

THE
HANDBOOK
FOR THE
END
TIMES

*Hope, Help
and Encouragement*

FOR LIVING IN THE LAST DAYS

DON FINTO



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Dedicated to the memory of a godly woman
Martha Graves Finto
my wife and closest friend for 64 years
a devoted mother, grandmother and friend,
and an ardent follower of Jesus through life
November 3, 1929—March 10, 2016

Contents

- Foreword by Lou Engle 13
- Acknowledgments 17
- Introduction 19
1. Let Both Grow Together 23
The wheat and weeds parable of Jesus seems especially apropos for our generation and connects to the predictions of both the prophet Daniel and the apostle John.
2. Listen to the Right Report 30
We must learn to listen to the Calebs and Joshuas of our generation—those who see the dangers but know that God will be victorious—rather than listening to the ten spies who see only the giants.
3. Expect the Harvests 41
Jesus told us that wickedness and righteousness would ripen side by side as we approach the end. We are to shine most brilliantly in the deepening darkness.
4. Remember the Passover 52
Israel experienced the horror of the first plagues but was protected from the last plagues. John's Revelation describes the ultimate Passover, a time when we experience some of the horror, but we are protected if we are faithful to God's ways.

5. Pay Attention to God's Calendar 61
God has a calendar and we have a calendar. His calendar was and is being fulfilled through the first and second comings of Jesus.
6. Glory in Suffering 70
Never does Scripture tell us that we will escape tribulation, but that we should be prepared for times of tribulation, even the Great Tribulation.
7. Escape God's Wrath 81
God's wrath is never for believers.
8. Watch for the Signs 88
Jesus and the apostles spoke of signs that would announce the season of His return. Those signs are increasing in our generation.
9. Do Not Be Deceived 101
Both Jesus and His disciples warned that, in the last days, deceit will abound, that "even from your own number" men will arise who distort the truth. Only faithfulness to God's Word will keep us from such deception.
10. Welcome the King! 116
What if the Rapture is simply a welcoming committee rising to escort the King of kings back to Jerusalem where He will reign for a thousand years in an era of unprecedented peace?
11. Recapture Godly Imagination 127
God gave us some outstanding pictures of what the future holds. When Paul spoke of our coming inheritance, he said, "Encourage one another with these words."
12. Read the Book 137
The antidote to deception is knowing the Book.
13. Pray the Word 143
There are no stronger prayers than using God's own words, praying them back to Him.
14. Wrestle with God for the Victory 152
When God makes a promise, He wants us to hold on until the victory. Jacob wrestled with God one night, but God wanted Jacob to persevere and claim the promises spoken earlier.

15. Call on Jesus 162
There is power in the name of Jesus/Yeshua. He is Lord, He is God and He is the Christ, but He has a name. That name is Jesus.
16. Keep in Step with the Spirit 170
Tod McDowell, who has walked with me more closely than any other brother, testifies to the transforming work of the Holy Spirit in shaping destiny.
17. Live in Community 183
We can live all our lives in “church” and never know real “community”—which, by the way, is the better translation of the Greek word ekklesia, the word usually translated “church” in our Bibles.
18. Raise Up the Generations 192
God never intended that old people alone or young people alone should be sent into the battle. Victory comes only when the generations are joined.
19. Prophecy Life to Yourself 198
Not until we accept God’s view of us will we ever enter into the fullness of God’s vision for our lives and accomplish that vision.
20. Finish Well 205
What a tragedy to see godly men or women turn away from the Lord in their closing years! This does not have to happen to us. We can finish well!
- Appendix A: Finto Bible Reading Plan 215
- Appendix B: Translations of the Greek *Thlipsis* 217
- Appendix C: Translations of the Greek *Thumos* and *Orge* 221
- Notes 225
- Index 229

Foreword

It was Don Finto's wonderful book *Your People Shall Be My People* that first awakened me to the two great biblical signposts heralding the global entrance into the last days. I felt as if I were listening to the old man Daniel, that biblical prophet, who unfolded the last days understanding that was gained through extended fasting and prayer. I felt I was being tutored by a great man of the Scriptures—a man who had walked a journey of integrity, passion, power and prophecy. The nation of Israel and the Jewish people had not yet captured my heart. But my eyes lit up when I understood in depth the place Israel has in the last days scenario.

Right in the pages of Don's book, I found my name being called and found my place in the story. I realized I was not just to be fasting and interceding for the Gentile nations. I was to be a Daniel, interceding for the nation of Israel and calling others into that intercession as well.

For years now, inspired by Joel 2, I have been calling massive, solemn assemblies of fasting and prayer for the outpouring of the Spirit and the shifting of nations.

The real story of Joel 2, however, is not just the fast, but the *outcome* of the fast. Joel unveils two major signposts: After the fast, God promises to (1) restore the land of Israel and (2) pour out His Holy Spirit on the Gentiles.

In 1948 a worldwide fasting movement was initiated through a book called *Atomic Power with God through Fasting and Prayer*. Then came the outpouring called (from Joel 2) the “Latter Rain.” In that same year, Jewish people were returning to their land and the nation of Israel was established through the vote of the United Nations—or, should I say, through the hand of the Lord.

In 1967, with the utopian dream of the 1960s spiraling into a nightmare of war, assassinations, riots and disillusionment, another Joel 2 cry ascended into heaven. Again God answered with the two signs. First, Jerusalem was recaptured by the Jewish military in the Six-Day War and became the capital of Israel, the sign of the restoration of the land. Second, outpourings of the Holy Spirit took place around the globe through the Jesus People movement and charismatic renewal. Then Jewish believers began returning to Messiah in great numbers, inaugurating the beginning of the last days rollout described in Romans 11:12–15.

When Daniel understood it was time for the restoration of Jerusalem and the rebuilding of the Temple, he set his face to fasting and prayer. It has been seven decades since Israel’s rebirth as a nation in 1948. More and more Jewish people are coming to their Messiah than ever before. We can feel the birth pangs of the new day and the unfolding of last days prophecy.

Don Finto’s newest book, *The Handbook for the End Times*, is leading us into another stage of understanding and revelation for what is soon to take place. Once again I sense that I am under the tutelage of a Daniel. I can feel, through a prophetic father, the heart of God, who wants not only to point out the signs of the times but to prepare His children to go through

the fires, storms and persecutions that Scripture foretells. This is not a book that causes us to stick our heads in the sand and ignore the dark side of biblical prophecy. It confronts us with the need to be aware of the persecution, deception and world upheaval ahead. Yet it does not focus on the negative. Instead it is poised to inject faith into the Body of Christ for greater victories to come. For although darkness covers the earth, the glory of the Lord will shine upon you.

The last days will be the greatest days of the Church. All hell will not quench her fire, her passion and her victory. Testimonies of Christ's dominion, similar to those in the book of Daniel, will be demonstrated even while powers of darkness rage. Clearly the letters in the book of Revelation that were sent to the angels of the churches will be manifested. The voice of the Lord will declare: "He who overcomes . . . TO HIM I WILL GIVE AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS" (Revelation 2:26 NASB). This motivates me!

I have not experienced the pain of persecution as in the Middle East, North Korea, Northern Africa and other places. Even so, I can hardly focus on the dark side because of the brightness of the rising King. Every tribe and tongue will receive a witness of the Gospel. Principalities and powers will be driven from their heavenly lairs that have lain undisturbed for centuries. With Don Finto, I refuse the counsel of despair and a jaded vision of the future. The Lord reigns; let the earth tremble before Him!

Don lifts up the Bible hero Caleb, who saw the Promised Land and was willing to face giants rather than wander for forty years in the wilderness. Like Don, I have seen, by dreams, the prophetic Promised Land. I will not live my life under the shadow of statistics, failure and doom-and-gloom prognosticators. I am living under the shadow of the dominating prophecy that this book heralds.

The Handbook for the End Times is filled with hope, and it gives us pastoral and prophetic instruction—not just on how to

survive, but on how to flourish with wisdom and understanding in the middle of coming upheaval and deception. We would all do well to sit under this Daniel and his instruction, to heed the warnings, to be encouraged by the amazing stories and to glean from the skilled exegesis of Scripture and descriptions of history.

Brothers and sisters, Jesus is coming again, and this book is preparing us for that coming. It will be, first of all, a coming of His presence, releasing testimonies of Kingdom reformation in the midst of horrific opposition. It will be a coming with historic waves of revival and spiritual awakening. And then it will be the Second Coming with the sound of the trumpet, when He will put His feet on the earth, crushing kings in the day of battle and establishing His full dominion from sea to sea. He will set up His throne and secure peace for the nations. Oh, yes, the devil will do his best to wage war and to rage against the people of God, but Jesus Christ Himself shall conquer the beast and reign.

So take hold of this book and read. Then run with mighty faith into the future, knowing you have been given a role to play on the last days stage of history.

Lou Engle, co-founder, TheCall; founder, Bound 4 Life

Acknowledgments

Scripture calls us to “enter His gates with thanksgiving” (Psalm 100:4) and to bring our prayers and petitions to God “with thanksgiving” (Philippians 4:6; Colossians 4:2). I am a very blessed man. I am forgiven, I am counted as righteous and I have an inheritance that is eternal. I was blessed with a faithful wife of 64 years, have a family who loves me and loves each other and have an extended family that reaches around the world.

Our Caleb family—I smile every time I am among or even think about them—are scattered among the nations. They are an intergenerational group of passionate, godly, prayerful, worshipping, hungry disciples of Jesus. They challenge, inspire and encourage me.

What can I say to the Lord for having brought Tod McDowell and me together? In the spring of 2005, while I was teaching in the Kona, Hawaii, Youth With A Mission base, God prophetically/supernaturally brought Tod into my life as a spiritual son. He was already a general in the Lord’s army, destined to lead His people forward into strength and power as we move hastily toward Jesus’ return. He has expressed himself personally in the chapter on the Holy Spirit.

Acknowledgments

Tod is now director of the Caleb Company, a ministry I started in late 1996 with the desire to raise up an army like the biblical Caleb who would (1) take their mountains when they are 85 and beyond, (2) stay wholeheartedly devoted to the Lord all their days and (3) raise up the generations behind them. Our desire is to equip the Church to understand, embrace and participate in God's biblical plan for Israel and the Jewish people, and its relationship to world awakening and revival in our day.

I would be arrogantly remiss if I pretended to have written without the aid of Anne Severance. She is a gentle, humble and gifted woman of God who has taught and continues to teach me how to put into words what my heart is trying to say. Thank you, Anne, for being there for *Your People Shall Be My People*, for *God's Promise and the Future of Israel* and now for *The Handbook for the End Times*.

Thank you, Jane Campbell and Baker Publishing Group, for entrusting to me the honor of being a Chosen author and for helping to "produce weapons of mass instruction," as we were prophetically told to do. May this book be indeed one of those weapons that will challenge the Church to stand strong even in times of great distress.

Introduction

Strange how Scripture that we have read dozens, even hundreds of times, will suddenly take on fresh revelation. This happened to me a few years ago when I was reading Jesus' parable of the wheat and weeds, as recorded in the thirteenth chapter of Matthew. I was struck by the fact that Jesus was describing the end of our age, when both world righteousness and world wickedness reach their maturity simultaneously and are ready to be harvested.

Jesus' description of the end times makes me believe that those famous opening phrases from Dickens's *The Tale of Two Cities* were never more appropriate than in the days just ahead of us: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness."

The darkest time in all of history, as well as the most brilliant for the people of God, lies before us. It is the exciting possibilities of this next season that compelled me to write this book.

While the quotation by Charles Dickens comes from a classic English novel of the nineteenth century, Jesus' parable of the wheat and weeds is Jesus' own description of the days ahead.

Several years ago I became captivated by Jesus' words in Luke 21 concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, the scattering of the Jewish people among the nations and the Gentile domination of that city for a season until the time came for the Jewish people to regain control of their capital. The revelation that began coming to me inspired me to write *Your People Shall Be My People* and *God's Promise and the Future of Israel*. The thesis of both books has to do with the timing of God in our generation, a time in which Jewish people by the tens of thousands are beginning to believe that Yeshua/Jesus is indeed the promised Messiah and the corresponding awakening of faith among the nations that Jesus is not only Israel's Messiah but the world Redeemer—all this at a time when evil in the world is also rapidly accelerating.

My own personal awakening led me to take a harder look at Israel's prophets, as well as the end time messages of Jesus and the apostles.

Many believe that Spirit-empowered believers will be “taken away” before our enemy launches his last great assault. I see many reasons for rejecting that theory and for the need to expend our energy preparing to weather the coming storms and shine most brilliantly during the world's darkest hour.

I am learning to trust the Word of God even when I do not understand it. Another verse I have quoted for years and believe *most* of the time is Romans 8:28. I have read these words in various versions just to be sure I am not misreading Paul's core thought.

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose (NIV).

We know [with great confidence] that God [who is deeply concerned about us] causes all things to work together [as a plan] for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His plan and purpose (AMP).

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good for those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose (NASB).

All things!

All!

For good!

Not for everyone but for those who love the Lord and are called by Him.

One of my close friends once preached a sermon entitled “The Most Difficult Verse in the Bible to Believe.” It was Romans 8:28! I happened to be in the congregation that day and was surprised at the verse he had chosen. Yet I found myself immediately agreeing with him.

Even though I have quoted the verse almost my entire life, I still find it impossible to grasp—except that I know God is always right. No matter how grim the situation, how intense the suffering, no matter how evil the consequences, He finds a way to mold all the circumstances for good for those of us who have embraced Him as our Leader.

In looking back over my own life, I see how true Paul’s words are. I would never have chosen for my own father to abandon the family, for my mother to die or for me to experience sexual molestation from a trusted preacher cousin as a way of drawing me into the heart of God. But I realize that God used the confusion of that time and godly grandparents to compel me to know Him even at an early age.

How could I have known that God would use that childhood trauma to make me more desperate for Him and more willing to follow Him? But God knew the call He wanted to place on

my life and was using every circumstance to mold me into that destiny. My role was to keep loving Him and trusting Him.

Now, a few years later and after a lifetime of learning to believe this verse, I am about to tell you of some things that are predicted in Scripture that do not sound good at all. Still, I believe completely that God will work all the bad stuff that is coming in the future for our good if we will simply hang onto Him and trust Him.

Jesus' words have motivated me to challenge the people of God to become the most radical, God-empowered and God-empowering, miracle-working, people-rescuing followers of Jesus in the history of the planet. So join me on the pilgrimage. Do not be afraid when you read about or even experience some of the horrors that will come. The best is yet ahead! Keep remembering Romans 8:28. And in case you should be tempted to forget along the way, I will keep reminding you.

1

Let Both Grow Together

“Take your sickle and reap, because the time to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.”

Revelation 14:15

Seven words out of Jesus’ end time parable of the wheat and the weeds have changed the way I look at the future: *Let both grow together until the harvest.*

Jesus was telling one of those the-Kingdom-of-heaven-is-like parables. A man sowed good seed in his field, but an enemy came and sowed weeds. As the plants began to grow, the field hands seem to have seen nothing unusual. Only as the plants “sprouted and formed heads” did they detect the weeds (see Matthew 13:26–39).

The servants asked the master, “Do you want us to go and pull them up?”

“No,” he answered, “because while you are pulling the weeds, you may uproot the wheat with them. *Let both grow together until the harvest.* At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned, then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn.”

The disciples may have been thinking, *Good story! But we still do not understand what He is saying.*

“Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field,” they later asked Jesus.

So He went into greater detail, detail that gives very clear meaning to those seven words.

“The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the people of the kingdom. The weeds are the people of the evil one, and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels.”

Matthew 13:37–39

I have read these words dozens of times, but not until a few years ago did I get the basic message Jesus was communicating to His friends, as well as to us these many centuries later. This is the end time of all end time parables. Jesus is describing what is to happen at the close of the age—this age, the age in which we now live. At the time of God’s choosing, there will be a harvest of both wickedness and righteousness, of both the wicked and the righteous.

Premature Harvest

I am a West Texas farm boy. I know what it means to harvest when something is ripe. We were cotton farmers. Try to harvest cotton too early and it is worthless. Not even when that white begins to show inside the boll would one dare to pick the cotton. Still worthless! One must be patient. But when the boll is fully open, grab the cotton quickly, take it to the market and sell it for enough money to feed the family for the year.

There is an interesting little aside in the encounter Abraham had with God when He was describing what would happen to

Abraham's descendants: "For four hundred years your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own and . . . they will be enslaved and mistreated" (Genesis 15:13). And then He gave one of the reasons for Israel's long estrangement from their country of destiny. "In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here, *for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure*" (verse 16, emphasis added). Or, as the King James Version reads: "The iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full."

According to His communication with Abraham, God, in His sense of justice, cannot judge a nation—or, in the case of the wheat/weeds parable, the world—until the iniquity of that nation is full, has reached its full measure, has ripened.

Jesus' simple parable describes for us the time of the end for our present age, when world wickedness will reach its zenith, or, in this case, its nadir. When the sin tank of the world is full, God will bring down the curtain on world civilization in its present form.

These Are the Days

That is the bad news. But the good news is that while wickedness is ripening, righteousness is also ripening. Followers of Jesus will become the godliest, the most Holy Spirit-empowered, the purest of heart, the most miracle-working generation in the history of the planet. Jesus ended the explanation of the parable with words that attest to this maturing: "Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (Matthew 13:43).

Hundreds of years prior to Jesus' coming, the prophet Daniel saw the very thing Jesus described. He saw "the time of the end" (Daniel 12:4, 9) at "the end of the days" (verse 13), a time when "those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever" (verse 3). This will be a time

when “many will be purified, made spotless and refined, but the wicked will continue to be wicked” (verse 10).

Interestingly enough, without any way to imagine airplane travel and superhighways in the nations of the world and without the remotest comprehension of an atomic age when the world’s wisest scientists and scholars would be unable to keep up with all of the latest technologies and inventions, Daniel described the very era in which we are living, a time when “many will go back and forth, and knowledge will increase” (Daniel 12:4 NASB). Nothing in all of Scripture more precisely distinguishes our generation from all those in prior years. We indeed are going back and forth, with millions of us in the air, traveling from nation to nation at any given moment. Other multiple millions are traveling at high speeds on the world’s highways.

At the same time knowledge is increasing at such astonishing speed that even those in the field of technology have trouble staying abreast—to say nothing of the fact that I can hold in my hand access to more knowledge than was in the world’s finest libraries less than a century ago.

All this is happening at the same time that the wise, those who are leading many to righteousness, are growing into their destinies of “shining like the brightness of the heavens . . . like the stars,” as Daniel foresaw.

Radical and Radiant

Remember when Moses came down from the mountain after being with God, and “the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory” (2 Corinthians 3:7)?

Have you ever pondered what it will be like when, as the psalmist predicts, “those who look to [God] are radiant” (Psalm 34:5)?

I love the story that was highlighted on *The 700 Club* some years back. A well-known Hollywood figure, a Jewish atheist

known for his sometimes ruthless business practices, came upon extremely hard times. During this downturn in his professional life, his wife, too, could no longer tolerate his behavior and left with their child.

One night, in complete despair, this man walked out on the beach in front of his Malibu home, raised his hands to the God he did not believe in and cried, “Help!”

When he went back inside, Jesus appeared to him. The man was so undone by the encounter that he started calling some close friends to tell them what had happened. But they did not take the matter seriously, supposing that he had had too much alcohol or was high on some drug.

Weeks later, while at a Hollywood party, he was strangely drawn to a couple across the room. They seemed so at peace with themselves and with life. The way they greeted people, the manner in which they treated each other. Even their faces had almost a glow about them.

Though he had no idea who the couple was, he finally summoned the courage to walk up to them and inquire. “You’re different, different from anyone else in this room,” he said. “There is something about the way you relate to each other and to others here. What is this with you?”

They knew all about their inquirer. They knew of his amazing success in the movie industry, but they also knew that he could be ruthless and uncaring in order to get his way.

“Are you sure you want to know?” they answered cautiously.

“Yes, tell me.”

“We are radical followers of Jesus,” they said. “We believe that He is your Messiah, the promised One from the prophets. We believe He rose from the dead, and that He has sent His Spirit to live within us. We have come to know a peace that we had never before experienced. Maybe you would like to get to know Him as well.”

And so it was that this former Jewish atheist, after telling them the story of his beachside cry and his late-night encounter, came to know his Messiah—all because of the countenance of two of Jesus’ followers. The radiance of which the psalmist spoke, the radiance that shone in Moses’ face, the brightness Daniel foresaw was playing out in the hearts and lives of a Hollywood couple, whom God used to bring another of His children into the Kingdom.

Harvest of Wrath and Righteousness

We are living the partial fulfillment of the promise, but we have yet to experience its fullness, its ripeness. Yet if Jesus’ wheat-weeds parable is true—and we know that it is—then the time will come when the righteousness, the holiness, the purity, the empowering of believers will have reached its zenith among every tribe, tongue, nation and people—all who will stand before the throne of God in the last day (see Revelation 5:9; 7:9).

In the closing years of his life, the apostle John also saw and described the final harvest of which Jesus had spoken.

I looked, and there before me was a white cloud, and seated on the cloud was one like a son of man with a crown of gold on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand. Then another angel came out of the temple and called in a loud voice to him who was sitting on the cloud, “Take your sickle and reap, because the time to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.” So he who was seated on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth, and the earth was harvested.

Revelation 14:14–16

John saw the harvest of righteousness, but then he saw two additional angels who were involved in the harvest of the wicked.

Another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he too had a sharp sickle. Still another angel, who had charge of the fire, came from the altar and called in a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, “Take your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of grapes from the earth’s vine, because its grapes are ripe.” The angel swung his sickle on the earth, gathered its grapes and threw them into the great winepress of God’s wrath.

Revelation 14:17–19

One day near the close of Jesus’ life, as He and His disciples were walking away from the Temple to the Mount of Olives, He brought up again the subject of the time of the end, as well as the destruction of the Temple that would occur when Rome destroyed the city in AD 70. There would be great upheavals, an “increase of wickedness, [when] the love of most will grow cold . . . [a time of] great distress, unequaled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equaled again” (Matthew 24:12, 21; see also Daniel 12:1). That is wickedness ripening.

But this will also be a time when “this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations” (Matthew 24:14).

The “people of the evil one” will flourish, mature and ripen into the wickedest, the most lustful, the most terrorizing, the most idolatrous, the most selfish generation in the history of the world.

But at the same time, the “people of the Kingdom” will mature, flourish and ripen as we move into our destiny of becoming the most powerful, godly, miracle-working, radiant body of believers the world has ever known.

Both growing side by side until the end!

With what kind of attitude should we approach the ripening? What should we expect as the harvest nears? Come with me as we look at ways that will help us be a strong, vibrant part of the future, even when the times are difficult and dangerous.