

# Unrolling the Scroll



## Episode One The Revelation of Jesus Christ

The Scroll Is In His Hand  
He is About to Carry out His Plan  
Are You Ready? Do You Understand?

Line by line, precept by precept, Apostle Ray Young opens up  
The Revelation of Jesus Christ in an easy-to-understand format so that  
YOU can understand it and be prepared for His Second Coming.

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**All Scripture quotes found in this book are taken from the New King James Translation Bible, unless otherwise specified.**

# Dedication

This entire series of seven books is lovingly dedicated to the memory of my father, Rev. Laurence J. Young and to my grandfather, Floyd W. Young. As I was growing up, I had the rare privilege of having real men of God as an example to look up to. In all the storms and difficulties that our family passed through, I was able to look to my father as a source of strength and my grandfather as a source of peace and security. I can clearly remember walking down the concrete sidewalk that joined our two homes together with books under my hand, climbing up into my grandfather's lap, and saying, "*Grandpa, read to me!*" If not for his patience and loving kindness, I would have never developed the love of reading that I have, and all the literary skills which developed from that love. I also remember the great peace and quiet love which my grandfather and grandmother, Emily, had for one another. In all the 50+ years that they were married, I never heard a cross word pass between them, and I was over at their house often enough to know. Without the courage and strength of my father against overwhelming circumstances, I would never have developed the resilience and stubborn determination that brought me through two near-death crises, betrayal and rejection. I can still remember my father quitting his secure job at the age of 55 in order to move to Indiana to pastor two tiny Methodist churches with a combined membership of about 50. I also remember how our big green Chevy Impala slid sideways through a stone bridge on an icy road when dad was on his way to preach his first sermon. I remember how my father calmly got out of the car, measured the length of the car, then walked to the stone bridge to measure its width. He then turned to me and said in an even voice, "*An inch and a quarter!*" Without another word, he got back in the car, me in tow, and drove the remaining quarter mile to the little country church to deliver his first sermon. Thanks, Dad and Grandpa, for everything you did for me! I hope that they allow the windows of heaven open where you live, so you can see that your talented but often troubled boy finally turned out all right!



# Acknowledgements

I want to acknowledge my wife, helpmeet, friend and companion, Beverly. Without her love and support, I would not be in the ministry today. When a heart attack and malignant, inoperable cancer both threatened to take my life within the span of one year, she faithfully ministered to my needs just as she had done as a child for her invalid father. She loved me, nursed me and nurtured me through the crisis. When the church I was pastoring betrayed me and fired me as I lay in the hospital, she stood by me, comforted me and protected me. Aside from Jesus Christ, I owe her everything. This book would not be in existence if she had not patiently prodded me to pick up the work I had begun three years ago and then let go, entangled in other issues and problems. Darling, acknowledging you is not nearly enough. Thanking you is not nearly enough. Praising you is closer to the truth, but Proverbs 31 still says it best:

*"Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, but a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised. Give her the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praise her in the gates" – Proverbs 31:30-31*

I also want to acknowledge the tremendous support and patient prodding of Vicki Black, who has done all the editing for this work, and calmly carried proof after proof back and forth between me and the publisher. Her many hours of work have made this book possible, and her unflagging kind and gentle demeanor have been an inspiration to not only me but to everyone around her. She is a caring and compassionate friend, not only to me, but also to all that are fortunate enough to come in contact with her. I count her as one of the greatest blessings in my life and as a true friend in Christ.



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# Preface

**Oh, NO! Yet ANOTHER book on Revelation! When will it ever end?**

Yup! Another book (actually **Seven Books**) on **The Revelation of Jesus Christ**, the most important book in the entire Bible! Why do I say that? Because it **Cross-foots** the entirety of Scripture together into one ultimate, masterful piece of **non-fiction literature**; the **Story of All Stories about the Love of All Loves**.

But a zillion books have already been written on this subject. **Why another one???**

**Because many of them are dreadfully, dangerously, deadly wrong.**

Certain things are being taught in American Christianity about the Rapture and the events contained in The Revelation Of Jesus Christ that are so completely out of context that the truth appears to be a lie, and vice versa. Now, wait a second, pastor! Are you saying that these folks don't love the Lord? Nope! Do they love Jesus with all their hearts? Yup! Do I love the folks that are writing these books and teaching these things? Yup! **But being absolutely sure and absolutely right isn't the same thing.** Let me give you an example: For many years I believed a certain way about the Rapture and the Tribulation and the Wrath of God, etc, etc. And I believed firmly, passionately, and, I thought, accurately. I faithfully repeated everything I ever heard any TV preacher say. I even looked up the Scriptures, kinda, sorta, that they quoted from. It all seemed good at first glance. Then, one day about 15 years ago, I was pastoring a little Spirit-filled church in Southeastern Indiana when the Lord spoke to me and said, "*I want you to teach from The Revelation of Jesus Christ*". My reply was, "*No way! Every lunatic and wacko from Waco uses Revelation as a hidey-hole for their crazy doctrines and practices. They twist and distort the Word of God to suit their own purposes.*" And the Lord replied, "***Then who will teach it correctly?***"

That floored me. Now I no longer had an argument, because He knew how very much I valued Scripture, and how much emphasis I placed on **rightly dividing the Word of God**. So, I had to make several quality decisions. The first was to **scrap everything I had ever been taught about this wonderful book**. The second was to **read the book literally, logically and chronologically**. That meant that I had to begin with the following assumptions:

- (1) What I was reading was **literally true, not symbolically true**.
- (2) That this book was **designed to be logical, and meant to be understood**.
- (3) That the events portrayed in this book were **chronological**, forming an **accurate time-line** that could be followed, and into which **all other Scriptures** regarding the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ could be cleanly placed, **without distortion or manipulation**.

When I finally got done, with passages underlined, cross-footed, dove-tailed, doubled-underlined, noted, commented on and read again and again, **everything fell into place, exactly as it was supposed to**.

Not only that, but, to my absolute horror, **what The Revelation of Jesus Christ REALLY SAID, literally and clearly, was in absolute variance to what most so-called prophecy experts were saying it said!** Now I had a dilemma. I could no longer teach what I had been teaching. And I knew that I could no longer rely on the so-called experts. So I began to teach this little congregation the book, line by line and precept by precept. The old guard was outraged. It violated their long-held, highly cherished theology. And they were in no mood to change their minds. The young adults in the church were astonished, but thrilled, and took up my challenge to search the Scriptures to see if these things be so. Time and time again, they came back to me, saying "*You were right, pastor! That's what it actually says! In context! Literally!*"

But for the next ten years, virtually every attempt I made to teach this new, but very old, truth fell on deaf ears. America was not willing to listen to anything that stretched its comfort zone. Suburbanianity, masquerading as Christianity, didn't want to be moved out of its three bedroom, two-car garage dream world to face what was actually going to come on the world and the church in their lifetimes. Only in the Black Christian community did I find ears that were willing to listen, and hearts that were willing to accept and change, even though I am Indo-European myself, of Welsh and German ancestry. Then God moved us to a suburb of Cincinnati, Ohio. After pastoring a small, African-American congregation for about three years, circumstances necessitated us forming a new, multi-cultural, non-denominational church. Suddenly, everyone I encountered wanted to hear what I had to say. Everyone I taught these truths to eagerly searched them out for themselves, and readily embraced them. What had happened? Perhaps the deadly events of 9-11 shocked America so badly that she started to wake up. Perhaps the Holy Spirit had finally decreed that it was time for this to be preached. No matter why, the door suddenly swung wide open. I was eternally grateful, and very, very relieved.

As you read this book, the First of Seven **Seals**, you will begin the most exciting Scripture journey you have ever taken. If you complete this journey (and you only need to "walk" about 15 minutes each day to do it), you will come to understand exactly how The Revelation Of Jesus Christ is put together, what each of the key symbols represent, in what order the events will occur, when the Rapture will occur, who the Wrath of God will fall on, and, most importantly, **what you must do to ensure that when the roll is finally called up yonder, YOU will be there!**

An index has been provided at the end of this book outlining the entire **Unrolling the Scroll** series, along with the articles contained in each of the other 6 Seals. For further information on how to obtain additional copies of this book, any of the other Seals, or the individual tri-fold flyers containing each Day within the Seals, please contact us at the address listed below, email us, or phone us. We stand ready and willing to talk with you, answer your questions, and, most importantly, **pray with you and for you.**

**May God richly bless you as you walk in faith and obedience to Him!**

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# Day 1 – Pre-, Mid-, Post-, Pan-, What???



“And I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals. Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, ‘Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?’ And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it.” – Revelation 5:1-3

Today we begin what I prayerfully consider to be the most important series of messages I have ever given. I know that the materials that we will cover will be controversial, to say the least. Yet, God has given us a **mandate**, a **mission** and a **message** concerning the return of Jesus Christ, particularly the **timing** of His return in relationship to a series of terrible events described in the Scriptures as the **Tribulation**. Within the church, there are many different points of view regarding the return of Jesus Christ. Some folks who call themselves Christians don't even believe He **will** return. They see him as no different from some Hindu holy man. Some believe that He will come, but **prior** to the Great Tribulation. We call those folks **Pre-Trib**. Some folks believe that He will come back in the **middle** of the Great Tribulation. They are referred to as **Mid-Trib**. Other believers cling to the belief that He will return at the **end** of the Tribulation. You can call them **Post-Trib**. And I always jokingly add a 4<sup>th</sup> category, folks who are **Pan-Trib**. “Well, brother”, they say, “I don't worry about it, 'cause I know it'll all **pan out!**”.

Raised in a mainline denomination, I heard very few, if any, sermons on the return of Jesus Christ as I grew up. I guess most of us were **Pan-Trib**, in that we never gave the matter much thought. Truthfully, looking retrospectively back through time, **it really didn't matter WHAT you believed about the Tribulation UNTIL NOW!** Why didn't it matter? Because all believers who lived and died up until this generation would **never see or experience** the events described in the Book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ. **That is about to change dramatically and drastically!** Some Biblical scholars believe that we are already somewhere in the first four Seals. Truthfully, after studying the Scriptures myself, and comparing what The Bible says about the final days of mankind to current events on the TV, I can't say I disagree with them.

After decades of being at best a lukewarm Christian, I began to move closer to God when I was 25. By the age of 29, I had been Baptized In (With) the Holy Spirit, complete with the supernatural evidence of Speaking in Unknown Tongues. If you're not familiar with this marvelous experience, please take the time to read carefully and prayerfully through the Book of Acts, then give us a call, write to us, or email us. Given what is going to come upon all the earth, **you need this experience in your life!** As I began to move away from my mainline denominational background and teaching, I began to encounter a great deal of teaching regarding the return of Jesus Christ. Almost all of what I encountered centered on **Pre-Trib** theology, so for many years, I was a strong advocate of that particular viewpoint. Then I acquired some relatives who were strongly **Post-Trib**. Some folks in that camp advocated digging caves in mountains, stockpiling food and supplies, and preparing to ride out the storm. We spent many evenings hotly debating all of the points of each stance, with neither side giving an inch of ground.

The whole matter finally came to a head for me when I began a 3-month term as an interim pastor for a local Full-Gospel church. It was a church cleanly split right down the middle between the old guard, who thought they knew and had experienced everything, and the young guard, who were hungry for the deep things of God and genuinely wanted to experience a move of God themselves, instead of listening to the

older members reminisce about the "good old days". One day, as I was praying, the Lord spoke to me. "I want you to begin teaching from the Book of Revelation", He said. "No way!" I replied, "That book is the hidey-hole for every lunatic and wacko from Waco! I will not teach from Revelation!" The argument between God and I raged for a considerable period of time. **Guess who won?**

Once I had finally given in and given up arguing, I was presented with another problem. **If I was supposed to teach the book, it would probably be a good idea if I read the book myself first!** Please understand that this is not generally the way that most pastors prepare their sermons. Too often, "research" consists of **stealing someone else's ideas wholesale, without bothering to give credit to the original author.** That's called plagiarism, and a huge number of pastors are guilty of the sin several times a week. Truthfully, I had been guilty of it many times myself. If I heard a sermon point which sounded good to me, I was just as likely as the next guy of pulling the statement out in my next sermon and waving it about proudly, **without a clue as to if it was correct or not.** I have a good friend who is thinking man in a fundamentalist Pentecostal denomination. That makes him the odd man out, but he sort of enjoys the opportunity to point out inconsistencies. He's a very deep individual, with a special kind of careful Biblical scholarship that I value and cherish. He regularly helped us with our radio broadcast, and never failed to bring some special insight into the program. Years ago, while he was in Bible school for his denomination (which shall remain nameless!), he and a fellow classmate challenged one of their professors about three particular Scripture references listed in their textbook. "In your opinion", they asked the instructor, "Do these Scriptures accurately represent the theology represented in the book?" The instructor replied vigorously in the affirmative. "Then explain to us", they countered, "why these so-called Scripture references point to Chapter and Verse combinations **which don't even exist in the Bible!**". By failing to **check his sources**, the instructor had made himself vulnerable to criticism and humiliation.

So it was with me in my life. I had proudly brandished my Pre-Trib theology about from the pulpit, without ever bothering to go to the Scriptures referenced to see if what the speaker **said** the Bible said was actually what the Bible **said itself.** Did you follow that? I can say that you said "All boats are made of **peas.**", when what you actually said was, "All boats are made of **trees.**" Does a misunderstood word make a difference in that sentence? By handling the Scriptures secondhand, without taking the time ourselves to search the Scriptures to see if these things be so, we set ourselves up to be deceived by each new whiz-bang theory that comes down the pike. The Bible calls them "*Winds of Doctrine*". They certainly blow out, blow up and blow away a huge number of believers, particularly the new kids on the block, hungry for the Word and willing to accept anything they hear. This is how the cults work (as well as their father, the devil). When they quote Scripture (and they always do), they either **add something in, leave something out, change the word used, or change the meaning of the word used.** In so doing, they quickly and successfully manage to turn "trees" into "peas", and **no one is the wiser for the fraud and deception that has been perpetrated!**

So it was with the Book of Revelation. I had been taught many things about the book. Some of what I had been taught was correct. But when I began to **read the book for myself,** I found, much to my amazement, astonishment and horror, that **none of the stances I had been exposed to were correct! Pre-Trib was wrong! Mid-Trib was wrong! Post-Trib was wrong!** Can you imagine the controversy that erupted in that Full-Gospel church when I began to share, Chapter by Chapter and Verse by Verse, what the Bible **actually said about the return of Jesus Christ?** The old guard erupted in anger. They had never been taught it that way, they said, and quickly and firmly hardened their hearts to the actual in-context words of the Holy Scripture. The young people were amazed, but they looked up the Scriptures which I taught them, just to confirm in their own minds and hearts that I was telling them the truth. **And, dear reader, friend and brother in Christ, I am still telling the truth to everyone who will listen! Your own salvation may well depend on how you interpret and are prepared for the events of the next 10 – 15 years. The Scroll is about to unroll, and you must be prepared! Jesus opened the Scroll by prevailing over the power of sin, death and the grave. The least we can do is Unroll the Scroll to see what is contained therein.**

During the rest of this book, we will conduct a Chapter by Chapter and Verse by Verse exposition (a big word for study) of **The Revelation of Jesus Christ.** Each daily study is referred to as an *E-Pistle*. Think of each *E-Pistle* as if it were a chapter in one of the Biblical Epistles, written by Peter, Paul, James, John or any of the other great Biblical authors. Each chapter as a general rule takes into account either a

single subject, or a series of connected subjects. The *E-Pistle* for **Day 1** will logically lead into the *E-Pistle* for **Day 2**, and so on. We will normally stay on target, although there are some times when I got so excited writing this book that I kinda wondered off into the bushes a little bit. My apologies for those occasions when my overwhelming love for the Lord and His Word just carried me away. I promise that I'll always carry you safe and sound back to the original train of thought, and we'll resume the discussion from there. Since much of what we will be discussing will get rather deep, this whole book is designed to be digested in bite-size pieces. **15 minutes a day** will carry you from one *E-Pistle* to another. If you're hungry for more, just keep on reading until you're satisfied for the day. Either way, once you've finished these *E-Pistles*, you will understand The Revelation of Jesus Christ better than 99% of the Christians around you, probably better than 75% of the pastors under whose teaching and authority you currently sit, and better than about 50% of the so-called prophecy experts who make a living "borrowing" their materials from one another. I can guarantee that you will discover things about this marvelous book that you never knew existed. Odds are you will have to scrap most of your end-times theology, make significant revisions to the way you are living, and actually become a true New Testament Christian. There's a good reason why God called it The Revelation, instead of just Revelation. It's designed to reveal to you **what is about to happen, what you have to do to be ready, and what kind of person you will have to become** in order to survive victoriously through these perilous time. Today, you have begun that journey. We pray that He will strengthen in your inner man with His great might! Until next time, may God richly bless you as you walk in faith and obedience to Him!



# Day 2 ~ Rightly Dividing the Word



“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth”. – II Timothy 2:15

When Peter, Paul, James, John, and others wrote their letters, they did so **to impart important Scriptural truths into the lives of the Saints**. That is also our goal. With all of the “teaching” that goes on today, you can find a wide variety of opinions and beliefs. People take the Word of God and “spin” it in ways that stagger my imagination. I am amused by some of the “teachings” I read, troubled by others, and genuinely horrified by the rest. The Bible says that we are to “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth”. (II Timothy 2:15) It’s that **rightly dividing** stuff that seems to get us into trouble. There are millions of opinions about what God’s Word says, and everybody has their own spin on the Word of God. The real problem with all of this is simple: **God means exactly what He says, and doesn’t need any help from us in interpreting it**. A little over five years ago, the Lord instructed me to begin teaching out of the Book of Revelation. I immediately took issue with Him (I do that a lot!). “No way!” I said, “That Book is the hidey-hole for every lunatic and wacko from Waco. They take Your Word and twist it and distort it until it bends their way, then lead people astray and into all kinds of harm!” The argument raged for a considerable period of time. Finally, He convinced me that unless **someone taught it accurately and completely, no one would ever get it right**. So, with great reluctance, I began to read Revelation for the purposes of study, meditation and teaching. I also made a quality decision which has forever changed the way I think, believe and live my life: I decided that **when God says something, He means exactly what He says!** This concept is hard to get across to most Christians, so let me provide you with an illustration of what I mean:

Let’s say, for example, that I was going to the grocery store and would return at 5:00 this evening. I would come to you and say, “Hey, everybody! I’ve got to go to the grocery store for a few items. Traffic is pretty heavy, so I might not be home right away. I should be back around 5:00, give or take a few minutes. Keep supper warm for me. I won’t be gone long!” Now, how would I feel if, after I left, my family sat in the living room and said, “When he said ‘grocery store’, what he meant was ‘barber shop’. He was speaking **symbolically, not literally**. And when he said ‘home’, he meant his ‘spiritual home’, the local church. And I know, brothers, that when he said ‘5:00’ that was a symbolic representation. He’s really talking about 5,000 years and when he used the word ‘long’, he was referring to the long roads that he has to drive!”

That would be pretty ridiculous, wouldn’t it? By the time my family got done interpreting what I had said “**symbolically**”, they would have successfully **ruined what I said**, and **totally changed and distorted the meaning of my statement**. If we were to do that to another person, we would be called a liar and a fraud. Politicians and the news media regularly do this kind of thing to quotes, particularly from people whose politics or religion they don’t agree with. We become outraged when people deliberately distort and twist our words to make us seem to say something that we never said at all. **Yet Bible “scholars” have been doing this to the Word of God for almost 2,000 years**. We hear this kind of nonsense preached and taught from out pulpits **constantly!** In fact, we hear it so often **that we have come to believe that this form of constant misrepresentation is actually the correct way to view the**

**Word of God.** The truly sad part of all of this is that well-meaning pastors have been taught at their seminaries that this is the correct and appropriate way to present the Gospel.

The pervasiveness of this kind of thinking can be found in no better place than the Jewish Law. What God gave to man, through Moses, consisted of what we know as the first five books of the Bible; Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. The Jews refer to these books as the *Pentateuch*. These five books are God-ordained, God-breathed and God-inspired, along with the Wisdom Literature of Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Historical books like I and II Chronicles, and finally last, but not least, the major and minor prophets, like Daniel, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Zechariah, Haggai and so on. The mysterious but documentable **Bible Codes** are found interwoven in these Sacred Books. Some books, like the inter-testamental books of Tobit, I and II Maccabees and others have been excluded from the list of the Sacred Canon, and all for very good reasons.

The mandate given by God through Moses to His people regarding His Word is found in Deuteronomy Chapter 6:

*"<sup>4</sup> Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. <sup>5</sup> You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. <sup>6</sup> **And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. <sup>7</sup> You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. <sup>8</sup> You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. <sup>9</sup> You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates."** – Deuteronomy 6:4-9*

Wow! Sounds like a great start, huh? And if Israel had done **just that, and only that**, everything would have been hunky-dory. What went wrong? Well, Jewish theologians, in their intellectual arrogance, just **knew** that the great unwashed in the midst of the congregation would **never** be able to understand what God was saying, so they **decided to help poor old God a bit**. Over a period of hundreds of years, Rabbis labored faithfully, but misguidedly, to produce what they called the **Second Law**, or *Mishnah*. Now, come the Sabbath, the Rabbi would faithfully and lovingly remove the Torah from its sacred place, carefully unroll it, and read a brief passage, in ancient Hebrew. The Torah would be then lovingly put away, and then the Rabbi would get a **much larger** volume called the *Mishnah*, and read **extensively** from it. By the time all of the smoke had cleared, the people of God had heard perhaps one or two verses of **Torah**, or God's opinion of man, and tons of materials from the **Mishnah**, or **man's opinion of God's opinion of man**. Often, the *Mishnah* contradicted Torah, by saying that a certain thing clearly didn't mean **just what it said**, but rather that what God meant to say was **this instead**. Sometimes the *Mishnah* would water the Word of God down until it had no clout or authority in the lives of the believers. Often, the *Mishnah* so perverted the Torah, that it would have been better that there had been no reading of the Word of God at all. Listen to what Paul had to say about this practice in II Corinthians, Chapter 3:

*"<sup>12</sup> Therefore, since we have such hope, we use great boldness of speech— <sup>13</sup> unlike Moses, who put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what was passing away. <sup>14</sup> **But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the veil is taken away in Christ. <sup>15</sup> But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart. <sup>16</sup> Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. <sup>17</sup> Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. <sup>18</sup> But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord."** – II Corinthians 3:12-18*

How does this veil work? The **Mishnah** crowds out, supplants, and replaces the **Torah** in the hearts of the believers. All they remember is what the **Mishnah** said, and God's Words, found in the **Torah**, are lost to their hearing. Jesus told the Scribes and Pharisees that their traditions (*Mishnahs*) make void or cancel out the Word of God. See how easy it is to do? And how subtly the snare of the tempter comes upon us and wraps itself around us, so smoothly, so quietly, so gently that we don't even realize that we are being taken for a ride to a place where we do not want to go to become something we do not want to be.

I can remember, oh so clearly, watching the very same thing happen to me when I was a kid growing up in the Methodist Church. We always had Sunday School at 9:30, then church at 10:30. Sunday School



consisted of anywhere from three to five songs (All five verses!! We were more spiritual than the Baptists, since they only sang the 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and last verses), followed by the dreaded **Lesson Plan**. Now I'm sure that the people who put these things together loved the Lord, but I'm equally sure that watching paint dry and grass grow also scored high on their social must-do list. Again, the pattern would always be the same: a little chunk of the Word, followed by page after page of human nonsense, without a shred of anointing. And every week, the same dreadful lie would be promoted in classrooms all over the world: God is a good god who loves you. God loves everybody. Somehow, God will work it out so that nobody has to go to hell. Hell is a bad place. You should be such a good little boy or girl that you shouldn't have to worry about whether you're going to heaven or hell. Even as a child, I knew that something was wrong with that picture. I didn't realize the almost toxic level of doctrinal poisoning the church had received during the Middle Ages, and how much IV solution of Gospel truth would be necessary to begin to bring the body not into compliance with a series of dead works, but to revitalize it into the future Wife of the Only Begotten Son of God.

And all of this apostasy stemmed, and still stems from, one single, seemingly harmless practice: **Listening to man's opinion about God and not about God's opinion about man**. As I grew older, and the Scripture began to come alive to me, it became apparent to me that something was wrong, and that something had to change.

The decision that changed my life was to **take God at his Word, without supplemental interpretation**. It is these doctrines and opinions of men that constantly supplant, replace and make void the Word of God. If God, in Revelation Chapter 4, talking to John the Revelator said, "*Come up here...*", then God was talking to **John the Revelator, not the whole church**. What we have done, time and time again, is to take what **God says**, and say, "*That's not what He really means. He was talking symbolically about (fill in the blank), not (what He was actually saying).*" Do you get the drift on this? It seems like a little thing, but it is actually a **very big thing to God, since it implies that He is so incompetent that He can't manage to speak His own mind. It also implies that we are smarter than Him, since He seems to need our help in order to understand accurately what is on His mind**. We have to help poor old God out by inserting our own doctrines, since He can't seem to get it right. **That's pretty arrogant, isn't it?**

When I began to read the Scriptures **at face value**, I was shocked, horrified and thrilled, all at the same time! I found out that virtually **100%** of what I had been taught about the return of Jesus Christ and the timing of the *Rapere* (Rapture) **was 100% wrong**. The more I read and studied, the more appalled I became. The entire church has been fed a spin that will lead it into absolute destruction unless **someone** has the guts to tell the Church the truth! Tag! I guess I'm it! (Along with a number of very godly, careful scholars who I have run into since then who discovered the same things as I did).

As we go on in this series of daily devotionals, I will take you into the Word of God **in context** and show you, **line by line** and **precept by precept, here a little, there a little** what God has **actually** said to us. Not what **we want** Him to say, but what **He wants** to say **to us**, and has already said, in **bluntly plain language!** My heart is at the point of exploding because I cannot get this information out fast enough, to enough people. When fellow believers sit down with me and listen and study with an open heart and mind, they are as astonished and troubled as I was when they discover the obvious truth in front of their very eyes in God's Word. I call them **Bereans**. Folks who are locked into preconceived notions with closed hearts and minds are called **Thessalonians**. I'll let you "*search the Scriptures*" to see if you can find out what I mean.

Sorry for the soapboxing! The burden God has placed on my heart is more than I can bear! Pray for open doors and funding to take the real truth of God's Word to America, the Church and the whole world! May God richly bless you as you walk in faith and obedience to Him!



# Day 3 – Getting the BIG Picture



“Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this” – Revelation 1:19

“After these things, I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, ‘Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this.’” – Revelation 4:1

Because The Revelation of Jesus Christ has such enormous detail contained in it, earnest believers who are trying to read and understand it often get tangled up in those details, and fail to comprehend the basic structure of the book. There is actually a remarkably clear-cut outline to Revelation, but if that structure is not understood, the reader can often miss what God is saying. With that in mind, here is an introductory outline of the Revelation of Jesus Christ, through the first 6 Seals, with all the “good parts” underlined, if you will.

When you study this remarkable book, you always need to keep certain basis guidelines clearly in mind. Here are the basic guidelines we use in teaching the Word of God.

- (1) God knows what He is doing, and is perfectly capable of saying **exactly what He means** in His Word. In fact, at the end of both the Old and New Testaments, He specifically warns us not to **add to** or **take away** from the words of this covenant (Deuteronomy 12:32, Revelation 22:18-19)
- (2) The Word of God is **literally true**, particularly regarding prophecy (Think about the birth, life and crucifixion of Jesus!)
- (3) If the Word explains the meaning of a passage, either **in the context**, or **by means of a symbol reference to another passage** which explains the symbol, **we are not permitted to insert or make up our own interpretation.**
- (4) When dealing with multiple sources of revelation, always go with the **final statement on the matter.**
- (5) In sorting out the **significance** of Scriptures, place them in **this logical and Scriptural order:**
  - (a) The testimony of Jesus as **Son of God** (after His resurrection)
  - (b) The testimony of Jesus as **Son of Man** (prior to His resurrection)
  - (c) The testimony of the **Apostles**
  - (d) The testimony of the **Prophets**
  - (e) The testimony of **Other Individuals**

The simple truth remains : If you treat Bible prophecy like some kind of Holy Ghost Grab Bag, and begin pulling Scriptures out at random just to suit your fancy, you can and will end up with some of the most outlandish doctrines you could imagine. No attempt to understand the Return of Jesus Christ will ever fit together in any reasonable, logical fashion if you attempt to fashion your interpretation by beginning with those individuals who, although they were divinely inspired, were still working with the least revelation on the matter.

Now, with that in mind, let’s look at the Revelation of Jesus Christ:

- I. The book begins with a self-identification as **the Revelation of Jesus Christ** (Son of God) [1:1]
  - A. A special, unique blessing is included for those who **read** and those who **hear** the prophecy. [1:3]

- B. John explains that he is in exile on the Isle of Patmos because of his testimony for Jesus [1:9]
- C. John is "*In the Spirit*" (praying in tongues and worshipping) on the Lord's Day [1:10]
- D. Jesus appears in a vision as Son Of God, and tells John to write down the following things: [1:19]
  - (1) What he sees
  - (2) "*The things which **are***" (Current Events)
  - (3) "*The things which will take place **after this***" (Future Events)
  - (4) This makes **Revelation 1:19** the **key passage for understanding the division of the book**
  - (5) This is similar in structure to Robert's Rules of Order on **Old Business** and **New Business**, where **Old Business (Things That Are)** must be taken care of before **New Business (Things That Shall Be)** can be dealt with.

- II. Jesus then dictates **7 letters to 7 churches located in Asia Minor**, of which John **just happens** to be the Bishop-In-Exile. Since he cannot visit these churches to examine their spiritual well-being, Jesus takes care of the matter for him. [1:18 – 3:22]
  - A. These are **seven individual churches with seven unique sets of problems**
  - B. These are the "*things which are*" referred to in 1:19
  - C. These are **NOT seven church ages** (Artificial, human interpretation not found in the Word of God)
  - D. These are **NOT seven types of churches** (Same reason)
  - E. Both previous interpretations end up making the Word of God **say something other than what it really says**
  - F. Having concluded Old Business / Current Events / "*things which are*", Jesus now turns His attention to **New Business/Future Events/"things that shall be"**.

- III. **After these things, Jesus opens a door in Heaven for John (and only John) to enter through, in order to discuss "*things which must take place after this*" (Future Events) [4:1]**
  - A. This is **totally consistent** with Revelation 1:19, and marks the beginning of the discussion of events which will take place much later in the time line. In order for Jesus to give John this information, He must pull John out of the temporal realm, and into The Spirit (see II Corinthians 12:1-4 for a similar experience by Paul)
  - B. This is **NOT the rapture of the Church! It never says that it is, and it explains what it is clearly and logically within the text itself.** To say that John is somehow symbolically representative of the church violates the first three rules of understanding Scripture, and makes the Word of God into a lie!
  - C. The **actual rapture of the Church will occur much later in the time line, and will clearly identify itself as such.**

- IV. John is introduced to a **Scroll with writing on both sides.** This Scroll represents the **legal indictment of mankind.** It, or a similar scroll nearly identical to it, also appears in **Ezekiel 2:9-10** and **Zechariah 5:1.** [5:1]
  - A. The Scroll is sealed with **Seven Seals** [5:1]
  - B. The first Four Seals correspond to **Four Horses**
    - 1. The **White Horse -- War and Conquest** (NOT the anti-Christ, see Zech 6:1-8, Matt 24:6-7) [6:2]
    - 2. The **Red Horse -- Ethnic Genocide** (see Matt 24:7) [6:3-4]
    - 3. The **Black Horse -- Global Crop Failure** (see Matt 24:7) [6:5-6]
    - 4. The **Pale Horse -- Famine, War and Animals** (see Matt 24:7) [6:7-8]
    - 5. These Four Horses are the same Four Horses found in **Zech 6:1-8**, paralleling **Rev 6:1-8**
    - 6. Since the Four Horses in Zechariah **come from Heaven**, the **White Horse cannot be the Anti-Christ**
    - 7. Again, the rules say that if a **meaning is already provided by Scripture directly or indirectly, you are not permitted to make up your own interpretation.**

I need to pause at this juncture to make a **VERY IMPORTANT POINT.** Please notice **HOW MANY TIMES** we have already had to correct some **SYMBOLIC** interpretation which **IN NO WAY** corresponds to the **ACTUAL** meaning of the Scriptures. The entire Pre-Trib camp **LIVES AND DIES BY THIS SKEWING OF SCRIPTURE MEANINGS TO SUIT THEIR FANCY.** Their justification, as with all the other camps, is that "*the Lord revealed it to them!*" Folks, I've got **BIG NEWS** for you – If your **PERSONAL REVELATION** conflicts with the **ACTUAL TEXT, THEN YOU ARE DECEIVED, AND YOUR**

**INTERPRETATION IS WRONG!** All the various Tribulation camps **ALWAYS** fall back on some sort of subjective **SYMBOLIC** interpretation of a Scripture passage, when in virtually every case, the Scripture involved already contains its **OWN** interpretation, directly or indirectly!

I know that I sometimes tend to come off a little hard on these issues. And, to be fair, I was once a rabid Pre-Tribber myself. Who wouldn't want to go out before all the trouble begins? Pre-Trib is an easy "sell", just like the Prosperity doctrines of the last 20 years, because they appeal to the carnal nature in man. No one likes pain. Everyone likes to be wealthy. Unfortunately, the entire church has been guilty of "easy selling" when it comes to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. "Just a simple prayer", we say, "and you can make it all right with heaven and God". What we often don't tell them is that they also have to live a life consistent with that decision, or hell is still their destination. Jesus, Himself, after all, clearly stated in Matthew Chapter 7 that **we would know them by their fruits**. Based on the whole counsel of God, two things are equally true about the Gospel: **Faith without works is dead** (James Chapter 2). But, **works without faith is also dead** (Hebrews Chapter 9). I can clearly remember ministering to a street person about 2:00 early one Saturday morning. We were sitting on the curb by the old white church that I pastored and in which my family actually lived for a time, talking about the things of God. He had a massive tumor growing out of the side of his head. Clearly, it was malignant, and represented a real threat to his life. As we talked, I offered to pray for his healing. That was fine with him. At first, I prayed in English. Then, I began to pray in the Spirit. As long as it was in English, he was OK. But when I switched to unknown tongues, the unclean spirit in him suddenly went berserk. He began to howl like an animal, clawing the concrete sidewalk with his fingernails until they bled. He then jumped up, shouted, "God loves me just the way I am!!!", and raced hell-bent down the street. Why did he say that? Because he had been told that very thing, time and time again by well-meaning Christians eager for their next evangelical "score", and willing to play fast and loose with the Real Gospel of Jesus Christ. Did God love him? Of course! The tragedy is that God still loves every sinner burning in the pits of Hell, and will continue to love them when they are in the Lake of Fire. **But just because God loves YOU doesn't mean that He loves WHAT YOU DO, nor does it mean that His love will somehow automatically prevent you from rejecting His grace.** Paul, writing in Romans 6:1, says, "Shall we therefore continue to sin that grace may abound? God forbid!" God's grace is designed to **keep you** from ever returning to sin, not to justify you **jumping back in with both feet!** What about the thief on the cross, you ask? He had no time to evidence fruit. True, but He did evidence **faith** enough to ask Jesus to let him be with Him in Paradise. And what did our Lord and Savior reply? "*And Jesus said to him, 'Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.'*" Any further arguments on that one? Please feel free to disagree with Jesus! The thief was justified **by faith through grace**, and not of works, lest any man should boast! The only work he could do was to believe it in his heart and confess it with his mouth. And so he did!

We have to close today on that note. We will pick up the outline tomorrow where we left off today. I would apologize, but it's simply not necessary. The Word of God is so deep and multi-dimensional that even the Reader's Digest version takes a little while to unfold.

Until next time, may God richly bless each and every one of you!



# Day 4 - New Business



“After these things, I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, ‘Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this.’”

– Revelation 4:1

In our previous E-Pistle, we began an introductory outline of The Revelation of Jesus Christ, with all the “good parts” underlined. Before we continue, let me restate the basic guidelines we use in teaching the Word of God.

- (1) God knows what He is doing, and is perfectly capable of saying **exactly what He means** in His Word.
- (2) The Word of God is **literally true**, particularly regarding prophecy (Think about the birth, life and crucifixion of Jesus!)
- (3) If the Word explains the meaning of a passage, either **in the context**, or **by means of a symbol reference to another passage** which explains the symbol, **we are not permitted to insert or make up our own interpretation**.
- (4) When dealing with multiple sources of revelation, always go with the **final statement on the matter**.
- (5) In sorting out the **significance** of Scriptures, place them in **this logical and Scriptural order**:
  - (a) The testimony of Jesus as **Son of God** (after His resurrection)
  - (b) The testimony of Jesus as **Son of Man** (prior to His resurrection)
  - (c) The testimony of the **Apostles**
  - (d) The testimony of the **Prophets**
  - (e) The testimony of **Other Individuals**

Now, let’s pick back up with Revelation 4:1:

### III. After these things, Jesus opens a door in Heaven for John (and only John) to enter through, in order to discuss “things which must take place after this” (Future Events) [4:1]

- A. This is **totally consistent** with Revelation 1:19, and marks the beginning of the discussion of events which will take place much later in the time line. In order for Jesus to give John this information, He must pull John out of the temporal realm, and into the Spirit (see II Corinthians 12:1-4 for a similar experience by Paul)
- B. This is **NOT the rapture of the Church!** It never says that it is, and it explains what it is **clearly and logically within the text itself**. To say that John is somehow symbolically representative of the church violates the first three rules of understanding Scripture, and makes the Word of God into a lie!
- C. The **actual rapture of the Church will occur much later in the time line, and will clearly identify itself as such**.

IV. John is introduced to a **Scroll with writing on both sides**. This Scroll represents the **legal indictment of mankind**. It, or a similar scroll nearly identical to it, also appears in **Ezekiel 2:9-10** and **Zechariah 5:1**. [5:1]

- A. The Scroll is sealed with **Seven Seals** [5:1]
- B. The first **Four Seals** correspond to **Four Horses**
1. The **White Horse -- War and Conquest** (NOT the anti-Christ, see Zechariah 6:1-8, Matthew 24:6-7) [6:2]
  2. The **Red Horse -- Ethnic Genocide** (see Matthew 24:7) [6:3-4]
  3. The **Black Horse -- Global Crop Failure** (see Matthew 24:7) [6:5-6]
  4. The **Pale Horse -- Famine, War and Animals** (see Matthew 24:7) [6:7-8]
  5. These Four Horses are the same Four Horses found in **Zechariah 6:1-8**, paralleling **Revelation 6:1-8**
  6. Since the Four Horses in Zechariah **come from Heaven**, the **White Horse cannot be the Anti-Christ**
  7. Again, the rules say that if a **meaning is already provided by Scripture directly or indirectly, you are not permitted to make up your own interpretation.**
- C. When the **Fifth Seal** is opened, we see the catastrophic results of a global persecution of Christians, with believers being killed in enormous numbers.
1. Please notice that **war** will destroy the stability of **nations**.
  2. When **nations** fall apart, the **ethnic groups** (kingdoms, Greek *ethnos*) inside those nations begin to persecute and kill each other (USSR).
  3. With **war** and **ethnic genocide** rampant in the world, it becomes impossible to plant and harvest crops. This logically produces a **global crop failure**.
  4. With no food on the shelves, **famine and disease** ravage the land.
  5. With no political or economic stability, the world, unwilling to take responsibility for its own sinfulness, does **exactly** what Nazi Germany did before the onset of World War II – **blame those who believe in God**. In Germany, this meant the **Jews**. In our day, it will be the **Christians**.
  6. Please also notice two important characteristics about the first Five Seals:
    - a. **They all represent man's inhumanity to man.**
    - b. **They match perfectly what Jesus said in Matthew 24 in terms of content but not in the same sequence.**
- D. Finally, when the **Sixth Seal** is opened, the **planet itself** can stand no more. A **massive earthquake** shatters the Earth's Tectonic Plates. Massive volcanic eruptions fill the atmosphere with dust, and the sky grows black. Even more frightening, a **partial blow-off of the Earth's atmosphere occurs**.
1. Unrepentant, unredeemed humanity knows what it going on, and attempts to flee and hide from God.
  2. They, themselves, recognize and announce the beginning of **The Great Day of His Wrath** [6:17]
  3. But before the **Wrath of God** begins, there are two things which God must do:
    - a. **Establish 144,000 male, virgin Jews** to testify to their own nation, which will have to endure the Time of Jacob's Trouble.
    - b. **Remove the Gentile Church in the Rapture, so that it does not participate in the Wrath of God.**
  4. Remember, the Wrath of God **begins with the Seventh Seal, with Seven Trumpets and Seven Bowls**.
  5. **Please notice that the Church has been present through a great deal of suffering and persecution up until this point in time, but it by no means matches the horrors which will mark the Seventh Seal.**
  6. Can this be proven by Scripture? Absolutely! In context? Perfectly! Clearly? Impeccably! Listen to what the Scripture **says about itself**:
    - a. **"After these things, I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands"** [Revelation 7:9]
    - b. So that there can be **no confusion in the mind of the reader**, the Bible goes on to **give a specific explanation** to the reader about **who these people are**:
    - c. **"Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, 'Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?'"**. And I said to him, 'Sir, you know.' So he said to me,



***'These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb'*** [Revelation 7:13-14].

Folks, I don't see how the Bible could make it any clearer to anyone. So that there is **no confusion**, the removal of the Church is pointed out by one of the **Twenty-four Elders** (Wouldn't it be fun to know who gets that job? Perhaps the answer to that question is also hidden in plain view somewhere else in the Scriptures. I'll let you know if God shows it to me. I'll also be careful to support it **from Scripture, in context**). Not only does he pose two questions, ("*Who are they? Where did they come from?*") he also answers his own questions, by using the same exact terms used by Jesus Himself in Matthew 24 and the other Gospel accounts.

Not only does the **passage explain itself**, it is also backed up by **massive additional documentation** from other Scriptures, also taken **in context**. We don't have the time or space in this E-Pistle, but we will examine those other Scriptures in detail as we continue on in this series.

Now, I fully realize that we have rushed rapidly over a great deal of ground. There are a million questions that we did not answer today, and there are probably two million answers waiting to be used in reply. Just for fun, let me run a few questions by you for you to be thinking about:

- (1) How do we know that the **1<sup>st</sup> Horseman** of the Apocalypse represents **war**?
- (2) How do we know that **he isn't the anti-Christ**?
- (3) How do we know that the **2<sup>nd</sup> Horseman** represents **Ethnic Genocide**?
- (4) **Where** will this Ethnic Genocide occur?
- (5) Did you know that the Bible not only tells us **what** the Four Horsemen are but **where** on this planet their activity will be concentrated?
- (6) Did you know that the Bible isolates **which kinds of crops will fail globally, which will not, and** what nations will fall from power and rise to power as a result of these events?
- (7) Did you know that the Bible also **clearly indicates** where on the globe plague and famine will be concentrated?
- (8) Perhaps most importantly of all, did you know that the Sacred Scriptures **tell us exactly what two unmistakable, cataclysmic events will occur just before the Rapture of the church**?
- (9) **And what hidden in plain view event is imbedded in all these events which will allow the Anti-Christ to arise, demonic signs and wonders to begin to manifest, and prevent any further conversions from the Gentile world**?
- (10) Did you know that **only half of the "Church" globally is the true "Bride", and that half of those who call themselves Christians will BE LEFT BEHIND AFTER THE RAPTURE to face the wrath of the Anti-Christ and be forced to choose whether they will take the Mark of the Beast or not**?
- (11) Did you know that the prophecies of Daniel, once used by the pre-Trib camp to create the complete timeline for the whole Revelation sequence, are, in fact, **totally self-contained within the traumatic events of the 7<sup>th</sup> Seal, The Wrath of God**?
- (12) **Did you know that there will be a 20 year gap between the rapture of the Bride portion of the church and the beginning of the Wrath of God?**

I know, I know. Right now, my Pre-Trib friends are sending out for the wagons and the guys with the white coats that tie in the back. They think I'm crazy. Sorry, guys! **I am as sane and in my right mind as His precious and holy Word is literally, logically, and chronologically true!** I've even had "offers" from "scholars" to help me repent and find the "errors of my ways". But they said the same thing to Martin Luther, John Wesley, Charles Parnham, and every other true man of God who took hold of the **Mishnah (teachings of man), and cast that book behind their backs, only to embrace the one, true, Holy, supernaturally revealed, Spirit-breathed Word of God!**

No, dear friends. Many of you have never heard this before. And, before *Unrolling the Scroll* is finally done, we will have revealed many marvelous things hidden in the Word, in plain sight, for all to see, but unable to be seen because the Veil of Moses has been over the eyes of the church for far too long! No allegories! No symbolism! No subjective nonsense! Just **THE TRUTH, THE WHOLE TRUTH, AND NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH, SO HELP ME, GOD!!!**

Are you beginning to see why I categorically state that all previously held views of the Rapture are in serious error? If you read the Scriptures in context, and in chronological and logical order, **NO OTHER VIEW CAN BE SUPPORTED!** For those of you who love the Lord with all your heart, and are reading this for the first time, please understand: We love you. God loves you. You can be sincere about God, and be sincerely wrong! Up until now it hasn't really mattered, as I pointed out in an earlier article. **But now it does matter! Your ability to endure until the end will determine if you shall be saved, or not!** And we love you enough to **want you to survive what is coming upon all mankind!**

Friend, THE **RAPTURE OCCURS AT THE END OF THE SIXTH SEAL. NO OTHER PLACE. NO OTHER TIME.** After war! After ethnic genocide! After global crop failures! After global famine and pestilence! After global persecution of the Body of Christ! After the shattering of the Tectonic Plate and the partial blow-off of the Earth's atmosphere! Then, and only then is the Church removed, prior to God's Wrath and His restoration of Israel.

I'll finish this E-Pistle by saying to you what Jesus said to His disciples almost 2,000 years ago. – *"And what I say to you, I say to all: WATCH (Be ready)!" –Mark 13:37*

Until next time, may God richly bless each and every one of you. May you be found faithful in all things until He comes!

# Day 5 ~ Many Will Become Offended



“Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My Name’s sake. And then many will be come offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another” – Matthew 24:9-10

In our last E-Pistle, we talked about how critical the positioning of The Revelation of Jesus Christ is in regard to understanding the correct sequence of events regarding the return of Jesus Christ and the “snatching away” of the Church. As I have surfed the net, I have spent time reviewing the criticisms of this viewpoint. Sadly, although volumes have been written, most of what I found made the same basic mistakes: (1) Dealing with the **literal** meaning of passages as if they were **symbolical** and (2) simply not dealing with what Scripture actually says **in context**. Folks have asked me, “How did you arrive at your doctrine?” Actually, it was quite easy: having been exposed to every possible view of the return of Jesus Christ, and having listened to most (although not all, by any means) of the arguments from each camp, I simply decided **to read the Word for myself**. I further decided to hold **no preconceived notions** about the matter, but to accept **at face value** what the Bible had to say about the matter. I determined that I would not read into the Scriptures what was not already plainly, clearly there. No “symbolic” interpretations. No making the Scriptures say something **symbolically** that they didn’t already say **actually**. I posed myself this question : If I were a new believer, sitting by myself with a Bible in my hand, and with **no previous teaching** on the matter to slant my opinion one way or another, what conclusions would I arrive at by taking The Revelation of Jesus Christ **chronologically**, and reading it at **face value**? Many months later, after I had come to the conclusions that I now firmly hold, I received a book in the mail from a gentleman named Robert Van Kampen called “The Sign”. Much to my amazement, a great deal of what he said coincided with the conclusions which I myself had reached, apart from anyone else’s “help”. Although I don’t agree with 100% of what he said (what two Bible scholars agree totally on anything?), I found myself in unison with him on point after point. Remember, I had made the same discoveries myself **prior to receiving his book**.

“But Pastor Ray”, you say, “What’s the big deal with all of this? I mean, isn’t it just more bantering about with words? What difference does it make **WHAT** you believe on all this stuff? Aren’t we all going to heaven, anyway?” Friend, I truly wish that statement were true. It would eliminate a lot of arguments, headaches, and the terrible burden which I feel for the Church in the upcoming decade. To be fair, as I mentioned in one of our earlier E-Pistles, **up until this generation, it really didn’t matter** what you believed about the Rapture and the Coming of the Lord. The simple and honest truth was that you were going to experience a natural death, and go to Heaven based on your relationship with Jesus Christ, without ever having to experience the testing and trials which this generation of believers will have to endure. Western Christianity has lived in such a protected, shielded environment that the mere thought of suffering for Christ immediately makes most Christians run for the exits. And, bluntly put, a great many more White Christians in America head for the back door than their Black counterparts. The Black church in America already understands what it is like to suffer unjustly for what it believes. It knows that there is always a price to be paid for taking a stand. Saturated by an unbalanced teaching wave regarding prosperity, the White church in America is all for taking the easy way out. No suffering here. No suffering now. No suffering later. It blatantly disregards the fact that every time there has been a **great move of God** down through the ages, it has **immediately** been followed by **massive persecution**. It consistently ignores the fact that all of its heroes had to **suffer persecution and in many cases die for their faith**.

For those of you who are fervently praying for the Final Great Awakening, are you also prepared for the global violence that will accompany it and attempt to trample it out of existence? Or have you forgotten how they threw Christians to the lions, or wrapped them in oil-soaked cloth, and set them on fire alive to light the gardens of Rome for Nero's pleasure? No, my friends, a church obsessed and deluded with a Pre-Tribulation Rapture mindset is clearly **not prepared to suffer and die for their faith**. What will happen to these individuals when sudden hostility arises, and they are still here? In 1948, the Communists invaded and took over mainland China. The church in the China of that day was (guess what?) firmly Pre-Tribulation! They saw the Communists and Mao as the Anti-Christ, and expected to be raptured out of the events that soon followed. Forced to suffer and die for their faith, many of them forsook the faith, turning on one another, betraying one another, and doing exactly what Jesus said would happen in Matthew 24. Only a small remnant survived. Shaken to their core, that small group of suffering, persecuted believers regrouped, rethought, and reversed their theology regarding the suffering church. Out of that core group, a massive revival occurred, sweeping millions of Chinese into the Kingdom of God. Almost 50,000 mainland Chinese are born again and filled with the Spirit each and every day! They know that they may have to suffer for Christ, but, armed with the comfort of the Holy Spirit and the guidance of the Word of God, they know that their brethren down through history have been required to do the very same thing. **Now, what about you?** Are you prepared to suffer and die for Jesus? You must be ready to both **live** and **die** for Him. Nothing else will suffice.

Now, let me take you down another unpleasant, but totally related, path. In Matthew, Chapter 23, Jesus totally loses His cool and goes off against the Scribes and the Pharisees for turning His Father's House from a House of Prayer into a den of thieves. As He is leaving the temple in a rage, He runs into the disciples, who, instead of being in the ministry meeting, were playing hooky and seeing all the sights. Unaware of what has just happened, they say, "*Master look at all them thar tall buildings!*" Jesus looks them straight in the eye, nails them to the wall, and says, "*Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, **not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down***". Pow! Crash! Bang! Man, oh, man, where did **that** come from? Shaken, they follow Him back to the Motel 6 at the Mount of Olives Exit, #2 (just kidding, just kidding!), and kinda hang around for a while. Jesus is still livid, so nobody has the guts right away to ask Him what He had been talking about. After all, if they had been **where** they were supposed to be, doing **what** they were supposed to be doing, they would have been right in the midst of it, and no questions would be necessary. Now, it's painfully obvious that they have once again tanked it, and are going to have to eat some humble pie. Finally, Peter, James, John and Andrew (Mark 13:3) summon up enough courage to ask him the **Three Big Questions**. What are they? Simple! **(1) When will these things happen? (2) What will be the sign of Your coming? And, (3) What will be the sign of the end of the age?** Now, to be fair, they probably thought they were asking one question. Only the benefit of 20/20 hindsight allows us to see that there were actually three separate questions and three separate answers. The rest of Matthew 24 and 25 is Jesus' **extensive, intensive answer** to those three questions. In a nutshell, here's what He says:

- (1) Don't be fooled.
- (2) Many will come in my Name, saying they are Me.
- (3) There will be wars and rumors of wars.
- (4) It **still** won't be the end.
- (5) Nation will rise up against nation. (1<sup>st</sup> Seal – White Horse – War!)
- (6) Kingdom (*ethnos*) will rise up against Kingdom. (2<sup>nd</sup> Seal – Red Horse – Ethnic Genocide!)
- (7) Famines. (4<sup>th</sup> Seal – Pale Horse)
- (8) Pestilences. (4<sup>th</sup> Seal – Pale Horse)
- (9) Earthquakes. (6<sup>th</sup> Seal)
- (10) **AND THIS IS JUST THE BEGINNING OF THE SORROWS!**

Now, consider the following facts: If you've been brought up in church with a **Pre-Tribulation Rapture** theology, and you've been taught from the pulpit by the pastor you trust that you're not going to have to go through any of these things, **what is your logical reaction going to be?** Are you going to be shocked? Outraged? Feel betrayed? Like a fool? None of these Christians can be trusted? They told me a lie about this. **What else did they lie to me about???**

**But then it gets worse...the 5<sup>th</sup> Seal of Revelation erupts with all its fury!**

" <sup>9</sup> Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My Name's sake." -- Matthew 24:9

And now comes the logical, inevitable consequence when Pre-Tribulation theology runs head-first into the brick wall of the Word of God...

" <sup>10</sup> And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another." -- Matthew 24:10

Can you see why they would become offended? And why they would fall away? And why they would betray one another? And why they would have hate in their hearts for, above all else, other so-called Christians? Having believed one of the greatest deceptions ever imposed on the church during its entire history, they become angry, fall away, and then, in the most shocking reversal in the history of the world, **align themselves with the beast, the false prophet and the anti-Christ**, and become the **key leaders** and **supporters** in the Great Whore Of Babylon, the last world religious system that opposes everything about the Gospel of Jesus Christ! Understand this: they still want something **spiritual**, just **not of the Holy Spirit**. They want something **supernatural**, but not of **sanctification**. They want a supernatural benefit package, but have been systematically taught that there is **no price to pay**, no suffering, no blood to shed, that **they, and they along, were somehow magically to be exempt from suffering for Christ**, unlike every other generation of Christians before them. But now, lost and confused, betrayed and deceived, they are like a ship without a sail, a boat without an anchor, desperately seeking something spiritual and supernatural, **but definitely not Christian**.

" <sup>11</sup> Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. <sup>12</sup> And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold." -- Matthew 24:11-12

Now hear what Paul has to say on the matter. See if it doesn't line up PERFECTLY...

" <sup>3</sup> Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the FALLING AWAY COMES FIRST, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition..." -- II Thessalonians 2:3

Dear friends, can it be any clearer? Any plainer? Any more obvious? Please stop now, before it's too late. Get a new mind and a new heart toward Christ. Start taking seriously what Jesus has already said that He expects of you and me.

Please understand why I am so troubled. The Church at large is unaware, unprepared and unwilling to deal with what the Bible says **will certainly come**. What will happen to them? Will they **come to their senses**, or will the vast majority of them **deny Christ**, offended and angry at pastors, churches and God? And what **about you**, dear reader? **If you are not prepared to stand, will you be able to stand at all?** In a game, only those who are **prepared** to play are **able** to play, and to succeed. **Are you ready? Are you sure? Are you prepared?**



# Day 6 – The Revelation of Jesus Christ



“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants – things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John, who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw” –

## The Revelation of Jesus Christ 1:1-2

In our Day 1 materials, I mentioned that there was a very important reason why the final book in the Bible is called **The** Revelation, not just Revelation. First of all, let’s talk about the full name of the book. If you open your Bible, you will find that it is **The Revelation of Jesus Christ**. Please note: it isn’t just **A** Revelation of Jesus Christ; it is **THE** Revelation of Jesus Christ. That’s important. Very important. So important that missing the significance of what God says about the nature of this book will, and has, successfully skewed almost every attempt to understand Bible prophecy **in context** and **in chronological order!**

First of all, let’s address the significance of the word “**THE**”. To help you understand what God is saying, I have to make a reference to sports. Specifically, I’d like to direct your attention to **The** Ohio State University, part of the Big 10, and a perennial football and sometimes basketball power. When Ohio State plays a game, they **never** announce themselves simply as “*Ohio State*”. Others may refer to them as such, but when they talk about their own university, they call themselves **The** Ohio State University. Why is that? What’s the big deal, anyway? Here’s the big deal: In the state of Ohio, there are **many** universities. You’ve got the University of Ohio, Marshall, Miami of Ohio, etc, etc. But in the state of Ohio, there is only **one Ohio State University**. Based on charter and position, it is the **most important university in the state of Ohio**. It is preeminent among all other universities in that state, is funded first and is always to be considered **the single most important university, and the first among many**. All of the universities within the state are **legitimate**, and have **their own unique role and place** within the educational community. But there is **only one university** which stands separate and distinct among the others in place and preeminence: **The Ohio State University**.

That’s how it is with **The Revelation of Jesus Christ**. Scattered throughout the Bible are **many** revelations of and about Jesus Christ. The Bible is first and foremost a book of prophecy. But of all the prophecies given, **the most important, the preeminent, and the ultimately defining revelation is The Revelation of Jesus Christ!** “*That’s all well and good*”, you say, “*But what does that mean to me in a practical sense?*” Here’s the answer: **It is impossible to ever get the chronological sequence of events correct unless you begin first with the final and defining statements made personally by Jesus himself!**

During my professional career in the computer industry, I had the privilege of working as the Systems Administrator for a county government in Southern Indiana. It was during that time that God began to deal with me about teaching from The Revelation of Jesus Christ. It was also at that time that I learned a great deal about the legal system, because of my professional involvement with the court system of the county. I met more lawyers in two years that I had in my entire life up until then, and learned more about the due process of law than I had ever known before. What most people don’t know is that the **Scroll** mentioned in Chapter 5 is a **legally binding document**, an edict of a Higher Court, which follows all of the generally accepted rules of the jurisprudence system. It is the **final ruling** on a matter that has

been pending before the courts for a very long time. It, or a very similar document, also appears in the Old Testament in the writings of the Prophet Zechariah, also in Chapter 5.

In a legal matter, the court will convene to address the case at hand. At that time, after hearing arguments from both parties, the judge may **rule in a binding fashion**, may **carry the matter over** for further consideration or additional testimony, or may issue **a preliminary ruling, based on existing information, which is subject to amendment at a future date based on additional testimony**. This may go on for a long period of time, with rulings going back and forth, depending on the conditions that exist as the judge continues to make **supplemental rulings**. If you've ever been in a court battle, you know **exactly** what I'm talking about. It never seems to end, never seems to come to some final resolution, but eventually it will. Finally the judge or jury will make a **final, binding decision** that closes the matter on the case. **All other preliminary rulings, although binding for a brief period of time, now are subordinate to The Final Decision rendered by the court**. If I wanted to understand the full matter before the court, I could trace the events leading from one hearing to another, review the various preliminary or interim decisions, and then sit down with the **Final, Binding Document which gives us the framework and the conclusion of the matter**. In essence, the Final document is also The document which stands as the concluding statement of the court on the matter.

What does that have to do with understanding Biblical prophecy and the chain of events that will lead up to the return of Jesus Christ? Everything! In order to "*get it right*", you have to **start with the end, or final document**. Since The Revelation of Jesus Christ is **His Final Testimony** in court on the matter, **that book**, and no other, **must** be used as the **guideline or snap-down grid into which all other prophecies must be fit**. That's why the book is so enormously detailed, structured and orderly. You have **Current Business** ("*things which are*") and **New Business** ("*things which will be*") found in Chapter 1, Verse 19. Under Current Business, you have **7 letters to 7 churches**. At the end of Current Business, you have **New Business**, found in Chapter 4, Verse 1. Under New Business you have a **Scroll (legal indictment) with 7 Seals**. **The 7<sup>th</sup> Seal contains 7 Trumpets**. **The 7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet contains 7 Bowls**. This incredible structure and detail is not put there randomly. In fact, once I began to study the book as being **literally true and technically accurate** everything fell into place. Instead of being the most difficult book in the Bible to understand, it quickly became one of the easiest books to understand, and **pivotal to every other event listed in Scripture**.

Here's how to get prophecy in Scripture to make absolute sense: **START WITH THE ENDING. USE IT AS THE GUIDELINE INTO WHICH YOU PLACE EVERYTHING ELSE. THEN WORK BACKWARDS IN TIME, PLACING EACH SCRIPTURE REFERENCE YOU ENCOUNTER INTO THE FRAMEWORK PROVIDED BY THE FINAL, CONCLUDING DOCUMENT**. Walk through **everything Jesus has to say first**. You will be amazed a how cleanly Matthew Chapter 24 fits into the 7 Seals of the Scroll. Then, when you have tied everything Jesus had to say on the matter (it is, after all, HIS Revelation!), go to the Apostles, and tie what they say in as well. Amazingly, everything fits perfectly. Remember, Jesus told them that many Prophets and Holy Men earnestly had desired to look into the things that they were being taught and experiencing **first hand**. Once you've worked backwards through the New Testament, starting with Jesus, then adding what His Apostles said, turn to the Old Testament and **work backwards through it**. See what Malachi has to say (he prophesies about Moses, Elijah and Jesus in one passage!). Work backwards all the way to Genesis. When you are done, **everything will make sense, and everything will fit together**. How do I know this? **Because I've done it myself, and it works!**

Now, here's what **not to do...DON'T TRY TO BASE YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE CHRONOLOGY AND TIMING OF THE EVENTS AT THE END OF THIS AGE ON DANIEL, EZEKIEL OR SOME OTHER OLD TESTAMENT PROPHET!** This is where Biblical expositors go wrong constantly. The whole concept of **Mid-Trib** arose based on trying to use Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week as the snap-down grid. It doesn't work! If you examine a court case based on some preliminary or interim document or ruling, **you will never get a clear picture of the conclusion of the matter!** You will only be able to see a small fragment or portion of the case, based on the events **as they stood at that point in time**. Based on only those insights, you will never be able to understand the conclusion of the matter until you review the concluding document itself.



I know that this is deep water. For some of you, your head may be spinning. Others of you may be saying *"I never heard anything like this in all my life! Never has it been preached in the pulpit of any church I've attended! What makes you so sure you're right?"*

When I was a child growing up, I would sit in church and listen (most of the time), to what the preacher had to say. Even though I had given my heart to Jesus when I was seven, God still didn't really mean all that much to me. And the Bible was a nice little book that the preacher carried with him, as did some of the members of the church. A few people seemed to know what was in the book, but not many. Everyone else took it for granted that the preacher knew what he was talking about. As I got older, I became obsessed with football, girls, and all the other things that occupy the mind of a teenage boy. God was far, far away, even though I was in church every Sunday. It was just something that you did, no questions asked. By the time I reached college, God was absolutely the last thing on my mind, even though I felt called into the ministry. You see, no one had taught me or modeled to me Jesus Christ in their flesh, the fullness of the measure of the stature of Christ. It wasn't until I was 29, shortly before I was baptized in the Holy Spirit, that the Word became real to me for the very first time. And I devoured the Bible as if I had never heard of it, and was reading it for the very first time. I would sit there and underline everything, often twice! During that period of my life, I had to give my Bible away every two years, because I had so underlined, circled, highlighted and otherwise marked every passage that you could barely see the original text for all the inserts, comments, markings and notes I had made. Then I would start all over with a new Bible, and off to the races I would go again. At this point in my life, I have read through the Bible cover to cover over a dozen times. I'm still a piker compared to the wonderful old saint of God who went to our little country church when my father was a young man growing up. He had read the Holy Scriptures from cover to cover **97 times!** The power he carried was enormous, including the authority to delay the time of his death until he had prophesied to my father on his death bed! Still, twelve times isn't bad! But it was when I realized that what I was reading was **literally true**, not **symbolically or allegorically true**, that my life changed forever. I had been taught, like most of us, that the Bible was not literally true, but rather that it had to be read as literature or poetry, true from a theoretical standpoint, but not to be trusted regarding actual details. Why did I believe that? **Because that's what we were being taught from the pulpit of our little country church by the young preachers who came to pastor us.** And where, pray tell, did they get that idea? **From the seminaries that they attended, in our case, Drew University in New Jersey.** And where did these seminaries get these ideas? **From the apostate, backslidden professors of religion who taught there.** And where, then, did they get their ideas? **From the ungodly, rebellious philosophers of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries who made statements such as "God is dead!"** God wasn't dead, but they and their theology sure were. Friends, it took a divine revelation from God to get me to understand that He not only was not dead, but that His Word was true. Not only was His Word true, but it was **literally true**. That discovery transformed my theology and my life. It opened the Word of God to me in a way I had never seen before. And, suddenly, question after question that had never had a satisfactory response suddenly had multiple answers. All from treating God with at least as much respect as you would a friend whom you trust. All from believing His Holy Word, at face value. Every single revelation I have, and will unfold to you in this series, comes from Him opening up His Word to me out of the respect which I now have for that Holy Word. Here is my challenge to you: **prove me wrong by using the Word of God IN CONTEXT, and I will repent and correct my stance.** But don't try to use vain theology or human reasoning. Any mind that could believe that the earth was a plate resting on the back of a turtle is clearly not qualified to answer questions regarding the creation and nature of the universe, and certainly not qualified to answer questions about its Creator. Some things we can discover by **investigation**. But almost always, that investigation is as the result of a Divine **revelation**, where God suddenly opens up a matter, and the light comes flooding in. All the details that follow do just that: the **investigation that produces them follows the revelation which comes from God.** The blunt truth is that **nothing** is ever discovered until God decrees that it is time for it to be discovered. And then, in His great mercy, He bends down to the earth and whispers into the ear of some unsuspecting human, and suddenly the light bulb goes on nonetheless. That individual may not even know that it is God turning on the light in his head, but the Father of Lights is the only one who can bring the light. I have what I have by **revelation followed by investigation**. If you do the same research, using the same methods, you will come to the same results yourself. Go ahead, give it a try! You will be amazed at what this little black book, tired and worn, will unfold to you. And that, dear friends, is why I am sure I am right. It's not that I am right. It is that **God is right. All the time. In all things.**

During the coming year, we will walk Chapter by Chapter and Verse by Verse through the entire book. As we do, we will Cross-Link Scripture to Scripture. When we are done, the Bible will have opened itself up to us in a way we could have never possibly imagined, and we will truly understand **The Revelation of Jesus Christ**, and be prepared, not only for the upcoming traumatic events headed for this planet, but also **for His glorious return and our meeting with Him in the air!**

# Day 7 – Things Which Must Shortly Take Place



“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants – things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John, who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw. Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near”.

– The Revelation of Jesus Christ 1:1-3

Today we begin in earnest to examine the actual Scriptures involved in The Revelation of Jesus Christ. This is going to be a very extensive and intensive study, so brace yourselves. However, when we are done, you will understand this remarkable book in a way you never did before, and you will be positioned to make the significant changes in your life which the upcoming events described in this book will force upon you. You see, when these events come to pass, and they surely will, and when they come to pass in **your lifetime**, it will change everything about our world, everything about America, and everything about the way in which most Americans live. When the **Coming Crash** occurs, it will plummet America and most of the world into economic chaos unrivaled since the days of the Great Depression. In fact, the Lord has made it very clear to us that this crash will make the crash of 1929 seem like child’s play. In just a few short months, America was plummeted from a nation living high on the hog to a place where “*Buddy, can you spare a dime?*” was the rallying cry. Truthfully, if World War II hadn’t come along, we might never have recovered. Guns and Butter are always a mainstay of economic recovery. If you don’t understand the phrase, “*Guns and Butter*”, please talk to someone over the age of 60 who remembers how it was during World War II, and what the economy was like prior to the war during the desolation of the 1930’s Dust Bowl era. As a point of illustration, remember that just before the World Trade Center disaster and our subsequent declaration of war against terrorism, our economy was in serious shape, with investor confidence waning rapidly. The primary objective of the Republican administration was a recovery program. When America is forced to go to war, it stirs up a nationalistic fervor and a patriotism which supercharges the confidence level of the country. Call it an economic testosterone shot, if you will. It forces men to stand up and be men, whether for fighting a war, playing a football game or defending their family against an unseen enemy. We would not be here today if Godly men had not fought bravely and often died in the defense of their families and country. Thank God for the patriotism which the horrible events of 9-11 have stirred up! It is still not what God ultimately desires, but it is a start, and in due season we will arrive at the point where God wants us to be spiritually.

Now, on to the Book itself:

**<sup>1</sup> “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants – things which must shortly take place. <sup>2</sup> And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John, who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw. <sup>3</sup> Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.”** – Revelation 1:1-3

Follow carefully what is being said here. Let’s break the Scripture out, piece by piece, so you can see what is actually going on.

**The Revelation of Jesus Christ**, which **God** (The Father) gave **Him** (The Son, Jesus, The Word) to show **His** (The Son’s) servants (that’s us!) – things which must **shortly take place**. (Short in God’s perspective...2000 man-years, 2 God-days, as outlined in II Peter 3:8, where Peter says that with the Lord **one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day**). So, from the perspective of

Heaven, where Jesus currently resides, seated at the right hand of God the Father, only **two days have actually passed since he ascended into heaven in the clouds!** To us it looks like **2,000 years**. To God it looks like **two days**. So, from His perspective, it **will shortly take place**. The issue of the passage of time has been a real thorn in the sides of many Christian theologians down through the centuries. All sorts of strange interpretations arose, particularly in the Dark Ages; when the Word of God was locked up inside cathedral vaults, and even the priests weren't allow to read it. Some people theorized that the Millennial Reign (The 1,000-year reign of Christ on the Earth) was actually occurring, starting in 1 AD. When the Gregorian calendar reached the year 999, a panic swept all European Christianity, because they were certain that Jesus was coming back on January 1 of 1000 AD. Hmmm... Does this Millennial Madness sound vaguely familiar? Was there a similar, mindless, unscriptural panic among many Christians during the final three months of 1999? Didn't Jesus specifically say that no man knows the hour or the day, not the angels in Heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only? **So to set any specific date for the return of Jesus Christ is to be by definition wrong to begin with!** If no man knows, then **no man knows!** Granted, we will know the general times and seasons. In fact, there are specific events, global and massively traumatic in scope which will alert the Body of Christ across the world that His return is imminent. But as to the **exact day**, no one here on earth will know.

One additional note: This is The Revelation of Jesus Christ **in His full divinity as the Son Of God**. That makes it similar to and compatible with the revelations which He received **prior** to His crucifixion and resurrection **as the Son of Man**. But it also means **that this Revelation is superior to, and takes precedence over any other revelations given throughout the Bible**. It forms the framework into which Ezekiel, Daniel, Zechariah and all the others are to be placed. **Never** begin Biblical exposition with a limited, early form of revelation. **Always** begin with **God's final Word on the matter**. At some point in this series, we will examine the remarkable contrast between what Jesus said as Son of Man, versus what He said as Son of God. There are some amazing facts to be discovered there. Always **start with Jesus and His Words**. Take His Words as the **Son Of God** first. Take His Words as the **Son of Man** second. Then add in what the **Apostles** said. Then add in the **Prophets**. If you do, everything will fit together, and make perfect sense.

Until next time, may God richly bless each and every one of you! May this year be a year of victory and deliverance for all of you! May the love of God dwell richly in you, and may the peace of God rule and reign in your hearts!

# Day 8 – Blessed Is He Who Keeps



“Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near”

– The Revelation of Jesus Christ 1:3

Everybody wants to be blessed. Even the rankest of sinners, estranged and at war with God Almighty, wants things to go well in their life. But blessing from God carries with it some prerequisites, some requirements which must be satisfied **up front** in order to receive favor from the Lord and obtain His Blessing. Early on in Revelation, Jesus outlines the fundamental requirements necessary to obtain that Blessing. Let’s take a careful look at what is required of us.

First of all, it is necessary that this book of prophecy be **read**. Why so? Because unless those of us in the Body of Christ who are entrusted with the deep things of God are careful and thorough scholars, we won’t be able to teach the Word of God with any degree of authority or accuracy. Careless reading produces careless teaching. Careless teaching produces careless believers. And careless believers produce a careless church, powerless and incapable of obtaining that which is promised. When the Lord came to me several years ago and told me that I was to begin teaching out of this book, I rebelled at first. Although I had spent considerable time in studying the Word, I had just as studiously avoided this particular book. Why? Because I had already observed so much abuse and sheer idiocy regarding the contents of the Book of the Revelation. It seemed that every fringe lunatic and Wacko From Waco used the vivid symbols in this book to justify their hair-brained, insane and often demonic doctrines and actions. Frankly, I wanted no part of that. I had been systematically been taught, by example and from the pulpit, that this book was simply too complex, too symbolic and too mysterious for any conventional layperson to understand. Only great scholars, with decades of seminary instruction and the ability to read conversantly in both Greek and Hebrew were qualified to read, interpret, understand and teach this most mysterious of all books. What a total, complete crock! I didn’t fully begin to realize what a snow job religion had done on the Body of Christ until I actually sat down with the book **and began to read it for myself**. When I did, I found it to be the most systematic, logical, understandable and compelling book in the entire Bible. Only Paul’s letter to the church at Rome carries the same type of exacting structure, and the same kind of ironclad logic. I also discovered, **as I searched the Scriptures daily myself to see if these things be so**, that most of the things I had been taught from the pulpits of the various churches I had attended weren’t even close to being correct. What was actively being promoted to the Body of Christ **just wasn’t so!** I had also been told from the pulpit and by my mentors that Revelation was not a book to be easily understood and that I needed their help in order to understand it. When I began to read it, I discovered instead that this Book was clear, logical, linear to the extreme, and outlined in **vivid detail** exactly **what** would happen, **in what order** it would happen, and **how** it would happen. **All because I was forced to read the Book for myself!** Clearly, knowing and understanding God’s will for your life and His plans for mankind **must** qualify as some sort of blessing!

But reading was not enough. It was never God’s plan for only a select few to cloister together, tightly gripping some ancient manuscript and hiding His Will and His Ways from the rest of mankind. Clearly, humanity in general and the church in specific desperately need to **hear** the Word of God. Faith comes by **hearing**, and **hearing** by the **Word of God**. In the Middle Ages, when the church was at her absolute worst, the Word Of God was kept locked up in vaults inside the cathedrals. Not even the priests themselves were allowed to read the Holy Scriptures, but instead were taught **another gospel**, consisting

of the **doctrines of men**. This was totally consistent with satan's plan to **make void, supplant and replace the Word of God**. In Jesus' day, the Scribes and Pharisees didn't really teach directly from the **Torah**, or **God's Law**. Instead, they taught from the **Mishnah** or **Second Law**, which consisted of the **teachings of men**. Any time they made reference to **Torah**, it was always in the light of a previous quoted passage from the **Mishnah**, thereby **preconditioning the believer to read God's Word in the light of man's opinion**. That makes it almost impossible for the average believer, who **never gets anything from God firsthand, but always relies on the preprocessed opinions of others, to ever understand what God is actually saying**. Jesus, quoting from Isaiah, had this to say in the Gospel of Mark:

" <sup>6</sup> *He answered and said to them, 'Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, 'This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. <sup>7</sup> **And in vain they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men**'. <sup>8</sup> **For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold to the traditions of men** – the washing of pitchers and cups, and many other such things you do.'*"  
-- Mark 7:6-8

He then goes on to illustrate in the following verses how someone can twist the Word of God by **pre-applying the doctrines of men** so that a man could even deny help to his parents, and somehow make it look like he was actually obeying God. How sad! Jesus closes the passage by saying this:

" <sup>13</sup> *...making the word of God **of no effect through your tradition** which you have handed down. And many such things you do.*" -- Mark 7:13

When Martin Luther stumbled upon a copy of the Latin Vulgate (the Bible of its day in the common language) in a library in Rome, he began to read it earnestly. It was during that time of revelation that he discovered that **the just shall live by faith**, and that we are **justified by faith and not of works, lest any man should boast**. This was pure heresy to a church that taught, incorrectly, that you were justified by works (a re-institution of the Jewish Law). "*Oh, that I had such a book for myself!*" he cried out. Fortunately for us, God granted his request. Luther's rediscovery of the **actual Word of God** triggered a Reformation that has been continuously unfolding for almost 500 years. Every 100 years, God allows us to rediscover a critical truth about Him and His Word, moving line by line and precept by precept back toward the spiritual condition of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century Church. Why so slowly? **Because each time God restores any single important concept, it produces 100 years of bloodshed, heartache, violence and persecution before that truth can be fully established as valid in the mind of the church**. Although we have come a long way from the 1500's, we should not kid ourselves – we still have a very long way to go! Our whole ministry is centered on several key issues, one of which is the restoration of the office of the Prophet to the body of Christ. But even when that is finally accomplished (and we are far from even that point in time!), there is also the restoration of the office of the Apostle to consider and accomplish. And, according to Ephesians 4:11-13, **all of these offices must be in place and fully operational for the church to finally come to fullness and maturity. And Jesus can't come back until the Bride is finally ready and in a condition of spiritual equality with Him!**

Can I prove this! You betcha! In context? Yup! Multiple Scriptures? Tons! Today? Nope! That's not our topic. But rest assured, Saints of God, I **will** return to this topic again and show you **line by line and precept by precept** why the Lord **cannot return at this point in time!** Guess you'll just have to keep reading these E-Pistles to find out. **Or, (shudder!) you could simply sit down with the Word of God and read it for yourself!**

Before we close today's message, there's one more critical issue that we must deal with. It is not enough to **read** the Word of God. It is not enough to **hear** the Word of God. Everything that you **read and hear** must eventually produce **action, as you do the Word of God**. There are two deadly doctrinal errors which have encircled the Bible from time immemorial. The first great lie is that we are **justified by works**. This was the common belief in the Jewish Law, and Paul devotes a great deal of time explaining patiently that we are **justified by faith**. There is, however, an **equal but opposite** doctrinal error which says **that we are justified by faith regardless of our actions**. Both courses of conduct will send you straight to the Lake of Fire. Paul spends several chapters in his letter to the Romans discussing this false doctrine. Peter, in one of his letters, mentions that folks seem to love to twist what Paul has to say. But the most compelling proof comes from Jesus Himself, and His half-brother (same mother, different

father!), James the Elder, who wrote the Book of James in the New Testament. Here's what Jesus had to say about folks who **talk a good game but don't play it**:

"<sup>21</sup> Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but **he who does the will of My Father in heaven**.<sup>22</sup> Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?'<sup>23</sup> And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'<sup>24</sup> Therefore, whoever **hears these sayings of Mine, and does them**, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock:<sup>25</sup> and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; **and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock**" – Matthew 7:21-25

James, writing in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Chapter of his letter, adds these comments:

"<sup>17</sup> Thus also **faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead**. But someone will say, 'You have faith, and I have works.'<sup>18</sup> **Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works**." -- James 2:17-18

He then adds, in verse 26, "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so **faith without works is dead also**"

What, then, shall we say? That for the **Blessing of the Lord** to come upon us in our lives, **three fundamental things are necessary**. First, we must **read the Word of God**, in order to personally understand how He wants us to live, move and have our being. Second, we must **teach that Word without compromise, so that others can hear it, and come to faith in Christ**. Finally, we must **do the Word written in this Book**, ordering our lives and actions according to the principles contained therein.

When we **read, hear and do**, God's richest blessings will surely be ours! Until next time, may His richest blessings be upon you as you **read, hear and do His Holy Word!**





# Day 9 – Who Is, Who Was, and Who Is To Come



“John, to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne” – The Revelation of Jesus Christ 1:4

One of the great mysteries of the Bible concerns the **Pre-Existent Christ**. Ironically, it's not a mystery because the Scriptures don't speak of the matter. In fact, they speak very clearly on the subject. It's just that this whole matter of someone who **existed before**, **exists right now**, and will **exist again** tends to make your head spin, and smacks dangerously of something one might find on an episode of *Star Trek*. Interestingly enough, the Bible's **scientific facts** are so mind-boggling that they beggar any **science fiction** that the mind of man has been able to come up with. And frankly, up until this generation, with its rapidly expanding understanding of the scientific nature of the universe, many of the scientific wonders contained in the Holy Scriptures were viewed by our non-technical ancestors as **mysteries**, that is, something not capable of being understood. This is why, so often in The Book, information is given to the prophet **but not explained at that point in time**. In so many cases regarding prophecy, the prophecy being given makes **absolutely no sense at all** to the individual **to whom it is being given**. It will only make sense later, to another person, often in another generation, with a whole different set of values, circumstances and information. This is why even the great prophet Daniel is instructed to "...shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro and **knowledge shall increase**." (Daniel 12:4) When Daniel attempted to understand the meaning of the visions he had been given, he was overwhelmed by all of it. It was beyond his ability to understand and comprehend. Only in a **future** generation with a whole new battery of scientific facts at hand, would the message be understandable.

So it is with Someone **who is**, **who was**, and **who is to come**. How can someone possibly exist at three different times, in three different ways in the same space-time continuum, and yet be the same person? It, along with some critical passages in the Gospel of John, form the ongoing, raging debate between Trinity and Oneness people. This argument over the nature of God has sharply divided even the Pentecostal camp, and has done great harm and damage not only to believers who cling stubbornly to their little piece of the pie, but also to those outside the camp, hoping desperately to see some degree of sanity in a group of people who claim to know the truth, but often act as if they don't know anything at all! I have both good news and bad news for those in both the Trinitarian and Oneness camps. Here goes: **The other guys are wrong and you are right!** Wait a minute, or is that **the other guys are right and you are wrong? Actually, it's both!**

I take a certain level of perverse pride in upsetting the applecart for both sides. It's kind of like the movie, *Oh, Brother, Where Art Thou?*, where the three escaped convicts are arguing over who is in charge. One convict says that he should be in charge; the second says that he should be in charge, and they both look at poor Delmar, chained between them, waiting for him to decide which one is right. Delmar looks at them both and says, *"Why, I'm with you fellers!"* When Oneness and Trinity folks ask me if God is One or Three, I simply smile and say, *"Of Course!"* When they ask me, in dead seriousness, how we baptize, I say, with a slight smile on my face, that we believe in baptism by **submersion**. Bewildered, they ask, *"Brother, don't you mean immersion?"* "Nope", I reply. *"With immersion, all you do is get them totally wet. With submersion, we hold you down until we're sure you're fully converted!"*

"Alternately", I continue, "we baptize you by **throwing you off the Kennedy Bridge into the Ohio River!**" When I am greeted by even more incredulous looks, I add, "That way we know you're **fully converted before you hit the water!**" I've got a whole routine I do on this topic. Someday I'll share the whole thing with you. As you can probably tell, I have a low tolerance level for willful ignorance, particularly in matters concerning the Scripture. You can always tell a Pharisee by how they react in doctrinal matters. It is their specialty to find a small item (gnats) and worry that issue to death while blindly ignoring the larger issues of the Gospel (camels). They are also always utterly without humor, and suffer from severe, third degree tunnel vision regarding spiritual matters.

Nuff' on that, though! Certainly, I have successfully stirred up a hornet's nest already. Love to debate it with you, but I DON'T DO DEBATES! I learned a long time ago that they "*accomplish nothing, and only ruin the hearers*". Now on to the topic at hand!

In order to understand this multiple identity thing with Jesus, we have to remember that **before He was known as Jesus, He was known as The Word**, and His identity **as The Word of God predates and pre-exists His identity as the Son Of God**. What? Huh? Can you say that again, Pastor Ray? Better yet, let the Apostle John explain it to you...

*"In the beginning was **the Word...**"*

Notice the capitalization of **Word**? That means it's not simply a word, but a **Title or a Name**, like *Your Majesty* or *Mr. President* or *Your Honor...*

*"...and **the Word was with God...**"*

Whoops! There goes the Oneness argument right down the drain! I can't **be you** and **be with you** at the same time. For John to state that the Word of God, as an individual with a title, is **with** God implies clearly that **there are two separate identities and personalities at stake at the same time!** Add the Holy Spirit, who is not mentioned specifically in this passage, but who is referenced repeatedly as an individual throughout the entire New Testament, and we have a clear, Scriptural basis for the doctrine of the Trinity. But don't get too excited, Trinity folks. John is about to throw you a curve as well!

*"...and **the Word was God...**"*

Bang! Thud! Crash! Score one huge point for the Oneness Folks, who argue constantly that **Jesus Is God**. Guess what? **They're right! Jesus IS God! And Jesus is also the SON OF GOD! And Jesus is also the WORD OF GOD!** Head hurt yet? Good! God is about to expand your teeny, tiny parochial viewpoint of who He is and what He is capable of doing!

**Because God (The Father, Jesus the Word of God and the Son of God and the Holy Spirit) PRE-EXISTS THIS PHYSICAL UNIVERSE AND THE SPACE-TIME CONTINUUM IN WHICH WE LIVE, HE IS NOT BOUND BY THE RULES OR UNDERSTANDINGS OF THIS REALM.** And this, dear friends, is precisely the point in time and the place in doctrine where we always get bound up, not in **who He is**, but in our pathetically shallow understanding of the real nature of space and time. Get this straight in your head -- Everything that we claim to know and take pride in knowing about space, time, the speed of light, the size and age of the universe and what we say we know about God (and are willing to kill others for!) is only **A TEMPORARY CONSTRUCT SET UP BY GOD IN ORDER TO ACCOMPLISH A CERTAIN SHORT-TERM GOAL.** In the physical universe or space/time continuum in which we live, we are bound by the rules of that universe in two critical ways. First of all, we can only be in **one place at a time**. I can be **here** or I can be **there**. I cannot be both here and there simultaneously. Second of all, I do not have the power to **move through time** at will. Although I have mobility in the standard three dimensions of height, width and depth (I can move back and forth, from side to side, and jump up and down), I have absolutely no mobility to travel **back and forth through time**. **But God exists outside of this universe, and can move through time at will.** Where He exists, no such restrictions on His being exist. He can simultaneously be as many things at one time as He wants to be. He can also be in any number of places at the same time as He wants to be. At least, that's how it looks from where we live. Since we have such little information about the universe/space/time continuum where He lives, we have to extrapolate what it must be like there by implication. His **control** of space and time and His existence

**outside** of space and time gives Him immutable and infinite power over this universe. It makes him **omnipresent** (able to be at all places at the same time), **omnipotent** (all powerful), and **omniscient** (all knowing). I know all of these is supposed to be theological and mystical and a mystery, but the truth of the matter is that all of this is very scientific and logical, particularly in light of recent developments in quantum physics and string theory. Just as with our friend Daniel, this kind of information is so new and so radical that it is beyond the comprehension and acceptance of most people. At this point in time, if you feel compelled to rush outdoors and shout your particular dogmas as loudly as you can into the wind, please feel free to do so. It won't limit Him, and it won't bother me. Is God One? Yes! Absolutely! Is God Three-In-One? Yes! Absolutely! How do I know that? Because the Bible tells me so! Do I have to understand how two seemingly impossible realities can simultaneous coexist? Nope! **That's where FAITH comes into the picture.** If God tells me that thus-and-such a thing is true, **then it is true!** How do I know that? Because He has already told me in His Word that He is not a man that He should lie, nor the son of man, that He should change His mind! So if God tells me that a given thing is true, I can take it to the bank. I don't necessarily have to understand everything He is saying. If I can't get a handle on part of what He has said, then I just need to **write it down** in hopes that I or somebody later on will finally understand what He is saying. Gosh, does that sound just a little like what He told Daniel in Chapter 12? Being in the prophetic ministry, I run into this kind of situation **all the time.** God will tell me something that **absolutely doesn't make sense to me at the time He says it.** My job is to believe it in faith, and **simply say what God says, even if I don't understand it, knowing that later on He will explain Himself to somebody, even if it isn't me!**

Here's a classic example from our own spiritual scrapbook. We have some dear friends and supporters in the ministry, Owen and Lindsey. They are a wonderful, sweet couple who have grown by leaps and bounds since they associated themselves with our ministry about a year ago. When I first met Owen, a prophetic anointing fell on me and I prophesied to him and his wife for about an hour. One of the things that I said under the anointing was, **"When the settlement comes, take the money and run!"** Now, dear friends, I had **no clue what I was talking about!** Neither did Owen. Neither did Lindsey. None of it made any sense until about three months later, **when a car ran into the truck Owen was working on, hurling him from the truck and onto the hood of the car!** Fortunately, with a few months of rehab, Owen was back on the job, with no ill effects from the accident, but with a **big fat settlement check in his pocket, which allowed him and his family to buy their own first home!** The Lord also showed me many other things about their lives that night, including the fact that God had written ***Ichabod*** (The Glory Hath Departed) over the door of the church that they had just left and that this church had horribly used them and hurt them. It turns out that the wife of the previous pastor had taken a paint brush and written *Ichabod* above the front door of the church before they left. Did I know that in the natural? Absolutely not! Did God know? You betcha! Now, please follow what the Lord did that night. He had me to prophesy some things **which were immediately confirmable by previous events.** He also had me to prophesy some things **which were absolutely un-confirmable and seeming illogical to the natural mind.**

**But it turns out that both the confirmable and the un-confirmable were equally true! One was a Word of Knowledge, based in the "past" of our time stream. The other was a Prophecy, based in the "future" of our time stream. Both were from God. Both were equally true.**

So it is with the **Word of God** who is the **Son of God** who is also **God.** Neither you nor I have to understand how three separate realities can simultaneously co-exist in order for them all to be equally true. Do yourself a really big favor and read John 1:1-14 carefully. Take a sheet of lined paper and write down in outline form all the amazing things John has to say about the being we will come to know as Jesus. Then take the time to read the Book of Hebrews to find out even more amazing stuff about who He is and what He became during and after His earthly ministry. Here are some teasers: He will **become the prototype for His own priesthood** by the **power of an indestructible life.** He will **form Adam in His own image**, walking in the cool of the evening in the Garden in Eden, using the **resurrection body** He picked up in AD 33, which, by the way, is **patterned after Adam's body.** He will also show up and offer Abram communion or Passover with **bread and wine**, using that same indestructible body, thus joining him into the family of faith with **the rest of the apostles** by sharing with Abram what He shared with them. He will throw a force field around Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego in the fiery furnace by using His power as The Son of God. And, by the way, He will **become the Son of God and be made perfect by what He suffers. He will become so much better than the angels. He will obtain a**

**more excellent name than theirs. He will become the only naturally born Son Of God through the Virgin Mary.** Frankly, dear friends in Christ, this topic **alone** is worthy of and deserves an **entire book** in order to explore and explain it fully. Jesus, our precious Lord and Savior, is **so much more than we can imagine or think or dream of!** **All blessings to His Holy Name! Praise and Honor and Worship Be Unto Him who was, and is, and is to come!!!**

**Friends, trust in Him always! His grace, power and mercy are without limits! Worship Him and Him alone!**

# Day 10 ~ Firstborn from the Dead



“John, to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth.”

— The Revelation of Jesus Christ 1:4-5a

In Day 9, we examined briefly the concept of a Lord and Savior who not only **is**, but also **was**, and, in addition to that also is He **who is to come**. Normally, when folks read this, and the many other Scriptures in the Bible on this same subject, one of two things happens: They either (1) don't catch what the Bible is saying about Jesus in His **multiple modes of existence**, or they (2) realize something deep is being said, but don't understand it and so gloss over it by saying, "Well, brother, that's just a *mystery!*". To both camps, I say this: To truly understand everything that Jesus has done for us, you have to understand **who He was, who He is, and who He will be**. Now, let's talk for just a second about what a **mystery** is. A **mystery** is a set of events which are either **not known** or **not understood**. There are, for example, many things about our universe which are currently a mystery to us. Recently, we found that super-massive black holes appear to be at the center of every galaxy we can see through the Hubble Telescope and other long-range viewing devices. For decades, we thought that black holes were far and few between in the universe. Then, our research once again proved how wrong we were in all our theories. Every five years or so, we have to completely scrap our notions of how the universe works, and start all over again. That's why they are called **theories**, and not **laws**. A **theory** is nothing more than an **educated guess based on existing facts** about how something works. A **law** is an **absolute, provable, repeatable set of circumstances which always work the same way**. For example, there is a **Law of Gravity**. There is also a **Theory of Evolution**. And there is also a **Law of Sin and Death**. Get the picture? Could it be that our scientists are **just guessing**? You betcha! Could it be that God Almighty knows exactly what He is doing, and that **His Word** and **His Laws** are provable, immutable, unbreakable and unchangeable? Forever and ever, world without end, Amen!

The other kind of mystery is when we **have the facts at our disposal, but really don't understand them or know how they fit together**. That's the basis for all mystery novels. We know **what happened**, but darned if we can figure out whodunit until the very end of the story, when the author wonderfully weaves all the seemingly unrelated facts together into a marvelous conclusion. **That's also exactly how God wrote the Bible**. This precious book is actually the greatest **mystery novel in the history of the universe**. Actually, the story begins **before** the creation of the universe. When we begin the account in **Genesis**, some amazing things have already occurred in a kind of time called **Kairos** time. It's different from **Chronos** time, or time as we know it in this universe. More on that subject in another E-Pistle.

The mystery we're discussing today is how Jesus **became the Son of God, became a Living Sacrifice for our sins, and then became the Firstborn from the Dead**. You see, folks, the wonderful, loving, eternal being we know as Jesus **wasn't Jesus when the universe came into existence!** Now, before you start yelling, "*Heresy!*", and start throwing rocks, let's look at what the Bible **actually says about this topic**. You will find that God's Truth is always stranger than fiction, and a whole lot more fun to read

that any mystery or science fiction novel every written, mainly because the story He's telling us is **true and not made up!**

Here's how John (Mr. Inside Scoop throughout the entire New Testament) describes the creation of the universe:

<sup>1</sup> *In the beginning was the **Word**, and the **Word** was **with** God, and the **Word** was **God**.* -- John 1:1

In our last E-Pistle, we discussed how this one sentence both **confirms** and **trashes** every argument made by both the Trinitarian and Oneness camps. John clearly states that the being Whose Name and Title is the **Word** was **coexistent simultaneously with God, while at the same time also being God himself**. How can that be? Well, **it's a mystery!** In our little chunk of space-time (a temporary construct to help create **Someone Very Special**), things either **are** or they **aren't**. You can either be **here** or **there**. We can either do it **now** or we can do it **later**. In this physical universe, all matter and energy revolves around and resolves into either an **on** or an **off** condition. There is **light**, or the absence of light, **darkness**. Things are either **true** or **false**. Because of this **on/off mindset**, it's difficult for us sometimes to get a grip on something that can be **more than one thing, truth or reality simultaneously**. But in the greater, eternal reality that encompasses our little chunk of temporary reality, things can be **many things at many times in many ways** and still be true. That's hard for our little pea brains to comprehend. Very hard. But very true, and the **basis for really understanding God in some of His wonderful fullness**. Let's let John continue in his discourse:

<sup>2</sup> *He (that is, the Word) was in the beginning **with** God* -- John 1:2

Sure sounds like two different people, doesn't it? And, in fact, it is, and it isn't! Remember, on God's side of the tracks, things can be **more than one thing** and **be in more than one place** at **more than one time**, and it's all OK with Him!

Now comes one of my favorite "Hammer" Scriptures. I just love to nail folks with this nifty little chunk of truth! Not to put them down, or embarrass them, but to get them to expand their minds a bit, and start thinking God-thoughts. If you ask most Christians who made the universe, they say, "Well, God did, of course, silly!" Then I ask them a killer question - "**God who?**" Invariably, they don't understand what I am asking them, and look at me like I've gone plumb silly. At this point, I have to start spelling it out for them. "OK", I'll say, "Let me ask you this: *How many beings are there in the Godhead?*" Now if I ask a Oneness person that question, they will always answer, "One!" If I ask a Trinitarian the same question, they will say, "Three!" Again, both answers are correct, and will get you into the Bonus Round (Don't ask! Just keep reading!). If I ask the Oneness person, "One Who?" he'll always answer "Jesus!" which is both the **right answer** and the **wrong answer!** Head hurt yet? Not far now! Just hang in there! If I had asked the Trinitarian, he might have answered right, but with three choices, he could also get it wrong. He could have said **God the Father**. That would have been the right answer in theory, but the wrong answer in practice! He could have said **God the Son or Jesus**, which would have been equally right and wrong at the same time. He could have, in desperation, not having a clue what I'm after, said **God the Holy Spirit**, and would have also been partially right, and partially wrong. **Give up? OK. Here's the correct, Biblical answer to the question:**

<sup>3</sup> ***All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made***  
- John 1:3

**Through Him! Him Who? Him the Word of God!** Because you see, dear friends, at that point in our space-time universe, **He didn't exist as Jesus, He existed as the Word!** He wouldn't **become** Jesus until later in the storyline. Prior to the creation of this universe in which we live, according to the Disciple That Jesus Loved, the guy who had the inside scoop on the Upper Room, and the guy who got to write the final, most definitive book in the entire Book, there were **Three Beings Who Were Also One**. He mentions two of them at the beginning of his Gospel. One is God Almighty, whom we will come to know as the **Father**. The other is the **Word**. And it is **through the Word** that the **Father** actually creates the universe. John says that **everything that was made** (that is, the entire physical universe, so huge and massive that every time we look deeper with the Hubble, we find even more galaxies) was **made through Him. Nothing was made without Him. Everything that was made was made by Him.**

Now, shortly thereafter in the Chapter, John will clue us in on another remarkable fact:

" <sup>14</sup> *And the Word **became flesh** and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the **only begotten of the Father**, full of grace and truth*" – John 1:14

Now, to help you understand what John just said, we have to take a good old-fashioned King James word, and render it in a modern sense. The word **begotten** means **naturally born descendant of or from**. In Genesis, Chapter 5, we run into a whole slew of begats and begots. Adam begot Seth. Seth begot Enosh. Enosh begot Cainan. Cainan begot Mahalel. And so on and so on and so on... In plain English, what its saying is that **Adam had a son of his own named Seth. Seth had a son of his own named Enosh**. And so on...

Now, if John says that the Word **became** flesh, it has to mean by plain English and common sense that there was a time when the Word **wasn't** flesh. That means that there was a time when the part of the Godhead known as the Word **wasn't human, but God only**. Get the picture? Then something wonderful, remarkable and darn near impossible happened – **The Word became a living human being, and we got to look at His wonderful Glory!** Before, when Moses asked to see God's Glory, the Lord told him that no man could look on His face and live, so He stuck him in the cleft of a rock and just let Moses see a trailing vestige of His Amazing Power, Glory and Goodness! Now, with a part of God Himself wrapped in flesh (human form), and with His Glory toned down to the point where it could be contained in human flesh without absolutely, instantaneously destroying that flesh, we could get a clear look at just what God was all about, and how He really felt and thought about matters here on Earth. When Jesus told the disciples that He would be going away, they became very upset and disconcerted about the matter. Phillip said,

" <sup>8</sup> *Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.*" -- John 14:8

Sounds like he was kind of insecure about the matter, doesn't it? Jesus, being the **express image of God in the flesh**, answered this way:

" <sup>9</sup> *Have I been with you so long, and **yet you have not known Me**, Phillip? **He who has seen Me has seen the Father**; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father?'" – John 14:9*

The whole story of how God managed to sandwich the Word into human flesh is an incredible tale, and deserves a book in and of itself. It was the greatest con job in the history of the world, and the guy who got stuck was the devil, who had been lying, stealing, killing and destroying from time immemorial. God the Father used His **Only Naturally Born Son** to set the devil up, and caused him to default on his own contract with God. But, another time and another place. We still haven't been able to finish this topic. But we've run out of time and space for today! In our next E-Pistle, we'll continue this remarkable chain of events, until we discover **how Jesus ends up first in everything!**

Until then, may the Lord watch over you and keep you safe and free from all harm!





# Day 11 – First In Everything



“John, to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth.”

– The Revelation of Jesus Christ 1:4-5a

In our last E-Pistle, we talked about how Jesus was known as the **Word** prior to the creation of the world. He continued in His role as the Word until the Virgin Birth, where, as John said in his Gospel, “*The Word became flesh and dwelt among us...*” (John 1:14). We also established that in His role as the Word, He was the instrumentality through which the Father created this universe. Now, the Bible lays down a very important principle for doctrine. If you are going to teach that something is true from Scripture, there must be **multiple witnesses, testimonies or Scriptures to back up that teaching**. The cults are great at taking a **single Scripture**, then ripping it out of context and reinterpreting it to suit their fancy. Some of the most abominable doctrines ever created have come directly from the Bible, but **never in context, and never with Scriptural support from other Scriptures that say the same thing**. One of the most important principles of Bible scholarship is that **Scripture interprets Scripture**. You are **not** allowed to make up your own personal interpretation of a Scripture passage if **another Scripture passage already provides a clear-cut explanation**. This is particularly true in passages with what appear to be symbolic images built into them. Almost without fail, those images are found elsewhere in the Bible, and **explained there clearly and in context**. Without being faithful in your study of the Word (studying to show yourself approved), you can come up with some of the most outlandish ideas if you don’t study **the entire Word of God**.

With that in mind, if what John is saying is true and in context, then we should be able to find similar and identical Scriptures regarding the same topic elsewhere in the Bible. Bingo! I direct your attention to the letter that Paul wrote to the Colossians. In the first Chapter, he devotes a great deal of attention to Jesus Himself, and of Him Paul says:

“<sup>15</sup> He is the **image of the invisible God**, the **firstborn over all creation**.<sup>16</sup> For by Him **all things were created** that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers.<sup>17</sup> **All things were created through Him and for Him**. And He is **before all things, and in Him all things consist**.” – Colossians 1:15-17

Now, that’s pretty remarkable! John gave us the first clue when he told us that the entire universe as we know it was created by the Word, whom we will come to know as Jesus later on in history. Now, Paul, drawing from the incredible wave of revelation which he received at the onset of his ministry on Mt. Sinai when he went into Arabia (Galatians 1:11-17), lets us know even more about the incredible mystery surrounding the creation of the universe and the grand and infinite purpose which God the Father purposes to accomplish through the being that will eventually become His Son. It seems that not only was the **physical universe** created by Him, but that **Heaven itself was created by Him**. What? Are you sure of that, Pastor Ray? Yup! Take a close look at what Paul says in the passage above. He says that **all things** that were created that are in **heaven and earth were created by Him**. Couldn’t that mean just the physical universe? Nope! Look again. It says that He created **thrones, dominions, principalities and powers**. Whenever Paul uses that particular phrase, he is referring the **spirit beings, notable angels and demons**. Remember when he says that “*we wrestle not against flesh and*

*blood, but against principalities, powers and spiritual wickedness in the heavenly places”?* It is very clear in that passage that he is not talking about human agencies or things in this physical universe. So **if you take the two Scriptures together, since they talk about exactly the same thing**, the only conclusion we can come to **in context** is that **Heaven itself was created by the Word**. Might be a very compelling reason for us to hide the **Word** in our hearts, and to speak God’s **Word** over our own circumstances, huh?

Now, that would be nifty enough, but there’s even more. Not only were all things created **by** Him, they were created **for** Him! In other words, from our perspective as Christians, **all of this is all about Jesus!** Catch this: the earth, the entire, enormous physical universe in which we live, and Heaven itself were all created **by** Jesus **for** Jesus. Gosh, what a wonderful Father to have! And what limitless power He must possess! In the creation process, God the Father turned to the Word, whom He intended to become His Only Begotten Son, threw him the keys to the tool shed, and said, “*Kid, go have fun!*”. Wow! Can you imagine the fun that He had figuring out what stars, planets, comets, black holes and the like would look like, how they would work, and how matter, energy, gravity and light would all integrate and interrelate together in an incredibly sophisticated mathematical model? One He had the blueprints in place, He did what the Word would do best – **He believed and so He spoke!** Suddenly, in a blinding flash of light, things began to form and shape, and galaxies were flung out by the billions. Stars were formed. Planets were placed in uniform orbits around them. And then, with the Holy Spirit in close communion with Him, He concentrated on a single planet on the outer rim of a fairly nondescript galaxy, one that we call the Milky Way. Into that planet He poured huge amounts of hydrogen and oxygen, creating water in staggering abundance, all out of proportion to the universe around it. Air appeared, oceans appeared, dry land was raised up out of the oceans, and then, wonder of wonders, **life appeared in the universe**. And not just life, but **intelligent life!** And not just intelligent life, but **life shaped in the form and design of His Resurrection Body, which He had picked up later on in time in about AD 33!** Did I just lose you? Bear with me. Remember, in **kairos** time, something may be **multiple things in the same place at the same time**. So not only was He the **Word**, but He was at the same time **Jesus, son of Man, Jesus, son of God, Savior, Redeemer, Lion of the Tribe Of Judah, Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world, along with a million other things, ALL AT THE SAME TIME!**

What was this incredible scenario all about? **It was all about love**. A love so boundless, so limitless, so selfless, so incomprehensible that **the Father wanted His precious Son to have all of this for Himself, and to be first among all of it!** How so like a loving parent, whose precious child has to have the very best, and who can do no wrong! You see, when we see our own children, even though we are sinful, fallible and frail, we see them **through the eyes of love!** Surely they are the most wonderful children in the world! And cute! Why, **nobody** has a baby cuter than mine! Smart? Why, my boy is the smartest kid in the class! And talented! Listen, my kid can sing, play sixteen instruments, is going to college on at least three athletic scholarships and never missed a test question in his life! **All this through the eyes of love!**

Listen to what Paul says:

*“<sup>18</sup> And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the **beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence**”* -- Colossians 1:18

First in everything! That’s my boy! Can you see why I’m proud of Him? But there’s more...

*“<sup>19</sup> For it pleased the Father that **in Him all the fullness should dwell**”* -- Colossians 1:19

Yeah, my kid’s **just like me!** Takes after His old man, doesn’t He? A real chip off the old block! In fact, **My full power and glory dwell in him, so if you’ve seen Him, well, I guess you could say you’ve seen Me!**

But there’s even more...

*“<sup>20</sup>...and **by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of the cross.**”* -- Colossians 1:20

Just makes sense, doesn't it? If Jesus/The Word **made** the heavens and the earth and **sustains** them inside of Himself, then it would be perfectly logical for the job of **redeeming** the heavens and the earth to fall back on His shoulders as well! Gosh, isn't it amazing how wonderfully God's Word confirms itself?

Hey, scoffers and unbelievers! Match that, willya? Try and find any book anywhere in the entire world that so marvelously ties itself together from Genesis to Revelation, all telling the same wondrous story about the same wondrous Redeemer doing the same wondrous things. How can you see such marvelous things in His Word and not believe? Could it be that the only thing holding you back is the hardness of your own heart? Think about it!

And that's not the end of it! But it is the end of it for today! Much, much more on this same topic in our next E-Pistle!

...and if you're NOT a believer, and you're reading this, don't you think that a God with **that much love in His heart might also love you? After all, He let that precious Son of His go to the cross and die for me and you!** Boy, it's so very worth looking into! Who knows that you might find something of eternal value as you search? Later, saints of God!



# Day 12 ~ Upholding All Things



<sup>1</sup>God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, <sup>2</sup>Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; <sup>3</sup>Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high:"

— Hebrews 1:1-3

In our recent E-Pistles, we've been talking about how Jesus, known as the Word at the beginning of time as we know it, was the instrumentality that God the Father used to create the heavens and the earth, and who redeemed it by becoming a human being and dying in our place for our sins. We've also discussed the fact that **Scripture interprets and confirms Scripture**, by using the concept of **multiple witnesses** to establish any matter. This is a standard concept in Jewish Law, for no person could be convicted of any crime **without the testimony of at least two witnesses**. That's why, when Jesus was hauled before an illegally-called kangaroo court involving part of the Sanhedrin, they had to find at **least two** individuals who would perjure themselves in order to gain a conviction of the perfect, sinless Son of God.

With that in mind, in looking at this little mini-series, we could have stopped with Colossians. The testimony found in John Chapter 1 and Colossians Chapter 1 would be sufficient to prove the point, and should be enough to bring conviction into your heart about how wonderful, marvelous, powerful and **absolutely necessary** a relationship with Him is. **However...**

There are still several incredible Scriptures which tie into this topic. One of the things I have discovered about teaching **The Revelation of Jesus Christ** is that by walking systematically, Chapter by Chapter, Verse by Verse through this remarkable book **that you will also walk through virtually every book in the entire Bible!** Written as the **Greatest Mystery Novel of All Time**, God weaves clues to the conclusion throughout the entire novel (Non-Fiction, thank you!) by using the gift of **prophecy** to leave little fragments of insight all down through the corridors of time. Not even the prophets themselves truly understood what they were prophesying about. Each one of them was given a seemingly random selection of pieces, much like a jigsaw puzzle. None of them were given **all** of the pieces, nor would all of the pieces make sense, even when taken as a whole, **until it was time for us to understand them**. It was much like having all of the pieces of the puzzle, without having a picture of what the puzzle looked like to try and work from. Imagine the difficulty in trying to put the puzzle together without the complete picture! So it was for the Body of Christ **until this generation**. For example, scholars down through the centuries argued that the references to Israel being back in their homeland again surely must be **symbolic and allegorical**, or **refer to the church**, for surely it was impossible for the Jews to ever return home again! Then came World War II and the horrible **Holocaust**, in which **six million innocent Jews lost their lives to the satanic power of Nazi Germany**. All across Western civilization, if we can use the word civilized to describe what was done, Christians gave passive assent to that monster Hitler until it was almost too late. In Germany, many members of the clergy cast their lot with the Nazis and simply turned their heads and pretended that what was happening simply wasn't there. After the war, torn by conscience as we looked in horror at Auschwitz, Dachau, Ravensbruck and other concentration camps, America and Europe were so grieved at what we had permitted to happen that, **just as Isaiah had prophesied, a nation was born in a day!** (Isaiah 66:7-9) Please notice that the fulfillment was not **symbolic or allegorical**, but **actual and literal**, **just as all of God's Words are fulfilled LITERALLY!**

Now on to the **Third Witness**. If you turn to Hebrews, Chapter 1, you will find this remarkable passage:

*"<sup>1</sup> God, who **at various times and in various ways** spoke in times past to the fathers **by the prophets**,  
<sup>2</sup> has in these last days **spoken to us by His Son**, whom He has appointed **heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds**;  
<sup>3</sup> who being the **brightness of His glory** and the **express image of His person**, and **upholding all things by the word of His power**, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,  
<sup>4</sup> **having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.**"*

-- Hebrews 1:1-4

Whew! What a mouthful! And what a series of incredible statements! Remember the reference I made to the jigsaw puzzle, and how God has "peppered" hints about what He was going to do across the time stream? Well, isn't that exactly what the writer of Hebrews just said? (By the way, we actually don't know who wrote the Book. Some suspect Paul, others Barnabas. Whoever it was, they were strongly influenced by Paul's doctrines and theology). And also notice who He used to leave the hints. **The Prophets!** The method that He used? **Here a little. There a little. Line by Line. Precept by Precept. Just like the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle.**

But once Jesus came, the Word made manifest in the flesh, suddenly the days of hinting around were over. Jesus spoke plainly and at great length about the end times and the Master Plan of His Father. In 3½ brief years, He unfolded and explained more of the plan than all of His prophetic predecessors. In addition, in both the Gospels and the Book of the Revelation, He then added the final picture against which the pieces of the puzzle were to be placed. We've talked about this concept before, but it's worth repeating: **Prophecy in the Old Testament doesn't make sense unless you use the Final Chapter in the Novel to match all the details back against.** Only when you use the Book of Revelation as the **guideline into which you place all other prophecies** will all of the various prophetic utterances finally make sense and come together.

Now, back to the quote from Hebrews. Notice, just as with John Chapter 1 and Colossians Chapter 1, Hebrews also **clearly states** that God the Father created **all** the worlds **through His Son**. Remember that at that time, He was still known as the **Word**, but it's the same Divine Person involved. Since everything was made **by Him for Him**, it only makes sense that He be the **inheritor** of all things. After all, he made them by the mandate of the Father for Himself. **He should be allowed to keep that which he made himself for himself!** Isn't it amazing, when we step away from all the cluttered detail and look at the **big picture**, how **obvious, clear and logical God's plan is?** This is one special grace that the Lord has permitted us: that we have been able to step back away from space/time to see the **overall design and plan of the Father**. And what a marvelous, wonderful, loving plan it is! Remember, **Jesus plans to share all of this with we who are part of His Bride, just as a husband would share his home, belongings and finances with the woman he loves.** The concept is simple. The design, brilliant. The motive, heart-wrenching.

Remember the other issues which we discussed? How about the Divinity of Christ? Well, Hebrews clearly says that Jesus is **the brightness of His glory** and the **express image of His person**. You can't do better than that. If Jesus possesses **all the glory of His Father**, and **looks just like His old man**, then there can be no doubt that creating, fixing and inheriting the heavens and the earth is certainly within His scope. But there's one more issue: When sin entered this universe, it **began on planet earth**, then spread like wildfire **throughout the entire galaxy**, then leapfrogged from galaxy to galaxy until **the whole universe was infected with sin!** What happened can be likened to the results of a rock or a pellet striking a pane of glass. There will be an initial point of impact, relatively small, and seemingly insignificant. But within a matter of minutes, a crack will appear at the point of impact, and begin to radiate in all directions from the point of impact until the entire pane is shattered, broken **and un-repairable**. Instead of fixing the pane of glass, it becomes necessary to **replace** the pane with a **new pane** without any flaws, breaks or damage. **That is what happened to this space/time universe when we broke it in the Garden!** Listen to what the Lord told Adam in the Garden:

*"<sup>17</sup> **Cursed is the ground** for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life"*

-- Genesis 3:17b

What began as a curse on the **ground** spread throughout the entire **planet**. As sinful, infected mankind spread throughout the surface of the earth, the curse spread with him. And the curse was carried by **Adam**, not Eve. How do we know that? Because the sins of the **fathers** are visited on the children, not the sins of the mothers. That is why Jesus could be **born of a woman**, but not by means of a **human father**. If He had been born of a human father, the curse of the Law of Sin and Death would have transmitted genetically to him through the damaged Y chromosome in his earthly father. By the time that Paul wrote his letter to the Romans, the curse had spread throughout the **entire universe**, damaging it beyond any means or hope of repair. Listen to how Paul describes it:

*"<sup>18</sup> For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared **with the glory which shall be revealed in us.** <sup>19</sup> For the earnest expectation of **the creation** eagerly awaits the revealing of the sons of God. <sup>20</sup> **For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope;** <sup>21</sup> **because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God"** -- Romans 8:18-21*

Right now the entire universe is subject to the **bondage of corruption**. Scientists call it **The Law of Entropy**. Believers call it **The Law of Sin and Death**. No matter what you call it, the results are always the same. No matter how hard you work, things eventually fall apart, break and are destroyed. No matter how many vitamins you take, you still eventually grow sick and die. It's hundreds of times easier to break something than it is to fix it, and destruction comes easily, while creation is like swimming upstream against the rapids. It didn't use to be this way, folks! Life was meant to be eternal. Our cells were meant to regenerate themselves eternally. But something went terribly, terribly wrong. **Sin entered the physical universe and corrupted the matter there by means of mankind**. Since satan was and still is a **spirit**, his infection couldn't touch the physical heavens and earth, although it had caused him to be cast out of the third Heaven. **It took our stupidity to ruin the universe!** Thanks be to God that He sent His **Only Begotten Son to save us from what we had done to ourselves!** And right now, according to Hebrews, He is **upholding or sustaining a sin-ravaged, unstable creation**. Without His direct and infinitely powerful intervention, the whole universe would explode in a massive intergalactic supernova, with all matter and energy de-resolving back into the light from which it came. Peter got to learn about the **Big Bang Law**. Notice I didn't say Big Bang Theory? Actually, in a sense, the scientists are right. God said, "*Let there be light!*", and **bang, it happened!** But there is a **Big Bang** described in the Bible...

*"<sup>10</sup> But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which **the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up"** -- II Peter 3:10*

How could Peter, an uneducated fisherman of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century AD, possibly know what a **trans-galactic thermonuclear explosion would be like?** How could he possibly know that the **elements melt (de-resolve) in such an explosion?** Put that in your pipe and smoke it, you who scoff at the scientific accuracy of the Scriptures!

But the job isn't complete if only the old heavens and the earth are removed. Remember, Jesus has the very first and only **resurrection body**. Right now it's the prototype of what God's going to do for all of us. By the way, that's not just for believers. **Every human will eventually get a resurrection body**, some in the Rapture, others at the Great White Throne Judgment. **Some of the bodies are going to LIVE forever in the New Jerusalem. The rest of those resurrection, indestructible bodies are going to DIE forever in the terrible Lake of Fire.** Can you imagine burning and burning and burning? Constantly in the **process of dying, but never able to die because your body CAN'T DIE? What a horrible, unimaginable fate!**

Jesus is our **down payment** or **earnest money on the resurrection**. He is the **first-born from the dead**. But the simple deal on that is that if there is a **first-born**, there must be, by implication, a **second-born, third-born, fourth-born** and so on... And finally, once we have received our resurrection bodies which can never be destroyed or die, the poor universe, an innocent bystander in all of this but, nonetheless, a **victim of the crime**, will **also receive its own resurrection and re-creation**. How fair! How wonderful! How gracious! Isaiah describes it first:

"<sup>22</sup> For as the **new heavens and the new earth which I will make shall remain before Me'**, says the Lord, **so shall your descendants and your name remain.**" -- Isaiah 66:22

Notice the use of the word **remain?** That means **steady-state, unchanging, eternal.**

John the Revelator, echoing the words of Isaiah, says it this way:

"<sup>1</sup> Now I saw a **new heaven and a new earth**, for the first heaven and the first earth **had passed away**. Also there was no more sea" -- Revelation 21:1

Why had the first heaven and the first earth passed away? **Because they were broken beyond repair, and only a NEW heaven and a NEW earth would do to match our NEW resurrection bodies!** By the way, that fact that the new earth has no seas is remarkable confirmation of the consistency of the Holy Scriptures. I'm not going to tell you why in this E-Pistle, though! I'll let you think about that one for a while. Let me know if you figure it out. Hint: **It has something to do with the Pre-Flood Earth!**

Friends, if you aren't totally blown away by this wonderful Savior who we love and who loves us so much that He would die and rise again for us, I honestly don't know what to do with you. Maybe praying for you is still the best way. Always has been. Always will be! God bless you, as you meditate on His Word daily! He may be the **first-born**, but **our turn is coming!**



# Day 13 – Kings and Priests



“John, to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.” – The Revelation of Jesus Christ 1:4-6

What a marvelous thought! What believer wouldn't want to be a **king** and a **priest to God!** Imagine being able to walk in the **power** and **authority** accorded to a king! Visualize what it would be like to be able to minister **directly to God the Father!** You see, those of us who love Him with all our hearts and are eagerly anticipating His Second Coming can think of nothing else **but** Him. Our minds are filled with thoughts pertaining to the Word of God. Our hearts burn within us when we contemplate looking on His wonderful, holy face. We live to **be in His presence**. That is our all-consuming desire. The world cannot understand this. We are strange, bizarre creatures to them. They think it strange, said Paul, that we don't want to go where they go, do what they do, or be what they are. Even more inexplicable to them is the fact that at one time in our past, **we were just like them!** But God, in His great love and mercy, invaded our lives, changing us forever, reorienting our value systems, and turning our hearts and minds continually toward Him. Whenever Heaven is shown to us in the Scriptures, praise and worship around the Throne is always central to the vision. I know many people, most of whom are nominally Christian, who say, *"I can't possibly imagine what Heaven will be like. Sitting on a cloud and strumming a harp doesn't exactly sound like my cup of tea!"* Rest assured, friend, if you are **not comfortable with the presence of the Lord now, you won't be comfortable with it then, either!** If you have never been in the presence of the Lord, you cannot possibly imagine how wonderful, how totally consuming and how all-important it is. For those of you struggling with addictions, be they nicotine, alcohol, cocaine, sex or any other form of obsessive-compulsive behavior, I've got a **better fix for you!** Once you have personally experienced the presence of the Lord, **nothing in this world will ever satisfy you again.** You will now be a hopelessly incurable addict, **addicted to the things of God.** And once you've been there, no place on earth will ever be your home again. You will find yourself longing constantly for that incredible place where you are fully, totally the person you were born, meant and called to be.

It was God's original intention to make Israel this nation of kings and priests. When He called Abram out of Ur of the Chaldees, He had in mind to cultivate this father of faith into an entire nation of people whose hearts would burn for Him, and who could be entrusted with the deep and holy things of God, in order to **evangelize the world, and to share the good news of God's great love with all people.**

Listen to what God told Moses about the project:

*"<sup>3</sup> And Moses went up to God, and the Lord called to him from the mountain, saying, 'Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: <sup>4</sup> You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagle's wings and brought you to Myself. <sup>5</sup> Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then **you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people**; for all the earth is Mine. <sup>6</sup> And you shall be to Me **a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.**' These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel."* -- Exodus 19:3-6

In order to accomplish this, the Hebrew children had to go through persecution, lack, want and slavery to help them realize that the **world had nothing to offer to them**. Then, in a great act of deliverance unprecedented in human history, He took over **three million people** out of the most powerful nation in the world, with great and mighty signs and wonders, then spent almost 40 years teaching and training them in the wilderness. He even appointed a special land for them, so that they could grow and prosper. But Israel, like most of us, would not have it. They were all too eager to run back into the very world which He had patiently extracted them from. They wanted to be like the nations. What a tragedy! And God kept giving them chance after chance to repent and redeem themselves for the purpose He had called them to. Finally it was too late. Jesus told them that they had **not known the time of their visitation**, and so the Jews went into exile again, this time for almost 2,000 years. For two God-days, He has punished His original child, making him sit in the corner while He spends time with another, adopted child.

It was at that point in time that God turned His attention to the **Gentiles**. Instead of concentrating on a single people, He reasoned, He would go throughout the world, finding **one here and one there**, raising up a nation of **kings and priests** one at a time from among all humanity. **That's where the Church comes in!** Peter, in writing to the body of Christ dispersed (just like the Jews!) because of persecution in Jerusalem, says this:

*"<sup>9</sup> But you are a **chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;**<sup>10</sup> who were once not a people, but are **now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy**" -- I Peter 2:9-10*

Notice what he says. That we are a **chosen generation**. Chosen by who? **By God!** For what purpose? So that we can be a **royal priesthood** (notice how he weaves both the **king** and **priest** portions into one phrase?). What kind of people are we to be? A **holy people**. Why? **Because when you carry the POWER of God, you must also carry the PERSONALITY of God!** Increased **anointing** without increased **accuracy** and increased **integrity** always produces increased **damage!** This has been one of the major sins and failings of the Charismatic movement, the Word/Faith movement, and every other potentially significant move of God in the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Unlike the initial outpouring of the Holy Spirit in 1901, which was birthed out of the Holiness movement, these more recent outpourings were ruined and defiled by the immoral and irresponsible conduct of the leaders that God raised up to head those movements. Small wonder, then, that Christians are held up to ridicule and scorn by society at large. Frankly, we deserve the criticism and ridicule that we receive in the media. Hollywood didn't have to add anything at all to the PTL and Swaggart scandals. We managed quite well on our own, thank you! And lest you think that I have been somehow above all this, be disabused of that foolish notion. The Bible says that he who has been forgiven much also loves much. Even wonder why I love Jesus so much? Hmmm... I'll let you figure it out for yourself. I will tell you this: without the merciful intervention of God Himself, I would not even be alive today, much less in ministry, much less carrying the anointing which He has mercifully entrusted to us for the sake of His people. I just tell folks that everyone has a **past**, including the **pastor**.

But if we are faithful to allow Him to purify and purge us, we do become a holy nation, and a **special people**. The thought of being special to God fills my heart with joy and my eyes with tears. To think that we, who were nothing at all, now not only belong to Him but have been entrusted with a ministry of reconciliation, reconciling the world to Christ, is almost more than I can bear. Thank You, Jesus! Praise Your Holy Name! In our ministry, we don't look for those who have been forgiven little. They only love Him a little. Instead, God has directed us to those who have been **forgiven much**, for they also **love Him much**. When I see folks who **love the Lord with all their heart**, it makes it very easy for me to **love my brother as myself**. Why? **Because they share the same love of Christ that I do, and that makes us brothers and sisters in the same marvelous family**.

Finally, with that process completed, we become qualified and capable of **telling the whole world of His marvelous works, and praising Him before men**. When they look at us, look at what we once were, see what we are now, and listen to our testimony of His goodness and mercy, they are **drawn to us in order to be drawn to Him**. **And that**, dear friends in Christ, is what it is all about – **God redeeming and reconciling the world to Himself through our conduct and testimony, that all men might be saved!** Will all be saved? You and I both know that the answer is no. But, inasmuch as it depends on

me, I am going to do everything I can to draw others to Christ, so that they can receive the same precious mercy that I did when I fell down. **Thanks be to God for His infinite mercy!** The more I think about it, the more excited I become!

Where does this concept of kings and priests come from, anyway? Actually, the whole idea comes from a pattern laid down in the **Old Testament by Jesus Himself!** What? Jesus in the **Old Testament?** How can that possibly be? If you have been following our recent E-Pistles, you know we have spent some time talking about time **inside** this universe, known as **Chronos time**, versus time as it exists **outside this universe**, known as **Kairos time**. **In Chronos time, only one reality is possible at one time. In Kairos time, multiple realities can exist simultaneously in the same place.** In fact, the differences between the two types of time go even deeper than that. With **Chronos time**, things can be in one of three states – **past, present and future**. **Past events** are fixed points in **Chronos time** and cannot be altered inside of the time stream. Present events are a moving point in the time line, occurring spontaneously, then passing into Past event status. Future events are yet to be determined, and cannot be accurately anticipated within the time stream. That's how it is where we live. That's **not** how it is where God lives! **Kairos time has only dimension to it, ETERNAL NOW.** That's why the Bible says that Jesus Christ is the same, **yesterday, today and forever.** Scientifically speaking, Jesus is the same all across the time stream. Although His Titles, Roles and even Nature change in **our** time stream, they do not change in **Kairos time**. Instead, He is already all of those things and much, much more. He has been all those things from the very beginning (and in Kairos time, there is no such thing as a beginning, middle or end!), and He is **always** those things, in a condition of **eternal now**.

**Now comes the really cool part.** Stay with us as we **travel through Chronos time**, just like H.G. Wells in the *Time Machine*. Although innumerable stories and movies have been written and produced about time travel, it ain't gonna happen! Why? **Because our mortal bodies are fixed and locked into Chronos time.** If you, as an individual, were to move through Chronos time, your body would age, because it is a part of this space-time continuum. It is impossible to move **forward in time without aging**. Conversely, if you were able to move **backwards in time**, your body would get **younger**. Unfortunately, since we all have an **Alpha Point and an Omega Point** in our physical existence (birth and death, for those of you who don't understand), if we move too far **forward** in the time stream, we cease to exist by means of death. If we move too far **backwards** in the time stream, we cease to exist because we move to a point prior to our birth. Get the picture? So the only way that someone could be capable of time travel was **if He had a body not made of the matter of this universe, and so not subject to the laws of Chronos time. And if that body were also made of matter made out of a universe yet to be created which is not subject to the Law of Sin and Death, then that body would not be capable of dying or being destroyed.** In short, it would be Superman without Kryptonite! Boy, wouldn't it wonderful to have a body like that? Well, guess what, saints of God! **A body just like that already exists!** Only one is currently in existence, and it just happens to belong to Someone whom we hold precious, wonderful and dear. That's right! The possessor of that incredible, indestructible body just happens to be **our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!** Remember that when He was born of the Virgin Mary, He had a **sinless but mortal body**. That's why, prior to His death and resurrection, He constantly referred to Himself as the **Son of Man**. Since the **sins of the fathers, not the mothers**, are visited on the children, the only way that a human being could be born **without carrying the Law of Sin and Death in his body as a genetic inheritance was to be born of a woman, but not by a human father!** That's why the devil thought he had us trapped forever. He couldn't conceive of how any human could escape that trap. Fortunately for us, God the Father did have a plan that would work – Jesus! And the Virgin Birth is **precisely the concept and conception** that fooled the devil.

After Jesus' death and resurrection, He came up out of the grave with a **still sinless but immortal body**. We don't have time in this E-Pistle to explore that incredible topic, but we will at some future time. The important issue for this discussion is that His body is **not subject to the Law of Sin and Death, and so is immortal and indestructible**. It is made of the stuff of the **new heavens and the new earth** prophesied in Isaiah and Revelation. Since His body is not made of the stuff of this universe, it is also **not subject to the Laws of Chronos time**. As such, He can move **in and out of Chronos time at will**, without it impacting His physical body. These guest appearances in the Old Testament are referred to by theologians as **theophanies**, or appearances of Christ in his resurrection body at various points in the time stream. Once He had ascended on high to sit at the right hand of God the Father, He had total

freedom to intersect Chronos time at any point and any time that He so chose. And, since Kairos time doesn't follow the same rules as Chronos time, He could use the resurrection body He picked up in 33 AD to go back **before Chronos time began, to create the heavens, the earth and Chronos time itself!** Head hurt? I told you that God doesn't **think, exist, measure time or act like us.** His perspective is so radically different that it takes years for us to even begin to get a clue as to what He's up to. Now, let's take this discussion to its logic conclusion (and it **is** eminently logical and well as being totally true). In His resurrection, non-Chronos time subject body, Jesus went back **before time to create time.** After creating the heavens and the earth, He planted a garden in Eden. As the Son of God, He knelt in the dirt and fashioned it into an image **just like His.** That lifeless form, waiting for Him to breathe the Spirit of life into its nostrils, looked **just like Jesus!** Ironically, Jesus' own body, being the Son of Man, also looked **just like the body on the ground, because it was fashioned after it!** Now, before you cup your hands to your ears and run out of the room yelling "No! No! No!", remember that in Kairos time, things may be more than one reality at the same time. If you search the Scriptures for yourself, you will find dozens of these **Closed Time Loops**, where time converges on itself in a past-is-present-is-future-is-past-is-present-is... sequences, in which there is **no beginning or end to the sequence, but rather an eternal state of being.**

Now, with this Divine concept in mind, consider the following Scripture:

*"<sup>1</sup>For this **Melchizedek, king** of Salem (Jerusalem), **priest** of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, <sup>2</sup>to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all, first being translated '**king of righteousness**', and then also king of Salem, meaning '**king of peace**', <sup>3</sup>without father, without mother, with genealogy, **having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but like the Son of God, remains a priest continually.**" -- Hebrews 7:1-3*

Hmmm... Let's see... Who do we know who is both a **king** and a **priest**? Who do we know who **is alive forever more**? And who do we know who is the **Son of God**? Halleluia! It's **our very own Jesus, Son of Man, Son of God, Eternal Savior, Redeemer, Lord, King, High Priest of our confession, Alpha, Omega, First, Last, Beginning, End...**

Wow! If this doesn't leave you in a state of awe at just how wonderful He is, I don't know what else to say to you. Oh, by the way, since Jesus was and still is Melchizedek, He holds His priesthood **by the power of an indestructible, eternal life.** (Hebrews 7:16) Now, one more fun fact:

When Jesus/Melchizedek came to Abram/Abraham after the battle of the kings, He **offered him bread and wine.** (Genesis 14:18). I'm going to close this E-Pistle with another Scripture Challenge Round: **Since Melchizedek is Jesus, and He offered Abram bread and wine, what special significance does that give the event, and what does that imply for Abraham as the Father of Faith?**

Chew on that one for a while. You just might end up getting excited about the implications for Abraham and all of us who are of the household of faith once it dawns on you what Jesus did for him and for us all.

Now, with all of the work that Jesus did to establish Himself as **priest** and **king**, and with all the promises, both to Israel and the Church about our opportunity to become like Him in every respect, it only makes sense that someday **we can be priests and kings, too!** Does Scripture support that? You betcha! Listen to John describe the Millennial Reign of Jesus Christ:

*"<sup>6</sup>Blessed and holy is he who has part in the **first resurrection.** Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be **priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.**" -- Revelation 20:6*

Job finished. Mission accomplished. Jesus finally has completed what He set out to accomplish about 6,000 years ago. During the Millennial Reign, those who have participated in the **first** resurrection administer justice and faith throughout a shattered but rebuilding earth. Who participates in the first resurrection? More on that later. And, by the way, if there's a **first** resurrection, that also implies logically that there must also be a **second** resurrection. Hmm... Wonder what **that's all about?** Stay tuned, saints of God! Answers will follow later (or eternally now, if you prefer Kairos Time!).

Until next time, and all of the time, **live for Him who lives forever!**



# Day 14 – Coming With Clouds



“Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.”

– The Revelation of Jesus Christ 1:7

All throughout the Bible, whenever God Almighty appears in His Manifest Glory to sinful, rebellious mankind, His appearing is always accompanied by **clouds**. This is not merely some symbolic, allegorical notion thought up by nomadic tribesmen, but an **absolute necessity for the preservation of mankind**. The holiness of God is so very great, and our perverseness so very pervasive, that it becomes necessary for Him to place a barrier between us and Him, in order to protect us from His Glory and Power. As I searched the Scriptures in preparation for this series of articles, I found **forty-one Scriptures** which apply directly or indirectly to this topic. Truthfully, I was just going to sit down and write the article based on what I already knew, but the Lord corrected me. *“Do your research first”*, He said, *“and you will be amazed at what you will discover”*. As always, He was right. As I searched through the Word of God, I was amazed at what He showed me. So much was revealed that, as always, it will take several articles to unfold all of it. I’m going to break these materials out into two categories: (1) The nature and purpose of clouds surrounding God in the Old Testament, and (2) the nature and purpose of clouds surrounding the return of Jesus Christ as outlined in both the Old and New Testament. In this article, we will discuss clouds in the Old Testament.

When God first created and began dealing with mankind, no clouds were necessary at all. In Genesis, we find God, in the form of Jesus in His resurrection body, walking in the garden in the cool of the evening. He can stand directly in front of Adam and Eve and ask them about why they are hiding from Him. But that was a time of covenant, relationship and equal yoking. Without sin, mankind could stand in the presence of He who lives forever and not feel shame, remorse or fear. Nothing **inside** of man was incompatible with that which was **outside** of him. After the fall, everything changed dramatically. Expulsion from the garden followed rapidly on the heels of disobedience. Proximity to God would now be a thing of the past, and the ability to stand directly in His wonderful presence would be terminated for untold thousands of years.

Even when God cut covenant with Abram, it was necessary that there be a separation between the two parties, in which God would hide His glory from Abram. In the covenant ceremony, a great darkness and horror fell upon Abram (Genesis 15:7-13). That darkness shielded Abram from God’s glory, this protecting Abram from destruction.

This kind of divine proximity doesn’t occur again until the time of the Exodus. There are clear patterns throughout the entire Bible of God removing Himself from proximity of sinful mankind for extended periods of time. Throughout most of history, God has been **distant by design**. So great was the breach between God and man that for Him to come into our midst would have been harmful to us.

As the children of Israel started to come out of Egypt, God manifested Himself in a remarkable fashion:

"<sup>21</sup>And the Lord went before them by day in a **pillar of cloud** to lead the way, and by night in a **pillar of fire** to give them light, so as to go by day and night. <sup>22</sup> He did not take away the pillar of cloud by day or the pillar of fire by night from before the people." – Exodus 13:21-22

Now, it has been argued by some so-called "scholars" that the pillar of smoke and fire was actually an active volcano in the Sinai peninsula, and that these poor, deluded nomadic shepherds, now finally accidentally freed from their Egyptian taskmasters by a series of random natural occurrences, simply headed for the first obvious thing in their line of sight, a plume of smoke issuing from an active volcano. What utter nonsense!

It constantly amazes me that men of each new generation can question the integrity of a God who has proven Himself Faithful throughout **all** generations. The sad truth about humanity is that we have a great deal of difficulty learning by either **instruction** or **example**. The Bible says that all the events written down in it are placed there as an example for us, specifically so that we can avoid making the same dumb mistakes over and over again. You see, the devil doesn't have any new tricks in his bag, just a brand new bunch of suckers and rubes in each new generation who have to learn for themselves **by experience** (and some never do!) that God **never** lies and the devil **never** tells the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth!

Now, back to our unbelieving buddies and their "volcano theory". Just to show you how utterly preposterous the whole concept is, take a look just a page or so later, in Exodus, Chapter 14:

"<sup>19</sup>And the Angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, **moved and went behind them**; and the pillar of cloud **went from before them and stood behind them**. <sup>20</sup> So it came **between** the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. Thus **it was a cloud and darkness to the one, and it gave light by night to the other**, so that the one did not come near the other all that night." – Exodus 14:19-20

Take a close look at what the Bible just said. The Holy Scriptures record that the pillar of fire and smoke, in which resided the Angel of the Lord (we know Him today as Jesus!), move from **in front of the Israelites and swung around behind them, standing as a barrier between them and the Egyptian army**. Now, think about the "volcano theory" for just a second. If the pillar of smoke and fire were actually a plume from an erupting volcano, then **the entire volcano had to move from its previous distant location to proximity to the two camps, and then swing around and divide them!** Folks, I don't know about you, but it takes more blind faith to buy into that kind of nonsense that it does to accept a 6,000 year-old record that has never been proven to be wrong or inaccurate! Not only would the volcano have to move several hundred miles, but it would have to **place the Egyptian army in pitch darkness, thus pinning them down in a tactical military maneuver, while at the same exact time providing light to the children of Israel so that they could witness one of the greatest miracles of all time, the parting of the Red Sea**. Some volcano, huh? By the way, two great Biblical explorers, Ron Wyatt and Bob Cornuke, have discovered and confirmed the exact path which the children of Israel took in the wilderness, complete with underwater land bridge over which they crossed, the palms of Elim, complete with their twelve springs, the bitter waters of Mara, and Mt. Sinai itself, a **non-volcanic** mountain located in Saudi Arabia, just as the book of Hebrews says it is, complete with a granite peak which is **scorched beyond recognition over its top third with a fire and energy so intense that the granite rocks themselves have been burned to a crisp on the outside!** I could go on, but the best thing for you to do is to get on the web, go to some search engine like Google.com, and type in **Ron Wyatt** or **Bob Cornuke** as a keyword search. You will be astounded at what you find. To be fair, **Ron Wyatt was there first**. Cornuke followed his documentation and confirmed the facts. The Saudi government has placed a military perimeter around the mountain, called **Jabal Al Lawz** in Arabic, and forbidden anyone to come near it. Three guesses why fundamentalist Muslims wouldn't want the events of the Holy Bible to be proven to be literally true!

Meanwhile, back at the "volcano", God Almighty was keeping the Egyptian army pinned down with pitch darkness just like the three days of darkness in which Egypt had been totally blacked out while Goshen, where the Hebrews were living, was experiencing nice, bright sunlight. Unlike the movie versions of the parting of the Red Sea (actually the Gulf Of Aquabah (**Yam Soph** or **Sea Of Land's End**, not **Yam Suph** or **Sea Of Reeds** like the so-called "experts" claim), the parting of the waters did **not occur instantly**



**when Moses stretched out his staff.** Don't believe me? OK, how about believing what the **Bible** says about it?

" <sup>21</sup> *Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; (remember, this is happening **at night**. To confirm that, look at the end of the previous sentence, in Verse 20) and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind **all that night**, and made **the sea into dry land**, and the waters were divided. <sup>22</sup> *So the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea on the **dry ground**, and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.*" – Exodus 14:21-22*

Makes perfect sense, doesn't it? If there were an **underwater land bridge hidden about 50 feet below the surface of the southernmost part of the Gulf of Aquabah** (and, ahem, there just happens to **still be one there** to this very day!), it would take **several hours** for a strong east wind to push the waters back away from the land bridge and **dry the muddy ground out enough for human traffic, livestock and relatively light, wooden carts and wagons to go across**. Dry enough for that kind of traffic to make it across, **but not dry enough to support the significantly higher weight of IRON CHARIOTS**, which is exactly what Pharaoh and his armies were driving! When these much heavier vehicles attempted to cross that only partially dried expanse, some very nasty things started to happen.

" <sup>23</sup> *And the Egyptians pursued and went after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, **his chariots**, and his horsemen. <sup>24</sup> *Now it came to pass, in the morning watch, that the Lord looked down upon the army of the Egyptians **through the pillar of fire and cloud**, and He troubled the army of the Egyptians. And He **took off their chariot wheels**, so that they drove them with difficulty; and the Egyptians said, 'Let us flee from the face of Israel, for the Lord fights for them against the Egyptians'"*  
– Exodus 14:23-24*

Before, the Egyptian army was pinned down by the absolute, pitch darkness, but at least they were pinned down on **dry land**. After that kind of show of power, plus all the ten plagues which had hammered Egypt, cumulating in the death of all the first-born of the land, wouldn't have made sense to **anyone with a brain that messing with the God of the Hebrews was probably a really bad idea?** God, in His infinite wisdom and mercy, had kept the Egyptians at bay **without harming them** while His own people escaped across the land bridge into Arabia. Now, early in the morning, during the **first watch** (between 6:00 AM and 9:00 AM, with all of the children of Israel safely across to the far shore, the Lord laid yet one more trap for the arrogance and pride of Pharaoh. The slaves were gone for the second time, once again preserved by the immense power of the God that they served and worshipped. Now, they stood on the other side of the gulf, almost as if God Himself were taunting Pharaoh, and with **a path through the sea still open in front of him**. Arrogance is a terrible thing. At this point, common sense and knowing when you're licked should have kicked in somewhere in the dim recesses of this guy's brain. Not for a man who thought he was a god, though! It never dawned on him that the same God who had **opened** the sea could **close it again**, and even more easily than He had opened it. You see, it took supernatural power to move that much wind across the gulf, mounding the water up on either side of the land bridge. The land bridge runs almost **due east and west** across the gulf, so a **strong east wind**, isolated and concentrated like the pursing of your lips to blow a strong stream of air across a room, would cut a temporary "groove" in the waters, pushing them back on either side, and mounding them up on the right and on the left. That same powerful stream of air would also dry out the mud resting on the rock ridge which makes up the land bridge. As an aside, during the 1920's, when huge oil tankers began plying the gulf, engineers had to blow a hole in the land bridge to allow the tankers to pass through without foundering on the rocks. Earlier, wooden boats were much lighter, and didn't have a deep enough draft to sink low enough to hit the bridge. In order to close the bridge **permanently**, all God had to do was to **stop the wind**. Passing through the groove in the water created by the wind must have been like walking through a wind tunnel against the wind, since the people were crossing from the **western** to the **eastern** shore of the gulf. As an additional aside, one of the two Biblical explorers I mentioned earlier in this article did some scuba diving over the now-submerged land bridge, and discovered **gold-lined chariot wheels, separated from their chariots!** The wood had rotten away over the centuries, but the thin gold veneer which comprised a decorative lining for the chariot wheels was still intact, and still clearly in the form of a wheel. I just love it! The more atheistic "scientists" try to disprove the Bible, the more unnerving, confirming pieces of evidence they keep finding! Go right ahead, boys, just keep trying! The fool says in his heart that there is no God, but God knows how to confound the "wise".

Meanwhile, back at the cloud...

At some point in time in all of this, the pillar of smoke and fire had calmly lifted off of the Egyptian forces, freeing them from the darkness that had surrounded them. Odds are that, having lifted from their army, the Lord moved across the gulf and repositioned Himself in front of His people, leaving the Egyptians glaring at them from the other shore. The rest, of course, is history. Pharaoh's entire army was destroyed as the two sides of the water wall closed in on them. Encased in battle armor, they never had a chance. Those few who survived the cataclysm of the two incoming walls of water, meeting each other in the middle, would have quickly sunk to the bottom, laden down with their battle gear. The Egyptian army was clearly not prepared for an amphibious assault!

That remarkable pillar of fire and smoke, in which was contained the Lord Jesus Christ in His resurrection body, totally glorified and energized, would stay with the people until they crossed over into Canaan many years later. How do we know it was Jesus? That topic, and some other very interesting facts about Mr. Sinai, will be covered in our next E-Pistle. Stay tuned to see how God the Son leads His covenant people to God the Father, for the **Meeting at the Mountain!**

Until next time, seek His glorious presence at all times, and be continuously filled with His Spirit!

# Day 15 – Jesus in the Cloud



“Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.”

– The Revelation of Jesus Christ 1:7

In our last E-Pistle, we discussed the relationship between God and clouds, and how he uses clouds to hide His Glory from sinful, rebellious mankind in order to protect us from being harmed by His Holiness. For those of you who have never stood in the transcendent power of God, you probably think we’re crazy. So much cheap, easy grace has been spoon-fed in the mouth of a selfish, carnal, childish church that we cannot imagine just how powerful, holy and righteous He really is. If not for the blood of Jesus Christ to protect us from His justice and His wrath, we would all have been struck dead a long time ago. Frankly, the margin for error narrows dramatically as we go up the side of the mountain. Gross misconduct which will be tolerated and gently corrected in a five-year-old is totally unacceptable in a twelve-year-old, and grounds for imprisonment in a twenty-five-year-old. So it is with the presence and glory of God. Things which are tolerated **but not approved of** at the foot of the mountain, in the pews of a carnal, backslidden church will flat **get you killed at the top of the mountain**. This is specifically why God warned Moses not to let the people **even touch the mountain**, lest He break out against them. Aaron’s two sons, Nadab and Abihu, found out the hard way that it was a bad idea to get drunk, put on their priestly garments, and offer unholy incense before the Lord. Fire came from the Pillar of Smoke and Fire and consumed them **where they stood**. They literally became their own **sin offering**.

When we last left the children of Israel, they had just come from their remarkable victory over the Egyptian army and the crossing of *Yam Soph*, or **Sea of Land’s End**, located at the Gulf of Aquabah, just west of Saudi Arabia. Going before them in the wilderness was the **Angel of the Lord**, hidden inside the Pillar of Smoke and Fire. If you will remember, I said that the being known as the Angel of the Lord may very well have been the **Lord Jesus Christ, in His Post-Resurrection Body**. I know that this is deep water for some of you, so just bear with us as we examine the Scriptures to see if these things be so. When I first hear teaching about this subject, I categorically rejected it, because it didn’t fit inside of my theological box. But then I made a “terrible mistake”. I began to read the Word of God for myself for what it really says. The thing that really made me begin to wonder about this topic was the description of the Ark of the Covenant. On top of the Ark, between the two Cherubim, was something called the **Mercy Seat**. Listen to the construction description that God gave Moses for building the ark:

*“<sup>9</sup> According to all that I show you, that is, the pattern of the tabernacle and pattern of all its furnishing, just so you shall make it. <sup>10</sup> And they shall make an ark of acacia wood; two and a half cubits shall be its length, a cubit and a half its width, and a cubit and a half its height. <sup>11</sup> And you shall overlay it with pure gold, inside and out you shall overlay it, and shall make on it a molding of gold all around. <sup>12</sup> You shall cast four rings of gold for it, and put them in its four corners; two rings shall be on one side, and two rings on the other side. <sup>13</sup> And you shall make poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold. <sup>14</sup> You shall put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark, that the ark may be carried by them. <sup>15</sup> The poles shall be in the rings of the ark; they shall not be taken from it. <sup>16</sup> And you shall put into the ark the Testimony which I will give you. <sup>17</sup> You shall make a mercy seat of pure gold; two and a half cubits shall be its length and a cubit and a half its width. <sup>18</sup> And you shall make two cherubim of gold; of hammered work you shall make them at the two ends of the mercy seat. <sup>19</sup> Make one cherub at one end, and the other cherub at the other end; you shall make the cherubim at the two ends of it of one piece with the mercy seat <sup>20</sup> And the **cherubim shall stretch out their wings above, covering the mercy seat with their wings**, and they shall face one another; the faces of the cherubim shall be toward the mercy seat. <sup>21</sup> You shall put the mercy seat on top of the ark, and in*

*the ark you shall put the Testimony that I will give you. <sup>22</sup> **And there I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim with are on the ark of the Testimony, about everything which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel.**"*

– Exodus 25:9-22

For years I read this Scripture without seeing the incredibly obvious. I know that I'm not alone in this. Only when I began to understand that **every single Word of God has significance and purpose** and **that God means exactly what He says, nothing more and nothing less** did the Scriptures really begin to unfold themselves to me. As I read this passage, it suddenly dawned on me that a **mercy seat** was just that, **a seat**. Now, this shouldn't be rocket science, but I've never heard anyone else teach or preach this in all my years in the ministry. **Just exactly do you do with a seat? You sit on it!** Please notice that the Bible doesn't call it a cover. It doesn't call it a seal. It doesn't call it a top. It doesn't call it a lid. All of those things are what we have traditionally envisioned this remarkable piece of the ark as being. But it is **none of those**. It is **a seat**. And a **very special seat**. Why is it very special? **Because there is only one person in the entire universe with a resurrection body qualified to sit on a mercy seat**. Guess who that might be? No conventional angel would ever be qualified to sit on a mercy seat. And spirits don't need seats to sit down on. Only someone with a real body needs a seat. And, pray tell, who in the entire universe has a physical body capable of holding the Shekinah Glory of God? Hmmm... Who has a body capable of traveling through time? Hmmm...

"But Pastor Ray", you say, "Isn't this just a lot of circumstantial evidence? Can you prove **conclusively** that Jesus was in the Pillar of Fire and Smoke?"

Good question! Let's look at the rest of the evidence, from the Scriptures:

The next issue that pops out at us from the Scripture is **what else was on the seat**. Please take notice that **on both sides of the Mercy Seat were Cherubim**. Now, medieval artists have done us a terrible disservice in terms what a **cherub** actually looks like. I frankly don't know where in the world they got their ideas, but they sure weren't from the Bible! Cherubs are, simply put, some of the most terrifying intelligent creatures ever created in the history of the universe! They are **not** fat little naked baby boys! They are **not** human! **They're not even totally organic!!!** In fact, based on what the Scriptures say, they are more like the **Borg** of Star Trek than any other created being! Now I know I've got you rocking and reeling! The Borg? You mean those half-human, half-machine nightmares who live in cubes in outer space and assimilate everything in their path? Yup! You see, the devil wants us to be **afraid of any part human, part-animal, part machine creature coming from outer space**. He also wants us to be **afraid of spaceships in the form of a cube!** Why? **Because both images are directly associated with the Lord and His Throne!** How can I say that? Easy! Because the Bible already says it! Turn to the book of Ezekiel and follow along with us in the very first chapter:

*"<sup>1</sup> Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, on the fifth day of the month, as I was among the captives by the River Chebar, that the **heavens were opened and I saw visions of God...**<sup>4</sup> Then I looked, and behold, a whirlwind was coming out of the north, a great cloud with raging fire engulfing itself; and brightness was all around it and radiating out of its midst like the color of amber, out of the midst of the fire." – Ezekiel 1:1, 4*

Wow! Pretty awesome, huh? Ezekiel is just minding his own business when suddenly, out of nowhere, comes the most frightening thing he has ever seen, a **tornado connected to a cloud fill with raging fire!** Buddy, if that doesn't scare you, I don't know what would! But it gets scarier still...

*"<sup>5</sup> Also from within it came the likeness of **four living creatures**. And this was their appearance: they had the **likeness of a man**. <sup>6</sup> Each one had **four faces**, and each one had **four wings**. <sup>7</sup> Their legs were straight, and the **soles of their feet were like the soles of calves' feet**. They sparkled with the color or **burnished bronze**. <sup>8</sup> The hands of a man were under their wings on their four sides; and each of the four had faces and wings. <sup>9</sup> Their wings touched one another. The creatures **did not turn when they went, but each one went straight forward**. <sup>10</sup> As for the likeness of their faces, each one had the **face of a man**; each of the four had the **face of a lion** on the right side, each of the four had the **face of an ox** on the left side, and each of the four had the **face of an eagle**" -- Ezekiel 1:5-10*

This is straight from the *Island of Doctor Moreau!* This is science fiction at its scariest! Creatures that are **half human and half animal?** Yup! And they are stationed **at the very throne of God Himself.** He is, after all, Lord of all creation, and since He created all life, He also has the right to create **composite creatures, representative of all creation, to surround and protect His throne.** Actually, if push came to shove, each of the animals represented, the **lion**, the **ox**, and the **eagle**, all have special Scriptural significance, but that is a discussion for another day. Suffice it to say that **these created beings that are closest to the Throne of God itself, are by no means even marginally human!**

For that matter, they are not even completely **organic!** Listen to what else Ezekiel saw:

*"<sup>13</sup> As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like **burning coals of fire, like the appearance of torches going back and forth among the living creatures. The fire was bright, and out of the fire went lightning.** <sup>14</sup> And the living creatures went back and forth, in appearance like a flash of lightning. <sup>15</sup> Now as I looked at the living creatures, behold, **a wheel was on the earth beside each living creature with its four faces.** <sup>16</sup> The appearance of the wheels and their workings was like the color of beryl, and all four had the same likeness. The appearance of their workings was, as it were **a wheel in the middle of a wheel.**" -- Ezekiel 1:13-16*

You really need to read the rest of the description of the Cherubim with a scientific mindset in order to understand what is being described. We've always treated these passages as being symbolic, rather than literal, but what Ezekiel saw was **real**, not imaginary. Now it just so happens that there were four Cherubim, one located underneath **each corner of a massive platform, upon which rests the throne of God the Son.** Read Ezekiel 1:22-28 to get the full picture. The really nifty thing about these Cherubim was the fact that they are **attached to wheels.** But not just any kind of wheels. They are **interfaced into a wheel within a wheel.** For the longest time I really didn't understand that passage. But one day, as I was reading some alternate translations of the Bible to try and get a clearer picture of what God was trying to tell us, I hit upon a translation that described them as **a wheel transcribing a wheel.** I had always visualized the wheels as a big wheel with a smaller wheel inside of it, but for some reason, that picture had never really made sense to me. Remember, there are no Polaroid pictures associated with the Holy Scriptures, so when God showed his prophets and saints incredible scenes and events, they had to try and describe what they saw with conventional words, and sometimes words just don't tell the whole picture. What Ezekiel saw was a **device** in which an outer wheel, probably **vertical in alignment**, is transcribed (that is, intersected at a 90 degree angle) by a slightly smaller wheel which is **horizontal in alignment.** Now, if you've ever flown an aircraft, you'll immediately know what I just described. Every aircraft that flies is equipped with an instrument which helps it to maintain a proper perspective to the ground, so that the pilot doesn't get confused and end up flying down into the ground. It is called a **gyroscope, and it consists of a wheel within (transcribing) a wheel.** Gyroscopes are designed to **keep any device stable, and to prevent from being tipped over or overthrown.** How appropriate, then, that the **Throne of God** has underneath it **four living gyroscopes which make it impossible to overthrow His throne and His kingdom.** In addition, the Cherubim also serve another purpose: **They are sentry beings, designed to prevent any hostile forces from approaching the Throne unseen.** That's why the wheels are **full of eyes all around.** That way, they not only stabilize the Throne, but also act as a home sentry device, to protect the Throne. How awesome! How amazing! And how **totally logical and scientific!**

How do we know that this is Jesus' throne? In Verse 26, we read that the one who sat upon it had the **appearance of a man.** Now, no angel ever created has the right to sit upon a throne in Heaven. Ironically, that's what got Lucifer kicked out of heaven. He began to dwell upon his own beauty and wisdom and decided he could take over from God. Bad idea! We'll discuss that chain of events in another E-Pistle somewhere down the road. In the meanwhile, just ask yourself the following questions:

- (1) Who is the one person in the universe qualified to sit on a **Mercy Seat?**
- (2) What person in the Godhead is referred to as the **Son of Man?**
- (3) Who promised that He would **never leave us or forsake us?**

The Mercy Seat on top of the Ark of the Covenant was a miniature representation of the actual Throne of Christ. Just like the full production model in Heaven, it was surrounded by Cherubim, to protect it and

stabilize it. And from that Mercy Seat, Jesus guided and administered righteousness, justice and mercy to His people as He led them in the wilderness.

Isn't God good? And through His Holy Spirit, He is still leading us and watching out for us today. Thank God that He sent His Only Begotten Son to guide and protect us in our wanderings through life. The journey for God's people through the wilderness isn't over yet. The Son still has to lead his people to His Father, and we will have a **Meeting on a Mountain**, where the people will meet up with the First Person in the Trinity, **as Jesus brings His original bride home to meet His Dad!**

Stay tuned for our next E-Pistle, when we set to see **The Meeting on the Mountain!**

# Day 16 – Meeting on the Mountain



“Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.”

– The Revelation of Jesus Christ 1:7

On Day 15, we introduced you to the distinct possibility that the being called **The Angel Of The Lord**, residing in the Pillar of Fire and Smoke in the wilderness, was actually **Jesus Himself**, guiding his first bride across the desert to a place where they could dwell together. But every young man knows that he better not get married unless he first **brings his bride home to meet his parents**. This is also very true for the young lady in question, but in this case, one of the two parties just happens to be God in the Flesh, so the approval of the bride’s parents is not really a big deal, but the approval of **God the Father** just happens to be mission-critical. The meeting at the Mountain of God was inevitable, for it was the “sign” that God gave Moses at very beginning of the project. Let’s turn to Exodus, Chapter 3 and take a close look at how this whole thing started:

*“<sup>1</sup> Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian. And he led the flock to the back of the desert, and came to **Horeb, the mountain of God**. <sup>2</sup> And the **Angel of the Lord** appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of the bush. So he looked, and behold, **the bush was burning with fire, but the bush was not consumed**”* – Exodus 3:1-2

The conversation that ensued terrified Moses. God instructed him to return to Egypt, the very place where he was wanted for murder, go to Pharaoh, and tell him to let God’s people go. Surely this would not endear him to Pharaoh! Moses had long ago lost any self-confidence he might have had when he was being raised in the royal courts of Egypt. 40 years on the back side of the desert had stripped him of any pretensions he might have had of enjoying royal power and prestige, and wiped away any notions he might have had of delivering his own people by means of human authority. Now God Himself was mandating him to return to land where he faced certain death, and to approach the very household he had turned on. Burning bushes are nice, and very unusual, but there’s got to be more confirmation that this for him to risk certain death. What confidence does God offer him?

*“<sup>10</sup> ‘Come now, therefore, and I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt’. <sup>11</sup> But Moses said to God, ‘Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?’ <sup>12</sup> So He said, ‘**I will certainly be with you. And this shall be a sign to you that I have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain’**”* – Exodus 3:10-12

Now, I don’t know about you, but that doesn’t sound very reassuring to me. What God is basically telling Moses is that **the sign that everything will turn out OK will be when everything turns out OK**. When you get back to the mountain with three million plus people in tow, says the Lord, then you’ll know that I sent you and that I Am really who I say I Am. Now, hindsight is always 20/20. When all is finally said and done, everybody is suddenly an expert, and, of course, they knew all along that God was going to pull the whole thing off. Right. Sure. So if all you guys were so darn sure that God was in control, just exactly where were all of you when this whole project got off the ground, and where were you when one lonely man who considered himself a total failure stood before a supernatural manifestation of unknown

origin and was asked by that manifestation to do something that was utterly impossible. If my memory serves me correctly, you were the very people who were hollering that you were all going to die in the desert. Now that we're sitting here at the foot of the mountain, you have the utter audacity and temerity to tell me that you knew that God had it in the bag all along! Folks, everybody shows up to eat the bread! But only the Little Red Hen, the one who paid the price and did the job every step of the way, and did it all alone, has the right to enjoy the results of the labor that they suffered through.

Fortunately for Moses, God did give him a few supernatural "parlor tricks" to take with him. The hand into the coat, out leprous, then back in again and back out normal was at least frightening, but there was no doubt that Pharaoh's magicians could duplicate that trick, given enough time. And the stick on the ground into a snake then back into a stick again was cool, but again, probably duplicatable by demon-energized magicians in league with Hell itself. What if you were in Moses' shoes? What if that was **all you had to go on?** How much confidence would you have? Again, everybody is a hero after the danger has passed. So, in the final analysis, Moses had to obey God **on faith**, putting him on the same foundation as Abraham and all the other great saints of God.

Much to Moses' amazement, it somehow all worked out, and now he and slightly more than **three million people** were approaching the very mountain in Saudi Arabia where he had first encountered the Burning Bush. Leaving the people at the foot of the mountain, he once again climbed up the steep slopes, not knowing what to expect. Then the Lord spoke to him:

*"<sup>3</sup> And Moses went up to God, and the Lord called to him from the mountain, saying, 'Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: <sup>4</sup> You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and **brought you to Myself.** <sup>5</sup> Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be **a special treasure to Me above all people**; for all the earth is Mine. <sup>6</sup> And you shall be to Me **a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.** These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel'" -- Exodus 19:3-6*

Later on in this series, we will discuss in depth the concept of being a **nation of priests and kings.** Israel was offered the most staggering opportunity ever given to a group of people in the history of all mankind, and threw it away. Then, the same opportunity was offered to the Gentile world in the form of the church. Have we even begun to grasp what God Almighty has offered us? I think not. It has taken us almost 2,000 years to accomplish what could have been done **during the lifetime of the Apostles.** We could have **hastened the Day of His Appearing** (II Peter 3:12). More on that another time.

So that there would be no doubt on the part of the people about the validity of what Moses was telling them, God had planned the most massive pyrotechnic display in the history of the world. In so doing, it should have indelibly impressed the authenticity of His Words in their minds and hearts forever. Listen as God tells Moses what He plans to do:

*"<sup>9</sup> And the Lord said to Moses, 'Behold, I come to you **in the thick cloud**, that the people may hear when I speak with you, and believe you forever'. So Moses told the words of the people to the Lord. <sup>10</sup> Then the Lord said to Moses, "Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their clothes. <sup>11</sup> **And let them be ready for the third day. For on the third day the Lord will come down upon Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people.** <sup>12</sup> You shall set bounds for the people all around, saying, 'Take heed to yourselves that you do not go up to the mountain or touch its base. Whoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death.'" -- Exodus 19:9-12*

Before we continue on in the narrative, there are several key points that I must bring up. First of all, did you notice that **three days were necessary for the power of God to be displayed?** Did you also notice that the **people had to wait in faith during those three days, when nothing appeared to be happening?** Gosh, is there a parallel to this **three day waiting period** in the New Testament? If you can't figure this one out, I'm not going to tell you.

In addition, at the end of the three days, **the Glory of God was revealed for all the people to see.** Furthermore, there were boundaries placed around the place where the Glory of God would be manifested, so that the **people would not die by coming into contact with that Glory and Purity.** Think carefully about the scene immediately after the Resurrection involving Jesus and Mary Magdalene. What



did He tell her **not to do?** By the way, as an amazing aside, those **boundary markers** still surround Jabal Al Lawz, the **true** Mount Sinai, located in Saudi Arabia, right where Paul said it was (Galatians 3:25). You can also find the stone altar where they placed the Golden Calf. It is etched to this day with Egyptian petroglyphs (word pictures) showing the Egyptian bull god. The split rock of Horeb is also plainly visible, as are the stones which are worn thin by millions of gallons of water pouring down them, as is the vast lake into which the water poured. Remember, God had to take care of over three million people. That is going to take a **lot** of water! There's more, but I'll save the best for last!

*"<sup>16</sup> Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, **that there were thunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain;** and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. <sup>17</sup> And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. <sup>18</sup> **Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly.** <sup>19</sup> And when the blast of the trumpet sounded long and become louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God **answered him by voice.** <sup>20</sup> **Then the Lord came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mountain.**" -- Exodus 19:16-20*

Wow! Can you imagine being there? What an awesome, terrifying and wonderful moment that must have been. Imagine being in that crowd of three million, and seeing the **Glory of God come down upon the mountain.** Please remember that the Bible says that the Lord came **down** upon the mountain. Some unbelieving critics have tried to explain this event, as well as the Pillar of Smoke and Fire, as the results of an active volcano. What nonsense! We've already discussed how impossible it would have been for a volcano to do what the Pillar of Smoke and Fire did at *Yam Soph*, Sea of Land's End, plus guide the children of Israel on a zigzag course through the wilderness. Now, here are some hard facts to knock down the volcano theory regarding the mountain of God itself.

No matter which mountain you support as the real Mount Sinai, the one in the Sinai Peninsula, which has absolutely **no archeological evidence to support the claim**, or **Jabal Al Lawz** in Saudi Arabia, the one around which the Saudis have placed a military perimeter and which they forbid anyone to come near, the one with **100% archeological confirmation of all the facts listed in the Bible**, there is still one **overwhelming fact about both sites – neither site has a volcanic origin or evidence of volcanic activity.** That means that there is no way that the smoke, fire and violent shaking vividly described at the mountain could have possibly been the result of volcanic activity. In addition, there is one final staggering piece of evidence surrounding both the authenticity of Jabal Al Lawz as the true Mount Sinai, and the literal accuracy of the Scriptures which describe the events which occurred on and around the mountain. Ready? Here goes: Jabal Al Lawz is a standard mountain, with significant amounts of granite making up the entire mountain. If you take a close look at any picture of the mountain, you will find that **the entire top third of the mountain is scorched black, as if exposed to enormous heat and massive amounts of energy.** When Bob Cornuke and Ron Wyatt both explored the mountain, they found that if they broke some of the blackened rocks in two, that the core of the rocks they split was normal granite, but that the outer rind was **charred black, as if by great heat. Now, imagine, if you will, the massive amounts of heat and energy required to burn granite to a blackened crisp!** Please feel free to go on the internet and check both of their sites out. The pictures are overwhelming, the evidence indisputable, and the truth obvious!

Can you see why God instructed Moses to place boundary markers around the mountain? If there was that much raw power and energy at the **top** of the mountain imagine how hot the **base** of the mountain must have been! Also consider this: **Moses the man of God spent two back-to-back 40-day periods in the midst of that raging inferno, without eating or drinking, and yet without suffering any damage to his mortal body!** Instead, when he came down off the mountain, the Bible says that his face glowed. That means his body had absorbed a massive amount of radiation, without it being lethal in nature. God had to have surrounded Moses with some sort of incredible force field, which permitted ambient radiation to penetrate it, energizing his body and supplying its physical needs, yet preventing it from being damaged by the lethal power which raged around it. Had the clouds not been present on the top of the mountain, there is no doubt in my mind that blindness would have been the logical result for those in the crowd at the base. When the bomb was dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, people looking up into the sky when the bombs went off actually had their eyes melt out of their sockets! This matches

the prophecy given in Zechariah 14:12, describing events which will surround the return of Jesus Christ and His landing on the Mount of Olives, right where He lifted off from!

One final note: Remember that when Jesus comes back, He will be coming back as the **Son Of God**, not just as the **Son of Man**. When He returns, He will be returning in the full manifestation of His Glory. More than Mount Tabor. More than Mount Sinai. More than any human being on this planet can conceive or imagine. His eyes will be like a flame of fire. His head and hair will be white like wool (because of the enormous energy pouring out from every pore of His resurrection body!). His feet will be like fine brass. His voice will be as the sound of many waters. He came the first time as a babe in a manger. He will come the second time as conquering king, Son of God, a being of such staggering power and glory that we will fall at His feet like dead men.

And then, even though He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords, He will reach down to those of us who love Him, and graciously and gently draw us up through the atmosphere, changing our mortal bodies as we go up into bodies **that are just like His. Halleluia!** The first time that God's people met with Him, they trembled with fear and were forbidden to come hear Him. This time, we will rejoice with great exultation, and **run to embrace Him, for we will be like Him and we shall see Him as He is!**

**Saints of God, rejoice. We truly will shine like the stars in heaven!**

# Day 17 – Every Eye Will See Him



“Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.”

– The Revelation of Jesus Christ 1:7

In This E-Pistle, we take a close look at the actual events surrounding the physical return of Jesus to planet Earth. Possibly no other events has generated so much commentary, and so many wildly varying opinions. I’ve read stuff that curled my hair and straightened it back out again. Unfortunately, the **more important an event or doctrine is in the Bible, the more false doctrine the devil tries to surround it with**. It seems that for every foundational statement in the Scriptures, a cult has arisen somewhere along the way that teaches with great eloquence **just the opposite of the truth**. This is particularly true regarding the Second Coming of Christ. Some of the great yardsticks to measure any group’s doctrine with are these three questions: **Is it supportable IN CONTEXT in Scripture? Are there MULTIPLE WITNESSES that say the same thing? Does this doctrine stand ON ITS OWN, without altering what the Bible LITERALLY SAYS?** If the teaching of any group varies from these standards, then you are always dealing with **FALSE DOCTRINE**, and, unfortunately, there is a ton of it out there. Since most ministers and ministries tend to be careless in their handling of the Word of God, and since most of their parishioners and supporters tend to buy into whatever they say without “*searching the Scriptures daily to see if these things be so*” (Acts 17:11 paraphrased), it tends to be very easy to promote and propagate astonishing lies to a large number of people very quickly.

One of these areas is the Return of Christ. As you can see from the Scripture quote above, Revelation clearly says “...*every eye will see Him...*” Now, at face value that seems to be pretty obvious, and there are tons of Scriptures to back that up. But, before we look at the Biblical truth, let’s take a close look at what one of the cults, the Jehovah’s Witnesses, say about His Return.

On a web site entitled [www.watchman.org](http://www.watchman.org), a terrific short article says this:

*“A short biography of Charles Taze Russell, founder of the organization, was published in the Society’s book, **The Divine plan of the Ages**. It records, **‘Like other Christians he [Russell] was looking for the second coming of Christ. Between 1872-1876 he discovered that the Scriptures clearly teach that the Lord would not would return in a body of flesh, but would return as a spirit being, invisible to human eyes, and that his second presence was due in the autumn of 1874’ (1927 ed., pg. 4)**”*

How amazing! Did any of you catch the **two fundamental doctrinal errors** in that one simple paragraph? Hopefully so, since I **underlined both errors!** And, as predictably as clockwork, one doctrinal error rests on another. **Once you make one major doctrinal error and cannot admit you are wrong, then that deceit cascades into a whole additional series of lies, in hopes of propping up your doctrinal house of cards.** But untruth can’t support untruth, and lies can’t support other lies. Let’s see where Russell began his downhill slide.

In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus devotes chapters 24 and 25 to the subject of His Return. The material contained therein is so plain and so obvious that you really have to work at it to distort it from its original meaning. Among other things that Jesus said, He said this one telling thing:

"<sup>36</sup> *But of that day and hour **no one knows**, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only"*  
-- Matthew 24:36

Now, let's see what the rest of the Scripture records regarding this matter:

"<sup>32</sup> *But of that day and hour **no one knows**, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father"* – Mark 13:32

"<sup>7</sup> *And He said to them, '**It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority.**'* –Acts 1:7

Remember the basic Bible principle that every matter must be established in the mouths of two or three witnesses? Well, we have **Jesus Himself, both before and after His resurrection**, saying the exact same thing: **NO MAN KNOWS**. How, then, can so-called Bible scholars claim that they have received some special revelation about His return, when to do so **would violate the integrity of Scripture itself???** Can anybody see the obvious problem here? For God to give specific revelation about the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming of His Son to any conventional human being would be a direct violation of **what His Son has already said!** Yet, despite the obvious and repeated statements found in Scripture, **over 2,000 dates for His return have been set in less than 2,000 years!!!** Guess **what percentage of those dates has been wrong?** It is **ludicrous and mindless, as well as being profoundly unscriptural, to attempt to set a date**. So, if any "prophet" says that God has given him or her a date, they automatically become a **false prophet**, because they are teaching doctrine which is in direct violation of the revealed Word of God.

Now, let's follow the logical chain of events:

Someone who loves Jesus with all their heart digs into their Bible in an attempt to learn more of the Word. That's a **good thing**. Then, in an attempt to have something special with God, they come up with a doctrine which is in direct violation to the Written Word of God. That's a **bad thing**. When the date they set for His return fails to come to pass, **as it logically must**, they cannot bring themselves to admit that they missed God. Now comes the **really bad thing**. **In order to cover their obvious mistake, they invent additional doctrinal errors which only compound the matter**. This chain of events then cascades into a whole set of **misbeliefs**, all linked together, and all predicated on the **incorrect setting of a date for the return of Jesus Christ**.

Here's one more nail in the coffin of date-setting. I want you to think about this very carefully. If Jesus said that **no man knows the hour or the day**, then by definition **any date set by man would automatically and logically have to be incorrect!** The minute you think you know, you **don't know!** And since **no date set will be the date of His return, all dates set by man are automatically NOT the date of His return!**

Does Russell's theology follow this pattern? To a "T"! He originally set a date of **1874** for the return of Christ. Gosh, did that happen? What do you think? Having failed, as he must, to correctly predict the return of Christ, a new date is set, that of **1914**. The genuinely laughable thing about this second date is that it is set **posthumously**, in **1930** by the Watchtower Society. And, in keeping with the basic pattern of cascading false doctrine, it is further stipulated that **Jesus came invisibly**. Now we're really off the edge! You see, if Jesus came **invisibly**, and only true believers can see Him or accept this great "truth", then there is **no way to "prove" that the Watchtower folks are dead wrong!** Now, since **Scripture** says that every eye will see Him, **Scripture** clearly proves them to be in error. But, hey, they weren't paying attention to literal Scripture when Russell came up with the doctrine in the first place, so why bother to stick to Scripture now?

Pretty sad, isn't it? Good people get trapped in bad doctrine and ruin their lives. That's why Paul told Timothy to keep a close watch over his **life** and his **doctrine**. You see, dear friends, **living wrong and believing wrong will both send you to Hell!** You have to get **both aspects right** in order to make Heaven. Does that mean that any misunderstanding of the Bible, no matter how small, will hurl you into Hades? Hardly! But major doctrinal errors regarding morality or the basic dual nature of Jesus (Son of Man) Christ (Son of God) will do you in, permanently!

Once the fundamental error has been made, the cascade of errors continues, in a futile attempt to justify the original error. Once you've set a date for Jesus' return, **and it doesn't happen**, you are faced with only two choices:

- (1) **Admit that you are wrong**, and have totally blown it, just like thousands of date-setters before you, -- or --
- (2) **Try to cover up your error** by inventing even more outlandish lies to prop up the original error.

So it was with Charles Taze Russell. When Jesus failed to return to the earth in 1874, some fancy steppin' was clearly in order. What to do? Some date setters, like the Millerites, feverishly went back to their elaborate calculations and discovered, much to their amazement, that they had made a **dating error**, starting the calculation at one instead of zero. This meant, of course, that Jesus wasn't really supposed to return **this year**, but rather **next year at the same exact time!** True to form, when one year had passed, a much smaller, but even more zealous band of followers gathered on a mountaintop and cried "*Maranatha*", which means, "*Even so, Lord come!*". Unfortunately, just as Jesus had **accurately predicted almost 2,000 years before**, they were wrong! And just as the Millerites had been wrong, so the followers of Russell were wrong as well. Now, with the single most important prophecy given by Russell having failed, some serious backpedaling was in order. Their solution to the problem? No Problem! **Create a doctrine stating that Jesus had, in fact, actually returned, just as Russell had predicted, but that He had returned INVISIBLY!**

Remember how I said earlier in this article that **once the original error is made and remains uncorrected, that it's all downhill from there?** That's exactly what happened. In fact, the Watchtower Society has actually embraced **two separate dates for the invisible return of Jesus**. The first date, as originally set by Russell, was **1874**. Later on, it was amended to **1914**. Can you see the compounded confusion? It wouldn't be so bad if the Scriptures weren't **bluntly, repeatedly, unavoidably clear about the nature of the return of Jesus Christ**. Remember, all false doctrine stems from taking a **literal truth** expressed in the Bible, and trying to interpret it **symbolically**. When you say that something God has said literally is symbolic, it means that you can now overlay **any meaning you want over the literal meaning, thus changing, sometimes drastically, the original literal meaning of the text**.

To help you understand what I'm talking about here, let me pose to you one simple question: **Were the prophecies concerning the first advent of Jesus fulfilled literally or symbolically?** For example, was He born of a virgin **literally or symbolically?** Was he born in Bethlehem **literally or symbolically?** Was He a Nazarene **literally or symbolically?** Was He crucified between two thieves **literally or symbolically?** Did he make His grave with the rich **literally or symbolically?** Did he arise again from the dead three days later **literally or symbolically?** (Careful on this one...they've even managed to mess up the physical resurrection of Jesus, claiming that He wasn't resurrected physically but rather spiritually. See what I mean when I talk about a cascade effect?) Did they cast lots for His garments **literally or symbolically?** Did they pierce His hands and His feet **literally or symbolically?** Did He come through the Eastern Gate of Jerusalem riding on an ass, the foal of an ass, on **precisely the exact day prophesied by Gabriel to Daniel?** I hope by now you get the picture. You see, dear friends, every single prophecy concerning the first coming of Jesus Christ was **literally fulfilled!** There was nothing symbolic about any of it. Every single thing that God said regarding His Son came to pass **exactly as spoken! Folks, God means what He says!**

Now, here comes the killer question: **If every single prophecy concerning the FIRST Coming of Jesus Christ was LITERALLY FULFILLED, they what the heck makes you think that the prophecies regarding His SECOND Coming are mysteriously, magically all going to be FULFILLED SYMBOLICALLY?** Do you see the sheer lunacy involved in this kind of thinking? Do you see how totally it makes God Almighty out to be some sort of incompetent, lunatic liar, who somehow can't watch over His Word to perform it and bring it to pass. No, dear friends, the Bible is loaded from cover to cover with instance after instance of God **making a promise and then literally bringing it to pass exactly as He has said!**

Now that we're finally into literal fulfillment, what exactly **does** the Bible say about the Second Coming of Jesus Christ? Here are some Scriptures for you to chew on:

"<sup>26</sup> *Therefore, if they say to you, 'Look, He is in the desert!' **do not go out**; or 'Look, He is in the inner rooms!', **do not believe it.*** <sup>27</sup> ***For as lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be***" -- Matthew 24:26-27

Wow! How obvious can that be? Truthfully, I could stop right here in this article, so powerful is this statement by Jesus Himself. You have to twist and distort this Scripture to the point of no return to make it say anything else than what it says. Yet, somehow, they manage to do just that. But we're not concerned right now with what they did to it. We're concerned with what it says, and it says **a ton!** In this single sentence, Jesus **warns in advance** that there will be people (false Christs and false prophets [see verse 24]) who will come to you and say, "*Why brother, you've missed it! Christ has already come!*" What does Jesus say? **Not a chance, baby!** When **He** comes, that stellar, singular event will **light up the sky like a lightning bolt so massive that it will literally stretch across the entire expanse overhead!** Now, friends, **that's** a lightning bolt! Now, let's take this passage of Scripture where it's **supposed** to go, and uncover the **literal, hidden truth** that's been staring us in the face all these years! Taking this prophecy **literally** (and we must, else we call God a liar!), the Second Coming of Jesus Christ will therefore involve **a sudden, massive discharge of light into a sky that is darkened globally.** Why do I say globally? Hang in there. We'll get to the **rest of the story** in just a second. Any lightning bolt sufficient to light up the **entire sky** is a physical, literal event that **could not possibly be missed by any human being except those who were physically blind.** Does this sound like **invisible** to you??? This actual, literal event is going to be as close to a slap across the face as collective humanity is ever going to get, short of the Great White Throne Judgment, and, by then, it will already be too late! You will not be able to miss it when Jesus returns! But let's have some more fun with the passage before we move to the next verse in question. Notice that Jesus says **from the east...to the west.** If you've been listening carefully, He has just told us **in what direction He, the angels and the returning saints will be coming from relative to the earth's position in the Solar System.** In the Bible, the Prince always enters through the **Eastern Gate.** In the Book of Exodus, the children of Israel actually formed a **cross** in the desert when they camped, with the top of the cross to the **east**, and the foot of the cross facing **west.** Don't believe me? No problem! At some point in the future, God willing, I will sit down and show you, directly from the Book of Numbers, how all of that worked. God is so awesome! Everything He does **comes from the east, and heads west.** The invading 200 million man army on horseback from China comes **from the east.** Jesus Himself **approaches the earth from the east, and moves westward across the globe with the saints, lighting up a darkened sky with untold millions of points of light.**

How do we know that the sky will be darkened when all this happens? Piece of cake! Listen to what **else** Jesus has to say:

"<sup>29</sup> *Immediately after the tribulation of those days **the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light;** the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.*" -- Matthew 24:29

Now, if this were the only Scripture that says that there will be a global blackout, there might be room for argument, but, in fact, there are **dozens** of Scriptures, both in the Old and New Testaments, which all say the exact same thing. Remember, over 70 % of what Jesus said in the **New Testament** was a direct or paraphrased quote from the **Old Testament.** So if He said it in the New Testament, it is probably found in multiple locations in the Old Testament.

By the way, on a totally separate topic, Jesus has just totally wiped out all the Pre-Trib Theology guys. Notice how He says **immediately after the tribulation?** The events which He has just described occur at the **end of the 6<sup>th</sup> Seal, at the end of the Great Tribulation and just prior to the Wrath of God.** So much for leaving early! But let's let Him continue His statement:

"<sup>30</sup> ***Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and [then] they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and glory.***" -- Matthew 24:30

Now, I know I just stuck an extra **then** in that sentence, but if you read the sequence carefully, you can see that it's implied. Either way, the chain of events is unmistakable. Here's what Jesus just said, **in context:**

- (1) A great tribulation will occur.
- (2) The sun will be darkened.
- (3) The moon will not give its light.
- (4) The stars will fall from heaven.
- (5) The powers of the heavens will be shaken.
- (6) The sign of the Son of Man will appear.
- (7) All the tribes of the earth will mourn.
- (8) They will see the son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.
- (9) He will send His angels out.
- (10) A great trumpet will sound.
- (11) **They will gather together His elect, from the four winds, from one end of heaven to another.**

Now, let me ask you this, dear reader: **How in the world could you possibly miss all of that???**

**How could anyone in his right mind read these incredibly clear-cut Scriptures and come with an invisible return? Or, for that matter, how could anyone read these Scriptures and come up with a Pre-Tribulation Rapture???**

Can there be any doubt, dear friends? Just as Revelation says, ***EVERY EYE WILL SEE HIM*** when He comes. **Halleluia!!! Maranatha!!! Even so, Lord Jesus, COME QUICKLY!**

**Until next time, pray and prepare for His return!**





# Day 18 – Even They Who Pierced Him



“Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.”

– The Revelation of Jesus Christ 1:7

As we walk systematically through *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, you will find that there is no such thing as just skimming through this incredible book. We have been studying a single Scripture passage for the last three E-Pistles, with no apparent end in sight. But there’s a good reason for this slowness: **Every single verse in Revelation links to one or more source passages found elsewhere in the Holy Scriptures.** In fact, you can’t study *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* without studying the **entire Bible!** Virtually every single symbol found in the **last** book of the Bible is referenced in an **earlier** book of the Bible, often multiple times. Try to picture it this way: **If I was the greatest author in the history of the universe, and I wanted to write the biggest best-seller of all times, with an incredible plot, based on a true story, how would I do it?** Well, first of all, just like any good author, I would begin the story slowly, introducing major characters one at a time. At the same time, knowing that all great works of literature contain not only a major plot, but also a series of sub-plots which intertwine with the main story line, I would also begin to introduce the sub-plots, yet without revealing my real motives. I would leave hints here and there, and place seemingly irresolvable issues judiciously throughout the book. This would grasp the reader’s attention, because nothing drives people crazier than unresolved issues. There are whole societies dedicated to finding plot flaws in things as seemingly trivial as Marvel Comic Book plot lines. When I was growing up, and Superman and Batman were in their initial heyday, there was no such thing as an uncontested issue. No sooner would the latest version hit the newsstands than the authors would be inundated with hundreds, sometimes thousands of letters, all eagerly pointing out what they perceived as flaws in the plot line. Today, we do that with movies, and, to be honest, I know of a few nasty glitches in movie plot lines myself, since I am a detail-oriented person.

But what if I told you that there was a plot line developed over a period of 6,000 years, without a single flaw in the plot? What if I told you that **each and every sentence in the novel linked to multiple sentences in other places in the book?** What if I told you that I could **prove to you** that Jesus is Lord, the Christ, the Son of the Living God and the only Savior and Redeemer of Mankind by simply walking you through the Bible **backwards**, beginning with the Book of Revelation? What if I could show you **The Greatest Story Ever Told, written by the Greatest Person Who Ever Lived?** Even a hardened atheist would have to be interested in that kind of challenge. The real tragedy of all of this is that **hardly anybody has ever read the book from cover to cover!** Imagine! How could you possibly understand even the most trivial of paperback novels if you don’t **read the whole thing?** How could you possibly make sense of **any book by simply turning to chapters at random, picking sentences out of context, and then trying to write a book review based on that method of analysis?** Do you think that your book review would have any connection to the actual story line as contained in the book? Could you ever hope to understand the methods, motives and message of the author? Or would you simply wander in a state of confusion for the rest of your life, never truly understanding what the author meant to say? **So it is with the Word of God.** It is **not** a random compendium of fragmented works written by a ragtag series of unrelated authors over an extended period of time. Instead, it is **the most marvelous, systematic, consistent, methodical, orderly account every given of the hand of God**

**Almighty moving in the lives of men.** It has greater internal consistency than any book ever written, even though it has multiple human authors spanning over 6,000 years because, in the final analysis, **it was written by the Holy Spirit, a single author with a single plan, a single plot and a single conclusion!**

This incredible Book is illustrated in microcosm in the Scripture passage which we are examining today. The single fragment of Scripture underlined at the top of this article will cross-foot you to at least three different Scripture passages, which in turn cross-foot to multiple other Scriptures, which in turn...I hope you get the picture. Let's actually look, one at a time, at all the marvelous Scriptures prophesied and fulfilled by this single thread of Scripture.

The best way to understand this chain of events is to walk **backwards through the Scriptures.** Let's turn first to one of the last books in the Old Testament, **Zechariah.** It is simply amazing how the Lord literally packs Messianic Scriptures into the final few books of the Old Testament. After that there will be 400 years of **absolute silence** from God, when He will speak **not at all** to His people. In Zechariah, we find a whole series of parallel references which will not surface again until the Book of Revelation. In **Zechariah Chapter 4,** we find references to the **Seven-Piped Candlestick** and the **Two Olive Trees,** explained later in Revelation to be the **Two Witnesses** who are murdered in Jerusalem and then rise again from the dead after 3½ days. In **Zechariah Chapter 5,** we find the **Scroll of Revelation,** also written on both sides, with a detailed explanation of why there is writing on both sides. It was not normal for a scroll to be transcribed on both sides. Normally, writing was placed only on the interior, and the scroll was rolled up in order to protect its contents. In fact, even though chapters and verses weren't added to the Bible until much later in history, and even taking into account the fact that the Old Testament was done long before the New Testament, it **just so happens** that **Zechariah 5:1** exactly parallels **Revelation 5:1** and explains the latter passage and the symbols contained there. It also happens that **Zechariah 5:5-11** is linked directly to **Revelation 17:1-18.** But it gets better than that: **Zechariah 6:1-8** exactly parallels **Revelation 6:1-8,** and beautifully explains the passage in Revelation, not only identifying the **Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse** but also clearly identifying **the places on the surface of the globe where these four deadly riders will exact their wrath.** (More on that subject another day...I just wanted to plant a teaser for you to think about!) In **Zechariah 10** we find the reference to the **Early and Latter Rain** so often referred to by the Pentecostal camp. In **Zechariah 13** we find a **Fountain** flowing into the **River of Life** found in the New Jerusalem. In **Zechariah 14** we find the **Return of Jesus Christ** and the amazing fulfillment of the prophecy given at the beginning of the Book of Acts regarding His Return to the very mountain and the very spot where He lifted off from. But the Scripture from Zechariah that we're interested in today is found in **Zechariah 12:**

*"<sup>9</sup>It shall be in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. <sup>10</sup>And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; **then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a first-born.**" - Zechariah 12:9-10*

There's so very much in these two verses that I am almost at a loss as to where to start. But here goes: For starters, please notice that this is **God speaking in both the First and Second Persons at the same time.** If you will remember our conversations in previous E-Pistles about the differences between **Chronos Time** and **Kairos Time,** you will recall that there is a vast difference between the ways that time is measured in the two realms. In **Chronos Time,** something can only be **one thing at one place at one time.** I can't be both **here** and **there** at the same time. But that's in Chronos Time. In **Kairos Time,** no such limitation exists. In fact, in Kairos Time, something can be **more than one thing at one time.** If this were a science fiction novel, I would say it this way: In Kairos Time, **any thing or any being may exist in multiple realities simultaneously, much like parallel universes.** This is how God can be a **Father,** a **Son** and a **Holy Spirit** at the same time. Looking at this from Chronos Time, it doesn't make any sense to us at all, and theological debates have raged for millennia over whether God is One or Three, when in fact the answer to the question is not One or Three, but rather **Yes!** He is all of the above at the very same time. It all has to do with the realm or universe in which He moves and lives and has His Being. So It's not bad grammar to say "...then they will look on **Me** whom they have pierced...", then turn right around and say, "...they will mourn for **Him**...and grieve for **Him** as one grieves for an only son". And here's the really fascinating thing: **who was it that was pierced? Jesus!!!** So when **God** is speaking prophetically to Zechariah and He says "they will look on **Me**", who is it that is

speaking? Is it the Father who was pierced? No! **It was the Son!** Preexistent, with a Resurrection body before time began, which he brought into Pre-Time from 33 AD by leaving space-time itself and reentering prior to space-time. Does your head hurt yet? I hope so! Folks, **the rules where He lives aren't like the rules where we live!** Now, having clearly identified Himself as **God the Son** by saying, "*they will look on Me*", He turns right around and also clearly identifies Himself as **He who is NOT the Son** by saying, "*they will mourn for Him...grieve for Him*". By saying **Him**, He clearly also identifies Himself as **the Father who sent the Son to be pierced.**

Now, let me give you another little tidbit to chew on: Given God's existence **outside of space-time**, His absolute **mastery and control of space-time**, and the fact that He can move **forward and backward in space-time**, how in the world could a simple **created being** like the devil, trapped in space-time just like you and I and totally incapable of time travel, **ever hope to get the upper hand on an omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent being called God who can move through space-time at will, can be all things to all men, and be in all places at all times through His Spirit???** Let's take this a step further. Since God exists outside of space-time, He can intersect with space-time at an infinite number of places, just like a man walking over a detailed tile floor, first stepping on one tile and then another. Each tile represents a moment and a place in space-time or Chronos Time. To the tile being stepped on, it would appear that God was **there and only there at that moment in time.** But just because God stepped on **one tile beneath His feet to interact with it doesn't mean that He can't step on other tiles as well.** In fact, in order to accomplish His Sovereign Task, **all the tiles, or points in space-time, must be interacted with in order to bring them into compliance with His Will and Master Plan.** And that, my dear friends, in what our benighted theologians call **Omnipresence, or being able to be in all places at all times.** They then proceed to tell us that it is simply a **mystery**, which must be accepted by faith, since we can never truly comprehend it ourselves. Blah, blah, blah... Yet when you look at this from **God's perspective**, and look at it from **Kairos Time**, suddenly it makes perfect sense, and, in fact, has to be true due to the very nature of Kairos Time itself! Let's run down this road a little more, shall we? Since, due to the basic nature of God Himself and the Kairos Time which He exists in, He is **Omnipresent, or present at all places at all times, then it is a very small logical step to also realize that this makes Him Omnipotent, or all powerful, at the very same time!** How could you ever hope to defeat a being who, if He didn't like the outcome today, could simply intersect with yesterday to make a small correction in the flow of the continuum so that today as it happened never really happened at all? And we'd never know it, since the today we had experienced would be wiped out and replaced with an alternate today with a whole different set of experiences associated with it. Some of our science fiction series have delved into this a little, with the **Star Trek** series doing as good a job as any of pointing out the apparent paradoxes involved. But for God, no such paradox exists. A paradox only exists if you're looking at it from Chronos Time. No paradox exists when this sequence is viewed from Kairos Time. And just one more thing: **Since His existence in Kairos Time gives Him Omnipotence and Omnipresence in Chronos Time, it also gives Him Omniscience, or being all-knowing.** Since all of Chronos space-time is laid out before Him as an **accomplished fact, already done and completed**, and since He **dwells in an eternal realm in which there is an infinite amount of time available to Him, He also has opportunity to pre-know all things in advance!** And the devil thinks He can win? Excuse me! And you think that the devil really has any control over your life? Well, excuuuuuuse me!!! Only if you give him control, buddy! That's what makes the New Birth so very wonderful! This infinite, wonderful, marvelous, timeless, all-powerful, all-knowing, all-present, all-loving Being says, "*Hey, I'd like to come inside of you and live there. We'll work together in a symbiotic relationship. I'll provide you with companionship, guidance and comfort. When your earthly body eventually dies, I will hold in store for you another body that will never die. And when that happens, we'll link together in a way so wonderful, so complete, so utterly rapturous that you do not have words to describe it. And it will last forever!*" And then you say to Him, "*No thanks, God! I'd rather run my pathetic, puny little life right into the ground and die rather than let You who created me and loves me pick me up out of the miry clay and put my feet on a solid rock. Nah! Not interested!*" Friends, if that's not a working definition of crazy, then I don't know what is!

Wow! All of that out of one little snippet of Scripture? You ain't seen nothin' yet! Wait till you see what **else** is imbedded in this little chunk of gold! Now we're going to look at the next key point, **"whom they pierced"**. It is safe to say that the entire key to the **very atonement itself lies in this phrase.** But before we look at that, let's look at the actual events surrounding the piercing of Jesus Christ. In Zechariah, God talks about the event **as if it has already happened.** He says, "*they will* [future tense]

look on Me **whom they** [have already (past tense)] pierced". In plain English, what God (Jesus) just said was this: "When I come back, they are going to take a good look at Me, and realize that they crucified me, spilling my perfect blood back in AD 33, and they are going to grieve and mourn because of what they did, because they killed their very own Messiah and didn't even realize it. I was the only naturally born Son of God, and they hung me on a tree. The very person that they were looking for is the very person that they killed. Small wonder that they feel horrible about the whole thing!" Now, that's a wonderful, spiritual statement. But remember **when** He is making this statement. It isn't in the New Testament. It's in the Old Testament, over **400 years before the fact!** Yet He refers to the piercing as a **past tense event that has already happened!** Once again, this makes no sense whatsoever in Chronos Time. It does, however, make perfect sense in Kairos Time, since all events in Kairos Time are eternally **now**. To God, **everything has already happened! It's already a done deal, baby!** That's how He can speak through a prophet and call an event which has **yet to occur** something that has **already happened**.

Now, let's really get into deep water! It just so happens that this isn't the only Biblical reference to the piercing of Jesus in the Old Testament. It seems that our dear friend David, the man after God's own heart, had a rather remarkable experience one day while he was playing on his harp. Let's turn now to **Psalm 22** to look at one of the most remarkable prophetic Scriptures ever recorded. Just about everyone knows the **23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm**. It starts out with, "*The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want...*" It is considered to be one of the greatest passages of Scripture in the Bible. But if you back up one Psalm, you find a **blow by blow description of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, written by David under the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit, in which David actually sees and feels what happened to Jesus on the Cross!!!** The 22<sup>nd</sup> Psalm begins with a fascinating phrase. David writes, "**My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?**" Taken on face value, it is not much different from many cries of desperation recorded in the Bible, as men of faith struggled to keep or recover their faith during times of crisis. But there is something vastly different about this phrase. It seems that **this very phrase was uttered by Jesus as He hung on the cross, and is one of His famous Seven Last Words.**

The quote is recorded by two different Gospel writers, Matthew and Mark. Let's take a look at both quotes:

"<sup>45</sup> Now from the sixth hour [12:00 Noon] until the ninth hour [3:00 PM] there was darkness over all the land. <sup>46</sup> And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, '**Eli, Eli, lama sabach thani?**' that is **"My God, My God, why have You forsaken me?"**" -- Matthew 27:45-46

"<sup>33</sup> Now when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. <sup>34</sup> And at the ninth hour, Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying '**Eloi, Eloi, lama sabach thani?**', which is translated, **"My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?"**" -- Mark 15:33-34

In comparing Scripture to Scripture, it's painfully obvious that Jesus was **not crying out in desperation about some supposed abandonment by His Father, but rather quoting, as He did over 70% of the time in His ministry, directly from the Old Testament!** I've heard too many sermons about how God the Father had to turn His Face from His Son because of our sin, and that is why Jesus said what He did. Somehow, it never quite washed clean with me. Then, one day, I was reading in the Psalms and stumbled across Psalm 22. When I read Verse 1, I was riveted in place. Here was the **exact statement that Jesus made on the cross!** As I read the rest of the Psalm, I was amazed to discover detail after detail concerning the **crucifixion of Christ** recorded there in Psalm 22, written untold hundreds of years **before the event ever occurred!** Now, if that were the **only** parallel between the 22<sup>nd</sup> Psalm and the actual Crucifixion, it would be interesting, but certainly not enough to rivet our attention. **However...** as we read the **rest of the story**, we find one incredible parallel after another. Let's compare Scripture to Scripture for a bit, shall we?

**Psalm 22:6** says, "*But I am a worm, and no man; despised by the people*".

What does the word **worm** refer to? **Isaiah 41:14** says, "*Fear not, you worm Jacob, you men of Israel. I will help you*", says the Lord and Your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel." When Jesus calls Himself a **worm**, He was referring to this Scripture, which promises **Divine help and deliverance from His Heavenly Father!**

**Why does He need help?** Well, he's "*despised by the people*". That means that they hate Him and are arrayed against Him. In fact, that reference cross-foots directly to **Isaiah 53**, and the famous narrative of the **Suffering Servant**, considered by virtually every Christian scholar to refer to **Christ Himself**.

**Isaiah 53:3** says, "**He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him**".

How amazing! But that's only **the tip of the iceberg!** Wait till you see what comes next!

**Psalm 22:7-8** says, "*All those who see Me ridicule Me; They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, 'He trusted in the Lord, let Him [The Father] rescue Him [The Son]; Let Him deliver Him, since He [The Father] delights in Him! [The Son]*".

Remember how I said that one Scripture cascades into a whole series of other Scriptures? Well...it **just so happens** that the phrase **delights in Him** just happens to have a parallel statement elsewhere in the Bible, located in the New Testament. The event in which that Scripture is contained? **John the Baptist baptizing Jesus in the Jordan River!** Let's look at **that** passage for just a second.

"<sup>16</sup> *When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. <sup>17</sup> And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'"* – Matthew 3:16-17

One of the most basic Bible principles of Scriptural validation is that **every matter must be established in the mouths of two or more witnesses**, so this concept of the Father delighting in and being well pleased in the Son should be found in at least **one other place in Scripture**. In fact, we don't even have to leave the Gospel of Matthew to find our second witness.

"<sup>4</sup> *Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, 'Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.'* <sup>5</sup> *While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!'* <sup>6</sup> *And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces and were greatly afraid.*" Matthew 17:4-6

So, even though Jesus is **despised by men**, He is a **beloved Son** to His Father, and His Father is **well pleased and delights in Him**. Folks, that's not a bad place to be in. If you have to choose between making men happy and making God happy, guess which way you should go? Peter said it best in the Book of Acts:

"<sup>29</sup> *But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: 'We ought to obey God rather than men.'*" – Acts 5:29

There's much, much more in Psalm 22, but we've run out of time for today! For the **rest of the story**, pick up with us again on **Day 19**, entitled **They Cast Lots for My Garments!**

Until next time, walk in faith, walk in integrity, walk in love. Continue to trust Him who watches over His Word to perform it!



# Day 19 – They Cast Lots for My Garments



“For dogs have surrounded Me; The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet; I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me. They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots.”

— Psalm 22:16-18

In our last E-Pistle, we began a discussion of the remarkable events surrounding the crucifixion of Jesus Christ and its vivid, blow-by-blow description in **Psalm 22**, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit by David. In it, he describes vividly almost all of the details of Golgotha. How, you might ask, is that possible? How can a little, red-headed shepherd boy sitting on a Judean hillside know all of the graphic details of a type of event which won't even be practiced for over a thousand years? Now, everyone knows the **23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm**. It is one of the greatest passages in the Bible. Yet very few Christians, much less pastors, know the prophetic significance of the **22<sup>nd</sup> Psalm**. Even fewer understand the prophetic mechanism, and how this kind of supernatural revelation comes into existence, gets framed, gets written down, and, eventually, comes to pass. Before we take a look at **what** God told David through the Holy Spirit, let's look at **how** this kind of information is transmitted.

In 2 Peter 1:18-21, the Apostle says, “<sup>18</sup> *And this voice **which came from heaven we heard**, when we were with him in the holy mount.* <sup>19</sup> *We have also a **more sure word of prophecy**; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:* <sup>20</sup> *Knowing this first, that **no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation**. For the prophecy **came not in old time by the will of man**: but holy men of God spake as they were **moved by the Holy Ghost.**”*

The very first thing that folks need to understand about all of the **Verbal Gifts** (Word of Knowledge, Word of Wisdom, Prophecy, Discerning of Spirits, Tongues, and Interpretation of Tongues) is that they **never originate in the mind of the prophet, but rather in the mind of God**. Now God knows everything that can ever be known, past, present and future. All knowledge, wisdom and understanding come from Him. It's impossible for us to really comprehend how vast this knowledge and information is. He knows the cure for cancer. He knows what you'll be doing tomorrow afternoon at 3:00. He knows if Aunt Margaret will ever forgive Aunt Sally for what happened 23 years ago. Yet He rarely shares this information. One of the primary reasons for not sharing such vast knowledge is that most of us would quit before we ever got started if we knew in advance what kind of difficulties, adversities and hardships we would have to encounter, endure and overcome in our journey in life. Instead, His counsel to us is always, “*Let the troubles of the day be sufficient thereof*”. And, frankly, that's awfully good counsel. As I get older, I see the enormous benefit of disengaging from reliving yesterday and fretting about tomorrow. Having gone through an extended period of illness, and having endured a significant amount of pain over a long period of time, I don't think I could have made it through if someone had told me that I would spend over six months in non-stop pain, sometimes so severe that even simple conversations became impossible. And, as I write this article, I am still in pain. How much longer, Oh Lord? Who knows? Maybe tomorrow. Maybe today. Maybe never... And it's that possibility of never, or at least never in this lifetime, that becomes so very frightening. But if I can get through **today**, I'll worry about tomorrow when it gets here. So the Lord tells us **only what we need to know and only when we need to know it**. Now, for those of us who are know-it-alls, this is a very disconcerting thing. We want to know it all and control it all, or at least maintain the illusion of knowledge and control. And, frankly, dear friends, that's exactly what it is -- an **illusion!** There is never a time when you will know **everything** (at least on

this side of eternity) about a given subject. **Absolute knowledge** is not the answer, **adequate knowledge** is! And that's where all the information superhighway gifts come in. Prophecy, Word of Knowledge and Word of Wisdom all operate on a **need-to-know basis**. God will never tell you **everything** about the individual you're ministering to. Frankly, you don't need to know **everything** about anybody. You don't even know everything about yourself. It's also a good thing not to know too much about the person you're ministering or prophesying to. If you know too much, your knowledge of their past failures and sins would block you from delivering a prophecy designed to bring them out of their past and into their future. Only by selectively blocking out past failures can you be free to address them in terms of what they can and will be come...if only someone will give them a chance to change from what they are to what they can be.

There's another issue to be considered in prophecy and prophetic utterances. Because God just loves to do things in a manner **totally unexpected** (just so He, not you, gets the glory), He does not willingly nor easily roll out the deep things in Him for the casual observer to pick up as they walk along the side of the road. That means that when he gives a prophet a Word, it will by nature **only give selected details scattered here and there throughout the text**. Consider the parables of Jesus. Remember that He didn't explain things in parables **so that folks could understand them more easily**. Instead, He **hid or masked the real meaning of the truth He was trying to impart in a form that would require some additional work on the part of the listeners, or, in our case, the readers**. Only when the disciples came to Him **after the fact** did He they lay out what the parable meant. The same is true for prophecies. Often, God will only give me a small piece of the puzzle, not even enough for me to know what I'm talking about. It makes no **rational** sense to me, but faith operates on **supernatural faith, not rational logic**. If you don't start and finish with faith, you'll never understand God. You can be as religious as any man in the world, but you will be lost and confused until you simply **learn to trust Him in all things**. And you know what's really sad? Of all the wonderful things that our Lord and Savior taught, no one in the crowd wanted to **really** know the answers. They just wanted bread, fish and miracles, the **results of the knowledge**, without the **knowledge itself** or the understanding of **how to use that knowledge**. Even among his own disciples, out of a core group of twelve, only three, Peter, James and John, came to him on a regular basis asking for an explanation of what He had just said. And even so, they didn't always get what He told them as far as an explanation was concerned, **but at least they cared enough to want to know the how and why** of what He had said.

So it is with the prophecies contained in the Old and New Testament. Everything given to the prophets, apostles and even Jesus Himself, came fragmentarily, in bits and pieces. At no point in time were any of them given the entire picture. Jesus, as **Son of Man**, prior to His resurrection and His receiving an eternal indestructible body, came closest to absolute knowledge, but even He, by His own admission, was denied certain pieces of information prior to the resurrection. Don't believe me? Too much religion crammed down your throat by well-meaning preachers who knew how to **shout** but not how to **study**? Then let me quote to you Jesus' own words, found in Mark 13:32:

*"<sup>32</sup> But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, **nor the Son**, but only the Father."*

Now for those of you who want to quibble, I know that Matthew 24:36 omits **nor the Son**, but the simple truth is that Mark says so, and that's good enough for me. In the Garden, He begged the Father to lift this cup from Him, but all He got from heaven was silence. I can well identify with that situation. Because of the terrible physical problems that I have suffered through during the past year, I struggle with severe peripheral neuropathy in my hands and feet. Don't know what that is? Imagine pain radiating from your hands, arms, back, feet, legs, and sometimes even your chest and face **constantly**. The only thing that changes is the degree of pain. Right now, as I write this **E-Pistle**, my hands hurt from every joint, and my feet and calves are transmitting numbness and tingling. It's like having a swarm of bees on your legs and hands that are constantly stinging you. Don't think I've bombarded Heaven for my healing? Every day, every hour, every minute. Confessed it, laid hands on myself, everything that the Book says to do, and...nothing. Silence from heaven. Just like Jesus in the garden. Nobody gets the full picture. We probably couldn't handle it if we did. It would drive us stark raving mad, or drive us to self-destruction if we knew **everything** we were going to have to endure for the rest of our lives. God does not give us a full information download because it would destroy us, so fragile and weak are we.



So, when a prophetic word comes, it is never the full story, just what **we need to know at that time**. More information will be provided at a later date if we need to know more. So it was with David. As he prophesied under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he probably wondered what the heck he was talking about. Many of the things which he described in the form of torture hadn't even been invented yet. When they executed someone in his day, they impaled you on a sharpened pole, stoned you to death (stones were a commodity easily found in those days), or, on occasion, cut off your head. Extended torture was not in the Hebrew line of thinking. Now watch the incredible parallels between what David saw and said prophetically, and the actual additional events of the crucifixion:

Here's what David said in Psalm 22:7-8:

" <sup>7</sup>*All who see me make fun of me. They open their mouths and shake their heads, and say, <sup>8</sup>**'He trusts in the Lord. Let the Lord help him. Let the Lord take him out of trouble, because he is happy in Him.'** "*

Now, compare that statement to what Matthew 27:43 says:

" <sup>43</sup>***He trusts God. Let God save Him now, if God cares for Him. He has said, 'I am the Son of God.'*** "

How incredible is that? And this from the Pharisees, who were suppose to know the Scriptures. Surely they would not have knowingly or willing prophesied against themselves if they had realized what they were doing. No, dear friends, God kept them in ignorance of what they were saying in order to fulfill Scripture and in order to heap condemnation on their heads out of their own mouths.

Now, watch what David says in Psalm 22:14:

" <sup>14</sup>***I am poured out like water.*** *And all my bones are out of joint. My heart is like a melted candle within me.* "

And on to the account in John 21:32-37:

" <sup>32</sup> *Then the soldiers came and **broke the legs of the first man and of the other one who had been nailed to crosses beside Jesus.*** <sup>33</sup> *They came to Jesus. They saw He was already dead **so they did not break His legs.*** <sup>34</sup> *But one of the **soldiers pushed a spear into His side. Blood and water ran out.*** <sup>35</sup> *The one who saw it is writing this and what he says is true. He knows he is telling the truth so you may believe.* <sup>36</sup> *These things happened as the Holy Writings said they would happen, **"Not one of His bones will be broken."*** (Exodus 12:46) <sup>37</sup> *And in another place the Holy Writings say, **"They will look at Him Whose side they cut."*** -- Zechariah 12:10

Notice the **literal fulfillment** of Psalm 22, and of Exodus 12, and of Zechariah 12, all within six verses. Pretty amazing, huh? Considering that the Roman soldiers who were fulfilling the Scripture knew nothing of the prophecies, and the fact that Jesus was already dead and clearly had no control at that point in time of what came out of His body when they pierced it. But it gets better than that. Consider Psalm 22:16:

" <sup>16</sup> *For **dogs have surrounded Me; the congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet;*** " – Psalm 22:16

Wow! I had to underline **everything**, didn't I? Here's the reason why:

Psalm 22 says that **dogs have surrounded Him**. What does that mean? Simple! The Gentiles, of which the Romans soldiers were clearly a part, were view by the Jews as **dogs**, and were called such. Remember when Jesus, worn out by the pressures of the ministry, withdrew into the Syro-Phonician area, away from Judea and Galilee, where nobody knew Him (or so He thought) to get a little rest. No sooner had He hit the city limits than He was approached by a Syro-Phonician woman who had a daughter possessed by an unclean spirit. She begged Him to come and cast the demon out, but He replied, with seeming unnecessary harshness,

"<sup>27</sup> *Let the children be filled first, for it is not good to take the children's bread **and throw it to the little dogs.***" -- Mark 7:27

He was calling her a Gentile **dog**. He was worn out. He was exhausted. He had had His fill of people with unmet needs, all clamoring for His attention. He desperately needed a break. And here, where **nobody** should know who He was, there was **somebody** right at the door, crying for help. It was more than He could take. He, too, was human, just as we are. He got tired. He got angry. He wept. All these things are documented in the Gospels. Yet, somehow, we overlook His **humanity** and focus only on His **divinity**. Bad news, folks. If Jesus wasn't **fully man** to do and endure the things He did, none of us make heaven, and all of us make hell. Don't believe me? Someday, God willing, I'll write an **E-Pistle** about that. It should give us hope and make us ashamed of what we have and are not using.

But, back to the story...

**Dogs** (Gentile unbelievers) were literally surrounding Him, in the form of the four Roman soldiers that had been assigned to this task. But not only were they there, the **Chief Priests, the Scribes and the Elders who hated His guts and wanted Him dead also showed up, to taunt and torment Him as He hung there dying and in massive shock**. And, so, again literally, **He was surrounded by the congregation of the wicked**. But it gets better than that! Psalm 22 says that **they pierced His hands and feet**. Now, here things get **very** interesting. If you study the four Gospel accounts, it merely says that they **crucified** Him. None of the four accounts make any mention of nails piercing His hands and feet, except the Gospel of Luke, which doesn't mention it during the crucifixion, but only **after** His resurrection, when He enters the Upper Room out of nowhere and scares the living heck out of them:

"<sup>36</sup> *Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, "Peace to you."*<sup>37</sup> ***But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit.***<sup>38</sup> *And He said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts?"*<sup>39</sup> ***Behold My hands and My feet,*** *that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have."*<sup>40</sup> *When He had said this, **He showed them His hands and His feet.***<sup>41</sup> *But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He said to them, "Have you any food here?"*<sup>42</sup> *So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb.*<sup>43</sup> *And He took it and ate in their presence."*  
-- Luke 24:36-43

How appropriate that **Luke the Physician** would pay attention to the **medical conditions**, where the rest of the Gospel writers didn't. It's a good thing he did; otherwise we would only have partial, circumstantial evidence that both His hands and feet were pierced.

And the only reason we know that they were actually **pierced** is the narrative that John provides us in Chapter 20, Verses 24-27:

"<sup>24</sup> *Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came.*<sup>25</sup> *The other disciples therefore said to him, "We have seen the Lord."* ***So he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."***<sup>26</sup> *And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!"*<sup>27</sup> *Then He said to Thomas, "**Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing.***" -- John 20:24-27

Yet, here again, we have a **literal fulfillment** of prophecy regarding the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. And people say that there is no proof? Please! Give me a break! What is the probability that all of these prophecies, from so long ago, from so many people, places and times, could all be fulfilled in one three-hour window on Mount Golgotha just outside of Jerusalem by the very one who said He was the Messiah, the Son of God. How many zeroes do you have to put after the decimal point to get a probability of all these things coming to pass at the same time? And yet, there is more:

And now we finally come to the title of this **E-Pistle, They Cast Lots for My Garment**. If I just dealt with this one prophetic fulfillment, it wouldn't carry nearly the clout that a comprehensive overview does. If you're a non-believer, and you're reading this article, doesn't the amazing parallel of Scriptures catch

your attention? Doesn't it warrant **at least** a fair hearing of the Gospel of Jesus Christ? Now, listen carefully, as I **Unroll the Scroll** a little bit more...

" <sup>18</sup> **They divide My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots.**" -- Psalm 22:18

Now, listen to what the Roman soldiers did:

" <sup>23</sup> *Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, **took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier a part, and also the tunic. Now the tunic was without seam, woven from the top in one piece.** <sup>24</sup> They said therefore among themselves, 'Let us not tear it, **but cast lots for it, whose it shall be**', that the Scripture might be fulfilled which says: '**They divided My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots.**' Therefore the soldiers did these things." -- John 19:23-24*

Notice that they tore His garments into four equal pieces (which is how we know that there were four soldiers on this assignment), **dividing His garments among them, all except His tunic**, which was a nice piece of clothing, woven **without seam**, so to tear it unevenly into four pieces would never work. It would ruin the garment, and never tear evenly. So they **had no choice but to gamble for the whole thing, and cast lots for his clothing**. Again, are these Torah-believing Jews, trying desperately to make actions fit prophetic words? Hardly! They are hardened Gentile Roman soldiers, unaware and uncaring about the words on some dusty old scroll found in the temple of a conquered people. Yet they fulfilled Scripture **to the very letter**. Incredible! One more thought. As I was writing this article, it just hit me. The **veil in the temple** was also a single, seamless piece of cloth, a **garment for the Glory of Israel, the Ark of the Covenant. And while the garment belonging to Grace and Mercy was NOT torn in two, but retained, the garment belonging to Law and Works WAS torn in two, ending the reign of Law and beginning the reign of Grace and Faith.** How awesome! How incredible!

But that's not the end of the story. Most people don't even know that Psalm 22 is a blow-by-blow description of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. But for those few who do, most of them don't know that Psalm 22 also precursors **The Resurrection of Jesus Christ**. Most see the first words of the Psalm, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" as an unanswered cry for help. What they don't see is Psalm 22:21b, where David/Jesus both cry out, "**You have answered me!**" This is not a cry for help; this is a **shout of victory!** Listen to what **David said** and **Jesus quoted**, in the rest of the Psalm:

" <sup>22</sup> **I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will praise You:** <sup>23</sup> *You who fear the LORD, praise Him! All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him, and fear Him, all you offspring of Israel!* <sup>24</sup> **For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; Nor has He hidden His face from Him; but when He cried to Him, He heard.** <sup>25</sup> *My praise shall be of You in the great assembly; I will pay My vows before those who fear Him.* <sup>26</sup> *The poor shall eat and be satisfied; Those who seek Him will praise the LORD. Let your heart live forever!* <sup>27</sup> **All the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations shall worship before You.** <sup>28</sup> **For the kingdom is the LORD's, and He rules over the nations.** <sup>29</sup> *All the prosperous of the earth shall eat and worship; all those who go down to the dust shall bow before Him, even he who cannot keep himself alive.* <sup>30</sup> **A posterity shall serve Him. It will be recounted of the Lord to the next generation,** <sup>31</sup> **They will come and declare His righteousness to a people who will be born, that He has done this.**" -- Psalm 22:22-31

Gosh! Where do I start? Jesus, in quoting the **beginning** of Psalm 22, is also referencing **all** of Psalm 22. You don't believe that? All right. Go out and get yourself betrayed, beaten to within an inch of your life, body shredded and bleeding, then carry a heavy wooden cross down a uneven street for several miles before you collapse in pain and exhaustion. Then, let them nail your hands and feet to that piece of wood, and have to hang there for hours. Think you'd be up to quoting the whole Psalm? No? I didn't think so.

In quoting Psalm 22, Jesus is also making the following victorious statements:

- (1) **You have heard me!**
- (2) **Despite the fact that I am hanging on a cross right now, I will declare Your Name to my brethren.**
- (3) **That means that I will rise again.**

- (4) **When I appear to over 500 people at one time, I will praise You in the midst of the assembly.**
- (5) **My Father has not despised not abhorred my affliction.**
- (6) **AND HE HAS NOT HIDDEN HIS FACE FROM ME!** (So much for all the sermons which say that the Father had to turn His back on the Son on the cross because of mankind's sin! So much for those who preach and teach that the Father could not look on the Son while He was on the cross! Why don't they just read the Bible for **what it really says?**)
- (7) **When I cried out to My Father, He heard me!**
- (8) **All the ends of the earth will remember this event, and will turn to Me, and all of them will worship Me.**
- (9) **I rule over the nations, not Rome, not man, not anyone.**
- (10) **Even those in Sheol will bow down to me, and those who cannot keep themselves alive will look to Me, who lives forever!**
- (11) **My posterity (the church) will serve Me. I may not have physical children, but I will have billions of spiritual ones.**
- (12) **My resurrection will be declared to generation after generation as yet unborn, forever.**

**Please notice that Jesus makes 12 Statements of Faith** at the worst moment in His life. How incredible! I have to admit that the pain I am struggling with has caused me to waver sometimes. I guess I just have to follow the lead of my Lord and Savior, who, while nailed to a tree, nonetheless confessed His own deliverance and resurrection.

What else can I say? Doesn't the Word of God say enough **all by itself?** Until next time, may God richly bless you as you walk in faith and obedience to Him!

# Day 20 – Alpha and Omega



“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End’ says the Lord, ‘who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty”

– The Revelation of Jesus Christ 1:8

In today’s **E-Pistle**, we tackle one of my most favorite all-time subjects: The **Pre-Existent** and **Post-Existent Christ**. To which you say, **“Do what?”** Don’t worry. I’ll bring it down to plain ole English in just a little bit. When you ask people, **“Who created the heavens and the earth?”** most believers will answer, **“Why, God, of course!”** To which I, being a mean widdle kid at heart, reply, **“God who?”** At this point, they look blankly at me, and you can just hear them saying to themselves, **“Exactly what is wrong with this guy?”** Actually, nothing is wrong, at least theologically, with me. I’m just trying to get them to see one of the most wonderful, powerful facts about our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. You knew He was awesome. You knew He was powerful. You knew that He was wonderful. **But did you know that it was He who created the heavens and the earth?** That our very own Jesus is not only **Savior, Redeemer, Healer, Deliverer and Soon Coming King**, but that He is also **Creator of all that is, the heavens and the earth?** **“Now,”** you might answer, **“does it really matter if was the Father or the Son or the Holy Spirit?”** Yup! It sure does. Because **if Jesus created the heavens and the earth, then it was morally His job to also redeem them, and us as well!** Let me put it another way: If He **made** it, then who better to **redeem** it, **restore** it, and eventually **replace** it. Replace it? Yup! At least that’s what Isaiah and John both say. If you turn to Revelation 21:1, you will find the following passage:

*“<sup>1</sup> Now I saw a new **heaven and a new earth**, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea.”* – Revelation 21:1

Now, remember the principle that every matter must be established in the mouths of two or more witnesses. So, if this is going to really happen, there must be **another** Scripture elsewhere in the Bible which says the same thing. Enter the great prophet Isaiah:

*“<sup>22</sup> For as the **new heavens and the new earth** which I will make shall remain before Me,” says the LORD, “So shall your descendants and your name remain.”* – Isaiah 66:22

Later on in this series, we will explore at great length these new heavens and new earth, but that is not our topic for today. Our topic for today is the absolute, immutable proof that **Jesus Himself** created the current heavens and the earth. In order to do that, we will turn to three great passages, all in the New Testament, all plainly in sight for anyone to read, yet somehow hidden from all but a very few who have the audacity to believe that God can be taken at His Word, and that His Word is **literally true**. Let’s begin with the Gospel of John:

*“<sup>1</sup> In the beginning was **the Word**, and **the Word was with God**, and **the Word was God**. <sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> **All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made**. <sup>4</sup> In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. <sup>5</sup> And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. <sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup> This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. <sup>8</sup> He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. <sup>9</sup> That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world. <sup>10</sup> He was in the world, **and the world was made through Him**, and the world did not know Him.”* – John 1:1-10

Hmm... Let's see, here. We're talking about an individual called **The Word**. He is in the beginning **with** God, and He **is** God. Now, who might that be? Tada! How about **Jesus**? Now, that fact is truly a brain-dead conclusion, and hardly anyone anywhere in Christianity will argue the fact. But what does John say next? **All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.** The English is a little convoluted here, so let's simplify it a bit. Here's the Pastor Ray translation: **Everything that exists was made through Jesus. Nothing that exists was made without Him.** Here we have absolutely clear evidence that the **Apostle John** is firmly convinced that Jesus made the heavens and the earth. To go a bit further, in verse 10, John repeats himself, by saying that **the world was made through Him.** That's pretty clear-cut, isn't it? But there's more, a lot, lot more. Let's turn now to the Apostle Paul, for additional confirmation. Open your Bibles to the letter written to the church at Colossae. Maybe you know it as **Colossians**. Turn again to the very first chapter. Paul is talking about who Jesus is. Hear what he has to say:

<sup>15</sup> *He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.* <sup>16</sup> **For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.** <sup>17</sup> **And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.** <sup>18</sup> *And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.* <sup>19</sup> *For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell,* <sup>20</sup> **and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.** -- Colossians 1:15-20

Now if you think what John said was conclusive, take a good look at what Paul just dropped on us. Let's break this Scripture passage down piece by piece, shall we? In fact, so much is given to us that it would be a good idea to make a list.

1. **Jesus is the exact image of the invisible God.** So much for those who try to say that Jesus is somehow not God, or less than the Father. Co-equal, exact in representation, exact in nature, in all ways God of very God. Now I know that may seem like a moot point, but during the period of time spanning from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 4<sup>th</sup> Centuries AD, there was considerable debate about this point. The Council of Nicea debated this point. And their conclusions, based on what is clearly written by three authors, all in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century, and all clearly accepted as divinely inspired authors, also puts a dagger in the heart of the DaVinci Code hoax. If Jesus is the **exact image** of the invisible God, then there is no way in this world or the next that he is **just a man**, which is Dan Brown's assertion. I don't know about you, but every time I look in the mirror, I am painfully reminded that I am **not** the exact image of God, or, for that matter, not even a good reproduction of what I once was, and unfortunately, will never be again in this lifetime.
  
2. **He (Jesus) created everything that is in heaven and on earth.** Now this raises a very interesting point, and one that I have never heard anyone teach or preach on. But, hey, when you hang around with Pastor Ray, you're going to walk on new ground on a daily basis! Follow me, now, and watch where this goes. **If Jesus created everything that is in heaven and on earth, then it also stands to reason that He created heaven itself!** Remember, this universe, including both heaven and earth, are a **temporary construct** put into place until His goals have been reached. Once Jesus has what He is after through this universe, He destroys it, as described in II Peter 3:10. Then, according to Revelation 21:1 and Isaiah 66:22, He creates a **new heaven and a new earth**. He doesn't just destroy the old earth. He also destroys the old heavens (all three of them!). Why? **Because everything in both the heavens and the earth have been irreparably damaged by sin!** Even heaven itself? Yup! When did **that** happen? When Lucifer led a rebellion against God, as described in Isaiah 14:12-14. He was then cast out of heaven, as described in Revelation 12:7-9. Lucifer is further described in Ezekiel 28:11-17 and, oh dear friends, there is such an incredible truth hidden there that ties back to the very Garden in Eden itself! But not today! Later!

3. **All natural and supernatural authorities and powers were also created by Him.** This also, of course, includes Lucifer and all the other angels. The satanic bible claims that Lucifer is Jesus' older brother. What a crock! That's kind of like Frankenstein's monster claiming that he is the brother of Dr. Frankenstein. Hardly! Always remember, when you are dealing with the devil that you are dealing with a murderer, a **liar**, and a thief!
4. **ALL THINGS WERE MADE BY HIM, THROUGH HIM AND FOR HIM.** Why am I shouting at you like this? Because there is no more important statement in the entire Bible regarding Jesus as creator and sustainer of the universe than this single sentence. Everything was made **by** Jesus. Everything was made **through** Jesus. Everything was made **for** Jesus. Man, if we follow this thread where it is going logically, it explains everything! Let's walk down the corridor of time for a second. If we go back in time, we pass World War II, then World War I, then the Civil War, then the wars of Rome, then, faster and faster, past the creation of man, the creation of animal life, the creation of plant life, then forming of the continents out of the oceans that covered the earth, past the creation of life itself to a point where there is **nothing**. No heavens. No earth. No energy. No matter. Just a Triune Being, co-equal within Himself/Their Selves. A Being whom we will come to know as **The Father**. Another Being who at that time is known as **The Word**, and who we will later come to know as **The Son**. And another Being known as **The Spirit**. Together, in a unanimous, 3-0 vote (And no other decision has ever been any other way), **The Father** commissions **The Word** to create a complete universe, consisting of three heavens, and, contained within the second heaven, or what we call the universe, billions of solar systems and planets. Then, on one specific planet, with the assistance of **The Spirit**, **The Word** shapes order out of chaos, life out of death, and, finally, in the boldest initiative ever undertaken, combines **matter with spirit** in a unique, marvelous creature called **man**. The purpose of this enormous undertaking? The formation of a **4<sup>th</sup> Composite Entity which will be joined to the Godhead at the end of time called The Bride**. Created **by** The Word, **through** The Word, and, marvelously, **FOR** The Word! So complex is this undertaking, so carefully thought out, and so skillfully interwoven into the very fabric of the universe itself that the very numbering systems found in the Bible point to the transition from a **Triune** (three-part) Godhead to a **Quadrune** (four-part, if there is such a word. If not, I just created it!) Godhead. What? Oh, yes, dear friends! Again, we can't go into it in this article. But perhaps another time! ("Ooooh, I just **hate** it when he does that!" "Well, write him and tell him!" "Do you think he's respond?" "Of course! He's a man of God, isn't he? He might even talk to you over the phone! **Who knows?**") **Anyhow...** It just stands to reason that if the universe was made **by Jesus, through Jesus and FOR Jesus, there must be an underlying reason!** Wouldn't it make perfect sense for a Being that will become known as **The Son** have a logical need to go out and find **a mate for Himself?** And, since in pre-time, no one else exists except the Godhead itself, there are clearly no equal helpmeets available. And, if none are available, it would only make sense for the LORD to create a mechanism which could eventually, over a short period of time (at least from heaven's perspective!), produce another intelligent being which could **willingly choose to be joined in Holy Eternal Matrimony with The Son, and literally, physically and spiritually become a part of the family, and one with The Father, The Son and The Spirit. MEET THE BRIDE! And YOU are going to be a part of it!** (At least I **hope** you're going to be a part of it. You **have** chosen to make Jesus both Lord and Savior of your life, **haven't you???** If not, why not do it **right now???** And, if for some reason, you don't know **how, just call or write us!!!** We'll help you get where you need to go!)
5. **He is BEFORE all things.** This almost begs the question, but you can't possibly create something unless you already exist. And if you are going to create **all** things, you have to be there **first**, before anything else. Again, He is not an angel promoted to Sonship, as some cults teach. He created all the angels. He is The Word of God, **with** God and **God Himself**.
6. **In Him all things CONSIST.** Now what in on earth does that mean? Simple: If **Jesus** doesn't exist, **nothing else exists**. Our very existence depends on His continuing

existence and sustaining power. If He makes a quality decision that it is over, then **everything** is over! The air that we breathe exists because He wills it to exist. The lungs that breathe that air exist because He wills them to exist. You exist because He wills you to exist and have the incredible opportunity to embrace Him and His Kingdom, to be part of eternal life, the New Jerusalem and The Bride. You **consist and exist in Him, through Him and because of Him**. Every rebel that rejects God and condemns themselves to The Lake of Fire does so because He wills and provides the energy for that rebel to make that choice. And He does so, in full pre-knowledge that this individual will make that choice and choose that path. And His sacred heart is broken again and again as creatures that He came and died for willingly reject the greatest opportunity of all time, and turn away from His great love, compassion and mercy. How can something you created reject you? How can a son willingly reject his father and go away to a far country to ruin his life? Such is the paradox of free will. It embraces both the opportunity to accept or reject the love that is offered. The second paradox of free will is that by releasing your own will into the care of another, you gain the greatest possible good for yourself, yet by embracing your free will and choosing to reject the offered will of another, you condemn yourself to ultimate failure and destruction. Head hurt yet? Good! Once you get beyond John 3:16 and get to John 3:17, you begin to understand the terrible cost that both The Father and The Son sustained in order to give you the opportunity of an eternal lifetime.

7. **He is the head of the body, also know as the church.** Not the pastor. Not the bishop. He and He alone. Not that these offices do not exist, and not that they should not be honored or listened to. It's just that in the final analysis, Jesus and Jesus alone is in charge. Woe to those false shepherds who make themselves God! I just had a situation in which a dear friend came to me and told me of a pastor who also has a business on the side. He has two masters, two gods. And he had the audacity just the other day to say to her, ***"Don't talk to me about God. I am your God in this matter. And if you don't get on board (in joining his business enterprise), when the money comes rolling in you are on the outside looking in, don't come to me if you get into trouble!"*** When she told me this, I was outraged! How dare this arrogant man use the local church as a breeding cage for his personal business and gain! How dare he publicly threaten my friend and the other members of his congregation with being cut off if they do not join in his business as well as attend his church! And **how dare he call himself God!** If memory serves me correctly, someone named Lucifer got himself thrown out of heaven when he decided he would be God. And someone named Herod was eaten up by worms and died when the people cried, *"...the voice of a god and not of a man"*. He didn't even have to claim he was God. All he had to do was NOT disagree with their opinion. The Spirit of the Lord came upon me and I began to prophecy. Part of the prophecy included the fact that this man had spoken the wrath and condemnation of God upon himself by knowingly doing this. Pastor, isn't that harsh? Aren't you supposed to prophesy encouragement and exhortation? If called for, yes. But in the New Testament, Peter prophesied the death of both Ananias and Sapphira. I know of many other occasions where a prophet of God spoke death and it came to pass. Years ago, in the great 19<sup>th</sup> Century outpouring of the Holy Spirit, there was a woman preacher and prophetess who was conducting a series of meetings in Kentucky, I believe. There was, in that region, a man who hated her and the gospel with a passion. He happened to have a crop duster airplane, and determined in his heart that he was going to harass the meeting by buzzing them every night. And so it went. One the first night, he made pass after pass over the church, harassing the lady preacher and disrupting the meeting. On the second night, he did it again. But on the third night... Tired of the incessant harassment, the lady preacher pointed her hand up towards the ceiling and simply said, ***"I saw satan fall like lightning..."*** Suddenly the night air went deadly still, for the engine of the airplane had mysteriously died and could not be restarted. The plane crashed to the ground, killing the man instantly. Some years ago, also in Kentucky, we learned from a friend that a Godly woman was being beaten savagely by her unsaved husband. And so we prayed. As we prayed, the Holy Spirit came upon me, and I said, ***"Lord, break this man's hands so that he cannot hit his wife again!"*** The very next day, his right hand was caught in a car door and badly broken. Three days later he was arrested on a separate matter and sent to jail, never to strike his



wife again. Don't tell me that God cannot and will not exact judgment on the ungodly. Jesus is still head of the church!

8. **He is the very first one to be permanently resurrected from the dead.** He is not the last, for we who believe will follow him in the 1<sup>st</sup> Resurrection / Rapture. And we will be just like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. His body is the firstfruits or prototype of this new resurrection body, which is a significant upgrade from the matter-spirit interface designed and implemented in the Garden. This new model will never know sin, sickness, disease or death. It will be a model for the new heavens and the new earth. And out of His precious side, just as out of Adam's side, will come another body like it, bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh, which will be like him and yet different, a suitable helpmeet.
9. **He will have preeminence or first place in all matters because of this event.** Not only is He first, before anything else is created, He is also first to be permanently raised from the dead, and also the first to have a body made of the material from which The Bride and the new heavens and the new earth will be formed. That way **nobody** can take credit for **anything**. It is **His show, from beginning to end. Alpha and Omega, First and Last!**
10. **The full nature, glory and power of God dwells in Him.** Not just partially God. In a real sense, not even God-man, although that is true in a sense. But **fully God in every possible way. Not second in nature**, although willingly submitted to The Father from an implementation standpoint. Not inferior in any way to The Father. Not a lesser God. But absolutely the same as The Father in every way possible.
11. **And finally, by His incredible effort on the cross, to reconcile everything in the universe back to Himself by His very actions.** No intermediary. No middleman. He made it. He fixed it. **All by Himself.** Because nobody else could. How could they? Who would have the holiness? Who would have the power? Who would have the mercy? Who would have the sense of obligation and responsibility for this damaged creation except **He who created it?**

At this point the evidence should be overwhelming, but there is more. We first drew on the words of the Apostle John. We then went to the Apostle Paul. Now we will go to an unknown author, and the only unknown author of the New Testament. We will now refer to the Book of Hebrews, penned by perhaps Barnabas, the co-evangelist of Paul. But we're not really sure. Whoever it was, he was clearly familiar with Paul's writings, and gives us some of the greatest passages in the Bible, including the great Hall of Faith found in Chapter 11 and the incredible time travel paradox of Melchizedek found in Chapters 6, 7 and 8. But our concern is not in those chapters. Again, the words we seek are found in Chapter 1, this time in verses 1-4:

*"<sup>1</sup> God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, <sup>2</sup> has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, **through whom also He made the worlds;** <sup>3</sup> who **being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power**, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, <sup>4</sup> having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."* – Hebrews 1:1-4

Here again we find the same statements as we did in the two previous passages of Scripture. **He (Jesus) made the worlds. He is the express image of God the Father and contains all of His glory.** And, to top it all off, not only did He create everything, but He is **upholding all things by the Word of His power.** Does that make sense? You bet! Remember, we are dealing with a mechanism which was originally created perfect, without the Law of Sin and Death (also know to scientists as The Law of Entropy) operating inside of it to destroy it. It is spiritually unstable. It is also physically unstable. Based on Einstein's equations, there is a constant relationship between matter and energy, expressed as the familiar  $E = MC^2$ . But astrophysicists are troubled. It seems that there is a huge shortage of matter or mass relational to the amount of measurable energy found in the universe. Based on all their models, the universe should have exploded into nothing but pure energy billions of years ago (by their timetable, not

God's!). And they can't explain it. The universe looks like a giant broken mechanism which must have worked at some point in time, but no longer has the stability to hold together. **And darned if they can figure out what is holding it together!** Hmm... Are there any volunteers from our studio audience? Yes! I see that hand! And your answer is?... That's right! The correct answer to the astrophysicists dilemma is that **Jesus is upholding (holding up, holding together, sustaining) all things (the entire universe, the heavens and the earth) by the Word of His Power (who else would have enough strength to do this???)**

But now comes the next question. **Why** is He holding it together? Why not just let it go, and get on with the task of creating the new heavens and the new earth mentioned in Revelation and Isaiah? The answer is simple. **This universe must be held together until He draws from it the project He has been working on.** What project? **The Bride!** Consider this picture: This universe is much like an amniotic sac, found in the womb of a pregnant woman. The baby doesn't grow unprotected. It is housed in a covering which protects it from the mother's body, bathes it in a primordial fluid that nurtures it and allows it to grow, and holds it safe and sound until the time for the birth has arrived. Then, in a violent act of convulsive force, the amniotic sac, the child and the placenta which has been providing food to the child are expelled from the mother's body. Of the three, only the child survives. The amniotic sac and the placenta are disposed of. In nature, many animal mothers actually eat the two because they are so rich in nutrients. Now for a controversial analogy. The body of the mother is the universe in which we live. The amniotic sac is what we call today the church. The baby which we will call **The Bride** in contained **within** the church, but is **not** the church. This is matter of much controversy, and requires a whole separate series of article, found much later in these volumes, analyzing Matthew 24 and 25, which contain the answers Jesus gave to the three questions found in Matthew 23:

- (1)When will these events take place?**
- (2)What will be the sign of Your coming?**
- (3)What will mark the end of the age?**

In those passages, Jesus makes clear references in Matthew 24:8 to a Hebrew word which the translators translate as **sorrows**. The actual Hebrew word is **Odin**, which means, according to Strong's Concordance, **"the pain of childbirth, travail pain, birth pangs"**. And so, the entire process of giving birth to the Bride involves the same type of pain and agony as a woman would feel while giving birth to a child. But instead of being expelled from the mother's womb, this child is snatched away in a violent action referred to in the Greek as the **Parousia**. The Latin equivalent for this word is **rapere**, from which we get the word **rapture**. And out of the larger entity formally called the church, a true bride is delivered and removed permanently from the mother's womb. Once the child has been delivered, there is a mop-up operation, to clean up loose ends, so to speak, and then, having put all things back in order, there is no longer a need for the broken universe which housed the child. The child has been delivered, physically, spiritually and literally. The old mechanism has served its purpose, and may now be discarded, and a new mechanism, not broken, can be created to house this new wonderful entity that has been created. And this new child is not compatible with the old mechanism at all, since it is made, like the resurrection body of Jesus, of the substance of the new heavens and the new earth. And so, in a cataclysm of immeasurable violence, all conventional matter in the universe is de-resolved back into pure energy. And then, in another blink of the eye, a new heavens and a new earth are formed, totally compatible with this marvelous new being made of billions of individuals who chose to love, worship, serve and obey the Lord Jesus Christ. What a marvelous, incredible destiny!

By this time, if you haven't figured it out. I can't help you. Look at the **overwhelming evidence**. If a matter must be established by two or three witnesses, will **John, Paul** and possibly **Barnabas** do as acceptable witnesses? And how appropriate and logical it is that our precious Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is not only the **author**, but also the **perfecter and finisher of our faith**.

**He created it all. He sustains it all. He will end it all. And He will start it all over again, but this time, with a world without end. Amen and Amen!**

Day 20 ends Volume 1 of **Unrolling the Scroll**. It is our earnest hope and prayer that you have been blessed, challenged, exhorted, educated and equipped by what you have been taught here. There are seven total volumes in this work of faith. By walking through all seven, you will travel through The

Revelation of Jesus Christ in its entirety. And you will understand the book and the marvelous plan of God as never before, and far better than most Christians and so-called scholars. If you have thoughts or questions about **Unrolling the Scroll**, or have other unrelated questions that you would like to have answered, please feel free to contact us at the address, email address, or phone numbers listed elsewhere in this book. And, as always, **may God richly bless you as you walk in faith and obedience to Him!**



# Unrolling the Scroll

## Revelation Master Timeline

### I. Introduction

- A. Blessed is he who reads, hears and keeps (1:3)
- B. Who is and who was and who is to come (1:4)
- C. Firstborn from the dead (1:5)
- D. Kings and Priests (1:6)
- E. Coming with clouds (1:7)
- F. Alpha and Omega (1:8)

### II. John in the Spirit on the Lord's Day (1:9-10)

- A. Write what you see in a book and send it to the Seven Churches (1:11)
- B. Seven Gold Lampstands (1:12)
- C. Christ appears & His appearance (1:13-18)

### III. The "Hinge on the Door" (1:19) -- divides Revelation into two sections

- A. The Things Which ARE (Current Events)
- B. The Things Which WILL TAKE PLACE AFTER THIS (Future Events)

### IV. The THINGS WHICH ARE – Seven Letters to Seven Churches

- A. Ephesus – Repent and do the first works (2:1-7)
- B. Smyrna – You will have tribulation (2:8-11)
- C. Pergamos -- The Doctrines of Balaam and the Nicolaitans 2:12-17)
- D. Thyatira -- The False Prophetess Jezebel (18-29)
- E. Sardis -- Hold fast and repent (3:1-6)
- F. Philadelphia -- I have set before you an open door (3:7-13)
- G. Laodicea -- Neither hot nor cold, spew you out of my mouth (3:14-22)

### V. The THINGS WHICH WILL TAKE PLACE AFTER THIS – The Scroll with 7 Seals

- A. A door standing open in heaven (4:1) [II Corin 12:1-4]
  - 1. Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this
  - 2. John alone caught up in heaven
  - 3. Christ appears on Throne (4:2-3)
  - 4. 24 Elders (4:4)
  - 5. 7 Lamps of Fire / 7 Spirits of God / Cherubim (4:5) [Zech 4:2]
  - 6. Sea of Glass, like Crystal (4:6)
  - 7. 4 Living Creatures / Seraphim (4:6-9)
    - a. Full of eyes in front and in back – Living Sentries [Ezek 1:10]
    - b. 1<sup>st</sup> Creature like a Lion
    - c. 2<sup>nd</sup> Creature like a Calf
    - d. 3<sup>rd</sup> Creature like a Man
    - e. 4<sup>th</sup> Creature like a Flying Eagle
- B. Scroll written on both sides with 7 Seals (5:1-14) [Zech 5:1-4, Ezek 2:9-10]
  - 1. 1<sup>st</sup> Seal – White Horse -- WAR IN NORTHERN HEMISPHERE (6:1-2) [Matt 24:6-7]
    - a. Bow -- Instrument of War
    - b. Crown -- Ruler of Nation
    - c. Conquering and to conquer – War
    - d. [Zechariah 6:1-6] -- Northern Hemisphere
  - 2. 2<sup>nd</sup> Seal – Red Horse – ETHNIC GENOCIDE IN 10/40 WINDOW (6:3-4) [Matt 24:6-7]
    - a. Take peace from the earth
    - b. That men should SLAY ONE ANOTHER
    - c. A great sword (beheading)
  - 3. 3<sup>rd</sup> Seal – Black Horse – CROP FAILURE IN NORTHERN HEMIPHERE (6:5-6)

- a. Pair of Scales – Symbol of trade, commerce in John’s day
  - b. Quart of wheat for a denarius (one day’s pay)
  - c. 3 quarts of barley for a denarius
  - d. Collapse of wheat and barley crops
  - e. Do not harm the oil and the wine – principal crops in the Mediterranean
  - f. Area out of which will probably come the Anti-Christ
4. 4<sup>th</sup> Seal – Pale Horse – PLAGUE/FAMINE IN SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE (6:7-8)  
[Matt 24:7]
- a. Death, followed by Hades (Hell)
  - b. Power given to them over ¼ of the earth
  - c. Kill with sword, hunger, death & beasts of the earth
  - d. Sick, hungry, weak humanity can’t fight off hungry predators (8:7)
    - (1) Destruction of all green grass causes massive death of herbivores
    - (2) Carnivores come after humanity as major food supply
5. 5<sup>th</sup> Seal – Global Persecution –Tribulation (6:9-11) [Matt 24:9-13]
- a. World blames Christians for all their problems
  - b. Church delivered up to tribulation / Greek *thlipsis* (Matt 24:9)
  - c. Global execution of Christians (Matt 24:9)
  - d. Hated by all nations for Christ’s sake (Matt 24:9)
  - e. Pre-Trib church becomes offended and falls away (Matt 24:10) [II Thes. 2:1-3]
  - f. Betray one another, hate one another (Matt 24:10)
  - g. Many false prophets arise and deceive many (Matt 24:11)
  - h. Lawlessness abounds (Matt 24:12) [II Thes 2:6-8]
  - i. Love of many grows cold (Matt 24:12)
  - j. Those slain for the Word of God and their testimony (6:9)
  - k. How long till they are avenged? (6:10)
  - l. Wait until REMAINDER OF FELLOW SERVANTS ARE KILLED (6:11)
6. 6<sup>th</sup> Seal – Great Tribulation / Greek *megas thlipsis* (6:12-17)
- a. Global Earthquake (6:12) [Matt 24:7]
  - b. Sun black as sackcloth (6:12) [Matt 24:29]
  - c. Moon like blood (6:12) [Matt 24:29]
  - d. Stars of heaven fall to earth (6:13) [Matt 24:29]
  - e. Atmospheric blow-off (6:14)
  - f. Tectonic plates disrupted – islands and mountains moved (6:14)
  - g. Mankind panics (6:15-16)
  - h. Announcement of upcoming Wrath of God /7<sup>th</sup> Seal (6:16-17)
  - i. Wind held back globally (7:1)
  - j. Sealing of the 144,000 (7:2-8)
    - (1) Joseph = Ephraim
    - (2) Dan excluded for sin of Golden Calf (I Kings 12:26-30)
  - k. Rapture of First Portion of the Bride / Prepared / Enough Oil (7:9-17)
    - (1) Matt 24:29-31 – Wise and Foolish Virgins, half go in, half left out
    - (2) I Thes. 4:13-18 – We who are alive and remain shall be caught up in the clouds
7. 7<sup>th</sup> Seal – The Wrath of God (8:1-19:21)
- a. ½ hour of silence in Heaven / 20 years of peace on Earth (8:1) [II Peter 3:8]
  - b. Announcement of the 7 Trumpets (8:2-6)
  - c. 1<sup>st</sup> Trumpet (8:7)
    - (1) Hail, fire and blood (8:7)
    - (2) 1/3 of all trees burned up (8:7)
    - (3) All green grass burned up (8:7)
  - d. 2<sup>nd</sup> Trumpet (8:8-9)
    - (1) Great mountain thrown into sea (8:8)
      - (a) Possibly meteor/asteroid
      - (b) Possibly Mt. Tabor [Matt 17:1-21, Mark 11:11-26]
    - (2) 1/3 of sea becomes blood (8:8) – Possibly Atlantic Ocean, 1/3 of all water there

- (3) 1/3 of all creatures in sea die (8:9)
- (4) 1/3 of ships destroyed (8:9)
- e. 3<sup>rd</sup> Trumpet (8:10)
  - (1) Great star burning like torch – probably comet (8:10)
  - (2) 1/3 of all fresh water becomes poisonous (8:11)
- f. 4<sup>th</sup> Trumpet (8:12-13)
  - (1) 1/3 of sun struck (8:12)
  - (2) 1/3 of moon struck (8:12)
  - (3) 1/3 of stars struck (8:12)
  - (4) Announcement of the Three Woes (8:13)
- g. 5<sup>th</sup> Trumpet / 1<sup>st</sup> Woe (9:1-11)
  - (1) Abyss / Bottomless Pit opened (9:1-2)
    - (a) Holding Cell for angels that married human women
    - (b) Genesis 6:1-4 -- Sons of God married daughters of men
    - (c) Jude 4-6 – Everlasting chains under darkness for judgment
  - (2) Demons in form of locusts released (9:3-10)
  - (3) Led by Abbadon/Apollyon/Destroyer (9:11)
- h. 6<sup>th</sup> Trumpet / 3<sup>rd</sup> Woe (9:12-11:13)
  - (1) 4 demons bound at Euphrates (9:13-15)
  - (2) 1/3 of mankind to be killed (9:15)
  - (3) 200 million man army on demonic horseback (9:16-19)
  - (4) No further repentance by mankind / no further Gentile salvations (9:20-21)
  - (5) Angel with little book (10:1-2)
  - (6) 7 Thunders (10:3-4) – Contents unknown
  - (7) Angel swears that with 7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet, Wrath of God will be done (10:5-7)
  - (8) John takes little book from angel (10:8-11)
  - (9) Holy City trodden underfoot for 3 ½ years (11:1-2) -- 1<sup>st</sup> 3 ½ years of 7
  - (10) Two Witnesses (11:3-6) [Zech 4:1-5,11-14]
    - (a) Prophecy 1,260 days / 3 ½ years (11:3)
    - (b) Two olive trees and two lampstands of Zechariah
    - (c) Fire comes out of their mouths
    - (d) Power to shut heavens so no rain falls
    - (e) Power to turn waters to blood
    - (f) Power to strike the earth with all kinds of plagues
    - (g) Killed by Abbadon from Abyss
    - (h) Bodies lay on streets of Jerusalem for 3 ½ days
    - (i) People send one another presents, just like Christmas
    - (j) Resurrected by voice from heaven as world watches
    - (k) Ascend into heaven with everyone watching
    - (l) Great earthquake in Jerusalem
    - (m) 7,000 people die
- i. 7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet / 3<sup>rd</sup> Woe (11:14-19:21)
  - (1) 24 Elders announce what will happen (11:15-18)
  - (2) Temple of God opened in Heaven (11:19)
  - (3) Woman clothed with the sun (12:1-6)
  - (4) Dragon cast out of heaven (12:7-13)
  - (5) Woman flees into wilderness (12:14-17)
  - (6) Beast out of the SEA / Anti-Christ (13:1-10) [II Thes 2:3-7, Daniel 7:1-28]
    - (a) 7 Heads (13:1)
    - (b) 10 Horns (13:1)
    - (c) 10 Crowns (13:1)
    - (d) Blasphemous name on heads (13:1)
    - (e) Like a Leopard / Pan-Arabic Union (13:2) [Daniel 7:6]
    - (f) Feet like a Bear / Russia (13:2) [Daniel 7:5]
    - (g) Mouth of a Lion / England (13:2) [Daniel 7:4]
    - (h) Given power by dragon (13:2)
    - (i) Mortal wounding of one head (13:3)

- (j) Given authority to continue for 3 ½ years (13:4-5) -- 2<sup>nd</sup> 3 ½ years of 7
- (k) Granted power to overcome the saints (13:7)
- (l) Authority given over whole world (13:7-10)
- (7) Beast coming out of the EARTH / False Prophet (13:11-18)
  - (a) Causes everyone to worship the Anti-Christ (13:11-12)
  - (b) Performs great signs and wonders (13:13)
  - (c) Makes fire come down on earth like Two Witnesses (13:13)
  - (d) Animates / demon possesses images of Anti-Christ all over world (13:14-15)
  - (e) Mark of the Beast (13:16-18)
- (8) Rapture of the 144,000 (14:1-5)
  - (a) Male, virgin Jews
- (9) Angel preaching everlasting Gospel (14:6-7)
- (10) 2<sup>nd</sup> Angel announcing Babylon has fallen (14:8)
- (11) Final warning about taking Mark of the Beast (14:9-13)
- (12) Reaping of the earth (14:14-20)
- (13) 7 Plagues / Bowls (15:1-18:24)
  - (a) 1<sup>st</sup> Bowl/Plague – Sores on people (16:2)
  - (b) 2<sup>nd</sup> Bowl/Plague – Sea dies/becomes like blood of dead man (16:3)
  - (c) 3<sup>rd</sup> Bowl/Plague – Rivers & Streams become like blood (16:4-7)
  - (d) 4<sup>th</sup> Bowl/Plague – Sun scorches earth (16:8-9)
  - (e) 5<sup>th</sup> Bowl/Plague – Beast’s kingdom blacked out (16:10-11) [Exodus 10:21-23]
  - (f) 6<sup>th</sup> Bowl/Plague – Stage set for Armageddon (16:12-16)
    - [1] Euphrates dries up (16:12)
    - [2] 3 unclean spirits like frogs performing signs (16:13)
    - [3] 1 from satan, 1 from Anti-Christ, 1 from False Prophet (16:13)
    - [4] Paves way for kings of the East (China, Far East) (16:12)
    - [5] Gather kings of the whole world for Armageddon (16:14)
  - (g) 7<sup>th</sup> Bowl/Plague – Final devastation of the earth (16:17-19:21)
    - [1] Global earthquake of epic proportions (16:18)
    - [2] Rome broken into three parts (16:19)
    - [3] Cities of the world fall/collapse (16:19)
    - [4] All mountains, islands disappear (16:20)
    - [5] 100 lb hailstones fall (16:21)
    - [6] Great Whore of Babylon / Rome judged (17:1-18)
- C. Invasion from Heaven (19:1-21)
  1. Bride has made herself ready / Now complete (19:1-10)
  2. Rider on White Horse / Christ (19:11-13)
  3. Armies of Heaven follow (19:14)
  4. Christ destroys enemy armies (19:15-21)
  5. Anti-Christ, False Prophet captured (19:20)
  6. Cast into Lake of Fire (19:20)
  7. Satan cast into Abyss / Bottomless Pit for 1,000 years (20:1-3)
  8. Completed Bride rules over earth with Christ for 1,000 years (20:4-6)
  9. Satan released from Abyss (20:7)
  10. Deceives the nations (20:8)
  11. 2<sup>nd</sup> Battle of Armageddon -- Gog and Magog (20:9) [Ezekiel 38]
  12. Satan thrown into Lake of Fire (20:10)
- D. Destruction of Heavens and Earth (20:11) [II Peter 3:10]
- E. Great White Throne / Bema Seat Judgment (20:11-15)
  1. 2<sup>nd</sup> Resurrection – General Resurrection
  2. Books were opened / Record of works of all men (20:12)
  3. Book of Life opened (20:12)
  4. Sea, death and Hades give up dead that are in them (20:12-13)
  5. Dead judged according to their works (20:12-13)
    - a. Matthew 25:31-46 -- Sheep and Goats



- b. Romans 2:11-16 – The consciences now accusing, now excusing them
- c. Daniel 12:2-3 – Some to everlasting life, some to everlasting shame & contempt
- d. I Corinthians 3:9-15 – The Day will reveal it, but only as through fire
- e. II Corinthians 5:10 – We must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ
- f. Death and Hades thrown into the Lake of Fire (20:14)

(1) The Second Death – eternal

**F. New Heavens and New Earth (21:1-22:21)**

- 1. New Heavens and New Earth (21:1)
- 2. New Jerusalem descends from Heaven (21:2-4)
- 3. I make all things new (21:5-7)
- 4. Lake of Fire in existence eternally (21:8)
- 5. John shown New Jerusalem (21:9-22:2)
  - a. Great wall with 12 gates (21:12)
  - b. Twelve angels at the gates (21:12)
  - c. Names of the tribes of Israel written on gates (21:12)
  - d. Three gates on north, south, east & west (21:13)
  - e. 12 foundations with names of the 12 Apostles (21:14)
  - f. Dimensions of the city – cube @ 1,500 miles in height, width and depth (21:16)
  - g. Wall made of jasper (21:18)
  - h. City is pure gold, like clear glass (21:18)
  - i. Foundations of city adorned with precious stones (21:19)
    - (1) 1<sup>st</sup> – Jasper (21:19)
    - (2) 2<sup>nd</sup> -- Sapphire (21:19)
    - (3) 3<sup>rd</sup> – Chalcedony (21:19)
    - (4) 4<sup>th</sup> – Emerald (21:19)
    - (5) 5<sup>th</sup> – Sardonyx (21:20)
    - (6) 6<sup>th</sup> – Sardius (21:20)
    - (7) 7<sup>th</sup> – Chrysolite (21:20)
    - (8) 8<sup>th</sup> – Beryl (21:20)
    - (9) 9<sup>th</sup> – Topaz (21:20)
    - (10) 10<sup>th</sup> – Chrysoprase (21:20)
    - (11) 11<sup>th</sup> – Jacinth (21:20)
    - (12) 12<sup>th</sup> – Amethyst (21:20)
  - j. 12 Gates are 12 Pearls, each gate a single pearl (21:21)
  - k. Street of the city is pure gold, like transparent glass (21:21)
  - l. No temple in the city (21:22)
    - (1) The Lord and the Lamb are its temple
    - (2) No need of sun or moon, glory of God illuminates it (21:23)
  - m. Nations will bring their glory and honor into it (21:24-27)
  - n. Pure river of water of life (living water) flowing from the Throne (22:1)
  - o. Tree of Life (22:2)
    - (1) In the middle of its street
    - (2) On either side of the River of Life
    - (3) Bears 12 fruits
    - (4) Each tree bearing fruit every month
    - (5) Leaves are for the healing of the nations
- 6. No more curse (22:3)
- 7. They shall see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads (22:4)

**VI. Closing Statements (22:7-21)**

- A. Warning – Behold, I am coming quickly (22:7)
- B. John confirms that he saw and heard these things (22:8)
- C. Do not seal the words of this prophecy, for the time is at hand (22:10)
- D. Too late to change (22:11)
- E. Blessed are those who do His commandments (22:14)
  - 1. They may have right to the Tree of Life
  - 2. They may enter through the gates into the city

- 3. Outside (in the Lake of Fire), are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral, etc. (22:15)**
- F. I, Jesus have sent my angel to testify (22:16)**
  - G. The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come!" (22:17)**
  - H. If anyone adds to the words of this Book, God will add the plagues in this Book (22:18)**
  - I. If anyone takes away from the words of this Book, God will take away his part from the Book of Life, from the Holy City, and from the things in this Book (22:19)**
  - J. Surely I am coming quickly (22:20)**
  - K. Amen! (22:21)**

**Thank you for your interest in Unrolling the Scroll  
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# Episode Master Outline

<u>Day Title</u>	<u>Scripture</u>
<b>Episode One – The Revelation of Jesus Christ (20 Days)</b>	
1. Pre-, Mid-, Post-, Pan-, What?	Revelation 5:1-5
2. Rightly Dividing the Word	II Timothy 2:15
3. Getting the Big Picture	Revelation 1:19
4. New Business	Revelation 4:1
5. Many Will Become Offended	Matthew 24:10
6. The Revelation Of Jesus Christ	Revelation 1:1
7. Things Which Must Take Place Shortly	Revelation 1:1
8. Blessed Is He Who Keeps	Revelation 1:3
9. Who Is, Who Was, and Who Is To Come	Revelation 1:4
10. Firstborn From the Dead	Revelation 1:4-5
11. First In Everything	Revelation 1:4-5
12. Upholding All Things	Hebrews 1:3
13. Kings and Priests	Revelation 1:4-6
14. Coming With Clouds	Revelation 1:7
15. Jesus In the Cloud	Revelation 1:7
16. Meeting On the Mountain	Revelation 1:7
17. Every Eye Will See Him	Revelation 1:7
18. Even They Who Pierced Him	Revelation 1:7
19. They Cast Lots For My Garments	Psalms 22:18
20. Alpha and Omega	Revelation 1:8
<b>Episode Two – Things That Are (15 Days)</b>	
1. Tribulation, Kingdom and Patience	Revelation 1:9
2. In The Spirit	Revelation 1:10
3. Write In A Book	Revelation 1:11
4. Seven Golden Lampstands	Revelation 1:12
5. One Like the Son of Man	Revelation 1:13-15
6. I Have the Keys	Revelation 1:18
7. The Hinge On the Door	Revelation 1:19
8. The Seven Churches	Revelation 1:20
9. Ephesus – Leaving Your First Love	Revelation 2:1-7
10. Smyrna – Don't Be Afraid Of Suffering	Revelation 2:8-11
11. Pergamos – Beware Of Balaam	Revelation 2:12-17
12. Thyatira – Tolerating Jezebel	Revelation 2:18-29
13. Sardis – Hold Fast And Repent	Revelation 3:1-6
14. Philadelphia – An Open Door	Revelation 3:7-13
15. Laodicea – Because You Are Lukewarm	Revelation 3:14-21
<b>Episode Three – The Things That Shall Be (31 Days)</b>	
1. After These Things	Revelation 4:1
2. In the Spirit	Revelation 4:2
3. Twenty-Four Fine Fellers!	Revelation 4:3-5
4. The Throneroom of Heaven	Revelation 4:3-5
5. Cross in the Desert	Revelation 4:7-8
6. It's About Time!	Ecclesiastes 1:9-11

**Day Title****Scripture**

7. Time Traveler	Hebrews 7:1-3
8. The Order of Melchizedek	Hebrews 7:1-3
9. The Man from Eternity	Hebrews 7:3
10. Who Is Worthy?	Revelation 5:1-4
11. The Scroll	Revelation 5:1-2
12. The Four Horsemen	Revelation 6:1-2
13. The White Horse of War	Revelation 6:1-2
14. The Red Horse of Ethnic Genocide	Revelation 6:3-4
15. The Black Horse of Crop Failure	Revelation 6:5-6
16. The Pale Horse of Plague & Famine	Revelation 6:7-8
17. The Tribulation	Revelation 6:9-11
18. Decoding the Discourse	Matthew 24:3
19. The Sign of Your Coming	Matthew 24:3
20. Tectonic Boogie	Revelation 6:12-14
21. Smoke Gets In Your Eyes	Revelation 6:12-14
22. Planetary Heart Attack	Revelation 6:12-14
23. Catch Your Breath Before It Runs Away	Revelation 6:12-14
24. The 144,000	Revelation 6:12-14
25. Sitting on the Bench	Revelation 7:3-4
26. Three Strikes, You're Out!!!	Revelation 7:5-8
27. But Wait, There's More!!!	Judges 18:30-31
28. No Private Interpretation	II Peter 1:20-21
29. Every Nation, Kindred, Tribe and Tongue	Revelation 7:9-10
30. Who Are Those Guys, and Why Do They Keep Following Us?	Revelation 7:13-15
31. Who Are Those Guys, Really?	Revelation 7:13-15

**Episode Four – The Crucified Bride (34 Days)**

1. When Will These Things Be?	Matthew 24:3
2. One Question, Three Answers	Matthew 24:3
3. The Times of the Gentiles	Luke 21:24
4. The Blindness of Israel	Romans 11:25
5. The Fullness of the Gentiles	Romans 11:25
6. The Restoration of Israel	Romans 11:25
7. They Never Knew What Hit 'Em!	Matthew 24:36-39
8. Five Wise, Five Foolish	Matthew 25:1-4
9. The Door Is Shut	Matthew 25:6-10
10. Good and Faithful Servant	Matthew 25:20-21
11. You Did It Unto Me	Matthew 25:37-40
12. The First Shall Be Last	Matthew 20:8-16
13. Many Are Called, Few Are Chosen	Matthew 20:13-16
14. As Through Fire	I Corinthians 3:12-15
15. MEGA Tribulation	Matthew 24:21-22
16. The Dilemma of Daniel	Matthew 24:15-20
17. A Pig In A Poke!	Matthew 24:15-20
18. Head of Gold, Feet of Clay	Daniel 2:31-35
19. Writing on the Wall	Daniel 5:3-6
20. He Is My Shepherd	Isaiah 44:26-28
21. Ten Toes to Go, Please!	Daniel 2:41-43
22. Lions and Leopards and Bears, O My!	Daniel 7:2-5
23. Beware the Bear!	Daniel 7:2-5
24. The Lying Leopard	Daniel 7:6
25. The Mad Mahdi	Revelation 13:11-14
26. Monster on the Loose	Daniel 7:7

**Day   Title**

**Scripture**

- |   |                        |
|---|------------------------|
| 27. "Then"                              | Matthew 24:9-11        |
| 28. Abomination of Desolation           | Matthew 24:15-16       |
| 29. "Then" – The Sequel                 | Matthew 24:21-22       |
| 30. Till My Change Comes                | Job 14:12-15           |
| 31. Swat Team from Heaven               | Matthew 24:30-31       |
| 32. Just Like Jesus!                    | I John 3:2-3           |
| 33. Old Body, New Body                  | I Corinthians 15:48-49 |
| 34. Daniel's Master Timeline of Empires | -----                  |

**Episode Five – The Time of the Beast (30 Days)**

- |  |                     |
|--|---------------------|
| 1. The Worst Is Yet to Come                    | Revelation 8:8-9    |
| 2. 7-7-7, not 6-6-6                            | Revelation 1:12-16  |
| 3. Woe, Woe and...Woah!                        | Revelation 15:1-4   |
| 4. Silence in Heaven                           | II Peter 3:3-4, 7-8 |
| 5. The Prayers of the Saints                   | Revelation 8:2-5    |
| 6. Hail, Fire and ...Blood???                  | Revelation 8:7      |
| 7. Oxygen Shortage                             | Revelation 8:7      |
| 8. Mountain from the Sky                       | Revelation 8:8-9    |
| 9. Splitting Mountains in Two                  | Luke 24:59-51       |
| 10. Bitter Waters                              | Revelation 8:10-11  |
| 11. Smoke Gets in Your Eyes                    | Revelation 8:12-13  |
| 12. Locusts from Hell                          | Revelation 9:1-2,4  |
| 13. The Mutant Menace                          | Revelation 9:1-2,4  |
| 14. Float Like a Locust, Sting Like a Scorpion | Revelation 9:3-6    |
| 15. Math Whiz!                                 | Revelation 9:13-15  |
| 16. 200 Million Man Army                       | Revelation 9:16-19  |
| 17. The Seven Thunders                         | Revelation 10:1-4   |
| 18. The Little Book                            | Revelation 10:8-10  |
| 19. Don't Bug Agabus                           | Acts 21:10-11       |
| 20. Blueprints from the Future                 | Revelation 11:1-2   |
| 21. Elijah Who Is to Come                      | Matthew 11:10-14    |
| 22. My Two Witnesses                           | Revelation 11:3-5a  |
| 23. A Woman Clothed With the Son               | Revelation 12:1-5   |
| 24. Disgruntled Employee                       | Revelation 12:3-4   |
| 25. Cast Out of Heaven                         | Revelation 12:7-9   |
| 26. The Beast from the Sea                     | Revelation 13:1-2   |
| 27. Strange Critter, Strange Bedfellows        | Revelation 13:1-2   |
| 28. Cheap Imitations                           | Revelation 13:3-4   |
| 29. Fire from Heaven                           | Revelation 13:11-13 |
| 30. Mark of the Beast                          | Revelation 13:16-18 |

**Episode Six – Invasion from Outer Space (14 Days)**

- |                                  |                     |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. The Whore Of Babylon          | Revelation 17:1-6   |
| 2. 7 Heads                       | Revelation 17:7-11  |
| 3. 10 Horns                      | Revelation 17:12-18 |
| 4. Demon Prison                  | Revelation 18:1-2   |
| 5. Come Out Of Her               | Revelation 18:4     |
| 6. In One Hour                   | Revelation 18:5-19  |
| 7. The Marriage Of the Lamb      | Revelation 19:7     |
| 8. Getting Ready For the Wedding | Revelation 19:8     |
| 9. The Spirit Of Prophecy        | Revelation 19:10    |
| 10. I Have Horses, Don't I?      | Revelation 19:11    |
| 11. The Word Of God              | Revelation 19:12-13 |

**Day Title****Scripture**

- |                          |                   |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| 12. The Armies Of Heaven | Revelation 19:14  |
| 13. The Wrath Of God     | Revelation 19:15  |
| 14. Thrown In Jail       | Revelation 20:1-3 |

**Episode Seven – All Things New (23 Days)**

- |                                 |                     |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Rule and Reign               | Revelation 20:4     |
| 2. The First Resurrection       | Revelation 20:5-6   |
| 3. The Millennial Reign         | Revelation 20:6     |
| 4. The Final Temple             | Ezekiel 40 – 46     |
| 5. The River Of Life            | Ezekiel 47          |
| 6. The Lake Of Fire             | Revelation 20:14-15 |
| 7. The New Israel               | Ezekiel 48          |
| 8. Rebuilding the Planet        | Matthew 24:22       |
| 9. Shock Probation              | Revelation 20:7-10  |
| 10. The Great White Throne      | Revelation 20:11-25 |
| 11. The Gentile Escape Clause   | Romans 2:12-16      |
| 12. The Second Death            | Revelation 20:14-15 |
| 13. The New Universe            | Revelation 21:1     |
| 14. The New Earth               | Revelation 21:1     |
| 15. The New Jerusalem           | Revelation 21:2     |
| 16. The 12 Foundations          | Revelation 21:14-21 |
| 17. The Lamb Is It's Light      | Revelation 21:22-23 |
| 18. The Tree Of Life            | Revelation 22:2     |
| 19. No More Curse!              | Revelation 22:3     |
| 20. "Come!"                     | Revelation 22:17    |
| 21. Breach Of Contract          | Revelation 22:18-19 |
| 22. I Am Coming Quickly         | Revelation 22:20    |
| 23. Epilogue – Where from Here? | Revelation 1:1-3    |

NOTE: As I have written this series of books, a strange, wonderful and frustrating thing has occurred. When I first began this project, I walked systematically through the Revelation of Jesus Christ and outlined what I thought would be an iron-clad list of articles which would make up each of the episodes. I couldn't have been more wrong. Once I began a series of articles for a given episode, I found that the articles took on a life of their own, and literally began writing themselves. I now understand what the Psalmist said when he proclaimed that he was the "pen of a ready writer". As the Holy Spirit has taken over this project, the articles have grown longer, more detailed, and have taken directions which I would never have anticipated. In doing so, I have been the beneficiary of fresh revelation from God as I wrote. Time and time again, the Holy Spirit would quicken my understanding of the topic I was writing about, and I would begin to add additional materials which I had never understood or even thought of before that very moment. For that reason, this list of articles may or may not end up being an exact match for another episode which has yet to be written. For example, I have already written Episode One, so that list is pretty well carved in stone. The same thing would be true for Episode Four, which is almost complete. But for the other episodes, your guess is as good as mine as to whether or not this list of articles will match the finished product. I do know this: the general topic and time frame for each of the episodes is pretty well defined, and not likely to change (famous last words!). So please don't be surprised if, when you purchase the NEXT episode, the article titles don't always agree. I can guarantee you another thing: you will be getting MORE for your money, because the Lord will have given me deeper insight into His precious, Holy Word, and I will be sharing it with you in longer, more complex and more numerous articles. Thanks in advance for your patience in this matter. I hope and pray that you will enjoy the entire series and learn much about the End of Days in doing so.

Dr. Young

# Meet Dr. Young



Dr. Ray Young has been studying the **Revelation of Jesus Christ** for over 15 years. He has been in the ministry for over 30 years, and is a **teacher, prophet** and **apostle** in the body of Christ. Dr. Young is also a professional educator, and taught at a university level for 18 years. He is the president and founder of **Final Great Awakening Ministries and Revival Nation Movement**, and is also a published author, has also published the following books:

**How to Survive the Coming Crash**

**Unrolling the Scroll Series:**

**Episode 1 – The Revelation of Jesus Christ**

**Episode 3 – The Things That Shall Be**

**Episode 4 – The Crucified Bride**

**Episode 5 – The Time of the Beast**

**Making Sense of the End Times**

He and is currently working on completing the full **Unrolling the Scroll** series of seven devotional study guides to the Revelation of Jesus Christ, with three Episodes left to write. He can be reached at any of the phone numbers, email address or web site URL listed below.

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