

Old Testament 48
The “Great” and “Dreadful” Day of the Lord
(Zechariah 10-14; Malachi)
By Lenet Hadley Read

(This material provides an overview of Old Testament Studies on this subject, helping tie it all together. It adds recent insight from modern prophets).

I. Just as the Lord provided bit by bit a picture of Christ’s first coming, so He also provided piece by piece the events of His Second Coming.

A. Old Testament events and prophecies have revealed much about That Great Day.

1. From Noah: Through Noah’s ark we learn that the faithful can enter into God’s protection, and be lifted up, and then inherit a new life in a newly cleansed land.

2. From Sodom and Gomorrah: Because the totally rebellious will reject God’s messengers, and even turn upon those few who are their very means of salvation, there would come fire out of heaven to destroy wickedness.

3. From David: In the Millennium there will be a new and righteous Shepherd King (Jesus the Christ), who will rule over a reunited Israel.

4. From Solomon: There will be a new “Son of David,” [Jesus the Christ], who will not only reign forever, but be Righteous Judge ruling in perfect Wisdom over the earth,

II. Now from Zechariah we learn:

A. A great war will be fought in and around Jerusalem, but the Lord will intervene and save the inhabitants of Jerusalem from destruction (Zech. 12:2-3, 8-9. Note. This event was foreshadowed at the time of Hezekiah. See Isaiah 37).

B. Living waters will flow from the temple and will heal the Dead Sea (Zech. 14:8.) Note. This undoubtedly has real spiritual meaning, including:

1. The cessation of all death because of Christ.

2. **The spiritual healing of the deceased due to the work done in baptismal fonts under Latter-day Saint Temples.**

C. The Savior will stand on Mount of Olives, and it will split in two (Zech. 14:3-4).

D. Those left in Jerusalem will see Jesus Christ, feel his wounds, and mourn because He, though the true Messiah, was crucified (Zech. 12:10:13:6).

E. But as foreshadowed by Joseph of Egypt, the Savior will say something similar to this, **“Now therefore, be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves ... for God did send me before you to preserve life” (Gen. 45:4-5).**

F. False idols, unclean spirits, and false prophets will be destroyed (Zech. 12:2).

G. The righteous will be caught up to meet the Savior (Zech. 14:5).

H. The Savior will be King over the earth (Zech. 14:12-13).

I. So all things have been repeatedly foretold! Including...

III. All those on the earth will keep the Feast of Tabernacles, which was actually a witness of the Millennium (Zech. 14:16- 21). (To understand this, we must first understand the Feast of Tabernacles and examine how it taught of the Millennium).

A. God commanded all Israel to keep a set of Holy Days in the seventh month of the Jewish calendar. The last of these was the Feast of Tabernacles.

B. He commanded, “In the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruits of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the Lord seven days” (Leviticus 23:34).

C. This great feast was deliberately set at the time of Israel’s final agricultural harvest, because **it bore witness of Christ’s final Spiritual Harvest.**

1. Elder Bruce R. McConkie says we will all keep this feast in the future (*The Promised Messiah*, pp. 432-35). It is to be fulfilled by the Millennium itself.

IV. The ways ancient Israel kept his feast **prophesied of what the Millennium will be like.** Ancient Israel observed this feast in several ways:

A. **First:** Israel offered seventy (70) bullocks in addition to lambs and rams. The number seventy is significant. The Jews and early Christians understood it symbolized all the Gentile nations, or all the nations of the earth.

1. Alfred Edersheim wrote, “Indeed, the whole symbolism of the Feast [of Tabernacles], beginning with the completed harvest... pointed to the future. The Rabbis themselves admitted this. The strange number of sacrificial bullocks --- seventy in all --- they regarded as referring to ‘the seventy nations’ of heathendom.” (*The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, p.577).

2. Seventy sacrificed bullocks point to the pilgrims which came up from all nations to celebrate. A major purpose of their coming was to worship the Lord as King.

3. The sacrifice of seventy bullocks and the coming of all nations to worship the King witnessed that in the Millennium the peoples of all nations will reverently bow before Jesus the Christ, as King of all nations.

B. **Second:** During this feast, Israel built small booths or tabernacles, covered over with tree boughs. The people used these tabernacles to remember the shelter God provided Israel as they wandered in the wilderness.

1. As ancient Israel dwelled under boughs of trees in prophecy, in the Millennium, our protective shelter and wonderful dwelling will occur as we joyfully dwell in the presence of Christ. Revelation 21:3 describes that occasion. “Behold, the **tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them**” (emphasis added).

2. Perhaps we can recall Jesus’ final triumphant entry into Jerusalem, when the crowds, who had for a time begun to believe He was their Messiah and King, greeted Him with palm boughs, **a feature of the Feast of Tabernacles. They were welcoming Him as their protective shelter, their Messiah, their King.**

C. **Third:** Other rituals on this day included pouring water upon the altar, in supplication to the Lord to send His rains. Giant candelabra were also lit.

1. The rituals observed at the Feast of Tabernacles witnessed of the many blessings that would accompany the Messiah’s Millennial Reign. Many Jews actually understood this feast taught of the Messianic Age. Therefore, at this feast, during the ritual of the pouring of water upon the altar, Jesus bore witness He was the Messiah by crying out, “If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink” (John 7:2, 37-41).

2. Revelation 21:6 tells Christ will fulfill this ritual in the Millennium. “I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.” In the Millennium, Jesus will indeed open the fountains of righteousness and truth in abundance.

3. Furthermore, it was at the time of this feast, with giant candelabra shining in the city, that Jesus taught, “I am the light of the world” (John 8:12).

Again, Revelation 21:23 describes the fulfillment of this promise. “And the city [the Millennial Jerusalem] had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.”

4. In the Millennium, man will no longer know any darkness, for the Savior will pour out in abundance the pure light of truth.

E. **Fourth:** the Feast of Tabernacles celebrated the completion of all the harvests of the year and was called the “Season of Joy.”

1. **The Millennium has everything to do with the completion of Christ’s *spiritual* harvest. This will be a great harvest, and truly the season of the greatest Joy!** That joy will be especially keen as all mankind kneels as one and worships Jesus, not only as their King, but as this earth’s Savior and Redeemer, and the earth’s God.

2. All the witnesses in the Feast of Tabernacles are yet to be fulfilled. But they will be fulfilled --- in the Millennium.

V. From Malachi we learn even more about that Great and Final Day.

A. We will be judged concerning the payment of our tithes and our offerings, and whether we do so with an honest and willing heart (Malachi 3:8-12).

B. Latter-day Saints have a great responsibility to prepare the way for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ by helping gather Israel (Malachi: 3:1-3, 16-18; 4:1-6).

C. One great way we do so is through temple work which will keep the time on the earth from having been totally “wasted.”

D. This great work is why Malachi’s words are the last spoken in the Old Testament; it is why his words are among the first spoken to Joseph Smith in the New Dispensation. (See Joseph Smith-History verses 36-39).

1. For correlation, see Elder James J. Hamula, “Commandments, Calamities, and the Second Coming,” *The Ensign*, December 2010, pp 18-21.

VI. All these prophecies, taken together, give us a fuller picture of what shall be at the time of the Savior’s Return.

A. President Dieter Uchtdorf, in his Christmas Message in the First Presidency Broadcast in 2010, said that **we should include in our Christmas thoughts the Second Coming of Christ**, as well as the first. “We are members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The term ‘latter-day’ is significant.” We live and serve in a time prior to the Lord’s triumphant return. Our work is to prepare ourselves and the world for the coming of the Messiah in glory.”

1. To find the real meaning of Christmas we should look steadfastly for His coming.

“Let us look forward. Let us prepare for that blessed day when He will come again.” (President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, *Church News*, December 11, 2010). (emphasis added).

For those who do so and are spiritually prepared, the Second Coming will not be a Dreadful Day, but a “Great and Marvelous Day.”