9, 11, 7:6, 15, 8:10, 14, 9:9, 11:8, 10, and 12:8. DWS

to see it. It is a little difficult and a bit obscure on the surface. But if you put it all together we have **Design Prophecies** coming out here.

Design Prophecies are all over the place. We have in the Megillot the canonizers of the Scriptures themselves saying: watch the future, we have to pass Ab 10 with Lamentations. Then comes Tabernacles with Ecclesiastes and finally the Jewish race, Israel, will be completely saved in the end just as they were saved in the time of Esther. You have Christ, the *ekklesia*, the Great Tribulation, the Millennium, and then finally, like the book of Revelation says, the salvation of the whole of Israel. All of it is here, given in perfect design, if we have the ability to see it. I hope we have eyes to see.

Ernest L. Martin, 1977
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